

Fortress or Area of Freedom?
Euro-Mediterranean Border Management

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Conference Documentation

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Introduction

On 15 May 2009, the Italian coast guard forcibly returned 227 migrants to Libya without identifying their nationalities or screening for refugee status. Italian Minister of Interior Roberto Maroni publicly announced, "Today, in the name of all countries of the European Union, we have developed a new model to fight clandestine immigration — that is, to repulse at sea all those who try to enter illegally."

On 31 March 2009, more than 200 African migrants or the so-called 'boat people' died after their boat sank off the coast of Libya. Dozens of migrants die yearly crossing the Mediterranean Sea from North Africa to Europe and the Gulf of Aden from Somalia to Yemen.

Prior to the upcoming EU parliamentary elections control of the irregular migration in the Mediterranean region seems to be a challenging issue for the authorities of pertinent EU Member States as they seek to satisfy the conflicting demands of voters who expect humanity, but are also wary of illegal immigration.

In the light of these issues and as a follow-up to the "European Governance of Migration" conference (in September 2008), the Heinrich Böll Foundation in Berlin held an international conference "Fortress or Area of Freedom? Euro-Mediterranean Border Management" in cooperation with the Robert Bosch Stiftung and the British Council. Renowned experts from politics, academics, media and human rights organisations from Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, as well as representatives of governments, the European Commission, the African Union and other international organisations gathered in order to discuss and suggest policy recommendations on the issues that included:

- Security and border policies of the European Union (regulation, problems, recommendations)
- Trends in European labour migration (push and pull factors, circular migration, impact of the financial crisis)
- Human security and irregular migration (local patterns, boat people, trafficking, human rights, intentions and outcome of migration)
- EU-Africa partnership (cooperation, development policies, Diaspora communities)

The following is a documentation of major discussions during the two-day conference.

19 May 2009

Opening remarks

Ralf Fücks, Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Berlin

Viola Seeger, Robert Bosch Stiftung, Stuttgart

Michael Bird, British Council, Berlin

Ralf Fücks opened the conference by welcoming participants to Berlin and to the new building of the Heinrich Böll Foundation. He noted that the need for action in the field of Euro-Mediterranean border management is pressing. Mr. Fücks emphasized that coming to Europe presents a high risk for refugees. "In an attempt to provide better life for their families and dependents they meet dangerous barriers to cross into Europe." Focus of the European Union (EU) has been controlling its borders in a restrictive manner. Mr. Fücks admitted that the EU countries cannot open their borders for everyone. But he believes that the militarized protection of the borders should not be the way to manage migration flows. "We need to guarantee the rights of refugees to improve living conditions in developing countries," he stated.

Mr. Fücks went on stating that despite the global economic crises that will strongly influence the national labour markets of EU countries, due to Europe's demographic situation, it needs migrants to fill its labour market. So the issue of migration is and will remain important for Europe. The conference "Fortress or Area of Freedom? Euro-Mediterranean Border Management" is a follow-up to the conference "European Governance of Migration" that was held in September 2008 and the conference's aims are to shed light on the border regime of the EU in regard to the Mediterranean and North African countries, and to explore the "push and pull" factors affecting migration between these regions.

Viola Seeger, a representative of the Robert Bosh Foundation said that the issue of migration is hotly debated globally. She claimed that the range of political discussions on migration is bigger than the range of actions. The Robert Bosh Foundation eagerly supported the idea of the conference, as the foundation aims to raise awareness of politicians regarding the issues of migration. Ms. Seeger stated that, due to demographic, political and socio-economic factors, migration to Europe will increase.

Director of British Council in Berlin, Michael Bird stated that British Council is an international cultural relations organization. Seventy five years ago British Council was founded as a response to Fascism in Europe in 1934. At that time Europe was becoming, not the area for freedom, but a fortress. The British Council aimed to build a dialog in those difficult times. He said, "We believe that our future depends on people of all cultures working together on foundations of education, mutual understanding, respect and trust. The British Council has a vision what we call 'Next Generation Europe' and the huge proportion of the next generation of Europeans are and will continue to be migrants".

Film Presentation: "I Broke my Future – Paradise Europe" (2007)

Carla Gunnesch, Film Director, Berlin

The film I Broke my Future – Paradise Europe by Carla Gunnesch is about the lives of 'undocumented' migrants from Africa in Germany. As she put it, the media do not cover these lives and the kinds of difficulties they face in Germany. Her aim in the film is to raise awareness of the German audience about the lives of undocumented migrants.

The film tells stories of African undocumented migrants in Germany who reach destination of their dreams - Europe - overcoming difficult obstacles, in hopes for a better life. They risk their lives, facing hunger and disease on their way to "Paradise Europe". However, when they reach their destination, their expectations about good life with dignity and security are met with disappointment. They have difficult time to find a decent job and they are not secure from being cheated by various employers. The migrants also experience harassment and regular, humiliating police check ups. Since it is hard to find work but there is need to support not only oneself but one's family back home in Africa, the migrants are often forced to engage themselves with illegality, being left with no other choice.

One of the protagonists in the film, Yasar said that it is not a part of his culture to sell drugs or to be aggressive. He was forced to such an illegal act because he did not have any other way to survive. He also had high expectations from his family in Africa. The family believes that he is in paradise and earns money for supporting them.

One of the comments from the conference audience concerned the necessity to show this film in Africa. It was said that people in Africa should understand what the reality is in Europe.

Another comment addressed the gender aspect. It was said that the film does not tell women's story but only men's. The commentator mentioned the harsh conditions of lives of African women. To this, Ms. Gunnesch replied that it was an issue of access. She could not find female characters to appear in the film.

Keynote Speech: Poverty Meets Fortress

Fatou Diome, Writer, Strasbourg

Fatou Diome, a Senegalese writer based in Strasbourg has written a book *Belly of the Atlantic* that deals foremost with the issue of migration. "The children of Africa come to Europe and jeopardise their lives there. The belly is Africa that devours everything that comes from Europe. There are huge amounts of money sent from Europe to Africa, and Africa devours that money without producing anything in return." In the book she describes migrants that come to Europe and do not know why they came, and once they return home, they do not have the courage to tell people about the poverty they endure in Europe.

As it was shown in the film *I Broke my Future*, there are two situations that migrants face noted Ms. Diome. The first is imagining what it would be like when you arrive in Europe and the second is what actually happens upon arrival. There is also an aspect of depiction of others which relates to both Europeans' views of Africans and visa versa.

One of the main causes of migration from Africa is the economic situation. Many highly qualified Africans cannot find jobs in their countries. Since the agricultural sector is completely destroyed many people from rural areas migrate to cities to find jobs. This leads to increased growth of unemployment in the cities. As a result these people start thinking to migrate to Europe in search of a better life. They believe that it is the land of wealth, that it is paradise. They get such an image about Europe through TV, films and other media sources which filter information about Europe. Due to the high illiteracy rate, majority of people do not even get information from the media. "When 'illegal' migrants come to Europe, in most cases they face harsh conditions. They take any risk for the sake of survival. And they often have nothing to loose, nothing to risk." Ms. Diome pointed out that one can see that a migrant on the one hand crashes into the "forest" of Europe and on the other hand he is caught by very great expectations from home.

Ms. Diome noted that Europe is becoming more and more restrictive in allowing people to enter its territory and live there. She believes that if the borders were more open and people could travel more freely there would not be irregular migration.

Ms. Diome further drew attention to the problem of the image of the other, and stereotyping of the other. She argued that the image of Africans that Europeans have is based on the past experience of slavery and colonialism. The images and depictions of Africans that exist today have roots in those times. Much stricter migration legislation and negative media coverage also contribute to negative images of the foreigners. Thus migrants are the lowest strata of the society. They do not have security and they are relegated to certain low prestige jobs. For example, "African women are believed to be good babysitters and house servants but not qualified workers even if they have proper qualifications."

Related to the problem of low-status roles and negative images, Ms. Diome pointed out the problem of exploitation of Africa by Europe which can be comparable with that of colonial times. But today that exploitation has a new face. If before, Europe exploited Africa's natural resources, nowadays it is exploiting its human resources. She stated that Europe selects highly educated and skilled Africans for itself thus devastating the continent. This situation is not beneficial for the development of Africa, but rather the opposite. She claimed that this is an unacceptable relationship between Africa and Europe, and as unacceptable as colonialism used to be.

Ms. Diome stated what we have to fight is not migration but poverty, which is the primary cause of migration. Europe should not support Africa's dictatorship regimes for its own interests. Equal relationship between the global North and South is vital. It is about humanitarian help and about guaranteeing development; only under those conditions one can hope to keep illegal migrants from jumping to their deaths she concluded.

Panel Discussion: Poverty Meets Fortress

Peter Altmaier, Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Berlin

Omid Nouripour, Parliamentary Group Alliance 90/The Greens a. M.

Ambassador Mahamat S. Annadif, Permanent Representative of the African Union at the European Union, Brussels

Klaus Rösler, Director of Operations Divisions, Frontex, Warsaw

Chair: **Melinda Crane**, Deutsche Welle TV, Berlin

Peter Altmaier discussed that the EU has made progress in its common migration policy. He said that only 5 years ago every country in Europe implemented its individual policies without endorsing an alliance with neighbouring countries. During the last four years the European Union passed a common migration pact and created the agency FRONTEX. Main pillars of EU policy on migration aimed at (1) fight against illegal migration, and (2) curbing illegal migration through soft approaches. He emphasized that it is important for European countries to cooperate on the matter of migration and that they should jointly tackle the problems of illegal migration.

Mr. Altmaier claimed that, "In the last 50 years Europe has never been a fortress. There are about 15 million people living with migration background. The majority of them came completely legally". And further he stated, "In the Mediterranean we had immigration of several million of illegal job seekers via Greece, Spain and Italy. They found employments as illegal workers without decent conditions. They hoped after several years they could be transferred

into regular status. More people came while others waited for regularization. Italy and Spain saw the numbers are increasing continuously. Hence they decided to end this practice of regulations and to curb illegal immigration more in favour of legal immigration."

Mr. Altmaier further argued that there is a need to cooperate with the countries of origin and to open the possibilities for legal migration. Highly qualified migration can be of mutual benefit for Europe and Africa rather than serving the interests of only Europe and leaving no prospects for the development of Africa. Thus, he proposed to consider temporary migration policies. Mr. Altmaier mentioned that Europeans would like to see more intellectual exchange between Africa and Europe. In this way, people could see that Africa is more than just starvation, hunger, misery and illegal immigration.

Klaus Rösler started his speech with explaining the position of FRONTEX. He said that FRONTEX is a coordinating agency that supports and coordinates the measures of EU Member States to deal with illegal migration and that it does not play an empowering role but a supporting one. The agency works to establish the identity of migrants and clarify where migrants come from so that the people who really need protection are protected. In its activity FRONTEX emphasizes the protection of human lives and rights claimed Mr. Rösler.

Mr. Rösler stated that more and more Member States are ready to participate in the controlling and patrolling measures at the external borders of the EU. There is genuine solidarity among the EU Member States he said. "They do not perceive migration pressure as a domestic threat but they want to make a contribution to solving the problem by sending troops and providing materials. They want to share the burden with those countries that are access doors to Europe." Mr. Rösler added, "The legal role according to Frontex etude is not to order and carry out executive orders. Command and control stays within member states".

Omid Nouripour had controversial responses to what had been said by previous speakers. The first one concerned temporary migration. He agreed that there is a need to establish channels for legal migration but that channels have to make sense. When talking about the temporary pact concluded with Ghana he stated that it is a classical repetition of the mistake with guest-workers policy of Germany. Both sides had illusions about the temporary character of those migrants. But most of the guest-workers stayed in Germany and very few returned to their homeland. He argued for reconciliation of different measures. Mr. Nouripour expressed, "Germany certainly needs 'circular' and permanent migration but there needs to be a certain transparency and permeability when it comes to staying permanently in Germany. But these channels have been closed by the EU".

The second point addressed the status of Frontex. There is a need to reconcile and coordinate border protection of the EU. However, he stated that the use of Frontex is the wrong approach because of its status. "Frontex is an organization which has executive tasks but which has the legal status of agency. The agencies and the EU are independent of one another. So they are not automatically subject to the legal control of the European Parliament." He believed that when the agency assumes executive tasks it is absolutely necessary for the agency to be controlled by the parliament. Thus claiming that Frontex is not the right approach, he stated that there is a need for standardization when it comes to border protection in the EU. He also raised doubts about the genuine solidarity that exists among EU countries when it comes to protection of the external borders.

Ambassador Mahamat Annadif claimed there is a need to highlight the consequences as well as the root causes of migration. He elaborated more on the root causes. One of his observations was that, despite agreements that were made with the EU, the European partners try to conclude bilateral agreements, which in fact do not solve the problem of migration because they affect the whole range of other issues and aspects. He also argued

that more industrialization and creation of jobs in Africa will help to fight the root causes of migration.

Mr. Annadif expressed his wish that initiatives that focus on training Africans should not be one-sided. "All these kind of initiatives require consultations with the recipient side. One-sided measures are not effective. We need integrated policies and measures in which positive relations are promoted". He stressed the importance of mutual trust when talking about any kind of cooperation. He believes that the role of media is very large in this regard.

Reception and Music: Shri with DJ Badmarsh & VJ Oli Sorrentino, London

With the invitation of the British Council, musicians Shri, DJ Badmarsh & VJ Oli Sorrentino came together from London for a special performance for the evening reception. The reception was open for public beyond the conference participants.

The world famous musicians' unique blend of electronic dance music with Indian sounds and live instruments captivated the listeners with Shri on tablas, bass, Indian flutes, vocals, percussion and effects, DJ Badmarsh on decks (Breakbeat, Drum & Bass, Dubstep,) and Oli working up some intense visuals and moods onstage.

20 May 2009

Keynote Speech: Africa-Europe Dynamic: The Push and Pull Factors of Migration

Elizabeth Adjei, Director Ghana Immigration Services, Accra

Elizabeth Adjei discussed that the failure of globalisation to achieve fairer trade rules for poorer countries, achieve sustainable growth and to build stable states, has led to the situation of conflict in many of the countries of the south. Millions of people have been displaced by violence and human rights abuses, as well as natural disaster, forcing people to seek refuge in other countries. Some try to obtain asylum in richer countries where they hope to find greater security and freedom as well as better livelihood.

Ms. Adjei identified two major factors which prompt people to move: pull (demand) and push (supply). Pull factors include changing demographics, labour market needs, higher wages and human security. Powerful economic and demographic factors in both south and north can be attributed to this. Some migration is necessary for the stabilization of the economies. As European population shrinks, both skilled and unskilled labour has become necessary. Migrant workers are critical, particularly in sector where the reduction labour cost is vital for competitiveness. Ms. Adjei went on to list some of the motivating factors:

- *The willingness of employers to hire irregular migrants for lower wages in spite of government anti migration policies is a key motivation.*
- *Europe's geographical proximity to Africa makes it very attractive destination. Sometimes determined migrants can reach Europe by foot.*
- *Availability and advancement in opportunities like further education, training and exposure are also a factor. There are several opportunities that do not exist in developing countries. Foreign tertiary institutions now periodically open admission exhibitions for prospective undergraduate or postgraduate studies. This has a profound impact on the desire to migrate.*
- *Sustained economic growth has led to the demand for well trained professionals in the developed world. Well trained professionals from developing countries are being enticed to go and work in developed countries with better salaries and working condition. This explains the exodus of doctors and other medical personnel from some parts of Africa.*
- *Advancement in communication and access to satellite images contributes in large measure to reinforcing stereotypes and perceptions of Europe as an area of affluence. Modern communication has also made the transfer of cultural influences like music and fashion at reach.*
- *Remittances accruing to individual migrant, family and community are the most important benefits of migration. They are often referred to as "the magic of migration". Over the last couple of decades there has been tremendous increase in remittances.*

Ms. Adjei further discussed that Europe has responded to the persistent and increasing migration trend from Africa with more restrictive immigration policies by externalising its borders through Europol and FRONTEX. Europe is also putting North African countries under intense pressure to adopt restrictive immigration laws and regulations and to intensify joint border controls. "This move has largely failed to achieve its objectives as it has helped to fuel the migration industry of brokers, smugglers and traffickers," noted Ms. Adjei. Indications are that most migrants are prepared to undertake extreme risks, often with tragic consequences to life to reach their goal. "The failure of the increased restriction can be summed up in the words of an expert, who referred to it as the theory of the 'forbidden fruit', the more restriction there is, the more motivated and determined migrants are", said Ms. Adjei.

Ms. Adjei stated some facts referring to the International Organisation for Migration the number of irregular migrants has not declined despite increased spending on enforcement measures in major destination countries. This is because the push factors in countries of origin including poverty, unemployment and crises and the pull factors in countries of destination including higher wages, job opportunities and safety have not changed. Further, there are insufficient frameworks and mechanisms to allow regular migration to meet labour shortages of expanding economies in the EU.

In concluding part of her speech, Ms. Adjei advised following measures to be considered: States must respect the rights of individuals to leave their countries in search of better opportunities elsewhere and commit themselves to safeguard the right of migrants in the process. States must design migration policies and structures which are of mutual interest to both countries, and also follow-up with dialogue, cooperation and migration diplomacy. Socio-economic and security issues in developing countries must be immediately addressed through collaborative developmental efforts. Current approaches to migration and development have ignored seeing migration as a source of livelihood and a force for change, and instead the approach largely has been reduced by the developed countries to security of their citizens, control of migration and remittances. This approach must be reconsidered.

Roundtable 1 – In search of Security: High Risk at Any Cost?

Yayi Bayam Diouf, Women's Association against Illegal Migration, Thiaroye

Pippo Costella, On the Road, Martinsicuro

Prof. Loren Landau, Director Forced Migration Studies Programme, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

Chair: **Dr. Derek Lutterbeck**, Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, Malta

The roundtable was put together to analyse the enormous dangers migrants have to go through in search of security from socio-economic and political threats. The panelists with different backgrounds approached the issue from three different perspectives: (1) The role of women in raising awareness against illegal migration, and the need for social and economic development in Africa (2) African Impacts of European Immigration Policy (3) Experiences in trafficking in human beings in Europe.

Ms. Yayi Bayam Diouf started off her presentation by relating the story of how she lost her only son with 80 others on the high seas. This is the reason why the Women's Association Against Illegal Migration was formed by women who have lost their children under the same circumstances, "in order to give the women a voice and raise awareness by organising ourselves".

She stated that although most young people know they might die in the process of wanting to migrate illegally, they still embark on the journey. She attributed the reason for this to lack of jobs and the possibilities to develop themselves. "They lack opportunities and perspectives in Africa. Our children are frustrated that's why they head for the oceans."

Women have tried through enlightenment campaigns and job creation programmes to stop people from embarking on illegal migration. In the course of the association's enlightenment work, many young people come to for counselling, they try to dissuade young people who want to travel by telling them that illegal migration leads to death. The association also tries to explain the difficulties and the EU anti migration laws to the young people.

"As a way of dissuading the youths we decided to develop symbols. For example each time we hear that another young person has died, we put on a red band around our arms", shared

Ms. Diouf. Many young people have heard about the Association's campaigns also through media and they now think twice before they migrate.

She cited the example of Mali where entire families have disappeared as a result of migration.

She took a critical look at FRONTEX, saying that although FRONTEX was set up to combat illegal migration, it has a wrong direction of putting unnecessary pressure on Africans trying to migrate, which often leads to death on the high seas.

Loren Landau explained that the European migration policy – particularly its ever more restrictive and dehumanising sets of controls – is influencing African border and migration practice. Through the efforts of the International Organisation for Migration IOM, which helps to train officials and assists in repatriation of refugees, the anti trafficking agenda of the EU has been so projected to the point that migration continues to be framed as a law-enforcement concern, to the detriment of reforming a faulty asylum or migration policy.

Mr. Landau cited the example of South Africa as a case in point where through aid, political dialogues and 'capacity building', the EU is gradually winning allies in their ongoing campaign to legitimise tightened border controls in Africa.

Pippo Costella started off his presentation by drawing attention to the recent action of Italy, by returning rescued migrants back to Libya, though, Libya has not signed the 1951 UN Refugee Convention. According to him this was a violation of the Geneva Convention.

He also informed the audience that Italy had introduced a bill which makes illegal migration to Italy criminal and said it infringed on migrants fundamental human rights.

His presentation was based on the practical experience he had had as a member of the Expert Group on Trafficking in Human Beings of the EU Commission and from working with an Italian NGO "On The Road" – an organisation providing assistance and protection on human rights for victims of trafficking.

According to him, the Expert Group released a report in 2004 and 2007 which revealed a number of indicators from member states on anti-trafficking policies. This report re-structures the notion of trafficking and provides an interesting perspective in trying to reframe the issue of migration.

Third, is the process of the informalisation of the labour market that creates contexts of vulnerability again. He pointed out that in Europe there was a growing trend in terms of informal economy – illegal economy or black market and that this was a structural part of the economy in the European Union. Though this is very difficult to recognise, it is nevertheless important to take these into consideration. For example unregulated labour market creates the vulnerability.

The fourth point is the security paradigm of creating the impression that "migrants are threatening our security", and in this sense they are perceived or proposed as threats to the public opinion and this leads to create very rigid migration policies.

the opinion of the speakers was unanimous that EU border restrictions have not only failed to achieve its desired result of deterrence, but actually helped to fuel migration and the business of brokers, traffickers and smugglers. As a result most of the speakers advocated a more humane migration policy that would allow some measure of free movement of migrants in and out of the EU.

Another point of agreement was facing the reality of challenges of human mobility as a source of livelihood and a force of change. Failure to create legal routes endangers people's lives and their means of livelihood. And that states ought to respect the rights of individuals to leave their countries of origin in search of better opportunities and to commit themselves to protect and safeguard the rights and lives of migrants within the process.

Roundtable 2 – In Search of Cheap Labour: Jobs for the “Undocumented”?

Prof. Mehdi Lahlou – Institute National de Statistique et d'Economie Appliquee, Rabat
Hakam El Asri – Director, Labour Migration Partnership, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Paris
Chair: **Dr. Jean-Pierre Cassarino** – International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization, Turin

The chair of the roundtable, Dr. Jean-Pierre Cassarino opened the roundtable discussion by stating that the distinction between legal and illegal migrants is not defined in international norms. In the universal declaration of human rights any person has a right for decent work and social security regardless of whether a person is legal or illegal. Mr. Cassarino expressed his worry about the fact that the hierarchy of priorities has treated migration predominantly as a legal and security issue rather than as labour market issue. Hence there is the distinction between legal and illegal migration which is extremely pervasive in the current talks on migration on the bilateral level, as well as the international level.

Hakam El Asri pointed out that there is a real paradigm shift toward migration in general and labour migration in particular. He claimed that “The migration phenomenon is dealt with in a global way mainly in three components: Fighting illegal migration, promoting legal migration and trying to implement policies and practices with win-win purpose, linking migration with development aim.” First thing to be done is certainly the recognition of the positive impacts of migration, which strongly contributes to employment expansion in the EU Member States believes Mr. El Asri.

Further Mr. El Asri explained that European states have, and will always have uncertainty to document and to assess the undocumented phenomenon. “Discussing undocumented migrants’ labour does not mean discussing the whole illegal work phenomenon which concerns also regular migrants and nationals,” said Mr. El Asri. “Moreover, often undocumented workers are employed well below their skill levels. This situation results in a kind of deskilling -the process by which skilled labour within an economy is not used at its right level- which also means that when we talk about brain drain from origin countries, it doesn't always mean that there is necessarily a brain gain in the receiving countries. That might imply that this specific skilled migration results only in a ‘brain waste’,” said Mr. El Asri.

Then certainly such process of ‘brain waste’ in turn has important implications on efforts of creating win-win situation. Mr. El Asri advised that “Since the migrants occupy low skilled and underpaid jobs, the countries of origin might be losing out not only by the phenomenon of brain drain. But this very brain waste has also a heavy cost in terms of remittances since the wages their migrants receive are lower than a normal situation where their qualifications are recognised.”

The impact of migration is also largely determined by the nature of employment opportunities and positions the new migrants will seize in the destination countries argued Mr. El Asri. “The new migrants will tend to occupy the same occupations as previous migrants of the same origin. This phenomenon explains also the fact that labour migration has a modest effect on the wages of native workers. Paradoxically, during global recession as the present economic

down turn, foreign workers, third country migrants (regular workers) are the first to be affected", concluded Mr. El Asri.

Speaking about how European and African countries are jointly addressing the issue of undocumented workers Mehdi Lahlou discussed the EU pact on immigration and asylum that was accepted last October. He discussed three main principles of this pact: the first principle is about managing the alternative labour market according to a principle of national preference. "It means that interests of the nationals of every European country in the job market will be served first. Only when this category of people is not found to take certain jobs, migrants will then be considered for employment." He noted that this concerns only legal migrants. According to the second principle, the EU countries agreed to fight against illegal migration. Lastly the third principle, which he argued is a contradictory one, holds that the link between migration and development important. Mr. Lahlou claimed that there is a major contradiction in holding that migration can be alternative form of development for Africa, when the first two above-mentioned principles are also being applied.

Mr. Lahlou underlined that irregular migrant workers contribute massively to the economies of countries like Italy or Spain, increasing their market competitiveness compared to African countries. Migrant workers contribute to the production of cheaper agricultural products in countries like Italy and Spain stated Mr. Lahlou. Consequently irregular migration and absence of mechanisms that would consider the interests of both receiving and sending countries negatively impact development in the countries of origin.

Roundtable 3 - Migration vs. Security? Border Management in the Euro-Mediterranean

Dr. Henk van Houtum, Head of the Nijmegen Centre for Border Research, Nijmegen
Manuel Ferrer Muñoz, Centro Europeo de Estudios sobre Flujos Migratorios, Canary Islands
Prof. Mustafa Omar Attir, Director, Center for Sustainable Development, Tripoli
Chair: **Julien Simon**, Programme Manager for Mediterranean Transit Migration Dialogue, Vienna

Julien Simon opened the roundtable discussion by bringing narrowing down the topic of EU's external border management into border security, as the topic border management encompasses issues such as trade, sanitary, establishment of fictive borders, and so on. Debates about migrants' crossing over the Mediterranean is a highly sensitive topic, stated Mr. Simon, migrants are human beings and consequences of their movements have strong effect in contrast to movement of goods. Mr. Simon also added that the issue of migration and irregular migration across the Mediterranean is not only focused on the area, but far reaches till India, Syria.

Migrants' images are often framed by prejudiced public perception and media coverage. During his speech Henk van Houtum stressed that "The difference between the good tourists and the evil illegal migrants on the southern shores of the EU is seen as normal and immanent." Tourists are short-stay travellers, who come to enjoy the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. By contrast, illegal migrants are seen as barbarians who are suspicious and *not* of interest, who allegedly come in large numbers and threaten public order and security. In the media coverage of migration there is a citing of *floods*, *streams*, *masses*, and even *tsunamis* against which borders or walls have to be erected in order to prevent *flooding*, claimed Mr. Van Houtum.

This influx of 'others' is considered overwhelming when there is an apparent shortage of space for identity construction believes Mr. Van Houtum. The influx of the 'undocumented' or the 'undocumented' is considered and imagined to be dangerous for the fulfilment of being

European in terms of authority, citizenship and identity, and for the economic well-being and public safety (protection) of the Europeans. He added that "Moral panic incited by the media is the general factor for the imagined lack of space which makes people feel uncomfortable and the familiar alienated." The erection of a border is then an often used strategy. The migrants' flow into Europe raises alongside the militarization of the EU's external borders resulting in the colour of the sea turning increasingly bloody red, concluded Mr. Van Houtum.

Manuel Ferrer Muñoz started his speech by explaining that the Canary Islands constitute one of the access doors to the Schengen space, even when it is geographically hard to reach as it is lost in the immensity of the Atlantic Ocean. Mr. Ferrer Muñoz went on stating that there is no human power capable of containing the migrant tide. All efforts to hold that movement are useless. Besides, *"they are egoistic, selfish, and blind"*.

The indisputable consequence is that the European politics regarding control of migrant flows and the regulation of the right to asylum require a deep revision. Some of the solutions that have come up to the fore to confront the phenomenon of irregular migration are nothing more than sloppy remedies claimed Mr. Ferrer Muñoz. "For example, Spain has come up with the legal figure of social entrenchment (*arraigo social*), that allows for the regularization of the people who find themselves in a situation of administrative irregularity. For that it is needed to prove that they have been in the country for three years and that they have a job offer. But just how is a person supposed to finance herself for three years if she is not allowed to work?" More reasonable to ask is, what happens if at the end of those three years this person does not find a job offer? Evidently, in this case, the legal norm presents itself as a clear invitation to illegality.

Perhaps the question we should be asking is rather: "Is there a sincere political will from the European Union Member States to facilitate the process of integration for migrants? To me, it seems like there is no such a will, at least in Spain: if there was such a will, how can we explain the administrative inefficiency, the scandalous delay of legal proceedings, the disproportion between the high costs and exaggerated spending in border control, on the one hand, and the irrelevant quantities invested to offer job opportunities and housing to those people entering the country, on the other?"

What we should aim at is changing the problems at their roots, and we can only do that by gaining knowledge about the state of affairs in the origin countries. The designers of these policies could use some walking along the streets of cities like Bamako, Dakar, Saint-Louis or Nuadibú; or perhaps visiting the houses where persons crowd together waiting for the moment to start the adventure of jumping into Europe, without giving a thought about the obstacles that documents represent, without even wanting to look around them to count the number of deaths among relatives and friends who had the same dream before. How can we judge over asylum right without knowing closely the motives that pull the citizens of the Western Sahara, now incorporated to Morocco, and the Ivory Coast to apply for it?

Politics cannot ignore reality and reality, which is very stubborn, tells us that the walls and barriers are not solutions. Let us save some resources that we have spent on the walls and barriers, then, and let us think about some more profitable investments concluded Mr. Ferrer Muñoz.

Another main corridor for the access to the Schengen zone is Libya. Many reports and media coverage has been portraying Libya as a magnet for poor Africans stopping off on their way to Europe. Libyan government officials are also blamed for crook deals. According to EU officials dealing with illegal migration, Libya's contribution to the problem of illegal migration across the Mediterranean Sea is rather large.

Mustafa Omar Attir explained the situation concerning migration in Libya. "Libya's population is small even if it is geographically a vast territory. At the same time, Libya hosts up to 1.5 million irregular migrants officially, who are attracted to working at service industries and building sites that are springing up as the country emerges from years of sanctions."

Mr. Attir explained that Libya has a law that encourages foreigners to come and work in Libya. "Job contract and time limit are part of the regulation. But of course, many Arabs and Africans did stay after their job was done." According to Mr. Attir most migrants are Sub-Saharan Africans mainly coming from Niger, Chad, Sudan, Algeria. Most migrants belong to same tribe or family. There are also migrants entering Libya from South East Asia usually having destination-Europe in mind.

Europe criticizes certain Libya's policies such as the open-door policy toward foreigners. Mr. Attir clarified that such policy has been in-place during the last forty years, while illegal migrants' trips from Libya's shores is a rather newer development. "Variables which worth to be looked at include cooperation between all neighboring countries, adequate equipment and facilities to enhance border management effectiveness, EU's role in developing such facilities, socio-economic situation in sub-Saharan Africa, means for implementing the Libyan law which has been passed in 2004 and has strong penalties for illegal immigrants and those who facilitate their illegal entry, stay, and help in their attempts to cross the Mediterranean sea." Until these details are examined properly, the boats carrying illegal migrants attempting to enter EU using Libya's shores will continue to take place.

Malta's Ambassador to Germany, Dr. John Paul Grech intervened telling that Malta is not only the smallest of the EU countries, but it is also the most southern lying south of both Tunis and Tangiers. Combination of Malta's size and geographical location make illegal immigration an acute problem. Malta implements a combination of police action and search-and-rescue operations at its shores. Yet, prior to the upcoming EU parliamentary elections it seems to be challenging to satisfy the conflicting demands of voters who expect humanity, but are also wary of illegal immigration. Mr. Ambassador Grech stressed that many Maltese feel the EU's large countries are not doing their share in dealing with irregular migration. Malta expects "burden-sharing", under which other EU countries would share the responsibility of caring for the migrants concluded Mr. Ambassador Grech.

Panel Discussion: EU-Africa Partnership: Towards a Common Perspective

Kerstin Müller, MP, Parliamentary Group Alliance 90/The Greens, Cologne

Hugh Bayley, MP, Labour Party, City of York

Ambassador Nehad Abdel Latif, Director General, Secretariat for Coordination and Implementation Egypt-EU Partnership, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cairo

Fatou Diome, Writer, Strasbourg

Chair: **Melinda Crane**, Deutsche Welle TV, Berlin

Melinda Crane, the chair of the panel discussion opened the floor stating that the world is heading into another era of mass migration. Recent migration developments in the Mediterranean region trigger multifaceted questions one being 'Do states have the tools and political will to manage migration in a humane way that promotes fair treatment for both sending and receiving countries?'

Hugh Bayley started his speech by stating that there will be continuing pressures from Africa to Europe. The EU is facing a demographic problem. For Europe the fundamental policy should be based on the origins of migration, migrants' intentions, promotion of development and agriculture in Africa.

Kerstin Müller believes that the EU recognizes that migration can be positive; however it has not recognized that it needs a systematic concept of migration and asylum policy in the EU. "In 2007 the EU and the African Union agreed on partnership and commitment. Yet, the partnership misses out many important aspects such as commitment to just and fair trade policies." Ms. Müller believes that when the overall framework of migration for the future is discussed, trade policies call for a closer attention. She also pointed out that EU's concentration on controlling its external borders and efforts at strengthening FRONTEX activities in the Mediterranean region is to be entirely revised.

In order to support rural communities in developing countries agriculture must be promoted agreed Fatou Diome. She believes that developed countries should invest more efficiently in agriculture of the developing countries, particularly by providing equipment and technology to local farmers instead of sending Western consultants to Africa. Ms. Diome also believes that development in Africa cannot take place in the absence of clean and transparent governments.

Global political developments and economy influence the way migration issues are framed. Ambassador Nehad Abdel Latif outlined the development of EU-Africa partnerships starting from 1995 to 2009. In 1995 when EU and Africa signed the Barcelona declaration, migration was mentioned in a few lines. Main focuses then were on providing vocational training, education and creation of jobs for migrants in Europe.

With the 9/11 and 'war on terrorism', image of migrants and migration changed said Mr. Ambassador Latif. "EU Member States changed their internal policies. After 2001 policy makers' focus shifted from integration of migrants through education and vocational trainings to integrated border management and control of irregular migration."

Today in 2009 policy makers talk less about legal migration, but more about irregular migration and development. "Remittances and diaspora engagement are acknowledged as one of the efforts for development in Africa, while concrete actions for development remain unclear. On the opposite, efforts directed at curbing irregular migration and control of EU's external borders have become more concrete", said Mr. Ambassador Latif.

He also shared that circular migration is equal to temporary migration. It is favourably being promoted by the European policy makers referring to the return of labour migrants back to their home countries and participating in the development. However scepticism lies on the extent of the circularity of this circular migration.

Answering to the question whether creation of job centers in some African countries and repatriation of temporary migrants was a good development, Ms. Müller said that it is a better approach, than seeing boat people being sent back by the Italians to Libya. She believes that both temporary migration and introduction of blue care are positive steps.

Mr. Bayley added that UK has more Malawian doctors working in the UK than in Malawi. UK should be able to receive high-skilled migrants such as doctors, pharmacists, lawyers, nurses from African country, but at the same time UK must train and supplement the same number of people back in sending countries for example through cooperation of Ministries of Health.

Mr. Ambassador Latif also agreed with such a suggestion and stated the example of certain quotas for labour migrants that are posed by the Government of France. He believes that training centers and job centers are better measures than measures aimed at strengthening the FRONTEX. However, lack of political will among African political leaders to promote integrated Africa is another barrier on the way mentioned Mr. Ambassador Latif.

Ms. Diome believes that local knowledge, talent and skills must be used for the development of African countries. Investment into schools and universities is of high importance to consider. It is not Europe that should develop Africa, but Africa itself. Europe should work towards the situation that Africa would not need Europe for its growth concluded Ms. Diome.

Closure

Mekonnen Mesghena, head of the Department Migration and Diversity at the Heinrich Böll Foundation thanked all the participants of the conference for their commitments and contributions toward a very fruitful discussion during the two days.

In respect to some of the criticisms on the lack of involvement of local refugees' as well as human rights organizations at the conference Mr. Mesghena elaborated on the concept of the conference. The central topics were:

- Scrutinize critically current policies of border management of the EU in the Mediterranean region;
- Question and discuss the major factors of irregular migration from Africa and the Middle East to Europe; and
- Look into the perspectives of co-operation and coordinated approaches between Africa and Europe on development and migration issues.

To discuss those issues effectively focus was laid on the countries around the Mediterranean region which are mainly affected by the migration movement as sending, transit and destination societies. From these countries various stakeholders (government representatives, parliamentarians, business, civil society, research experts etc.) have been intensely involved in the conference debate. Furthermore a number of well renowned experts on border management and labour market from across Europe have successfully contributed to the discussions at the conference.

The Heinrich Böll Foundation will first and foremost prepare a thorough documentation of the conference which will be put on the website soon. Based on the outcomes of the conference discussions it will also prepare a position paper on the issues of irregular migration in the Euro-Mediterranean region and EU's policies on its external borders. The position paper will be published and further conveyed to the European Commission and relevant policy institutions.

As a further follow-up project to the "European Governance of Migration" conference (in September 2008) an experts' conference on highly qualified labour migration in Europe will take place in October 2009.

Fortress or Area of Freedom?

Euro-Mediterranean Border Management

Berlin, 19 - 20 May 2009

Day 1 **Tuesday, 19 May 2009**

16.00 h Registration

16.20 h *Opening Remarks*

Ralf Fücks, Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Berlin

Viola Seeger, Robert Bosch Stiftung, Stuttgart

Michael Bird, British Council, Berlin

16.40 h *Film Presentation*

"I Broke my Future - Paradise Europe" (2007)

Carla Gunnesch, Director, Berlin

17.40 h Tea / Coffee Break

18.00 h **Poverty Meets Fortress**

Keynote

Fatou Diome

Writer, Strasbourg

18.30 h *Panel Discussion*

Peter Altmaier, Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Berlin

Francis Etienne, Director, Ministry of Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Development, Paris

Omid Nouripour, MP, Parliamentary Group Alliance 90/The Greens, Frankfurt a. M.

Ambassador Mahamat S. Annadif, Permanent Representative of the African Union at the European Union, Brussels

Klaus Roesler, Director of Operations Division, Frontex, Warsaw

Chair: Melinda Crane, Deutsche Welle TV, Berlin

20.00 h **Reception and Music:** Shri with DJ Badmarsh, London

Day 2 **Wednesday, 20 May 2009**

9.00 h Registration

9.30 h Opening

9.45 h **Africa-Europe Dynamic: The Push and Pull Factors of Migration**

Keynote

Elizabeth Adjei

Director, Ghana Immigration Service, Accra

Discussion

10.30 h **Roundtable 1 – In Search of Security: High Risk at Any Cost?**

- *Who are the people crossing?*
- *Why do they leave their homelands?*
- *How do they cross the borders?*
- *What do they face upon arrival?*

Input

Yayi Bayam Diouf, Women's Association against Illegal Migration, Thiaroye

Pippo Costella, On the Road, Martinsicuro

Prof. Loren Landau, Director Forced Migration Studies Programme, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

Chair: **Dr. Derek Lutterbeck**, Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, Malta

Roundtable 2 – In Search of Cheap Labour: Jobs for the "Undocumented"?

- *What are the jobs waiting for undocumented migrants?*
- *What is the effect on local labour markets?*
- *What is the gender division?*

Input

Martin Baldwin-Edwards, Co-Director Mediterranean Migration Observatory, Athens

Prof. Mehdi Lahlou, Institute National de Statistique et d'Economie Appliquée, Rabat

Hakam El Asri, Director, Labour Migration Partnership, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Paris

Chair: **Dr. Jean-Pierre Cassarino**, International Training Centre of the International Labour Organisation, Turin

Roundtable 3 - Migration vs. Security? Border Management in the Euro-Mediterranean

- *How does security comply with the EU immigration and asylum policy?*
- *What is the EU border management strategy?*
- *What are the challenges?*

Input

Dr. Henk van Houtum, Head of the Nijmegen Centre for Border Research, Nijmegen

Manuel Ferrer Muñoz, Centro Europeo de Estudios sobre Flujos Migratorios, Canary Islands

Prof. Mustafa Omar Attir, Director, Center for Sustainable Development, Tripoli

Chair: **Julien Simon**, Programme Manager for Mediterranean Transit Migration Dialogue, Vienna

13.15 h Lunch

14.30 h **Plenary Session with Roundtable Speakers**

15.30 h Tea / Coffee Break

16.00 h **EU-Africa Partnership: Towards a Common Perspective**

Panel Discussion

Kerstin Müller, MP, Parliamentary Group Alliance 90/The Greens, Cologne

Hugh Bayley, MP, Labour Party, City of York

Ambassador Nehad Abdel Latif, Director General, Secretariat for Coordination and Implementation Egypt-EU Partnership, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cairo

Fatou Diome, Writer, Strasbourg

Chair: **Melinda Crane**, Deutsche Welle TV, Berlin

17.30 h **Closure**



Conference languages: German • English • French

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