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Rabat Process

Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development



Burkina Faso

Meeting on
Border management

5-6 November 2013

Husa Princesa Hotel, Madrid, Spain

Summary of debates and conclusions of the co-chairs

Project funded by the European Union



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SUMMARY OF DEBATES

On 5 and 6 November 2013, partner countries and organisations as well as observers of the Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development (Rabat Process) met in Madrid in order to exchange and strengthen regional synergies on the topic of border management. A priority identified by Objective 4 of the “Dakar Strategy”¹, adopted during the third Euro-African Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development, which was held in Dakar in November 2011.

This objective is of particular importance in the region of the Rabat Process, and the difficulties encountered, specifically in terms of porous borders as well as the lack of operational cooperation at both inter-agency and international level, compromise efforts in regional integration and free movement at regional level.

The **first session** was instrumental in highlighting the importance of the main theme. The co-chairs underlined the current prominent issue of border management in all of the countries of the Rabat Process. These opening remarks also emphasised the need for all-round cooperation and exchange of good practices between Europe and Africa in terms of border management. This, not only in order to avoid further human tragedy in the Mediterranean, to combat irregular migration and to fight against human trafficking and organised crime, but also to have a positive impact on the development of the countries. The co-chairs highlighted the exemplary nature of the Rabat Process, its capacity for action and its suitably advanced framework, which enables the development of concrete cooperation in border management, with dialogue and activities from the Support Project being geared towards putting discussions into action.

The issues at stake in this meeting were then presented by Mr. Ralph Genetzke, Head of Mission at the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) in Brussels. Mr. Genetzke reiterated that this meeting is based on the many recommendations and conclusions reached from past events in the region, and that this theme has always been a priority in the Rabat Process since the outset. He also highlighted that this meeting focuses on an operational level and aims to identify a list of concrete objectives in order to strengthen national and regional efforts and to reach a balanced approach to border management. With this in mind,

¹ The Dakar Strategy defines 10 priority objectives for the period of 2012 to 2014, founded on the three fundamental pillars of the dialogue, in order to facilitate the adoption of concrete measures designed to put discussions into action.





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Mr. Genetzke raised a few options for consideration, such as implementing a system for monitoring actions on this issue, developing regional operational guidelines and a detailed analytical inventory of projects on border management.

Mr. Genetzke also showed how activities from the Support Project contribute to the Rabat Process in terms of border management. The theme of border management will be prominently displayed on the Interactive Map on Migration - i-Map (www.imap-migration.org), which now also includes the Rabat Process. Graphics showing good practices are under development and will be published shortly on the i-Map. Border management will also be given special attention in national guides on the use of migration data and profiles. The monitoring activity of the Dakar Strategy Roadmap will enable an inventory to be created on migration initiatives in the region of the Rabat Process, including border management. Finally, the short-term technical assistance, which is available to partners of the Rabat Process, targets above all the current priority topics, namely border management, but also the use of migration data and migrations in crisis situations. Therefore, expressions of interest from States are expected in order to implement operational activities with the help of this tool.

Approaches from the European Union (EU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on the concept of border management were then detailed.

Mr. Rodrigo Ballester, Policy Officer for the Directorate General Home Affairs of the European Commission, presented the elements to support the vision of the European Union regarding borders, namely for security, mobility and development, but also an approach in terms of rights. He also explained how the Schengen area operates, its key contribution to regional integration and trade, its potential for ensuring both mobility and safety, and how it can be transferred. In light of this, he also highlighted the 2009 guidelines from the European Commission on integrated border management in terms of external cooperation. These are intended for administrations of third States and allow the European model to be transferred. These guidelines are based on three pillars: intraservice, inter-agency and international cooperation. Mr. Ballester then brought to light the benefits of replicating and applying these guidelines in Africa, particularly in West and Central Africa where the Sahel and Gulf of Guinea are two areas with severe problems. He also encouraged the development of regional guidelines, building capacities and working on legislative harmonisation. Finally, Mr. Ballester reiterated the unconditional support of the European Commission in the Rabat Process and its relevance for introducing concrete initiatives on border management in both the short-term and the long-term.

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Mr. Luka Anthony Elumelu, Principal Programme Officer, Head of the Free Movement and Migration Division for the ECOWAS spoke about efforts made by the ECOWAS in terms of border management and free movement of people. These efforts are based on three key principles implemented in three successive phases: the rights of entry, the rights of residence and the rights of establishment. Among the many accomplished actions, Mr. Elumelu highlighted the introduction of harmonised travel documents (namely the ECOWAS single passport, the medical certificate and the Schengen visa), lifting residence permit requirements for Community citizens, removing road checkpoints on international routes, implementing joint patrols, the exchange of information between personnel at borders, raising awareness on free movement including the human rights element, harmonising tourist guides, creating a national and regional media network on the implementation of the Protocol on free movement, and also, the creation of information centres at borders. He also indicated that these efforts took place over a long period and are continuing, particularly through the development of a regional migration policy and biometric identity cards, and benefit from the support of several partners (such as the EU, the ECOWAS/Spain Fund on migration and development, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and ICMPD within the framework of the project on free movement, funded by the 10th European Development Fund (EDF)). Finally, Mr. Elumelu indicated that there remain numerous challenges, these include: defining the ECOWAS citizen, harassment at border posts and the possibility of remedies for this, and the Protocol being inconsistently implemented between States. For the future, it is also crucial to depoliticise discussions on migration and work with the media to balance the coverage of these issues.

The special characteristics of the context of border management in the region of the Rabat Process were also brought to light.

Mr. Philippe Duporge, Police Commissioner and Head of the Regional Office for Civil Aviation Security (CRASAC) of the French Ministry of the Interior, described the challenges faced in border management on a regional level. These challenges are varied and mainly involve: the increase in migrations caused by the demographic change in Africa, the standard of living (high rate of unemployment), political pressure created or reignited by recent crises and terrorism, geographical constraints (and particularly the isolation of border posts), the lack of specialised personnel, the lack of communication between services and mistrust between States. Mr. Duporge presented the methods used for effective border management, with the fundamental trio being: control, inform and monitor. These methods include: collecting and transferring data (centralised under one office), creating simplified procedures and checking methods as well as distributing an explanatory table on movement regimes, the need for resources (official border

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posts, specialised equipment and personnel, by creating a programme at borders and by providing training for trainers), or developing strategic partnerships (technical agreements between directorates and ministries as well as between countries).

Mr. Augusto Teixeira, Head of Division for Borders in the Directorate of Foreign Nationals and Borders for the Cape Verde National Police outlined the particular constraints in terms of border management, which affect his country being an island country. Travel obstacles according to nationality were also highlighted, the latter mainly due to failing to hold a valid passport and a lack of means of subsistence. In terms of recommendations, Mr. Teixeira particularly suggested strengthening border security by training personnel, developing a channel of information between ECOWAS member countries, reducing the cost of transport or better implementation of provisions made in the ECOWAS Protocol.

During the discussion session following these presentations, the decision to enable free movement in the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) from 1 January 2014 was brought to light. To this end, the related Roadmap identifies three conditions: using the CEMAC passport, harmonising national legislations and developing roads and joint border posts. Equatorial Guinea and Gabon expressed some reservations on this process given that civil status records need first to be digitised and made available to all personnel at the borders. The necessary reform of provisions relating to free movement in the ECOWAS in view to adapting them to new circumstances (like the growing problem of weapon trafficking and corruption) was also discussed. It was also stated that the specific issue on cross-border communities was taken into consideration within this framework.

The question of providing training for trainers was identified as a possibility for concrete cooperation, which could be followed up by the Support Project under technical assistance.

The participants stated that the process of free movement at ECOWAS borders was moving forward but applying the legislation was much more difficult due to the multiple cases of corruption. This highlighted the importance of implementing effective measures against corruption and corrupters.

The **second session** focused on strengthening ways for border management using concrete examples.

Mr. Borut Eržen, Programme Manager for border management at ICMPD, presented the development process on national strategies on integrated border management, based on





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guidelines on this from the European Commission. The stages of development for a strategy on integrated border management are:

1. To identify a national coordinator
2. To identify key stakeholders
3. To set up a coordination group involving all active border agencies on the basis of terms of reference (with a decision making body and an implementing body)
4. To define the objectives of the strategy
5. To offer a detailed evaluation of the situation at borders
6. To draft individual chapters on the strategy
7. To circulate the draft strategy for comment and amendment
8. To adopt at the highest level

The known obstacles to development of such a strategy are the lack of political will and the lack of confidence and cooperation between services.

The catalytic role that international cooperation plays by developing strategies on integrated border management was reiterated during the discussion which followed this presentation. Nevertheless, the conflicts which affect certain areas of Africa put an apparent strain on the development of international cooperation. The participants stated that the main dilemmas in times of conflicts were in managing to balance a safe approach with the needs and the concerns of the populations, as well as managing to introduce procedures at borders for identifying refugees within mixed migration flows.

Numerous examples of cases of development strategies on integrated border management in the Balkans following European guidelines were also presented, given their significant value in terms of good practices and their position in a post-crisis context, whereby a strategy to slowly move forward and step by step had to be applied. The potential of integrated border management strategies to create regional harmonisation of legislations was identified. The question was raised on the possibility of developing cooperation in border management between Maghreb countries. A technical seminar could be organised within the framework of technical assistance in order to encourage discussion on this subject.

On the other hand, the need to take into account the role of customs when developing border management strategies was also highlighted.

Thereafter, the discussions focused on the crucial topic of operational cooperation with neighbouring countries, based on examples of good practices.

Mr. Brahim Lahyani, Head of Residence Permits and Visas of the General Directorate of National Security for the Ministry of Interior of the Kingdom of Morocco, first presented the

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features of former and diverse migration networks affecting Morocco and the constraints linked to the porosity of the country's borders. Mr. Lahyani commended the effective cooperation between Morocco and Spain in terms of combating trafficking and irregular migration. The issues raised by document fraud were then presented. Finally, the 6 pillars of the Moroccan strategy on border management were highlighted: the legislative and regulatory reform (law 02.03), the institutional aspects (namely with the creation in 2011 of the Mobile Intervention Brigade), operational aspects (with the implementation of a monitoring system of 13000 elements for border posts, forest grid systems, search operations, strengthening air control, land and sea patrol, and upgrading border posts), economic and social development issues (with the introduction of the Human Development Initiative and the National Plan of Action for Children), the process of raising awareness (through information campaigns and collaboration with the media) and cooperation (with for example, joint marine brigades with the Spanish Civil Guard). The results are satisfactory for the Moroccan authorities but significant challenges remain, particularly due to the fact that Morocco has become a country of destination, in addition to one of transit and origin. Mr. Lahayini concluded by highlighting the fundamental need to strengthen regional cooperation to efficiently manage borders.

Major Alicia Vicente Expósito, of the Coordination Centre for Coastal and Border Surveillance for the Spanish Civil Guard, then gave an overview of efforts made by the Civil Guard in terms of border cooperation. These efforts are based on the 4 pillars of the European model, namely liaison officers (measures adopted in third countries), cooperation with neighbouring countries (particularly through the development of joint patrols and the offer of technical assistance as in the case of the West Sahel Project), border surveillance systems (which enable the coasts and the territorial waters to be watched) and national actions on free movement and issues of return (the most important being the creation of 5 coordination centres and the exchange of information particularly through EUROSUR). These efforts have led to a significant reduction in irregular migration. It remains a challenge to involve countries of origin, transit and destination in the fight against the mafias, to find new and cheaper ways of monitoring borders and to successfully complete campaigns on raising awareness.

During the closing discussion of the second session, the participants discussed the possibilities of duplicating effective coordination practices developed between some partners, such as Morocco and Spain. It appeared that cooperation with countries of origin is crucial but still remains difficult to achieve other than in isolated cases. The voluntary return programme implemented by Morocco with sub-Saharan countries and supported by the IOM was said to be a demonstration of good practice even if this cannot be a definitive solution.

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Additional encouraging examples of good practices in terms of cooperation were mentioned, modelled on the partnership between Tunisia and Italy, as much for its logistical support as for detecting trafficking networks and even for the exchange of information. The Partnership on Mobility currently under negotiation between the EU and Tunisia will enable closer cooperation.

The issue of cost and transferability of police and customs cooperation centres to sub-Saharan Africa was raised, particularly for land borders.

On a practical level, the suggestion was made to roll out the creation of offices for document fraud and to put in place a joint training programme on this issue.

Moreover, the consortium was invited to engage in a discussion in order to suggest actions within the framework of technical assistance offered by the Rabat Process for the development of cooperation and coordination between African countries.

The **third session** was the opportunity to further explore priority issues.

Mr. Roman Fantini, Senior Analyst of the Risk Analysis Unit for Frontex presented the 8 guiding principles of the risk analysis network, thus illustrating the notion of tangible exchange of information and data collection. These principles include:

- regular and structured exchange of information
- common definitions and indicators
- a common methodology for risk analysis
- a shared and secure platform for exchange
- a reporting mechanism
- joint analysing activities
- annual reports
- annual or quarterly meetings

These 8 principles are applied within the framework of the “*Africa Frontex Intelligence Community*” (AFIC) launched in 2010. This programme offers a unique body of knowledge, analysis and intelligence, which work to strengthen capacities, from political decision making to adopting a common approach and to learning by doing. Many North African, West African and Central African countries have joined this network and take part in meetings and workshops which have taken place these last few years.

The participants emphasised that the AFIC provides a form of concrete answer to the problems on the exchange of information in the field of border management. Synergies could be developed with the Rabat Process, as the latter could be used as a platform for disseminating

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recommendations to dialogue partners. Conversely, the Rabat Process could enable initiatives to be identified and implemented within the framework of the AFIC.

It was also explained that the AFIC is a work in progress, limited by restricted institutional capacities and civil registers as well as the problem of document fraud and inadequate infrastructures. Technical support is required in this area.

Finally, it was suggested to develop interaction between AFIC and other platforms for exchanging information.

The role of border management in combating smuggling of migrants was explained by Mr. Ricardo Alonso Abad, National Inspector for Immigration and Borders for the Spanish National Police Force. Mr. Ricardo Alonso Abad stressed the need to continue cooperating with neighbouring and third countries, to prevent mixed flows at the source. In that sense, joint cooperation centres with Morocco constitute good practices. Such practices enable these migration flows to be detected and intercepted and thereby to avoid human tragedies caused by sea crossings. Therefore, new technologies developed in border management are of great importance in combating the smuggling of migrants.

Mr. Sohaïbo Diallo, Police Commissioner working for the State Security of Burkina Faso, then reviewed the efforts of his country in terms of combating cross-border crime and border management at cross-border level. The activities developed in this context focus on three objectives: strengthening the legal framework, clarifying the roles of border management bodies and developing cooperation in border management, particularly at cross-border community level. On this last point, Commissioner Diallo explained the work involved for organising regular meetings between administrations from both sides of the border, and the initiatives implemented by populations at the borders themselves; this in order to tighten security for the movement of people by supporting the police with information. He finally indicated that it remains vital to encourage the involvement of communities in border management, to give them a sense of responsibility, and to create networks and efficient cross-border institutions that share information and coordinate their actions in order to better combat organised crime.

The discussion closing this session served to highlight the central role of co-development in the Rabat Process and in efforts to combat organised crime and strengthen border management. The discussions also touched upon the added value that developing joint patrols can have in areas where cross-border communities reside. The latter could be involved in border management and could take into account the different types of migration flows in these areas

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(on this basis, the development of policies on asylum in several North African countries was welcomed), and managing their impact on the environment (for example from the creation of boreholes).

Finally, on the subject of migration the preventative approach was underlined as being essential and often more effective than a reactive approach as seen by detention centres, which should always remain the last resort.

Finally, during the **fourth and last session**, Mr. Rodrigo Ballester highlighted the initiatives identified from the previous sessions, such as adopting national strategies on border management using functional practices, developing offices for document fraud, introducing joint patrols and joint border posts, or creating a technical working group on border management as part of the Steering Committee to follow up these initiatives. These initiatives will enable the dialogue on border management to take effect, while at the same time facilitating intra-African mobility and promoting development.

The participants emphasised the importance of finding a balance between both mobility and security requirements and in not focusing all of the discussions on the safe management of borders.

The terms and relevance of a potential technical working group on border management as part of the Steering Committee (CoPil) was questioned.

The participants agreed on the need to strengthen the operational aspects of the Rabat Process by the next Euro-African Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development. In order to do this, strong and lasting commitment from States remains essential. The development of pilot projects was suggested. These could include:

- creating police cooperation centres
- introducing additional offices for document fraud
- looking at providing training for trainers (by introducing South-South expertise)
- prevention aspects (through awareness-raising campaigns and the press)
- voluntary return and reintegration

A reminder was given that the MIEUX (Migration EU Expertise) initiative is able to provide long-term assistance in supporting the development of national strategies on border management (demonstrated by what has been done in Senegal for example). The participants insisted on the need for firm political commitments on projects and piloted initiatives from participating countries, and to include these actions as part of discussions which take place through various international forums.





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The draft conclusions of the co-chairs were finally presented by Mrs. Sara Bayes Puig, Head of the Migration and Development Programme at FIIAPP (see below).

To conclude the meeting, the co-chairs agreed on these conclusions. They commended the progress made by the Rabat Process since it was launched in 2006 and the commitment of all partners. Finally, the co-chairs acknowledged that this meeting had enabled the importance of border management to be evaluated as well as helping to identify practical actions that can be initiated through the Rabat Process, so that migration can create opportunity, accelerate the process of regional integration and serve as a factor for development.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE CO-CHAIRS

The co-chairs

- 1.** Emphasise the importance of conceiving border management in a broader context of regional efforts in the field of development, integration, freedom of movement and trade, thus highlighting the regional nature of these issues while respecting national competences.
- 2.** Call partners to increase efforts to strengthen the management of their borders and promote a preventive approach to irregular movements, keeping in mind difficulties linked to the porosity of borders and challenges related to the reactivation of frozen or forgotten conflicts as well as the rise of terrorism. In this context, the protection of migrants' rights at borders must be assured and protection-sensitive entry systems must be put in place.
- 3.** Encourage the development of national and sub-regional border management strategies to clarify legal and institutional frameworks and promote cooperation at all levels. The co-chairs invite partner countries to initiate the first efforts in the elaboration of such strategies by the next Senior Officials Meeting of the Rabat Process.
- 4.** Recall the need to anchor border management on reliable data and note in this respect the relevance of the work undertaken by the Support Project for the development of tailor made national guides for the use of migration data and profiles in the development of evidence-based border management policies.

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5. Recognise the importance of issuing valid identity documents and travel documents to effectively manage borders. In this sense, the co-chairs support the extension of the network of document fraud offices and the development of reliable civil registry systems.
6. Stress the fundamental need to strengthen cooperation with neighbouring countries in the field of border management through joint patrols both at sea and land borders. In this context, the co-chairs propose to resort to technical assistance in order to organise sub-regional technical meetings to discuss cooperation mechanisms.
7. Encourage partner countries to develop strong partnerships with countries of origin through cooperation agreements, including at intra-African level.
8. Underline the importance of assisted voluntary return schemes and encourage all partner countries to cooperate in this area, especially through adequate support.
9. Welcome the regional training curriculum for ECOWAS border officials and a regional train-the-trainers programme. The co-chairs invite partners sharing a border to increase the number of joint training programmes for personnel working at borders, as well as train-the-trainers programmes, and to create joint border posts.
10. Confirm the importance of developing collection and exchange of information systems to promote effective border management, acknowledge efforts made by the Africa Frontex Intelligence Community and underline the need to create synergies between regional platforms such as the Rabat Process. Furthermore, the co-chairs support the development of visualisations of good practices on border management on the i-Map and encourage partners to refer to this tool for information exchange and support its continuous development. The co-chairs also invite partners to use the communication tools provided by the Support Project, such as the private area of the Rabat Process website, to boost exchanges.
11. Call partners to strengthen capacities at borders to fight illegal migration, smuggling and organised crime. The co-chairs suggest the use of operational solutions, such as the creation of specialised services to control cross-border crimes.
12. Note the need to boost border management efforts in the context of cross-border communities while considering the potential of borders as resources and bridges. The co-chairs encourage the development of discussion frameworks and cross-border institutions and remind



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the importance of the technical assistance made available by the Support Project to carry out short-term activities in this field.

13. Propose the development of concise operational guidelines on border management at regional level in the framework of the technical assistance offered by the Rabat Process, with the aim of presenting a draft at the next Senior Officials Meeting.

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