



April 2022

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about the UK's Migration and Economic Development Partnership with Rwanda.

I appreciate your strength of feeling on the matter. The UK has a proud history of supporting those in need of protection, with over 185,000 men, women and children being offered a place in this country since 2015. This is more than any other similar resettlement scheme in Europe.

It is clear however that our existing asylum system needs changing. Our ability to help those who are fleeing humanitarian crises is being hindered by increased illegal migration flows and people smugglers exploiting the system for their own gain. The British public feel strongly about this, and if we, as a society, do not try and find a solution, we might find this dismay becomes a much more toxic debate overall.

I am pleased that the Government has come up with a solution to discourage people from making the dangerous journey to the UK. The UK has now entered the world's first Migration and Economic Development Partnership with Rwanda. Under the partnership, people who enter the UK illegally, including by small boat across the Channel, may have their asylum claim considered in Rwanda rather than in the UK, with a view to receiving the protection they need in Rwanda if their claim is granted.

The UK is investing £120 million into the economic development and growth of Rwanda, with funding also provided to support the delivery of asylum operations, accommodation and integration, similar to the costs incurred in the UK for these services. Furthermore, it is the case that Rwanda has one of the fastest-growing economies and enterprise cultures, with growing trade links with the UK, which this scheme will complement as part of the Government's Global Britain agenda.

These new measures, combined with the reforms to the asylum system and the changes to our laws in the Nationality and Borders Act will help deter illegal entry into the UK, whilst simultaneously creating safe and legal routes for those fleeing war or persecution. In doing so it will help break the business model of the criminal smuggling gangs, protect the lives of those they endanger, ensure continued support for the truly vulnerable, and enhance our ability to remove those with no right to be in the UK.



**Chris Heaton-Harris**

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And indeed, the results so far are encouraging: over the last week (up to the date of this reply) there have been zero illegal crossings and zero illegal immigrants intercepted. The latest numbers can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/migrants-detected-crossing-the-english-channel-in-small-boats#full-publication-update-history>

So, given the absence of any other solutions to this issue, I do believe this is the right, just and workable way forward - and the policy itself seems to be a decent deterrent.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris'.

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**