



EURO-AFRICAN PARTNERSHIP FOR MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

RABAT DECLARATION

(Original in French)

We, Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Ministers responsible of Migration and Development and other representatives from partner countries: Austria, Belgium, Benin, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cap Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Guinea Equatorial, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Latvia, Liberia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Netherlands, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Congo, Romania, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Tunisia, and the United Kingdom and the European Commission ;

Gathered, following the Kingdom of Morocco's invitation, on July 10th and 11th 2006 in Rabat, in the framework of the Ministerial Euro-African Conference on Migration and Development ;

Thanked the Kingdom of Morocco, as host country, for the excellent organisation of the Conference and for its hospitality, as well as for its active participation and joint initiative with Spain and France ;

Expressed their consideration to the Republic of Senegal for its active commitment, in particular for the excellent organisation of preparatory meetings in Dakar ;

Thanked all the countries which have contributed to the draft of the Action and of the Final Declaration ;

Thanked as well the regional and international organisations present during the Conference ;

Aware that the destinies of our countries are linked and that only the development of an effective, rapid and tangible solidarity embodying both the imperatives of sustainable development and security for all will be able to offer a lasting answer to the management of migratory flows ;

Convinced that international migration has a positive effect on the host country and on the country of origin when such flows are well managed ;

Conscious that the management of migratory flows cannot be achieved through control measures only, but also require a concerted action on the root causes of migration, in particular through the implementation of development projects in Africa ;

Affirming that effective action must be taken against illegal migration, smuggling of and trafficking in human beings, in the framework of a viable and united partnership, whilst respecting the fundamental rights and dignity of migrants ;

Aware of the need to provide adequate international protection in accordance with the international obligations of the partner countries ;

Aware that it is necessary to make better use of the potential of migration as a factor for the development, modernisation and innovation of the societies of origin, transit and the host societies ;

Convinced that migratory flows are fed by powerful structural factors operating in the societies of origin, transit and the host societies, and that they have predominantly economic and social causes ;

Concerned by the phenomenon of brain-drain which holds back the development of countries of origin by depriving them of quality skills, leadership and experienced workers ;

Reaffirming that the management of these flows requires a coherent response that addresses, in a comprehensive and balanced way, the different aspects and various phases of the migratory process as a whole, in the context of an approach involving countries of origin, transit and destination ;

We Commit to creating and developing a close partnership between our respective countries so as to work together, following a comprehensive, balanced, pragmatic and operational approach, and respecting the rights and dignity of migrants and refugees, as regards the phenomenon of migratory routes that affect our peoples.

a. This partnership between the countries of origin, transit and destination aims to offer a concrete and appropriate response to the fundamental issue of controlling migratory flows and is based on the strong conviction that the management of migration between Africa and Europe must be carried out within the context of a partnership to combat poverty and promote sustainable development and co-development.

b. In order to strengthen an environment favorable to development, it is necessary to promote good governance, people-to-people exchange, trade and to promote peace and stability and the coherence of international policies.

c. The partnership instituted by this Declaration sets out to manage the migratory flows between countries of origin, transit and destination, in an optimum fashion and in a spirit of shared responsibility.

d. In addition to structural development issues, this partnership will also address the migratory phenomenon from all points of view deemed relevant by the partner countries, such as:

- making better use of the potential of legal migration and its beneficial effects on the development of countries of origin and host countries,
- enhancing the capacity of countries of origin and transit and destination to manage migratory flows in their entirety,
- developing awareness campaigns,
- facilitating the movement of workers and people,
- implementing an active policy of integration for legal migrants and combating exclusion, xenophobia and racism,
- controlling borders, and
- fighting against illegal migration, including readmission of illegal migrants, and trafficking in human beings.

e. This partnership will be pragmatic and operational, as demonstrated by the concrete translation of all these elements into an Action Plan which has been agreed by all the participants and is annexed to this Declaration.

We commit, fully aware of our responsibilities for "*Cooperation in terms of Development*" and "*Cooperation in managing migratory flows,*" having regard to the urgency of the situation, to start integrating measures consistent with the Action Plan in our policies and actions in these areas, whilst preserving its comprehensive and balanced nature.

With this in view and in regard to the follow-up, we charge our Senior Officials with making an initial assessment of the implementation of the Action and proposing a date for a second Ministerial Conference, in two years time at the latest.

We commit to encourage and deepen the political and operational dialogue between the European Union and Africa on migration and development by:

a. deepening the political dialogue on a continental scale and the holding of a Europe-Africa Ministerial Conference on "Migration and Development", on the model of the Cairo Summit held on the 3 and 4 April 2000. In this respect, we welcome the offer from Libya to host this Conference in Tripoli before the end of 2006, as a contribution towards a Joint Strategy and to the II EU-Africa Summit, to be held in Lisbon as soon as possible ;

b. bearing in mind the interrelationship between many migratory routes, encourage the relevant countries and organisations in Africa and Europe to adhere to the concepts of the Rabat Conference ;

c. intensifying bilateral dialogue on migratory questions between the different countries of origin and transit with the European Union and its Member States, including in the framework of Article 13 of the Cotonou Agreement ;

Invite regional and international organisations, as they have an important role to play in the follow up and implementation of the Action Plan, to contribute and to support the participating States in setting in place and implementing the Action Plan, especially its development dimension.

We will present, in the framework of the United Nations High Level Dialogue, the approach, conclusions and Action Plan of this Conference as a pragmatic and operational contribution to the process of addressing together the regulation of migration flows.

Adopted in Rabat, 11 July 2006.



ACTION PLAN

The Euro-African conference must result in the adoption of concrete measures, to be executed in the short and medium term, bearing in mind that this process is part of a long term approach. Only a pragmatic and ambitious action plan, commensurate to the scope reached by the migration phenomenon, can bring about the appropriate response.

It is important to undertake swift and concrete actions in order to respond to this urgent situation and to give greater visibility and credibility to the new dynamic born from the organization of this Conference. To be efficient, these measures need to be based on the principles of ownership and adherence as well as on the partnership forged between the countries and partners gathered by this conference. These measures should namely serve to guide the relations between these countries in matters concerning migration and development, while remaining respectful of their specificities. By its horizontal and operational approach, as well as its partnership dimension, the dialogue on Article 13 of the Cotonou Agreement constitutes an indispensable reference.

This initiative is the first stage of a process that includes the organization of future complementary initiatives which will focus on other migratory routes in Africa and in Europe as well as a continental approach. It is also an important stage in the preparation of the High Level dialogue in New York this September.

Partners are invited to consider the Action plan in the context of their dialogue and to explore the feasibility of implementing the measures it contains. All implementation must fully respect human dignity and the fundamental rights of migrants and of refugees.

1 – Migration and Development:

The Promotion of Development :

- a. Improving economic cooperation, the development of trade, socio-economic development and conflict prevention in order to promote economic prosperity in the countries concerned and thereby respond to the root causes of irregular migratory flows¹ ;
- b. Promoting migration as a positive factor for development by encouraging concrete measures contributing to the reduction of poverty². Integrating such measures, as well as other measures linked to migration, to development policies and programs, in partnership with partners concerned ;
- c. Promoting regional integration (ECOWAS, CEN-SAD, CEMAC, UMA) as a means for stimulating economic growth and fighting against poverty ;

¹ Conclusion of the Sevilla Council, June 2002.

² 'European Consensus on Development', December 2005.

- d. Identifying and implementing, in the framework of national and regional approaches to development, cooperation projects in particular fields which generate employment (agriculture, craft industry, tourism, fisheries...), in particular in areas with high levels of migration and especially between countries of northern, western and central Africa ;
- e. Developing and intensifying tripartite cooperation between member states of the European Union, North, West and Central African countries ;
- f. Granting technical assistance to migrants wishing to develop entrepreneurial projects in their countries of origin, namely in the framework of the EU-ACP Centre for the development of enterprises (CDE);
- g. Reducing – by working with banking and mutuality institutions as well as transfer operators – the costs of savings transfers of migrants to their countries of origin while respecting the private nature of remittances, reinforcing their potential for development and ensuring they are as productive as possible;
- h. Supporting the creation of a euro-african economic and business forum to encourage the sharing of knowledge and resources as well as to ensure the specific needs relative to the development of SMEs and the exportation of African goods ;
- i. Supporting the creation of a Euro-African professional network representing various disciplines and aiming to contribute to Africa's economic and social development ;
- j. Building european and african partnerships that bring together cities, municipalities, companies and industries ;
- k. Accompanying NGOs working for the co-development of African countries, namely in those regions with the strongest migratory pressures ;
- l. Spreading out co-development projects to cover migratory routes as a whole – based on relevant experiences carried out in countries such as Morocco, Mali and Senegal – in order to set up a dense network allowing for the combination of geographic and thematic actions.

Considering the establishment of financial instruments favorable to co-development :

- a. Supporting the creation of financial mechanisms in favor of migrants residing legally in Europe, aiming to co-finance their investment projects in their countries of origin or to give them guaranties in association, where appropriate, with local authorities ;
- b. Supporting the implementation of collective funding instruments in the countries concerned, with the participation of migrants in host countries ;
- c. Participating in intervention funds which support local development in areas strongly touched by rural exodus.

Development of knowledge and know-how and of measures aiming to guarantee that sufficient skills are available for the development of African countries:

- a. Favoring the apprenticeship of skills by broadening the access of African students to universities, institutes and top educational institutions in Africa and Europe ;
- b. Defining measures to avoid the brain drain phenomenon and to facilitate the return of students in their countries of origin at the end of their studies ;

- c. Putting in place an incentives policy for the return of African students to be allied with a seduction policy of European and African universities, namely through the creation of "Regional centers of excellence" in the south and the support of the existing centers ;
- d. Concluding exchange agreements to allow young professionals to perfect their linguistic and professional skills, as well as to gain a paid work experience in another country; and defining measures to ensure the return of these migrants in their countries of origin at the end of their stay ;
- e. Facilitating the access to new information and communication technologies ;
- f. Developing pairing and partnerships between Western and Central African countries and European countries so as to finance and develop training courses for young professionals and trainers.

Developing partnerships between technical and scientific institutions :

- a. Facilitating the access of researchers to scientific networks ;
- b. Developing "shared work systems" for scientists, researchers, doctors, technicians and other African professionals ;
- c. Facilitate the networking of researchers working within the European Union with their colleagues in Africa, in priority with those who work in areas that have a direct interest for countries of the African continent and their research institutions.

Strengthening cooperation in terms of professional training :

- a. Widening the range of university networks and the techniques they offer, in coordination with the needs of the private sector in European and African markets ;
- b. Creating or strengthening centers of entrepreneurial excellence and training and the support structures for business development, namely in the framework of the EU-ACP Center for the development of enterprises (CDE) ;
- c. Developing twinning and partnerships between schools, universities, hospitals and research centers of Northern, Western and Central Africa and Europe ;
- d. Facilitating the mobility of students between Europe in Africa, namely by the implementation of Nyerere and Nyerere/Erasmus Mundus programs.

2 – Legal migration :

Setting up cooperation programs for the management of legal migration :

- a. Reinforcing the (human, legal, institutional, statistical) administrative services responsible for migration so as to enable them, amongst others, to provide information to potential migrants on available channels for legal migration;
- b. Ensuring that migrants are offered before they leave their country of origin training that facilitates their insertion into the host country, as well as general knowledge on the values and language of the host country and the rights and duties afforded to them by law ;

- c. Promoting the reception of migrants in the destination countries in order to facilitate their integration process (language courses, orientation courses, etc...);
- d. Promoting the access for regular migrants to education and training mechanisms in destination countries to favor a better socio-professional insertion;
- e. Supporting ways of fighting discrimination;
- f. Engaging in a joint reflection on the transfer of migrants pension rights.

Adoption of measures facilitating the circulation of workers and people :

- a. Facilitating and simplifying, on a bilateral and voluntary basis and taking into account the needs of labour markets, legal migration procedures for skilled and unskilled workers, in order to improve legal channels for migration;
- b. Improving information on the needs of the European and African labour markets and the entry requirements to the labour markets of EU member states;
- c. Encouraging and supporting the development of intermediation mechanisms to allow a rational management of 'professional mobility', taking into account the concordance between supply and demand ;
- d. Discussing simplified procedures for certain categories of people (students, researchers, businessmen, merchants, craftsmen, artists, athletes ...);
- e. Supporting the implementation of an intra-community policy of free movement of people within sub-regional organisations for economic integration, while ensuring for sufficient guarantees against irregular flows and human trafficking (travel documents, border control, police and customs cooperation, cooperation for the return of persons...);
- f. Promoting means to facilitate circular and temporary migration between countries of origin and destination taking into account the needs of the labour markets;
- g. Optimizing the existing Agreements between partners relating to labour force and employment.

3 – Illegal immigration :

Cooperation in the fight against illegal immigration :

- a. Cooperating logistically and financially for the voluntary return of migrants in transit countries ;
- b. Setting up, while respecting human dignity and the fundamental rights of people, efficient readmission systems between all concerned countries, in particular through the effective implementation of the relevant provisions of Article 13 of the Cotonou Agreement and the conclusion of the readmission Agreements between, on the one hand, North, West and Central African countries and, on the other hand, the European community or one of its Member states and North, West and Central African countries;
- c. Technical and logistical support for the identification of the illegal migrants nationality;
- d. Facilitating the re-integration of irregular migrants who have returned to their home country ;

- e. Launching information campaigns sensitizing potential migrants on the risks of illegal immigration ;
- f. Making available financial resources to support transit and origin countries facing emergency situations concerning illegal migration.

Reinforcement of the national border control capacity of countries of transit and departure :

- a. Improving the training of relevant services and the equipment used in transborder operational cooperation;
- b. Cooperating in the aim of providing concerned countries with a computerized database destined to fighting efficiently against irregular migration;
- c. Cooperating in the aim of putting in place an early warning system, inspired by the European model, in order to allow the immediate transmission of precursory signals warning of a potential clandestine immigration, as well as activities orchestrated by smugglers' criminal organizations.

4 – Operational police and judicial cooperation and assistance for victims:

- a. Strengthening judicial and police cooperation relating to the fight against human trafficking and the dismantling of illegal immigration networks ;
- b. Identifying and strengthening cooperation mechanisms and, where appropriate, joint actions, including maritime, terrestrial and aerial cooperation, between countries of origin, transit and destination so as to dismantle the criminal organizations that control the trafficking that occurs across national borders ;
- c. In this field, ratifying and increasingly appealing to mechanisms provided for in the UN Convention against transnational organized crime (New York, USA, November 2000) and its protocols ;
- d. Implementing the Ouagadougou Action Plan (for the fight against human trafficking, particularly that of women and children – 28 November 2002) ;
- e. Setting up projects intended to help and to facilitate the reinsertion of victims of human trafficking ;

5 – Financing :

Setting up appropriate financing mechanisms:

- a. Evaluating and optimizing the existing funds and institutional mechanisms, without bearing prejudice to the budgetary frameworks already existing, and implementing, if necessary and possible, specific and relevant mechanisms in order to put in place the concrete measures identified during the conference ;
- b. Financing of the actions retained shall be through appeals to the following sources:
 - o European Union
 - o Partner states
 - o Other organs or international institutions.

6 - Institutional and follow up framework.

- a.** Setting up a follow-up Committee so as to ensure the relevance and proper implementation of the action plan, namely contributing to the coherence of the actions undertaken by the number of concerned consultation policies and foras (e.g., the 5+5, ECOWAS, EUROMED, etc.) ;
- b.** Setting up operational cooperation mechanisms between countries of origin, transit and destination ;
- c.** Supporting the creation of a Euro-African immigration observatory so as to allow a better understanding and regulation of migration flows, as well as to better respond to challenges pertaining to the management of irregular migration flows and the fight against the various forms of trafficking associated with the migration problematic ;
- d.** Planning for evaluation clauses in order to verify that the financial aid or the cooperation undertaken are respectful of the obligations and engagements taken by each and everyone ;
- e.** Planning for, when necessary, the setting up of specialized technical groups for the examination of certain specific aspects.