



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

**Communications Directorate**  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
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18 July 2016

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0628-16**

Thank you for your email of 24<sup>th</sup> June asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

*Please could you provide me with all letters sent by your department to the BBC Head of News or the News Editor of any BBC news programme, or any senior BBC employee since 01.04.2015 where there is a complaint in relation to the news coverage in any way. Please also provide me with copies of any responses?*

On 30<sup>th</sup> June, you refined your request to “*just correspondence from the FCO that was from either a Minister or a member of the FCO press office.*”

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed the search for the information which you requested and can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold information relevant to your request. Attached are a letter from former FCO minister Hugo Swire to the BBC and the BBC’s reply.

Some of the information you have requested, is personal data relating to third parties, the disclosure of which would contravene one of the data protection principles. In such circumstances sections 40(2) and (3) of the Freedom of Information Act apply. In this case, our view is that disclosure would breach the first data protection principle. This states that personal data should be processed fairly and lawfully. It is the fairness aspect of this principle, which, in our view, would be breached by disclosure. In such circumstances, s.40 confers an absolute exemption on disclosure. There is, therefore, no public interest test to apply.

Yours sincerely,

Communications Directorate

