



Expert Meeting
Africa-EU Policy Dialog

“Scenarios of Migration”

23. November 2017

Ivotel, Abidjan

Context

Migration has become an issue of increasing concern in world politics and debates. The European Union (EU) is facing the largest refugee crisis since World War II. Forced and irregular migrants are fleeing from civil war in the Middle East, especially from Syria and Iraq, and seeking asylum in European countries. Most recently, the migration challenge was one of the leading arguments in favour of the exit of Britain from the EU. African states, in particular Nigeria, Eritrea, Côte d'Ivoire and Somalia, have contributed high numbers of migrants fleeing from war, persecution and poverty. So far less than 20% of the migrants coming to Europe are Africans. It is however estimated that this number will increase over the coming years. Many African states have already been dealing with high levels of migration for years as transit and destination countries. As the majority of African migrants stay on the continent, migration has also had a big social and economic impact for African states. Ethiopia, for example, hosts the most migrants compared to its GDP. Both Africa and Europe have separately developed a number of instruments and frameworks dealing with migration and correlated issues.

Given the shared interest in the rising numbers of refugees and migrants, and crimes associated with it like human trafficking, the EU and the AU have also entered into various agreements and initiatives to tackle migration and its root causes. A first approach was made in 2006 at the Tripoli EU-Africa Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development which aimed at, among other things, the better management of legal migration between the two continents, and addressing the root causes of migration and refugee flows. In 2014, during the EU-Africa summit, both sides reiterated their commitment to migration and development and adopted the *EU-Africa Declaration on Migration and Mobility*. This declaration presented a comprehensive approach that needed to be underpinned by strengthened political dialogue in order to address critical elements of migration including systems of legal migration, the nexus between asylum, migration and development, and the root causes of (irregular) migration. Besides, the *Migration and Mobility Dialogue* (MMD), which represents the cross-continental approach, the EU has also partnered with African stakeholders in order to tackle migration on a regional level. Such regional attempts are the Rabat and Khartoum Processes which facilitate dialogue amongst countries involved in migration routes (countries of origin and transit) to find a way to address the root causes of irregular migration. Triggered by the tragic events and deaths of more than 800 people in April 2015, when a boat with refugees capsized in the Mediterranean, the EU announced the Valletta Summit on Migration which took place in November 2015.

The Valletta summit was supposed to foster political co-operation in addressing causes of irregular migration and to combat human smuggling and trafficking. This reflects the renewed emphasis on the foreign policy dimension of EU action in this domain. The summit aimed to tackle the full range of issues focusing on five interlinked specific areas:

- 1) Development benefits of migration and addressing root causes
- 2) Legal migration and mobility
- 3) International protection and asylum
- 4) Prevention of and the fight against migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings
- 5) Co-operation on return and readmission

In the run up to the Valletta summit there was rising criticism questioning whether Europe and Africa needed to have another round of discussions on migration when there had hardly been any implementation by both sides of the agreements made during the EU-Africa summit one and half years earlier. Further, the summit was not organised in conjunction with African partners and excluded countries from Southern Africa and parts of the Central African Region.

Aims and objectives

The expert meeting will deliberate on the different migration frameworks between Europe and Africa as well as the future challenges the continents will have to face. A better understanding of the mutual interests and priorities for both continents is essential for an open political dialogue.

Specific objectives of the meeting aim at:

- Fostering political dialogue and exchange of knowledge in order to find common ground and facilitate continued and heightened co-operation.
- Strengthening sustained and inclusive political dialogue in between the inter-governmental summits.
- Facilitating an interface and network-building between the AU and EU, and member state representatives, RECs, experts and African and European CSOs and think tanks working on migration.

Target group:

- Representatives of ministries or Parliamentarians from West African countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal)
- ECOWAS-Representatives
- African Civil Society Representatives
- Representatives of European Embassies
- Journalists CIV

Agenda

8.00 – 8.30 **Registration**

8.30 – 8.45 **Welcoming remarks**

- Thilo Schöne, Resident Representative, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Côte d'Ivoire
- Representative Government CI

8.45 – 10.15 **Session 1: The current state of affair between Africa and Europe on migration**

Chair:

- M. Florian Koch, Director of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung for the cooperation with the African Union

Discussants:

- S.E.M. Jean-François Valette, Head of Delegation of the European Union in Côte d'Ivoire
- S.E. Madame Josephine-Charlotte Mayuma-Kala, Special Representative of the President of the Commission of the African Union
- M. Samir Abi, Observatoire Ouest Africain des Migrations, Togo

Background:

Migration represents various challenges to both continents. African and European leaders acknowledge the benefits that migration and mobility can bring to development and the destination country's economy. Yet, there is still a widespread conception on both continents that migration is rather a *problem* that outweighs the positive effects of migration. Often, these perceptions and fears are linked to security related issues attributed to migration such as rising levels of crime, terrorism and trafficking. However, as studies have demonstrated, migration can have a positive effect on the development and the economy of host nations. In turn, the remittances sent from migrants to the respective countries of origin are contributing to the development of those countries. While these facts are increasingly acknowledged decision makers in Africa and Europe are still having challenges finding (political) common ground and identifying approaches and areas to make migration beneficial to both continents. For a long term approach on migration to be successful, areas of strategic interest need to be identified.

Guiding Questions:

1. What are the main stumbling blocks to a more mutually beneficial and political cooperation on migration?
2. Is the challenge of migration currently addressed in a sustainable manner? If not, what would need to change?

3. Migration – are Europe and Africa talking about the same issues?

10.15 - 10.45 **Coffee Break**

10.45 – 12.15 **Session 2: Presentation of migration scenarios**

Chair:

- Madame Countel Kanne, Project Manager of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Mali

Présentation:

- M. Adjon Danho, Migration expert and creator of the scenarios
- Madame Nathalie Yamb, Migration expert and creator of the scenarios

Discussions:

- S.E.M. Stefano Lo Savio, Ambassador of the Italian Republic for Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Liberia and Sierra Leone
- S.E.M. Babacar Carlos Mbaye, Permanent Representative of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

Background:

During the last months various experts from West Africa and Europe developed together with the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and its partner's different scenarios of future migration. None of them may come true entirely but they show different possibilities for the future. This will allow decision makers to make more profound decisions based on the expected consequences without talking on the likelihood of a certain future which can be influenced by many factors, some of them unforeseen.

These scenarios touch various issues such as conflict analysis, economic and democratic development as well as global climate change. The current debates in Europe and Germany focus on refugees from the Middle East but neglect the longstanding migration from West Africa through Libya and Italy, which cannot solely be explained by current conflicts but rather long existing structural deficits of African states. In the last months this migration through Libya gained more attention after the Turkey-agreement which closed the route through the Balkans. Although in the month of August numbers of migrants went down and efforts are being made by the European Union to control its borders already beyond its actual borders, the interest in migrating to Europe will not diminish.

West Africa has the highest percentage of migrants in sub-Saharan Africa, mainly composed of labour migrants. Traditionally migrants stay in the region and the migration flows used to be ten times higher than to Europe. This is slowly changing. In addition, West Africa has the highest population growth in the world while the development is not growing as fast to sustain the livelihood which is threatened by poverty, unemployment, food insecurity and conflict proneness of "young societies". The continuing weakness of West African statehood, bad governance as well as the sustaining democratic deficit are further increasing the risks to the region. This may cause

increased migration towards other regions of the world, including Europe. The European Union, however, has a responsibility in West African developments with its trade and development policy. Common answers of West Africa and Europe towards these future scenarios shall be discussed.

Guiding Questions:

1. Which factors are contributing to the current high level of migration and how can they be influenced?
2. What role do the migration compacts play in the region and how do they affect migration to Europe and within the region?
3. How can the EU, AU and ECOWAS cooperate in order to allow migration foster development in the region? Which role does civil society play?

12.15 – 12.45 Closing and wrap up

12.45 – 14.00 Lunch

Organiser

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) is a private, non-profit organization committed to the values of Social Democracy. It is the aim of FES to facilitate the political and social education of individuals from all walks of life in the spirit of democracy and pluralism as well as to contribute to international understanding and cooperation. FES carries out its mission in Germany and internationally through its programs of political education, international cooperation, study and research. At present, FES maintains around 100 offices worldwide, of which 19 are in sub-Saharan Africa.