

Rt Hon John Swinney MSP
An Fhìor Urr John Swinney BPA
First Minister of Scotland
Am Prìomh Mhinistear



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Dear All

Thank you for the Consortium's letter of 17 September 2024 on the Scottish Government's proposed Human Rights Bill, and the decision to continue working on the Bill to prepare for its intended introduction next Parliamentary session

I want to emphasise that the Scottish Government remains committed to advancing human rights, and we remain committed to bringing forward a Human Rights Bill. Given that the Bill has the potential to be hugely significant in both its breadth and implications for Scotland's public sector, the government considers it necessary to focus additional time and effort to make sure that we get the legislation right so that it can deliver the outcomes we all want it to achieve.

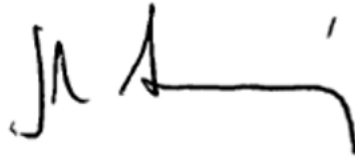
As the Minister who introduced the UNCRC Bill, I am mindful of the lessons learned from that experience. The recent change in UK Government presents, for the first time in 14 years, an opportunity to engage constructively on improving the proposed Human Rights Bill, including the scope of its proposed duties which have been so affected by the constraints of devolution highlighted by the UK Supreme Court's ruling. We will also continue to lay the groundwork for a future Bill by progressing work that builds the capability of the public sector to increasingly embed rights in everything we do, and steps here will flow from key actions that were identified in the development of Scotland's Second National Action Plan on Human Rights.

I would ask that you stay the course with us as we build on and strengthen the collective progress we have made to date. I recently met with Amnesty International and will also meet with the Scottish Human Rights Commission soon, where I look forward to continuing discussions on how we can work together to progress our shared commitment on human rights.

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Tha Ministearan na h-Alba, an luchd-comhairleachaidh sònraichte agus an Rùnaire Maireannach fo chumhachan Achd Coiteachaidh (Alba) 2016. Faicibh www.lobbying.scot

As I said at my recent annual meeting with the Scottish Parliamentary Committee Convenors, the incorporation of further human rights is fundamental to who we are as a society in Scotland today and where we want to go next. Human rights are central in achieving the Scottish Government's goals of eliminating child poverty, growing the economy, tackling the climate crisis and delivering excellent public services. You have my commitment that my government will continue to progress this important agenda.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Swinney' in a cursive style.

JOHN SWINNEY

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