

Rt Hon Mark Drakeford MS
First Minister of Wales

26 January 2024

Dear Mark,

UK/Rwanda: Agreement for the Provision of an Asylum Partnership to Strengthen Shared International Commitments on the Protection of Refugees and Migrants

As you are aware, the **Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee** is responsible for monitoring the implementation of non-trade international agreements in the Sixth Senedd.

During our meeting on **8 January 2024**, we considered the UK/Rwanda: Agreement for the Provision of an Asylum Partnership to Strengthen Shared International Commitments on the Protection of Refugees and Migrants. This agreement provides for the creation, maintenance and enforcement of a UK-Rwanda partnership for dealing with individuals relocated from the United Kingdom to Rwanda, including considering and determining claims for refugee status.

As noted in our **report**, which was laid on 16 January 2024, the Explanatory Memorandum details the domestic legislation that will be used to give legal effect to the agreement in the UK, including the *Illegal Migration Act 2023*, to which the Senedd withheld consent in June 2023. It also confirmed the Prime Minister's intention to bring forward new legislation to confirm the safety of Rwanda as a safe third country. The *Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Bill* was subsequently introduced in the UK Parliament on 7 December 2023.

The agreement relates to reserved matters, namely immigration and asylum, which are outside the Senedd's legislative competence. Whilst there may not be any direct implications for the Welsh Government arising from this agreement, we understand that this agreement, and the *Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Bill*, may have implications for individuals living in Wales who are relocated to Rwanda.

As such, we would be grateful if you could please provide:

- more information on your position on the agreement and the *Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Bill*;
- your view in relation to specific areas within our remit, for example, on international obligations, including the European Convention on Human Rights and the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement;
- your view on international obligations and the Sewel Convention in relation to this agreement, the *Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Bill*, and the *Illegal Migration Act 2023*, to which the Senedd withheld consent in June 2023.

Yours sincerely,

Huw Irranca-Davies

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Chair