



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

**Americas Directorate**  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
King Charles Street  
London SW1A 2AH

Website: <https://www.gov.uk>

06 December 2017

Dear Sir,

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0942-17**

Thank you for your email which we received on 11 October 2017. In your request you asked for;

***copies of all notes prior to, during, and following (within ten days either side of) the meeting detailed here***

**(<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/minister-duncan-statement-on-meeting-with-venezuelan-foreign-minister-jorge-arreaza>)**

***between Duncan and Arreaza please in London?***

I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office does hold information falling within the terms of your request.

Please find attached the information that the FCO can release to you.

We have withheld some information under exemptions at section 27 and section 40

**Section 27**

Section 27(1)(a) of the FOIA recognises the need to protect information that would be likely to prejudice relations between the United Kingdom and other states if it was disclosed. In this case, the release of information relating to UK / Venezuela bilateral relations.

The application of Section 27(1)(a) requires us to consider the public interest test arguments in favour of releasing and withholding the information. We acknowledge that releasing information on this issue would increase public knowledge about our relations with Venezuela. However, s.27 (1) (a) recognises that the effective conduct of international relations depends upon maintaining trust and confidence between governments. If the United Kingdom does not maintain this 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 disclosure of information detailing our relationship with the Venezuelan Government could potentially damage

the bilateral relationship between the UK and Venezuela. This would reduce the UK government's ability to protect and promote UK interests through its relations with Venezuela which would not be in the public interest. For these reasons we consider that, the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

### **Section 40**

Some of the information you have requested is personal data relating to third parties, the disclosure of which would contravene one of the data protection principles. In such circumstances sections 40(2) and (3) of the Freedom of Information Act apply. 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, s.40 confers an absolute exemption on disclosure. There is, therefore, no public interest test to apply.

Yours sincerely,

South America Department



We keep and use information in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. We may release this personal information to other UK government departments and public authorities.