



**EURO-AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT.**

**CLOSING STATEMENT BY H.E.M MOHAMED BENAÏSSA
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KINGDOM OF MOROCCO.**

RABAT, 11 JULY 2006.

*Ministers,
Dear Friends.*

We have taken a big step forward these last two days. As countries involved, at the highest level, in the migratory phenomenon, we have accomplished a serious and constructive work, exemplified by a franc and taboo-free dialogue and exchange of views, which resulted in the Rabat Declaration as well as a coherent and pragmatic Action Plan.

The Rabat Declaration on the Euro-African partnership for Migration and Development, together with a concrete Action Plan, represent a solid support to the process of finding multidimensional responses to the challenges posed by the migratory phenomenon. Not only do they reflect a common will and reflection, they are first and foremost strong messages, which signal our determination to move forward in terms of controlling the various aspects of this phenomenon.

Our Conference, which is the first of its kind, has made it possible for us to reconcile each country's imperatives and constraints. Countries of origin, transit and destination, have had the opportunity to share their respective experience, to express their needs, to put forward their solutions and, above all, to lay the foundations of a constructive cooperation in our region over the issue of migration.

The main issue at stake today is to turn Africa's development into the asset that could facilitate and strengthen the cooperation between Africa and Europe, in the framework of a partnership driven by solidarity, shared responsibility and complementarity.

The objective is to actually and significantly confirm the decisions made here so as to remedy the dysfunctionalities that we identified by gathering and conversing in a concerted fashion. We shall moreover do so by pointing up the process newly initiated here in Rabat.

Through their remarkable and original attendance, participating countries have put forward daring initiatives in order to solve the phenomenon of illegal migration, whilst taking into consideration the aspirations and constraints that we are confronted to in our fight against the negative effects of this phenomenon.

*Ministers,
Ladies and Gentleman.*

Our being here today also bears a legitimate and justified goal, that of combating the demonisation of migration. Aware of the stakes before us, we have denounced the stigmatisation of this phenomenon, which is altogether a source of mutual enrichment.

For each participant, the management of migration flows now represents an *acquis*, but this would have no consequence if we do not take into account the realities and root causes that motivate irregular migration.

Dear Friends,

All participants contributed to the success of this conference. Allow me, furthermore, to emphasise the contribution of the civil society as well as that of the international and regional organisations, whose reflections converged with ours, with respect to their expertise and their knowledge of the real experience undergone by migrants.

The Rabat meeting is, and will remain, the first step of a significant partnership, which has the merit of finding a common position to face the challenges and deadlines ahead. We all hope that this process will materialise through the objectives that we have set here. **The cycle of dialogue has been launched and the time for concrete measures is ripe.**

I thank you once again for your constructive participation and for your commitment.