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From: Presidency
To: Delegations
Subject: Rabat Process

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In order to reach the objectives of the EU's external dimension of migration, regional migration dialogues provide an influential platform to reach a common understanding, exchange new insights and facilitate the process of establishing a well-functioning, operational cooperation between EU Member States and partner countries. Since its inception in 2006, the Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development (Rabat Process) has offered a framework for consultation, bringing together countries of origin, transit and destination of the migration routes linking Central, West and Northern Africa with Europe. 57 state partners and additional key stakeholders, including the European Union (EU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), are involved.

Latest Developments & Way Forward

Spain took over the Chairmanship of the Rabat Process on 18 November 2021, at a Senior Officials' meeting organized in Malabo by the outgoing chair, Equatorial Guinea.

As chair of the Rabat Process, Spain has organized several meetings based on an open, global and multi-stakeholder approach to migration, also considering the importance of resuming face-to-face meetings in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic:

- A first high-level thematic meeting on "Migration and Development in 2022: The Role of Cooperation in Migration; New Actors for a New Context" was held on 12 & 13 May 2022 in Madrid. The meeting, which was co-chaired by Spain and Senegal, gave participants the opportunity to discuss recent developments on the migration and development nexus, the role of African youth and entrepreneurs, as well as the role of women and diasporas.
- On 5 & 6 July 2022, a high-level thematic meeting on "Cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination in the field of border management" was held in Madrid, co-chaired by Spain and Morocco.
- In addition, a workshop on migrant smuggling and the future of mixed migration was held in collaboration with the Mixed Migration Centre (MMC) on 22 June 2022 in Brussels.
- On 29 & 30 September 2022, a high-level thematic meeting on "State Cooperation as Key to Success in Labour Migration" will be held in Malaga, co-chaired by Spain and Nigeria.
- Finally, a meeting on remittances, co-chaired by Belgium and Ghana, will take place on 3 & 4 November 2022 in Brussels.

Documents to be adopted at the Ministerial Conference in Cadiz on 13 & 14 December 2022

- The **Cadiz Political Declaration**, a draft of which is set out in Annex I, takes into account recent international political developments and includes the following main elements: **1)** the new international context since 2018; **2)** a renewal of the commitments made by partner countries in the framework of the Rabat Process; **3)** a reminder of the commitments made - and objectives set - in the framework of the five pillars of the Joint Valletta Action Plan and the Marrakesh Action Plan; and **4)** the new tools to strengthen cooperation between partner countries.

- The **Cadiz Action Plan**, a draft of which is set out in Annex II, updates the Marrakech Action Plan, taking into account developments since 2018, and details concrete actions to be implemented under each of the five pillars of the Joint Valletta Action Plan.

The Steering Committee (Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Equatorial Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal, the EU and ECOWAS) discussed the “zero draft” of the Political Declaration and the Action Plan during a meeting on 7 September 2022 in Brussels. Spain, as chair of the Rabat Process, subsequently received a number of initial comments on the draft documents which were reflected in “draft 1” of the Political Declaration and Action Plan. This version of the documents was also discussed at the EMWP meeting of 28 September and further written comments were submitted to Spain at the beginning of October. On this basis, a “draft 2” of the documents was prepared and discussed at a Steering Committee meeting (19 October) and SOM (20 October) in Madrid. Following the SOM, the draft declaration and action plan were amended on the basis of comments made by delegations and a “draft 3” was circulated on 21 October. Rabat process partner countries were invited to submit outstanding comments (limited to red lines) by 25 October. On this basis a “draft 4” was prepared and circulated on 31 October.

Both strategic documents are eventually expected to be discussed and adopted by the Ministers responsible for Migration of Rabat Process partner countries at a Ministerial Conference which will be held on 13 & 14 December 2022 in Cadiz. This new multiannual cooperation programme for 2023-2027 will guide the activities of the Rabat Process and its partners for the coming years.

It is reminded that both documents, as non-binding instruments, should be endorsed by the Council prior to the Ministerial Conference, in order for the Commission to represent the Union externally. In case no substantial remarks are made at the EMWP meeting on 7 November, the Presidency will proceed with the adoption of the I/A note by the Council with a view to the endorsement of the EU position on both documents.

Question

The Presidency invites delegations to confirm at the EMWP meeting on 7 November that they can agree on:

1. “Draft 4” of the Political Declaration (Annex I);
2. “Draft 4” of the Action Plan (Annex II).


