



Federal Office  
for Migration



Ministry for Home  
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Ministère de l'Intérieur, de  
l'outre-mer, des collectivités  
territoriales et de l'immigration



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## DIALOGUE ON MEDITERRANEAN TRANSIT MIGRATION (MTM)

### *A DIALOGUE IN ACTION*

## **10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY EVENT**

Valletta, Malta, 22 May 2012

### **Summary of Discussions**

On 22 May 2012, the 10-Year MTM Anniversary Event took place in Valletta, hosted by the Ministry for Home and Parliamentary Affairs of Malta, organised in cooperation with ICMPD and with the financial support of France and Switzerland. The meeting informally gathered delegates of MTM Partner States representing Algeria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Kenya, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Malta, Niger, Poland, Senegal, Spain, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. The MTM Partner Agencies Europol, Frontex, IOM, Interpol, UCLG (represented by the City of Barcelona), UNHCR, UN-Habitat, and ICMPD were also represented. Furthermore, the Council of Europe, EASO, and the League of Arab States participated as Observers.

The event aimed to contribute to the common understanding on past, present, and future opportunities and challenges on migration management issues as well as to enhance cooperation among MTM Partner States, particularly in view of the latest regional developments and their significant impacts.

The event was articulated around four sessions corresponding to the following specific objectives:

- To analyse the place, role, and use of the MTM Dialogue in regional and national migration policy and strategy development;
- To discuss the African, European, and Middle Eastern perspectives on intergovernmental migration dialogues i.e. the Global Forum on Migration and

Development (GFMD), the Africa-EU Migration, Mobility and Employment (MME) Partnership, the Rabat Process, the EuroMed and Union for the Mediterranean, and the 5+5 Dialogue: their respective focus, programmes, and potential synergies;

- To identify the current state of play and future opportunities and challenges in the areas of expertise of MTM Partner Agencies;
- To provide a platform for MTM Partner States to discuss issues the MTM Dialogue should focus on in the coming future, bearing in mind the latest regional developments and their impact, the need for increased synergies between migration dialogues in the region, and efforts towards avoiding duplication.

The meeting was formally opened by the [Maltese Minister for Home and Parliamentary Affairs](#) (EN). Opening statements were given by the Heads of delegation of Switzerland, France, and [ICMPD](#) (EN).

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*Working Session I: 10 years of MTM Dialogue in retrospect: an informal, technical, and support intergovernmental dialogue on migration*

Setting the framework for the meeting, the first session was of an informative nature. A presentation of the framework of the [MTM Dialogue](#) (EN), its history, guiding principles, and a description of the current phase ***A Dialogue in Action*** was followed by a presentation of the [preliminary results](#) (EN) of the ***analysis paper on the place, role, and use of the MTM Dialogue as an informal technical support framework to regional and national migration policy and strategy development***, undertaken by an external consultant. The final analysis paper will incorporate the results of the MTM 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event.

This introductory session was the occasion to recall the importance of regional dialogues which provide useful frameworks to enhance cooperation on migration. In its 10 years of activity, the MTM has proven to be a technical, informal, non-binding, and action-oriented intergovernmental dialogue, applying an explorative approach and developing innovative means of cooperation and information sharing for various aspects of migration management. As such, the MTM has consolidated its position as a consultative platform, offering a forum for open and free discussion based on long-term trust building and its support to policy development at national and regional level.

It was also recalled that these achievements were made possible due to the support and commitment of MTM Partner States and Partner Agencies with whom ICMPD has always partnered in a mutually beneficial spirit of cooperation.

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Working Session II: African, European, and Middle Eastern perspectives on major intergovernmental dialogues on migration

The session was moderated by Mrs. Elizabeth Adjei. Participants to the panel were representatives of the City of Barcelona, France, Lebanon, Senegal, Switzerland, Tunisia, and Turkey. The session provided various perspectives on the achievements and challenges of the main migration dialogues as well as the synergies created, and to be created, among major dialogues.

In general, dialogues have contributed to create a common understanding and to improve cooperation on migration issues. Moreover, the importance of including and giving ownership to each country in the international forums was underlined. In this respect, the **2011 GFMD (EN) approach** and its various regional thematic meetings were deemed highly valuable. Furthermore, migration management challenges, in a global context, require establishing links and synergies between the various existing regional dialogues. In this regard, it was suggested to look at other models of existing experiences in other regions such as Asia and Latin America – particularly the dialogues involving countries which have experienced post-conflict reconstruction processes.

When it comes to the situation in the region, dialogues contributed to a significant improvement with regard to cooperation, notably between Africa and the EU. It was also reported that revolutions of the Arab Spring considerably changed perspectives on the migration phenomena, triggering intensive internal debates and influencing a change of position with regard to international cooperation. Governments of concerned countries revisited or are in the process of revisiting their role and involvement in dialogue frameworks both at bilateral and regional level.

Furthermore, regional dialogues were identified as useful frameworks to promote data collection and support the development of **information sharing mechanisms**, so as to increase quality and efficiency of the work undertaken both at national and regional level. In this regard, the achievements and further potential of the **i-Map platform (EN, FR, AR)** were acknowledged as a supportive tool to national and regional migration policy development. In 2011, the Prague Process joined the i-Map platform, as did the Budapest Process in 2012. Furthermore, it is foreseen that the Rabat Process will join in 2013.

With regard to cross-fertilization among major dialogues, clear complementarities between the **Rabat Process (EN, FR) and the MTM Dialogue** have emerged over the last few years and were underlined during the discussions. The political nature of the Rabat Process, on the one hand, and the technical one of the MTM, on the other hand, support each other. Furthermore, both frameworks have different geographic scopes, thus providing a different context. Suggestions for further development of the Rabat Process, bearing in mind the above mentioned synergies, were formulated – the Rabat Process could become action oriented through the implementation of projects focusing on the regional dimensions. South-South cooperation within the Rabat Process should be enhanced and synergies could be promoted, building on the experience that the MTM is currently developing in this field with the **AMEDIP (EN)** initiative.

Balancing dialogues in their geographic and thematic scopes was also addressed. In this regard, the importance of having a dialogue for the **Northern and Eastern African Routes**, following the example of the West African one has been emphasized. Indeed, participants called for an increased focus on East Africa and the Horn of Africa in particular.

Reinforcing the **role of Regional Economic Communities (REC)** such as **ECOWAS** ([EN](#), [FR](#)) and **COMESA** (EN) was mentioned as a way to promote the development of labour mobility schemes, which would enhance the protection of migrant workers. These schemes would also contribute to absorbing the growing manpower in the context of a demographic and urbanization growth. Focus should be put on the fundamentals of economies, the role of education, and the need to enhance student mobility which would then promote labour mobility and skills development.

At national level, dialogues are also witnessing changes with regard to the States' level of engagement. Turkey, for instance, was seen as a remarkable example of a country which has progressively evolved from being engaged in dialogue to assuming a **leadership role** in dialogue i.e. the Budapest Process. With regard to inter-institutional coordination at national level, a **whole of a government approach** - inter-ministerial holistic approach including all the relevant entities – was identified as a necessary way forward.

For the first time, with the participation of the City of Barcelona, the MTM looked into the local level. Management of migration movement is closely linked to sovereignty and to a great extent remains a State-level issue. However, reality shows that migrants move from a local community to another. Therefore, the **role of local governments is crucial** in order to ensure successful integration processes, given that local authorities are responsible for the inclusion of migrants in their societies. Fostering a dialogue on migration with local governments in order to bridge the gap between the priorities at central level and those at the local one, and enhancing decentralized cooperation appears key to a successful overall migration management.

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### *Working Session III: MTM Partner Agencies' perspectives on the state of play and future opportunities and challenges in their field of expertise*

The session was moderated by Mr. Graham Leese. Participants to the panel were representatives of Europol, Frontex, ICMPD, Interpol, IOM, UN-Habitat, and UNCHR.

Through the prism of MTM Partner Agencies' respective expertise, participants debated on the state of play, and possible future opportunities and challenges in the following fields: protection of migrants, nexus between migration and development, migration and security, and migration and urban governance.

Current trends indicate that for migrants, while still high, **Europe's attractiveness has significantly decreased**. The complexity and rapid evolution of migration patterns leads to the assessment that nowadays there is hardly any country which is not a mix of source, transit, and destination. Countries which less than two decades ago were countries of origin became major countries of destination in the last decade, are now once more becoming countries of emigration. In this regard, it was noticed that with diminished capacities, Europe is no longer able to financially support international cooperation on its own, and that key countries of the Mediterranean neighbourhood could consider increased commitment and leadership. Furthermore, debates and actions are increasingly taking place at South-South level. In this regard, the importance of a **strengthened South-South cooperation** was identified as **an opportunity and a priority**.

Recent or current uncertainty and instability related to conflicts in several countries e.g. Somalia, Libya and subsequently Mali, or Syria have considerable impacts on their respective sub-regions e.g. Horn of Africa, Sahel, or Middle East, and continue to fuel inter- and intra-regional migration.

The Central and East Mediterranean remain the most exposed regions with regard to inter-regional migration. Migration flows, routes, and modus operandi have increasingly shifted and merged, further underlining their mixed nature, and thus the complexity they represent for any migration management system. The increasing involvement of cross-border organised crime groups in the facilitation of illegal entry, misuse of legal channels, and use of false documents calls for a **reinforcement of strategic and operational cooperation among law enforcement institutions**. At the same time, the presence in migration flows of a significant number of persons genuinely in need of protection calls for a **balance between States' border security concerns and the upholding of their international obligations and the protection of human life**. Participants all agree that the death of migrants at sea cannot be an outcome.

The importance of cities as key migration actors was introduced during the MTM 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. City-level is where the impact of globalisation, including migration, is the most felt. This phenomenon will only increase and represent considerable challenges, bearing in mind that **Africa's urban population will double by 2030 and triple by 2050, by then representing more than twice Europe's overall population**. There is an opportunity to address the issues of migration and urban planning and governance, and to strengthen the capacities of local authorities to incorporate domestic and international migration in their urban development.

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#### Working Session IV: Future outlook of the MTM Dialogue

During the last session, based on the various points discussed during the day, Partner States and Partner Agencies expressed their views on the future orientations and priorities of the MTM Dialogue.

Participants underlined the importance of a continued effort to **support knowledge-based policy development** and information collection, processing, and sharing capacities of Partner States. In this regard, the **i-Map platform** in general, and the **MTM i-Map** in particular, as well as their further development and maintenance, was identified as a clear priority for the years to come.

Moreover, the MTM Secretariat was invited to pursue its efforts to **translate dialogue into action**. In this regard, the current MTM South-South orientation was deemed highly beneficial and the **South-South Expert Exchange Mechanism** to be launched within the AMEDIP project seen as an interesting test in developing tools and mechanism to support South-South cooperation.

In addition to the maintenance of the initiatives related to irregular and mixed migration, two main thematic areas of focus were identified as priorities for future MTM activities: 1) **migration and development**, namely actions directed at enhancing the positive roles of the Diaspora for the development of countries of origin, and 2) **labour and professional**

**migration**, namely the creation of schemes which would promote labour mobility and skills development. In line with these priorities, the MTM Secretariat was asked to explore **cooperation with the private sector** which is considered essential in order to ensure the sustainability of actions. Further focus of the MTM on **sustainable reintegration schemes** was also highlighted.

The Rabat Process and MTM Dialogue synergies and complementarities were considered an added-value offering two different levels of action while heading in the same direction. These **Rabat-MTM positive interactions should be further pursued**. Participants also called for more attention to be devoted to working on individual **migration route clusters/specific regions** such as the East Africa migration route and Sahel region.

Finally, UCLG and UN-Habitat were welcomed as Partner Agencies and the recently submitted **City-to-City dimension of the MTM Dialogue was fully endorsed**, thus acknowledging the growing importance of urban bound migration. The MTM Secretariat will also hold further discussions with the League of Arab States and the Council of Europe with regard to their interest in joining the Dialogue as **new MTM Partner Agencies**.

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In the closing session, participants expressed their thankfulness to the Maltese Ministry for Home and Parliamentary Affairs, France, and Switzerland, ICMPD, and the chairs for the excellent meeting arrangements, as well as the fruitful and open discussions. The Maltese Ministry for Home and Parliamentary Affairs as host made closing statements to the 10-Year MTM Anniversary Event.