



Foreign Affairs Committee

04 September 2025

Rt Hon. Baroness Chapman of Darlington
Minister of State for International Development, Latin America and Caribbean
[By email]

Dear Jenny,

Thank you for your letter of 6 August informing the Committee that you had decided the Agreement between the UK and France on the Prevention of Dangerous Journeys should be ratified in accordance with section 22 of the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 (CRAG). The Agreement was signed on 29 July in London and 30 July in France, ratified on 5 August and came into force on 6 August.

Section 22 of CRAG is rarely used but, it is important because it allows the Government to proceed with the ratification of a treaty without Parliament first having the opportunity to scrutinise it. CRAG rightly provides that this should only happen in exceptional cases and requires the Government to give its reasons to Parliament for dispensing with the scrutiny period 'before or as soon as practicable after the treaty is ratified'.

The Committee appreciates the fact that you set out in your letter a summary of the reasons why you considered this particular case to be exceptional in advance of the statement to Parliament, as required by CRAG. We suggest that in future the Government goes further and adopts the practice of informing the Committee *prior to ratification* if it intends to rely on section 22. This would allow a degree of Parliamentary involvement (albeit limited) without detracting from the Government's ability to ratify on an expedited basis.

EMILY THORNBERRY

Dame Emily Thornberry MP
Chair, Foreign Affairs Committee