



Rabat Process
Euro-African Dialogue on
Migration and Development

Rabat Process Senior Officials Meeting

**Outcome
document**

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**REPÚBLICA
PORTUGUESA**



**AGÊNCIA PARA A
INTEGRAÇÃO
MIGRAÇÕES E ASILO**



Under the co-chairmanship of Portugal and Nigeria

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Introduction

Senior Officials Meeting (SOM)

- Co-chaired by Portugal and Nigeria.
- This marks the third Senior Officials Meeting of the Rabat Process conducted within the framework of the Cadiz Action Plan 2023-2027. Since February 2024, Portugal has chaired the Dialogue in close cooperation with the Steering Committee members and the support of the Rabat Process Secretariat, implemented by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), and funded by the European Union, as part of the Support Programme for the Africa-EU Dialogue on Migration and Mobility.
- The meeting attracted a varied audience of 107 participants, including from 45 European and African countries, and from international and regional organisations.

Objectives of the meeting

- Presentation on the latest migration-related developments within the Rabat Process region;
- Review of the implementation of the Cadiz Action Plan under the Portuguese Chairmanship;
- Handover of the Dialogue Chairmanship to Nigeria, African member of the Steering Committee;
- Exchange on the 2025 Programme of the Nigerian Chairmanship.

This document offers a summary of the **presentations and contributions** made across the four sessions of the Senior Officials Meeting.

1) High-level opening ceremony

The **high-level opening ceremony**, chaired by Mr. Pedro Gaspar, President of the Board of the Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum (AIMA), was attended by Sedef Dearing, Deputy Director General, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), Jonas Hemou, Ambassador and Permanent Representative, ECOWAS Permanent Mission in Brussels, Alexandra Sa Carvalho, Deputy Head of the International Affairs Unit, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME), European Commission, H.E. Prof. Nentawe G. Yilwatda, Honourable Minister, Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Reduction of Nigeria, and H.E. Rui Armindo Freitas, Deputy Minister for the Presidency of Portugal.

The high-level representatives emphasised the pivotal moment in global migration governance, stressing the crucial role of dialogues like the Rabat Process in fostering shared responsibility and collaborative efforts to address common challenges.

In West and Central Africa, ongoing and emerging crises continue to shape migration trends and flows. Conflict, poverty and insecurity remain important drivers, while new challenges, such as climate-related disasters, further intensify mobility trends. In this context, sustained and inclusive collaboration between Europe and Africa is crucial to foster synergies, deepen partnerships, and advancing mutual interests and objectives. With the revamped EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, partnerships with Africa have become central to European policies aimed at promoting safe, orderly and regular migration.

All senior representatives reaffirmed their commitment to international frameworks, including the Global Compact on Migration and the [Cadiz Action Plan](#), which serves as the strategic blueprint for the Dialogue. They underscored the importance of maintaining both geographic and thematic balance, tackling a wide range of issues such as fighting against trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants, promoting sustainable reintegration, developing legal migration pathways, and channelling the positive effects of migration for development, all in alignment with European and African priorities.

The high-level officials all acknowledged Portugal's dedication and leadership in the framework of the Dialogue, which contributed to advancing the implementation of the Cadiz Action Plan. Nigeria will assume the Chairmanship of the Dialogue in 2025, committing to build on the achievements of its predecessors and to promote a balanced, inclusive and humane approach to migration governance.

2) Reflecting on the latest migration-related developments in the Rabat Process region

During this session, the four international organisations with permanent observer status in the Rabat Process shared key context, recent statistics, studies and outlooks on the latest migration developments, particularly along the migratory routes connecting Central, West and North Africa to Europe¹.

Migration flows and mixed migration in West and Central Africa - Perspectives from the International Organisation for Migration (IOM)

This presentation highlighted key recent migration data based on the [World Migration Report 2024](#), as well as regional analysis conducted in the Rabat Process region.

Migration is a phenomenon that only affects a minority of the world population. Only 3.6% of the population are international migrants, and most of these are regular migrants. Nonetheless, forced displacement has been on the rise, and geopolitical, environmental and technical changes have increasingly impacted global mobility trends worldwide.

In West and Central Africa more particularly, migration is mostly intraregional, with around 9.8 million migrants residing in West and Central Africa, primarily in Côte d'Ivoire and in Nigeria. Data shows that migrants travel mainly for economic reasons and respond to labour opportunities, particularly when moving to a country in West and Central Africa. The profile of travellers according to age, marital status, education level and employment status varies greatly depending on the intended destination of the traveller.

While economic factors remain prevalent, IOM research highlights the diverse drivers of migration. Recent research conducted with migrants in Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali and Central African Republic underscore the growing influence of climate-related factors – such as droughts and floods - on the decision to migrate. These environmental challenges not only contribute to international migration, but also drive significant internal displacement in the region, with over 717,000 people affected as of June 2024. Additionally, over 8.1 million were internally displaced due to armed conflict. Overall, a series of overlapping crises continues to affect West and Central Africa, and to drive internal and international displacement.

Concerning migration to Europe, overall departures have decreased, although the West African Atlantic Route has witnessed a sharp increase in departures in 2024 (+17%). Main destinations include Spain and the Canary Islands for the West African Atlantic Route and the West Mediterranean Route, Italy for the Central Mediterranean Route, and Greece for the East African Route. A similar trend is observed for missing migrants, with a decrease in the overall number of migrants reported dead or disappeared at sea in the region, but an increase along the West African Atlantic Route.

In a nutshell, recent data confirms some lasting patterns, such as the prevalence of intraregional migration in West and Central Africa. It also highlights some emerging trends, including the complexification and diversification of migratory routes, particularly, but not only towards Europe.

Global displacement in Africa - Perspectives from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

The UNHCR highlighted recent trends in global displacement in Africa, driven by a series of crises including conflict, poverty, climate and environmental change, and human rights violations. It particularly focused on the Sahel region, subject to a new wave of conflicts, and the East and Horn of Africa, where droughts and floods have heightened existing crises.

The Rabat Process region is seeing unprecedented levels of forced displacement, with 90% of displaced African people moving within West and Central Africa. Countries located along the Central Mediterranean route also host around eight times more refugees and asylum seekers than Europe. In this context, people on the move face

¹ See presentations: www.rabat-process.org/en/activities/political-meetings/upcoming-senior-officials-meeting

challenges including discrimination, exclusion, poverty, and the region remains a hotbed of trafficking and smuggling. While less numerous, women and children are particularly at risk.

In recent years, climate change has become a threat multiplier, disproportionately affecting vulnerable populations by worsening the effects of conflicts or restricting access to basic services such as education, water, food, health services, or employment. Countries in the Sahel are particularly affected. This situation calls for a comprehensive assessment of risks to develop durable solutions tailored to the diverse situations along migration routes.

In this perspective, the UNHCR emphasised the importance of adopting a **route-based approach** to enhance protection of refugees in the context of mixed migration. This approach seeks to build partnerships, strengthen asylum systems and identify available services and risks along migration routes. By adopting a comprehensive approach, states can jointly develop tailored responses and reduce dangers associated with long migration journeys. In this framework, the Rabat Process is a useful platform which fosters regional collaboration and provide space to respond to inter and intra-regional movements. Key efforts and ongoing initiatives to strengthen this route-based approach were presented, such as the mapping of existing services, workshops to support the strengthening of local asylum systems, or the creation of multi-purpose hubs in key locations.

Key recommendations to tackle the ongoing displacement crisis in the Rabat Process region include:

- Addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement, with a special focus on the multiplier effect of climate change;
- Enhancing data collection and evidence-driven responses;
- Complementing humanitarian aid with development funding to address some key drivers of migration;
- Renewing attention to the situation of specific, vulnerable groups, including unaccompanied minors, women and victims of gender-based violence;
- Prioritising the inclusion of refugees, including through ensuring complementary safe and legal pathways for refugees and through the establishment of multi-purpose support hubs along routes, in collaboration with various stakeholders such as IOM and local authorities.

Smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons in the Rabat Process region – Perspectives from United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

The UNODC presented the results of its [Global Trafficking Report 2024](#), with a special focus on the chapter “Smuggling in, to and from Africa”.

Since 2022, the detection of trafficking cases has increased, following a sharp decrease during the 2020 pandemic of Covid-19. Amongst the detected cases, the number of child victims has risen, particularly young girls in North Africa and in the Middle East. Additionally, a higher number of victims have been identified in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Of the detected cases, 42% of victims were trafficked for forced labour, and 36% for sexual exploitation. Nonetheless, this share was not reflected in global criminal convictions for cases of trafficking: only 17% of all convictions were related to forced labour, and the vast majority (72%) were for instances of sexual exploitation trafficking. A notable trend is also the increasing complexity of trafficking routes at the global level. While most victims are trafficked within national borders, cross-border trafficking was identified mostly in Western and Southern Europe and in the Middle East.

The report also showcased new data from Africa, collected thanks to joint efforts with the African Union, ECOWAS, UNDPDPO and IOM and thereby enhancing global understanding of trafficking within, to, and from the continent. Key findings highlight the diversity of traffickers ranging from small-scale operators and individual opportunistic traffickers to organised groups linked with smugglers to traffic migrants *en route* to Europe. While criminal response is increasing, it remains limited compared to other regions and mostly focuses on small-scale operators, rather than organised criminal groups.

The UNODC also presented the latest trends of smuggling in Africa, based on in-depth research conducted within the Observatory on Smuggling of Migrants (SOM), including through surveys with migrants, interviews with key informants, migrants, and migrant smugglers.

Key findings include the following:

- Smugglers' profiles are varied, ranging from low-level individuals to highly organised groups.
- Smuggling thrives on corruption, security, impunity and in the absence of legal migration alternatives.
- Criminal groups, militias and terrorists are not directly involved, but profit indirectly from smuggling by controlling access to territories smugglers pass through.
- Smuggling is demand-driven: the first contact is often established by migrants. In 86% of cases, migrants have either met the smuggler through family and friends or contacted them directly.
- When policies such as visa-free entry and temporary protection for refugees are in place, for example for Ukrainian refugees, smuggling has significantly decreased. These results shed light on efficient policy responses and lessons learned for the global fight against migrant smuggling.

In the Central and Western Mediterranean, an estimated 175,000 to 228,000 people were smuggled in 2023, generating global revenue between US\$290 million and US\$370 million. Despite the prevalence of smuggling, there are fewer systems in place to tackle smuggling than trafficking in human beings. Improving coordination between involved countries and enhancing prosecution are key priorities, highlighted by various stakeholders, including partner countries and regional organisations in Europe and Africa.

Humanitarian consequences of migration triggered by armed conflict and climate shocks – Perspectives from the International Committee Red Cross (ICRC)

The ICRC adopted a humanitarian perspective and provided the audience with a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between armed conflict, climate risks and mobility.

Armed conflict and climate change have a compound effect on the vulnerability of affected individuals and communities. Climate disasters, such as droughts and floods, can worsen economic situations already deteriorated by conflict, and limit access to essential services like food and water. Conversely, armed conflict can weaken resilience and disrupt long-term efforts to adapt to climate change. Additionally, climate change is also a driver of conflict, particularly over scarce resources.

Mobility is a key strategy for affected communities coping with the cumulative impact of climate change and conflict. In conflict areas, climate disasters are more likely to lead to displacement due to weaker institutions and response structures. However, and contrary to common belief, there is no direct link between climate change and mass movement across international borders. Affected communities typically move internally or within the region. Moreover, mobility during armed conflicts or climate shocks is often limited by factors such as insecurity, movement restrictions related to the conflict, or restrictive migration policies. In this context, mobility can result in added risk factors, again compounding the humanitarian effects of war, climate change, and displacement. Key recommendations to address these interlinked challenges include:

- Enhancing efforts to respond to climate change, support communities in their adaptation to climate change, and integrate climate and mobility-related considerations when responding to armed conflict;
- Respecting international legal obligations relevant to human mobility in the context of armed conflict and climate change;
- Anticipating risks and strengthening resilience, reinforcing access to hazard-resilient services and ensuring that people develop resilient livelihoods, shelters, and are informed of risks and adaptation pathways;
- Mobilising for improved climate action and finance, to ensure that climate action reaches places of crises and to facilitate a greater balance between mitigation and adaptation efforts.

3) Reporting back on 2024

During this session, countries which co-hosted an activity in 2024 reflected on key takeaways from the year and progress made in implementing the Cadiz Action Plan across the five priority areas. In 2024, 11 actions spread across 3 thematic areas were addressed, with a special focus on labour migration, promoting the positive effects of migration for development, and enhancing the protection of migrants.

A key milestone was the launch of the [Network of Focal Points for Missing Migrants](#), organised by the ICRC, along with the Gambia and Switzerland, with the support from the Rabat Process Secretariat. This network marks the concrete implementation of a recommendation formulated as part of a thematic meeting and embodies how dialogue outcomes can be translated into action.

Synergies with the Khartoum Process were also strengthened, through the organisation of a [Joint High-Level Meeting](#) co-chaired by the chairs of both Dialogues, Portugal and Egypt. This meeting was a welcomed initiative that promoted regional dialogue on shared challenges. In this context, 7 policy takeaways and 31 recommendations were developed to empower EU-Africa cooperation for innovative labour migration pathways.

In 2024, the Rabat Process also introduced innovative visibility products. During this session, a [highlights video](#) was premiered, featuring representatives from partner countries. The video showcased the dynamic and engaging approach of the Portuguese Chairmanship, emphasising close collaboration and the active involvement of partner countries in advancing the Dialogue and strengthening cooperation among all stakeholders.

Overview of activities under the Cadiz Action Plan, under the Portuguese Chairmanship

During the session, co-chairing countries presented key highlights and takeaways of the 2024 programme.

Area 1: [Development benefits of migration and addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement.](#)

Thematic Meeting on [Entrepreneurship and Diaspora engagement](#)

In May 2024, **Portugal** and **Senegal**, with the support of **Nigeria** as a reference country for Area 1 of the CAP, co-chaired a thematic meeting on entrepreneurship and diaspora engagement. The event highlighted the role of diasporas in development, shedding light on the importance of diaspora entrepreneurship in job creation, innovation and skills development in Europe and Africa.

Recognising the key role of diaspora organisations as bridges between diaspora communities and stakeholders such as governments and businesses, a side event was organised with 10 diaspora organisations. This format fostered dynamic discussions and highlighted innovative initiatives that strengthen diaspora engagement in Rabat Process countries.

During this reporting session, Senegal complemented the key highlights by presenting several key initiatives piloted by the Secretariat of State for Senegalese Abroad. Notably, the establishment of a National Diaspora Day approved by the President of the Republic and expected to be celebrated in December 2025. Additionally, the "Dieurigne sa Reew" initiative, meaning "Serve Your Country," is being implemented to encourage diaspora members to contribute voluntarily to community development in their country of origin. Furthermore, efforts are underway to create a bank for Senegalese residing abroad, with more details to be shared in the coming months.

Nigeria added that a culture that values diaspora contributions should be fostered, and strategies should be developed to align their expertise with national priorities. Universities, academics, and technological platforms play a crucial role in identifying and matching skills. The meeting also underscored that effective diaspora engagement requires strategic and coordinated efforts. Nigeria highlighted initiatives implemented through Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCom), such as the Access to Property for the Diaspora project and the adoption of the National Diaspora Policy, as clear demonstrations of the country's commitment to harnessing diaspora contributions to entrepreneurship, innovation, and sustainable development.

Area 2: [Regular migration and mobility](#)

Thematic Meeting on [Mobility schemes as driver of change](#)

In June 2024, **Cabo Verde** hosted a thematic meeting on mobility schemes as driver of change, co-chaired with **Portugal**. Building on previous discussions that emphasised the need for mutually beneficial labour migration schemes, the meeting focused on expanding skills mobility, while exploring existing migration pathways.

Breakout sessions provided participants with insights into ongoing initiatives strengthening labour migration. Ghana and Germany shared experiences in facilitating skills recognition, while private sector representatives outlined strategies to better involve employers in mobility schemes. The discussions also highlighted the importance of awareness-raising campaigns to inform migrants about available pathways. IOM presented the "[Migrants as messengers](#)" project, and Spain shared key takeaways from the [MigraSafe Africa](#) campaign, targeted towards several countries in North and West Africa including Senegal, Tunisia, Morocco, and Ghana. Additionally, integration of migrants in countries of destination was recognised as essential for maximizing the developmental benefits of mobility schemes.

During the group discussions, participants formulated 30 key recommendations. A field visit to Cabo Verde University further underscored the importance of data collection and information-sharing, showcasing the role of the Cabo Verde Migration Observatory, established under the [Coop4Int project](#). The Observatory aims to strengthen data collection and analysis to inform policymaking. The visit highlighted both the value of scientific knowledge on migration and the challenges of producing, collecting, and analysing data. Reliable data is crucial for designing effective labour mobility schemes that identify gaps, respond to the market needs, and map out available and needed skills.

Joint High-Level Meeting on [Innovative pathways for skills mobility](#)

Portugal and **Egypt**, the current chair of the Khartoum Process, organised a Joint High-Level Meeting between the Rabat Process and the Khartoum Process to discuss innovative pathways for skills mobility. Together with partner countries, the two co-chairs shed light on strategies to empower EU-Africa cooperation for legal migration, and identified needs, priorities, challenges and opportunities on labour migration and skills development to better support policymaking.

Partner countries recognised the potential benefit of mobility partnerships for development in both origin and destination countries, while emphasising the need for a balanced approach that addresses labour shortages in Europe while curbing unemployment and supporting talent development and retention in Africa. Circular migration schemes were highlighted as a good practice, as well as innovative tools for skills matching at the regional and interregional levels. Finally, participants insisted on the importance of embedding workers' protection provisions within mobility agreements and on the need to foster their integration into host societies.

The meeting also contributed to strengthening synergies between the Khartoum and the Rabat Processes. Enhanced cooperation between the two dialogues is key to address shared challenges and leverage global and continental learning opportunities with a diversity of stakeholders from Europe and Africa.

[Area 3: Protection and asylum](#)

Network of National Focal Points for Missing Migrants

The issue of missing migrants remains a pressing one, with thousands of migrants having disappeared along the migration routes within Africa and to Europe. The uncertain fate of these migrants is often compounded by a lack of adequate identification, tracing, and cross-border cooperation mechanisms. The [Network of National Focal Points for Missing Migrants](#) plays a critical role in addressing this issue, providing a platform for cooperation to protect the human rights of missing migrants, support their families in tracing their loved ones, and enhance policy harmonisation in Europe and in Africa.

During this session, **The Gambia** highlighted key demographic and economic factors driving migration, noting that over 60% of its population under the age of 25 and that high levels of youth unemployment drive many to seek opportunities abroad. The country faces significant migration challenges, particularly along dangerous routes such as the Central and Western Mediterranean, where harsh conditions, exploitation, and the absence of identification mechanisms contribute to the disappearance of migrants. The Gambia emphasised the need for stronger international cooperation, especially through platforms like the Rabat Process, to address the humanitarian issues surrounding missing migrants.

The **ICRC** reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the Network, noting that 17 countries had appointed focal points. The ICRC highlighted the progress made in the two 2024 online meetings, focusing on challenges such as the absence of centralised national databases, difficulties in data collection and obstacles to effective international cooperation. The ICRC pointed out successful practices from countries like Greece, Djibouti, and Senegal, and encouraged other partner countries to replicate these efforts. The ICRC remains committed to supporting the Network and national governments in clarifying the fate of missing migrants.

Switzerland reflecting on its long-standing commitment to addressing the issue, acknowledged the progress made with the establishment of the Network and praised the collaboration between The Gambia, the ICRC, and other partners. Switzerland also recognised the critical role of the Spanish, Moroccan, and Portuguese Chairmanships of the Dialogue in advancing this issue, with key milestones including the introduction of the issue of missing migrants into the Cadiz Action Plan in 2022 and the first thematic meeting on the subject in September 2023. Despite the progress, Switzerland stressed the need for further operational improvements, including clarifying national responsibilities, adopting legal frameworks for data exchange, and strengthening communication channels. Switzerland encouraged Mediterranean countries to join the Network to enhance regional cooperation and highlighted the contributions and support from IOM and UNHCR. In addition, Switzerland noted that the Khartoum Process is considering adopting an action point on missing migrants, furthering collective efforts to address this humanitarian crisis.

The issue will continue to be tackled in 2025, with an online meeting of the Network scheduled in March 2025. Additionally, a Thematic Meeting will be organised in the Gambia in July 2025, co-chaired by the Gambia and Switzerland and with the support of the ICRC. This meeting will improve global collaboration and will further the discussion on how to best clarify the fates of missing migrants.

Updates on the Africa-EU Migration and Mobility Dialogue (MMD)

Updates on the JVAP Follow-up

Since the adoption of the 2015 [Joint Valletta Action Plan \(JVAP\)](#), the JVAP Follow-up has served as a monitoring platform for partners of the Khartoum and Rabat Processes to closely follow the implementation of the JVAP, by collecting data on implemented projects and policies in the region.

Building on discussions from the Stock-Taking Event held in October 2024 in Lisbon on the margins of the Khartoum and Rabat Process Joint High-Level Meeting and following a thorough evaluation of 2024 and the decisions made by partners at the event, **a new JVAP database**, with significant improvements and innovative processes, was introduced. This upgrade has led to the launch of a [new website](#) that now serves as the central hub for all JVAP Follow-up coordination. The platform consolidates technical guidance, enhanced dashboards, a simplified data collection tool, and other resources - including a custom application for tabular data browsing and downloading - with additional products planned for the near future.

The revamp also features substantial enhancements in access management. By eliminating the need for passwords and custom usernames, the new system broadens data collection and entry capabilities among partner agencies, thereby increasing the overall reach and impact of the data. Additionally, the **upcoming data collection cycle** is scheduled to commence in February 2025.

Continuous tools improvements are planned, alongside increased efforts in skills and experience sharing to advance both the JVAP Follow-up and broader knowledge management on migration within the African-European context. Next steps include confirming focal points for data collection and establishing a Community of Practitioners (COP) on knowledge management. This new and updated system will contribute to fostering evidence-informed policymaking on migration between Africa and Europe.

Updates on the MMD Grant Facility

In 2024, the first **Call for Applications of the MMD Grant Facility** was launched. This EU-funded mechanism aims to support the operationalisation of policy discussions and thematic recommendations formulated in the framework of the migration and mobility dialogues.

Out of over 100 applications received, 8 projects were pre-selected for an allocated total of around 9 million euros. In total, 29 CSOs will be supported through the Facility. A diversity of partners will be involved, ranging from NGOs to diaspora organisations, and including universities, research institutes, and private social enterprises. Implementation is due to start in February-March 2025 and the projects will last up to 18 months.

The Facility will also support both **Pan-Africa and AU-EU cooperation**, through South-South and North-South partnerships. The projects are implemented in 26 countries, and thematic coverage spans across all JVAP pillars and transversal thematic areas, such as climate-induced mobility, migration and gender and migration and health. Amongst others, key objectives include strengthening diaspora engagement advancing the sustainable (re)integration of IDPs, refugees and returnees; developing information and awareness-raising campaigns to inform African youth about irregular migration; and improving migration governance and management by enhancing stakeholder capacity in target countries.

4) Progress on the implementation of the Cadiz Action Plan

During this session, the Rabat Process Secretariat assessed the current implementation of the [Cadiz Action Plan \(2023-2027\)](#). Such evaluation ensures that the Dialogue remains relevant and flexible. It is also a great opportunity to renew the political commitment of all partners in favour of the strategic goals and priorities of the Dialogue, guaranteeing active collaboration and sustained involvement of all stakeholders.

In 2023 and 2024, under the Moroccan and the Portuguese chairmanships, a diverse range of activities were organised, including 7 Thematic Meetings, 2 Senior Officials Meetings, and 3 Steering Committee Meetings. Key highlights include a broadened participation, with the diversification of involved stakeholders such as academia, national migration observatories, civil society organisations, and the private sector. Particularly, youth and diaspora organisations were actively involved, recalling an engagement made in the context of the Cadiz Action Plan.²

The Rabat Process Secretariat also strived to enhance collaboration and cooperation with partner countries. In this context, an **online survey** was conducted in December 2024 with National Focal Points to gather perspectives on the Dialogue. A total of 68% of partner countries responded to the survey, providing the Secretariat with useful insights and will support its work to improve and adapt the Process based on the needs of partner countries.³

During the discussion, countries reemphasised the relevance of the Cadiz Action Plan as a useful, reliable and balanced framework that facilitates comprehensive and mutually beneficial partnerships to address shared challenges in the field of migration. They reiterated the importance of addressing all areas of the Plan, and presented some of their key priorities, including **pursuing efforts on labour migration and regular pathways; enhancing sustainable return and reintegration; and ensuring the protection of migrants.**

Additionally, partner countries discussed how to foster better collaboration in the framework of the Rabat Process, and how to enhance the implementation of the Cadiz Action Plan in coming years. It was notably suggested to **refining meeting formats to enhance discussion** and to **continue engaging a broader, more diverse range of stakeholders** to ensure that the Dialogue remains relevant and effective.

² More highlights can be found in the [Overview of the CAP 2023-2024](#).

³ See detailed analysis of survey results shared by the Secretariat.

5) Handing over the Chairmanship and presenting Nigeria's programme for 2025

During the closing session, Portugal, represented by H.E. Rui Armindo Freitas, Deputy Minister for the Presidency, officially handed over the Chairmanship of the Dialogue to Nigeria, represented by H.E. Prof. Nentawe G. Yilwatda, Honourable Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Reduction. The latter was accompanied by the Honourable Tijjani Aliyu Ahmed, Federal Commissioner of the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI), who outlined the priorities of Nigeria's tenure as Chair of the Rabat Process.

During their Chairmanship, Nigeria will strive to drive meaningful dialogue between all stakeholders and to enhance the existing Euro-African partnership, in the framework of the Cadiz Action Plan. It will also prioritise impactful, humane and inclusive approaches to migration governance, ensuring result-driven solutions and innovative policies. Nigeria places a strong emphasis on championing and strengthening regional cooperation. It will embed its action within existing global and regional frameworks, including the Global Compact for Migration and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and will particularly seek to advance SDG 10, focusing on facilitating "orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility".

In line with the Cadiz Action Plan and key national and regional priorities, Nigeria will focus on the potential of youth and innovation to address emerging challenges and opportunities related to migration (Area 1 of the Plan) and expanding regular pathways to foster mobility opportunities (Area 2). Nigeria will also prioritise promoting the respect of the dignity and human rights of all migrants. In this respect, it committed to pursuing the efforts made to clarify the fate of missing migrants through the Network of National Focal Points on Missing Migrants, as well as supporting a thematic meeting on this topic (Area 3) to be organised in Banjul, The Gambia, co-chaired by Switzerland and the Gambia and supported by the ICRC. Nigeria finally stressed the importance of improving migration data management, to ensure evidence-based and value-driven migration policies. Additional priorities to explore include the fight against trafficking in human beings (Area 4) and climate-induced mobility and displacement (Area 3, cross-cutting area).⁴

To conclude, Nigeria invited Rabat Process partner countries to work hand in hand with the incoming Nigerian chairmanship, and welcomed inputs and suggestions to its presented programme, which will be carefully reviewed by the Secretariat of the Rabat Process.

PARTICIPATION AND OUTREACH

- The meeting attracted 107 participants, including from 45 European and African countries, and from international and regional organisations.
- According to the online feedback survey, participants expressed overall high satisfaction, with over 95% participants declaring they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with aspects such as logistics, relevance, informal discussions, and overall meeting quality.
- Participants welcomed the Senior Officials Meeting as an opportunity to take stock of the implementation of the Cadiz Action Plan and expressed their support to the upcoming Nigerian chairmanship, which they said to be aligned with global and regional priorities for migration management.
- The Chairmanship handover was featured on ICMPD's corporate website through an [In-focus article](#).
- The event was covered on the Rabat Process social media channels, with 5 LinkedIn posts and 4 tweets, resulting in 2,998 impressions on LinkedIn and 705 impressions on X.

⁴ More details on the vision and proposed programme by Nigeria can be found in the [Note from the incoming Chair](#).