

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



البعثة الدائمة
لمملكة المغرب لدى الأمم المتحدة
نيويورك

Statement

By

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General Debat

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

Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Mr President, on behalf of the Moroccan Delegation, for your election to the presidency of this historic session of the General Assembly, wishing you success in your noble task.

I would also like to express to your predecessor, His Excellency Jean PING, the Foreign Minister of the brotherly State of Gabon, our true and deep appreciation for his efforts as president of the General Assembly and for his patience and dedication in conducting excellent preparatory work and ensuring the success of the Summit meeting which coincided with the sixtieth anniversary of our Organization.

Likewise, I would like to pay tribute to the United Nations' Secretary General, His Excellency Kofi ANNAN, for the commendable efforts he made towards improving the structure of the Organization and stepping up its efficiency.

Mr President,

Last week's Summit meeting represented a key event in the history of the United Nations and a turning point in its activities, not only in view of the impressive number of highly distinguished participants but also of the importance of the summit declaration adopted thanks to the contribution of all.

In this regard, the Kingdom of Morocco supports the proposals submitted by the Secretary General with a view to ensuring the follow up of decisions adopted by the various international development conferences.

The Summit Declaration, though below our aspirations, has nevertheless reiterated our international commitments and paved the way for consolidating the role and efficiency of the Organisation and adapting it to the challenges imposed by global developments.

The call for the reform of the Organization does not necessarily mean its failure in reaching the objectives it has sought since its inception. It is rather a response to the world's new order which requires updating of some of the Organization's operating mechanisms in order to keep track of the changing international relations.

The success of the reform process requires a strong political will, specific follow-up and implementation measures as well as a comprehensive restructuring process. This, in turn, necessitates a full and balanced implementation of the various recommendations and strengthening the relevant mechanisms through the elaboration of regional and sub regional strategies for the attainment of the summit declaration goals.

For its part, the Kingdom of Morocco is fully committed to supporting the implementation of the Summit decisions and participating in the international effort for the achievement of the Millennium Development goals. To give but a few examples, our country adopted several proactive, national initiatives, be it those dealing with the respect of Human Rights and the establishment of an interdependent and modern society where women play an active role in development, or those enunciated in the National Initiative for Human Development, decreed by His Majesty King Mohammed VI on May 18, 2005.

This initiative reflects Morocco's willingness to create a development model based on the successful association of the rationale' of Modernity with Democracy and Economic Openness. It equally aspires to attain a sustained improvement of Human Development Indexes within a spirit of collective participation, solidarity, equal opportunity, dissemination of knowledge and provision of basic social services.

Mr President,

The end of the ideological divide era and the rise of a new world order, attracted the attention of the international community to the new challenges created by the plagues of terrorism, hunger, spreading poverty, illiteracy, under development, pandemic diseases as well as an increasing number of refugees fleeing from the disasters of war, destruction and the rising ethnic, tribal and religious conflicts and separatist trends.

Likewise, The 9/11 events increase the awareness of the international community to the threats of terrorism and the necessity of combating it by all available means as well as of curing its causes and motives.

The Kingdom of Morocco, which was struck by terrorism, participated, at the national, regional and international levels, in the efforts to combat this phenomenon through the elaboration of legal instruments and practical arrangements aimed at eliminating this plague.

The Kingdom of Morocco will also contribute, during this session, in the efforts aimed at adopting a comprehensive Convention against terrorism, thus complementing its participation in the elaboration of the international Convention against nuclear terrorism.

As for the development challenges, Africa, our continent, is the only region which won't attain the MDG's within the determined timeframe unless 'the international community lends it full support.

In this context, African countries acknowledge the necessity to rely, first and foremost, on their own human and material resources.

However, the economic take off of Africa can only be achieved through an efficient and realistic partnership, involving all concerned parties, donor countries, international and regional organizations alike. A partnership founded on an integrated and sustained basis that benefits the available north-south and south-south Cooperation mechanisms.

Convinced of the necessity to collectively combat the ills that beset our continent, Morocco has always taken the lead in supporting and encouraging any initiative aimed at freeing the African peoples from this predicament.

The Kingdom of Morocco thus has, on various occasions, voiced its full support to Nepad, as an integrated and comprehensive action plan designed to solve the persistent economic and social problems that plague our continent since the independence.

On the other hand, Morocco has always shown readiness to contribute towards the resolution of conflicts in Africa by conciliating positions consolidating the brotherly bonds and good neighbourhood relations between the States of Western Africa, or by the participation of the Royal Armed Forces in peace-keeping operations conducted under the auspices of the United Nations in Africa.

Morocco has also welcomed the G8 decision to cancel the debt of the least developed African countries. I would like to recall that His Majesty King Mohammed VI was among the first to initiate such a move. On the occasion of the First EU-Africa Summit in 2000, His Majesty announced the cancellation of the debt of the least developed African Countries, opening Morocco's market to their products and granting them custom exemptions.

Mr President,

African economic take off is dependant on the success of regional integration mechanisms that are being created throughout the continent. Therefore, the Kingdom of Morocco believes that reactivation of the Maghreb Arab Union is a political imperative, an economic necessity and a historical reality that meets the aspirations of the peoples of the region and reflects the expectations of our neighbours, particularly in the Mediterranean, with whom we endeavour to reinforce our partnership while we are preparing to celebrate the tenth anniversary of Barcelona process. In view of the above, Morocco pursues its

relentless efforts to activate the Union organs and remove obstacles that hinder its launching on a sound and constructive basis.

Allow me at this point to reiterate Morocco's firm commitment to work closely with the Secretary General, his Personal Envoy and his Special Representative as well as with all concerned parties, in order to break through the present stalemate and reach a political and negotiated solution to the artificial conflict on Moroccan Sahara.

This conflict between two brotherly neighbours, Morocco and Algeria, requires due to its geo-strategic nature, the involvement of our brethren in Algeria in a serious and constructive dialogue with a view to putting an end to it.

His Majesty the King Mohammed VI stated in his last throne speech "Morocco's willingness to engage in serious negotiations with a view to reaching a final solution that would win the United Nations support and grant the inhabitants of the southern provinces autonomy within the sovereignty of the Kingdom and its territorial integrity".

Pending the involvement of all in this process, it remains urgent to follow up on the humanitarian aspect by disclosing the fate of the missing persons and the prisoners. The International Committee of Red Cross was unable to establish contacts with these persons and/or to know their place of detention. The Office of High Commissioner for Refugees should, also, be allowed to undertake a fair and free census. Thousands of Moroccan citizens in Tindouf camps in Algeria should be allowed to exercise their right of return to their homeland.

Mr President,

Even though the United Nation's was not able to set an integrated efficient system for collective security as envisioned by the founding fathers, its record in preserving international peace and security is more than satisfactory. Indeed our Organization has spared the world the dire consequences of global bloody wars and nuclear or biological confrontations. This was made possible by designing the legal framework for disarmament and setting forth the mechanisms that prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and equally, by consolidating preventive diplomacy tools in addition to acquiring a wealth of experience in peace keeping operations.

However, the Arab region, which is still experiencing chronic and new and equally violent and fierce crises, aspires to the contribution of the Organization as well as other international and regional actors in solving these crises.

We hope that the new prospects in the Middle East would be consolidated by serious and brave steps likely to revive the peace process and bring it back on track

The Kingdom of Morocco welcomes the implementation of the 'withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, and considers it an important and positive decision on the path towards full implementation of the road map.

Morocco, which endeavours tirelessly in keeping open the channels of communication and dialogue among the peoples of the Middle East, reiterates its active commitment to promoting a peaceful settlement to the Arab -Israeli conflict leading to a lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, through the reactivation of the road map and the establishment of a Palestinian State, with Al Quds as its capital, as well as the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Arab, Syrian and Lebanese territories.

As the Chairman of Al Quds Committee, His Majesty King Mohammed VI reiterated his determination to actively pursue and support all peace efforts, as well as to preserve the Arab and Islamic identity of Al Quds and its statute as a place of tolerance and coexistence between the three monotheist religions.

Regarding the situation in the brotherly State of Iraq, the Kingdom of Morocco, while following with great interest the political process and commending the ongoing efforts aimed at recovering peace, stability and reconstruction, stresses the need for the participation of all constituents of Iraqi society in building the democratic institutions of the new Iraqi State and the preservation of its national unity.

The International community is called upon to help the Iraqi people overcome the ongoing crisis by creating the necessary conditions for peace and stability.

Mr President,

The Reform of the United Nations so as to enable it to meet the challenges of the 21st Century, and the restructuring of its organs and bodies, do call not only, for updating its mandate, improving its working methods, but also for regaining the Organization's natural and leading role as a framework for constructive dialogue and as a forum for positive interaction among the different intellectual currents and religious and cultural trends.

In this context, Morocco praises the Secretary General's decision to appoint a High level Working Group for Dialogue between Cultures and Religions and to establish a new cultural world order, based on tolerance and coexistence. Likewise, it supports diversity and unity of visions and goals as a contribution to meeting the challenges of the new Millennium.

Thank you.