



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

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By e-mail to:

29 October 2014

### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST – REF: 0930-14**

Thank you for your email of the 1 October requesting access under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), to the retained extract list below, which is currently being held by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO).

- FO 371/170851/1; original file reference FN 103110/5; titled '[Sino-Nepalese Political Relations](#)'; dated 1963.

I am pleased to be able to tell you that the review of the extract has determined that most of the material can now be released. A copy of the releasable information is enclosed with this reply. However, please note that there is one redaction, which has been made to material under the FOIA exemption Sections 27 (1) (a) and (2) which concerns International Relations.

The exemption in Section 27 is qualified and is therefore subject to the balance of the public interest. This means that a public interest test must be carried out to determine whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption, outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, as set out below.

27(1) (a) of the FOIA, states that:

*“(1) Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice—*

*(a) relations between the United Kingdom and any other State*

In favour of release: we acknowledge that disclosure of information relating to UK relations with Nepal and China would add to the understanding and knowledge of this subject. There is a public interest in transparency and gaining a greater understanding of the UK's foreign relations. The information could also aid the public to a better historical understanding of Britain's conduct overseas.

In favour of withholding: international relations depend upon maintaining trust and confidence between governments. Section 27(1) (a) recognises that the effective conduct of international relations depends upon maintaining trust and confidence between governments. If the UK does not maintain trust and confidence, its ability to protect and promote UK interests through international relations will be hampered, which will not be in the public interest. The release of the information within this extract would therefore prejudice the UK relations with Nepal and China; adversely affect the UK interests.

Section 27(2) states that:

*“(2) Information is also exempt information if it is confidential information obtained from a State other than the United Kingdom or from an international organisation or international court.”*

In favour of release: we acknowledge that the disclosure of information relating to UK relations with Nepal and China would add to the understanding and knowledge of this subject. Again there is a public interest in the understanding of the UK's foreign relations in order to better aid the public in comprehending the UK's historical conduct overseas.

In favour of withholding: the release of the redacted material would be prejudicial to the UK's relations with Nepal and China and would therefore not be in the public interest.

We have therefore concluded that the greater public interest lies in withholding this information.

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

Yours sincerely,

Knowledge Management Department



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