

Water refugees triple as France, UK sued over drownings

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Paris, January 14 (RHC)-- After a short respite due to the coronavirus, a new report shows that the situation of asylum-seekers on the Western edge of Europe has become worse than ever. It comes on the heels of a manslaughter lawsuit against the coast guards of the United Kingdom and France following the deadliest mass drowning on record in the English Channel late last year.

Year-end data shows that 2021 saw a massive, deadly and record worsening of the situation for asylum-seekers trying to enter the United Kingdom from France. The size of the Calais refugee camp tripled to 30,000 people, even though camp demolitions occur almost daily and treatment is routinely denounced as “inhumane.”

Nearly 30,000 refugees reached the United Kingdom last year, but at the cost of 1,000 people who became shipwrecked, resulting in at least 44 deaths.

November saw almost 30 refugees drown in a single night, the deadliest such incident on record in the English Channel. Three years ago, Paris and London agreed that France would block all routes to the UK, leaving dangerous sea crossings the only option.

Late last month a French NGO filed a manslaughter lawsuit against the coast guards of both France and the UK for allegedly ignoring the drowning boat's distress calls to the rescue services of both nations.

The vast majority of refugees in the world are caused by Western military interventions often led by France and the UK, in places like Syria, Mali, Afghanistan, Libya, Iraq and elsewhere. Politicians in both the UK and France, where a presidential election campaign is effectively underway, have been repeatedly accused of scapegoating immigrants in order to win over their domestic electorates, which lean heavily to the political right.

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