

— Original Message —

**From:** Joanne.Crabtree@fco.gov.uk  
**To:** j.bloch@exchange-data.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 09, 2008 12:26 PM  
**Subject:** FOI Request reference: 0993-07

Dear Mr Bloch

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request sent on 8 December, about the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances. I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) holds information falling with the description specified in your request.

However, we estimate that to locate, retrieve and extract all such information would exceed the appropriate limit of £600 or 3.5 days. This limit has been specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. The relevant papers that need to be reviewed are considerable and go back to 2003 when negotiations on the Convention first started.

Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act makes provisions for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit. We will not, therefore, be processing your request further.

However, we must advise you that even if you were to refine the scope of your request, the majority of the information you requested would be exempt under section 35(1)(a) - formulation of development of government policy. Section 35 is statutory recognition of the public interest in allowing government to have a clear space, immune from exposure to public view, in which it can debate matters internally with candour and free from the pressures of public political debate. Government officials need to be able to engage in free and frank discussion of all the policy options, to expose their merits and demerits and their possible implications as appropriate. Their candour in doing so will be affected by their assessment of whether the content of such discussion will be disclosed in the near future. For these reasons, the public interest in withholding this information outweighs the public interest in release.

The Government now needs to conduct a detailed analysis of the provisions of the Convention and its implications for implementation within the UK. It is already clear that primary legislation would be required in order to meet the requirement in the Convention to establish a new offence of enforced disappearance. With a heavy legislative agenda ongoing the Ministry of Justice have advised us that this is not likely to be possible for some time.

To date it has not been possible to progress further the preliminary work that had begun during the negotiation process, which is necessary to identify any other changes required to UK law in order to implement the Convention. Officials will examine the Convention in greater detail from this January to consider these issues as well as what areas of the Convention may need further clarification before the UK can determine its position on ratification.

22/06/2008

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

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint, or request a review of our decision, you should write to me at the above address within 40 working days of receipt of this reply.

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

Kind Regards

Joanne Crabtree  
UN Team  
Human Rights Democracy and Governance Group  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Jonathan Bloch [mailto:j.bloch@exchange-data.com]  
**Sent:** 08 December 2007 21:16  
**To:** DP-FOLIMG  
**Subject:** International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance  
**Importance:** High

Dear FOI Staff,

I would like to apply for copies of all documents relating to the consideration of whether to sign the above treaty. This information should be sent to me at the following address:

Mr J. Bloch  
20 Woodland Rise  
London N10 3UG

I would appreciate it if you would please acknowledge receipt of this request.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Bloch

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Visit <http://www.fco.gov.uk> for British foreign policy news and travel advice; and <http://www.i-uk.com> - the essential guide to the UK.

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**Jonathan Bloch**

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**From:** "J. Bloch" <j.bloch@exchange-data.com>  
**To:** <foi@guardian.co.uk>  
**Sent:** 09 February 2007 01:02  
**Attach:** 7 Feb Final response to Jonathan Bloch.doc; Digest.doc; INC-PM request call.doc; Minute re proposed Oppositionist mting 22Nov02.doc; UNGA Security Council Letter.doc; EXCHANGE (SE).RA-ATT  
**Subject:** Fw: Freedom of information request 0796/06 FOR ROB EVANS

----- Original Message -----

**From:** Alex.Partridge@fco.gov.uk  
**To:** j.bloch@exchange-data.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 08, 2007 1:14 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Freedom of information request 0796/06

Dear Mr Bloch,

I received a message to say that my previous email had not been delivered. I am now re-sending, with another email including the remaining five attachments to follow. I would be grateful if you could confirm receipt.

Kind regards,

Alex

**Alex Partridge**  
Assistant Desk Officer  
Political and Economic Team  
Iraq Policy Unit  
FTN 8008 8087  
Fax 8008 4119

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Alex Partridge  
**Sent:** 08 February 2007 13:09  
**To:** 'j.bloch@exchange-data.com'  
**Cc:** James Smith; Neville Jones  
**Subject:** Freedom of information request 0796/06

Dear Mr Bloch,

I am pleased to attach a final letter and supporting information in response to your Freedom of Information request to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, of 25 September 2006.

Kind regards,

**Alex Partridge**  
Iraq Policy Unit  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
FTN 020 7008 8087  
Fax 020 7008 4119

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