



**Rabat Process**  
Euro-African Dialogue  
on Migration and Development



JOINT VALLETTA ACTION PLAN  
2017 SENIOR OFFICIALS' MEETING



### **Joint Conclusions**

The Valletta Summit on Migration and the Joint Valletta Action Plan (JVAP) have had a positive impact on cooperation on migration and on jointly addressing migration between the EU and Africa as well as on the visibility, the scope and reach of the regional dialogues (Rabat and Khartoum Processes) which have been confirmed to be central to the monitoring and the implementation of the initiatives included in the JVAP. Migration matters have never been so much at the heart of national, regional and international priorities, or so central to the EU-Africa political framework, of which the Valletta dynamic is now part.

In this context, the partners of the Rabat Process and the Khartoum Process have developed individual analysis reports for the 2017 Senior Officials Meeting which offer a state of play of public policies and programmes undertaken per domain so far. These reports also provide an overview of the use of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) and put forward specific recommendations per domain, as well as general recommendations.

Based on the general recommendations put forward in the individual Analysis Reports developed by the Rabat Process and the Khartoum Process, joint conclusions have been developed, and are presented below. The Joint Conclusions complete the individual Analysis Reports and should be read in conjunction with them.

- 1) The Valletta partners reiterate their engagement with the Valletta principles of solidarity, partnership and shared responsibility. They commit to pursue all aspects of the dialogues on migration in order to fully implement the commitments of the JVAP. The Valletta partners recognise that important progress has been achieved during the last year. However, they acknowledge that 2016 has recorded the highest number of migrant deaths to Mediterranean crossings and that the number of irregular migrants going through the Mediterranean has not decreased since the Summit in Valletta. Therefore, partners decide to renew their joint efforts to strengthen cooperation and to implement the JVAP.
- 2) The Valletta partners also call for strengthened coherence between the different frameworks which contribute to the dynamic of the JVAP, in particular the Rabat and Khartoum Processes, whilst enabling each dialogue to preserve its own identity. They recall the importance of the EU-Africa Framework and suggest that the JVAP feed into ongoing discussions in preparation for the Africa-EU Summit of November 2017.

- 3) Managing migration and mobility-related issues should be addressed in a balanced and mutually beneficial way and with a comprehensive approach. Well-managed migration provides opportunities, the benefits of which must be utilised by societies and countries of origin, transit and destination. The challenges, particularly with regards to the prevention of irregular migration and fight against, migrant smuggling, trafficking in human beings and exploitation, must be overcome. In this respect, the partners call for equal attention to be afforded to the 5 domains of the JVAP.
- 4) Active cooperation, coordination and partnership among all stakeholders (both state, non-state and international actors) are absolutely crucial to ensure a balanced, positive approach to migration and mobility. Initiatives and coordination mechanisms need to promote ownership and to avoid duplication of efforts.
- 5) The Valletta partners underline the added-value of initiatives with a regional-scope to ensure better coherence of actions between countries of origin, transit and destination, in particular along migratory routes. However, in certain contexts which are characterised by strong regional diversity and specificities, national projects aimed at improving in-country coordination may be more relevant. In all cases, a '*one size fits all*' approach should be avoided.
- 6) The Valletta partners call for the mobilisation of the whole range of existing resources and financial instruments in order to implement the JVAP, avoiding the duplication of efforts and ensuring complementarity and efficiency of the available financial instruments. In addition, they reiterate the importance of continuing to maintain an appropriate balance of the EUTF resources between all the 5 priority domains. They also reiterate the importance of expediting the contracting process, the disbursement of funds and the implementation of projects in consultation with the concerned countries. A comprehensive approach in dealing with all of the operational windows of the EUTF needs to be taken into consideration
- 7) All stakeholders should step up efforts to mainstream all aspects of migration into their relevant policies, including in development cooperation.
- 8) The Valletta partners underline the importance of measuring the implementation of the JVAP against real progress on the ground. They recognise that most of the projects are in start-up phase and it is still too early to see important results in the field. The mapping exercise which has already been carried is essential, as it provides an initial visual overview of the implementation of the JVAP. However, it is important to initiate the use of a technical long-term reporting instrument for the JVAP. Therefore, the Valletta partners approve the establishment of a fully-fledged and efficient reporting/monitoring tool which will include systematic data collection using the model presented at the Senior Officials Meeting in Malta.

#### Final considerations:

The implementation of outstanding JVAP priority initiatives and actions will continue. The Valletta partners have agreed on the need to ensure that attention is given to certain areas within the 5 priority domains for the coming year, based on the progress already achieved in the implementation of the

JVAP as well as on both the specific and general recommendations put forward in the individual reports of the Rabat and Khartoum Processes. These areas, as well as the work programme for all partners, are based on the Valletta Declaration and on the implementation of the JVAP. In this context the Valletta partners wish to underscore the following key messages:

- 1) Vocational training, job creation and economic investment are crucial for addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement. In this sense, the partners call for renewed focus within domain 1 of support aimed at job-creation, vocational education and training as well as the creation of economic opportunities, especially for women and youth, in countries of origin and transit. These actions should also enhance the support to micro, small- and medium-sized enterprises in the formal and informal sectors and increased access to finance and should be accompanied by the development of employment and vocational-training policies and programmes.
- 2) In general, efforts should be pursued to promote legal migration and to consolidate mobility schemes. Student and researcher mobility is one of the objectives of the JVAP. Since Valletta, the number of Erasmus+ scholarships more than doubled, exceeding the Valletta priority action goal. Furthermore, several activities for the funding of the exchange of researchers have led to positive results. Further awareness-raising work could increase the number of applications from potential researchers and organisations,
- 3) There is a need to strengthen international protection and to step-up assistance, including its humanitarian dimensions, and to acknowledge that continued support is required to strengthen public institutions, policies and migration strategies. These efforts should lead to improved management of mixed migration flows, enhanced development prospects for refugees and other displaced persons and better protection of persons – including minors – in conformity with national standards and international conventions.
- 4) Efforts to manage migration flows jointly require a stronger focus on measures aimed at fighting trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling, as well as implementing integrated border management and cross-border cooperation. Ongoing programmes for institutional capacity building, including training programmes and, where needed, provision of equipment, should continue as a matter of priority and be extended as appropriate. In addition, the fight against networks of migrant smugglers and traffickers in human beings in countries and regions of origin and transit must be stepped-up.
- 5) Efforts to fight against irregular migration should be continued and further strengthened, in line with existing agreements and international obligations on return and readmission, as well as mutually agreed arrangements. Preference should be given to voluntary return and to ensure that all returns are carried out in full respect of human rights and human dignity. Effective cooperation on return and sustainable reintegration is an integral part of a migration and mobility policy and makes the latter more effective and comprehensive.

The Valletta partners call for the specific and general recommendations put forward by the Analysis Reports of the Rabat and Khartoum Processes, as well as the concerns raised and suggestions made at this Senior Officials Meeting, to be taken into account in the further work of the Valletta framework. The partners request therefore that the dynamic created by Valletta be pursued under the oversight of the Khartoum and Rabat processes, and recommend the organisation of an annual Senior Officials

Meeting (SOM). The partners may decide at a future SOM to recommend the holding of a Ministerial Meeting. The Valletta partners welcome the offer of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to host the next SOM in the first trimester of 2018.