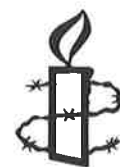


Amnesty International



Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP
Secretary of State for the Home Department
2 Marsham Street
Home Office
London SW1P 4DF

Monsieur Bernard Cazeneuve
Ministre de l'Intérieur
Ministère de l'Intérieur
Place Beauveau
75008 Paris

14 October 2016

Dear Home Secretary,

On 15 February 2016, we wrote to the two Governments concerning the situation of refugees and other migrants in the region of Calais and Dunkirk. We then enclosed a copy of Amnesty International's public statement issued on that same day. A copy of the letter and statement are enclosed.

Eight months on, the situation remains as poor and precarious for many of those living at Calais as it was previously. While there has been improved provision of access to asylum procedures and accommodation for some people, the prospective demolition of the site appears to make even their situation significantly more precarious at this time.

We have taken note of statements from the two Governments, including those made following your meeting with Monsieur Cazeneuve on Monday. We should like to remind you that the duties of the two Governments are not limited to moral ones, and are not limited to unaccompanied children.

International law requires that both Governments give primary consideration to the best interests of children in all actions affecting them. That applies to all children, not merely those who are unaccompanied; and applies to family reunion benefitting children, including both transfer of children to join family members, and of family members to join children, in the UK.

European Union law – in particular the Dublin III Regulations – requires both Governments to give effect to family reunion in relation to asylum claimants. Articles 8 to 10 of those Regulations are not restricted to children, still less unaccompanied children. Article 17(2) provides discretion and encouragement to Member States to go further in facilitating family reunion of asylum claimants.

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www.amnesty.org.uk

Amnesty International
United Kingdom Section
The Human Rights Action Centre
17-25 New Inn Yard
London EC2A 3EA

Telephone +44 (0)20 7033 1500
Facsimile +44 (0)20 7033 1503
Textphone +44 (0)20 7033 1664

We acknowledge that since February the two Governments have taken steps giving effect to these obligations for a small number of children. However, the scale of what has been achieved is modest. We are not aware that any of those entitled to family reunion under the Dublin III Regulations have been reunited save for unaccompanied children; and even the number of unaccompanied children reunited is on its face significantly lower than the number of such children it would appear are entitled to that.

In our February 2016 letter, we emphasised:

It is also clear to us that the UK and France need to not only undertake careful examination of peoples' family ties to give effect to family reunification under existing provisions, but also that the UK should at this particularly critical time expand the opportunities for refugees to be reunited with family in the UK – including British citizens, refugees and others settled in the UK.

The Governments have failed to both take and share responsibility for addressing the situation of refugees and other migrants living at Calais over a prolonged period. This is a key reason the situation has continued to deteriorate, and why many of those we encountered in February had limited trust in the statements or actions of the two Governments (or indeed of others). This in turn greatly compounds the reasons that smugglers and traffickers are able to exploit these people; and why many continue to make attempts to cross the Channel by means which are unsafe, in some cases fatal.

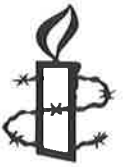
We recall before 2016 – following litigation in the UK regarding family reunion and amendments tabled by the Lord Dubs during the passage of UK legislation – the two Governments had between them singularly failed to make any real progress on providing family reunion in the UK for those people at Calais.

The prospective demolition of the site at Calais adds even greater urgency. In the circumstances, would you please:

- inform us what steps have been taken to ensure that each of the people living at the Calais site is individually assessed prior to any voluntary or involuntary eviction or relocation;
- provide details of the specific needs and entitlements that will be assessed, how they will be assessed and how they will then be met, including what steps will be taken to identify and/or give effect to rights to family reunion in the UK;
- in doing so, pay particular regard to the recommendations we made in our February 2016 letter; and
- provide further information as to what measures are in place to ensure that nobody is voluntarily or involuntarily evicted or relocated in circumstances that fail to respect their dignity, exacerbate existing risk or harm to their welfare, or additionally undermine or inhibit their access to asylum procedures and/or family reunion.

We invite you to give urgent attention to this letter, and look forward to your response.

Amnesty International



Yours sincerely,

Kate Allen
Director, Amnesty International UK

Sylvie Brigot-Vilain
Director General, Amnesty International France

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Textphone +44 (0)20 7033 1664

