



*Ministero degli Affari Esteri
e della Cooperazione Internazionale*



MIGRATION AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THE ITALY-AFRICA AGENDA

Africa. Papers from the Conference
of January 12, 2016 at the Ministry
for Foreign Affairs for Italy

Piedmont Centre for African Studies

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Towards the Italy-Africa Conference

The following is a comprehensive report on the Conference on Migrations, International Relationships, Africa, which took place on January 12 2016 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Italy.

The Conference, organized by the Piedmont Centre for African Studies (CSA) in cooperation with the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), is one stage of a project regarding migrations, human rights and international relations. Previous events in this project were the seminar on Work and Migrations that was held in June 2015 in Turin, with the participation of ILO, and the seminar organized in conjunction with the Commission for Human Rights, held in July 2015 in Rome, in the Chamber of the Senate of the Italian Parliament.

These documents are presented as a contribution to the First Ministerial Italy-Africa Conference to be convened on May 18, 2016 in Rome. After the Conference on May 18, CSA will be prepared to collaborate in order to give continuity to research and dialogue on these issues, both in the development and monitoring of first experiments and in organizing consultations and the necessary public debate.

The conference focus was on *concerted effort*. This is a theme which links together: international relations and policies; domestic integration policies; negotiations between nations; and relations with diasporas. The way forward is to establish a dialogue that recognizes and defines the different interests and strategies of migrants, while confronting them with the interests of their countries of origin and those of the reception countries.

Despite all difficulties we are encountering and will encounter in the future, compelling us to put aside all empty rhetoric, it is the concept of triple win that must be our inspiration and must guide political and institutional action in this field, as well as diplomatic dialogue.

The work that has been carried out so far is based on our awareness that there are no answers or simple, quick solutions to a historic challenge like the present migrations. The idea that we can limit or govern a phenomenon like migration, which is driven by overwhelming forces, is undoubtedly an illusion.

It is the duty of governance to do everything possible to reduce the difficulties related to the phenomenon of migration and to increase opportunities, for all subjects involved.

Without any claim to provide answers, these documents are intended to contribute to the recognition and the sharing of common questions before the international community.

Introduction by Pietro Marcenaro

President of the Piedmont Centre for African Studies

Why should we talk about migrations?

Why should we be discussing the issue of migrations when today the attention and concern of Italy and Europe is totally focused on refugees and displaced people? Are we not trying to escape the more dramatic and urgent issues of today?

We have known for a long time that the phenomenon of migrants seeking asylum and international protection has profoundly changed, not only in its scale but also because the line separating asylum seeking from economic migration is increasingly blurred. Asylum seeking and economic migration are tightly interwoven and largely overlapping, because asylum seekers and economic migrants cross the Mediterranean in the same clandestine boats.

Even the word emergency is inappropriate to describe this phenomenon because it normally refers to a definite temporal dimension that has a foreseen end. But considering the international scenario, the unfolding of crises and conflicts, it is quite clear that we are dealing with a long-term structural phenomenon.

This conference is based on the conviction that to consider the problem of refugees and displaced people as part of the more general issue of migration could help us to think of it as a structural problem and to find more appropriate political answers. Thus the current discussions and possible solutions could show us a way forward and a strategy to meet future challenges.

Why international relations?

Why is this meeting being held at the Italian Foreign Ministry (IMFA)? Because the only way to deal with the phenomenon of migration is through the concerted effort of all the players involved. We want to fully understand how international relations can progress in this direction and we must do so by starting from the realistic assessment of the great difficulties involved in constructing a shared European policy, and of the fragility of our relations with the migrants' countries of origin, despite the initial steps forward that we have taken. One first step towards enhancing the cooperation between the various players could be full recognition of the fact that countries of origin, transit countries and host countries have, to some extent, completely different interests.

Host countries are now asking for collaboration from the country of origin and transit countries in improving border patrols, in controlling migrant flows and in facilitating repatriation. But this position alone will not make it possible to lay a firm and enduring basis for a shared management of the migration phenomenon.

The issue of deciding on the quality and quantity of migrants that can be accommodated is one aspect of this concerted effort. But there are also issues that are just as important: the strategies that are implemented by countries of origin concerning migration; the migrants' rights and expectations, both as single subjects and as collective groups, as persons and as diaspora. Migrants' interests and objectives do not necessarily coincide with the needs of the countries of origin or the receiving countries.

What are the proper panels for determining cooperation, the multilateral and bilateral institutions where dialogue can be enhanced and where sustainable strategies can be developed? And would the civil society, together with the various political institutions, be able to play a key role in this process? How can multilateral and bilateral relations take further steps forward after the Valletta European and African Summit on Migration? What possible consequences can be expected from the Rabat and Khartoum processes? Some extremely optimistic people are talking of a triple win

strategy. This may be impossible to implement, yet it is still useful to understand what we must do to reach this goal.

Why Africa?

Because Africa is, and certainly will be in future, the epicenter of the phenomenon of migration, and because it is one of the Italian priorities in foreign policy. The reduction of the pressure of global migrations in the next few decades will not be a homogeneous phenomenon and the demographic growth in Africa will continue to cause pressure. It is not realistic to believe that medium-term development policies or radical redistributive policies will be able to mitigate the intensity of this phenomenon.

As for the African “demographic bomb”, which is seen as a threat by Europe, this could, on the contrary, under certain circumstances, become one of the most important resources for its growth. I am not only referring to the growing importance of remittances in the economies of countries of origin, which is a topic of great interest, where substantial progress is possible. In this value given to its demographic dividend, Africa could find the fundamental resource for growth; this is the direction in which the most aware and far-sighted ruling classes of Africa are pushing their migration strategies.

A few weeks ago in Dakar, the head of Caritas for Senegal said, with bitter sarcasm, that apparently the only people aware of the value of migrants were human traffickers.

Europe and Italy could start a positive dialogue by acknowledging the value of this “human good”, and making the migration issue an essential part of the African-Italian agenda. Given its foreign policy, Italy could become an important partner and could aspire to become a driving force on this matter on a European level. Not only in securing borders but also in leading the way to new, open policies.

Finally why diasporas?

As a result of recent events, the economic and social aspects of migration have almost been overlooked in public opinion. What has emerged is a deeper concern for the future of our European society, for its cohesion and its security.

We must ask ourselves: is it a foregone conclusion that immigration will inevitably foster alienation and marginalization, two problems that weaken the foundations of our freedom and democracy? To find a different perspective we need to identify the connection between migration flows arriving now or in the future, on the one hand, and the population of migrants already resident in Italy and in Europe, on the other.

Diaspora movements have changed: cell-phones have bridged the distances and migrants are permanently connected to their society of origin. To some extent, they live here and there at the same time: on the same day they participate both in the society of origin and in their society of destination. They can serve as natural mediators in the process of integrating new migrants. Numerous studies have highlighted the contribution that diasporas could give to growth and democratization processes in their countries of origin. The new law on cooperation, 125/2014, gives diasporas an essential role in Italy's system of cooperation.

Less widely examined and debated seems to be their role in achieving better outcomes in the integration policies of the new countries of residence. Yet that is what destination countries can gain through the recognition of rights and the participation of migrants in politics, which is an essential part of any government strategy managing migration.

This is certainly not an easy goal in these times, when participation in politics has generally become a scarce resource. However, it is strange that, despite the large number of studies carried out, this issue is not the subject of public debate or dialogue between political institutions.

A significant contribution could be given by local institutions, starting from city councils, which have already conducted experimental programmes; at the same time, listening to opinions from the countries of origin and their civil societies could be another great help.

Paolo Gentiloni

Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

The Africa issue, migration, the Italian-African Agenda are among the central points of Italy's Foreign Policy strategy, both for historical-geographical and for economical-cultural reasons. Given its geographical position Italy is in the centre of the Mediterranean Sea, at the center of European-African relations and the point of convergence between Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle-East. This has put Italy at the centre of one of the most troubled regions in the world over recent years, but possibly also a region of greater long-term opportunities.

In 2015 one million migrants¹ reached Europe by boat. According to the United Nations this accounts for only a small part of the 60 million people² that migrated worldwide in 2015. This small part has, however, led to consequences for our continent that are among the most urgent and delicate that we must face. During 2015, 153,000 migrants reached Italy by boat, 15 thousand less than in 2014: 70% of these migrants come from Sub-Saharan Africa.

*Yet the phenomenon of migration waves cannot simply be stopped. The answer to this issue does not lie in identifying the right tools to solve the migration problem, but rather in deciding if we prefer to suffer this passively or to try to manage and govern this phenomenon. A Europe that takes a passive approach to the phenomenon of migration, each country reacting separately and simply offloading the blame and responsibility on neighbour states is a Europe at great risk. On the contrary, a far-sighted Europe that has the courage to face this issue, is a Europe that will be able to handle migration in a reasonable way. **One of the main elements in managing the issue of migration is being aware of the fact that this will be a medium-long-term phenomenon.** In 2050 Europe will see its population shrink to 700 million people³ (in 2015 the continent's population was 738 million) and Africa will have approximately 2.5 billion inhabitants (in 2015 Africa's population was one billion and 186 million). Although international migration is a rather small component of population trends, compared to birth and death rates, in some areas it has a great impact on demographic figures: it is estimated that between 2015 and 2050 migration will have a significant impact on the population trends particularly in developed countries with a high average income.*

Beside recognizing the long-term scale of this challenge, the second important factor in managing migration flows in Europe is the awareness that this challenge must be dealt with together, all twenty-eight countries acting as one. The European Union is considered to be one of

¹http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php#_ga=1.122343435.1895110864.1454836884

²<http://www.unhcr.it/news/rapporto-global-trends-2014-dellunhcr-quasi-60-milioni-le-persone-costrette-a-fuggire-dalle-loro-case-in-tutto-il-mondo>

³ Report from United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)
http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/publications/files/key_findings_wpp_2015.pdf

the richest areas in the world, an important business area, perfectly able to manage a phenomenon of this nature, provided that it maintains a united front and provided that it realizes that in order to manage this together, the rules followed over the past twenty-five years are no longer adequate.

The Dublin Regulations were created 25 years ago to manage the crisis in the eastern bloc and the resulting migration flows within Europe. The approach on which they were based is now absolutely ineffective to cope with the dimensions of migrant flows in recent years. A possible risk for Europe is the limitation of its citizens' freedom of movement, one of the corner stones of the EU. *Unfortunately, we find ourselves at a point where in order to save the Schengen Agreement we must go beyond the Dublin Regulations.*

Let's take one example: Greece. In 2015, 851,000 migrants arrived in Greece by boat. According to the Dublin Regulations those 851,000 migrants, with the exception of some few family reunifications, should have been given accommodation by the country in which they first set foot, Greece. Yet this was found to be too difficult to accomplish and in reality did not happen. European Governments are facing delicate situations that are difficult to manage while respecting the current regulations, which are clearly no longer adequate.

What we must think carefully about is the distinction made between **migrants eligible for asylum and the so-called economic migrants**, who, according to European laws, should not be eligible. *On a European level, it is important to maintain this distinction in legal terms, but it is also of great importance to know that it is the whole of the current flow of migrants, including these economic refugees, that we must deal with, both as national governments and as the European Union.* Reception and repatriation must be decided according to pan European regulations. This must also be true for the classification of nations into "safe" countries, to which migrants can be repatriated and those that are not considered "safe".

The issue is very concrete if we think of the great debate existing in Europe about countries like **Eritrea** or **Afghanistan**. Citizens of Eritrea are considered by default to have the right to asylum, while for citizens of Afghanistan the default choice will be to repatriate. The question is very delicate and gives rise to different and often opposite opinions. *The repatriation policy, including the classification of safe and unsafe countries, must be the result of a joint European effort, as it requires logistics, humanitarian and organizational capability, financial resources and a guarantee of respect for humanitarian concerns. These are all responsibilities that we certainly cannot entrust to the single countries of first arrival. The commitment absolutely must be shared at a European level.*

In the last decade, within the overarching framework of its foreign policy on migration and asylum, the European Union has been committed to a broad dialogue with the African countries on a bilateral, regional and continental level, expressed in the "Global Approach to Migration and Mobility"⁴.

Examples of this are the Rabat Process⁵, the Khartoum Process⁶ (2014) and recently, in November 2015, the Valletta Summit⁷ between Africa and the European Union, which made important

⁴ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52011DC0743&from=IT>

⁵ <http://www.processusderabat.net/web/>

⁶ http://www.esteri.it/mae/approfondimenti/2014/20141128_political_declaration.pdf

⁷ <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/it/meetings/international-summit/2015/11/11-12/>

decisions, as, for example, the launch of the UE Trust Fund⁸ for specific projects. It is Italy that has been entrusted with the first project financed by the UE Trust Fund, a 20-million-euro project on the root causes of migration in Africa, which aims to create favourable conditions for economic development and employment in Ethiopia.

Development Cooperation is an essential part of Italian foreign policy, and since January 1, Italy has had a new tool, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, which closely cooperates with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and guarantees the full effectiveness of the overall action of Italian Cooperation.

Addressing the issue Migration-Africa in the current context requires the double effort of taking into account both the enhancement of the cooperation among the countries in order to face the undeniable challenges, as well as considering the opportunities presented by migration and its positive dimension.

Africa has long been considered a “lost continent”, a land of migration, hunger, famine and war. Today, however, the forecasts of the International Monetary Fund⁹ cite it as the world area which is destined to see the most interesting rates of development, quantitatively speaking - an overall rise of 24% in the GDP in the next five years, meaning almost 5% per year. These figures are encouraging, although we cannot disregard the present general situation of challenges and problems, which still exist and will not find an easy solution by relying on the driving force of the GDP alone.

“Italy has the great opportunity before it, the chance to make a great contribution, and not only in the field of migration. Africa needs infrastructures, energy -above all renewable-, an enormous input into small and medium-sized enterprises and into agriculture, political stabilisation and social development, and finally the empowerment of women. These are all difficult objectives but they are within Africa’s reach in the next years. They are objectives to which Italy wishes to contribute as fully as possible, also through the Italy-Africa Ministerial Conference to be held in May.”

First session: Migration, rights and international relationships

Moderator: Alberto Negri

Il Sole24Ore

The topic of migration linked to that of international relationships entails a very complex issue: namely, security. **Can we talk in general of safe and less safe countries? Can we talk about migration paths which are safer than others?**

Although it is widely believed that nowadays there are more unsafe countries than safe countries, it is very difficult to concretely establish a ranking. How is it possible to distinguish a safe country from an unsafe one? The same country could be considered as safe by some people and extremely

⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/2_factsheet_emergency_trust_fund_africa_en.pdf

⁹ <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2015/01/>

unsafe by others. If we take Turkey as an example, which is a nearby country, collaborating with the European Union (as is clearly seen from the latest mission in Ankara to discuss the issue of refugees flows from Syria and from the Middle East), can we consider it a safe country? The instinctive answer of the majority of people is affirmative, but these people would probably change their mind if they went to south-eastern Anatolia and visited some of the villages that have been burned to the ground, as they could not deny that the situation is undoubtedly unsafe for the inhabitants. So when we try to issue “safety certificates”, we need to pay attention to how and to whom they are given, because unfortunately, very often, what seems to be safe to some is absolutely unsafe for others.

If we begin to considering the specifics of migration flows, we can undoubtedly affirm that the situation we are facing is that of peoples on the move, who live in a state of constant insecurity, regardless of the reasons which drove them to migrate. If it is true that we can make a distinction between political and economic migrants, we cannot deny that the economic migrant too has to face very dangerous situations, setting out from a country which may not be at war but then crossing another nation where a conflict is raging, or in any case running the risk of being co-opted or sucked into criminal organisations. In Niger, for example, many migrants arrive from other African countries which are not at war, but they are often captured and exploited by criminal organisations. Perhaps it is not a question of distinguishing between safe and unsafe countries, but rather about realizing that *there are unsafe lives, there are individuals whose survival is not guaranteed*.

Finally, we must deal with an important issue: **what will be the consequences of the ongoing conflicts?** Often, as shown by the situations in different African and Middle Eastern countries, when a conflict ends the real effects and consequences can turn out to be devastating for years: entire economies are destroyed and people are forced to emigrate from their country of origin to find better living conditions.

Ferruccio Pastore

International and European Forum of Migration Research

The link between migration and foreign policy is to be found in alternating phases over and over again throughout history up to the present. Here are some examples. In the early days of the history of the Republic of Italy, agreements on migration were among the first significant acts of foreign policy, beginning from 1946 when the Italian-Belgian Protocol¹⁰ was signed. After some decades, at the beginning of the 1970s, the oil crisis, the consequent global recession and the great instability in the Middle East determined the introduction of restrictive immigration policies and a drastic reduction in the recruitment of foreign workers by destination Countries in Western Europe.

The frontiers were unilaterally closed to migration for work and it was the beginning of a breakdown between migration and foreign policy. For a quarter of a century, in a still relatively protected geopolitical situation, Europe cultivated the illusion of a unilateral migration policy, a “home-made” version, with no dialogue or coordination with the countries of origin and of transit.

During the 1990’s a range of geopolitical, economic, and demographic factors put an end to the illusion of unilateral policies migration and it was in this phase that Italy played a pioneering role,

¹⁰ http://legislature.camera.it/_dati/costituente/lavori/ddl/42nc.pdf

for example in shaping new forms of foreign policy on migration, combining privileged entry quotas, included in the what were called flow decrees, with an intensified effort from some important neighbouring countries, in order to manage migration flows. At that time, Italy also played a crucial role in managing emergencies, as can be seen from Operation Alba in 1997, a clear example of how foreign policy can be significantly driven by migratory factors.

Subsequently, in a context where global and European migration became more and more subject to ideology, this pragmatic experiment was slowed down; an imbalance developed in the policies on migration, which became skewed towards “security”, leading to actions of repressive control. This can be seen in the single important foreign policy agreement of those years: the treaty signed by Italy and Libya¹¹ in the summer of 2008 where security was clearly the dominant factor. The economic crisis, which began in 2008, led to the freezing of flow decrees, and, consequently, to the loss of a fundamental tool in Italian foreign policy on migration.

In 2005, after the tragic events at the Melilla and Ceuta border fences, Europe implemented its own migration policy, launching the *global approach to migration*¹² GAM, which however remained only on paper, because planning a foreign migration policy without a solid foreign policy was clearly too difficult. During the first months of 2011, it became dramatically clear that this situation of ongoing inertia was unbearable and there was a period of great activity around this issue on the international political scene. From this moment on the connection between migration and international relations could no longer be considered an optional extra, but became a necessity, a central priority for both Italy and the European Union. The external dimension of migration policy became a priority because the domestic solutions proposed by the EU destination countries were too difficult to implement. This is what happened with the relocation measures for asylum seekers, which, despite being innovative, remained, in practice, only on paper with just a few hundred successful relocations.

Also the attempt to implement an external solution, to resort to foreign policy regarding migration met with enormous obstacles, both general, as in every other field of foreign policy, and specific, as happens when we try to find ways to negotiate with the countries of origin and of transit on the specific field of migration policy.

In order to achieve objectives in migration policy, we use bargaining chips relevant to migration policy, typically to obtain greater cooperation: to encourage stricter border controls we offer greater flexibility as far as inflow is concerned. The problem with this approach is that, while it seems clear-cut on paper, where it has been put into practice on a national level it has functioned only intermittently (the Italian experience is an example of this). However, at a European level it has encountered many obstacles, essentially because the European Union cannot control the number of migrants entering Europe. In fact, it is the individual countries that have maintained their control over the number of migrants arriving and the number of admissions.

To overcome this obstacle, the European Union tried, for example, to play the card of short-term mobility and in 2011 the *global approach to migration* was renamed *global approach to migration*

¹¹ http://legislature.camera.it/_dati/costituente/lavori/ddl/42nc.pdf

¹² http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/international-affairs/global-approach-to-migration/index_en.htm

and mobility (GAMM). This was because the European Union quite rightly understood that, since the granting of short-term visas was a competence of the community, so the flow is different from migrations, it could become an attractive bargaining chip, potentially effective for negotiating with partners beyond the Mediterranean.

However, in this case we have only achieved an extension of the range of tools available, which is undoubtedly positive, but there is no simple way to make it work. If we consider the current EU relations with Turkey as they negotiate to come to a “big deal” in order to contain the flow of migrants, it becomes clear that there is an underlying problem: the agreement does not work because the real issue at stake is the liberalization of the short-term movement of Turkish citizens in Europe, a concession that many European countries, Germany first and foremost, are reluctant to grant, regardless of the promise made in negotiations during the first political meetings. To face such complex issues we need a really integrated approach, which uses strategically all the instruments of foreign policy, not just those specifically related to migration policy.

The EU-Africa summit in Valletta began to take some definite steps forward in this direction: the creation of the Trust Fund and the definition of a detailed plan of action. The first results are already visible but the process of co-developing a EU-Africa migration policy is still at an early stage. One of the key objectives in the Valletta plan of action is student mobility. By 2016 the number of scholarships granted by the EU to African countries will double in comparison to 2014.

This is a concrete, immediate short-term commitment, based on the idea that giving the opportunity of further study in Europe to young Africans, especially to future African ruling classes, would be enough to bring about some changes. Unfortunately this is not the reality. 50 years of post-colonial history has shown us that, although most of the African ruling class were educated abroad, the countries of origin have not always witnessed significant changes.

In a policy brief, which Fieri is now completing for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we maintain that we should take more decisive and courageous action to bring about the co-development of an EU-African policy regarding human resources. This does not only mean granting scholarships, but providing training in shared schools, which could also be located in Africa, to the EU-African ruling classes.

Gianni Bonvicini

Institute of International Affairs

The issue of “migration and international relations” involves a complex system of numerous factors: economic sustainability, border controls, security issues, bilateral and multilateral relations, consequences at both a domestic and international level, human rights and so forth. Migration directly concerns many countries of origin, of transit and of destination. It is objectively difficult, therefore, to manage it only at a national level, even if there is active involvement from the single States affected.

For Italy the issue of migration, especially as it affects our relationship with the continent of Africa, is undoubtedly of primary importance, given the impact that it has had on our country. However, it is also undeniable that the related plans of action and of problem solving cannot be successful only on a national level. Therefore, it is necessary to frame a European migration policy, which our own policy could use as a point of reference on a daily basis.

In the last months of 2015 the impact of the phenomenon of migration on Europe has been, in some respects, devastating, so much so that it has directly affected the foundations of the European integration process. There are three key factors we should highlight.

Firstly, an issue which we thought we had overcome once and for all, namely the question of **borders within the European Union**, has re-emerged. The borders between countries have been imposed once again, through dramatic actions like the erection of barbed wire or walls, thus threatening one of the greatest demonstrations of the desire for integration in the European Union – the Schengen Agreement.

Secondly, in Europe we are witnessing the dramatic formation of **informal sub-groups of countries** (like the core group in Central Europe or the Visegrad countries), which have nothing to do with the rules and mechanisms of the Treaty of Lisbon which provides for enhanced cooperation, as long as this is regulated by shared criteria and is open to all countries that wish to participate. Here again, serious damage is done to cohesion and the transparency in shared decision-making processes.

The third major factor in this dramatic historical moment is the **increasing loss of the sense of values on which European integration is based**, namely solidarity, protection of human rights and freedom of movement. Besides this loss of values, we have seen the revival not only of nationalism, but also of racism, while a dangerous tendency to equate migration and terrorism is re-emerging, making it even more difficult to address the issue of migration in a rational way.

Moreover, if you compare what it is now happening in the European Union with regard to the current migration crisis with the Euro crisis of the past, it can be clearly seen that very different approaches, tools and policies have been adopted. In the field of migration there is none of the enhanced cooperation that exists in the monetary field (Eurozone), nor is there an independent and supra-national agency which can take emergency measures, as did the Central Bank in the Euro crisis. Even the directives on legal migration issued by the Commission are not applicable to the current situation and Dublin 2 is clearly not working: its provisions are largely ignored, although no one seems to have the strength to change.

Moreover, there is an absence of the application of a fundamental principle in EU's policy, namely the **principle of coherence**: there is no sign of coordination with the policies connected indirectly to the migration, such as development cooperation or neighbourhood policy. It is evident that there is a real lack of overall management by the European Union on the question of migration and we must ask ourselves what action should be taken.

We should remember that **migration flows** involve not only Africa and the Middle East, which account for only a small part of the great movement of migrants worldwide. This is not only a temporary emergency due to the conflicts in Libya or Syria; these flows **constitute a global and structural phenomenon** to be addressed with a multilateral approach. "Go multilateral" should be the watchword

The European Union needs to make even greater efforts to identify and define the tools best suited to manage migration. In Africa it is certainly important to encourage bilateral processes between the EU and African countries, like the Rabat and Khartoum processes, European Union-Africa summits such as the Valletta summit, but it is also essential to promote regional and sub-regional strategies

both in Africa and in the Middle-East. The cooperation process regarding migration as a global phenomenon must be extended to other actors: European countries, such as Turkey and Russia; to non-European nations, like the Gulf states and China; as well as to important, multilateral actors, such as the UN and OCSE. The OCSE has already established a dialogue with the Mediterranean countries, at least on security issues and on the fight against organized crime that is profiting from migration.

Beyond the issue of security, migration must be considered as a central topic in foreign policy above all, not only on the national, but also at a European level. In this regard it is quite clear that the first problem we must deal with is the conflicts in Libya and in Syria, with international organizations and partners working together. The non-resolution of these conflicts is making an emergency out of a situation that is actually structural and will affect us for the next few decades. We must also create a real EU migration policy based on the principles of coherency and solidarity which should underlie the European Union's actions.

In addition, Frontex's responsibility for administrative border control must be expanded. A real independent European Agency for border protection and a Coastguard should be established, in order not only to manage migrant flows, but also to prevent the Schengen system from collapsing. Lastly, it is important that the issue of migration should be part of the new European Global Strategy¹³, which should detail the prospective tools, policies and institutional measures to be adopted at a European level in order to avoid the risk of nationalistic fragmentation. This will be discussed at the forthcoming European Council in June.

Luigi Manconi

President of the Human Rights Commission of the Italian Senate

Our initial assumption is that the capacity to govern the phenomenon of migration is the only alternative we have to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe and a disaster for the EU, and that this government capacity must be unanimous and correspond to a common policy: otherwise it will be powerless and inadequate for its purpose. We must also consider the fact that the development of an African agenda could give Italy a valuable role as a key actor, also in light of the fact that within the Europe-Africa axis it is possible to take advantage of all the potential and the opportunities presented by a trend reversal in the current scenario.

In order to deal with the complex issue of migration flows as they relate to the national foreign policy of nations and of the European Union in a specific context, as in relations between Italy and Africa, we must necessarily take into account the deeper considerations of human rights, including the causes of migration and the reasons why people choose to migrate.

The question of whether it is necessary or not to distinguish between **economic migrants and asylum-seekers** can help us to clarify some key elements in this context. The most up-to-date analysis in the areas of sociology, economics and demographics tell us that the distinction between

¹³ http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/international-affairs/global-approach-to-migration/index_en.htm

economic migrants and asylum-seekers is becoming less and less important, the difference is becoming more and more blurred and there is often an overlap between them. If we reconsider some specific countries, as for example Eritrea and Afghanistan, we see that it is necessary to update the criteria, categories and indicators we use to analyse migration flows.

This necessity is not only due to a need for an accurate analysis, but also a resulting fact, namely the major issue of the **human rights system**. *If we continue to privilege, emphasize and keep alive a distinction between economic migrants and asylum-seekers, the disastrous result will be that the system of protection for economic migrants will never reach the same standards as the protection system for asylum-seekers. The exact opposite will occur: the rights and guarantees for those seeking asylum will be reduced to the same level as those for economic migrants.* Not only does the continuing distinction between economic migrants and asylum-seekers as fixed categories not correspond to the current reality, but it will lead to a serious overall deficit in the protection and progress of human rights.

Over the last few weeks public discussion has made us reflect about three examples that clearly demonstrate how absolutely necessary it is to tell the truth in order to develop rational and intelligent public policies. The first example relates to the issue of the repeal of the crime of illegal migration. If it has been stated that the crime of illegal migration has proved to be unnecessary and harmful, the political class, managerial groups and those who have a great influence on public opinion must support the idea that this category of criminal offence is pointless and harmful, arguing against it and convincing as many people as possible that this offence must be repealed. *Illegal migration as a crime must be repealed because it does not penalize criminal behaviour, meaning behaviour that is harmful to other people or affects legally protected rights, but rather an existential condition, a status, a social being, the fact of being a migrant.* Moreover, as the head of the Direzione nazionale antimafia e antiterrorismo (national anti-mafia and anti-terrorism authority) and the Commissioner of Police himself argued very precisely, it has proved to be useless and harmful. Repealing this crime certainly involves the cultural, social and electoral costs that result from “telling the truth” in this case but will be compensated by a hard-won growth in collective awareness.

The second example concerns the issue of smugglers who are paid by the migrants to take them across the sea. About a year ago, the mobilization against smugglers, supported by all necessary means, even by military forces, led the public to believe that the smugglers are the cause, not the effect of migration. In fact, they are only involved in the last part of the route, a last stretch organized by criminals, of a human journey undertaken by migrants that has completely different motivations and roots.

The third example refers to the Cologne incidents on New Year’s Eve 2015. The events that occurred in Cologne convinced many observers in Italy and in the rest of Europe to proclaim the failure of multiculturalism. We have to be clear about the meaning of multiculturalism: is it a sort of snapshot of reality? Or is it essentially the surrogate for the projection of positive expectations for the construction of a society based on the mixing of different ethnic groups, cultures and religions?

It is to be said that even before the Cologne incident, in the last quarter of the century we witnessed several cultural conflicts, some of which were very heated. We have only to think of the issue of female genital mutilation in Italy or the issue of the Muslim veil. *Multiculturalism is nothing other than an unstoppable trend in contemporary societies, which can be mediated and governed but*

cannot be conceived of as an easy, obstacle free journey. Multiculturalism, meaning the coexistence of different cultures and traditions, is a process that is arduous and painful, but nonetheless necessary: there is no other way.

These three examples highlight how necessary it is to respect the political and moral imperative to tell the truth. This then becomes the starting point from which we lay out a path towards the development of a European Union that is aware of its responsibilities, has the capacity to be welcoming, and, at the same time, is able to build its own identity, based on the founding values of the original idea of European Union and Community.

Second session: Migrations and relations between Italy and Africa

Moderator: Ugo Melchionda

Idos Studies and Research Centre

In a comprehensive overview of Italy-Africa relations, with regard to the question of migration we must start by considering some important figures. The African continent is made up of nations with mostly very poor economies (half of the continent's population live on less than \$2.50 per day), but with growth rates that are extremely high.

One sixth of the world's population lives in Africa, and it is growing fast: according to the predictions of the United Nations, more than half of the overall population growth between today and 2050 will be recorded in Africa¹⁴, where the population is expected to double. There are 31 million African migrants in the world, 10 million of whom are refugees and displaced persons.

In the past decade, Africa has doubled its presence in Italy, rising from 516,000 units to over 1 million units. Today African migrants are almost a fifth of all legal migrants¹⁵.

As regards applications for asylum lodged in our country, a large proportion of these are made by people coming from Sub-Saharan Africa. Out of a total number of 65,000 applications made in 2014, 10,135 were submitted by people from Nigeria, 9,790 by people from Mali, 8,575 by people from Gambia and 4,675 by people from Senegal.

It is important that Italy and the other European countries continue to engage with Africa, both in the area of rights and their recognition, and in the area of project planning and dialogue, concentrating on economic factors and the opportunities that will arise. The Rabat and Khartoum processes are two important instruments in Europe-Italy-Africa relations because they deal with two aspects of migrations which are closely connected. Migrations and development on the one hand, and control of illegal flows on the other. There is the fear that Khartoum could limit Rabat, as Dublin is limiting Schengen.

¹⁴ http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/publications/files/key_findings_wpp_2015.pdf

¹⁵ [http://www.dossierimmigrazione.it/docnews/file/Scheda%20Dossier%202015\(4\).pdf](http://www.dossierimmigrazione.it/docnews/file/Scheda%20Dossier%202015(4).pdf)

Mario Deaglio

Economist

The question of migration, international relations and Africa, given its complexity, must be addressed from the point of view of the social sciences (politics, economics and demography) applied together. A concrete handling of this issue should start from two implicit premises that we find in the media treatment of this new wave of migration.

1) The first premise, completely unsubstantiated, is that the **migrant's choice is definitive**. In reality, the refugees seek a refuge for the duration of the emergency, but they would be generally willing to return to their country of origin if conditions improved. If the low and medium middle class people from Syria who have migrated to Germany in the last few months had the impression that there would be credible conditions for the reconstruction of their country in the short term, they would probably go back to Syria.

In the past, the number of migrants moving from former Yugoslavia to Austria reached 700,000, but when the situation stabilized, a returning flow began. Due mainly to economic reasons, migrants tend to have a longer term perspective, which is not related to a single emergency; however, at least at the beginning of their journey, they believe that a return to their country of origin could be possible once they have acquired the necessary economic and professional capacities. Italian migrants who moved to Germany in the '50s largely returned to Italy when they retired or shortly before retiring. Therefore, in either case it is not true that we are faced with a definitive choice by migrants; instead we are faced with their conditioned choices, which need to be treated individually.

2) The second premise is that **migrant flows must be dealt with primarily in terms of logistics**. In Europe, in the last months of 2015, the logistical approach eclipsed the political approach and led to discussions about quotas, visas on passports and fingerprints, without treating the real political issues at stake. Certainly the situation is not helped by the fact that there is no equivalent for migrants of the European central bank, in the sense that there is no supranational regulatory body.

In actual fact, we must realize that any country receiving refugees or economic migrants inside its borders cannot remain neutral about the situations in these migrants' country of origin. Instead, it must engage itself politically in the short and long term in order to create acceptable living conditions, with adequate development and growth, in these countries.

When we think about the measures to be established in migration policy, we must consider that the future in the long term will be dominated by the direct and inevitable relationship that will permanently link Europe and Africa. It is estimated that in about a quarter of a century the population of Africa will reach around one billion, and the average age of people in African nations (which is already very low), will decrease even more (in Egypt half of the population is less than 19 years old). Nobody is considering the fact that within two or three decades we will be faced with an exceptionally young and exceptionally large population. What will happen to the European economy if Africa grows by 5% every year? Or if it grows predominantly in some sectors but not in others? Despite the fact that the future of the European Union depends mainly on its relationship with Africa, there is a depressing lack of research and debate on these issues.

On what bases can we build the relationship between Europe and Africa? The answer given by classic economic theory, which is based principally on international trade and mutual benefit, is under many aspects still valid, but it is not enough. We need coordination of industrial policy, an idea of the direction to be taken and a real strategy. *Can Europe truly play a role in the process of*

economic growth, and social and civil development in Africa? And thus manage to find a way to partially alleviate its own problems? There is no sure answer to this question, but a solution could be found by discussing these common issues together with the African people. The two shores of the Mediterranean Sea, the two continents must create a dialogue. Europe's African agenda must be drawn up together with African countries.

With regard to the issues relating to migration flows in the short term, these mainly concern the management of the migrants and refugees in terms of logistics. Migrants are considered as objects, they are treated individually, not in relationship to the community they form and in which they live. They are generally considered as passive subjects, in the sense that they are principally required to observe certain rules and there is no consideration for their identity, which is not only personal but also belongs to a community. The European Union must begin to consider migrants as communities, identifying those which already exist and those being formed, establishing a dialogue with them and with their representatives. This can be achieved by means of many small actions that can begin even the moment they enter the host country.

Take for example the question of food. In the reception centers there are generally ready meals, but no one has a thought of providing the communities with raw materials so that they can make their own food. The community should be more independent in the running of its own centers. Newly arrived migrants should be provided not only with the basic necessities, but also with the tools needed to get to know the area they are now living in: books, courses on current law etc. In Germany, for example, some radios stations broadcast in the languages of migrants and there are newspapers published in these languages.

Lastly, there is one further point where the micro concerns, which are short-term, merge with the long term: **migrant business**.

In Italy, there are 500,000 migrant entrepreneurs, 135,000 of whom come from the Mediterranean area. Among them there are flourishing businesses owned by immigrants which hire Italian workers and others whose activities extend also to their countries of origin. We are starting to see this type of interaction, which is an important cultural operation contributing to the process of integration and interaction with the host country. The recognition of the migrant communities, facilitation of economic relations at a micro level, the initiation of a long-term dialogue resulting in the creation of projects and programmes that will involve the entire continent of Africa collectively with Europe: these are the tools which can help us turn the issue of migration into a great opportunity.

Lia Quartapelle

Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies

The issue of migration has made it clear how essential it is that a large component of Italian foreign policy be focused on Africa. The **relationship between Italy and Africa is assuming its own characteristic form**, beyond declarations of principles, or the “charitable” attitude which was the typical feature of western interest in Africa in the late 1990s and early 2000s. It is a relationship which must begin to respond to global issues involving both Italy and Africa, of which migrations are a sign and symptom, not an isolated phenomenon.

The recent summit of Valletta, held last November between the European Union and thirty-five African countries, was much awaited because it was a revival of the tradition of Europe-Africa dialogue on shared issues. Here European leaders' main concern was how to mitigate migration

flows and to save Schengen, under threat from the recent reinstating of border controls by some of the EU Member States that had always been most open to immigration, like Sweden, Norway and Denmark. This was a missed opportunity to make a new start in Europe-Africa relations, approached from a less strategic perspective since the Chinese crisis has loosened their competitive grip on Africa. The relationship between Europe and Africa was damaged in Valletta through the image given of Europe as a “fortress under siege”, which from the African point of view is an inaccurate impression, as can be clearly seen by if we consider the figures. Compared to the 3% of the world’s refugees who are hosted in Europe, Africa is home to 30%. No exact figures are available, but it is estimated that there are more intra-African migrants in West Africa alone (about 7.5 million) than African immigrants in the whole of Europe. There are more than 17 million immigrants in the African continent.

In this context, Italy is more involved in the phenomenon of migration than is the rest of Europe, and more directly involved in migration from Africa. There are three reasons for this. Firstly, the geographical proximity between our country and the African continent. Secondly, with the opening of the Balkan Routes, the flows arriving in Italy have increasingly become flows from Africa. In 2014 out of 170,000 arrivals 42,320 were Syrians (25%), while in 2015 only 5% were Syrians, compared to 61% from SSA (with more than 25% from Eritrea). Lastly, Italy has had to face migration flows in a manner which is sudden and dramatic: on the one hand, Italy is the Western country with the largest discrepancy between effective immigration and perceived immigration (the figures show a difference of 23%); on the other hand, it is one of the European countries whose population of migrants has increased faster during the past 25 years (from 0.9% in 1989 to 8% in 2014). For all these reasons, the relationship between Italy and Africa, identified as a natural focus of our foreign policy, plays an increasingly important role in the issue of migration.

Outlining some structural factors in migration between Europe and Africa can help us determine the goals, priorities and working method of a renewed commitment and involvement from Italy in Africa. African migrations are, in fact, none other than the symptoms of the profound contradictions existing in this continent, though these vary from country to country. Firstly, there are migrant flows generated by the hope for a better standard of living, from the economic point of view, for the migrants and their family. These are the flows of people coming from West Africa, from countries such as Senegal, Gambia and Nigeria (even though people from Nigeria are sometimes fleeing wars and persecution): they have been excluded from the benefits of the economic growth of their nations and this has led families to pin their hopes on some members who are pressured to migrate. There are also flows linked to conflicts and oppression. People coming from the Horn of Africa are fleeing the civil war in Somalia or the repressive regime in Eritrea.

Lastly, the third reason for migration is linked to fragile States. In Africa there is a significant percentage of fragile national governments. The background of some North African countries and of Sub-Saharan Africa, in particular the Sahel belt, show how a local situation of fragility may lead to regional and global instability. The weakness of the governments and the endemic corruption in countries like Somalia, Mali, South Sudan and Nigeria, as well as the fall or weakening of repressive political regimes, has had two results. On the one hand, it has driven people to seek to escape from fragile and unstable situations; on the other hand, it has enabled human traffickers to take advantage of the weak state institutions, uncontrolled borders and opportunities for corruption, and so extend their range of activity in comparison with the past.

In the countries of Sahelian Africa, the consequences of the “Arab Spring”, beginning with the fall of Gaddafi, have brought to a head underlying geopolitical dynamics already in operation for years, and have turned the area into a catalyst for crisis, with the disintegration of state agencies, growing migration flows and terrorism. The new strategy between Italy and Africa must come to terms with these three factors, the combination between them and the differences between the countries where they occur.

In geographical terms, even before these historical events, Italy is in a privileged position to relaunch the relationship between Europe and Africa as a global partnership. And Italy is adopting a number of different tools. Firstly, there has been (at least since the second Prodi government) **an effort to reinforce our capacity to communicate at the highest political level with African countries**. Secondly, we are working hard to follow up political commitment with concrete actions and so we are expanding our foreign policy with regard to African countries. In particular, after several attempts in 4 legislatures, **we have managed to reform the cooperation for development, a significant tool of Italian foreign policy**. The process of structural reform, which is still ongoing, has been accompanied by a response in terms of resources: an increase in funding of 120 million euros in a bilateral channel with the Stability Law. While this is still not enough to meet the commitment of 0.7% of the GDP, it is a strong reversal of the previous trend, which will be consolidated in the next two years and shows our willingness to reinforce the bilateral channel. The additional resources will be spent to upgrade the Italian presence in Africa. There are two questions which could be interesting to share.

1. If this aid and the ability of Italy to set up a political dialogue are to have a positive influence on African transitions, we must come to an understanding about **how to combine cooperation and security** (generally a taboo topic). This would serve the specific purpose of opposing the distortions of the issues caused by unstable governments, especially in the Sahel belt. We must reach an understanding about **how to strengthen the democratic transitions of several of these countries**. Here we are referring especially to the situation in Eritrea, which has a determining effect on migration flows to Italy; yet Italy has no clear strategy either in terms of policies, or in terms of cooperation towards this country.

2. **The foreign policy towards the African countries must try to be consistent also with other policies towards Africa**. Thanks to the renewed interest in Africa, there has been an upsurge in Italian activism towards African countries, an activism that is often not coordinated. What is needed is a strategic framework based on more structured actions, tools and goals, which would allow all Italian government institutions to take more efficient action in Africa.

Three of the African countries most involved in the migration crisis are former Italian colonies: Eritrea, Somalia and Libya. In this case, colonialism has given Italy a greater knowledge of these lands, their society and their inhabitants. However, this privileged knowledge still raises mistrust; it must be handled with extreme caution. We must keep that in mind when the new and future peace process in Libya takes place. Italy will have a Herculean task: this background knowledge and a large number of men and women, who are to be used as a resource, must be made available for the peace process. **In seeking to establish peace and stability, this political strategy must also be committed to supporting in every possible way the recovery of intending migrants so that they can contribute to the growth and the renewal of their countries of origin**, in Libya and also in Eritrea and Somalia. This is actually the mandate Italy feels ready to assume because of our affinity with these countries and our sense of responsibility.

Massimo Livi Bacci

Neodemos

The issue of migration is now being discussed in a global, European and Middle-eastern context. In this context, Italy is “nestled” in a European Union that is a failure in terms of migration policies. The Treaty of Lisbon¹⁶ is one example of this, since it allows the member states to freely decide the number of migrants that can be accepted inside their borders. The great migration to Spain that took place in the first decade of the present century, to some extent financed, in terms of employment, the property bubble which deeply affected the European Union economy. As for free movement, Europe is running the risk of failing precisely in the areas where it had achieved great results: the limitations of the Dublin Regulation strongly challenge Schengen.

Europe lacks a shared asylum policy. Despite all of the difficulties, it is essential to share the criteria that distinguish the asylum seeker, who needs a basic temporary or permanent protection, from the economic and social migrant, who is not facing a seriously life-threatening situation in their country of origin. For this reason, we must enhance the structures and unify the procedures that the countries use to examine applications for asylum and protection. The question of managing migration flows cannot be addressed through short term economic policies. Europe, as a whole, and the single countries cannot be caught unprepared by flows of displaced persons, which are caused by situations of great instability that have arisen over the years.

As regards international migrations and international relations between Italy and Africa in the long term, apart from the present emergency situations, what can we expect in terms of development in the African continent over the next few decades?

In order to talk about the relations between Africa and Italy and about migration flows, we first need to understand which part of Africa we are referring to. There is North Africa, which we are all familiar with. This part of Africa is well known to us and is the area that has close bonds with Europe, with which there are strong channels of interaction. Then there is Sub-Saharan Africa, which has very different problems in terms of population. In North Africa the demographic pressure is easing significantly: the birth rate has been decreasing over the last few decades and the way of life has somehow moved with the times. By contrast, in Sub-Saharan Africa, the rate of population growth continues to rise: for instance, the Nigerian birth rate is only slightly lower than it was twenty years ago. If this reproductive behaviour does not change, the population will triple by 2050. We are facing a “demographic explosion” that has never been recorded before; this is a significant fact to which the international community is not giving due consideration. During the recent meetings of the United Nations General Assembly, in which the new *sustainable development goals*¹⁷ (SDG) were approved, the demographic issue drifted out of focus, as if this topic no longer mattered.

Furthermore, we should not forget that Sub-Saharan Africa is strengthening its ties to Asia rather than to Europe. In recent years, our role as economic development partner for Sub-Saharan Africa has changed and is continuing to change. Sub-Saharan Africa is the part of Africa with the highest growth rate, 5% on average in the last ten years. However, we must consider that half of this growth rate is nullified by the population growth rate, which is 2.5% a year. Therefore, the real benefits are

¹⁶ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3AC2007%2F306%2F01>

¹⁷ <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

much lower compared to those indicated by the absolute figures alone. Sub-Saharan Africa is now experiencing a particular economic transition. Against the World Bank's expectations this transition is expressed in modest agricultural productivity and strong growth in the service sector. This is an anomaly, given that during a typical economic transition an increase in the agricultural productivity is the first positive factor to be noted; this increase then supports the development of the manufacturing sector and the benefits eventually trickle down to the tertiary sector. So almost certainly, the future of Sub-Saharan Africa development will not be built upon the manufacturing sector but upon the service sector. This is a new factor, which requires comprehension and in-depth analysis.

As for the relations between Italy and Africa, the **African diaspora** to Italy plays an important role, not only from the economic point of view but in other areas as well, despite the fact that its numbers have fallen in recent years compared to the past. Today, out of the total amount of foreigners in Italy, approximately 20% are African (80% from North Africa), for a total of 1 million people of African origin in Italy. Even though 20% is substantial figure, it has decreased from 6 years ago when the percentage of Africans was 26%. More than half a million Moroccans live in Italy. Fifty thousand of these work in the retail trading sector and principally, as street traders. The proportion of Moroccan entrepreneurs is higher than that of immigrant entrepreneurs from eastern Europe, the Philippines and other countries. It is surpassed only by the entrepreneurial capacity of the Chinese and Pakistani communities. African migrants living in Italy (one million Africans, of which half a million are Moroccans, one hundred thousand are Tunisians and another one hundred thousand are Egyptians) form large communities that are relatively well-integrated. Working with these communities is one possible way to develop cooperation between Italy and the single countries of Africa.

Migration routes are closely linked to events in the single countries of both Africa and Europe and to their interrelationship. Libya is regarded as the typical gateway to Europe, but because of its instability, many migration flows have now moved to routes passing through Greece and Turkey. In this way, several European countries that were once involved in the migrant question only indirectly are now involved directly. Europe lacks a shared policy on migration that could prevent the single countries from taking individual actions based on the migration routes and on the scale of migration flows.

As far as the migration trends are concerned, if we were to imagine a very long term perspective that goes beyond the next 30 years, we could envisage a new phase, very different from the current one. It would be a sort of fourth wave of globalization, in which there would be many and varied types of immigration, which may not relate only to the permanent physical movement of people. For instance, we need only think about the rise in international travel. According to the estimates of the international authority on travel and tourism, international journeys have increased from 20 million to one billion in the last fifty years. Mobility is rising exponentially and this leads us to believe that migration flows will be very different from what they are now.



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