

Britain's first flight to transport asylum seekers to Rwanda did not depart after the European human rights court issued a last-minute injunctions to stop their travel.

In the past few days, representatives for at least 30 individuals earmarked to be on the first flight successfully argued that they should not be deported to Rwanda on health or human rights grounds.

Just a handful of migrants were set to fly from an air force base in south-west England on Tuesday (local time) but, shortly before the plane was due to leave, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) granted injunctions to prevent their deportation.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said: "I have always said this policy will not be easy to deliver and am disappointed that legal challenge and last-minute claims have meant today's flight was unable to depart."

"It is very surprising that the European Court of Human Rights has intervened despite repeated earlier success in our domestic courts."

She said the government would not be deterred and would prepare for the next flight.