



From Rt Hon Harriet Harman MP, Chair

Rt Hon Robert Buckland MP

Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice

By Email.

17 September 2020

Dear Robert,

I am writing following reports in the weekend press that the Government is planning to “opt out of major parts of European human rights law”. Is that the case and what are the “major parts” of European Human Rights law the government is planning to “opt out” of?

It is not clear from the press reports if this is a reference to the content of the Overseas Operations Bill or the Government’s plans for Judicial Review, or whether it refers to some other strand of work intended to deliver the Conservative Party manifesto commitment to “update the Human Rights Act”.

I would like you to respond to this letter setting out:

- What the Government’s plans to “update the human rights act” are;
- Which parts of European human rights law the Government is considering opting out of;
- The timetable for bringing detailed proposals forward; and
- How you propose to engage parliament and the public in these plans.

As you will be aware, the Joint Committee on Human Rights agreed in March 2020 to hold the Government to account as it set forward on implementing its manifesto commitment. It is vital that, whatever changes are proposed, every individuals' human rights are protected under the law.

We would appreciate a response to this letter within a fortnight given our scrutiny of the Overseas Operation Bill.

Yours sincerely

Rt Hon Harriet Harman MP
Chair of the Joint Committee on Human Rights