



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

02 December 2014

Near East Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

Website: <https://www.gov.uk>

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0862-14

Thank you for your email of 4 September asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked for:

- 1. The number of meetings held since May 2010, in the Foreign Office or elsewhere between the Foreign Secretary (either the Rt Hon William Hague MP or the Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP) and Stuart Polak, Director of Conservative Friends of Israel.*
- 2. The minutes that were taken at these meetings and any other memorandum relating to them.*
- 3. The number of meetings held since May 2010, in the Foreign Office or elsewhere between the Foreign Office ministers (excluding the Foreign Secretary) and Stuart Polak, Director of Conservative Friends of Israel.*
- 4. The minutes and details of these meetings. Which ministers were they with and were civil servants present?*

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed the search for the information which you have requested. I have provided below the information we can release.

In previous correspondence we mentioned that a specific exemption applied in relation to your request (Section 27 – International Relations). Following further consultation, it was later found out that this exemption is no longer relevant to this particular request.

Some of the information you have requested is personal data relating to third parties, and is withheld under Section 40 (Personal Information) of the FOIA. It is our view that disclosure of this information would breach the first data protection principle, which states that personal data should be processed fairly and lawfully. Section 40 (2) and (3) of the FOIA therefore apply. It is the fairness aspect of this principle, which we believe, would be breached by disclosure in this case. In such circumstances, Section 40 confers an absolute exemption on disclosure. We do not therefore have to apply the public interest test.

Following a search of our paper and electronic records, I can confirm that the following meetings between Foreign Office Ministers and Mr Polak took place since May 2010:

One-on-One meetings with Mr Polak

Date	FCO Minister
17/10/2010	Rt Hon William Hague (then Foreign Secretary)
08/05/2013	Mr Alistair Burt (then FCO Parliamentary Under Secretary of State)
09/09/2013	Rt Hon William Hague (then Foreign Secretary)

Meetings and events Foreign Office Ministers attended where Mr Polak was present

Date	FCO Minister	Event
03/11/2010	Rt Hon William Hague (then Foreign Secretary)	Dinner to celebrate Scientific Collaboration between UK and Israel
13/09/2011	Mr Alistair Burt (then FCO Parliamentary Under Secretary of State)	Meeting with Portland Trust
18/12/2012	Mr Alistair Burt (then FCO Parliamentary Under Secretary of State)	Australia-Israel-UK Leadership Dialogue Gala Dinner
12/02/2013	Mr Hugh Robertson (then FCO Minister of State)	Meeting with CFI Members in Parliament
08/05/2013	Mr Alistair Burt (then FCO Parliamentary Under Secretary of State)	United Jewish Israel Appeal's Sports Quiz Dinner
24/10/2013	Mr Hugh Robertson (then FCO Minister of State)	Meeting with the Jewish Leadership Council
25/11/2013	Rt Hon William Hague (then Foreign Secretary)	CFI Annual Business Lunch

There are no recorded meetings between the Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP (Foreign Secretary) and Mr Polak.

A read-out of the dinner event on 3 November 2010 is available from the .gov.uk website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-william-hague-hails-uk-israel-science-links>

Below is an excerpt from briefing for Minister for the Middle East Alistair Burt ahead of a meeting with Moon Valley on 10 January 2011:

Background

1. You met with Stuart Polak (CFI), [Redacted] from the Portland Trust on 13 September. Portland Trust supports Moon Valley on encouraging economic development in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Following a search of our paper and electronic records, we do not hold a record of minutes or other memoranda related to the other meetings and therefore cannot confirm whether Civil Servants were present at these meetings.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the Freedom of Information Act, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless it is exempt. The information we have supplied to you may now be published on our website together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

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Yours sincerely,

Near East Department



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