



**Final Recommendations**  
**Regional Workshop:**  
**International Protection in Mixed Movements in the Central Mediterranean:**  
***Trends and Good Practices***  
**14<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> June 2021**  
**Rixos Hotel Sharm Sheikh - Arab Republic of Egypt**



We, the Representatives of Member States from the Republic of Tunisia, Democratic Republic of Algeria, State of Libya, Arab Republic of Egypt, Kingdom of Morocco and Republic of Mauritania<sup>1</sup>;

We thank the Arab Republic of Egypt for its generous hospitality and for hosting the regional workshop: International Protection in Mixed Movements in the Central Mediterranean: Trends and Good Practices, which took place in presence at a delicate time the world is going through especially with the outbreak of Corona pandemic.

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<sup>1</sup> List of participants attached.



We thank also the General Secretariat of the Arab Interior Ministers' Council and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for organizing the regional workshop: International Protection in Mixed Movements in the Central Mediterranean: Trends and Good Practices, which is the first of its kind in this field and within such delicate circumstances that North African countries are going through, especially with security, economic and social challenges that require more cooperation and coordination among them.

*Recognizing* with appreciation that Countries of North Africa continue to maintain their humane and generous approach towards refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in spite of the numerous challenges;

*Having* reviewed the key challenges related to protection in irregular mixed movements of refugees and migrants and the effective management of asylum and migration in the Central Mediterranean;

*Noting* that, during the past decade, the context of asylum and migration in North Africa has significantly altered, with continuing and increasing arrivals of refugees and migrants due to the effects of conflict and persecution, indiscriminate violence, poverty, unemployment, the lack of livelihood prospects and climate change in neighboring countries;

*Expressing concern about the increasing numbers of* refugees and migrants, unaccompanied and separated children and other vulnerable groups at serious risk of human trafficking and other serious human rights violations during mixed movements;

*Recognizing* that effective management of asylum and migration issues in North Africa requires further action based on international and regional co-operation and international solidarity, as well as greater coordination with UNHCR including in relation to the identification of international protection needs, as well as IOM, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other stakeholders;

*Acknowledging* that further actions must also be taken – in the context of national laws, regional agreements and adherence to international standards – to make progress in the following key areas:

- a. Further strengthen the protection available to refugees in irregular mixed movements as a means of providing viable alternatives to dangerous onward journeys;
- b. Law enforcement through the prosecution and conviction of human smugglers and traffickers and the dismantling of their networks in origin, transit and destination countries;
- c. Development of public awareness campaigns in the communities of origin, transit and destination countries to raise awareness of the risks associated with irregular movement and available alternatives;



- d. Working to provide the necessary support for the implementation of safe, dignified, and legal return programmes for those not in need of international protection or without other grounds for legal status in response to irregular movements;

*With reference to the above, we recommend the following:*

### **1- Regional and international co-operation**

Regional and international cooperation can be strengthened through the following measures:

- (a) Increasing the level of co-operation, co-ordination and information-sharing amongst all national, regional and international actors and sharing the responsibility in line the whole society approach within the principles embodied in the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and the Global Compact on Migration (GCM). Such information-sharing should also include the sharing of good practices regarding the protection of refugees that could be replicated in other States;
- (b) Enhancing regional co-operation in response to irregular movements, with the support of UNHCR, including to strengthen the identification of those with international protection needs, as well as the support of IOM;
- (c) Working to assist and strengthen the capacities of refugee-hosting countries in all areas that guarantee decent livelihoods for refugees and the communities hosting them.

### **2- Data collection and analysis**

As part of regional and international co-operation, data collection and analysis are important to facilitate understanding of mixed movement trends. They are thus also important to enable the adoption of more effective measures/mechanisms to manage and respond to irregular mixed movements, including in relation to refugee protection. In this regard, priority should be given to promoting the exchange of data and analysis on irregular arrivals, including those disembarked after rescue at sea, between States and the respective International Organizations; where this may contribute to a greater understanding of movement trends, including in relation to people in need of protection.

### **3- Strengthening the refugee protection system**

It is important that the basic principle of refugee protection, i.e non-refoulement as set out in the 1951 Refugee Convention, be respected and duly implemented, and responsibility-sharing arrangements in the region should be further strengthened. In this context, countries in the North African region are working to:



- (a) Work towards developing and / or strengthening mechanisms to identify people in need of international protection or with other specific protection needs such as victims of trafficking and unaccompanied and separated children, at borders and along the routes, and refer them to the necessary protection and assistance;
- (b) Enhance the knowledge of border officials about possible international protection needs of persons in irregular mixed movements, and how to identify and assist such individuals, including through gender-sensitive approaches, and refer them to relevant protection institutions and organizations;
- (c) Consider UNHCR functional reception arrangements including at disembarkation points that provide the necessary assistance and enable the identification of persons with international protection needs in irregular mixed movements;
- (d) Use detention as a last resort and work to share experiences and initiatives on alternatives to immigration detention between States and other key actors in the region. Detention of children should be avoided, in line with the international standards. Where detention is necessary, it should be applied in accordance with minimum standards under international human rights law;
- e) enhancing coordination with UNHCR to enable effective referral and screening of people with possible international protection needs at the earliest opportunity, including in adherence to the principle of non-refoulement; and
- (h) To use the expertise of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to find durable solutions for refugees in line with the principle of responsibility and burden sharing in a more equitable manner.

#### ***4- Protection of victims of human trafficking***

States are encouraged to integrate counter-trafficking provisions into national legislation and policies relating to migration, labor, gender, children and security.

States are encouraged to enhance cross-border cooperation in efforts to identify and prosecute traffickers. States are also encouraged to further develop mechanisms aimed at enhancing access of victims of trafficking to justice.

#### ***5- Follow-up mechanism***

We recommend implementing these recommendations through an ongoing coordination mechanism through the following:



- (a) Designating national focal points to follow-up on the implementation of these recommendations;
- (b) Establish a regular review mechanism to assess progress and identify obstacles and find solutions to overcome them;
- (c) Strengthening national capacities through more training and developing their competencies in the field of refugee protection;
- (D) Holding periodic meetings to inform member states of developments on trends and good practices in the protection of refugees within the mixed movements in the Central Mediterranean and to work on implementing the recommendations of this workshop.