



Minister and Children and Young People
Clare Haughey MSP

Juliet Harris
Together – Scottish Alliance for Children’s Rights
The Melting Pot
15 Calton Road
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Our ref: 202100245601

08 October 2021

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill

Dear Juliet

Thank you for the letter of 06 October from you and 65 of Together’s members regarding the Supreme Court judgement. As I set out in the Scottish Parliament on 06 October, we fully respect the court’s judgment and will abide by the ruling, but cannot help but be bitterly disappointed. It makes plain that we are constitutionally prohibited from enacting legislation that the Scottish Parliament unanimously decided was necessary to enshrine and fully protect the rights of our children.

We strongly agree that the children of Scotland deserve to have the commitments made to them fulfilled, and our determination to do that is undiminished. It is with urgency that we are carefully considering the implications of the judgment and how best to take this important legislation forward. This will inevitably take time. As key advocates for children’s rights who have walked with us this far on the journey, encouraging us along the way, we want to reassure you, your members, and the children of Scotland that we will reach our destination. This Government remains committed to the incorporation of the UNCRC to the maximum extent possible as soon as practicable.

Whilst the judgment means that the Bill cannot receive Royal Assent in its current form, the majority of work in relation to implementation of the UNCRC can and is continuing. As you will be aware from your participation in the Strategic Implementation Board, this Government is committed to a three-year UNCRC implementation programme in collaboration with public authorities and children and young people. Our officials will continue delivering at pace the majority of work in relation to implementation of the UNCRC.

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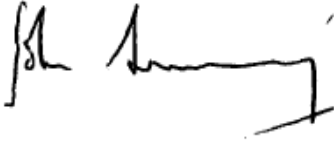
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Finally, we would like to thank members of Together and its excellent staff for their commitment to furthering the rights of children in Scotland. Your leadership has been pivotal to garnering support for incorporation. We look forward to working with you and your members on the next steps on the journey to incorporating the UNCRC into Scots law.

Yours sincerely,



JOHN SWINNEY



CLARE HAUGHEY

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