

## **INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS' DAY**

**18 December 2024**

CEN-SAD area is probably the most affected by migration issues in Africa, as it concentrates most of the countries of origin, transit and destination before crossing the Mediterranean to Europe.

It includes countries in East, Central, West, Sahel and North Africa, some of which are departure and transit countries for migrants from several other regions and countries in Africa, converging on the Maghreb countries on the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts (Libya, Tunisia, Morocco).

It is also characterised by internal migration, facilitated by Community instruments on the free movement of people, adopted long ago within the framework of these institutions.

On the occasion of the International Migrants Day, celebrated every year on 18 December, CEN-SAD reaffirms its commitment alongside Member States in the fight against irregular migration, and is also associated with initiatives to promote safe, orderly and regular migration.

CEN-SAD therefore calls for:

- Safe, orderly and regular migration management at regional and continental levels;
- Implementation of the rights of migrants, protection of their fundamental rights, including access to basic services such as health, education and security, regardless of their legal status;
- Building institutional capacity and implementing regional mechanisms for effective management of migration flows by promoting data sharing and best practices among Member States;
- Intensifying efforts to jointly combat irregular migration and human trafficking and to dismantle criminal networks that traffic and exploit migrants;
- Provide legal and safe alternatives for regional mobility;
- Support development initiatives in communities of origin, transit and destination to reduce the factors of forced migration, while promoting the integration of migrants into local economies;
- Encourage and strengthen cooperation with the African Union (AU) and other Regional Economic Communities (CERs), to align regional strategies with continental and global objectives such as the AU Agenda 2063 and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration;

- Develop a harmonized regional migration management policy based on coordination, complementarity and cooperation among Member States to effectively respond to cross-border challenges and optimize the economic and social benefits of migration.

Finally, migration, if well-managed, represents a unique opportunity to stimulate economic growth, promote regional integration and respond to the demographic and economic challenges faced by many countries.

This day is an opportunity for all stakeholders to mobilize for collective action, in solidarity and cooperation, so that migration is recognized as an opportunity rather than a permanent challenge.