



Office of the
Advocate General
for Scotland

The Right Honourable
Lord Stewart of Dirleton KC

Advocate General for
Scotland

Lord Falconer of Thoroton

House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

04 March 2024

Dear Charles

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

I am writing to follow up on the debate in the Lords on day three of Committee (Official Report, 19 February 2024, column 413) regarding the implementation in practice of the provisions set out in the UK: Rwanda Treaty: Provision of an asylum partnership ('the treaty')

You asked about the Rwandan domestic legislation and whether anyone from the UK Government has seen it and what their opinion is of it.

Rwanda is working at pace and the legislation required for the Government of Rwanda to ratify the treaty passed the lower house of the Rwandan Parliament on 28 February; it now has to go to the upper house. It is important to note that once the UK-Rwanda treaty is ratified, this will become domestic law in Rwanda. The treaty itself will take precedence over the amended Rwandan asylum laws in Rwanda's hierarchy of law.

Rwanda is a sovereign nation, and it would not be appropriate for the UK to dictate timeframes for the introduction of their new domestic legislation. However, officials continue to work closely with the Government of Rwanda, who have given assurances that the implementation of all measures within the treaty will be expedited.

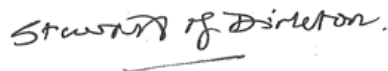
In order to implement the treaty, the Government of Rwanda will also pass a new Rwandan asylum law which will strengthen and streamline key aspects of the end-to-end asylum system, in particular decision-making processes and associated appeals processes. These changes address the Supreme Court's conclusions as to the system's capacity, which was a key factor in the Court's determination that there was a risk of refoulement.

The UK and Rwanda remain committed to delivering the partnership as soon as we can so we can provide safety and security in Rwanda to those in need whilst also preventing dangerous and unnecessary journeys across the Channel, disrupting the business model of smuggling gangs and, ultimately, stopping the boats. The UK and Rwandan governments continue to work closely to deliver the necessary changes so the partnership can be operationalised as soon as possible, and removals can commence.

I am copying this letter to Baroness Chakrabarti, Baroness Hale of Richmond, The Lord Bishop of Chichester, Baroness Lister of Burtersett, Lord Purvis of Tweed, Lord Deben, Baroness Whitaker, Lord Coaker, Lord Hannay of Chiswick, Lord Kerr of Kinlochard, Lord Scriven, 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 "Stewart of Dirleton." The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a short horizontal line.

RT HON LORD STEWART OF DIRLETON KC