‘From Irregularity to Stability: Strategic and Viable Actions to Prevent Irregular and Dysfunctional Migration’

“Migration will be with us for many years to come. We can make it a win-win situation if we concentrate on development in the countries of origin and by providing legal channels that regulate the flow of migrants to Europe and subsequently back to the countries of origin. This is what the Diaspora Development Dialogue will be discussing.”

Dr George Vella – Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malta

“We urgently need to offer African youths better socio-economic opportunities at home. Without this, the tragic circumstances of migrants in the Mediterranean will continue and deaths may even increase. I am pleased that the Diaspora Development Forum gives us the opportunity to think and work on practical actions and solutions.”

Dr Abdramane Sylla – Minister of Malians Abroad, Mali

The Second DDF is organised in partnership with:

AEDP is implemented by:

AEDP is supported by:

AEDP is financed by the European Union and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation:
Aims of the Diaspora-Development Dialogue

The overall aims of the Diaspora-Development Dialogue are to:

- Facilitate face-to-face networking between diaspora organisations and individuals involved in African development.

- Facilitate practical partnerships between ADDOs and international development agencies and institutions in different European countries.

- Facilitate effective dialogue through discussions, debates and exchanges on African development.

Theme of the Dialogue

Single Theme: Every DDF focuses on a single theme. This enables participants to explore enough of the factors and issues related to the theme, and make practical and feasible suggestions and recommendations. AEDP will seek to adopt, develop and integrate each DDF theme into its core and supplementary programme of work – in collaboration with partners.

Theme of DDF 2:

- ‘Strategic and Viable Actions to Prevent Irregular and Dysfunctional Migration’.

Sub-themes of DDF 2: The sub-themes have been chosen to explore ‘imaginative new schemes and programmes’ and generate ‘positive and practical recommendations and action points’. The two sub-themes are:

- ‘New forms of preventative awareness-raising schemes’

- ‘New forms of employment and job creation schemes’
Proceedings of the Second Diaspora Development Dialogue

The second Diaspora Development Dialogue took place on 28th May 2015 on the theme of ‘From Irregularity to Stability: Strategic and Viable Actions to Prevent Irregular and Dysfunctional Migration’. This was a unique policy engagement conference which brought together representatives of the diaspora, governments, and civil society from the Mediterranean region and Africa. What made the DDD unusual in this regard was the way in which it brought together government and civil society stakeholders concerned with migration, as well as diaspora and migrant representatives with their own experiences of irregular and dysfunctional migration, in order to discuss practical and strategic measures to reduce the impact of irregular migration in the Mediterranean.

The second Diaspora Development Dialogue was attended by eighty-two (82) people from government, civil society, and the diaspora. In total, five (5) EU states were represented (Greece, Malta, Italy, Portugal, and Spain) either by officials or by diplomatic staff attached to these states’ embassies to Malta.

Speakers from five (5) African states contributed (Algeria, Eritrea, Gambia, Mali, and Tunisia), and diplomatic staff representing Egypt, Ghana, Gambia, Mali, Serbia, Sudan, Swaziland were also in attendance. Diaspora participants, based in the five EU states in the southern European region as well as France, Belgium, the Netherlands and the UK shared between them eighteen (19) African countries of origin and/or heritage. In addition, Representatives of the EC Delegation to Malta, UNHCR, and IOM participated in the Dialogue.

DDF2 Training Report

As part of the second AEDP Diaspora Development Forum, African diaspora participants based in the Southern European region participated in two and a half (2 1/2 ) days of specially-tailored training. The first day and third days of DDF2 were devoted to training sessions, and aimed to support African Diaspora Development Organisations (ADDOs) to better understand and influence policy at a national, regional, and international level.

DDF2 saw twenty-eight (28) people go through the registration process online, of who fifteen (15) were offered sponsored places, and thirteen (13) delegates based in Malta registering on the first day of DDF2. This was an impressive turnout for AEDP and African professionals in the Southern European Region who were meeting to synergise their practices, and develop paradigms that would foster good practice both in terms of diaspora initiatives in Africa addressing the causes of irregular migration, and effective policy advocacy on migration debates in Europe.
In total twenty-eight (28) people were trained, exceeding the target of 25; of these twenty-five (25) trainees were accredited and three (3) trainees received certificates of attendance. The training delegates came from 17 countries of origin within Africa, an impressive range of people working towards the development of the continent across these regions.

The first training session, held on 27 May 2015, was delivered by Gibril Faal OBE, AEDP Interim Executive Director. The aim of the ‘Understanding and Influencing Policy’ training was to make delegates understand the nature and processes of policy formulation and implementation in order to gain the skills required to participate effectively in policy development, and to understand how to achieve and maintain influence in emerging policies and practices in the field of international and diaspora-related development.

These are very important aspects of professional development that impact not only on the individual, but have a profound effect on the ability of development organisations to strengthen their operations, and how they interact and formulate effective policies in the diaspora and in Africa. It was important to stress the point that a policy also provides direction on how relevant actions are implemented through guiding principles, priorities, plans and procedures; and that a policy is a framework sets out and provides guidance on the positions, interests, actions, activities, projects and programmes of institutions and organisations; in relation to specified themes or issues. The ‘Understanding and Influencing Policy’ training finished by demonstrating to delegates on how to produce realistic and impactful advocacy action plans.

The third day of the DDF saw AEDP Engagement and Capacity Development Manager, Paul Asquith, and invited trainer, Jara Henar i Pi, Director of the Barcelona’s Irregular Settlements Plan Office, City Council of Barcelona, training delegates of the morning session in ‘Fundraising and Resource Mobilisation’. Their aim for this session was for delegates to understand the different forms of funds and resources potentially available to diaspora, both from government and EC sources and from philanthropic trusts and the private sector. Paul Asquith spoke of the need to capitalise on the comparative advantages of ADDOs over other development actors – expert knowledge of local conditions, connections to local communities, and greater flexibility due to their smaller size. He described this as ‘fundraising judo’. Jarar Henar i Pi then stressed the need to understand how EU funding streams in particular work and are administered at the local or national level, and advised ADDOs bidding for EU funds to partner with larger, more established NGOs with experience and capacity of bidding for these types of funds.

In the afternoon, Gibril Faal delivered a training session which helped trainees understand the important reasons why grant applications and proposals succeed or fail, and to gain the skills required to present credible and winning funding bids for their respective organisations. He offered examples on how to address grant-makers’ guidance and criteria, talked through the techniques for writing effective applications, and the techniques for demonstrating need and appropriateness of projects, how to demonstrate organisational capacity to deliver projects, and demonstrated how to show relevant outcomes and impact of project in a bid.
The final morning after the DDF brought together the trainees to test the knowledge they had gained over the past three days, and also to suggest ways that ADDOs in different states in the region could work together in developing advocacy actions plans. Trainees were then awarded their certificates by the course leader, Gibril Faal.

The delegates individually and collectively expressed their immense gratitude that a forum such as the DDF provided them with an opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in relation to policy advocacy and fundraising. Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive; twenty-seven (27) trainees rated the training as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ in the training evaluation.
Welcome & Opening of Dialogue

The session was introduced with a Dialogue Statement delivered by Aleja Taddesse of AEDP and Ali Konate of Migrant Network for Equality – Malta. This emphasised the need to consider irregular and dysfunctional migration calmly and rationally, in order to better serve the memory of those who have so tragically lost their lives trying to migrate across the Mediterranean.

Khady Sakho, CEO of FORIM (France) then gave an Opening Statement in which she welcomed participants from all sectors and backgrounds, from the North and the South, and enjoined them to work together to address the complex causes of irregular migration.

Session One - Strategic and longer-term actions needed to prevent irregular migration

This session addressed three points, namely: exploring the reasons why long term strategic actions are needed to prevent irregular migration; presenting ideas and recommendations of specific or categories of practical strategic actions that need to be prioritised; and reflections on how the recommendations can be made acceptable to governments, civil society and diaspora organisations in Europe and Africa.

Panel Chair Gibril Faal OBE, Interim Executive Director of the Africa-Europe Development Platform introduced this session and its panel members.

The Maltese Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr George Vella then gave a speech in which he noted that irregular migration would remain an issue for years to come, and has already been the source of terrible tragedies. He stressed that although the EC has presented a new EU agenda on migration, we already sense that a number of EC states are registering their disagreement with the concept of allotted quotas. Dr. Vella went on to say that
stability can only be introduced into this irregularity as part of holistic and comprehensive migration strategy which includes protection for migrants, as well as actions in countries of origin and transit; on reception processes, and implementation of an EU migration programme that includes pathways for long and short-term migration and circular migration. He concluded that of even more critical importance, was the need to strengthen regional development cooperation with countries in Africa, countries of origin and transit, and to strengthen dialogue through processes between European states, states in the Mediterranean, and in Africa, such as the Rabat and Khartoum processes.

Dr Abdramane Sylla, Minister for Malians Abroad, Mali, agreed that the damage caused by migration, especially illegal migration, needs to be discussed. He noted that that increasingly educated young people are seeking to migrate irregularly, due to a lack of jobs/positions available to graduates in Mali, to Europe in search of work. Among the 800 migrants who drowned, there was a Malian medical student who had completed 5 years of study. The Malian government is very aware of this issue, what is at stake, and for many years it has tried to address the issue of migration, through adopting a major document, the National Migration Policy, adopted in 2014. This addresses migration from Mali, and seeks to put an end to irregular migration. In terms of figures, in 2012 Malian migrants contributed 400bn CFA in remittances, far greater than ODA Mali receives currently. He concluded that this national policy recognises that poverty is a driver of migration – people leave because they are poor; they are poor because their villages are the victim of climate change and desertification. So Mali’s programmes have focussed on meeting needs of these young people, based firmly on job creation.

HE Hannah Simon, Ambassador of Eritrea to France and UNESCO Representative, said that we need long-term strategic actions to prevent irregular migration- and that we cannot prevent irregular migration as long as we do not eradicate root causes. Short-term responses to irregular migration have so far proved unproductive: countries or blocs of countries have tried to close their borders and restrict access as well as other short-term measures but these have not been successful. She added that in recent years Eritrea, has set in place the long-term infrastructure to enable economic development, with large scale development projects planned using internal capacity and diaspora contributions such as remittances, mainstreaming of which will be crucial. She proposed that minimising sanctions against countries; promoting good governance; and effective conflict resolution as essential to addressing the drivers of irregular migration. She concluded by calling for more effective preparation for natural disasters and climate change, another factor behind irregular migration, and for facilitation of legal routes for migration – migration for labour, for education opportunities, and family reunion should be encouraged and visa restrictions relaxed.

**Session Two - Mitigating the negative impacts of irregular and dysfunctional migration**

This session addressed three points, namely: exploring the issue of dysfunctional migration when the migration is intrinsically detrimental to the migrant, her family and community; presenting positive, practical and achievable
recommendations on how to mitigate the push and pull factors of dysfunctional migration; and reflections on how to support economic migrants in a sustainable manner.

Panel Chair Gibril Faal OBE, Interim Executive Director of the Africa-Europe Development Platform introduced this session and its panel members.

Mr. Evarist Bartolo, Minister of Education and Employment, Malta, stressed the need for appropriate education and employability schemes in Europe and in African states, to address an obvious driver of irregular migration and meet labour and skills shortages across both Africa and Europe.

Mr Bubacarr Jabbi pointed out that in Gambia there was a real shortage of jobs, one of the main drivers of irregular migration; exacerbated by an education system that fails to equip young people with the skills and qualifications needed to find or create jobs. He added that as a maths teacher he was earning €10 per month, which was what prompted him to become an irregular migrant. He also emphasised the need for better awareness-raising of the risks of irregular migration, and access to short-term visas for medium-skilled migrants.

Mr Mahamadou Keita – Secretary General, Malian Association of Deportees, Mali agreed that lack of awareness in countries of origin, plus media reporting, was a factor, especially for the rural poor, and proposed that there should be more

Ms Luisa Maia-Gonçalves – Head of Int. Department, Ministry of Internal Administration, Portugal, pointed out the need to distinguish between irregular migrants fleeing conflict and complex emergencies, who should be given protection, and between those who migrate irregularly and illegally for economic reasons. Illegal economic migrants should be returned to countries of origin, with suitable reception procedures in place.

Mr Lotfi Ben Ameur – Directorate General for Consular Affairs, Republic of Tunisia, noted that governments on both sides of the Mediterranean were committed to reducing the negative impacts of irregular migration, and this necessitated greater coordination between states, and the establishment of legal pathways for migration.

Mr Jon P Hoisaeter – Head of UNHCR, Malta, asked if return policies from EU states could potentially drive a change in the situation, especially if coupled with better awareness-raising and stronger return programmes focussed on social and economic reintegration. He also argued that the media have an important role to play, and all stakeholders – governments, civil society, diasporas – should help journalists tell positive stories about migration whilst communicating the very great risks of irregular migration.
Parallel Workshops

Workshop One: New forms of preventative awareness-raising schemes

**WORKSHOP ONE** focussed on ‘new forms of preventative awareness-raising schemes’, and was moderated by Dominik Kalweit (Board members, SKOP Malta).

Panellists included: Dr. Raymond Xerri, Director for Maltese Living Abroad; HE Theodoros Daskarolis, Ambassador of Greece to Malta; HE Magda Baraka, Ambassador of Egypt to Malta; Mohamadou Keita, Secretary-General of the Malian Association of Deportees; Ms Ribka Sibhatu, an Eritrean Poet and Writer based in Italy; Mr Bubacarr Jabbi – Chairman of Operation No Back Way to Europe, Gambia; Amadou Bocar Sam, President of the Platform of Senegalese Immigrants of Catalonia; and Ms Jara Har i Pi – Director of the Barcelona’s Irregular Settlements Plan Office, City Council of Barcelona.

The workshop considered three main questions, with the following recommendations:

**Q1: How can the risk-taking and venturing characteristics of migrants be re-focused towards productive ventures and activities in countries of origin?**

- Need for awareness-raising and also networking on risks and realities of irregular migration, especially in rural areas of countries of origin, especially involving those who have been deported
- Support and re-entry schemes for deportees
- More responsible media coverage of migration issues, esp in relation to irregular migration to Europe
- Need to learn from African states’ experience of working with their diasporas

**Q2: How can young people and families be convinced that resources and assets used to pay for irregular migration should be invested for local income-generation and self-employment?**

- Importance of networking and sharing good practices
- Capacity-building for young people and communities in relation to running SMEs AND for migrant and diaspora organisation in Europe
- Increasing the amounts dedicated to voluntary return schemes
- Support for schemes that encourage irregular migrants to ‘regularise’ their status (as in the example of Barcelona – access to housing, legal support, training, job search…)
- Development programming must address human rights and good governance
- Reducing migration by fostering job creation in the rural sector in Africa

**Q3: How can migrants and the diaspora enhance their role in reducing dysfunctional migration?**

- Stronger partnership between the EU and Africa, that actively involves the African diaspora
- Migrants and the diaspora also have an important role to play in communication and awareness-raising of the risks of irregular migration
- The younger generation in the diaspora need to preserve their heritage and culture and build on their connection to their countries of origin
Workshop TWO: New forms of employment and job creation schemes

Discussion in WORKSHOP TWO centred on ‘new forms of employment and job creation schemes’, and was moderated by Onyekachi Wambu, Director of AFFORD. Panellists included Ms Paola Chianca from CEFA, Morocco; Davide De Bernardin – Project Coordinator of Migrant Offshore Aid Station (MOAS); Dagmar Schineanu – Senior Economist and Migration and Development Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Italy; and Mr Abubakarr Bangura, Board Member, African Diaspora Policy Centre, Netherlands.

The workshop considered three main questions, with the following recommendations:

**Q1. What are the potential job creations sectors and segments of the economy that are underdeveloped in countries of origin?**

- Agribusiness / Agroindustry – in the case of Italy, €2m for schemes in Senegal, Niger, Burkina Faso; IOM has run successful programmes in Somalia (MIDA) in support of the Agric sector
- Increase investment opportunities, e.g. as in local development schemes for Egyptians abroad
- Build capacity of local and national governments as well as local civil society
- Training for diaspora and migrant organisations in relation to supporting job creation, investment, and SMEs
- Apprenticeship schemes in identified sectors such as agriculture
- EU-funded Voluntary Assisted Return Schemes need to be better financed and structured (e.g. Morocco, Tunisia, Senegal) to support economic and social reintegration of migrants
- Temporary visas (‘Blue Cards’) and schemes to enable seasonal/ circular migration

**Q2. What types of schemes should be undertaken to stimulate new forms of self-employment and job creation?**

- Empowerment of organizations that work with co-development
- Training on planning fundraising and social projects
- Increase the role of embassies and consulates in terms of returning migrants/ deportees
- Internships in companies that have business interests in countries of origin
- Training at national and local government level in programming job creation and self-employment
- Fairer migration and trade policies – that support circular migration and more equitable trade terms (i.e. to avoid ‘dumping’ of subsidised agri-products on African markets
- More research on what migrants expect/ want – both in Europe and in countries of origin

**Q3. How can migrants and the diaspora enhance their role in job creation?**

- Training people according to market needs and labour gaps – education systems in African states should align their education with market needs nationally and internationally (INGOs pay well, but finding suitably qualified local staff can be a challenge)
- Awareness-raising about opportunities and challenges
- Provide resources for viable business start-ups needed to implement business and SMEs in countries of origin

Session 3 - Way forward on implementing strategic preventative actions

In this final session, the panel considered ways forward and key recommendations arising from the Dialogue. The panel included HE Giovanni Umberto De Vito – Ambassador of Italy to Malta; Ms Diane Spiteri – Representative of the European Commission in Malta; Mr Seddik Saoudi – Director of the National Competences Abroad, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Algeria.

Panel members agreed that coherent and consistent migration policies and procedures needed to be applied by and between states, and that regional groupings such as the EU and AU, as well as processes such as the Rabat and Khartoum, were important within that. They also noted that governments, civil society, and diaspora communities needed to work together more effectively, including with governments and civil society in countries of origin.

Panel Chair Gibril Faal OBE summed up by noting that people to his mind migrated for two main reasons: to seek a better life for themselves and/or to seek protection. A structural approach was needed, as one migrant can lift an entire family out of poverty in one generation, and the diaspora and migrants should be placed at the heart of this.

He stressed there were three levels of response needed to address irregular migration: short-, medium-, and long-term.

**In the short-term**, the focus had to be an emergency one: on protecting and saving lives, and also providing aid to border regions in destination countries.

**In the medium-term**, the response should be to dismantle the infrastructure that facilitates irregular migration in transit countries, as well as equipping deportees with tools and resources to make a life in countries of origin – sending people back without a backup plan was clearly not sustainable.

**In the longer-term**, the strategic focus needed to be on the sending countries, and that development programming and investment should be focused on sustainable job creation – 80% of resources on job creation, 20% on awareness-raising.

He noted that the following areas were important in the medium- and long-term:

- Training and capacity-building
- Capital (access to loans, interest rates)
- Business sector (SME funds)
- Diaspora Investment
- Enabling policy environments
- Circular Migration
- Regional / Inter-regional Migration
### Agenda for the Dialogue

**MORNING SESSIONS OF THE DIALOGUE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>08.30 – 09.00: (30 minutes)</td>
<td>Registrations, Tea &amp; Coffee</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.00 – 09.15: (15 minutes)</td>
<td>Welcome &amp; Opening of Dialogue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miss Alea Tadesse – AEDP Administrator, United Kingdom</td>
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<td>Mr Ali Konate – Migrant Network for Equality, Malta</td>
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<td>Ms Khady Sakho – Member of AEDP Board of Trustees &amp; President of FORIM, France</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.15 – 10.30: (75 minutes)</td>
<td>Strategic and longer term actions needed to prevent irregular migration</td>
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<td>Dr George Vella – Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malta</td>
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<td>Dr Abdramane Sylla – Minister for Malians Abroad, Mali</td>
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<td>Ms Martine Cassar – Officer-in-Charge, International Organization for Migration, Malta</td>
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<td>HE Hanna Simon – Ambassador of Eritrea to France and Permanent Delegate to UNESCO</td>
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<td>Mr Abdoulie Jarra – Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, Gambia</td>
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<td>Chair: Mr Gibril Faal OBE – Interim Executive Director, Africa-Europe Development Platform (AEDP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 – 11.00: (30 minutes)</td>
<td>PRESS CONFERENCE / COFFEE BREAK</td>
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<td>(The press conference will be with the panellists from the opening session)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.00 – 12.30: (90 minutes)</td>
<td>Mitigating the negative impacts of irregular and dysfunctional migration</td>
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<td>Discussion Panel:</td>
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<td>Mr Evarist Bartolo – Minister of Education and Employment, Malta</td>
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<td>Mr Bubacarr Jabbi – Chairman of Operation No Back Way to Europe, Gambia</td>
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<td>Mr Mahamadou Keita – Secretary General, Malian Association of Deportees, Mali</td>
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<td>Ms Luisa Maia-Gonçalves – Head of Intl. Department, Ministry of Internal Administration, Portugal</td>
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<td>Mr Lotfi Ben Ameur – Directorate General for Consular Affairs, Republic of Tunisia</td>
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<td>Mr Jon P Hoisaeter – Head of UNHCR, Malta</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.30 – 13.30: (60 minutes)</td>
<td>LUNCH BREAK</td>
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### AFTERNOON AND EVENING SESSIONS OF THE DIALOGUE

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>13.30 – 15.15</td>
<td>Parallel Workshops</td>
<td>Each of the two workshops will have a moderator. Experts will make short presentations to start the focused discussions on positive and practical actions.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Workshop 1: New forms of preventative awareness-raising schemes</strong></td>
<td>Moderator: Mr Dominik Kalweit – Board Member, SKOP, Malta</td>
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<td>HE Theodoros Daskarolis – Ambassador of Greece to Malta</td>
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<td>Dr Raymond Xerri – Director for Maltese Living Abroad, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malta</td>
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<td>Mr Amadou Bocar Sam – President of the Platform of Senegalese Immigrants of Catalonia</td>
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<td>15.15 – 15.45</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
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<td>15.45 – 16.15</td>
<td>Feedback from the workshops</td>
<td>Summaries from the moderators and rapporteurs of the two workshops</td>
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<td>16.15 – 17.30</td>
<td>Way forward on implementing strategic preventative actions</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Workshop 2: New forms of employment and job creation schemes</strong></td>
<td>Moderator: Mr Onyekachi Wambu, Director of AFFORD, United Kingdom</td>
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<td>Ms Paola Chianca – Project Coordinator, CEFA, Morocco</td>
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<td>Mr Abubakarr Bangura – Board Member, African Diaspora Policy Centre, Netherlands</td>
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<td>17.30 – 18.30</td>
<td>General Networking</td>
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<td>18.30 – 20.30</td>
<td>Dialogue Dinner</td>
<td>Guest Speaker</td>
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<td>Formal close of the Diaspora Development Dialogue (DDD)</td>
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DDF 2: Facts and Figures

- **28 delegates** Certified
- **25 delegates** Accredited
- **5 speakers** were from African states (Algeria, Eritrea, Gambia, Mali, and Tunisia)
- **5 delegates** from EU states (southern region) incl. France, Belgium, Netherlands & UK
- **7 diplomatic guests** (Egypt, Ghana, Gambia, Mali, Serbia, Sudan and Swaziland)
- **10 women**
- **18 men**
- **83 delegates** attended DDF 2
- **15 African countries** of heritage and/or origin
APPENDIX 1: Full Text of the Speech by George Vella, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malta, at the Second Diaspora Development Dialogue, 28 May 2015

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The subject of our discussions today gives me the opportunity to talk about a fundamental challenge for Malta. This challenge is at the very top of our priorities and at the centre of our efforts.

Malta has over the past years faced a constant and prolonged challenge of migration as increasing number of migrants seek to cross into Europe primarily from sub-Saharan Africa, through North Africa.

We had to face this pressure with our own devices as a country on the frontline of what has now become an emergency.

What started as a trickle has now become a flood.

The crossings of migrants which many times have transformed themselves into horrible tragedies have brought home the difficulties faced by migrants and the need for the protection of these vulnerable persons. But these tragedies have also exposed the extent and the gravity of the problem that Malta now faces especially in regard to illegal migration.

Illegal migration from Libya was already a problem before 2011, and the fall of the Gaddafi regime. Now it has reached alarming proportions. The tragic drowning of well over 3,000 persons so far this year including 800 in one incident in April is most shocking and weighs heavily on our conscience. The European Council meeting on migration of 23 April sent a strong signal of the EU’s resolve to combat human smuggling and trafficking.

The European Commission has just presented a new “European Agenda on Migration” which we are all still studying how to implement. I hesitate to say however that when it comes to this Agenda’s recommendation to the proportionate distribution of refugees, we are already seeing that a number of European Member States, for various reasons, are registering their disagreement and are reluctant to accept the concept of allotted quotas.

How can we introduce some sort of “stability” in this “irregularity”?

This can only be achieved through a set of actions as part of a holistic and effective migration policy. A holistic policy that protects vulnerable persons but also prevents irregular migration. This holistic policy has to include measures which impinge on the countries of origin, on the countries of transit, on the process of crossing land and sea, on the regulations that control the process of reception, and ultimately on the implementation of a migration policy that provides for legal migration.

We have to provide a holistic, sound, fair, and humane approach to migration, and I strongly believe that the European Union must ultimately launch a serious well organised, comprehensive system of legal migration, catering for both permanent and temporary stays, including “circular migration”.
To start with it is of even more critical importance that we redouble our efforts to strengthen our cooperation with our partner countries in Africa; with the countries of origin and transit by intensifying our dialogue through the existing processes and frameworks encompassing European, Mediterranean and African countries: such as the Rabat and Khartoum processes; The EU-Africa Migration and Mobility Dialogue; and the EU-ACP Partnership. Malta will be playing its part by hosting a Summit with African partners in the coming months in order to strengthen cooperation on tackling the root causes of migration.

Ideally we should reduce the incentives for irregular migration by intensifying our development cooperation and humanitarian assistance towards countries of origin, through regional development and protection programmes, and equitable implementation of a “return policy” for migrants who do not qualify for humanitarian protection.

We need to be able to assist partner countries in Africa with better development cooperation policies to be able to offer a better life and to better manage migration in the country of origin. At the same time it is important that effective policies are implemented on return and readmission for those who fail the asylum test. In regard to readmission we believe there are frameworks already in place that need to be better used.

Effective management of borders of countries of origin, and better training of coast guards will help curb further migrant flows.

We need to strengthen a greater presence at sea through EU-led joint operations in the Mediterranean so that lives are saved at sea and to ensure a better management of our borders.

The need to effectively target the smugglers and traffickers of human beings and to disrupt their business model. The first steps of establishing an operation (‘EUNVFOR MED’) under the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy were agreed at the meeting of EU Foreign Ministers on 18 May 2015.

The scourge of human smugglers and the extortion, the suffering and the depravity attached to this sordid trade in human suffering and misery, to which illegal migrants fall prey in their obsession to reach Europe, must be abolished at all costs.

The EU is in the process of obtaining the necessary authorisation through the UN Security Council, or better still through cooperation with the Libyan authorities to proceed to physically hamper and stop the smugglers from their illicit trade in human life and death.

At this juncture it is worth pointing out that the present chaotic situation in Libya is contributing in no small way towards the further deterioration of the lack of control of these smugglers. Thus the urgent need for the political stabilisation of this country through the mediation process ably conducted over these last months by the UN representative Bernardino Leon.

We need to sustain efforts by supporting the UN-led mediation process to stabilise Libya and achieve a political agreement around a Government of National Unity. Stabilising Libya is a crucial step in preventing further loss of life at sea.
The EU needs to implement a strong common asylum policy with systematic identification and proper fingerprinting, as well as a proper evaluation and revision of the way the Dublin Regulation is implemented, now that the concept of fair proportional distribution of refugees is clearly spelled out in the European Agenda for Migration.

Offices like the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) like the one in Malta, could help in the training and assistance needed by member states authorities to take decisions re migrants.

The EU is not short of legislation on migration: Reception Conditions Directive, relating to detention of asylum seekers; the Qualifications and Procedures Directive that provides assurances that beneficiaries of International protection will have access to labour market, social benefits, and free health care; to mention just two.

What the EU lacked was proper adherence to regulations and reinforcement of internal solidarity and sharing of responsibilities, through a fair distribution mechanism.

This is precisely what the European Agenda for Migration is set to achieve.

European countries need to show greater solidarity and responsibility. In regard to persons in need of international protection based on fair criteria which do not leave countries like Malta to shoulder disproportionate responsibilities.

The decisions taken by the European Heads of Governments at their extraordinary meeting on 23 April 2015 – following repeated calls by Malta to put migration at the top of the EU’s agenda – and subsequent proposals by the Commission in its European Agenda on Migration are a step in the right direction but much more still needs to be done.

The European Union has to embark on a new policy of legal migration which would ease the flow of illegal migrants, making the process more humane, while providing the much needed workforce to replace the demographic deficit resulting from dwindling birth rates.

The European Agenda for Migration already proposes resettlement and relocation schemes.

The already existing, but little used Blue Card Scheme should be made better use of.

In addition a well managed visa policy can provide prospective migrants with the opportunity to spend some time working, studying, or training in Europe, acquiring the necessary skills and competences, as well as some savings to take back to his native country where one could plough back the gained experience and cash into his own country’s economy.

Migration will be with us for many years to come. We can make it a win-win situation if we concentrate on development in the countries of origin and by providing legal channels that regulate the flow of migrants to and from Europe.

To meet this difficult challenge there is no alternative but to work together in close partnership and use all the tools and channels at our disposal. Only then will we be able to achieve a migration policy that moves from irregularity to stability. Thank you.
APPENDIX 2: Full Text of the Speech by Dr Abdramane Sylla – Minister for Malians Abroad, Mali, at the Second Diaspora Development Dialogue, 28 May 2015

Ladies and gentlemen, members of the presidium, participants, members, it is an honour for us to be here, this morning, to talk about Immigration. You are aware that the topic is very sensitive in regard to the enormous damages caused by migration, especially, irregular one.

We have always claimed that the phenomenon of migration, as old or ancient as it is, which contributed to bring nations closer in the past, nevertheless, becomes increasingly difficult today. Difficulties due to geopolitical world strategies, tough border control which prevent people to move freely.

So, these difficulties led young people to enter illegally into Europe, thus the tragedy with the recent case of 800 shipwrecks, in the Mediterranean Sea which has drawn our attention.

I would like to mention that if in the past, migrants were considered as an unskilled force, we are increasingly noticing in our country, Mali, that those who are migrating, come of course from the rural area, but also, there are many young graduates who finished their studies but are unemployed. They are actively looking for ways to reach European countries and elsewhere, in order to work. So, as to say that this trend is rising... to give you an example as I mentioned the 800 shipwrecked, among the Malian casualties, we had a student who was in the fifth year of his medical studies. As you can see, it is a very important topic.

I am grateful for the platform that you are offering through this event in order to exchange ideas about what we can offer as solutions and alternatives in Mali and also listen to new ideas from you, in order to improve this framework.

The Government of the republic of Mali, is well aware of this phenomenon. We didn’t wait for casualties to occur before attempting to find some solutions. Many years ago, the government has tried to tackle the problems of migration by setting up a Ministry in charge of Malians abroad since 1992.

‘Malian living abroad ‘because of our history, we are known as an ancient nation and great travellers and there are about four million Malian people living in almost in every country of the world. So in regard to that huge and important Diaspora, the government of the republic of Mali has, indeed, initiated various approaches that resulted in the creation of this ministry to deal with issues related to migration, which I am heading at present.

As I mentioned earlier, we have reflected on the question and adopted a document on national migration policy. I brought some copies of this policy document which has been adopted on 3rd Sept 2014 and that we have officially launched; I think this document adopted by the Malian government, is an answer to the concern of those people affected by the issue.

We are trying to do our best, surely not pretending to eradicate migration but to significantly reduce this illegal form of migration. This document is built around 8 main lines but all those lines can be classified in two categories.
Firstly, it is about creating a regulatory and legislative framework in order to emphasise on the issue of migration. Therefore, promoting dialogue as requires this kind of discussion, is the path to follow in order to find acceptable solutions at all levels, provide a legal content so that migration could be a nice experience.

For that purpose, we can refer to the scheme of circulatory migration in this context that we are running with Spain. It consists in welcoming few groups of Malian workers in Spain, during a given period and at the end of it, those migrant workers return home and vice versa. I believe it a beautiful example of cooperation and controlled migration.

Secondly, the most important aspect is to links development and migration. I would like to remind you that we are a low-income country. Those who live abroad contribute massively to the economic development of our country. I will give you some figures, to support those arguments.

In 2012, Malian migrants brought about 400bn CFA in remittances alone, which is superior to any direct international aid we ever received. Most of the time, these funds are used towards household maintenance, family welfare but also to finance basic infrastructures such as schools, health centres, water pumps in many villages. Some of that money goes towards productive investments such as agricultural projects that is instrumental in retaining young people in their villages. By generating employment, they are preventing from going abroad. Thus bringing added value to our economy. And it is above all, this feature that appears extremely important, in the document we have drawn up. So, the government concluded that the main reason for migration is linked to poverty. Some 2000 villages, at the beginning, have been identified where the degrading effects of climate change such as the lack of rain, prevent people from growing crops. This is why, today, we are heading towards a plan of jobs creation in order to control migration from our point of departures.

As we can see, we have some ambitious projects for those 2000 villages as we hope that with the implementation of all those infrastructure projects, we can significantly bring some solutions to this hot topic of migration’.

APPENDIX III - Press Articles on DDD2:

Maltese Independent

Development in Africa – and legal migration channels – crucial to address irregular immigration
John Cordina Thursday, 28 May 2015, 11:56 Last update: about 3 months ago

Irregular - and dysfunctional - migration from Africa cannot cease without development in the countries of origin and without legal channels regulating the flow of migrants to Europe and back, speakers at a conference focusing on long-term solutions agreed.

The argument was made during an event bringing together representatives of governments and organisations working with African diasporas organised by the Africa-Europe Development Platform
(AEDP), whose topic was "from irregularity to stability: strategic and viable actions to prevent irregular and dysfunctional migration."

The opening remarks by Maltese Foreign Minister George Vella, Mali’s Minister for Malians Abroad Abdramane Sylla, Eritrea’s ambassador to France Hanna Simon and AEDP executive director Gibril Faal had a common theme: that the phenomenon of irregular migration from Africa to Europe could not be effectively addressed without long-term solutions, including development which provides would-be migrants with genuine opportunities in their home country.

Mr Faal - who lives in the UK but who hails from the Gambia - noted that irregular migration provoked a short-term response focusing on emergency humanitarian aid, primarily in destination countries and border areas, as well as a medium-term response focusing on transit countries, with the apparent aim of dismantling the infrastructure that supports migrant flows.

"What we tend to miss, of course, is the third element, strategic long-term action," he added. And he emphasised that it is this long-term action that should receive the most importance. "Whatever effort we spend on short-term and medium-term measures, we must spend at least ten times as much - in money, time, effort and publicity - on strategic issues," Mr Faal maintained, adding that while countries found themselves focusing on the most urgent matters, they often overlooked what was the most important.

On his part, Dr Vella highlighted the challenges Malta faces as a country on the border between Africa and Europe, emphasising the need for the proportional distribution of migrants and asylum seekers making it to Europe. Whilst he noted that the European Commission has been working towards this goal - including by proposing the emergency relocation of asylum seekers from Italy and Greece - he said that he was already sensing that a number of EU member states were registering their disagreement at being allocated migrant quotas.

He said that ultimately, the EU had to implement a "serious, comprehensive system of legal migration," which catered for both permanent and temporary stays, including the promotion of the concept of circular migration: people moving to Europe to work temporarily before returning back home, hopefully in a better financial situation to improve their position. But the minister also insisted that development in the countries of origin was of crucial importance. "Migration will be with us for many years to come. We can make it a win-win situation if we concentrate on development in the countries of origin and by providing legal channels that regulate the flow of migrants to Europe and subsequently back to the countries of origin," he said.

In his own remarks, Dr Sylla said that his country hoped to stem the flow of people towards Europe, but noted that the situation was very difficult due to widespread poverty and a lack of opportunities. But the Malian minister also stressed that migrants provided a crucial contribution to the development of their countries of origin through the remittances they sent to relatives back home, noting that the approximately 4 million members of the Malian diaspora contributed hundreds of millions of euros to the Malian economy every year.
Foreign Affairs Minister George Vella this morning expressed disappointment that some European states had already disagreed with the European Commission’s proposed distribution of refugees. Dr Vella was speaking at a conference organised by the Africa-Europe Development Platform on how to prevent irregular and dysfunctional migration.

Like fellow speakers, he spoke about the advantages of allowing migrants to spend some time working, studying or training in Europe, and then invest their acquired skills and savings in their country of origin. Malta, he said, had over the past years faced a constant challenge of migration as increasing numbers of migrants, mainly from sub-Saharan Africa crossed into Europe through North Africa.

“We had to face this pressure with our own devices as a country on the frontline of what has now become an emergency. What started as a trickle has now become a flood,” he said. The minister noted that stability could only be achieved through a holistic policy that protected vulnerable people but also impinged on countries of origin, countries of transit and the process of reception.

“Ideally we should reduce the incentives for irregular migration by intensifying our cooperation and humanitarian assistance with countries of origin through regional development and protection programmes, and equitable implementation of a return policy for migrants who do not qualify for humanitarian protection,” he said.

Dr Vella also referred to strengthening the presence at sea through EU-joint operations in the Mediterranean so that lives were saved and borders were managed better. Meanwhile, the EU was obtaining the necessary authorisation through the UN Security Council and cooperation with the Libyan authorities to physically stop smugglers from their illicit trade in human life, he added.

However, while the EU was not short of legislation on migration, it lacked proper reinforcement of internal solidarity and responsibility sharing through a fair distribution mechanism. “European countries need to show greater solidarity and responsibility when it comes to people in need of international protection, based on fair criteria that do not leave countries like Malta to shoulder disproportionate responsibilities,” he insisted.

The EU should also embark on a new policy of legal migration that would not only make the process more humane, but would also provide the much needed workforce to replace the demographic deficit resulting from dwindling birth rates, Dr Vella said.