

**‘COMPASSION NOT CRUELTY’: COALITION OF HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS  
WAS NOT ALLOWED TO DROP BANNER ON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE**

- To mark World Refugee Day 2023, a coalition of human rights organisations organised a peaceful protest to drop a 100m banner on Westminster Bridge calling for ‘compassion not cruelty’
- Organisations from across the sector are calling on the UK Government to scrap this cruel #RefugeeBanBill and rebuild our asylum system

Today, to mark the importance of World Refugee Day, a coalition of human rights organisations planned to drop a 100m banner on Westminster Bridge during a peaceful demonstration calling for ‘compassion not cruelty: refugees welcome’ but they were stopped by the police.

As the campaigners prepared for the event, police officers approached them and told them to stop.

The organisations from across the sector - who came together to London to protest against the cruel refugee ban bill, are asking the UK Government to guarantee safe routes for refugees no matter how they arrive by rebuilding an asylum system that offers them a fair hearing.

This peaceful protest was organised by JustRight Scotland, Freedom from Torture, Amnesty International UK, Liberty, JCWI, Together with Refugees, Women for Refugee Women, Praxis, Rainbow Migration and Rene Cassin.

The Government’s refugee ban bill is currently making its way through Parliament and, if passed, will effectively extinguish the right to seek refugee protection in the UK. This Bill has been widely criticised as being unworkable and incompatible with the UK’s international human rights obligations.

**Sabrina Galella, Policy Officer at JustRight Scotland who was at the demonstration, said:**

“Today we gathered on Westminster Bridge to drop a banner that reads ‘Compassion not cruelty, refugees welcome.’ We thought it was important to show our opposition against the Refugee Ban Bill, today on World Refugee Day. However, we were prevented from doing so, as police officers approached us and told us to stop.

“The right to peacefully come together and express our views is a fundamental human right, and today’s events have shown how our ways to speak truth to power are being dangerously shredded in the UK.”

**ENDS**

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