



PRESS RELEASE

## RWANDA IN ARBITRATION PROCEEDINGS AGAINST THE UNITED KINGDOM ON CANCELLED MIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

Kigali, 27 January 2026

The Republic of Rwanda, on 24 November 2025, submitted a Notice of Arbitration to the Permanent Court of Arbitration under Article 22 of the Treaty between the United Kingdom and Rwanda concerning the Migration and Economic Development Partnership (“MEDP”). This Notice commences arbitration proceedings against the United Kingdom.

Initiated at the request of the United Kingdom, the MEDP is a bold new approach to deter the dangerous migration journeys which are causing untold suffering, while also addressing the global imbalance of economic opportunity, which is one of the underlying causes of mass irregular migration. The partnership between Rwanda and the United Kingdom reflects Rwanda’s commitment to protecting vulnerable people and builds on Rwanda’s track record of welcoming and hosting refugees and migrants from around the world. The MEDP entered into force on 25 April 2024.

In July 2024, shortly after taking office, the UK Prime Minister announced that the MEDP was “dead and buried”. He did so without prior notice to Rwanda, contrary to the spirit of the partnership that had always characterised the MEDP. Later that day, Rwanda was informed that no future removals of individuals under the MEDP were scheduled or intended to be scheduled, and that the UK Government would consider the formal termination of the MEDP treaty in due course.

In November 2024, the United Kingdom requested that Rwanda forgo two payments of £50 million that were due in April 2025 and April 2026 and said it was doing so in anticipation of the formal termination of the treaty. Rwanda indicated it was prepared to accept these arrangements should the treaty be terminated, provided that new financial terms would be negotiated and agreed. Discussions between Rwanda and the United Kingdom did not however ultimately take place and the amounts remain due and payable under the treaty.

The United Kingdom, however, has made clear that it has no intention of making any further payment under the MEDP treaty. It has also made clear that it has no intention of honouring its further commitment to make arrangements to resettle in the UK a portion of the most vulnerable refugees hosted in Rwanda. Disappointingly, Rwanda's attempts to move the UK from its entrenched position have been unsuccessful.

Shortly after filing its Response to Rwanda's Notice of Arbitration, the UK notified Rwanda of the termination of the treaty. In accordance with the treaty's terms, this termination takes effect on 16 March 2026. Rwanda sincerely regrets that the UK has decided to bring the partnership to an end.

In the arbitral proceedings Rwanda advances three claims: first, a claim that the United Kingdom has breached an exchange of notes setting out the treaty's financial arrangements; second, a claim of breach of Article 18 of the treaty in respect of these financial arrangements; and third, a claim that the UK has breached Article 19 of the treaty by refusing to make arrangements to resettle vulnerable refugees from Rwanda.

Rwanda regrets that it has been necessary to pursue these claims in arbitration, but faced with the United Kingdom's intransigence on these issues, it has been left with no other choice.

Rwanda remains committed to finding solutions to the global migration crisis, including providing safety, dignity and opportunity to refugees and migrants who come to our country.

**END**