

Kevin Foster MP
Member of Parliament for Torbay
House of Commons
London, SW1A 0AA, United Kingdom



Dear Mr. Foster,

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Organization for World Peace in order to voice our grave concern over the Home Office's response to the worsening refugee crisis. We, at the Organization for World Peace, believe that your department's response, which is not only inadequate but also significantly exacerbates the crisis, is causing considerable hardship on both sides of the Channel - and beyond. In late October, the crisis once again made the headlines when four Kurdish-Iranian refugees died whilst attempting to make the perilous Channel crossing. Rasoul Iran-Nejad, Shiva Mohammad Panahi, Anita and Armin were just four out of over 7,000 refugees who have attempted to make the crossing this year alone. Each one of them is a human being who, having suffered unimaginable hardship, has - in desperation - been forced into taking an unsafe route into the United Kingdom. If the U.K. had fulfilled its moral duty to provide safe and legal routes into the country, refugees would never have to rely on such routes, and consequently would never fall into the clutches of people-traffickers who put their lives at risk for the sake of profit.

The past year has seen a dramatic increase in the number of refugees risking their lives in order to reach the U.K. It is no coincidence that this increase has coincided with the government's decision to pause all refugee resettlement schemes that offer refugees a safe and legal route into the U.K. All the while, conditions continue to worsen in the 'Calais jungle'. With winter approaching, the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, and an increasingly hostile police presence in the camp, it can come as no surprise that many refugees see a perilous Channel crossing as the only viable option. The despondency that ensues from the closing of safe channels for seeking asylum, coupled with the deteriorating conditions in the 'Calais jungle', is therefore creating a perfect storm, which will only exacerbate the humanitarian crisis.

The Organization for World Peace therefore joins the UN's appeal in calling for the Home Office to re-implement the U.K. global resettlement scheme with immediate effect. Furthermore, the Home Office should also commit to the establishment of a permanent immigration office in Calais, thus allowing asylum applications to be easily processed. Firstly, this would provide another efficient, safe, and legal channel into the U.K. It would also offset refugees' reliance on dangerous people-traffickers. If the Home Office is truly serious about the need to crack down on the malignant practice that is people-trafficking, it must adopt measures that allow the safe and legal entry of refugees, which simultaneously will negate their reliance on these exploitative traffickers. The fact that refugees currently view these exploitative criminal gangs as their only hope for a better life, emphasises the U.K.'s failure to provide safe and legal channels of entry. A people-smuggler must not be a refugee's only beacon of hope for a better life, nor should they view a perilous Channel crossing as the only way to achieve it. Instead, refugees should be looking to the U.K. to fulfil their moral obligation and be provided with safe and legal channels to facilitate their entry.

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Yours sincerely,

Luke Entwistle
Advocate at the Organization for World Peace.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Arthur Jamo', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Arthur Jamo
Lead Advocate at the Organization for World Peace