



**HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR**  
**Office of the Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs,**  
**Public Transport and the Port**  
**Suite 631, Europort**  
**Gibraltar**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **GIBRALTAR-REGISTERED SHIP RESCUES 110 REFUGEES**

The Gibraltar-registered Offshore Supply Vessel, 'VOS THEIA' was involved in a dramatic rescue of over one hundred refugees from a sinking boat off the coast of Libya last week. The event was monitored throughout by the Gibraltar Maritime Administration duty surveyor, Captain David Graham, in liaison with the vessel's Master and nearby NATO forces.

The 'VOS THEIA', commanded by Captain Sergiy Flora, was underway to Tripoli, Libya, when they received a telephone call from the Italian Coastguard on the evening of the 26th July and were requested to assist a rubber boat in distress. When the vessel approached the boat, the crew noticed that the boat was damaged and sinking. All 110 persons on board were rescued and transferred to the Offshore Supply Vessel's main deck. The refugees advised the Captain that they were of Algerian nationality.

The Italian Coastguard, in cooperation with the Libyan maritime authorities, advised the 'VOS THEIA' to proceed to Tripoli. After a series of negotiations, the refugees were successfully disembarked at the port and arrangements were made to repatriate them to their country of origin.

The Minister with responsibility for Shipping, the Hon. Neil Costa, has written to Captain Flora of the 'VOS THEIA' to congratulate him on his crew's bravery in the rescue, as well as the calm and responsible way in which they all handled the situation.