

*The Permanent Mission  
of the Kingdom of Morocco  
to the United Nations*



البعثة الدائمة  
لمملكة المغرب لدى الأمم المتحدة  
نيويورك

**Statement  
by  
H. E. Mr. Abbas EL FASSI,  
Prime Minister  
of the Kingdom of Morocco**

**at the High Level Meeting  
on MDGs**

**New York, 25<sup>th</sup> September 2008**

**Please, check against delivery**

**-Unofficial translation-**

Mr. Chairman,  
Mr. Secretary General,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Secretary General and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for their initiative to organize this High Level Meeting which offers us, mid-way from the 2015 meeting, an opportunity to evaluate our progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Mr. Chairman,

The Millennium Development Goals complement and converge with Morocco's national strategy and social development policies for fighting poverty. To meet the deadline of 2015, the pace of socio-economic development has been accelerated through special programs and the allocation of important credits to the social sector. Indeed, the budget for this sector witnessed a remarkable increase growing from 39% to reach 47% in 2002, and achieving 55% today.

In this context, the National Initiative for Human Development, launched by His Majesty King MOHAMMED VI in 2005, revitalized this tendency by targeting three main axes:

- First, decreasing the social deficit and fighting marginalization by increasing services and facilities offered, in rural areas, in the fields of health, education, illiteracy, water and electricity, as well as opening up remote areas and fighting desertification.
- Second, encouraging activities that create permanent jobs and restructuring the unregulated sector.
- Third, assisting vulnerable population, especially, women and children.

This experience was implemented in full coordination with the concerned actors and civil society. It has already resulted in generating good living conditions for a population of 3 million people. Between 2005 and 2007, 10% of Morocco's population has benefited from the implementation of a total of 12,000 development projects. This strategy, that goes hand in hand with the MDGs, amounted to a decrease in the rate of poverty, in Morocco, from 15,3% in 2001 to 9% in 2007, as established by the World Bank census.

By adopting this strategy, Morocco is, undoubtedly, undertaking steps towards realizing the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, even though it entails doubling efforts in the sector of education and the fight against illiteracy, particularly in rural areas.

Allow me, also to seize this opportunity to convey Morocco's deep appreciation to all the governments, as well as the regional and international organizations for their kind support to the National Initiative for Human Development.

Mr. Chairman,

This meeting is being held in such critical international circumstances, characterized by the dramatic increase in the prices of food and oil products. This situation negatively influences development and stability, particularly in Africa, which also faces the effects of climates change, drought, desertification and the scarcity of water resources.

To meet this challenge, Morocco has put in place a number of short and mid-term emergency measures to reform the clearance system and regulate prices in order to guarantee food security for all Moroccans.

Furthermore, the government has recently adopted “the Green Morocco Plan” with the aim of both, developing and modernizing the agricultural sector, and creating more jobs in rural areas. The Plan also intends to attract private investment, as well as increase the sector’s coherence with international market regulations.

Mr. Chairman,

Morocco called, during the International Conference on Food Security, held last June, in Rome, for a reinforcement of international cooperation and the increase of public support for developing countries with a view to ensuring food security for all. Morocco also proposed the creation of a multilateral fund which could mobilize competences and regulate the transfer of technology to developing countries, on preferential terms.

In this regard, I would like to express Morocco’s willingness to help other African countries improve their agricultural crops and control the prices in consumer good. This solidarity is demonstrated, namely, through the cancellation of the debt of african least developed countries, the free access of their products to the Moroccan market and a diversified technical assistance in different sectors.

With regard to the special importance, Morocco gives to human development, a central pillar of cooperation with its African countries, Rabat hosted, on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> April 2008, the first African Conference on Human Development in Africa. The final Document of this Conference “Rabat Declaration” stresses the key role, played by education and health, in allowing human resources to achieve coherent socio-economic development. The “Rabat Declaration” reiterated the dire need to address the serious social issues such as poverty, unemployment, social marginalization, as well as the epidemics, from which Africa continues to suffer.

Mr. Chairman,

Despite the positive steps, undertaken in all over the world, to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, a great part of African is still lingering behind. This has, namely, be noted in the recommendations of the steering Group of the MDGs in Africa, set up by the Secretary General.

Morocco supports these recommendations and reiterates the need to strengthen the global partnership for the Millennium Development Goals. In this regard, the UN Conference on Financing for Development, which will be held in Doha, from 29<sup>th</sup> November to 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2008, will offer us another opportunity to access and review the progress in the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, and develop new financial mechanisms.

Thank you.

**Statement  
by  
H. E. Mr. Abbas EL FASSI,  
Prime Minister  
of the Kingdom of Morocco**

**at the High Level Meeting  
on Africa's Development needs**

**New York, 22<sup>th</sup> September 2008**

**Please, check against delivery**

**-Unofficial translation-**

**Mr. Chairman,  
Mr. Secretary-General,  
Distinguished Heads of State and Government,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like, first of all, to express the Kingdom of Morocco's pride in holding this high level meeting on Africa's development needs, following the proposal submitted by my, in 2006, at the 61<sup>st</sup> Session of the General Assembly.

Today's meeting is an opportunity to review the implementation of commitments concerning the development of African continent, to assess the challenges it faces and decide on the ways forward with a view to identifying a global and integrated vision on how to support and reinforce the national and continental programs and strategies adopted by African countries.

This meeting also offers us a good occasion to coordinate between the various international initiatives undertaken to advance our Continent's development. This exercise should lead to a "Global Partnership for Africa's Development", as a unified and integrated framework allowing Africa to achieve its sustainable development.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Africa's development has become an important issue for the international community. The African Continent represents an essential constituent of our multidimensional international system. And thanks to the political and economic potentialities it has, the African Continent also plays a pivotal role in international relations and trade exchanges, enabling it to enter into diverse strategic partnerships with great economic and political powers from all over the world.

Conscious of the great challenges facing our Continent, the African countries initiated radical political and economic changes, making serious efforts to enhance good governance, establish the Rule of law, preserve equality and liberties and provide for a good environment for investment and business. The African Continent spared no efforts in attempting to reduce conflicts and violence and to establish peace and stability. Thanks to these positive changes, most African countries have achieved, over the last few years, positive growth rates ranging from 5 to 7%.

Nevertheless, this progress remains fragile when taking into account the great challenges and obstacles that continue to hinder the promotion of sustainable development in the African Continent. These obstacles unfortunately threaten to undermine what was achieved in the domains of economic development, peace and stability. The efforts made thus remain worthless in such critical international circumstances where never-ending crises are a burden for the development of African societies. The rising food prices and the instability of oil prices result in a decrease of financial resources devoted to development, a decrease in public assistance and a decline of foreign investments. These difficulties are made worse by the negative impact of climate change, the continuing armed conflicts as well as other crises.

Under such dire circumstances, the progress of our Continent and the achievement of the expected growth rate depend on the reliance on our own resources, as well as on the support of our partners in the North and South. In this context, the recommendations of the Steering Group on the Millennium Development Goals in Africa, set up by the United Nations Secretary General, represent an inspiring ground for all of us.

The Kingdom of Morocco thus calls upon developed and donor countries to live up to their promises to participate in the African Continent's development. Morocco actively supports the adoption of a program of work that activates the commitments of all the partners in Africa's development, particularly those mentioned in the United Nations conferences and those of the Group of 8, aiming to double the aid to Africa and to cancel the multilateral debts of the poor countries by 2010.

I would also like to reiterate the great importance that should be given to middle income African Countries. These countries achieve positive growth rates, but still face serious problems and challenges resulting from the growing needs and social demands of their middle classes. This situation requires from the governments these countries to double the efforts to find new resources, especially when considering heavy burden imposed on their economies by external debts, thereby representing an obstacle to their social progress.

Morocco therefore thinks it is essential to strive to overcome these difficulties by transforming part of these debts into productive investments. Such investments could help achieve a sustainable development that could, in turn, address problems related to unemployment, illegal immigration, health and education.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The Kingdom of Morocco believes that cooperation between the North and South is essential to respond to Africa's developmental needs, in parallel with the strategic role that South-South cooperation should play in the development of our Continent.

In application of His Majesty King Mohamed VI's strategic vision, the Kingdom of Morocco has placed South-South cooperation among the priorities of its foreign policy. It has also made of solidarity cooperation with African countries one of the pillars of its relationship with Africa. The Kingdom of Morocco, in choosing to make its foreign policy a continuum of its domestic policy, thus decided to share the experience of the National Initiative for Human Development, launched by His Majesty the King in 2005, with its African friends.

Within this framework, the Kingdom of Morocco hosted, in April 2007, the first African Conference on Human Development. This Conference was concluded by the adoption of a work strategy that encompasses pragmatic cooperation initiatives as well as a follow up mechanism that sets up a long term approach aiming at associating African countries with successful human development experiments and exchanging experiences in this domain.

**Mr. Chairman,**

It is time to consider the development of Africa as a global priority and a problem for the international community as a whole. Indeed, the situation in Africa has direct repercussions on the situation of our global community. From this perspective, it lies with the international community to deal with our African Continent with a sense of responsibility. This should be done within a framework establishing an effective international partnership that may lay the foundations of peace, stability, development and social welfare in our Continent and all around the world. To this effect, the establishment of a mechanism likely to apply and follow up the recommendations of today's meeting is necessary.

Thank you.