



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Thank you for your email of 31 July with the following freedom of information request:

“As I understand it, the Prince of Wales undertakes royal tours at the request of the FCO. I would like to find out how and why this request was made.

Could you therefore please supply me with all internal correspondence - including formal reports - relating to the decision by the FCO to request that the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall visit Chile, Brazil and Ecuador in March 2009.

This could include, but is not limited to:

**the minutes of the meeting where the decision was made to request that the Prince of Wales visit South America *any cost/benefit analyses of the proposed tour *any concerns raised about the tour by FCO staff and ministers.”*

I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold information relevant to your request.

The FCO submits bids prepared by the Geographical departments in support of Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSOs) to the Royal Visits Committee (RVC) for official overseas visits made by members of the Royal Family.

(RVC) is a Cabinet Office Committee, which advises The Queen on the future programme of inward State Visits by Heads of State and officially funded visits overseas by The Queen and other Members of the Royal Family to Foreign and Commonwealth countries other than Realms. It is chaired by the Permanent Under-Secretary of State (PUS) from the FCO.

Costs for members of the Royal Family are shared for official visits made on behalf of the FCO. Transport costs to and from country are met by the Royal travel grant in aid which is administered by the Department for Transport. The annual reports can be found at www.royal.gov.uk. All other official costs are met by the FCO.

Below is the bid by the Americas Directorate of the FCO for HRH The Prince of Wales to visit South America on behalf of the UK Government:

Country	Galapagos Islands (Ecuador), Brazil
Date	Flexible, recommendation of second half of 2009

Recommended length of visit: Approx. 10 days

Galapagos Islands/Ecuador: 2009 is the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin, the 150th of the publication of *On the Origin of Species* and the 50th of the foundation of the Galapagos National Park. A visit would form the centrepiece of a programme of commemorative events. HRH could inaugurate a planned education/visitor centre at the Charles Darwin Research Station, (CDRS, whose director is Welsh) with a keynote speech. Commitment to protection of biodiversity/environment are declared Ecuadorian priorities.

Brazil: the key theme of any visit to Brazil would be climate change and deforestation. A visit would strongly support UK climate change objectives. Brazil is a key member of the coalition working to tackle climate change. It is a major global supplier of agricultural products and minerals. It will be the key supplier of biofuels in the future and has the world's largest stake of tropical agricultural land, tropical forest, biodiversity and water. A visit would offer an important opportunity to the Prince of Wales to take forward his Rainforests initiative and see what is happening on the ground to combat deforestation and reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions (GHG). But Brazil is central to other important British interests (a world trade deal, reducing poverty and strengthening the international system). The visit would also enable HMG to repay the Lula State visit in 2006. It would help build the stronger future relationship with Brazil that we will need as its power as an emerging country grows and it is increasingly influential internationally.

The visit relates to the following FCO/Mission objectives:

DSO 1 (global network), DSO 2 (support for the British economy), DSO 7 (High growth/low carbon), and DSO 8 (international institutions).

Public Presentation: The visit to the Galapagos for the 200th anniversary celebrations is likely to receive prominent international media coverage. There would be significant local and regional media coverage of the visit to Brazil. 3

Below is a further bid from the Americas Directorate for HRH The Prince of Wales to visit Chile as part of the official tour

Country Chile

Date Part of a three-country visit: Brazil, Ecuador (Galapagos) and Chile, 9-20 April 2009

Recommended length of visit (max normally 3 days): 3 days

This visit to Chile forms part of a three-country tour of South America including: Galapagos Islands/Ecuador, Brazil and Chile. We have already submitted bids to the RVC for the Galapagos/Ecuador and Brazil legs which have been approved.

Main purpose of visit are climate change and environment. President Bachelet warmly welcomes this visit. The visit would reinforce our partnership with Chile ahead of the Copenhagen 2009 climate change negotiations. Chile is acutely vulnerable to climate change: glacial melt, expanding deserts, water supply, agriculture (DSO7). The British Council (of which The Prince of Wales is a vice-patron) enjoys a high reputation in Chile and we are expanding our bilateral scholarships programme following bilateral discussions between the Prime Minister and President Bachelet.

The visit relates to the following FCO objectives: DSO7: To promote a low carbon, high growth, global economy.

The visit will help promote the following Directorate/Mission objectives: From the Americas Directorate Business Plan for 08-09, this visit will help deliver our priority objective:

1: Support from all countries of the Americas for an equitable post 2012 agreement in Copenhagen 2009 on climate change and increased commitment to a low carbon economy

Post Country Business Plan's objectives:

3: Encourage Chile to play a greater role in tackling climate change and energy security issues

5: Deliver measurable improvements in our support for British Business

Comments on timing: The visit to Chile forms part of a three-country tour of South America including to Brazil and Ecuador (Galapagos) to coincide with the Darwin 200th anniversary. 4

Below is the background prepared by the Americas Directorate in support of the bids which was presented to the Royal Visits Committee (RVC) to visit South America on behalf of the UK Government and including why the HRH should travel to these countries

2009

Brazil, Chile and the
Galapagos Islands (Ecuador)
FCO Official Visit

Brazil

The key theme of a visit to Brazil would be climate change and deforestation. A visit would strongly support UK climate change objectives. Brazil is a key member of the coalition working to tackle climate change. It is a major global supplier of agricultural products and minerals. It will be the key supplier of biofuels in the future and has the world's largest stake of tropical agricultural land, tropical forest, biodiversity and water. A visit would offer an important opportunity to The Prince of Wales to take forward HRH's Rainforests initiative and see what is happening on the ground to combat deforestation and reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions (GHG). But Brazil is central to other important British interests (a world trade deal, reducing poverty and strengthening the international system). The visit would also enable HMG to repay the Lula State visit in 2006. It would help build the stronger future relationship with Brazil that we will need as its power as an emerging country grows and it is increasingly influential internationally.

Chile

Main purposes of visit are climate change and environment. The visit would reinforce the UK's partnership with Chile ahead of the Copenhagen 2009 climate change negotiations. Chile is acutely vulnerable to climate change: glacial melt, expanding deserts, water supply, agriculture (DSO7). The British Council (of which The Prince of Wales is a vice-patron) enjoys a high reputation in Chile and the UK is expanding the bilateral scholarships programme following bilateral discussions between the Prime Minister and President Bachelet.

Galapagos Islands/Ecuador

2009 is the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin, the 150th of the publication of On the Origin of Species and the 50th of the foundation of the Galapagos National Park. A visit would form the centrepiece of a programme of commemorative events. HRH could inaugurate a planned education/visitor centre at the Charles Darwin Research Station, (CDRS, whose director is Welsh) with a keynote speech. Commitment to protection of biodiversity/environment are declared Ecuadorian priorities.

COSTS: Grant in Aid travel £600,000 — FCO costs £80,000 5

Below is the paragraph that was issued confirming the bid for a South America Tour was successfully endorsed by the Royal Visits Committee (RVC)

2009 Spring

South America

The RVC endorsed the bid for The Prince of Wales to visit Brazil, Ecuador (Galapagos Islands) and Chile in spring 2009. The programme will have a climate change focus.

I can confirm that the FCO has redacted some information from the above reports under Section 27 (1) (a).

Section 27(1) (a) of the Freedom Of Information (FOI) Act 2000 recognises the need to protect information that would be likely to prejudice relations between the United Kingdom and other states if it was disclosed.

The application of s.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 other states. But 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. For these reasons we consider that the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.