



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Baile Átha Cliath 2

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Dublin 2

14 February 2017

Ellen Coyne
The Times
4th Floor
Bishop's Square
Redmond's Hill
Dublin 2

Our Ref: FOI/Req/2017/014

Dear Ms. Coyne,

I refer to your recently submitted request for information, made under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, in which you requested the following:

Correspondence between the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister's office, the Northern Ireland office and the UK Department of Foreign Affairs on

- 1. The Dublin Monaghan bombings*
- 2. The UK decision to repeal the human rights act and its impact on the Good Friday Agreement.*

To include correspondence sent and received between 1 September 2016 and the date of the request.

Dublin Monaghan bombings

As reflected in the Programme for Partnership Government, implementation of the all-Party Dáil motions relating to the 1974 Dublin and Monaghan bombings is a priority for the Government. The Taoiseach and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade regularly raise this matter at bilateral meetings with the Prime Minister Theresa May and Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, James Brokenshire.

Human Rights

The Good Friday Agreement stipulates that the European Convention on Human Rights must be incorporated into law in Northern Ireland. The Government's position is that any plans by the British Government to replace the Human Rights Act with a British Bill of Rights must take account of their obligations under the Good Friday Agreement. Minister Flanagan has raised this issue in his regular bilateral meetings with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

Freedom of Information Request

I have identified one record which falls within the scope of your request. After consideration of the records and the relevant sections of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, I have made the decision to refuse the release of this record.

1. Schedule of records

A schedule of records is enclosed with this letter, which shows the document relevant to your request.

2. Reasons for decision

The refusal to release this record is based upon the exemptions in the Act relating to "Security, Defence and International relations" 33(1)(d) and 33(2)(b)(i).

In relation to section 33 of the Act, my decision has been informed by consideration of the potential for the release of this record to create difficulty in the conduct of relations between this country and another State, thereby prejudicing the future supply of information required for the effective conduct of international relations.

In relation to section 33(1)(d) I have carefully considered both the nature and source of the record and am satisfied that the public interest is best served in refusing access to this record. I have also refused access under section 33(2)(b)(i); this is a mandatory exemption and so I am obliged to refuse the release of the record.

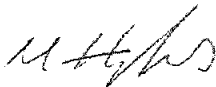
3. Rights of appeal

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@dfa.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@dfa.ie or on 01 408 2857.

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.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please contact me by telephone on 01 408 2684.

Yours sincerely,



Marie-Claire Hughes
Ireland, UK and Americas Division
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade