



Home Office

Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP
Minister of State for Immigration

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Dr Onkar Sahota AM
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27 March 2023

Dear Dr Sahota,

Thank you for your email of 3 March advising the Home Office that you have not received a response to your letter of 22 June 2022, to the former Home Secretary about the Migration and Economic Development Partnership (MEDP) between the UK and Rwanda. I am replying as the Minister of State for Immigration.

As one of the safest and richest countries in the world the UK has an obligation to provide sanctuary to some of the many who flee war and persecution. We have a proud history of fulfilling this duty, and in response to the latest geopolitical upheaval, the UK has responded with generous schemes for Ukrainians, Hong Kongers, Afghans and Syrians fleeing war and persecution.

As you may be aware, stopping small boats crossing the Channel was one of the five promises the Prime Minister made to the British people in January 2023. The only way to stop the boats and deter illegal migration is to make clear that if you arrive here illegally you are not going to be able to stay here. Instead, you may be detained and promptly removed either to your home country or a safe third country, such as Rwanda.

This is the only way to deliver the deterrent needed to stop people making these dangerous, unnecessary, and illegal crossings. These people-smuggling gangs who coordinate the crossings exploit the vulnerable and use their profit for other criminal activity such as drugs and weapons smuggling. By removing their clients, we remove their profit and reduce their other activity.

The new legislation introduced by the Home Secretary and Prime Minister on 7 March will ensure that if you enter the UK illegally:

- the Home Secretary will be under a new duty to remove you;
- you may be detained, with no recourse to immigration bail or judicial review, within the first 28 days. We can maintain detention thereafter so long as we have a reasonable prospect of removal;
- the number of appeals and challenges available to suspend removal will be radically narrowed. Only those medically unfit to fly, at real risk of serious and irreversible harm in the country we are removing them to or who claim that the Home Secretary has made a factual error in determining that they are an illegal entrant subject to the duty to remove, will be able to delay their removal. Under 18s

will only be removed in limited circumstances ahead of them reaching adulthood, such as for the purposes of family reunion or where removal is to a safe country of origin;

- other human rights claims, including the right to private or family life, or other forms of Judicial Review cannot suspend your removal. They will be heard remotely, after removal;
- you will be disqualified from using modern slavery rules to prevent removal. If someone is identified as a potential victim of modern slavery, we will ensure they are safely returned home from where they were removed against their will, or to another safe country. Removal from the UK may only be deferred where a person is cooperating with law enforcement agencies in an investigation into the circumstances of their trafficking. This will mean that genuine victims are protected, while preventing people from abusing our modern slavery laws to thwart their removal from the UK;
- you will face a permanent bar on lawful re-entry to the UK and a permanent bar from securing settlement in the UK or from securing British citizenship through naturalisation or registration, subject only to very narrow exceptions.

As we reduce illegal migration, we will do more to help the most vulnerable who are at risk of war and persecution through safe and legal routes. Since 2015, the UK has offered safety to nearly half a million people from all over the world using our global routes as well as our country-specific routes for Syria, Afghanistan, Hong Kong and Ukraine. The Bill will introduce an annual cap, to be determined by Parliament, on the number of refugees the UK will accept, once illegal migration is under control. This will allow us to plan for an orderly system, in conjunction with local authorities, that takes into consideration local capacity for accommodation, public services, and support. This will help avoid a repeat of the use of hotels to accommodate people. The only way to come to the UK for protection should be through safe and legal routes. This will take power out of the hands of the criminal gangs and protect vulnerable people, including children.

Under the MEDP with Rwanda, everyone considered for relocation will be screened and have access to legal advice. Decisions will be taken on a case-by-case basis, and nobody will be relocated if it is unsafe or inappropriate for them. Upon arrival, Rwanda will accept physical and legal responsibility for all those relocated. Asylum claims will then be considered and processed in Rwanda, with a view to individuals receiving the protection they need there if their claim is granted – they will not return to the UK. All relocated individuals will have their needs looked after while their asylum claims are being considered in Rwanda. They will be provided with the healthcare and other support needed to ensure their health, security and wellbeing. This includes safe and clean accommodation, food and other amenities. People are free to leave if they wish, but those in genuine need of international protection will be provided with it in Rwanda. Those whose claims are accepted will then be supported to build a new and prosperous life in one of the fastest-growing economies, recognised globally for its record on welcoming and integrating migrants.

This arrangement between the UK and Rwanda complies with national and international law, including the UN Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights. Rwanda itself is a State Party to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the seven core UN Human Rights Conventions. There is nothing in the UN Refugee Convention which prevents removal to a safe country.

We would only ever work with countries that we assess are safe and will treat asylum seekers in accordance with relevant international human rights laws. Our own safety assessment of Rwanda and their asylum process has found it is a fundamentally safe and secure country with a track record of supporting asylum seekers. Our Country Policy Information Note provides further information on the basis by which we have determined that Rwanda is a safe place for refugees, more of which can be read at;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rwanda-country-policy-and-information-notes/country-policy-and-information-note-rwanda-assessment-may-2022-accessible>

The Home Office have always maintained that this policy is lawful, and the UK High Court has upheld this. We are committed to making this partnership work and our focus remains on moving ahead with the policy as soon as possible. We stand ready to defend against any further legal challenge.

Turning to police pay, the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) considers and makes recommendations to the Government on the appropriate level of pay and allowances for police officers. We value its independent and expert advice. On 19 July 2022, the Government announced that it had accepted the recommendations of the PRRB in full, awarding a consolidated increase of £1,900 to all police officer pay points for all ranks from 1 September 2022, equivalent to 5% overall. It is targeted at those on the lowest pay points to provide an uplift of up to 8.8%, and between 0.6% and 1.8% for those on the highest pay points.

In addition to annual pay awards, police officers who have not reached the top of their pay scale receive annual incremental pay of at least 2%, and often 4-6%, subject to satisfactory performance. In its last report, the PRRB stated that median full-time gross annual earnings for police officers are 33% higher than in the whole economy, 26% higher than associate professional and technical occupations and 1% higher than professional occupations. It also reports that median total earnings ranged from £41,700 for constables to £93,000 for chief superintendents outside London, and £48,400 to £98,500 in London.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'Robert Jenrick' in a cursive style.

Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP
Minister of State for Immigration