

EURO-AFRICAN CONFERENCE ON MIGRATION & DEVELOPMENT

CONCLUSIONS OF THE FOLLOW-UP MEETING

Madrid, 21st June 2007

Final Version

1.- Pursuant to what was agreed by the Ministers who convened last July in Rabat in the context of the Euro-African Conference on Migration and Development, the first Follow-up Meeting has been held on 21st June at Madrid.

2.- The Meeting was opened by the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation, Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, who addressed the delegations to underline the importance of the Process, and stressed the Spain's commitment to it and the hope that the Follow-up Meeting would be a useful tool for the Process to continue advancing with renewed vigour.

3.- The different multilateral and national initiatives have shown that the Rabat Process, with a regional approach at its inception, has opened a new path based on partnership, on a balanced and comprehensive treatment of the migration process, whilst bearing in mind the imperatives of development and security, co-responsibility and solidarity, directed at the concerted management of migratory flows between the country of origin, the country of transit and that of destination. The participants expressed their heartfelt conviction that international migration does have positive effects when the flows are well-managed.

4.- The participants exchanged information on the most significant developments in the field of migration policy. At the outset, they were informed of the common approach to migration currently being adopted by ECOWAS. The participants recognised the importance of ECOWAS within the Rabat Process and expressed their will to support this Organisation in its role of promoting the implementation of an Action Plan at the regional level.

Subsequently, the participants were informed by the Presidency of the EU Council and by the European Commission of the comprehensive European Policy on migration confirmed by the European Council in December 2006, including actions in all aspects of migration policy. The German Presidency also described the actions set out during its semester, particularly in the field of dialogue on migration with third countries. The future Portuguese Presidency, in turn, presented its priorities, which include, amongst others, the strengthening of political dialogue between the European Union and Africa, as well as within the EUROMED framework.

5.- Following this, the representatives of countries and international organisations participating in the meeting went on to present the actions and projects they had implemented, thus fostering a dynamic, rich debate.

These actions and projects, which are the expression of a co-operative effort, cover all the aspects of the Action Plan. In the first place, those directed at fighting all the root causes of underdevelopment, with the aim of achieving economic and social development in compliance with the Millennium Development Goals and the agreements linking the European Union with the participant countries. Others cover the setting up of co-operation programmes in the field of legal migration and the adoption of measures to facilitate the movement of workers and persons, supporting the reception of migrants in the country of destination and promoting the access of legal migrants to education and training schemes. Finally, co-operative action, always respecting the dignity and fundamental rights of migrants and refugees, in the field of combating irregular migration and criminal organisations profiting from the smuggling of and the trafficking in persons.

Encouraged by the experience acquired over the last few months in the context of the Action Plan, the participants recommended the continuance of the efforts made to date.

6.- In addition, in the light of last month's developments, the participants agreed upon the timeliness of defining mechanisms aimed at improving co-ordination, increasing the visibility of the Process and reinforcing the implementation of the Action Plan. To this effect, the following measures were agreed:

- To disseminate and promote multilateral, regional and bilateral initiatives and actions that the participants have established in the framework of the Rabat Process, and which were presented at the Follow-up Meeting at Madrid.

- To set up a network of contact points, designating in each country or organisation participating in the Conference a person to be responsible for the internal co-ordination of the Process. Each contact point shall be in permanent communication with his/her counterparts, appointed by the other participants, in order to share information and to co-ordinate the various initiatives that will be implemented in the framework of the Process.

- To plan the implementation of a support platform that, in collaboration with the contact points, will facilitate the coordination and the visibility of the Process.

- To organise technical meetings of experts to work on questions concerning the relation between migration and development, as well as legal migration and the fight against irregular immigration, in order to reinforce dialogue within the Rabat Process, and to identify, in an operational way, specific measures and projects to be implemented. Several delegations expressed their interest in organising such meetings.

7.- The participants decided that, in accordance with the provisions of the Rabat Declaration, the second Ministerial Conference will be held next year. The French delegation stated that it was prepared to host this event in France, during the French Presidency of the European Union, a proposal that was received with satisfaction and appreciation by all the delegations.

8.- The participants, recalling that a proposal had been made in this respect at the Ministerial Conference in Rabat, expressed their satisfaction concerning the EU-Africa Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development, held at Tripoli last November. They stressed the high degree of convergence between the principles and goals of the two processes, and expressed the wish to promote further coordination and cooperation between these two initiatives to enable their objectives to be achieved.

9.- The participants proposed that the concerted approach in the field of migration and development that was started in Rabat could be taken into account at the next EU-Africa summit to be held in Lisbon.