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**REPORT OF HIS MAJESTY MOHAMMED VI, KING OF MOROCCO,
AFRICAN LEADER ON THE ISSUE OF MIGRATION
ON THE FOLLOW-UP TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AFRICAN
MIGRATIONS OBSERVATORY IN MOROCCO**

INTRODUCTION

1. At the 28th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, We were designated Leader on Migration Issues.
2. In this capacity, We pledged to spare no effort to make a substantial and concrete contribution to the efforts of our Pan-African Organization whose dual mission is to address the challenges and opportunities posed by the issue of migration.
3. On the occasion of the 29th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, We presented a preliminary report to the African Heads of State and Government in order to develop a coherent African approach to the issue of migration.
4. At the 30th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, We gave concrete expression to this approach in a report that We entitled "Towards an African Agenda on Migration".
5. Conceived in an inclusive approach and unanimously adopted by the African Heads of State and Government, the African Agenda on Migration promotes the development of an innovative and positive approach to migration that integrates regional migration dynamics and works towards the realization of the potential of the migration-development nexus through the prism of human security.
6. The momentum generated by the African Agenda on Migration was outlined in a report we presented to the 32nd Ordinary Session of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union. The report examined in particular the operationalization of the main proposals of the Agenda, which are the creation of an African Migrations Observatory and the appointment of an African Union Special Envoy for Migration. It also presented the achievements and challenges of the Marrakech Global Compact on Migration, adopted on 10 December 2018, for the African continent.
7. More than a year after the adoption of the Marrakech Global Compact, the report that We present to the 33rd Ordinary Session of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union proposes to return to the role of Africa in the new governance of migration.
8. It takes stock of the migration issue in Africa (I); it sets out the essential role of the African Migrations Observatory in migration governance in Africa (II); it affirms the central place of Africa in the implementation of the Marrakech Global Compact (III).

I. THE MIGRATION ISSUE IN AFRICA: A STATE OF PLAY

9. **In 2019, there were 272 million international migrants worldwide**, following an upward trend. However, Africa is experiencing particular dynamics.
10. **The African continent faces major global challenges:** poverty, conflict, insecurity, climate change, but also population growth, youth unemployment and urbanization.

11. **In this context, migration in Africa is a complex issue**, in particular due to the lack of data and the mixed nature of migration flows. In this regard, it should be recalled that African migrants, asylum seekers and forcibly displaced persons often use the same migration routes.

12. **Migration in Africa also suffers from misperception.** It is often associated solely with poverty, while other factors, such as climate change, are at the root of the phenomenon.

13. **Climate change is a driver of forced migration in Africa.** Floods, drought and other effects of climate change are driving millions of African men and women from their homes.

14. **Africa is the continent most affected by the new phenomenon of "climate migrants".** Of the 140 million potential migrants due to climate change, more than half - some 86 million people - could be in sub-Saharan Africa by 2050.

15. **Migration is a factor for development.** Migrants sent \$529 billion to their countries of origin in 2018. These remittances very often exceed official development assistance and foreign direct investment.

16. **However, Africa is the continent that receives the least remittances.** Although remittances to sub-Saharan Africa increased by almost 10 per cent in 2018, they remain the lowest in the world: \$46 billion, compared to \$143 billion in East Asia and the Pacific, 131 in South Asia, 88 in Latin America and 59 in Europe and East Asia.

17. **Africa has the highest remittance transfer costs in the world.** While the global target is 3% (MDG7 target 7), Africa has very high costs, amounting to more than 9%, with no downward trend.

18. **The transfer of funds represents an untapped potential.** It can be a real lever for the endogenous development of the continent. In this sense, the digitalization of remittances must be accompanied by increased traceability and productive and sustainable use of savings by diasporas, in order to create wealth in the long term.

19. **The contribution of migrants to development is not a one-way process.** It is not just about remittances to countries of origin; it also contributes to development within host countries. This is all the more true since a large number of international migrants are in developing countries.

20. **However, stereotypes about African migrants remain a universal misconception.** Security approaches, political instrumentalization and electoral calculations contribute to the distortion of the migration phenomenon.

- **International migration is not African.** Only less than 14% of international migrants are African, i.e. less than 1 in 5 migrants is African. No African country is among the top 10 countries of origin of international migrants.
- **African migration is intracontinental.** Africans hardly emigrate

internationally. Less than 3% of the African population has migrated internationally. African trajectories are not South-North, but South-South. Since 2005, South-South migration has increased faster than South-North migration.

- **Africa is rather a land of immigration than emigration.** Africa receives more migrants than it sends. With an increase of 67% in 10 years, it is the continent that has seen the largest increase in migrants.
- **African migration is intra-regional.** When Africans emigrate, they move to neighboring countries, around poles of attraction and migration hubs. In 2019, more than 8 out of 10 international migrants in sub-Saharan Africa (89%) were born in their region of residence.
- **Intra-regional migration is largely labor migration.** Africans are looking for jobs in the labor markets of neighboring countries.
- **Africa is not at Europe's doorstep.** Africans are not the first asylum seekers in Europe.
- **European immigration is not of African origin.** There is no influx of African throngs into Europe. Less than 12% of total migration flows to Europe come from Africa.

21. **Africa is paying a heavy price in terms of migration.** While only 14% of international migrants originate from our continent, 1/3 of the deaths identified along migration routes are African.

II. THE AFRICAN MIGRATIONS OBSERVATORY: FOR AN ENLIGHTENED GOVERNANCE OF MIGRATION IN AFRICA

22. **The current state of play of the migration issue in Africa demonstrates that stereotypes and untruths related to migration do not stand up to scrutiny.** It is through a fundamental misunderstanding of the migration phenomenon that this distortion takes place. And this distortion is compounded by a lack of internal production of narratives on migration: indeed, the main studies and data on migration are not produced in Africa and are, therefore, disconnected from reality.

23. **It is in response to a structural need for reliable data on migration,** that the *African Migrations Observatory*, which **We have proposed in the framework** of the *African Agenda on Migration*, was established. The proposal stems from the recognition that migration data is as scarce as it is essential and is based on the fundamental idea that better governance of migration requires a significant improvement in quantitative and qualitative data on migration.

24. **The African Migrations Observatory is an institution of the African Union structured around a triple function of understanding, anticipation and action.** The Observatory's activities, which are of a technical and operational nature, will generate a better knowledge of the migration phenomenon, create an African narrative

on migration, provide information and promote the harmonization of efficient migration policies.

25. **Thus, thanks to the Observatory that Morocco will host, Africa will have an advocacy and decision-making tool.** Solid and reliable migration data are essential tools for the development of relevant, effective and realistic policies. They will enable our countries to identify the destinations of our nationals, young people, women and children, to know their itineraries, to assess the dangers and risks they run and also the factors that have led them to leave their homes. It will therefore be a matter of anticipating and acting accordingly, not to harm migrants, but rather to offer them better living conditions, enabling them to contribute to the development of the continent.

26. **Moreover, this regional mechanism for data collection, analysis, management and exchange provides Africa with a lever for development.** The data are all the more useful in that they not only make it possible to know the degree of influence of migrants on the various key sectors for development, but also to evaluate the public policies of African countries in these economic sectors and thus to strengthen the impact of migration on development, both for countries of origin and host countries.

27. **Africa will also gain an instrument for coordination.** The Observatory implies a double coordination: at the national level between the different departments and at the continental level between the different Regional Economic Communities. An up-to-date, exhaustive and comparable database at the regional and international levels is, in fact, dependent on harmonization in terms of collection methodology and definition of concepts.

28. **Morocco's leading role in the design, development and implementation of the Observatory is consubstantial with Our commitment to a new governance of migration.** Morocco has spared no effort to carry out each of the steps aimed at the materialization of Our proposal to set up the African Migrations Observatory.

29. **Morocco has lived up to its commitments** by providing our Organization with modern and equipped premises, in accordance with international norms and standards, which house this new African mechanism and provide it with all **necessary conditions for the effective launching of its activities.**

30. **Therefore, through this report, Morocco, which puts its words into action, is pleased to announce the forthcoming launch** of the *African Migrations Observatory*, following the works of the Summit. The choice of this date has all its relevance, in that it comes at a time when action on migration must, absolutely, follow its course, maintain momentum and remain at the heart of African priorities.

III. AFRICA: A CENTRAL ACTOR IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MARRAKESH GLOBAL COMPACT FOR MIGRATION

31. **The Observatory is also a tool for the implementation of the Marrakech Global Compact for Migration**, which recognizes the need to maximize the overall benefits of migration, while taking into account the risks and challenges faced by migrants and communities in countries of origin, transit or destination.

32. **The Global Compact for Migration represents a historic opportunity for us Africans** to speak with one voice, to improve international cooperation on migration and to enhance the contribution of migration to sustainable development. It also offers an opportunity to better harness the benefits of migration, through enhanced use of regular migration channels, protection of migrants' rights, and new investment for development.

33. **In this context, and while the Marrakesh Compact for Migration was the crowning moment of several months of negotiations, during the drafting process we argued in favour of a Pact that is in Africa's interest.** We have worked to ensure that this Pact is based on international human rights law as well as on all the international conventions and treaties relating to the fight against organized crime, trafficking in persons and slavery, the fight against climate change, the rights of migrant workers and the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development.

34. **At each stage of the process of the Compact's adopting, the participation of the Kingdom of Morocco has been marked by Our mandate.** Africa was thus at the heart of the Message We addressed to the participants. We affirmed on that occasion: *The Marrakech conference was, above all, a call to action. Africa is already responding to this call! It does not intend to be on the sidelines. Africa will not be the object of the Global Compact. It will be an actor in it. A central actor.*

35. **However, The Global Compact is not an end in itself. It only makes sense through its effective implementation.** Therefore, we are called upon to develop together a regional plan to implement it; it will be reinforced by national action plans to ensure that our migration policies are in harmony with the Global Compact's overall objective.

36. **The African Agenda for Migration resulting from Our Leadership Mandate sets out our roadmap.** It anticipated the importance of the knowledge of migration dynamics enshrined in the Global Compact, by dedicating to this objective a fully-fledged institution: the African Migrations Observatory, which was supported by name by the Compact.

37. **Our roadmap is designed around 4 pillars:** informed and effective African national policies; sub-regional coordination through the Regional Economic Communities, whose role in integration is undeniable; a continental perspective making migration in our African continent a lever of co-development, a pillar of South-South cooperation and a vector of solidarity between our countries; and a responsible international partnership that should facilitate migration and mobility in a safe, orderly and regular manner.

38. **Our vision is in convergence with the regional dimension granted by the Marrakech Global Compact for the implementation of its provisions,** in that it encourages, in its article 50, the United Nations regional economic commissions or regional consultative bodies to review the implementation of the Global Compact in their respective regions, starting in 2020.

39. **In this context and in line with Our mandate as Leader on the Issue of Migration in Africa, We propose to host, in 2020, the African Regional Forum for**

the Implementation of the Marrakech Global Compact. It will serve as the African preparatory meeting for the 2022 International Migration Review Forum.

40. **Morocco suggests hosting this first African Regional Forum on 10 December 2020 in Marrakech** to commemorate the second anniversary of the Marrakech Global Compact and to coincide with the celebration of the International Human Rights Day. To take stock of its African implementation, We are convinced that there is no more significant and symbolic setting than the very place where it was adopted.

41. **Morocco is willing to share its national experience in migration management** - recognized by the United Nations as a model that can inspire other countries - with sister African countries that so wish. Our national immigration and asylum strategy, which is at once comprehensive, humanistic and responsible, is in fact perfectly in line with the provisions and objectives of the Marrakesh Global Compact.

42. Similarly, **the regularization operations from which undocumented migrants have benefited in Morocco are part of the Pact's efforts to promote legal channels for migration.** Migrants' access to education, work and health not only contribute to their integration, but also to the creation of favorable conditions that enable them to contribute to the enrichment and development of the places where they settle.

43. **Accordingly, the measures taken by Morocco to eradicate the smuggling of migrants** and the adoption of a legal framework to combat human trafficking are designed to reduce the situations of fragility and risks faced by migrants and to protect and respect their rights.

44. **Morocco's migration policy is a fundamental dimension of the Kingdom's African policy**, in that it aims, inter alia, to combat the root causes of migration. Through the integration of the migration-development nexus into its public policies, Morocco is effectively helping to promote the emergence, development and prosperity of the African continent as a whole.

45. **Moreover, it is in coordination and cooperation with its neighbors and partners** that Morocco implements its migration policy in order to ensure that migration to and from Morocco takes place in a safe, orderly and lawful manner.

CONCLUSION

46. This report has enabled Us to take stock of the migration issue in the continent and to recall the key role of the African Migrations Observatory in migration governance in Africa. The Observatory is a response to a structural need for reliable data on migration. It informs Africa on the evolution of migration dynamics and provides it with a tool to defend and support decision-making, in essence, a lever for development and an instrument for coordination.

47. Furthermore, by establishing the African Migrations Observatory, Africa is implementing the Marrakech Global Compact for Migration. Africa is thus establishing itself as a central actor in the implementation of the Marrakech Global Compact. By recognizing the importance of mutually beneficial migration governance for countries of origin, transit and destination, our continent is living up to its commitments.

48. Through the holding, in Morocco, of an African regional forum on the implementation of the Compact, our Continent is assuming its responsibilities, thereby maintaining the necessary momentum around a multilateral management of the migration issue that is beneficial to the people of Africa, and particularly to its youth.

49. It is Our hope that Our mandate as Leader on the issue of migration will find its main focus in African youth. Development-oriented migration policies will provide our youth with new opportunities that make migration a choice, and certainly not a necessity.

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