

Our Ref: FoI/Req/2016/192  
Wayne O'Connor  
Sunday Independent,  
Independent House,  
27-32 Talbot Street,  
Dublin 1

Dear Mr. O'Connor,

I refer to your request of 11 November which you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for access to records held by this Department, as follows:

**All records relating to the election of Donald Trump including:**

- **All correspondence to and from the Minister's office with US election candidates between June 1, 2016 and 10 November 2016**
- **All correspondence between the Minister's Office and the American Embassy in Ireland between June 1, 2016 and 10 November 2016**
- **All records and correspondence to/from the Minister's Office and the White House/President Obama's Office between June 1, 2016 and 10 November 2016**
- **All briefing documents, reports, memos, draft reports, speeches and draft speeches prepared for the Minister in relation to the US election between 1 June, 2016 and 10 November 2016**

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 18 November 2016.

79 records have been identified that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. It has been decided to grant access to 14 of the records.

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, 65 of the 79 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.

I have exempted 63 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](mailto: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](mailto: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,  
Assistant Director, U.S & Canada  
Americas Unit  
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade