

Letter to the Home Secretary

The tragic loss of life at sea near France this week has highlighted again the need to change policy in tackling illegal migration.

You have rightly condemned the actions of people smugglers. They take profit to put people at risk on dangerous boats and encourage them to break the law of the country they wish to enter. It would be good to know what more can be done to find and prosecute the people in France responsible for organising this vile trade.

The UK needs to reinforce your clear view that people should not attempt illegal entry through dangerous crossings in boats or by illegal and dangerous use of trucks and road vehicles with or without the knowledge of the drivers. To do so the courts need a new instruction from an Act of Parliament to help ensure there is no incitement to try the dangerous sea route or back of the lorry method with smugglers. No-one should be paying a people smuggler to evade the law and no-one should be funding and organising dangerous journeys for children.

The message has to go out that it is possible to become a refugee or economic migrant legally and safely. The UK should not accept any attempted illegal entry. The last thing we want to do is to send out a message that attempting illegal entry is likely to work as that would be an incentive to put more lives at risk. Too many have died at sea or in or on lorries already. Let's take action to save lives.