



JOINT VALLETTA ACTION PLAN 2018 SENIOR OFFICIALS' MEETING

14 – 15 November 2018

Addis Ababa - Ethiopia

Joint Conclusions

The Joint Valletta Action Plan (JVAP) on Migration, adopted by Heads of State and Government of Africa and Europe in November 2015, has facilitated the transition to an even stronger, mutually beneficial alliance between the two continents, working in a partnership of equals. The JVAP has helped the mutual understanding of policies (such as the Migration Policy Framework for Africa and the European Agenda on Migration) and provides a framework for the numerous actions being pursued. The JVAP confirmed the overarching role of the regional processes (Rabat and Khartoum Processes and the African Union's Horn of African Initiative) and encouraged the coordination of their activities. The JVAP also responds to the recognition at global level that most international migration and mobility takes place within regions.

In this context, the JVAP contributes to the purposes and principles of the Declaration of the fifth African Union (AU) – European Union (EU) Summit in November 2017; and informs the negotiations for a post-Cotonou Agreement.

In preparation of this Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM), both the Khartoum Process and Rabat Process (which are mandated to monitor the implementation of the JVAP) have produced their respective Analysis Reports in a participatory manner. These reports take stock of the work to date and make domain-specific and general recommendations. These Joint Conclusions complete the two Analysis Reports and should be read in conjunction with them.

- 1) Valletta partners acknowledge that the Valletta principles of solidarity, partnership and shared responsibility have become even more relevant to each of the five domains as implementation of the JVAP has progressed and continue to be considered an inherent part of future implementation of the JVAP. Valletta partners emphasise and welcome the growing ownership by all actors, including regional institutions, local authorities and non-state actors, whose role has proven to be crucial for the impact of actions pursued by the JVAP.

- 2) Taking into account and complementing existing dialogues and frameworks, Valletta partners commit to continue deepening their cooperation and dialogue on migration and mobility between Africa and Europe, and reaffirm their commitment to enhancing operational synergies, advancing joint efforts in addressing common challenges while respecting continental, regional and sub-regional specificities, and reinforcing the articulation between the JVAP and the different frameworks which contribute to the implementation of the JVAP, an example being the Luxor Declaration of November 2017. In this respect Valletta partners recognise the AU-EU-UN Task Force as an important example of such cooperation based on UN principles.
- 3) Recognising the added value and the continuing relevance and role of the EU Trust Fund for Africa and other bilateral and multilateral financial instruments mobilised during the last three years, Valletta partners acknowledge that the ambitious objectives of the JVAP will require sustainable and predictable mobilisation of sufficient resources in line with identified policy priorities by both Processes, and the continued expediting of programme approval and delivery. Additionally, effective coordination of diverse financial mechanisms as well as programmes is essential to avoid duplication of efforts and maximise the impact of agreed, prioritized projects, legislative and policy reforms.
- 4) Valletta partners note the importance of promoting constructive and long-term approach to migration and mobility, which can benefit countries of origin, transit and destination. They reiterate that attention should be given with an equal importance to all five domains of the JVAP. While acknowledging the achievements to date, Valletta partners recognise that further concerted efforts should be made in domain 2 concerning legal migration and mobility, in particular for young people and women: entrepreneurs, students and researchers, moving within Africa and between Africa and Europe, taking into account national competences and labour market realities and paying attention to the integration of migrants in host societies as appropriate; and domain 5: bearing in mind the obligation of each state under international law to readmit its own nationals in full respect of human dignity and of the principle of non-refoulement, and recognising a preference for assisted voluntary return, more need to be done among countries of origin, transit and destination to strengthen the fight against irregular migration and facilitate return, readmission and reintegration.
- 5) To address the root causes of irregular migration, the Rabat and Khartoum Processes call for intensified efforts on the creation of economic opportunities, decent jobs, vocational education and training, especially for youth and women, step up support to SMEs and increased access to finance. Both processes also reiterate the importance of investing in agriculture, reducing disaster risks and preventing the negative effects of climate change and land degradation as emphasized by the JVAP.
- 6) Valletta partners agree to encourage and support African diaspora's engagement in countries of origin with a view to boosting local development and investment, to

participate in information campaigns on the risks of irregular migration and to encourage the use of legal pathways, and as appropriate, to engage in integration programmes in countries of destination; and to facilitate faster, cheaper and safer transfers of remittances through legal channels in both source and recipient countries, including by reducing transaction costs.

- 7) Valletta partners recognize the need to further strengthen the fight against irregular migration by fostering cooperation and mutual trust and stepping up current effort to stop trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants, and underline the necessity for stronger regional coordination and cross-border cooperation. Whilst taking into account of specific sub-regional contexts and regional diversity, programmes fostering police and judicial cooperation, border management and the collection of information should be pursued as good examples that can be built upon and best practices that can be more widely applied in full respect of international human rights law.
- 8) Valletta partners welcome and encourage further enhanced cooperation to improve national systems for issuing civil status documentation, registration and the use of biometrics as well as the capacity of consular services facilitating the swift identification of persons and preventing document fraud, which have proved helpful in support of the JVAP.
- 9) Welcoming ongoing efforts by UN agencies (notably IOM and UNHCR) and other international organisations, Valletta partners restate their commitment to step up protection to those in need, with particular attention to persons in vulnerable situations such as victims of trafficking in human beings (being predominantly women and girls) in line with international law, international human rights law, and where applicable, international refugee law, and increase efforts on reintegration of migrants and the voluntary resettlement of persons in need of international protection.
- 10) Underlining the importance of measuring the level of implementation of the JVAP against progress on the ground, Valletta partners support the completion of the Valletta database and urge all countries and organisations to ensure sustained provision of updated data. Recognising the need to reinforce the relevance of data and the efficiency of its delivery, partners acknowledge the importance of the database as a reporting tool for assessing JVAP implementation. In order to optimize its added value, lessons learning from the pilot period will be carried out, including reviewing technical requirements and access for Valletta partners.
- 11) Valletta partners welcome the increased level of implementation in 2017 and 2018 across the 5 domains of the JVAP. The Khartoum and Rabat Processes Analysis Reports recommend that, whilst the principles, structure, goals and comprehensive approach of the JVAP remain, the JVAP should be updated to reflect delivery to date and acknowledging recent policy developments (among others the Declaration of the

fifth African Union – European Union Summit, the AU Protocol on Free Movement of People, the proposal for a new Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investments and Jobs and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration¹ as well as the Global Compact on Refugees). For this purpose, Valletta partners mandate the steering committees of both processes to work jointly and propose updates to the JVAP as appropriate that would then be agreed by the Khartoum and Rabat Processes and ultimately endorsed at the appropriate meeting of Valletta partners at a time and place to be agreed.

The partners acknowledge the increased confidence created by the JVAP under the oversight of the Khartoum and Rabat Processes, and the active commitment by African and European countries and institutions. The partners express their gratitude to UNECA for the generous use of its facilities and to the hosts of this SOM, the Ethiopian government and people, for the warm reception and hospitality.

¹ While acknowledging the specific national approaches with respect to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration