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### **Migrant Deaths:**

In 2023, 30,000 migrants journeyed across the English Channel to arrive in the UK. These boat crossings not only undermine our border security, but also put people at risk. We need to stop these dangerous crossings, prevent lives being lost, strengthen our border security, and fix the broken asylum system.

I do not believe that the unaffordable, unworkable, and unlawful Rwanda scheme will solve this issue. The Government has argued that this partnership, which allows the removal of asylum seekers to Rwanda if they arrived in the UK irregularly, will act as a deterrent for further crossings. In my view, for a deterrent to be effective, it must be credible.

This scheme will cost £300 million but is expected to remove less than 1% of the migrants who crossed the Channel last year.

Instead, we need to stop the boats before they reach the French coast by going after the supply chain of the smuggler gangs. I want to see this money used to fund the National Crime Agency properly so it can work more effectively with Europol. By introducing stronger powers to restrict the movement of those suspected of people smuggling and setting up a new cross-border police unit to tackle this upstream, we can crack down on criminal gangs. I also want to see steps taken to negotiate a new security agreement with Europe, including the real-time sharing of intelligence on suspects.

I am concerned that the warehouses and lorryloads of boats crossing Europe are being ignored and left unchallenged. Alongside strengthening border security and targeting these supply chains, we should be ensuring prosecutions and convictions for the smuggler gangs and their vile trade. I also want to see proper management of returns, by establishing a major new unit with 1,000 staff to ensure that we have enforcement.

We need stronger border security and a properly controlled and managed asylum system. This will enable the UK to do its bit to help those fleeing persecution and conflict and ensure that those who have no right to be here are returned.

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