



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

Our Ref: Fol/Req/18/258

Date: 18 September 2019

Dear Mr. Silke,

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:

*'Any correspondence between members of Young Fine Gael and the Tánaiste, Simon Coveney, regarding Bruneian laws on homosexuality between March 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 and April 10<sup>th</sup> 2019.'*

*Any correspondence between members of the public and the Tánaiste, Simon Coveney, regarding Bruneian laws on homosexuality between March 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 and April 10<sup>th</sup> 2019.'*

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 3rd September 2019.

Regarding the first part of your request, having conducted a search of the Department's records, I have not located any documents that fall within the scope of your request. Therefore, your request falls for refusal on administrative grounds under Section 15(1) (a) of the Freedom of Information Act, as "the record concerned does not exist".

Regarding the second part of your request, I have identified five records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. I have made a decision to grant one of the records and part-grant four of the records.

While two of these pieces of correspondence are from members of the public and three are from public representatives and/ or persons acting in their official capacity with NGOs, I have decided to release all such correspondence for the purposes of your request, for the sake of openness and completeness.

The decision to part-grant four of these records has been taken in correspondence with Section 37(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2014.

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

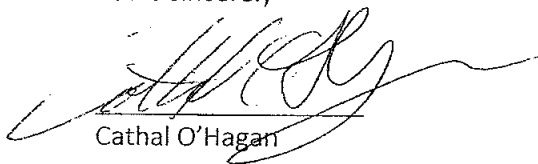
manner which demonstrates transparency and accountability of the Department. I have particularly considered whether releasing the personal information, which includes names, addresses, email addresses etc., would provide any additional benefit in this regard. I have weighed this against the right of individuals to have their personal information remain private. The personal information which I have redacted does not have any bearing on the substance or detail of the records, and does not diminish or alter the views expressed, and as such, I am satisfied that on balance the decision to partially redact the records and remove identifiable information is correct.

#### 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](mailto:foi@dfa.ie).

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



Cathal O'Hagan