

UK to Join HCCH Judgments Convention ‘as Soon as Practicable’

Yesterday, the UK Government published its response to a consultation on the prospect of joining the 2019 HCCH Judgments Convention. After summarising the responses received during the consultation, the Government concludes:

16. It is clear from the responses received for questions 1, 2 and 5 that respondents consider the merits of Hague 2019 to outweigh any potential downsides. This corresponds with the feedback that the Government received from stakeholders during round-table engagement sessions on this matter.

17. Having carefully considered the responses received and wider stakeholder feedback, the Government has decided that the UK will sign Hague 2019 as soon as practicable. [...]

The Government also addresses the question of possible reservations under Articles 14, 16, 18, and 19 and a possible notification under Article 29:

49. Declarations under Articles 14, 16, 18 and 19 can be made upon signature, ratification, or at any time thereafter, and may be subsequently modified or withdrawn at any time. Having carefully considered the responses to question 9, the Government is of the view that there were no sufficiently strong policy reasons raised by respondents to this Consultation to warrant the UK making declarations under the relevant articles of Hague 2019 at this time.

[...]

52. The Government will keep questions of declarations under review as it proceeds to signature and implementation, and in future as the Convention comes into force between the UK and current and future Contracting States.

53. The Government has considered the concerns in relation to the Russian Federation having signed Hague 2019 and considers that UK should sign the

Convention with the understanding that a future notification in relation to the Russian Federation under Article 29 would be available to prevent the Convention applying between the UK and Russia, should there be any development in the latter's ratification of Hague 2019.

The decision has already been welcomed by the President of the Law Society.