



Ministère de l'Intérieur - Ministère de l'Intérieur du Royaume-Uni

Calais, August 20 2015

MANAGING MIGRATORY FLOWS IN CALAIS: JOINT MINISTERIAL DECLARATION ON UK/FRENCH CO-OPERATION

1. Europe is experiencing unprecedented pressure from migration, with more than 340,000 arrivals in the first six months of this year. That includes a mixture of people migrating for economic reasons and genuine victims of persecution. It reflects unrest, demographic, political and economic imbalances across the world, and also the power of criminal networks involved in people smuggling.
2. This situation cannot be seen as an issue just for our two states. It is a priority at both a European and international level. Many of those in Calais and attempting to cross the Channel have made their way there through Italy, Greece or other countries. That is why we are pushing the wider international community, other Member States – and the whole of the EU – to treat mass migration as a structural, global challenge. The countries of Europe will always provide protection for those genuinely fleeing conflict or persecution. However, we must break the link between crossing the Mediterranean and achieving settlement in Europe for economic reasons.
3. At key frontiers this phenomenon presents a serious concern. The UK-France border in Calais and the wider regions of the Nord Pas-de-Calais and Kent, in particular, are greatly affected. Whilst Calais represents only a small proportion of the total flow into Europe, the presence of thousands of people seeking to reach the United Kingdom – often at risk to their own lives – has provoked vigorous and coordinated action by our two states.
4. The governments of France and the United Kingdom have a long history of close and effective collaboration. That closeness and shared sense of purpose is clear in Calais, and in responding together to wider challenges presented by illegal migration. In this area, our two states' joint approach is emblematic of the quality and character of our wider relationship.
5. Ever since President François Mitterrand and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher signed the treaty for the Channel Tunnel, in Canterbury Cathedral on 12 February 1986, France and the United Kingdom have worked intimately together on arrangements for border control and protection. That collaboration was given new voice when each state established 'juxtaposed' border controls on one another's soil. In 2015, the effect of global migratory pressure has created the need for significant additional intervention, in relation both to security and to humanitarian provision, to secure continuing efficient and effective operation for both states.
6. Recent months have seen a resurgence of people coming to Calais to seek entry to Britain. Repeated attempts to subvert the border control between France and Britain are an acute symptom of a problem that starts in Africa, the Middle East and Asia, and is exploited by smugglers who take migrants' money and risk their lives, in particular in the Mediterranean.

7. It is a deep-seated ambition of both our countries to achieve long term, sustainable solutions to these problems. Principally, that means implementing effective overseas development policies, to support source countries in offering stable, safe, attractive futures for their citizens. It requires international action focused on long term peace and security to address the problem at its source. Many migrants leave their homes reluctantly and want to return home eventually, and so it also means investing in neighbouring countries to slow down flows. And it means understanding and stopping the evil criminal gangs who prey on migrants, at every stage of their journey, so as to destroy their business model and break the link between coming to Europe illegally and achieving long term settlement. Finally, it means European countries needing to take action to make illegal migration less attractive, particularly through combating immigration abuse and running effective returns programmes.

8. In the Nord Pas-de-Calais, our two states are determined to reinforce security. That builds on the professionalism and close collaboration of the French Police and Gendarmerie and United Kingdom Border Force, to address the criminal exploitation of migrants in Calais who are exceptionally vulnerable, and to provide international protection or humanitarian relief to those in genuine need. But our two countries cannot tolerate illegal and dangerous attempts to circumvent border controls, human trafficking, or abuse of the immigration system. Our joint approach rests on securing the border, identifying and safeguarding the vulnerable, preserving access to asylum for those who need it, and giving no quarter to those who have no right to be here or who break the law.

9. This document sets out a comprehensive programme of work, jointly between our two states and under direct Ministerial oversight, to address each part of this problem. Necessarily it gives most focus to action in the Calais region of Northern France and in Southern England, where the local manifestation of an international issue disrupts the daily lives of many citizens. It will be supported by closely collaborative work upstream, in Africa and approaching the Mediterranean, both in bilateral partnership and as part of the wider European effort.

Ensuring effective security at the Channel Tunnel and the Port of Calais

10. Strong, visible and effective security, at the Channel Tunnel railhead at Coquelles and at the Port of Calais, is a core part of our joint strategy. Besides its importance for border control, we believe that highly effective security reduces the incentive for would-be illegal migrants to travel towards Calais or to remain there. We want to eliminate any sense, particularly amongst criminal gangs exploiting migrants, of there being value in bringing people to Calais.

11. Our two governments have already invested in substantial physical and policing infrastructure in the Nord Pas-de-Calais. The government of France has deployed several hundred additional police officers and gendarmes since the start of 2014. In parallel, the UK government has paid for new, high security fencing around the Port of Calais as part of the £12m / €15m Joint Fund, established by Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve and Home Secretary Theresa May in their joint statement published in September 2014.

12. Since the end of June this year, as a result of increased security at the port, migrants have switched their focus, seeking to gain access via the Coquelles and Cheriton railheads of the Channel Tunnel (including at significant risk to their own lives). This situation cannot continue. The two governments have recognised and decided the following steps:

(i) France continues to allocate significant resources, including by reinforcing the numbers of French police and gendarmes in the Calais region, and through the deployment of additional mobile units. Thereby, France has dedicated exceptional law enforcement capacity to the Calais region;

(ii) To invest additional United Kingdom resources in (a) making the perimeter of the railhead secure, through a combination of high quality fencing, CCTV and infrared detection technology and flood lighting, (b) strengthening security within the tunnel itself, and (c) supporting Eurotunnel Ltd. to increase substantially the number of security guards protecting the site. This work will be delivered as a matter of urgency, with the first additional fencing already in place, and will also bring wider security benefits;

(iii) To invest United Kingdom resources in creating a new, integrated control room covering the railhead in Coquelles, bringing together CCTV, detection equipment and intelligence feeds to give local

police tactical commanders a comprehensive and integrated picture upon which to base operational deployments, alongside continuing significant additional French police deployment;

(iv) The design of these improvements will be reinforced by the rapid implementation of the 10 August 2015 security audit recommendations, involving highly specialised expertise from French RAID police units, Kent Police Special Branch and other agencies;

(v) To deploy additional 24/7 freight search teams to drive down the number of clandestine stowaways and the direct risk to life associated with attempts; and

(vi) To ensure the new measures are maintained and remain effective, the two governments have put in place a programme of six monthly security inspections, in partnership with Eurotunnel.

13. At the same time, the two governments have commissioned a study of other Channel and appropriate North Sea ports that could be used by criminal gangs exploiting migrants. The two governments will commission and implement new security measures if necessary, based on that study.

Collaboration between French and UK law enforcement agencies

14. French and UK police and border authorities have collaborated closely for many years. They are committed to developing even more closely (i) their operational collaboration against organised immigration crime, and (ii) a joint programme of returns for illegal migrants.

15. In relation to organised immigration crime, the two governments have decided:

(i) That on both the French and UK sides of the Channel, each state will nominate a “gold commander” to give unified authority for work to understand, deter, disrupt and interdict criminal activity associated with bringing would-be migrants to the Nord Pas-de-Calais or into the United Kingdom;

(ii) That arrangement will be used to develop an integrated plan to deter illegal migrants and defend the approach to the Port of Calais and the railhead at Coquelles, using a range of human and specialised technical assets;

(iii) Each state’s law enforcement agencies will exchange operational intelligence, including in collaboration with other partners such as EUROPOL, allowing investigations to be opened into the organised exploitation and trafficking of migrants. Each state will nominate a national coordinator to be its single point of contact in the fight against organised immigration crime;

(iv) To intensify cooperation against organised immigration crime, the United Kingdom and France will establish a joint command and control centre in Calais. Under French police operational command, that will bring together French policing assets, together with permanent desks for teams from the United Kingdom Border Force, National Crime Agency and other agencies. Linked to the “gold command” structures, and drawing upon data feeds from the railhead and the Port, the centre will have a strong focus on developing and deploying intelligence and operations in real-time against criminal activity on both sides of the Channel. This new command and control centre will be closely supported by the existing UK joint intelligence unit in Folkestone;

(v) The two states’ interior ministers will receive monthly, detailed, joint reports from the two “gold command” leaders on the extent of immigration-related criminality seen, detected and disrupted on both sides of the Channel; and

(vi) Underpinning these closely collaborative policing efforts, prosecuting authorities in the two states will work jointly to ensure prosecutions are pursued, networks are dismantled and perpetrators are punished.

16. The two governments have also decided to step up their joint efforts on returning illegal migrants:

(i) In the Nord Pas-de-Calais, the two governments have agreed to establish immediately a joint project team to maximise the number of illegal migrants who return home. The French authorities already carry out several monthly returns flights from Calais. In addition, the two governments will pool their diplomatic and logistical expertise to achieve maximum effect, including bringing particular focus to securing documents for migrants, alongside financial contribution and support with return flights by the United Kingdom government;

(ii) In addition, in order to support the policing effort the two governments will also bring together their collective expertise in analysing and translating languages spoken in source countries. For example, the United Kingdom will contribute translators and analysts speaking Pashtun, Oromo, Tingrinya, Amharic and Tamil. France will contribute the same for Albanian, Ukrainian, Dutch, Arabic and Kurdish.

Managing migrants in Calais

17. In the face of a migratory phenomenon without precedent, and with a substantial humanitarian element, the United Kingdom and French governments are unified in their response. Both governments recognise the importance of close partnership and collaboration, reflecting the special circumstances of Calais as the closest port to the United Kingdom. The French Interior Minister and the UK Home Secretary share concerns about the difficult living conditions of migrants in Calais, which present health and sanitation challenges, alongside the risk of trafficking and other crime affecting the most vulnerable.

18. The government of France has put in place a day centre, adjacent to migrant living areas, with the support of European Union funding. That provides a daily meal, shower, sanitary care and legal advice. But immediate humanitarian relief does not offer a long term response: It must be accompanied by an accessible process for migrants to claim asylum in Europe, thereby reducing pressure in Calais.

19. The government of France has taken exceptional measures to deal with a humanitarian crisis that is unprecedented in recent history. It has implemented a specific plan to deal with asylum seekers in Calais, in addition to wider measures put in place throughout France. It has developed a fast track process for migrants to claim asylum locally that, to date, has resulted in more than 1,000 migrants leaving Calais for care and support elsewhere in France at European standards. The French government will increase access to that process, so that any migrant with a well-founded fear of persecution can secure protection from French authorities.

20. Similarly, to correct any misapprehensions about life in the UK, the government of the United Kingdom will continue its fortnightly programme of information provision to would-be migrants. Border Force officers, operating on the ground, provide migrants with a more dissuasive and realistic sense of life for illegal migrants in the United Kingdom. That reflects the United Kingdom government's work to render the UK a less attractive place for illegal migrants, including through limiting access to housing and health services in the UK, and through targeting disreputable employers who seek to employ illegal migrants.

21. Both governments retain a strong focus on protecting the most vulnerable and the fight against human trafficking; both governments are particularly concerned that women and children should be protected properly. To that end, the two governments have decided to put in place joint programmes to:

(i) Increase observation, amongst the migrant population in camps, to identify quickly those people who are especially vulnerable or who potentially are victims of trafficking;

(ii) put in place information provision to such people, and a system for removing them briskly to places of safety. That will include appropriate accommodation and support, including to break access to vulnerable people by those who seek to exploit them; and

(iii) offer advice and support to vulnerable people, in protected accommodation, to help with any claim for asylum in France or to enable them to secure access to existing support arrangements for victims of human trafficking.

22. The two governments want to make it easier for migrants to return voluntarily to their home countries. Working together, the governments of France and the United Kingdom will put in place:

- (i) Information campaigns to encourage migrants to take up voluntary returns packages;
- (ii) clear and well advertised programmes to support voluntary returns;
- (iii) joint arrangements with collaborating source countries – linked to wider international development programmes – to support reintegration of returning migrants into their countries of origin. For example, that may include linking skills-building with particular employment opportunities or other economic development work; and
- (iv) work with their own states' Non-Governmental Organisations and the European Commission to maximise the opportunities in this area.

23. For those migrants who want to seek international protection, the two governments agree that capacity to manage claims, lodged in Calais with the French government, should be reinforced. The objective should be that claims are processed speedily and that pressure in Calais is reduced by enabling those whose claims are being processed to move away. To that end, the government of the United Kingdom will provide some support to the government of France for dedicated facilities, a significant distance from Calais, to supplement provision for those whose claim is being considered by France and draw pressure away from close to the frontier (including for transfer to other EU member states under the EU's Dublin III Regulation, where the French government will provide bespoke advice and support).

24. The French and UK governments wish to improve operational effectiveness in relation to the Dublin III Regulation, particularly between the two states, which determines which EU Member State is responsible for managing individual asylum applications. The two states will establish a permanent contact group, focused jointly on ensuring that the provisions of the Dublin III Regulation are used efficiently and effectively. The two governments will take stock of these arrangements at the end of the year.

25. Taken together, the provisions in paragraphs 17-24 will include a supporting financial contribution from the UK government of €5m per year for two years.

European and international action

26. The two governments share an absolute focus on tackling the problems of illegal migration upstream and at source. That was reflected in the conclusions of the recent conference between a range of ministries in the two governments, held in London on 28 July 2015 and followed by a joint statement by the French Interior Minister and the UK Home Secretary. Taking this work forward, the two governments have decided:

- (i) To exploit and mobilise all available European instruments to address the migration challenge;
- (ii) to work together in driving implementation of the actions, from the European Council meeting on 25-26 June 2015, for the EU High Representative to pursue effective dialogue and negotiations with the principal countries of source and transit. Building on Franco-German initiatives in this area, France and the United Kingdom will work towards propositions, in collaboration with other key Member States, to help inform the work of the High Representative;
- (iii) to work closely together, with other European Union Member States, the European Institutions and with African partners to design and then support proposals for strongly co-operative approaches to tackling the root causes of mass illegal migration. That will be discussed at the joint conference between the European Union and African partners in Valletta on 11 November 2015;
- (iv) they will also hold a follow-up conference in Paris, possibly with other Member States by the end of the year, building on the work the two governments agreed in London in July 2015, including discussion of the Eastern migration routes;
- (v) to accelerate the implementation of a multi-purpose centre for migrants in Niger -by the International Organisation for Migrants-in strong consultation with the government of Niger and supported

by EU funding. This centre will aim to provide information on the dangers of illegal migration, offer alternative options for migrants and assist them to return to their countries of origin. And to consider similar models in East Africa;

(vi) to work with the government of Niger, and other EU Member States, to support Niger in reinforcing management of border areas and in the fight against criminal networks;

(vii) to work together to break the business model of the people smugglers and traffickers, working in collaboration with partner countries, including a stable Libya through support to a Government of National Accord;

(viii) to continue to break the criminal networks, the two governments will support the EUROPOL JOT Mare analysis centre in creating regular strategic assessments, and in the collection of actionable intelligence (by the EU Regional Task Force in Sicily) for both European and partner agencies in Africa in the Middle East;

(ix) to pool expertise in developing targeted information campaigns delivering clear and simple communications messages that seek to shape the choices migrants are making, highlight the risks of travel, and undermine the narratives of the smuggling networks, including working with source and transit countries; and

(x) in alignment with ongoing Franco-German initiatives, to support EU countries of first entry in setting up *hotspots* – processing areas close to arrival points, which allow for the identification and registration of migrants, and where a distinction can be made between migrants in need of protection and economic migrants (who should be returned to their country of origin). That support will include offers to deploy French and UK personnel to support the work.

Ministerial oversight, governance and programme management

27. The governments of France and the United Kingdom attach considerable importance to full, effective and brisk implementation of each element in this document. At Ministerial level, the Interior Minister of France and the Home Secretary of the United Kingdom will hold their states' officials to account jointly for implementation, and will receive regular joint reports. Besides any other meetings, the two Ministers will hold a joint meeting every six months to receive formal reports of progress and any new themes.

28. Supporting Ministers, implementation work will be overseen by the existing UK/France Migration Committee, that brings together senior officials from both governments. That will be supplemented by monthly meetings between HM Ambassador to France and the Directeur du Cabinet of the French Interior Ministry. The two governments have also agreed to form a joint project team, with particular focus at the local level.

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