

Home Secretary meeting with Rwandan Minister Dr Vincent Biruta

Home Secretary Priti Patel today (Wednesday, 18 May) hosted Rwandan Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, Dr. Vincent Biruta, to formally update each other on progress since the signing of the landmark Migration and Economic Development Partnership.

The engagement came five weeks after they formally signed the agreement in the Rwandan capital Kigali, which set out a bold, ground-breaking international plan to help address the global migration crisis.

The ministers updated each other on developments since the signing and discussed progress on operationalising the agreement.

The Home Secretary noted that the first tranche of illegal migrants with no right to be in the UK have now been notified of the government's intention to relocate them to Rwanda.

She also commended Dr. Biruta and the Rwandan Government on all the hard preparatory work being done in advance of their hosting the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting next month.

Today's meeting comes ahead of further joint engagements for both ministers, who will be travelling together to Geneva for discussions with the UNHCR and other key UN agencies, on Thursday.

Rwandan Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, Vincent Biruta, said:

I'm pleased to be in the UK to continue working with the Home Secretary to advance our pioneering migration partnership.

This partnership builds on Rwanda's strong record of providing safety to those fleeing danger, with our country currently providing sanctuary to over 130,000 refugees from multiple countries – including vulnerable migrants evacuated from Libya, Afghanistan and neighbours like the DRC and Burundi.

These programmes have seen Rwanda work with international partners such as the African Union and the UNHCR and others, to provide safety, dignity and opportunity to those in need.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

I am proud of the partnership agreed between our two countries, which aims to break the people smugglers' business model and

prevent further loss of life in the English Channel, while ensuring protection for the genuinely vulnerable.

We are pushing ahead with delivering this world-leading plan which epitomises the kind of international approach that is required to tackle an international challenge like the migration crisis.

I look forward to meeting UNHCR representatives with Minister Biruta this week, as we continue the vital conversation on illegal migration and the importance of global cooperation.

Following this meeting with the Home Secretary, Dr. Biruta and his wider delegation fulfilled engagements with other counterparts in the British Government, including ministers at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.