



Project proposal by

North South Center for Migration Studies

With the support of the Spirit of Fes Foundation

International Conference on

**MIGRATION AND GLOBALIZATION
And a workshop on Migration and Development
13-15 January 2009
Fès, Morocco**

Background

The Mediterranean region is of strategic interest for migration policies and cultural relations. It is an area of integration and as a border, being increasingly fortified as European policies also aim at exclusion. The region has been experiencing a significant growth in irregular migration from south to north. As a consequence, the migration issue has emerged as one of the most important—and divisive—policy challenges for countries both north and south of the Mediterranean sea. The countries to the north increasingly perceive undocumented migration from the African continent as being “out of control”, and as a threat to their national welfare systems and domestic peace and stability. Consequently, European countries have been struggling to find ways to curb the flow of irregular migrants from the south, which has also involved demanding stricter border and immigration controls from their southern neighbor countries.

For the countries of the southern side of the Mediterranean, the situation has in a sense been more complex. As far as they themselves have become destination or transit countries for would-be migrants coming from further south, they too have come to view irregular migration as a growing burden, and have been espousing an increasingly restrictive agenda vis-à-vis clandestine migration from sub-Saharan Africa.

On the other hand, as migrant-sending countries, southern Mediterranean countries are of course also interested in opening legal channels of migration into the EU for their citizens in order to relieve pressure on their saturated labor markets. As a consequence of these diverging interests, collaboration between the countries north and south of the Mediterranean in the area of migration policy has generally been rather difficult to achieve, and at times the migration issue has also led to considerable tensions between north and south Mediterranean countries.

Moreover, in July 2006, a first Ministerial Euro-African Conference on Migration and Development was held in Rabat, which brought together some 60 African and European countries, to discuss migration and development, and to find ways out of the seemingly persistent crisis of irregular migration from the African continent towards Europe.

However the Rabat conference has also been criticized by a number of human rights organizations for the general neglect of human rights and refugee protection issues in the current policy agenda on migration and development in the Mediterranean region.

Objectives of the Conference on Migration and Globalization

Against this background and within the framework of the Mediterranean Forum on Migration, Development and Diplomacy, The South North Center for Intercultural Dialogue and Migration Studies (Morocco) and Lugano University (Switzerland), in collaboration with the Spirit of Fès Foundation, are planning to organize on January 13th-15th 2008 an international conference on the theme “Migration and Globalization”, bringing together scholars, policy makers and journalists from Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, and the US.

Globalization might be considered a process going on for centuries, as illustrated by the examples of the historian Ibn Khaldoun and the explorer Ibn Battouta; however, it has gained momentum in the final decades of the last century: technically and economically, but also politically with the end of the bi-polar systems and power concurrence.

Since the 1970s, consciousness-raising over environmental issues brought the world closer, giving way to the notion of “citizen of the world.”

However, the factors that had the deepest impact on (e)migration are certainly the development of the information, communication and transport technology: e.g. satellite television, portable telephone and internet. Globalization allows exchange and

multiculturalism to become a living reality, but also reinforces old restrictions and creates new forms of exclusion.

The conference will focus on migration in the Mediterranean and the impact of globalization. Migration and globalization have become crucial issues at a time when mismanagement of economic problems, cultural differences and migration are sources of misunderstanding and conflict.

The objectives of the conference would be as follows:

- **To provide and exchange information on recent developments in migration policies, in both European and southern Mediterranean countries**
- **To provide better solutions to migration issues which are pertinent and sustainable, especially for the countries of the South Mediterranean.**
- **To raise the awareness of human rights issues in the context of migration policy**
- **to foster cooperation between the countries of the south of the Mediterranean in the field of migration policy;**
- **to foster cooperation and between the north and the south in this area**
- **to encourage a dialogue between the governments, civil society, and the academic world to reach a better understanding of the interrelationship between migration, development and diplomacy and to develop more sustainable policies and solutions.**

The establishment of such a forum would also be in line with Swiss foreign policy objectives, according to which the Mediterranean basin is a priority region, and the migration issue is considered as one of the most pressing challenges confronting the countries north and south of the Mediterranean.

To realize these objectives it is proposed to organize this international conference on 13-15th January, 2009, in Fez, Morocco with participants coming from the North and the South Mediterranean. The participants would include policy makers and government officials, as well as local scholars and experts on migration issues.

Expected Benefits of the Forum

A number of potential benefits can be expected from the planned conference on Migration and Globalization. These include the following:

- To identify possible avenues of cooperation between the sending, transit and destination countries in the area of migration policy
- To strengthen confidence between north and southern Mediterranean countries in the field of migration policy

- To enhance and broaden the understanding of the North Mediterranean countries of the nexus between migration and development, and the North and South Mediterranean its implications for diplomacy and inter-state relations.

Organizing institutions: South North Center for Migration Studies, Istituto Studi Mediterranei and Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, Spirit of Fez Foundation.

The South North Center for Intercultural Dialogue and Migration Studies

The South North Center for Intercultural Dialogue and Migration Studies was created on 28 August 2006 in Fès, Morocco, by a group of Moroccan university professors and researchers. The Center is interested in multidisciplinary studies of intercultural dialogue and migration issues in the Mediterranean region.

The main objectives of the Center are :

- ✚ Reinforcing research on intercultural dialogue and migration studies in the Mediterranean region,
- ✚ Fostering all initiatives of economic, social, and cultural exchange between South and North,
- ✚ Organisation of workshops, national and international conferences, training sessions on intercultural dialogue and migration issues,
- ✚ Establishing relations and linkages with government and non-government organisations having the same objectives and interests,

The Spirit of Fez Foundation

The Spirit of Fez Foundation is a non-government organization which was established in 2005 by civil society experts, politicians, and local authorities in the region of Fez, Morocco. It organizes annually several conferences on social policy and development issues. Its major goals are:

- ✚ Promotion of development in the region
- ✚ Enhancing local capacity building,
- ✚ Enhancing cooperation links between Morocco and other countries in terms of intercultural dialogue and migration,
- ✚ Publication of research and studies relevant to social, economic, and cultural development
- ✚ Introducing democratic culture in the domains of education, training, and in civil society,

Istituto studi mediterranei (ISM)

The *Istituto studi mediterranei (ISM)* was created in 1997 as an independent research institute on Mediterranean issues. In 2005 it was integrated into the Faculty of Communication Sciences of the University of Lugano. Since 2004 the Institute has been partly funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation of the Federal department of Foreign Affairs. Anchored in civil society and the international academic

and scientific community, the Institute aims to develop multidisciplinary research and studies on societies, cultures and countries around the Mediterranean.

The Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC)

The *Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC)* was established in 1990 pursuant to an agreement between the governments of Malta and Switzerland. It is an institute of higher learning offering advanced degrees in diplomacy with a focus on Mediterranean issues. MEDAC has an international teaching staff and a number partner institutions in both Europe and the MENA region. Since its inception, one of its main partner institutions has been the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva.

Themes of the Conference, Location and Date of the Conference

The conference will deal with the following sub-themes:

- 1- Migration and development in North Africa: prospects for the future
- 2- Migration, gender and social reform
- 3- Migration South-North, Integration and Euro-Arab Relations
- 5- Migration, Media(s) and Human Trafficking
- 6- Migration South-North and brain drain, a challenge for the future?
- 7- Migration, trafficking and human rights
- 8 – Actors, action plans and strategies: e.g. UN, ILO, IOM, EU, Attac

The conference aims to review plans of action and policy instruments addressing current migration flows and pressures, in order to promote a better management of migration issues, based on the collaboration of experts, policy makers, and civil society organizations from North African countries and the European Union.

The conference will also debate the different means which can allow an interdisciplinary global and integrative approach of the question of trafficking and human rights in the debates.

The conference will be a good opportunity to establish a network of experts with the aim to develop common research projects fully integrated in the world wide migration issues.

Timing

- Abstracts to be sent by participants by October 30th, 2008
- Notification of acceptance of abstracts by November 15th, 2008
- Conference takes place on 13th-15th January, 2009

Location of the Conference

Palais des Congrès, Fès, Morocco

Financial aspects / contribution ISM and MEDAC

General principle: participants of the Forum coming from European countries would cover their own expenses, while costs of participants from southern Mediterranean countries would be covered.

Estimated costs of the organization of the three-day conference (in Morocco) with around 25 participants would be about **41 000 Euros**. See the detailed budget attached.

The contributions of ISM and MEDAC would be mainly in kind: development of the programme, running and contributing to the workshop, and logistical support.

The contributions of the South North Center would be basically the conception, of the conference, the printing of the programme, and realization of the conference as a whole.

The Spirit of Fez foundation would support this conference by covering the cost of printing all documents (programmes, leaflets, etc) and by covering the cost of the conference room and dinners for the guests.