



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

10 October 2018

Wayne O'Connor
Sunday Independent

Our Ref: FOI/Req/2018/237

Dear Mr. O'Connor,

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:

“records which are non-personal and which I believe are held by the Department, dated between January 1, 2018, and the date of this letter.

- *Records of correspondence between the Tánaiste's office and the Vatican.*
- *Records of correspondence between the Tánaiste's office and the World Meeting of Families.*
- *Records of the briefing documents prepared for the Tánaiste about the visit of Pope Francis to Ireland.*
- *Records of all correspondence, including but not limited to briefing documents, memos, phone calls, letters, emails and draft briefing documents, to and from the Tánaiste's office about the visit of Pope Francis to Ireland.*
- *Records of meetings and notes from meetings between Department officials and Vatican officials about the visit of Pope Francis to Ireland.”*

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 4th September 2018.

I have identified **19** records that fall within the scope of your request.

I have made the decision to grant 7 records in full and grant a part of 11 records and deny access to 1 record. The attached schedule sets out the Sections of the Act which have been applied in this regard.

With regard to records 14 and 15 I am satisfied that their disclosure could result in negative consequences for Ireland's international relations with the Holy See. Successful diplomatic relations depends upon the creation and maintenance of trust and confidence between States. Accordingly I have applied Sections 33(1)(d) of the FOI Act, Security, defence and international relations.

Regarding Record 19 I am satisfied that the Act does not apply to the information withheld in accordance with Sections 42(b)(i) and 42(b)(iii).

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. A fee applies for an appeal for access to non-personal information; the level of this fee has been set at €30. For methods of payment, please contact FOI Unit at foi@dfa.ie, or 01-4082857.

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.

Lastly I would like to thank you for your understanding and agreement to the delayed response to your FOI request.

Yours sincerely.

Eoin