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HM King Mohammed VI delivers Royal Speech at the 22nd Conference of the Parties

to the UNFCCC in Marrakech

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USPA NEWS - The King Mohammed VI delivered a speech on Tuesday at the solemn high-level session of the 22nd session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 22), which is currently taking place in Marrakech. Here follows the Royal Speech.

"Your Majesties,
Your Excellencies,
Your Highnesses,
The Honourable Secretary General of the United Nations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to welcome you to the Kingdom of Morocco, the land of dialogue and coexistence, the crossroads of civilizations, and to greet all of you, who have come to participate in the 22nd session of the Conference of Parties on Climate Change.

The fact that Morocco is organizing this world conference for the second time after the 2001 session, reflects our commitment to approaching international challenges within a multilateral framework.

The fact that the city of Marrakesh is, today, hosting this conference is evidence of the great importance we attach to issues associated with the environment and the climate, as part of the Kingdom's priorities.

Our country is among the first to have played a part in raising global awareness about climate change. Our initial contribution goes back to when I attended the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, as Crown Prince and as head of the Moroccan delegation.

Today, the Marrakesh Conference is a decisive turning point in the implementation process of the historic Paris Agreement.

The whole of mankind is pinning great hopes on the resolutions to be endorsed. It is expecting more than just a declaration of commitments and principles to curb greenhouse warming and mitigate its effects.

Indeed, humanity is looking forward to decisions which will help save the future of life on earth, and calling for tangible initiatives and practical steps to preserve the rights of coming generations.

Holding this conference in Africa is an incentive for us to give priority to tackling the adverse repercussions of climate change, which are growing worse and worse in the countries of the South and in insular states whose very existence is in jeopardy.

Your Majesties
Your Excellencies,
Your Highnesses,

The last fifteen years have witnessed the emergence of a discourse expanding on environmental issues, together with an increase in the number of NGOs involved in environmental advocacy. More importantly, this period has been marked by growing awareness of the importance of preserving the environment.

Notwithstanding the emergence of such positive awareness, are we heading in the right direction? Is this joint course of action getting the necessary coordination and cooperation from all players?

There are major differences among states and regions as far as environment-related culture is concerned. Priorities in industrialized countries, which are said to be advanced nations, are not the same as those in developing countries. There is also a major gap between the two in terms of means and resources.

It may be natural for each party to defend its own interests. However, the decisions that are made and imposed are not always easy for some states to implement.

Therefore, it has become necessary to unify education on environmental issues, and raise awareness about its defining role in preserving the future of mankind.

I should like to stress here that during its tenure, Morocco shall devote its efforts and allocate the financial resources available during this short period to discharging this difficult, noble mission.

Your Majesties
Your Excellencies,
Your Highnesses,

Our commitment to addressing the problematic issue of climate change through the implementation of the Paris Agreement, reflects

our shared desire to enhance inter-generational solidarity. Such involvement is a moral necessity and a human obligation. It must be based on the firm belief in the inevitability of our shared destiny, and on genuine North-South solidarity for the sake of human dignity. Plenty of promises were made at previous conferences. But our conference today is a conference of truth and clarity, a conference for responsibilities to be shouldered before God and History and before our peoples. Will our conferences and agreements have any meaning if we leave it up to the most fragile segments of population over there, on the islands threatened by outright disappearance and in the fields grappling with the risk of desertification in Africa, Asia and Latin America, to face a destiny fraught with danger? The environmental issue is a critical problem which must be tackled in the most serious and responsible way. The era of colonialism is over. The logic of imposing decisions is over. What is at stake is the very existence of man. It is therefore our joint duty to work hand in hand to protect him.

Accordingly, countries must not be pressed from the start into accepting decisions they will be unable to comply with. This is not to say that they reject them. It only means that they do not have the necessary means to implement them.

Your Majesties
Your Excellencies,
Your Highnesses,

Wait-and-see attitudes and negligence when addressing climate change and its effects will lead to dire consequences jeopardize security and stability and exacerbate the already expanding hotspots of tension and crises throughout the world.

In the name of our shared destiny and in the name of our historic responsibility, I urge all parties to work on translating our commitment to the values of justice and solidarity into actions, by:

“ç Providing the countries of the South, especially the least developed, as well as insular states, with such urgent financial and technical support as will enhance their capacities and enable them to adapt to climate change;

“ç Advanced countries honoring their commitments and mobilizing 100 billion dollars at least, by 2020, which was the key to the Paris Agreement;

“ç All the parties being involved in facilitating the transfer of technology, and working for the development of research and innovation in the field of climate;

“ç Non-Governmental players, including companies, local communities, NGOs from civil society, giving strong impetus to the Global Climate Action Agenda.

Your Majesties
Your Excellencies,
Your Highnesses,

The Kingdom of Morocco has spared no effort to increase its contributions, as part of the international momentum seeking to curb greenhouse warming effects. Morocco, which was among the first countries to announce their intended Nationally Determined Contributions, has pledged recently to reduce the rate of emissions.

In addition, it has taken concrete steps to ensure that 52% of the national energy supply comes from clean sources by the year 2030. By the same token, we have proposed a set of initiatives as part of implementing the Paris Agreement, especially with respect to adaptation and financing. These include the initiative for the Adaptation of African Agriculture (AAA).

Your Majesties
Your Excellencies,
Your Highnesses,

The outcome of this conference will play a decisive role in determining the fate of the new generation of COPs, which should focus on initiative and action. Indeed, the Paris Agreement is not an end in itself. Actually, the outcome of the Marrakesh conference will be a true test to gauge the efficiency of the commitments we have made, as well as the credibility of the parties that announced them. The time has come to redress the situation. We have no alternative but to work to make up for lost time, through continued, comprehensive mobilization and positive harmonization, so that the coming generations may lead an enjoyable and dignified life together. I should like to conclude by saying once again: “Welcome to Marrakesh, the ochre city”^[7]. May Almighty God make this important conference a total success, for the benefit of all mankind.”

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