Trans-Mediterranean Migration and Euro-African Strategies

Mehdi Lahlou
Professor
Institut National de Statistique
et d'Economie Appliquée (INSEA), Rabat

The repeated assaults from late August to early October 2005 by hundreds of Sub-Saharan migrants – living ever longer in Morocco with less and less resources for surviving and, above all, seeing their hopes for crossing to the other side of the Mediterranean progressively dwindle as all sorts of controls on both shores are intensified – in attempts to storm the barbed wire fences erected by the Spanish authorities around their enclaves in Moroccan territory, Sebta and Melilia (i.e. the Arabic names for Ceuta and Melilla), alarmed the Spaniards, frightened their EU partners and troubled the Moroccans. The latter were suddenly confronted with a situation that was certainly foreseeable in nature, but unimaginable insofar as the scope it had taken on, both on site and through the images it produced in the media and its impact on public opinion, both in Europe and Africa.

The two countries frontally affected by these events, i.e. Morocco and Spain, quickly took advantage of the situation in order: in the case of Morocco, to display its position as 'victim' of its geography and request a new 'Marshall Plan' for Africa, if only to reduce the propensity of Sub-Saharan Africans to emigrate; and in the case of Spain, to call for greater involvement (and greater solidarity) by other EU Member States; both countries basing their arguments on the fact that *"they are doing everything that should be done"* to reduce the migratory flow to Europe, though without success. These same countries moreover demanded that countries of emigration and transit, in particular Algeria, take greater responsibility and tighten controls on their citizens emigrating abroad and/or border crossings by emigrants in transit through their territory, and therefore to assume responsibility in managing a matter in which they should likewise be deeply involved. Generally speaking, the autumn 2005 events seem to have produced a major shock wave regarding the significance of the migratory phenomenon originating in Africa, its causes and possible evolution if nothing of import is done to stem its determining factors and mechanisms. For the Europeans, on the one hand, this shock wave would soon translate into the search for improved political convergence and more means to reinforce controls already in place to protect Europe's southern borders. In the Maghreb, on the other hand, from Libya to Morocco, a certain tendency has emerged to adopt an approach that increasingly integrates European policy goals on migration, although the official discourse contains many nuances.

Two essential factors should nonetheless be kept in mind with regard to the process unleashed:

- The explosion in the number of irregular migrants arriving in Spain over the course of 2006 and, above all, the shift in destination, the majority now arriving on the Canary Islands instead of the coast of Andalusia, seem to indicate that protection measures of a direct security nature remain inoperative.
- There is an attempt to collectively deal with the Euro-African migratory issue in an inter-governmental framework involving the countries of destination as well as those of transit and departure. This attempt, whose contours are not yet politically and institutionally well defined or established, comes after a long period when the Spanish and particularly Moroccan Authorities were considered the main policymakers – if not the only ones – responsible for all issues relating to migration in the Western Mediterranean.

Another Migratory Path: The 'Cayuco Way' or the Dakar-Tenerife Maritime Route

The near sealing off of the Strait of Gibraltar against irregular migrant travel through the combination of different Moroccan-Spanish land and sea controls – controls that have also become more effective along the Saharan coast of Morocco closest to the Islands of Fuerteventura and Lanzarote – has led nearly automatically to the 'opening' of the Dakar-Canary Islands maritime route, which is longer and more dangerous, but more direct and less costly. Although it was foreseeable long ago, this new path constitutes a real surprise for the speed with which it began to be used and the number of migrants using it, especially in the summer of 2006. In fact, the sharp decrease in migratory flow across the Strait of Gibraltar to Europe is understandable and has been more than compensated by the shift of migratory channels to Western Africa, to the area between Mauritania and the Republic of Guinea. In this regard, the emergence of two new transit countries, first Mauritania in November of 2005 and then Senegal in the spring of 2006, translates into what seems like a true explosion in the number of migrants travelling irregularly to Spanish territory and the consolidation of the Canary Islands as the main gateway to Europe along its southern flank.

Thus, over the course of 2006, over 31,000 Sub-Saharan migrants (as indicated in the tables below), in other words, four times the number of arrivals registered on the Canary archipelago in 2002 – a year in which irregular arrivals were considered to have reached a historical peak since the start of the current migratory phenomenon – landed on the Canary Islands, primarily the Island of Tenerife, the most populated and tourist-oriented of the islands, on board *cayucos* (small, fragile boats) generally carrying from 100 to over 170 migrants, whereas the pateras or outboards arriving on the Andalusian coasts carry an average of only 20 to 40.

TABLE 2 **Evolution of Migrant Detentions (All Nationalities) on Arrival in Spain (Southern Maritime Paths) from 1993 to 2006**

Path of Arrival Year	Strait of Gibraltar	Canary Islands	Total	% Arrivals via Canary Islands / Total
1993	4,952	*	4,952	-
1994	4,189	*	4,189	-
1995	5,287	*	5,287	-
1996	7,741	*	7,741	-
1997	7,348	*	7,348	-
1998	7,031	*	7,031	-
1999	7,178	875	8,053	10.86
2000	16,885	2,387	19,272	12.38
2001	14,405	4,112	18,517	22.20
2002	6,748	9,756	16,504	59.11
2003	9,794	9,382	19,176	48.92
2004	7,425	8,426	15,851	53.15
2005	7,066	4,715	11,781	40.02
2006	6,976	31,106	38,082	81.68

Source: Mehdi Lahlou, based on data from Spanish newspapers, primarily El País, and the 2006 Annual Report of the *Asociación pro derechos humanos de Andalucía* (APDHA).

TABLE 3 **Evolution of Migrant Arrivals to the Canary Islands from 2005 to 2006**

Islands	2005	2006
Tenerife	637	17,261
Gran Canaria	1,416	5,460
La Gomera	72*	3,371
Fuerteventura	2,249	2,232
El Hierro	0	1,974
Lanzarote	329	822
La Palma	48	0
Total	**4,751**	**31,106**

Source: Asociación pro derechos humanos de Andalucía (APDHA) – Annual Report, 2006, published January 2007; and * the newspaper *El País* (Madrid), 28/08/2006.

These tables reveal the continuity into 2006 of the new migration process from Africa set in motion in the autumn of 2005, which consisted in shifting migratory routes over 2,500 km from Spain's Andalusian coastline, obliging Spain in particular to extend its surveillance and security intervention zone to areas generally outside of its sphere of political, economic or cultural influence, with all the diplomatic difficulties this entails.

The new migration process from Africa set in motion in the autumn of 2005 consisted in shifting migratory routes over 2,500 km from Spain's Andalusian coastline, obliging Spain to extend its surveillance and security intervention zone to areas generally outside of its sphere of political, economic or cultural influence

Hence, migratory routes were following the traditional south-north axis until the end of 2005, that is, crossing the Sahara (via Gao and Kidal in Mali or Agadez in Niger), Algeria then Morocco and arriving in Spain via the Strait of Gibraltar (with a variant of the same south-north axis forking off once in Morocco – or in south-western Algeria since 2003 or so – towards the Atlantic coastline across from the Canary Islands). Now, on the other hand, they are oriented south-west or east-west, draining the migrant populations of the majority of Sahel countries directly to the Canary Islands, which have become a springboard towards mainland Spain and the rest of Europe. The only significant difference is that whereas before, the crossing was done in an easily controllable area under high surveillance and consisted of crossing 15 km of sea (between Tangiers and Tarifa, for instance), today, the route involves navigating over 1,200 km between the Senegalese coast and the Canary Islands in an ocean area that requires entire fleets to even begin to be under surveillance.

There are several apparent reasons for this, namely:

- The bloody events of September-October 2005 at the outskirts of the cities of Ceuta and Melilla (i.e. Sebta and Melilia) in northern Morocco. These events, which led to the death of 11 migrants (in fact, 5 migrants were shot under similar conditions in the vicinity of Melilla on 3rd July 2006), caused a great deal of fear, not only among the migrant community living in Morocco, and demonstrated that the risk of being shot to death by Moroccan or Spanish security forces can no longer be ruled out in the migratory odyssey, calling forth a survival instinct among both migrants and their families.
- The fact that the Spanish security/defence authorities have strengthened their Integrated External Surveillance System (SIVE), one of its essential terrestrial components being the reinforcement of 'protective' fences around the cities of Ceuta and Melilla.
- The overall strengthening of border patrols along the Algerian border with Mali and Niger occurring in October-November 2005, with massive deportations of irregular Sub-Saharan migrants (primarily detained in the vicinity of the city of Maghnia)[1] carried out by Algeria for the first time.
- The relative revival of the Tuareg rebellion in one of the most important border crossing zones, that of Kidal, between Mali, Niger and Algeria, with the subsequent mobilisation of troops (as occurred in May 2006) and dismantling of transport networks, thus inciting fear among migrants and above all, their smugglers.
- The multiplication of US military exercises in the Sahel area within the framework of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative, formerly called the Pan Sahel Initiative (PSI), a US initiative to fight against terrorism in Africa. Over the course of the first half of 2006, two joint US-Malian exercises were carried out in the region of Gao[2], rendering the area highly risky for people smugglers, particularly due to the presence of plentiful military forces that are well-equipped and, in addition, under foreign supervision.

[1] The Associated Press (AP), Algiers, 5/12/2005.

[2] Such exercises had already taken place in 2003, 2004 and 2005. In 2006, they took place from 10th February to 24th March and again from 10th May to 15th June.

Migratory Policies and the New Regional Context

The new state of affairs has led to a new political situation whereby each Maghreb country is approaching the options currently expressed by Europe, whereas until 2002/2003, only Morocco was targeted as the main gateway to Europe. In this regard, there is hardly any relation between current Maghreb action on migratory matters since 2002 and action taken before the EU began to consider this issue significant in its relations with a number of third countries.

Nonetheless, the approach to this issue taken by Libya, and above all Tunisia and Algeria, is given less media coverage because the European pressure on these three countries was much weaker until recently and in any case, more sporadic, Morocco always being in the front line. Targeted from the start and in the hot seat since 1998, when the European Council established its "High Level Working Group on Asylum and Migration," and once the latter structure had developed six action plans, one of which focussed on Morocco – placed on this occasion on a level with Somalia, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan or Albania insofar as EU foreign relations –, Morocco has been subject to strong pressure, particularly from Spain, which reached a peak in June 2002 at the Seville European Council. This pressure has but changed form, going from highly 'discourteous' (during the central-right wing administration governing Spain until the spring of 2004) to 'friendly,' without ceasing to be as sharp as it is strict since the arrival of the Socialist administration in Madrid in April of 2004. Moreover, it is this same government that is progressively attempting to rally its EU partners around its own foreign migration policy objectives, furthermore making them joint objectives for the countries of origin, transit and destination of African migrants.

Moroccan Migration Policy: Progressively Aligned with the European Security Approach

The European approach to management of external migratory flows vis-à-vis Morocco has been insinuated since 2002 in particular through friendly advice, primarily from France, alternating with more or less accentuated diplomatic pressure, primarily from Spain, all of this in a tense 'regional atmosphere' brought about by the 'war against terrorism,' the onset of the Anglo-American campaign against Iraq, the recurring Morocco-Algeria conflict regarding former Spanish Sahara and, finally, the pathetic incident of the tiny island called Perejil/Leila, off the northern coast of Morocco.[3] To make matters worse, Morocco has experienced persistent economic and financial difficulties, while as of July 1999, the country has experienced a rejuvenation and renewal of part of its political and decision-making agents, beginning with the king. The combination of all of these elements constitutes an excellent opportunity that Europe will certainly not forego. At best, it considers Morocco as the good student of the region who cannot but follow the 'migratory' policy path laid out by Europe; and at worst, as a sort of 'soft underbelly' of the Maghreb and as such, Europe feels there is no risk in multiplying demands and raising the level of these demands.

In this regard, the first major initiative by Morocco was of a legislative order. It consisted of a bill on 'irregular emigration and immigration in Morocco,' put forth in January of 2003 by the administration in Rabat (a new administration had just taken office in November of 2002), which was unanimously passed into law by the Moroccan Parliament following the terrorist attacks in Casablanca on 16th May 2003.

The law, best known by the name of Law 02-03 and which became effective as of its promulgation in November 2003, was qualified by certain Moroccan jurists as an emergency law. But above all, given that it does not respond to any internal logic, it can be considered a law of European-Moroccan co-sovereignty, in the sense that it can be inscribed, first and foremost, within the will of the EU to protect itself against illegal migration coming from one of the major points of transit towards Europe.

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[3] On 12th July 2002, an armada of nearly 6,000 soldiers from all forces of Spain's troops evacuated, via Bab Sebta, 6 Moroccans gendarmes who had disembarked on the island, located less than 200 metres from the Moroccan mainland and inhabited by goats.

With the autumn 2005 events, Morocco employed nearly 9,000 people – of both the military and police forces – to attempt to improve surveillance of its land and maritime borders. It also hosted the first Euro-African Conference on Migration in Rabat in July 2006 and proceeded to carry out sporadic, media-hyped "rapier thrust" operations to transfer Sub-Saharan migrants residing illegally in different Moroccan cities to its Algerian border.[4]

Tunisia and its Law of February 2004

Though not subject to the same pressure by circumstances – since this country does not really lie along major migratory paths from Sub-Saharan Africa, nor is it a significant departure point – or the same impositions by the EU on the matter, Tunisia has likewise felt obliged to model its legislation along the lines of the evolution occurring in the Maghreb region since 2002.

It was in this framework that Tunisia passed a law on 3rd February 2004 (less than 3 months after Morocco had passed its Law 02–03) amending the one previously extant (Law of 14th May 1975) on passports and travel documents[5] and expanding it to include a series of penal provisions strictly sanctioning clandestine migration.

To sustain how well-founded this law was, the Tunisian government argued that "the security of the Mediterranean Basin is incumbent upon all perimeter countries and therefore Tunisia as well, and that all countries have established penal provisions in order to deter clandestine migration." At the same time, the Administration also justified violations of its general principles of penal law, adducing the severity of offences relating to clandestine migration, arguing that such migration entailed an elevated loss of human lives, a breach of the peace and undermining of national security. In this same context, an association was made between migrant trafficking and terrorism which coincided nearly point per point with the arguments espoused by the Moroccan government on the issue.

In fact, the Tunisian law of February 2004 meets a primary objective, which is the harmonisation of internal law with the commitments made by Tunisia to fight against illicit migrant traffic rings, both through the ratification of the protocol against illicit migrant trafficking by land, air and sea, an addendum to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and the EU-Tunisia Association Agreement. This reveals a double phenomenon: that of the rising importance of clandestine migration and the wish of the Tunisian State to keep it out. The latter conclusion is based on the significance given to new migratory stipulations in a law whose title does not invoke the repression of irregular migration but simply designates the regulation of passports.

The importance of the phenomenon, however, is revealed by the particularly repressive nature of the law. In fact, many jurists, including Tunisian ones, doubt that it complies with the general principles of (Tunisian) penal law or the treaties regarding fundamental human rights officially ratified by Tunisia.[6]

Libya: Migration Policy as a Tool for 'Reintegration into the International Community'

Libya is in a unique situation within the Maghreb with regard to the migration issue. The second largest country in the region (1.76 million km^2) but above all, one of the most sparsely populated in the world (with an overall population of some 5.5 million inhabitants and an average density of 3.1 inhabitants/km^2), with the discovery of oil fields it has become a significant immigration country in a phenomenon similar to that occurring in the Arabian Peninsula. It has become a destination for both Arabic citizens (Moroccans, Tunisians, Egyptians, Sudanese, etc.) and Sub-Saharan migrants (from Chad, Mali, Niger, etc.).

This migration has, however, changed origin often according to the changing political considerations of Tripoli over the course of the past three decades and above all in the 1990s.[7] Official statistics from the Libyan population census of 1995 revealed a workforce of nearly 100,000 Sudanese and 40,000 Sub-Saharans, as compared to 5,000 Sudanese

[4] As occurring as of 23rd December 2006. This matter was eventually taken up by the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights, which demanded that Morocco stop violations of human rights accompanying such police operations.

[5] Official Gazette of the Republic of Tunisia, No. 11, 06/02/2004.

[6] This analysis was sustained precisely by a Tunisian jurist – whose name will not be mentioned here for obvious reasons – in a working paper presented at a Maghreb seminar under the auspices of the Maghreb representation to the ILO in Algiers in early April 2005.

[7] Hence, according to regional political circumstances and the evolution of its international relations, Libya has given precedence to this or that migrant nationality, which has led to a constant alternation between countries, above all between the Arabic world and Sub-Saharan Africa.

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and several hundred Sub-Saharans twenty years earlier. According to different researchers, "although spectacular, this growth is apparently an underestimate." The estimates made at the beginning of the current decade registered the number of Western and Central African nationals in Libya at approximately 1.5 million (The Baltimore Sun, 26/10/2000), of which 500,000 were from Chad (Agence France-Presse, 01/10/2000). The technical commission sent by the European Commission to Libya in late 2004 found that Libyan Authorities estimated the number of legal workers living on Libyan territory at 600,000, with the number of irregular migrants lying somewhere between 750,000 and 1.2 million.

In reality, the case of Libya is symptomatic of the confusion prevailing on the issue of migration relating to the Maghreb since 2002/2003, especially in Europe.

Libya is not a country of emigration and has been known since the start of its enrichment through oil to be a land of immigration, all the more popular because attracting immigration was one of the objectives of the Pan-African policy followed by its leaders until the end of the 1990s.[8]

The position it would take up with regard to this issue – well-justified by the numerous dramatic incidents occurring between 2003 and 2005, and above all by an influx, as massive as it was surprising, of Sub-Saharan migrants to Sicily departing from the coast of Libya between September and October 2004 – is an advanced expression of a political 'realism' unprecedented in international or North-South Mediterranean relations.

For several years now and especially since the 2nd Gulf War starting on 20th March 2003, Libya has been highly interested in "returning to the international community," as it is very concerned with the access to foreign capital and European and US technology that this return would bring, thus allowing it to recover its production capacity. By the same token, it is also apparently interested in a change in its migration relations with the countries from which it has traditionally received its labour force, at no significant political cost to itself; European injunctions to Libya on this account are most likely to facilitate the change without Libya having to go to great pains to justify its actions.

Moreover, Europe – experiencing a period of record energy prices and concern for its energy supply – is necessarily attracted by Libyan oil and the investment and trade opportunities it represents; and since Libya is part of the Maghreb, that is, an effective and potential area of transit for irregular Sub-Saharan migrants, nothing is stopping the European approach of the management externalising of migratory flows from Africa to encompass Libya as well. Indeed, Europe even considers it an area for experimentation on the matter, as the Libyan Authorities themselves "seem to be party to it."

This explains how this country – although it considers itself the most 'African' of Northern Africa, is not participating in the Barcelona Process, is not bound to Europe by any political or commercial agreement such as the agreements for establishing a free trade zone between the 3 central Maghreb countries and the EU, and has not signed the Geneva Refugee Convention – is now one of the leading states in the region insofar as cooperation with Europe on migration issues.

Algeria: Intolerable Indifference

Algeria, which opened its Saharan borders as a key option of government strategy concerning territorial development, is also an important country of emigration, although the number of Algerian emigrants is presently much lower than that of Moroccan emigrants, just as the proportion of remittances by these migrants vis-à-vis the Algerian GDP is much lower than in the case of Morocco.

For many years though, this country considered that the problem of Sub-Saharan migration was

[8] This was confirmed in the report by the technical commission sent by the European Commission to Libya in late 2004: "Libya's Pan-African policy has been and still is one of the main reasons that contributes to attracting thousands of immigrants from all of Africa who have fled from war, famine, disease, AIDS, etc, coming particularly from the Sub-Saharan region and the Horn of Africa. For many of them, Libya is a destination country although few of them have the possibility to legally establish themselves as foreign workers in Libya".

not its concern, despite the fact that nearly all irregular migrants in transit through Morocco on their way to Europe have crossed Algerian territory and continue to do so today, whether moving towards Oujda (in north-eastern Morocco) or any point along the south-eastern border separating the two countries.

This posture, for which certain Algerian leaders adduced the fully erroneous concept that Algeria was more of a country of destination that of transit for Sub-Saharans, was related to the different problems existing in Moroccan-Algerian relations (not the least of which was the Sahara issue[9]), the attempts by both Algeria and Morocco to appear solidary vis-à-vis black Africa, and the much less 'insistent' European approach to relations with Algeria as compared to its approach with Morocco.

The Algerian position has nevertheless progressively changed, also beginning in 2002/2003, with the onset of the group 5+5 Western Mediterranean meetings, the signature in April of 2002 of the agreement to institute an EU-Algerian free trade zone (which entered into effect in September of 2005) and finally, events relating to the Moroccan incidents of August to October 2005, which Morocco as well as Spain and the EU took as an opportunity for discussing the 'Algerian responsibility' in Sub-Saharan migration more openly and requesting the Algiers Authorities to become more actively involved in controlling the southern Maghreb border and struggling against migrant trafficking rings.

Spain:
Dealing with the Canary Islands Phenomenon

Frightened by the mass migration attempts in the autumn of 2005 – which it staved off with the invaluable assistance of the Moroccan Authorities – Spain, which could hardly keep pace with the arrival of cayucos to the Canary archipelago in the summer of 2006,[10] was one of the instigators, along with Morocco and later France, of the initiative of organising a major Euro-African ministerial conference to discuss all aspects relating to the management of migratory flows moving through Africa as well as issues relating to African development. It has become progressively evident for the majority of those involved that these flows emerge and develop not only according to increasingly accentuated economic and social deficits, but also in reaction to human rights violations (most often concurrent with the stated deficits) in the majority of countries of departure.

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In any case, there are certain common conclusions – shared by the Moroccans in Africa and the French, Italians and Germans in Europe – that can be summed up in the following three points: 1) Migration is one of the major challenges facing African and European societies and governments at this early stage of the 21st Century; 2) The persistence of demographic imbalances and unequal perspectives for well-being among different societies presage the continuation and probable acceleration of the propensity to emigrate, not only from Africa to Europe, but also among African countries in accordance with their respective levels of development; and 3) The propensity to emigrate is fuelled by structural factors operating in both the countries of origin and those of destination. Spain – which is currently one of the European countries with the greatest need of significant demographic influx – now has a number of political objectives with regard to African countries,[11] principally to:

- Strengthen the capacity to control national borders by means of improving equipment and training civil servants.

[9] In this regard, a speech by the Algerian President made a particularly deep impression when, just after a visit from the King of Morocco to Algiers in April 2005, he maintained that the issue of the border between Algeria and Morocco (that is, the question of whether the borders should be open or closed) was a matter of "bilateral relations between His Majesty (the King of Morocco) and myself (i.e. himself)," emphasising in the same speech that "the issue of Western Sahara rests, on the other hand, with the United Nations." The Associated Press (AP), Paris, 05/04/2005.

[10] Over 4,600 migrants crossing in *cayucos* from the western coast of Africa disembarked on the Canary Islands over the course of August 2006. Of these migrants, over 1,500 arrived between the 17th and 20th August. Source: Spanish newspapers, including *El País* and *El Mundo.*

[11] Objectives which it sustained at the Euro-African Ministerial Conference in Rabat in July of 2006.

- Effectively detect and pursue the mafias controlling traffic across national borders.
- Establish readmission agreements between countries of origin, transit and destination.
- Facilitate the temporary reception and repatriation of national or third country migrants, respecting their dignity and human rights.

In fact, in May of 2006, the Spanish Authorities alerted the other EU Member States of the risks it was incurring, and with it, all EU countries, due to the massive influx of Sub-Saharan migrants at the time, coming from the coast of Mauritania and Senegal. At the same time, in order to tackle the problem at its source, the same authorities also formalised a 'vast diplomatic offensive' involving a plan for development aid to Africa called the 'Africa Plan.' It was to concern Senegal, Gambia, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea and Niger, with a budget of slightly over 600 million euros.

The persistence of demographic imbalances and unequal perspectives for well-being among different societies presage the continuation and probable acceleration of the propensity to emigrate

With the initiative by the EU's Frontex Agency not managing to obtain the support initially expected nor sufficient means and migratory pressure rising over the course of 2006 for Spain – despite the launching of the 'Africa Plan' and the Euro-African Conference in Rabat – as well as for Italy (the Island of Lampedusa receiving nearly 22,000 African migrants over the course of 2006) and Malta, these three countries turned to the other EU Member States to attempt to convince them that the issue of clandestine migration from Africa to the southern European coast was a problem whose material and political aspects should not be incumbent solely upon the countries of entry (*Le Monde*, 31/08/2006).

In early September 2006, Spain and Italy – later joined by France – would again demand that European solidarity in the face of clandestine immigration be a priority topic at forthcoming EU summits:

> *"We have decided to address the European Union to request that joint action regarding immigration be on the agenda of the informal summit in October (Lahti, Finland) as well as at the summit in December (Brussels). Joint action should not only involve joint border patrols but also cooperation with neighbouring countries from which immigrants are arriving in order to assist them economically."* [12]

By way of summary, all factors seem to demonstrate the following:

- Having diverse interests and needs insofar as population and the labour market, EU countries, which are not all at the same level of development and economic vitality nor at the same stage of demographic evolution, are not prepared to take the same approach to the migratory issue, although a certain consensus has been reached with regard to the principle of struggle against irregular immigration.
- At the conference held in Rabat in July of 2006, although a document relatively coherent with the initial aims of the event was published, the impression given insofar as recommendations was that it proved more of a dialogue of the deaf, where the Europeans spoke of "readmission agreements and the need for greater control of borders in the south" while the Africans were more inclined to discuss development aid and the facilitation of legal migration.
- Moreover, the explosion in the number of Sub-Saharan migrants arriving on the Canary Islands has shown that the propensity to depart from southern Sahel areas and Western Africa will only increase; the greater distance of departure areas and the stretching out of migratory routes (now essentially maritime) will oblige Spain as well as all of Europe – insofar as they make joint decisions – to implement even more material, human and financial means for largely hypothetical results, unless they decide to employ war means. This is aggravated by the fact that no Sub-Saharan State seems capable of ensuring even minimally 'serious' control of their borders, even if they had the political intention of doing so, which is far from being the case due to a variety of internal reasons.

[12] Romano Prodi, Italian Prime Minister, quoted by AFP, 10/09/2006