2015
VALLETTA
SUMMIT ON MIGRATION

ACTION PLAN

Introduction

The following Action Plan is built around five priority domains. Its actions are part of one package and will be implemented in full coherence with countries' sovereignty, national legislations and taking into account national specificities. **Sixteen priority initiatives** will be launched before the end of 2016.

The existing mechanisms of the Rabat Process, the Khartoum Process and of the Joint EU-Africa Strategy will be used to monitor implementation. In doing so, lessons learned from many actions which have been launched successfully with partners like Cabo Verde, Morocco and Niger will be duly taken into account. The next Khartoum and Rabat process Senior Officials Meetings to be organised by end 2015 will agree on the best way for each of the processes to follow up and monitor the progress made in the implementation of this Action Plan. The state of play of the implementation of the Action Plan will also be regularly on the agenda of the meetings organised in the framework of the Africa-EU Strategy as well as our bilateral political dialogues and a dedicated Senior Officials Meeting to be held no later than January 2017.

To support the implementation of the Action Plan, the EU, its Member States and associated countries will use their relevant financial instruments available for cooperation with African partners in line with their legal and financing frameworks. Substantial EU funds are available to implement actions in the areas prioritised by this Action Plan. The EU, its Member States and associated countries will step up efforts to mainstream migration into their development cooperation. In parallel, the newly established **EU Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa** will provide additional funding and will contribute to a flexible, speedy and efficient delivery of support to foster stability and to contribute to better migration management. More specifically, the Trust Fund will help address the root causes of destabilisation, forced displacement and irregular migration, by promoting economic and equal opportunities, strengthening resilience of vulnerable people, security and development. Moreover, the European Investment Bank, in cooperation with African partners, the Commission and other financial institutions, can provide financing to support the re-establishment of the conditions for self-sustaining economic growth and the development of human capital.

1. Development benefits of migration and addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement

1.1. Investing in development and poverty eradication

- **Mainstream migration in development cooperation**

  – *Support African countries, regional and pan-African institutions, in particular the African Union, in developing or further strengthening national and regional migration strategies while taking note of individual countries specificities*

  – *Develop options for migration mainstreaming processes that are based on principles of ownership, involvement and participation of key actors*

  – *Integrate migration in development and poverty eradication strategies and programmes, in particular in the areas such as labour market/employment, private sector development, education, health, social protection and security, while ensuring full policy coherence*

  – *Encourage triangular cooperation between Sub-Saharan countries, Southern Mediterranean countries and European ones on migration-related topics to foster development in regions of origin and transit*

  – *Conduct a joint EU-Africa analysis of the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement to improve the evidence-base of public policies*

  – *Pursue strategic reflection to further promote regional economic integration between European, Southern Mediterranean and Sub-Saharan countries*

- **Boost socio-economic development**, particularly by creating job opportunities, especially for young women and men

  – *Enhance employment opportunities and revenue-generating activities in regions of origin and transit of migrants, including through public and private investment in favour of agriculture and rural economy development (e.g. the "terres fermes" policy devoted to value chain development, support to agri-business and family farming)*

- *Step up assistance to youth to acquire labour market-relevant skills through education, vocational training, access to digital technologies, while ensuring equal opportunities for young women and men (e.g. AU/NEPAD new skills initiative)*
- *Create new economic opportunities for young women and men through initiatives focused on, among others, targeted measures to create jobs and employment opportunities and stimulate entrepreneurship), and programmes with civil society to foster youth participation in the public sphere*
- *Develop networks between European and African vocational training institutions, with a view to ensuring that vocational training matches labour market needs*
- *Step up support to micro, small and medium sized enterprises (SME) in the formal and informal sector including through access to finance and micro-loans, training and incubation with particular focus on women, youth and rural populations*
- *Support and boost the local information and communications technology sector, including ICT start-up communities, and work with them (for example through practical trainings, workshops, mentoring)*
- *Support economic cross-border activities in border cities and markets*

- Support **resilience**, in particular to the benefit of the most vulnerable, in particular women and children, and communities hosting protracted refugee populations, including through rural development, food and nutrition security, health, education and social protection
  - *Enhance the resilience agenda aiming at reducing food insecurity and under-nutrition and increase the delivery of basic services notably through the AGIR (Sahel) and Share 2.0 (Horn of Africa) initiatives*
  - *Address environmental and climate change issues in the most affected regions, including through adaptation to climate change and development of sustainable and renewable energies, notably via consensual electrification projects Provide satellite data and information (Copernicus programme) to support rural development, the improvement of food security and the management of natural resources in a sustainable way. The existing access to Copernicus data and information products by African countries will be further facilitated*

- **Enhance sustainable livelihoods and self-reliance** opportunities for displaced persons, as well as to host communities

  – *Promote economic opportunities for displaced persons, that would also benefit the host communities and reduce dependency on humanitarian assistance*

  – *Enhance the provision of basic services for displaced persons and host communities such as increased access to education, water, health services, and vocational training in cooperation with regional and local authorities*

1.2 Development benefits of migration

- Promote cheaper, safer, legally-compliant and faster transfers of **remittances** and facilitate productive domestic investments

  – *Implement country specific programmes, maximising the impact of remittances notably in rural areas*

  – *Support financial education and inclusion of migrants and their families*

  – *By 2030, reduce to less than 3 percent the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 percent. In addition, identify corridors for remittances transfers where the partners commit to substantially reduce the costs by 2020, from Europe to Africa and within Africa, in compliance with exisiting national legislation*

  – *Explore, identify and promote innovative financial instruments to channel remittances for development purposes and to increase the volume of transfers through the formal remittance channels*

- Promote **diaspora** engagement in countries of origin

  – *Develop country specific actions aiming at enhancing the development impact of migrant diasporas, both in the EU and associated countries and in Africa, to their country of origin. In this context, develop diaspora investment models aimed at leveraging migrants' savings for local business development and as a means of boosting local economic development*

  – *Further enhance the countries' outreach to and the knowledge of their diaspora*

1.3 Addressing instability and crises

- **Take action with regard to conflicts,** human rights violations and abuses that, generate internal displacement, irregular migration and refugee flows. Special focus should be given to the situation in individual countries in Africa, and notably in the regions of Sahel, Lake Chad and the Horn of Africa.

  – *Reinforce support to diplomatic initiatives, including mediation efforts, for some of the most urgent crisis situations in Africa*

  – *Consolidate and support the implementation of crisis settlement processes in terms of peace agreements and reconciliation by the international community*

- **Prevent new conflicts**

  – *Reinforce the support to the different subregional initiatives and mechanisms for conflict prevention and management, as well as to development and implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture and the African Governance Architecture*

  – *Consider cooperation regarding early warning and analysis of potential future conflicts of any nature, which might lead to displacement of the population*

  – *Launch measures to prevent and counter radicalisation and violent extremism, in particular among the youth, notably in the Sahel, Lake Chad, North Africa and Horn of Africa regions, taking into account inter alia ElAzhar's leading role in this regard, the Moroccan experience regarding the education of imams and the outcome of the International Conference an Violent Extremism and Deradicalisation held in Algeria on 22 and 23 July 2015*

  – *Support national, regional, and local administrations and civil society organisations in their efforts to foster community cohesion and address human rights violations that contribute to instability in accordance with national law*

- **Support State building, rule of law and good governance**

  – *Strengthen capacities of public administration in security and rule of law as well as improve border management*

  – *Support cross-border cooperation and specific actions with both security and development dimensions in remote border areas*

- *Promote police and judicial cooperation between origin, transit and destination countries*
- *Protect and promote respect for Human Rights for all, including migrants and refugees, in countries of origin, transit and destination. Work together to ensure the African Year of Human Rights in 2016 is a success*

- **Reinforce State capacity to ensure security and fight terrorist threats**, including through continuation of existing efforts to the benefit of local populations
  - *Develop activities of EUCAP Sahel Niger in the Agadez region, while increasing coordination with EUCAP Sahel Mali*
  - *Strengthen capacity to fight terrorism and organised crime, in a human rights compliant manner, including through training and professionalisation of the internal security forces as well as judicial authorities including through regional cooperation*
  - *Encourage exchange of information at regional level (e.g. support to G5 Sahel Security Platform) as well as with destination countries*

We commit to implement the following initiatives by end 2016 at the latest:

- ***Launch projects to enhance employment opportunities and revenue-generating activities in regions of origin and transit of migrants in East, North and West Africa to enhance the professional skills and employability of young people, including the AU/NEPAD skills initiative, access to digital technologies, support to micro, small- and medium-sized enterprises in the formal and informal sectors and increased access to finance***
- ***Launch projects linking relief, rehabilitation and development in peripheral and most vulnerable areas characterised by instability, forced displacement and irregular migration, providing a targeted response to tackle the main determinants of vulnerability (poverty, marginalisation, exclusion, destitution) and targeting populations at risk (especially youth)***
- ***Operationalise the African Institute on Remittances to serve as a focal point for all stakeholders in African remittances, a centre of excellence on African remittances as regards research, advocacy and private sector engagement; and a hub through which technical assistance and capacity building regarding remittances would be provided to African Union Member States' organisations (central banks, ministries, banks, and non-bank financial institutions)***
- ***Facilitate responsible private investment in African agriculture, agri-business and agro-industries and boost intra-African trade and exports of agricultural products through***

agricultural finance initiatives and by working with like-minded organisations, with immediate effect, with a view to contributing to rural economic transformation, taking due note of the African Union's Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods.

2. Legal migration and mobility

- Promoting **regular channels for migration** and mobility from and between European and African countries
  - *Reinforce cooperation and create networks between relevant agencies and institutions in the field of job/employment creation and development with a view to facilitating placements and job opportunities*
  - *Strengthen cooperation on pre-departure measures (e.g. foreign language and vocational training) as well as rights awareness*
  - *Step up efforts to promote legal migration and mobility within bilateral cooperation frameworks such as Mobility Partnerships and Common Agendas on Migration and Mobility.*
  - *Identify, as a pilot, one or more professions where participating States commit to make progress on facilitating recognition of skills and qualifications (including for migrants who decide to return to their country of origin – circular migration schemes)*
  - *Treat the portability of social rights of lawfully residing migrants, in conformity with international conventions, bilateral conventions, and national laws applicable in this area*
  - *Support continental, regional and sub-regional frameworks for mobility and migration, such as the Joint Labour Migration Programme adopted at the African Union Summit in January 2015 and other initiatives developed by ECOWAS and IGAD*
- Promoting **mobility of students, researchers and entrepreneurs** between Africa and Europe

- *Improve the legal framework for conditions of entry and residence in the EU applicable to third country nationals for the purpose of research, studies, pupil exchange, training, voluntary service and au pairing.*
- *Use the Erasmus+ annual call* ***and relevant national programmes of EU Member States and associated countries*** *to support mobility of students and university staff between Europe and Africa partner countries*
- *Use the Marie Sklodowska-Curie actions calls to foster both the mobility of researchers between Europe and Africa as well as to encourage joint research projects*
- *Support the implementation of harmonised qualifications in higher education through the Africa-EU Harmonisation Tuning, Quality and Accreditation initiatives*
- *Work towards mutual recognition of academic qualifications and professional certificates through the conclusion of bilateral agreements or by other means*
- *Promote migration schemes in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) including training programmes for African entrepreneurs in European countries, including through circular migration*
- *Strengthen partnership and 'brain circulation', building on the model of the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership grants and the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area initiative.*

- Support the elaboration and implementation of **comprehensive national and regional strategies on migration and mobility**
  - *Encourage the development and implementation of national and regional strategies or policies for integrating migrants into host societies and for counter-acting xenophobia and discrimination. In this context, promote fair recruitment practices and strengthen the capacities of local authorities and civil society to advocate for and protect rights of migrants*
  - *Enhance civil status registration (communication, practical frameworks, modernisation, exchange of information, network, training sessions) and support the creation of coherent and robust Civil Registry systems, as well as the issuance of secure identity cards and passports, in line with relevant regional initiatives*

- Engage, in a spirit of partnership, in the creation of positive synergies between negotiations on **visa facilitation** and discussions in other areas such as readmission, as an element of the comprehensive logic of the Action Plan

  – *Conclude on-going negotiations of agreements on visa facilitation and readmission and, where appropriate, open new such negotiations*

  – *Within existing legal frameworks, facilitate the process of issuing visas as well as procedures related to legal migration:*

    - *Simplify entry proceedings (including by maximising the possibility of issuing multiple-entry short-term visas, and the abolition of administrative fees for certain categories of persons)*

    - *Facilitate the short stay visa issuing processes for certain types of visitors, such as students, researchers, business people and artists and holders of diplomatic passports*

    - *Facilitate the procedures related to applications for legal migration, including family reunification*

We commit to implement the following initiatives by end 2016 at the latest:

- ***Double the number of scholarships for students and academic staff through the EU supported Erasmus+ programme in 2016 compared to 2014.***

- ***While respecting the national selection and admission procedures, launch pilot projects that pool offers for legal migration (e.g. for work, study, research, and vocational training) by some EU Member States or associated countries to selected African countries as an element of the comprehensive logic of the Action Plan.***

- ***Organise, in the framework of the Rabat and Khartoum processes and the Migration and Mobility Dialogue, workshops on visa facilitation***

3. Protection and asylum

3.1 Protection

- Reinforce the **protection of refugees and other displaced persons**, uphold the human rights of all migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers, support the integration of long term refugees and displaced persons in host communities and strengthen **capacities of countries of first asylum, transit and destination**

  – *Further work to prevent the loss of life at sea by continued search and rescue efforts by all sides, including, where appropriate through joint action at sea and on land when agreed with the countries concernedEnhance the protection capacities of countries which are hosting large numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons, including security in refugee camps, support local development for host communities and forcibly displaced persons, and enable better management of forced displacement*

  – *Support countries in their efforts to adhere to and comply with the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol*

  – *Facilitate access to justice, legal assistance, witness-protection, health and socio-psychological support for refugees, migrants and asylum-seekers victims of serious crimes*

  – *Further engage with actors from civil society organisations on how to ensure a more accessible, equitable and effective international protection*

- Jointly explore the concept of enhanced capacities in priority regions along the main migratory routes, with a view to developing possible pilot projects, in cooperation with UNHCR

- Support EU, African and global resettlement efforts for refugees and increase the legal avenues available to persons in need of protection, both bilaterally and through multilateral structures (in particular UNHCR and IOM)

  – *Implement the EU Member States' commitment of 20 July 2015 to resettle 22,000 persons in clear need of international protection to the EU*

3.2 Humanitarian response

- Enhance efforts of countries to provide **humanitarian assistance** in countries most affected by forced displacement

  – *Ensure provision of life-saving emergency assistance, in affected countries, that focuses on basic services (education, health and nutrition), food assistance, shelter, water and sanitation and protection. Assistance targets the most vulnerable, regardless of their status*

  – *Strengthen the link between humanitarian assistance and longer term development measures to improve livelihoods, self-reliance opportunities and to facilitate durable solutions*

We commit to implement the following initiatives by end 2016 at the latest:

- ***Regional Development and Protection Programmes in the Horn of Africa and North Africa should be up and running by mid-2016. Their aim is to address the protection and developmental needs of people suffering long-term displacement and their host communities. The programmes will focus on durable solutions, enhancing protection capacities of hosting countries, and creating development and livelihood opportunities for displaced populations and host communities, including in areas such as income-generation, jobs, and education***
- ***Carry out trainings and improve the quality of the asylum process, in close cooperation with UNHCR and with the support of EASO, in countries of origin, transit and destination***
- ***Develop targeted projects to improve resilience, safety and self-reliance of refugees in camps and host communities in countries most affected by forced displacement in close coordination with host countries, international organisations***

4. Prevention of and fight against irregular migration, migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings

- Support in drafting and implementing appropriate **legislative and institutional frameworks**, in line with the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime, UN Protocols on Smuggling of Migrant by Land, Sea and Air and on Trafficking in Persons,

especially Women and Children, and the 2014 Protocol to the ILO Forced Labour Convention

– *Support to the rule of law and law enforcement, judiciary and border management authorities in order to tackle smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings, including on tracing and seizing assets and criminal proceeds, as well as on crime investigation and prosecution. Support could include capacity building and provision of relevant equipment. Human rights dimension will be fully reflected in capacity-building and training projects*

Train law enforcement and judicial authorities e.g. on proactive and reactive investigation methods and judicial treatment of victims/witnesses and assisting in setting up specialised anti-trafficking and smuggling police units

– *Step up capacity building to counter the production and use of forged and fraudulent documents, including by engaging Frontex and Europol*

– *Ensure effective implementation by relevant national authorities of existing legislation and measures against employers who exploit irregular migrants*

– *Step up efforts for effective investigation and prosecution of migrant smugglers and traffickers in human beings and more effective protection of victims that complies with fundamental rights and takes the gender of victims into account*

- Contribute to prevent and address irregular migration and to fight related organised crime, such as migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings, including through agreed actions and missions

- Provide protection, support and/or assistance to stranded/vulnerable migrants, refugees and victims of trafficking. Special attention should be given to vulnerable groups, notably women and children

  – *Support establishing standard operating procedures for the referral of victims of trafficking at national and cross-border levels, and the provision of systematic and predictable consular assistance to stranded migrants, including in regard to the issuance of travel documentation and the facilitation of transit and re-entry into the country of origin*

– *Support relevant authorities and civil society organisations to provide protection and rehabilitation services, including in the framework of post-return reintegration, notably medical and socio-psychological counselling, training, requalification and assistance*

Support regional initiatives on children at risk, in order to ensure comprehensive and sustainable child protection to prevent and to respond to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children

- Improve intelligence gathering

  – *Encourage all States to gather intelligence on smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings, with the support of Interpol and other appropriate agencies*

  – *Support Interpol intelligence gathering exercises in relation to migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings*

- Improve information and intelligence sharing

  – *Enhance cooperation in particular with Interpol National Central Bureaux (NCBs) and regional bureaux in African countries in order to foster policing improved intelligence sharing, between African states.*

  – *Support information exchange between Interpol and Europol.*

- Foster operational police and judicial cooperation

  – *Enhance operational police cooperation and exchange of information between countries of origin, transit and destination of migration, including, where appropriate, through Joint Investigation Teams with the agreement of countries concerned. This cooperation should involve, where appropriate, Interpol and EU agencies, in particular Europol*

  – *Facilitate timely exchanges between States regarding mutual legal assistance in cases of smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons*

- Develop further and maintain, where appropriate, **communication networks between EU and African countries** to support maritime surveillance and to save lives at sea in compliance with fundamental rights and data protection standards

- Fight corruption and develop **alternative income generation opportunities** in countries where migrant smuggling and services for migrants are important economic factors

- Provide easy and continuous access to adequate and **credible information on legal migration opportunities and dangers** of engaging in irregular migration, as well as giving a realistic view of living conditions in European countries

  – *Support mechanisms in countries along the main migratory routes upon request starting with a 'multi-purpose centre' in Agadez (Niger), which aims at ensuring provision of direct assistance and information to migrants, registration of migrants, as well as providing opportunities for safe and voluntary return and reintegration in cooperation with countries of origin. These mechanisms should also include support to local communities and should be complementary to initiatives aiming at reinforcement of local and national capacities to manage migration*

- Provide capacity building and financing for investments in improved **border management systems at regional and national level**

  – *Support national capabilities to control land, sea and air borders as well as maritime surveillance capabilities for the purpose of prevention of irregular migration, cross-border crime, terrorism as well as enhanced search and rescue*

  – *Promote development and implementation of national and regional strategies and action plans on integrated border management*

  – *Strengthen the capacities in border management on respect for human rights of migrants*

  – *Promote or further enhance platforms that provide for the exchange of strategic knowledge and joint analysis engaging authorities from non-EU Partner Countries, EU Member States and associated countries (e.g. Liaison Officers) and EU Agencies (e.g. Frontex African Intelligence Community - AFIC)*

  – *By the end of 2016, develop training mechanisms for border guards and police, including regional training centres and common curricula*

We commit to implement the following initiatives by end 2016 at the latest:

- ***Establish or upgrade national and regional anti-smuggling and anti-trafficking legislation, policies and action plans in countries and regions of origin and transit of migration. Identify single national contact points for anti-smuggling and trafficking activities to enhance cooperation, including with counterparts in EU Member States and associated countries and in Europol***

- ***Implement projects focused on strengthening institutional capacities to fight against the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings networks, both in origin and transit countries located along the West Sahel routes, and raise awareness on this problem among the populations concerned***

- ***Set up a joint investigation team in Niger against migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings networks, as a pilot project to be potentially replicated in other countries or regions at their request***

- ***Organise information campaigns in countries of origin, transit and destination, to raise awareness of the general public and potential migrants and victims on the dangers of trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants, their recruitment processes, including through public broadcasting services programmes aimed at informing the general public and potential migrants about the migratory situation in Europe***

5. Return, readmission and reintegration

Strengthen **cooperation in order to facilitate the return and sustainable reintegration of irregular migrants**, both from EU Member States and associated countries and from African countries of transit and destination, bearing in mind the obligation of each state under international law including **Article 13 of the Cotonou Agreement** for its signatory parties to readmit its own nationals in full respect of human dignity and of the principle of non-refoulement. In accordance with the 9th paragraph of the Valletta Summit on Migration final declaration (*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 agree to :

  - *Develop practical cooperation arrangements and bilateral dialogues on implementation of returns with regard, in particular, to identification and issuance of travel documents*
  - *In the first half of 2016, organise a seminar on best practices in the field of return and readmission procedures, including on identification procedures as practiced by European countries, the issuing of identification documents, and documentation processing*

- Pay special attention to **unaccompanied minors** taking into account the principle of the best interest of the child. Child protection systems in countries of origin and transit should be supported so as to offer a safe environment for vulnerable children including unaccompanied minors upon their return

- Explore return **pilot projects between the EU, associated countries, and African countries**
  - *Provide comprehensive and developmental packages for safe return and reintegration, whereby a partner country commits to cooperate closely with the EU on return and readmission, notably on identification and travel documentation, and receives support for the individual reintegration of its own nationals, visa facilitation and a tailor-made package of support, including on other policy areas.*
  - *Further promote programmes on assisted voluntary return and reintegration*
  - *Strengthen the capacity of authorities and civil society organisations in their field of competence of countries of origin and transit to manage voluntary returns and support reintegration of all returnees, including through support to the development of policy frameworks and community-based reintegration measures, in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration*

- Cooperate with countries of origin on addressing the absence of identification documents – and the absence of civil registry which is often the cause of it – as one of the main difficulties in the application of return and readmission policies
  - *Strengthen the capacity of authorities of countries of origin to respond in a timely manner to readmission applications, including through support to modernise civil registry systems and fingerprints digitalisation*

We commit to implement the following initiatives by end 2016 at the latest:

- ***Strengthen the logistical and operational capacity of authorities of countries of origin to respond in a timely manner to readmission applications, including through missions by immigration officials from African countries to European countries in order to verify and identify nationalities of irregular migrants who are not in need of international protection with a view to being returned. Such identification missions will take place in the first quarter of 2016 with at least 10 African countries on a voluntary basis***

- ***Launch projects in countries of origin to support the reintegration of returnees into their communities aiming at capacity building for authorities and civil society organisations involved in the return and reintegration processes in their field of competence, in particular by integrating the returning migrants in the local community, labour market and social system***