

24 April 2023

Appeal on Rwanda judicial review begins

An appeal by refugees of the Rwanda judicial review decision is underway at the Court of Appeal.

In September 2022, PCS, alongside Care4Calais, Detention Action and 8 individual refugees, applied for a judicial review of the government's Rwanda policy. Our objective was to have the policy declared unlawful in order to protect our members from working in a difficult and hostile environment; and to defend refugees from cruel and inhumane treatment. The High Court declared the policy was generally lawful, but quashed the decisions made by the Home Office in relation to the 8 refugees.

While the decisions in relation to the cases of the individual refugees were welcome, it is important that the ruling that the policy is generally lawful continues to be challenged, as it is this generic position that potentially subjects all refugees to this inhumanity; and which forces our members to work in an ever more hostile and unpalatable environment.

On the bench are:

- Lord Burnett of Maldon - The Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales
- Sir Geoffrey Vos - The Master of the Rolls
- Lord Justice Underhill, Vice President of the Court of Appeal, Civil Division.

It is clear from the line-up that this litigation remains high profile and controversial.

The Court of Appeal will examine eight separate grounds of appeal over a three-day hearing. Judgement is expected to be reserved and handed down within the next few months.

PCS Head of Bargaining, Paul O'Connor, who has been heading the litigation on behalf of the union, said: "It is vital that this morally reprehensible policy continues to be challenged. Our members are sick and tired of being forced to

work in hostile conditions and we are determined to campaign for a better working environment for them.

The government's continued demonisation of refugees is a smokescreen to deflect from their catastrophic failure to address the cost-of-living crisis enveloping this country. The UK is the sixth richest economy on the planet and can readily afford to take care of its own citizens and take its fair share of refugees. That it does neither is a conscious political choice and is a moral disgrace."