



**An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha**  
**Department of Foreign Affairs**

Our Ref: Fol/Req/21/172

Date: 20/08/21

Dear Louise Burne,

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:

- **Copies of all correspondence (to include emails, letters, text messages, WhatsApp messages, memos etc) between Minister Simon Coveney and Katherine Zappone between June 27 2020 and the date of this request**
- **Copies of all correspondence (to include emails, letters, text messages, WhatsApp messages, memos etc) between Minister Simon Coveney and Tánaiste Leo Varadkar regarding the creation of a new special envoy position between June 27 2020 and the date of this request**
- **Copies of all correspondence (to include emails, letters, text messages, WhatsApp messages, memos etc) between Minister Simon Coveney and officials in the Department of Foreign Affairs regarding Katherine Zappone between June 27 2020 and the date of this request.**

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

I have made a decision to refuse your request on administrative grounds under Section 15 (1) (f) of the FOI Act which states that;

*“A head to whom an FOI request is made may refuse to grant the request where — the FOI body intends to publish the record and such publication is intended to be effected not later than 6 weeks after the receipt of the request by the head,”*

The Department of Foreign Affairs intends to publish all records it holds in relation to the appointment of Katherine Zappone as a Special Envoy on Freedom of Expression, (with the exception of records that are exempt from release under various provisions of the FOI Act), by 8 September 2021. It will also publish a schedule, listing all the records, and, where applicable, giving the reason for redaction or refusal of certain records.

**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). A fee applies for an appeal for access to non-personal information; the level of this fee has been set at €30, (€10 for medical card holders). A copy of the medical card should be provided to avail of the reduced fee. For methods of payment, please contact FOI Unit at [foi@dfa.ie](mailto:foi@dfa.ie), or 01-4082618.

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

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David Ormond  
FOI Section