



KHARTOUM PROCESS – EU-HORN OF AFRICA MIGRATION ROUTE INITIATIVE

Senior Officials' Meeting of the of the Khartoum Process (EU-Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative) – The Hague, The Netherlands, 5th March 2020

Chair's Summary

The Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) of the Khartoum Process took place in The Hague on the 5th of March 2020, preceded by the Khartoum Process Steering Committee (SC). The SOM was hosted and chaired by The Netherlands. The objectives of the meeting were to discuss the developments and governance-related matters, to deliberate upon the work plan for 2020 and beyond, and to agree on the procedure for finalising the update of the Joint Valletta Action Plan (JVAP) and the validation of the updated text.

1. Opening Remarks and Chairmanship Handover

The opening ceremony, chaired by Mr. Joost Klarenbeek, Special Envoy for Migration, The Netherlands, featured the welcome words on the part of The Netherlands, as the incoming 2020 Chair and the host of the Meeting, the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU), and Eritrea as outgoing 2019 Chair of the Khartoum Process.

- Ms. Kitty Van Der Heijden, Director General for International Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands, reaffirmed the commitment of the government of The Netherlands to continue working towards an enhanced cooperation between Africa and Europe. The role of regional frameworks, such as the Khartoum Process and the JVAP, was highlighted, particularly in providing opportunities for partners to discuss openly migration-related matters of joint interest, both as diplomats and as experts. The Netherlands thanked the outgoing Chair, Eritrea, for the successful work carried out in 2019.
- Mr. Philip Bob Jusu, Socio-Economic Officer at the Bureau of Chairperson and African Union (AU) representative to the EU and ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) Group of States, African Union Commission (AUC), detailed the circumstances under which the Khartoum Process was created and invited the delegates to reflect upon the migration policy debate in the region. The role played by the Khartoum Process in providing a common platform for exchanges and debates leading to an informed and sustainable decision-making was underlined.
- Ms. Silvena Pesta, Deputy Head of Unit, Directorate-General Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME) of the European Commission (EC), reiterated the EU's commitment in supporting the Khartoum Process as a forum for bilateral, regional, and continental level engagement between the European and African partners. As the first official visit of Ms. Ursula Von der Leyen, the new president of the EC, to Addis Ababa confirms, the EU is committed to reinforcing the partnership with the AU for the benefit of the two continents. To this end, the EC is currently discussing the New European Pact on Migration and Asylum and exchanging ideas with the AU concerning the preparation of the new European Strategy with Africa.
- Mr. Ibrahim Osman Mahmud, Director General of Political and Diplomatic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Eritrea, on behalf of the outgoing Chair, Eritrea, charted the

concrete steps undertaken in 2019 towards the operationalisation and further advancement of the Khartoum Process.

➤ The 2019 Khartoum Process Chair, Eritrea, officially handed over the Chairmanship to the 2020 Chair, The Netherlands.

2. State of play of the Khartoum Process

Under the Eritrean Chairmanship, the thematic focus of the Khartoum Process was expanded to Domains 1 and 2 of the JVAP, which was manifested in the successful organisation of **Thematic Meetings (TM)** on the following subject matters:

- *Legal Frameworks and Policy Development: Optimising the Benefits of Organised Labour Migration*, 24th – 25th September 2019, co-hosted by Egypt and Portugal in Cairo, Egypt (JVAP Domain 1)
- *Migration for Development: Harnessing the Potential of Diaspora*, 23rd - 24th October 2019, co-hosted by Eritrea and Switzerland in Asmara, Eritrea (JVAP Domain 2)

These TMs allowed partners to exchange good practices on the matters that have not been addressed in the framework of the Process to date. Each TM resulted in a set of recommendations in support of individual or joint actions pertaining to Domains 1 and 2.

In response to the decisions of the 2018 JVAP SOM, which took place on the 14th-15th of November 2018 in Addis Ababa, the respective Steering Committees of the Khartoum and of the Rabat Processes launched the **update of the JVAP** in April 2019. To ensure a comprehensive participation, members were invited to submit their contributions and recommendations, with a focus on the introductory paragraph, the Priority Actions, and Priority Areas of the five JVAP Domains.¹ A Drafting Committee Meeting was organised on the 17th of July 2019, with the participation of volunteer countries² and the Khartoum Process Secretariat (the EC and the AUC), supported by ICMPD. The changes were proposed at a technical, rather than a political level, maintaining the principles and the five-pillar structure of the 2015 JVAP intact. The work of finalising the update of the JVAP will continue under the guidance of the 2020 Chair, The Netherlands.

During the SOM in Asmara, which took place on the 6th of March 2019, Khartoum Process partners agreed to take practical steps to ensure the continuity of vision and actions beyond the duration of a single Chairmanship. Towards this goal, Italy proposed to work jointly on a **multiannual work plan**. The aim of the latter is to facilitate the delivery of the Khartoum Process' objectives, while paying due consideration to the thematic priorities of the participating states and the link to the JVAP. Following a Chair's call for contributions, a Drafting Committee convened in Brussels on the 17th of July 2019 to reflect upon the inputs received³ and the preferred format for the capture thereof. The resulting *Multiannual Work Plan* represents a non-binding guiding document in support of the Chairs and the wider membership. It follows the five-pillar structure of the JVAP and reflects the expressions of interest of partners in thematic and capacity-building actions aimed at the fulfilment of the Khartoum Process mandate. Incumbent Chairs and participating states are warmly encouraged to refer to the Work Plan for identification and implementation of concrete activities individually, bilaterally, and multilaterally.

¹ In total, twelve countries submitted written contributions, namely the Czech Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Denmark, France, Sweden, and Tunisia.

² Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Italy, The Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

³ In response to the call to submit proposals for the Multiannual Work Plan, the Czech Republic, Egypt, Eritrea, France, Italy, The Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, Sudan, Uganda, and the United Kingdom sent their inputs.

3. Update from the African Union Commission

An overview of activities implemented in 2019 with the aim to enhance information sharing, capacity building, and operationalisation of efforts directed at combating trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants amongst members was presented, as follows:

- The conclusion of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the AUC and the Sustainable Development Goals Centre for Africa, in February 2019. The MoU aims at establishing a strategic partnership to assist the AU Member States in support of the achievement of the African Union's Agenda 2063 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The signature of the MoU between the AU, the Government of Rwanda, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to establish an Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) in Rwanda for refugees and asylum-seekers stranded in Libya, in September 2019.
- The operationalisation of the Migration Research Centre in Mali, the Migration Observatory in Morocco, and the Continental Operational Centre in Khartoum, Sudan, to enable these structures to work closely with the existing continental and regional statistical centres towards the objective of strengthening migration statistics in Africa. The establishment of fast-tracking and efficient system of information sharing will promote an evidence-based and informed decision-making at both regional and continental levels, as well as across the continents.

4. Programme of the Khartoum Process under the Chairmanship of The Netherlands

➤ Vision for the 2020 Chairmanship

To identify and map actions to be implemented in 2020, the Chair invited the delegates to share their national and institutional priorities and thematic interests, as well as their availability to host or co-host a Khartoum Process activity. To guide delegates' interventions, the Chair proposed the following questions:

- What are the programmatic and policy changes in partner countries relevant to the Khartoum Process activities?
- How do these developments feed into our work?
- EU-Africa Strategy: How can Khartoum Process activities contribute to the achievement of results in this framework?

During the *tour the table*, all those present⁴ and Switzerland by means of a written contribution, had the chance to express their thematic priorities and suggestions. The aggregated summary is as follows:

- Delegates highlighted their determination to continue striving for concrete results as well as focusing on working-level cooperation amongst the AU and EU member states.
- The validity of the JVAP as a reference framework for long-term strategies with sustainable goals was reconfirmed. A number of country representatives recalled the principles of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR) as relevant for regional and international cooperation. In parallel, it was recognised that the implementation of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and GCM is hindered by several factors, including climate change.

⁴ With the exception of Czech Republic, who will provide their respective inputs in writing following the meeting

- Italy and Austria expressed their interest to focus on Domains 2 to 5 of the JVAP, while Switzerland highlighted its interest in addressing (a selected range of priorities across) all Domains of the JVAP.
- Legal migration and mobility, with a special focus on (safe) labour migration, was identified as a priority by Belgium, Egypt, Italy, France, Slovenia, Portugal, and Switzerland. The IOM put forward a suggestion to include addressing the matters pertaining to intra-African labour mobility and bilateral labour migration agreements between African countries.
- Denmark, Latvia, Slovenia, and Malta reaffirmed their interest in retaining the focus on the core mandate of the Khartoum Process, namely combating trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants, through a rule of law approach.
- Hungary highlighted the urgency of enhancing the protection of the EU borders to stem illegal migration through the deployment of a range of security solutions, including cyber security.
- The enhancement of efforts directed at the improvement of living perspectives in migrants' country of origin was put forward for consideration, with a focus on job creation and enabling persons to create and/or find socio-economic opportunities in their country of origin, while reiterating the preference for deploying a holistic approach towards migration management.

Participating states expressed their interest, willingness, and availability to host Khartoum Process activities as follows:

Djibouti	Thematic Meeting, on a topic pertaining to one of the JVAP Domains;
Egypt	- Thematic Meeting, to be organised jointly with an interested European partner, including the 2020 Chair The Netherlands; - JVAP SOM, in 2021;
Ethiopia	Open to discuss the possibility of co-hosting the TM on <i>Return, Reintegration, and Integration</i> (initially planned to be co-organised with the UK), with an interested European partner;
Italy	TM on <i>Identification and Status Determination of Migrants on the Move and at Borders</i> (dates tbc);
Somalia	Thematic Meeting, on a topic pertaining to one of the JVAP Domains;
Switzerland	Expressed interested in a thematic focus that explores the Migration and Peace Nexus from a root causes perspective, as well as the complex interaction between conflict, conflict transformation, and migration;
UNODC	Co-host a Training Event at the Headquarters in Vienna or Nairobi on countering trafficking in human beings, smuggling of migrants, and the cross-border dimension

5. Khartoum Process: membership and governance

The Chair summarised the discussions held during the SC concerning the Khartoum Process membership and governance as follows:

➤ The participation of the UK in the Khartoum Process following the withdrawal from the European Union

The UK's formal withdrawal from the EU on the 31st of January 2020 has an immediate effect on the participation of the UK in the Khartoum Process. Under the rules of the Withdrawal Agreement, the UK can no longer - in principle - participate in Khartoum

Process meetings.⁵ As a result, it was not appropriate or possible for the United Kingdom to convene and/or co-host the TM on *Return, Reintegration, and Integration* in London or Addis Ababa after the 31st of January 2020.

Considering the preparatory work completed, the TM on the subject matter will be retained as part of the 2020 Khartoum Process work plan. Ahead of the SOM, Ethiopia reiterated the need to cross-check internally with regard to the confirmed willingness and readiness to host the meeting jointly with a European country as a co-host. The European participating states are invited to express their interest in co-hosting the TM on the topic.

➤ **Governance: Steering Committee membership and composition**

• **Membership of the UK in the Steering Committee**

Under the rules of the Withdrawal Agreement, the UK can no longer be part of the Khartoum Process SC. The Chair informed the membership of the decision of the SC to call the European participating states of the Khartoum Process to consult internally and put forward their candidatures to take up the vacant seat in the SC. The procedure will follow the steps undertaken in the replacement of Malta after its withdrawal from the SC in 2016. The Chair will provide the necessary further communication on the matter in writing.

• **Request of Djibouti to join the SC**

Djibouti reiterated its interest and willingness to join the SC. To this end, in compliance with the Khartoum Process *Steering Committee's Rules of Procedure*, adopted during the SC in Sharm El Sheikh on the 23rd-24th April 2015, Djibouti applied in writing on the 3rd of February 2020.⁶

Based on the outcomes of discussions held during the consultative meeting and the SC, the Chair reiterated the preference of the African group to retain the current number of the SC members as stipulated in the Rules of Procedure.

In the absence of volunteering states to pursue the alternative options of withdrawal or rotation,⁷ the SOM agreed to prioritise the replacement of the UK in the SC and to address the matters pertaining to the request of Djibouti to join the SC once the geographical balance in the SC is restored. It was further recalled that the SOM represents the Khartoum Process' decision-making body, within which all the member states are present on a level of equality.

➤ **2021 African Chairmanship and 2022 European Chairmanship**

During the SC, which took place in Cairo on the 9th of July 2018, Sudan confirmed its readiness to take over the Chairmanship of the Process in 2021. In the absence of indications signalling a change of the position of Sudan, the Chair will reach out to Sudan with a request for a re-confirmation.

⁵ It should be noted that the Withdrawal Agreement exceptionally allows the possibility to invite the UK to participate in a specific meeting and/or agenda point, if the presence of the UK is necessary and in the interest of the EU.

⁶ The written request represents a follow up to the request submitted on the 3rd of May 2018, which was discussed during the SOM in Nairobi on 8th of May 2018 with the decision of the membership to refrain from expanding the membership and retain the existing SC composition. In the past, requests of Djibouti to join the SC were presented verbally and discussed during the SOMs, which took place on the 5th of April 2017 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and on the 6th of December 2017 in Rome, Italy.

⁷ The Chair informed the membership that the African partners discussed three alternatives during the African consultative meeting, which took place ahead of the SC, and during the SC, namely: 1) Retention of the current composition on the part of the African SC members; 2) Withdrawal of an African SC member in favour of Djibouti; 3) Rotating SC membership.

In response to the Chair's call for nominations for the 2022 European Chairmanship, Germany confirmed its openness to put forward its candidature, subject to endorsement by the political level.

6. The Joint Valletta Action Plan Update

➤ On the process of **updating the JVAP text**:

To respond to the mandate conferred by the JVAP partners at the 2018 SOM in Addis Ababa, the Khartoum and Rabat Process SCs launched the update of the JVAP in April 2019.

To ensure a comprehensive participation in the exercise, the members of both the Khartoum and the Rabat Processes were invited to submit their written contributions and recommendations concerning policy developments and priority actions to be reflected in the update.

The Khartoum Process Drafting Committee, established at the SOM on the 5th of March 2019 in Asmara, convened in Brussels on the 17th of July 2019 to analyse and discuss the contributions and agree on the methodology and the steps for its validation;

Following the Drafting Committee meeting, a draft update was submitted to the attention of the Steering Committee for further comments, as appropriate;

The proposed update is of a technical nature and focuses on the adjustment of the dates and formulations. It retained the principles, structure, goals, and comprehensive approach of the JVAP.

➤ On further steps for **validation**:

To ensure a coherent approach to the JVAP updating exercise, the Rabat Process has followed a similar procedure to the one introduced by the Khartoum Process. The Rabat Process Steering Committee met in Brussels on the 18th of February, examined the same updated text, and proposed further amendments.

The two texts need to be brought together for a joint discussion and approval by the respective SCs of the two Processes during a Joint SC meeting, tentatively scheduled for the 2nd of April 2020, in Brussels.

In terms of validation of the final updated JVAP text, a number of options were put forward and discussed at the Steering Committee, namely:

- a JVAP SOM on the margins of the upcoming Rabat Process SOM, scheduled to take place in Paris, in June 2020 (tbc);
- a JVAP SOM on the margins of the next EU-AU Ministerial Meeting scheduled to take place in Kigali on the 4th-5th of May, or on the margins of the AU-EU Summit, scheduled to take place in Brussels in October 2020;
- a fully-fledged, standalone JVAP SOM;
- a silent validation procedure by the two respective SOMs, in writing.

The Khartoum Process SOM agreed to the preference indicated by the SC consisting of a written procedure, preceded by a validation by the Joint SC of the Khartoum and the Rabat Processes, followed by a fully-fledged JVAP SOM. In this regard, the offer of Egypt to host the next JVAP SOM in 2021 was welcome.

The Rabat Process will be informed about the decision of the Khartoum Process SC and the SOM and consulted accordingly regarding the next steps.

➤ On the JVAP **follow-up tools**:

Launched in 2017, the JVAP Database hosts detailed information pertaining to over 1500 JVAP initiatives. The data, inserted by the national focal points of the Khartoum and the Rabat Processes, are accessible to all focal points across both Dialogues.

As the recent TMs in Cairo and Asmara vividly demonstrated, the Database offers a range of tools to process, retrieve, and analyse large amounts of data on specific thematic and budgetary matters, which may be deployed to support the advancement of the Dialogues and country-specific policies.

Following the recommendation of the 2019 JVAP Lessons Learnt Report, a new JVAP portal is currently being designed (work in progress since February 2020).

In the following months, the JVAP Follow-up Team will launch the 2020 data collection cycle, which will be divided into three phases:

- 1) data collection (spring-summer 2020);
- 2) data cleaning (autumn 2020);
- 3) data analysis and visuals delivery (autumn-winter of 2020).

7. **Continent to Continent Migration and Mobility Dialogue (C2CMMD)**

The C2CMMD aims to bring together strategic stakeholders from the AU and EU (the European External Action Service and the EC) with the aim to address migration and mobility matters at a continental level. It provides a platform for consultation, coordination, sharing of information and experiences on the topics and issues of joint interest, which are of continental dimension. The C2CMMD complements the existing dialogues and focuses on the following priority areas:

- Remittances and diaspora investment, including reducing the costs of remittances and leveraging diaspora for development;
- Information sharing aimed at addressing the issues of human trafficking and smuggling of migrants;
- Sharing experiences on sustainable return and reintegration;
- Supporting the AU free movement regime.

The C2CMMD encourages joint actions and activities, while paying attention to the *AU's Migration Policy Framework for Africa and Plan of Action 2018-2030*, as well as the EU's competencies on migration and mobility.

8. **Scenario-building exercise: mixed migration in the Horn of Africa, East Africa, and North Africa**

Following an introduction of the work of the Mixed Migration Centre (MMC) and its methodology based on a collective intelligence approach to analyse mixed migration in the Horn of Africa, East Africa, and North Africa, the MMC team guided the participants through a process of strategic analysis of the future in their respective regions. During the breakaway exercises, the MMC experts provided the participants with a synthesis of the mixed migration *status quo* within and between the Horn of Africa, East Africa, and North Africa. Discussions and exchanges aimed at identifying and examining relatively certain and relatively uncertain drivers of migration. Their possible impacts on mixed migration stocks, flows, routes, and conditions and experiences of persons on the move were examined. The discussions during the plenary sessions prompted the participants to reflect on those factors for which they felt they were least prepared. An outcome document outlining the results of the discussion groups and plenary sessions will be developed and shared separately with the delegates.

9. Updates on Programmes and Projects

➤ Update on the EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa (Horn of Africa and North Africa windows)

The EU provided an update on the EUTF pertaining to the North of Africa window and the Horn of Africa window, including the new projects launched, as follows:

- A total budget of 184,600,000 euro will be invested into projects and initiatives pertinent to return, reintegration, rural development, women support, social protection, and food security both at regional and national level;
- Overall, the Horn of Africa initiative was allocated a budget of 1689 million euro, with a total of 87 actions approved to date;

In the Horn of Africa, the EUTF has been working across four strategic objectives, with the following results:

- Creating greater economic and employment opportunities: resulted in a creation of over 31,000 jobs;
- Strengthening resilience: improved access to basic services, including education, health, sanitation, and electricity for nearly 4,5 million persons;
- Improving governance and migration management: 212,000 potential migrants reached out to by means of information campaigns on migration and risks linked to irregular migration;
- Supporting, in the area of security, border management and conflict prevention: launch of a programme on capacity building involving up to 1,000 institutions and nearly 20,000 staff.
- In 2019, the North of Africa window saw the approval of 10 actions, covering 5 regional programmes, which support development, protection, voluntary humanitarian return, diaspora engagement, and labour mobility.
- Additionally, three new actions were adopted to support community stabilisation and protection programmes in Libya. Accompanied voluntary returns of over 50,000 migrants were facilitated by provision of reintegration support.

➤ Update on Better Migration Management (BMM)

The second phase of BMM was launched in September 2019, with the overall goal of supporting national authorities and institutions in facilitating safe, orderly, and regular migration and effectively addressing and reducing trafficking in human beings and the smuggling of migrants through a human rights based approach. Funded by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the EU, BMM II is implemented by the British Council, Civipol, IOM, UNODC, and GIZ.

With actions tailored to the specific needs of the participating countries, namely Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, and Uganda, the project's design features three components that focus on

1. *Migration Governance*: improving coordination between government institutions responsible for migration management at local, national, and regional levels.
2. *Cooperation on Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants*: improving the quality and comprehensiveness of investigations and judicial cases of trafficking and smuggling of migrants.

3. *Protection*: improving access to information on safe, orderly, and regular migration for migrants, as well as ensuring access to protection facilities and services for victims of trafficking and vulnerable migrants.

➤ **Update on the Regional Operational Centre in Khartoum (ROCK) in support of the Khartoum Process**

Since the establishment of the ROCK, the recruitment of police liaison officers with operational expertise from Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya, Somalia, Egypt, and Djibouti was carried out. The challenges pertaining to the availability of funds were highlighted as hindering the implementation of the Centre's activities. In particular, the need for operational assistance and an agreed and coordinated development strategy between the AU and the EU was mentioned.

Plans for the future include a possible extension to mid-2021, the expansion of activities in East Africa, and the possibility of creating a lasting structural network. The challenge ahead is to build a solid partnership with relevant institutions and agencies based on commitment, cooperation, coordination, and sustainable communication.

10. Closing remarks

The concluding remarks of Ms. Ankie Broekers-Knol, Minister for Migration, The Netherlands, underlined the dynamic and multifaceted nature of the migratory process that calls for an approach that duly addresses the needs and interests of countries of origin, transit, and destination. International and regional frameworks such as the Khartoum Process and the five pillars of the JVAP remain relevant as ever, providing the stakeholders the means and tools to identify both the needs and the possibilities for responses, including in cooperation with each other over the long term. As the 2020 Chair of the Khartoum Process, The Netherlands reiterated its readiness to continue actively engaging with the dialogue partners, finding common solutions to tackling the challenges of trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants, and supporting regional cooperation on migration matters.