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THE PRIME MINISTER

25 November 2021

*Dear Emmanuel,*

Yesterday's appalling tragedy in the Channel has shocked people across France and the United Kingdom. I know your thoughts, like mine, are with the families of those men, women and children who lost their lives at sea. I pay tribute to the work of your emergency services who have been dealing with this devastating situation. I also pay tribute to you, the French government and other authorities across France, who have been working on this challenging issue for so long.

We spoke yesterday evening and agreed to intensive talks between our ministers and officials. I am confident following our conversation that you recognise, like I do, the urgency of the situation we are both facing. I have also seen the statement by your Prime Minister today and a read out of a call between the Home Secretary and your Interior Minister, which has agreed a number of positive steps and areas for further cooperation.

In particular, I welcome the fact that the Home Secretary will be invited to Calais this Sunday to meet her counterparts from France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany. I stand ready to upgrade this meeting to a Leaders' Level Summit or to arrange further bilateral discussion with you or with colleagues.

As I set out in a letter to you this summer, I have long been profoundly concerned that any morning we could wake to the news of a serious tragedy involving widespread loss of life in the Channel, including of women and children. I noted that the British and French public would rightly ask whether we had done everything possible to prevent such a catastrophe.

Such a catastrophe has now happened. I recognise that in both our countries, frontline law enforcement teams and immigration officials are working day and night but I agree with your words that unless we increase our efforts today, other tragedies will happen. This morning, further boats have arrived with yet more lives put at risk.