



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Baile Átha Cliath 2

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Dublin 2

Our Ref: FoI/Req/2017/034

Jack Horgan Jones

Business Correspondent

The Sunday Business Post

Hambleton House

19/26 Pembroke Street Lower

DUBLIN 2

Dear Mr. Horgan Jones,

I refer to the request of 20 February which you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for access to records held by this Department, as follows:

Any internal reports and briefing notes from November 2016 to date, in relation to the potential effects of the election of Donald Trump as US president'

19 records have been identified that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. It has been decided that access to none of the records can be granted.

Where access has been refused, the records are exempt from release under sections

29.1 (a) and 33.1 (d)

Under Section 29 of the Act, Deliberations of FOI Bodies, all 19 records scheduled have been refused. I have considered whether the public interest would be better served by releasing the records in question in terms of the right of the public to have access to information. Given the source and nature of the records I am satisfied that premature release of certain records would negatively impact on the decision-making processes of this Department, disclose positions taken by the Department and would substantially impair the good relations we have with

another State. On balance the public interest would not be best served by releasing these records.

Further, I have exempted the 19 records under Section 33- security, defence and international relations.

This Department manages relations between Ireland and 178 countries, operating in a complex and diverse international environment, in a variety of locations and under varying local laws and customs. In order to effectively carry out its role, the Department must maintain trust and confidence between governments and other interlocutors. If the Department does not maintain the mutuality of trust, its ability to protect and promote Ireland's interests could reasonably be expected to be adversely affected. I feel release of the information would have a significant adverse impact on the effective conduct of the functions of this Department. I have considered the right of the public to have access to information and the need for an open and accountable civil and foreign service. I am satisfied that the balance favours refusal rather than release.

Right of Appeal

Should you wish to appeal this decision, you may do so in writing to the Freedom of Information Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 76-78 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2 or by email to foi@dfat.ie. A fee applies for an appeal for access to non-personal information; the level of this fee has been set at €30. For methods of payment, please contact FOI Unit at foi@dfat.ie, or 01-4082857.

You should make your appeal within 4 weeks (20 working days) from the date of this notification. However, the making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances. The appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of the staff of this Department.

Yours sincerely

Jack McCormack

Jack McCormack,

Assistant Director, U.S & Canada

Americas Unit

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade