



**Foreign, Commonwealth
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Rt Hon The Baroness Anelay of St Johns
Chair, International Relations & Defence Committee

Rt Hon The Baroness Hamwee,
Chair, Justice & Home Affairs Committee
House of Lords
London
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16 November 2021

Dear Baroness Anelay, Dear Baroness Hamwee

Thank you for your letter of 20 September about the safety of women judges in Afghanistan. I apologise for the delay in replying.

Like you, I recognise the valuable role played by women judges in upholding human rights and the rule of law in Afghanistan, and the highly vulnerable position in which they now find themselves. A number of women judges were specifically called forward for evacuation during Operation PITTING.

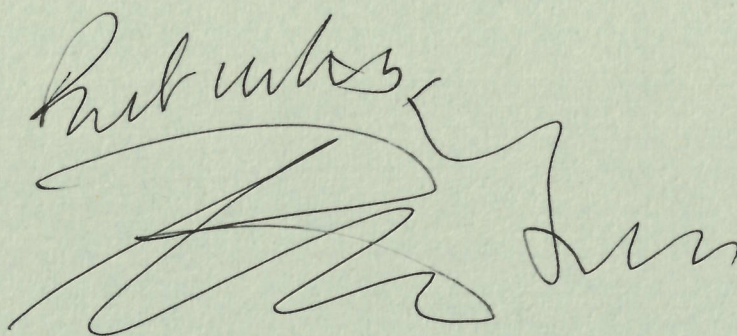
Only some of those called forward were able to leave Afghanistan during Op PITTING. We have created a Joint Afghanistan Casework Unit, staffed by officials from the FCDO, Home Office and Ministry of Defence, to take forward the UK's commitment to all those agreed for resettlement in the UK. We are pleased to be supporting a number of women judges and their families who have managed to leave Afghanistan. I am delighted that three more women judges were able to come to the UK for resettlement last week.

For those who come to the UK, we are determined to ensure they have the best possible start to life here.

We have also set out plans for a resettlement scheme for Afghan citizens under which we will welcome up to 5,000 vulnerable Afghans over the next year and up to a total of 20,000 in the coming years. Further details on the scheme are published at: Afghanistan resettlement and immigration policy statement - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

Resettlement can, of course, be an option for only a very small minority of Afghans. We have made very clear that if the Taliban want international acceptance they must respect the human rights of all Afghans, including in particular of women and girls, and they must allow unhindered humanitarian access and the safe passage of people authorised to travel abroad.

We are using the diplomatic and humanitarian levers at our disposal to restore stability to Afghanistan. As the Prime Minister has said, this will require a concerted and coordinated effort from the international community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Truss', written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above the printed name.

THE RT HON ELIZABETH TRUSS MP