



ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE:
Levers for Building the Africa we Want

KEYNOTE SPEECH FOR

**H.E. MRS. AMIRA ELFADIL
COMMISSIONER FOR HEALTH, HUMANITARIAN
AFFAIRS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**AT THE LAUNCH OF THE STUDY ON RETURN,
READMISSION AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES
IN AFRICA**

High level Opening Panel

**DATE: JUNE 23, 2021
TIME: 15:00 – 17:00HRS**

- **Ms. Ylva JOHANSSON, EU Commissioner for Home Affairs**
- **Mr. Michael SPINDELEGGER, Director General of the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)**
- **Dear national Focal points from Cameroon, Guinea, DRC, Nigeria, Morocco, Egypt, Sudan, Malawi, Mauritius,**
- **Mrs Nassim Majidi from Samuel Hall and her team,**
- **Distinguished partners, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is with absolute great pleasure and a singular honour to welcome you all to this auspicious occasion organized to launch a Study on **Return, Readmission and Reintegration** African Union programme. The Agenda 2063 and SDGs underscore indispensable importance of partnerships in policy discourse. I therefore wish to say with pride that, the step by step build up work for the Study to be launched today epitomizes the pioneering spirit of shared responsibility, global solidarity, and dynamic cooperation. I am cogently aware, conclusion of the Study was made possible through the impeccable support of the European Union and the facilitation of ICMPD.

Furthermore, before we deep dive into the technicalities of the study and its policy propositions, allow me to express my gratitude to AU Member States and distinguished focal points from Cameroon, Guinea, Morocco, Egypt, Sudan, DRC, Nigeria, Malawi and Mauritius, for their commitment and contribution throughout this process. The commitment of Samuel Hall team is also highly appreciated. Last but not least, I wish to recognize and thank all the AUC staff who worked relentlessly to ensure that this study provides the necessary answers to our questions associated with Return, Readmission and Reintegration.

Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

As we are all aware, the recent decades has been characterized by the exponential rise in African migration. The reasons for these rising migration trends include the search for better employment opportunities, higher income, better education and health care. African migration can also be motivated by difficult socio-economic conditions, conflicts, insecurity and climate change to mention a few.

With the rising trends of international migration, return migration has gained ground in the international debate. Return, Re-admission and Reintegration has been one of the response strategies adopted by countries to manage migration, thereby returning migrants and/or forcibly displaced populations to their countries/communities of origin or of first asylum. Africa has been witnessing important levels of intra-regional returns and inter-regional returns. Congruent to this background and trends, AU Member States, while adopting the 2018 Migration Policy for Africa, proactively requested the AU Commission to conduct an evaluation of Return, Readmission and Reintegration programmes on the continent, in a view to establish best practices on Return, Re-admission and Reintegration.

Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

The study we are launching today was initiated with the main objective to assess and draw lessons from the RRR programmes on the continent, the long-term results being to identify principles and the approaches to be applied by AU Member States to ensure sustainable Return, Readmission and Reintegration of migrants.

Importantly, not only did the study ignite an important discussion around the definition of sustainable reintegration from various perspectives, but it also identified key success factors for sustainable reintegration based on previous reviews and the analysis of case studies from 9 AU Member States. Beyond the success factors, the exercise also highlighted 5 key messages that can improve prospects for sustainable reintegration on the Continent.

It is imperative to reiterate that an **increased ownership and knowledge on reintegration** by **countries of origin** are central factors to build and strengthen AU Member States responsibility in this field. Also, **reintegration programmes** need to be more connected to **national and local development plans**, and the involvement of **private sector**, local and international, should be redefined and optimized.

Finally, AU Member States and all stakeholders are invited to adopt **out-of-the-box and flexible approaches to reintegration**, in order to harness long-term added value impact on the life of returnees and the return communities and achieve impetus on socio-economic sustainability.

We are encouraged that the fact that some of these messages are agreed upon by our EU partners, namely the necessary linkage between reintegration and development programmes, as emphasized by **Excellency Commissioner Johannsson** in her keynote speech. Our strong hope is that these messages will guide our future cooperation on return and reintegration, not only with the EU but also with other regional blocks.

Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me conclude by underscoring that, the recommendations formulated in this study places at the door of the esteemed AU Member States a challenge, to strengthen institutional coordination, enhance legal and policy frameworks and bolster national Monitoring and Evaluation and learning system. It is our duty at the AUC, to support these efforts in collaboration with the Regional Economic Communities.

Allow me to recognize in a special way, all our partners here present working on this thematic issue with us including ICMPD, GIZ, as well as IOM and we look forward to working with all. In the context of shared responsibility, I wish to seize this moment to thank you in advance for the anticipated unwavering support on the journey that lay ahead of us, our work is really cut out. I thank you.