

FINAL DECLARATION

We, the participants to the Valletta Summit on Migration recall the Joint Africa-EU Declaration on Migration and Development of 2006, the Africa-EU Declaration on Migration and Mobility of 2014, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Declarations of the Ministerial Conferences of the Rabat Process and of the Khartoum Process on 27 November and 28 November 2014 respectively.

We are deeply concerned by the sharp increase in flows of refugees, asylum seekers and irregular migrants which entails suffering, abuse and exploitation, particularly for children and women, and unacceptable loss of life in the desert or at sea. Such an increase places the most affected countries under severe pressure, with serious humanitarian consequences and security challenges. **We agree that the first priority in this context is to save lives** and do everything necessary to rescue and protect the migrants whose lives are at risk.

We agree to respond decisively and together manage migration flows in all their aspects, guided by the principles of solidarity, partnership and shared responsibility. We will pursue this common cause in full respect for human rights and the sovereignty of participating states, taking into account national legislations and specificities.

We reiterate our firm commitment to respect international obligations and human rights. Respect for the dignity of refugees and migrants and protection of their human rights, regardless of their status, will remain our priority at all times. We recall our common commitment to fight all forms of discrimination, racism and xenophobia.

We recognise the **high degree of interdependence** between Africa and Europe as we face **common challenges** that have an impact on migration: promoting democracy, human rights, eradicating poverty, supporting socio-economic development, including rural development, mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change. We will pay particular attention to stability and security, which is currently threatened by terrorism, the arms trade and armed conflicts. We commit ourselves to address these challenges in a concerted manner, notably through early warning, conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

We fully recognise the benefits of well-managed migration and mobility between and within our continents. We underline that a comprehensive approach is necessary for boosting sustainable economic, social and environmental development and to ensure that human beings can fulfil their potential to live in dignity and equality. We have a common responsibility to address the opportunities and challenges of migration and mobility which must be shared in a fair manner between countries of origin, transit and destination. We commit to take into further consideration migration and mobility in our development strategies, programming and implementation.

Migration within Africa and Europe, from Africa to Europe and from Europe to Africa is a multi-faceted phenomenon. We commit to **address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement** resulting from state fragility and insecurity, as well as from demographic, economic and environmental trends. Our common response will focus on reducing poverty, promoting peace, good governance, rule of law and respect for human rights, supporting inclusive economic growth through investment opportunities and the creation of decent jobs, improving the delivery of basic services such as education, health and security. Rekindling hope, notably for the **African youth**, must be our paramount objective.

We acknowledge that further efforts should be made to **advance legal migration and mobility possibilities**, including at bilateral level, by fostering well-managed mobility between and within the continents as well as encouraging policies that promote regular channels for migration, including labour migration and the mobility of entrepreneurs, students and researchers, including at regional level.

We are determined **to strengthen the fight against irregular migration** in line with existing agreements and obligations under international law, as well as mutually agreed arrangements on return and readmission. We agree to give preference to voluntary return and reaffirm that all returns must be carried out in full respect of human rights and human dignity. We will improve cooperation on return and sustainable reintegration which can only enhance migration and mobility policy and make it more effective and comprehensive.

We undertake to scale up our joint efforts in **preventing and fighting migrant smuggling, eradicating trafficking in human beings** and combatting those who exploit vulnerable people, both in Europe and in Africa**.** Trafficking in human beings, including for the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced labour is a serious crime and an unacceptable infringement of fundamental human rights. We will strengthen the fight against organised criminal networks, including their links to terrorism, through effective border management, enhanced cooperation and the implementation of the relevant legal and institutional frameworks.

We agree to **strengthen international protection and step up assistance**, including its humanitarian dimension. Protection must be granted to all those entitled to it in accordance with international and regional instruments. Access to regular mechanisms for protection, such as resettlement, should be reinforced.

We acknowledge the maturity of our dialogue on migratory issues and express our **strong political commitment to pursue our joint actions through existing bilateral and regional mechanisms**, namely the Rabat and Khartoum processes and the Migration and Mobility Dialogue, while promoting their operational aspects.

We commit to **undertake concrete actions** to respond to challenges of migration and mobility at the appropriate level and with a gender perspective. In this context, we agree to launch a number of priority initiatives before the end of 2016, as a first response to some of the challenges we are currently facing. Our joint actions shall be seen as a whole and hence implemented in parallel, allowing for the necessary degree of differentiation through region and country specific approaches.

We commit to **allocate appropriate resources** to the implementation of such concrete actions using all existing instruments, along with the newly set up EU Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa.

To this end, we agree today to implement through the existing dialogues **the joint Action Plan annexed to this declaration**. A meeting at Senior Officials level will take place no later than January 2017 to take stock of the overall progress in the implementation of this Action Plan.