



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

Our Ref: Fol/Req/19/090

13th March 2019

Dear Mr. Hughes,

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:

"I am seeking the release of transcripts of complaints sent by members of the public and politicians to the Minister regarding the government's decision to recognise Juan Guaido as the interim president of Venezuela."

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 20th February 2019.

I have identified 4 records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. I have made a decision to grant partial release of the 4 records.

Where access has been only partially released the cases relate to section 37(1) Personal Information.

Section 37 – Personal information

While Section 37(1) Personal Information is a mandatory exemption I am still obliged to consider whether the public interest would be best served by releasing the records in full. I have taken into account the benefit to the public to be given access to correspondence in a manner which demonstrates transparency and accountability of the Department. In the main, the information redacted relates to personal contact information and does not affect the substance of the record. I have particularly considered whether releasing the personal information would provide any additional benefit in this regard. I have weighed this against the right of individuals to have their personal information remain private and have found that there is a clear prerogative for this information to remain private.

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,
Niamh Kenny

*Americas Unit
Ireland, UK and Americas Division
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*