



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office
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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUESTS REF: 0636-17 & 0637-17

Thank you for your request for information which we received on 3 July 2017. In your request you asked for;

From your request of 5 June:

I can narrow it down further but it would still be a period of years, between January 2014 and December 2016 and the sort of events I am looking for are generally to do with the recent and historic conflict there between guerrilla groups and the government of the day. In terms of which kind of violations I am particularly interested in extrajudicial executions and political executions, 'femicide' and anti-lgbt cases. I'm afraid I cannot express specific units of the police or military but I am interested in reports detailing their involvement in the conflict with specific reference to the types of violations I have listed above. If there are official published reports please do direct me where to find them and I will search them myself but I would much prefer the reports included in day to day correspondence.

Further to my previous reply I would like to add that I am also interested in reports relating to internal repression in Colombia.

On 3 July you asked us to refine this further;

Re. your suggestion, I would like to submit the same requests again but between the time frame of October 2015 and October 2016 - limiting it to a period of one year as per your suggestion.

I am pleased to inform you that we have completed an assessment of the public interest for information found relevant to your request. A PDF of the scanned documents relevant to your request is attached. Some of the information has been withheld under exemptions permitted by the FOI Act (2000). Redactions have been annotated to show the relevant exemptions applied.

Section 27 (1) (a), International Relations.

Some of the information within the scope of your request has been considered for exemption under Section 27(1)(a) of the FOI Act. Section 27(1)(a) recognises the need to protect information that would be likely to prejudice relations between the UK and other states if disclosed.

The application of Section 27(1) requires us to consider public interest arguments in favour of releasing and withholding the information. We acknowledge that releasing some of the information in the document found may increase public knowledge about the contact between the UK and Colombia and third countries. The disclosure of some information we have found could potentially damage the relationships of the UK-Colombia, and third countries. This would reduce the British Government's ability to protect and promote UK interests through its international relations, which would not be in the public interest.

Section 40, Personal Data

Some of the information you have requested has been redacted or withheld under Section 40 of the Act. Section 40 allows exemption for 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 FOI 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. Section 40 is an absolute exemption and therefore a public interest test is not required.

Section 43, Commercial Interests

Some of the information is exempt under Section 43 (2) of the Act, which relates to commercial interests. The use of this exemption was carefully considered. The factors in favour of disclosure of this information, including the general public interest and greater transparency and accountability, were carefully weighed against the need to allow business-people and commercial organisations the space to conduct their lawful business competitively and without fear of disclosure of sensitive commercial information. We consider that this transparency also poses risks to the protection of commercially confidential information. Failure to protect such commercially sensitive information would limit the sources of information and interlocutors available to the FCO and limit the FCO's ability to promote the British economy and lobby for the interests of British businesses overseas. In this case after such consideration we believe that the public interest in withholding the redacted information outweighs the public interest in its release.

Yours sincerely,

South America Department



We keep and use information in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. We may release this personal information to other UK government departments and public authorities.