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Lord Sharpe of Epsom  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

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06 March 2024

Dear Lord Scriven,

## **SAFETY OF RWANDA (ASYLUM AND IMMIGRATION) BILL: HOUSE OF LORDS REPORT STAGE**

I am writing following the debate in the Lords on day one of Report (Official Report, 04 March 2024, column 1417) with regards to the legal provisions in Rwanda for those who identify as Transgender.

The Rwandan Constitution contains a broad prohibition on discrimination, stating at Article 16 that 'All human beings are equal before the law. They shall enjoy, without any discrimination, equal protection of the law.' Rwandan law does not criminalise or discriminate against sexual orientation or gender identity. However, there are no specific legal protections for LGBTI persons in Rwandan law.

As set out in the Government's published [Policy Statement](#) and accompanying evidence pack, thorough consideration has been given to the treatment of LGBTI persons when assessing the safety of Rwanda for the purposes of relocating individuals under the terms of the Migration and Economic Development Partnership.

The Government's assessment is that the partnership, by design and as set out in the specific terms of the UK/ Rwanda Treaty: Provision of an Asylum Partnership ('the Treaty'), together with the independent Monitoring Committee which will ensure Treaty obligations are being complied with in practice, ensures that the human rights of Relocated Individuals will be respected, with Article 3(1) providing that the obligations under the Treaty shall be met in respect of all Relocated Individuals without discrimination.

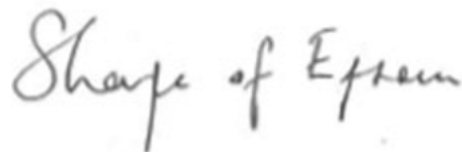
The Treaty also enhances the role of the independent Monitoring Committee, who will ensure obligations under the Treaty are adhered to in practice.

Nevertheless, whilst making a clear statement about the general safety of Rwanda, the Bill allows decision makers and the courts and tribunals to consider claims that Rwanda is unsafe for an individual person due to their particular circumstances, despite the safeguards in the Treaty, if there is compelling evidence to that effect.

I am copying this letter to Lord Etherton, Baroness Butler-Sloss, Lord Cashman, Lord Murray of Blidworth, The Lord Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, Baroness Hamwee, Lorde Browne of Ladyton, Lord Stirrup, Lord Kerr of Kinlochard, Baroness Coussins, Lord German, Lord Coaker, and Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede.

I will also place a copy of this letter in the library of the House.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sharpe of Epsom".

**Lord Sharpe of Epsom**  
**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State**