Dear [Insert the name of your MP]

I am writing to you today as one of your constituents to express my deep concerns about the Government’s recent announcement to create a New Plan for Immigration.

The plans announced by the Home Office undermine the right of an individual, enshrined in the 1961 Refugee Convention, to claim asylum. To criminalise people who have been forced to flee their homes and seek refuge in another country is inhumane and unworkable. Seeking asylum is a right, not a crime.

Under these new proposals, only those people who enter the country through a ‘safe and legal’ resettlement route will be considered for indefinite leave to remain. Those people who enter the UK by another means will, under these proposals, only be granted temporary protection and will be subject to removal from the UK at any time. This is a disgraceful proposition, which undermines the right to claim asylum, and attempts to judge a person on their means of entry into the UK, rather than the merit of their asylum claim.

Very few ‘safe and legal’ routes exist currently. The Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme has ended. The Dubs Amendment, which would have enabled unaccompanied sanctuary seeking children currently in Europe to be reunited with family in the UK, was voted down by the Government. There is little evidence in the Home Office’s proposals to suggest that alternative resettlement routes are under creation. Without such routes, desperate people will be forced to make desperate decisions, increasingly falling into the hands of smugglers.

The UK Government continuously refers to its proud tradition of welcoming refugees to this country. Yet the landscape looks increasingly bleak for people who come here in search of its protection. We have witnessed the unsanitary conditions and overcrowding of former army barracks and the Government has made clear in its proposals that it plans to house more people in basic reception centres. Individuals in Government-contracted hotels have evidenced the substandard food given to them, as well as having spoken out about curfews imposed by private contractors responsible for their operation. This is surely no way that a Government that is proud of its history of welcoming people would behave?

Furthermore, proposals to place sanctuary seekers in offshore processing centres, if deemed necessary by the Government, are alarming. They speak of inhumane disregard towards vulnerable people. The proposals fail to convince of their humanity or heart. They represent a moral failure of the Government.

I urge you to use your parliamentary position to raise my concerns as a constituent with the Home Secretary and to oppose these proposals.

Yours sincerely

[Insert your name]