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Mr Ambassador, I will stop here and hand the floor over to you. We will be listening to you with great appreciation and interest.

Aziz MEKOUAR

You may have heard atomic scientists talk about what they call the Doomsday Clock, and in 2016 we were at three minutes before midnight, meaning that we are on the verge of extinction of the Human race. The clock works according to the dangers, and the two main dangers that the Human race is facing are nuclear war and climate change. We have ways to stop nuclear war; it is miraculous that nothing has happened and, hopefully, nothing will happen. Climate change is much more dangerous, because there is a point of no-return where there is nothing we will be able to do, so we must pre-empt and start acting.

We can see what is happening from the information we have recently had from science centres around the world. For instance, the National Snow and Ice Data Center, in the Arctic, said a few months ago that there was less ice than ever before, with the mean temperature in 2017 at 23 degrees above normal, and in the Gulf of Mexico, the sea surface has never dropped below 72 degrees Fahrenheit, and it was the warmest winter in all cities around the Gulf of Mexico. It is very dangerous, and I believe that what happened in Paris is that people, countries, governments, and non-state actors reached that conclusion and decided to finally sign the Paris Agreement after 21 years of negotiations.

In Morocco we believe that the danger for the world is real, and under the leadership of King Mohammed VI, who has always been very highly concerned by the need to protect the environment since he led the Moroccan delegation to the Rio Conference in 1992, we have been doing a lot. For instance, if we look at renewable energy, by 2020, 42-46% of our energy will come from renewable energy, and by 2030, 52%, will come from renewables. We have a very ambitious NDC, costing around 50 billion dollars, of which half is conditional and half is not, which is only addressing mitigation. For adaptation to the effects of climate change we will need another 30 billion dollars. Morocco has been very active in terms of protection of the environment and on mitigation and adaptation. In our determination to participate in the efforts to address climate change we have hosted two COPs: COP7 in 2001 and COP22 last year. COP7 was a historic COP because it set the rulebook for the Kyoto Protocol. COP22 was very important because it was immediately after the Paris Agreement, and was the first COP to begin implementation of the agreement. The first CMA, which is the Conference of the Parties acting as a meeting of the parties to oversee the implementation of the Paris Agreement, took place in Marrakesh at COP22. I remind the Paris Agreement came into force less than one year after its signing, which was absolutely unbelievable. It was the first time for an international agreement to enter into force in such a short time after it was signed.

In terms of climate, a recent report from UNEP said that if all the countries implement only their NDCs, by 2030 we will only reach one third of the 2-degree objective. On the carbon budget, if we continue the way we are going, we will have consumed 80% of what is available to reach the 2-degree objective by the end of the century. If we want to reach 1.5 degrees by 2030, but continue to act as we are, we will have consumed the entire budget. This perspective is not good currently, but things are happening.

The Moroccan Presidency had some objectives for COP22, one of which was to keep the integrity of the Paris Agreement. When countries sign an agreement at four o'clock in the morning, very often the people who have been negotiating do not know, exactly, what they have agreed upon. The difficulty was to make sure that nobody was going to re-open negotiations, which was my goal as Chief Negotiator for COP22, and of the Moroccan Presidency. The second was to start working on the modalities, rules, and procedures to implement the Paris Agreement, and I



must say we worked hard and we came out with 35 important decisions. We also wanted to maintain the momentum by adopting the Marrakech Action Proclamation for our Climate and Sustainable Development. All the heads of state, governments, and heads of delegation signed this Proclamation stating that they are determined to continue, to stay mobilised to address the problems of climate change. Last but not least, COP22 was the first COP that had a second pillar, which was a strong participation of the non-state actors that became the Action Agenda. It started in Lima, continued in Paris, but at COP22, and became a real part of the COPs in Marrakesh. All subsequent COPs will have a strong participation of non-state actors which is crucial and fundamental.

What were the priorities of the Moroccan Presidency towards COP23 and during 2017? One of the most important work was on climate finance. If you look at the NDCs, a lot of them are conditional, and not all countries have the means to implement their NDCs so we thought it was of the utmost importance to address the issue of finance. Where will finance to fund the needs to address climate change come from? Where will all these projects be financed, in terms of mitigation, but also in terms of adaptation? It is a main issue. Of course, we had the \$100 billion roadmap that was announced by the developed countries at COP22, but \$100 billion is nothing, it is a drop in the ocean since the needs are in the trillions. So – the big question is: where will the money be coming from? Of course, there will be public money, but public money will never be enough, so the idea is how can we leverage private money to implement the NDCs?

We had what we call the CAPE (Climate Action Peer Exchange for Finance), which is an initiative that was launched by Morocco and the World Bank. It is a meeting between stakeholders, especially ministers of finance, to exchange information and see how we can work together to implement the Paris Agreement. Another very important initiative was launched in Marrakesh, the NDC Partnership, which I believe is probably one of the most important outcomes of COP22. A country will implement its NDC using domestic finance, of course, but it also has to raise finance from other sources as well, and the NDC Partnership is meant to help countries find where these funds are available, and how to build the environment and governance needed to attract both public and private finance. When we talk about private finance, I will quote Christiana Figueres, who said there are trillions invested below zero interest rate, and these trillions are waiting for the opportunity to have a better return on investment, and probably it looks that there are big opportunities today in renewable energy projects.

Other initiatives include, the Marrakesh Partnership to Foster Green Capital Markets in Africa, the Green Growth Infrastructure Facility for Africa, the Network of Financial Centres for Sustainability that was launched by Casablanca Finance City, the MBA 4 Climate, launched by CGEM, which is the association of companies and enterprises here in Morocco, and the Climate Finance Accelerator that we launched together with the United Kingdom.

Everybody talks about adaptation but it is not clear how we measure the needs for adaptation, this is why we had an event in September 2016 and another in October 2017 about the metrics of adaptation. We launched the AAA, which is the Adaptation of Agriculture in Africa, and we have encouraged the progress of the NAPs which are the National Adaptation Plans. Another very important part of COP22 was mobilisation and work with the non-state actors and the NGOs. The way I conducted the negotiations was to meet with the NGOs members of the Climate Action Network and others who work only on climate, listen to their ideas on different aspects of the negotiations, and try to figure out how their views can be translated into negotiations between governments. I would sit with them, listen to them, share their ideas with the governments, and at the end of the day, have outcomes that are not exactly what they wanted, because they want the maximum, but some got some interesting breakthroughs.

On South-South Cooperation, we had an event in New York and there will be another one in Bonn. On the Paris Agreement, we are starting to work on what we call the Work Programme, which are the procedures, rules, and modalities for the implementation of the Paris Agreement, and the other pillar, which is the non-state actors' action. We had decided that the Paris Agreement would enter into force by 2020, and the Work Programme would be finished by then. In fact, the Paris Agreement came into force in 2016, and the Work Programme, the rules, modalities and procedures will be finished by 2018. At COP23 we will continue to work on the Work Programme; we will be working hard for the next 15 days in Bonn, and we will continue working during the year, especially at the session in Bonn in May, and in Poland in November 2018.

There is another important event happening in Poland next year, which is what used to be called the Facilitative Dialogue, but today is called the Talanoa Dialogue, which is the Fijian word for conversation between parties. At the Talanoa Dialogue, countries will sit together to figure out where we are, where we want to be and how we can get there, and this will be a process that will start in Bonn now, and continue during the Fijian Presidency and we will have ending in Poland at COP24 by a technical meeting followed by a Ministerial one.

The priorities of the Fijian Presidency is to advance the work of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and preserve the multilateral consensus to uphold and advance the Paris Agreement; to build greater resilience for all vulnerable nations; to forge a grand coalition to accelerate climate action before 2020 and beyond between civil society, the scientific community, the private sector, and whole levels of government including cities and regions; to harness innovation; to draw a strong link between the health of the world's oceans and seas, and to infuse COP23 with the Fijian "*Bula* spirit" of inclusiveness, friendliness and solidarity, and promote the Pacific concept of Talanoa.

I started with a very pessimistic statement; I will now be a little bit more optimistic. I noticed there is a real will by everybody, governments, non-state actors, and companies to do whatever is needed to be done. Last year, President Obama issued the Clean Power Plan, and the coal producers sued the act at the Supreme Court, who put the plan on hold until the courts sort through whether it is legally valid.

Cities, states, companies, the Edison Electric Institute, which is the association of the power producers in the United States, said, 'The Supreme court can say whatever they want to say, we have our programme, we are doing what we have to do and we will continue to do it'. There is a mobilisation of companies, states, cities, and you can see that in the United States, in California and Texas and other states, and in the world and here in Morocco to cut greenhouse gas emissions. What is happening in China is just encouraging. China's policies and actions are set to overachieve its "peak by 2030 CO₂" goal in its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), as well as its own national targets. We have seen a significant decline of their GHG emissions with at the same time a significant job growth. Countries have decided to move to energy efficiency. Energy efficiency is so important that it represents the consumption of Japan in terms of energy.

I will end on an optimistic note; if you look at all the decisions taken by many countries, especially China, but also in Norway and other countries – for example, all cars in Norway will be electric by 2020, and in China, 25% of the cars will be electric by 2025 – we see a lot happening in terms of research, in terms of science, and in terms of transforming science into implementation.