



6<sup>TH</sup> MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE  
**RABAT PROCESS**  
Euro-African Dialogue  
on Migration and Development  
CADIZ-2022

# Sixth Ministerial Conference of the Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development

**13-14 December 2022**

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**Final  
Document**



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## Introduction

After more than fifteen years of successful cooperation on migration and development under the Rabat Process, the sixth Ministerial Conference of the Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development brought together in Cadiz on 13 and 14 December 2022 Ministers and high-level representatives from the European Union and North, West and Central Africa to define the new strategic framework of the Dialogue for the period 2023-2027.

This major event brought together 25 African and 27 European countries, delegates from regional dialogue partner organisations (ECOWAS, European Union) and representatives of international organisations (UNHCR, IOM, ICRC, UNODC). Under the auspices of the Kingdom of Spain, the Conference renewed the political commitments made by the partner countries in 2006 to build a comprehensive, concerted and balanced approach to migration management.

The Conference concluded with the adoption of the Political Declaration and the Cadiz Action Plan, which will underpin the cooperation framework of the Rabat Process for the next five years (2023-2027). The Dialogue Secretariat, provided by the ICMPD, will support the implementation of these commitments according to the needs identified. The meeting also provided an opportunity for partner countries to exchange views in two roundtable discussions, one on common opportunities and challenges in the field of migration and mobility for Rabat Process countries, and the second on perspectives to address new migration drivers in the Rabat Process region. Finally, the Sixth Ministerial Conference ended with the handing over of the Chairmanship to the Kingdom of Morocco.

- **High level opening ceremony**

**Mr. Michael Spindelegger, The Director General of the ICMPD** began by recalling the importance, in this period of multiple crises, of strengthening partnership, cooperation and dialogue on migration such as the Rabat Process, which is a key instrument in this regard. Indeed, since its inception in 2006, the Rabat Process has served as a platform for dialogue, with the aim of finding common and coordinated responses to the challenges and opportunities of international migration. Mr. Spindelegger then welcomed the concrete progress that had been made in the five areas of the Marrakesh Plan of Action, including the development of tools for data collection, sharing and analysis, the synergies created with other regional dialogues and frameworks, and the operational approach adopted. He added that the Political Declaration and the Cadiz Plan of Action will pave the way for enhanced cooperation, which is necessary to ensure the success of collective actions to address a phenomenon as complex and multifaceted as international migration.

**Mr. Margaritis Schinas**, Vice-President of the European Commission, in a video statement, stressed the clear added value of the Rabat Process in terms of dialogue, action, mutual trust and partnership for the countries and organisations involved. The fact that more and more countries want to be involved in this dialogue is a tangible sign of its success. Mr Schinas welcomed the Cadiz Declaration, which provides a clear political direction for the coming years by setting out the common priorities of more than 50 European and African states. This testifies to the high level of trust and openness achieved in the sensitive area of migration and mobility as well as to the comprehensive and balanced approach followed in the framework of the Joint Valletta Action Plan and the European Pact on Migration and Asylum. He then expressed his expectation that the Ministerial Conference would be an opportunity to initiate concrete and immediate action on the ground. Mr Schinas also pledged immediate support for the implementation of the Cadiz Action Plan, including through the Team Europe Initiatives, which can have a truly transformative impact on EU-Africa migration management and cooperation. It is more important than ever to ensure safe and regular migration in order to avoid dangerous routes and dramatic situations for migrants. Finally, he welcomed the long road travelled together in the framework of the Rabat Process based on the mutual recognition of a shared responsibility for migration, while expressing his full confidence in the Kingdom of Morocco to continue along this path during its Presidency.

**Ms. Fatou Sow Sarr**, Commissioner for Human Development and Social Affairs of ECOWAS, began his speech by stating that this Ministerial Conference was an opportunity to renew the commitments of the partner countries to take better account of current challenges (conflicts, insecurity, Covid-19, etc.). In order to meet the common migration challenges (vulnerability of migrants, access to employment for young people and women, climate change, the fight against networks of traffickers and trafficking in human beings), the response strategies of the various actors should be better articulated and appropriate normative frameworks adopted. These challenges require comprehensive, balanced and coordinated responses involving local, regional and national actors, including members of diasporas. The ECOWAS representative then indicated that the implementation of the Cadiz Plan of Action requires financial resources, accompanied by monitoring mechanisms to periodically measure the scope of interventions. Finally, she welcomed the fact that the governance of the Dialogue had been strengthened through the inclusion of four new countries in the Steering Committee, respecting the principle of geographical parity.

**Mr. Younes Sekkouri**, The Minister of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills of the Kingdom of Morocco focused his speech on the importance of the notions of multilateralism, voluntarism, leadership and cooperation to solve common challenges. He then mentioned that Morocco, which is at the crossroads of Europe and Africa, wishes to be fully involved in the implementation of the objectives and actions detailed in the Cadiz Action Plan. Mr Sekkouri closed his speech by insisting that Morocco will commit itself to continuing the efforts undertaken by Spain during its upcoming presidency.

**Mr. José Manuel Albares**, The Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation of the Kingdom of Spain closed the opening ceremony by recalling, first of all, the role played by Cadiz as a crossroads of cultures, which makes it a predestined city for the Euro-African dialogue. This choice is particularly justified as migration is a central issue for Europe and the Mediterranean. He then highlighted some of the key migration-related issues that Spain had been engaged in during its presidency of the Rabat Process. The world is facing complex challenges, including a constant increase in migratory flows, to which the texts to be adopted at the Ministerial Conference provide an ambitious response. Mr. Albares stressed that the common objective was to ensure orderly, predictable and safe migration, with respect for the fundamental rights and dignity of each migrant. It was important to address the root causes of irregular migration and this could only be done through cross-cutting collaboration between the different ministries in charge of migration, integration or diasporas in countries of departure, transit and destination, both South-South and South-North. He concluded by praising the diversity and dynamism of the European continent which is also the result of the contribution of migrants. Mr Albares called for an efficient management of migration between the European and African continents in order to preserve this source of wealth for all.

## • Adoption of the Cadiz Political Declaration and Action Plan

**Ms. Dolores Rios**, Ambassador for Migration at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation of the Kingdom of Spain, welcomed the work carried out collectively with all partner countries to develop the Cadiz Political Declaration and Action Plan, which reflect the main migration trends and recent political developments since 2018. The Ambassador added that in these two texts, the partner countries recognize that only a comprehensive, integrated and multidimensional approach can ensure the success of collective actions to address the complexity of the international migration and asylum phenomenon. She then welcomed the new members of the Steering Committee, namely Niger, Nigeria, Switzerland and the Netherlands. She concluded her speech by saying that the Political Declaration and the Cadiz Action Plan were balanced texts that took into account all the issues and challenges ahead and would form the basis of a partnership for the next five years.

The Political Declaration and the Cadiz Action Plan were adopted by all the partner countries listed in the Political Declaration.

- **Round Table 1: Common opportunities and challenges arising from migration and mobility for Rabat Process countries**

In his introductory speech, Mr José Manuel Albares, Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation of the Kingdom of Spain, identified many challenges common to the Dialogue partner countries, including the demographic and developmental gap between the two continents, the global health situation, the Russian-Ukrainian crisis and the climate emergency. In the face of these challenges, he recalled the need to adopt an approach of solidarity and shared responsibility.

The interventions of the partner countries and international organisations focused on common opportunities and challenges.

**Area 1: Development benefits of migration and addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement**

Several countries mentioned the importance of addressing the **root causes of migration**: Spain, Equatorial Guinea, Central African Republic, Czech Republic, Romania, UNHCR. Among these root causes, the issue of **climate change** was mentioned by several countries: Spain, Morocco, Mali, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Croatia, Malta, Nigeria, Slovenia, IOM. The driving role of **diasporas** in the development of countries of origin and destination was also recalled by Niger and Luxembourg.

**Area 2: Regular Migration and Mobility**

Many countries focused their intervention on the need to **strengthen regular migration channels, particularly in terms of professional migration, education and vocational training**: Spain, Portugal Morocco, Mali, Niger, Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Greece, Luxembourg, Nigeria, Romania, UNHCR, IOM.

**Area 3: Protection and Asylum**

The need for **international protection and asylum** was recalled by several countries, particularly with regard to the importance of resettlement operations (Portugal, Niger and Sweden, UNHCR): Spain, Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Nigeria, Romania, ICRC.

**Area 4: Prevention and effective reduction of irregular migration, fight against migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings**

**The fight against irregular migration, smuggling and trafficking in human beings** is of primary importance for many countries: Spain, Netherlands, Mali, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Malta, UNHCR, IOM, UNODC.

**Area 5: Return, readmission and reintegration**

The issue of **return and reintegration** is a priority for the following countries: Spain, Morocco, Mali, Finland, Niger, Netherlands, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Slovenia, UNHCR.

Finally, the **demographic challenge** was identified as a common challenge by Morocco and Niger, while Sweden and Luxembourg both mentioned migration management as a **shared responsibility**.

- **Handover of the Presidency to the Kingdom of Morocco**

Mr Fernando Grande-Marlaska, Minister of the Interior of the Kingdom of Spain and Mr Younes Sekkouri, Minister of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills of the Kingdom of Morocco shook hands to officially hand over the Presidency of the Process to Morocco.

- **Round Table 2: Perspectives for addressing new drivers of migration in the Rabat Process region**

**Mr. Fernando Grande-Marlaska**, The Minister of the Interior of the Kingdom of Spain recalled in his introductory remarks the importance of addressing all 5 areas of the Cadiz Action Plan in a comprehensive and integrated manner, taking into account the importance of prevention and the strengthening of consular and institutional cooperation.

**Area 1: Development benefits of migration and addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement**

The issue of the **links between migration and development as well as the root causes** of migration which are central to the Rabat Process countries were mentioned by several countries: Spain, Morocco, Finland, Gambia, Netherlands, Central African Republic, Senegal, Sweden, Belgium, France, Gabon, UNHCR, IOM. Among the root causes, **climate change** was mentioned by many countries as a major challenge: Spain, Morocco, Finland, Gambia, Belgium, France, Nigeria. Several countries mentioned the importance given to their **diaspora** members: Cameroon, France.

**Area 2: Regular Migration and Mobility**

**Regular migration and mobility** is a central issue for many partner countries. Several of them mentioned the importance of strengthening regular migration channels: Spain, Morocco (circular migration and inter-university agreements), Portugal (bilateral employment agreements), ECOWAS, Senegal (job creation), Belgium, Benin, France (importance of foreign students), Ghana, Nigeria (vocational training), Gabon, ICMPD (vocational training), IOM. Several countries stressed the need to strengthen **mobility and access to employment for young people**: Gambia, ECOWAS, Senegal, Cameroon.

**Area 3: Protection and Asylum**

**Protection and asylum** are central issues for several partner countries: Spain, Belgium, Cameroon, France (international protection for the most vulnerable people), Gabon, Switzerland (separation of families, missing migrants, unaccompanied minors), UNHCR (resettlement).

**Area 4: Prevention and effective reduction of irregular migration, fight against smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings**

Many countries have identified the **fight against irregular migration, migrant smuggling and human trafficking** as one of their priorities: Spain, Gambia, Netherlands, Portugal, CAR, ECOWAS (important gender dimension in human trafficking), Senegal, Sweden, Benin, Congo-Brazzaville, France, Ghana, Gabon, UNHCR (protection of victims of human trafficking).

**Area 5: Return, readmission and reintegration**

**The countries that identified return and reintegration** as important issues are the following: Spain, Morocco, Gambia, Sweden, Belgium, Senegal (reintegration of Senegalese returnees), Belgium, Cameroon (sustainable reintegration), Congo-Brazzaville, France, Ghana, IOM.

Several cross-cutting elements were identified by the partner countries, such as the importance of adopting a **global and integrated approach to migration** (Spain, Morocco, the Netherlands, Senegal, Belgium, Congo-Brazzaville, IOM) or the importance of having **reliable data** on migration (Morocco, Gabon) and having a **balanced narrative and discourse** on migration (Morocco).

- **Closing remarks by the Kingdom of Morocco**

**Mr. Younes Sekkouri**, Minister of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills of the Kingdom of Morocco closed the Ministerial Conference by welcoming the renewed ambition of the Rabat Process to cooperate through the Political Declaration and the Cadiz Action Plan for the coming years. He welcomed the opening of the Steering Committee to new countries for a more inclusive and effective approach to migration. Finally, he welcomed Portugal's candidacy to succeed the Moroccan Chairmanship.