

Restart the Rescue

Published: January 13, 2026, 1:13 am

This is off my usual topics, but it's my blog, and I can decide when to do that.

1,500 people [have drowned in the Mediterranean Sea](#) so far this year trying to escape Africa, and Libya in particular. That number is much higher than last year because governments have decided to withdraw most rescue services for those seeking to make this crossing.

I believe that a serious error of judgement on their part.

The vast majority of people fleeing Libya are doing so on the basis of legitimate fear. That fear has been heightened following the West's intervention in its affairs. They are refugees and it has always been the duty of governments, the world over, to accept refugees, not least because we never know who will be next.

It's my belief that any party that forms a government after May 7 must change UK policy on this issue, offer Royal Navy support to ensure the safety of refugees, and require the EU as a whole to act to ensure lives are not lost at sea.

Nothing less will do.

I believe in government and its power to do good. This is an occasion when actions must demonstrate that capacity.