



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Our Ref: Fol/Req/2017/179

Date 9 October 2017

Dear Ms McSorley,

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

'Briefing notes prepared for the Minister for Foreign Affairs ahead of his meetings with academics from Ulster University and QUB, and the briefing notes prepared for the Minister ahead of his meeting with the NI Chamber of Commerce.'

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 21st September 2017.

I have identified 3 records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. I have made a decision to part-grant of the records.

Where access has been refused, the records are exempt from release under section 33 (1) and section 37 (1) of the Act.

I have considered section 33 and section 37 of the Act in making my decision. Access to certain confidential information and to operate in a confidential environment is essential in order to allow the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to carry out its functions.

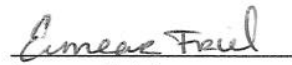
I have considered whether the public interest would be better served by releasing the record in question in terms of the right of the public to have access to information and the need for transparency in the decision-making process. However, given the nature of the records, I am satisfied that, on balance, the public interest would not be best served by releasing the information at this time.

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@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 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

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Eimear Friel", is written over a horizontal line.

Eimear Friel

Ireland, UK and Americas Division

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade