



Foreign &
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20 February 2009

North Africa Team
Middle East & North Africa
Directorate
King Charles Street
SW1A 2AH

Mika Minio-Paluello

Via email: request-5157-b1068f62@whatdotheyknow.com

Freedom Of Information Request Reference: 0076-09

I am writing to confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has now completed its search for the information which you requested on 23 January 2009. In that request, you asked us for:

- A – a list of meetings in 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007 held between FCO ministers or civil servants and Royal Dutch Shell employees that relate to Egypt and/or Libya
- B – a list of those in attendance during these meetings
- C – a list of files, memos or correspondence relating to these meetings

I can confirm the Foreign and Commonwealth Office holds some information relevant to part A and B of your request. A copy of that information is enclosed.

The data you requested on the names of those in attendance during the meetings constitutes personal information under Section 40 of the Act, the disclosure of which would contravene one of the data protection principles. In such circumstances, Section 40 (2) and (3) of the FOIA applies. In this case, our view is that disclosure would breach the first data protection principle. This states that personal data should be processed fairly and lawfully. It is the fairness aspect of this principle which, in our view, would be breached by disclosure. In such circumstances, Section 40 confers an absolute exemption on disclosure. Only the names of public figures have been included.

With regards to Part C, you asked for a list of files, memos or correspondence relating to those meetings with Royal Dutch Shell. I can confirm the FCO does not hold specific files on Royal Dutch Shell and are therefore unable to provide you with a list of files. In addition, we do not hold a list of memos or correspondence relating to those meetings. It is unclear from the wording of Part C whether you want only a list of memos and correspondence, or whether you want an actual copy of the relevant memos and correspondence. I would be grateful if you could clarify that aspect of the request.

It may be possible to locate information relating to those meetings but this would involve a wider search. If you would like us to carry out a search for any relevant documents relating to those meeting, please submit a new request to the Information Rights Team who process



your new request. Please note any information which is held is subject to assessment and we therefore can not guarantee an automatic release.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request an review of our decision, you should write to the Information Rights Team. Please note any request for an internal review must be submitted within 40 working days from the date our response was issued.

If you are not content with the outcome your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

The Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire
SK9 5AF.

Yours

On behalf of

North Africa Team
Middle East & North Africa Directorate