

HM THE KING MOHAMMED VI

King of Morocco

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to send this message to the participants in the tenth annual meeting of the *World Policy Conference*, which has been convened in Marrakech.

Placed under my patronage, this important meeting in the Ocher City offers eminent figures from a wide range of backgrounds the opportunity to discuss major regional and global issues. It also contributes to improving governance in terms of thinking, decision-making and control. The aim is to promote the advent of a more open world which respects diversity.

In-depth reflection and constructive debate will certainly lead to the emergence of new ideas and fresh solutions that will further improve our countries' development models.

The undeniable progress that Africa has made has not gone unnoticed. In fact, it has been followed with growing interest by the international community.

Needless to say, the path to prosperity is a lengthy, complex process. We can say, however, that citizens' main aspirations - especially Africans' - can be fulfilled only through inclusive human and economic development programs that are based on a regional or continental vision.

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a convinced son of Africa, I plead, once again, for the need to support the Continent, which has managed to shape its own destiny thanks to the bold medium and long-term structural reforms undertaken in various sectors.

It is our responsibility to foster innovative strategies and ambitious policies which should not only be based on the accomplishments that have already been made, but which should also draw inspiration from successful initiatives at global level. These strategies and policies should be adapted to our diverse social, economic and cultural realities.

In this regard, it will be necessary to streamline our institutions, promote good governance and significantly improve the way public funds are used.

Today, Africa's tremendous assets in terms of human capital offer an exceptional opportunity to achieve progress. Being part and parcel of a constructive drive to transform the Continent's economy, young Africans, far from being a handicap, are a major asset in this regard.

Through the development and implementation of sound educational, vocational training and health policies, we should be able to ensure better integration of these young people into the socio-economic fabric of our countries. This would result in stronger, inclusive and sustained growth that would create jobs and boost productivity.

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is an abundance of natural resources in our Continent that are yet to be fully exploited.



In this regard, bringing about a paradigm shift in the farming sector and establishing bridges and synergies with industry would also create jobs.

This transformation of African agriculture should happen at all levels, from primary production to agro-industrial value chains. This should help us make the most of the Continent's enormous agricultural potential - particularly arable land - and offset the socio-economic difficulties faced by agricultural stakeholders, which are mostly due to relatively low outputs.

This leads me to mention the concept of "Green Revolution" – a revolution we want based on a large-scale overhaul of technology and production methods suited to the African context and consistent with the requirements of climate change.

It is gratifying to see that Morocco's commitments in terms of accelerating agricultural growth and achieving sustainable development in Africa are helping to meet food needs of Africans on a continental scale.

As for Africa's industrial sector, it is still not competitive. The two main challenges facing Africa's industry are the development of innovative activities and the training of a skilled workforce.

Alongside private investment, new forms of financing and partnerships must gradually be developed in order to encourage the growth of transformative projects and speed up their implementation.

Finally, there is no ignoring the fact that we urgently need to solve, definitively and pragmatically, the issue of the lack of infrastructure on our Continent. We all know that where there are roads, connectivity and networks, development takes hold and precariousness ceases to exist.

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is high time the strategic priorities of the international community were recast by revisiting Africa's contribution. Given the recent developments and the clear progress made by Africa, it is of the utmost importance that our Continent be front and center of a redesigned world stage, and that its voice be heard at global level.

Africa is open to multi-dimensional partnerships covering the institutional, political, economic, social and environmental spheres as well as other areas relating to the prevention of radicalization and the fight against terrorism.

As they capitalize on the potential for North-South cooperation as well as on each other's experiences, policymakers can build stronger, more realistic and - above all - more equitable cooperation relations. This is what would give a revamped North-South partnership its full meaning.

There is no doubt in my mind that by being united, cohesive and pragmatic, Africa will be able to hold its rightful place in such a process. I am pleased to note, in this respect, that there is a common desire among all African countries to achieve greater integration.

Such a goal requires that all stakeholders - public as well as private - avail themselves in a pragmatic way of all the opportunities that arise, and that they face up to challenges and threats together.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, the era of a passive Africa suffering from a complex environment is over. A proactive Africa is replacing a submissive Continent.



In that light, Africa's potential and its assets are better harnessed when firm growth benefits all segments of the population.

The Continent has resolutely embarked on a path towards prosperity. Today, Africa is rapidly changing as it builds on its own model as well as on a vast array of partnerships. An 'Africa of options' - instead of an 'Africa of constraints' - is taking shape.

However, to lay the groundwork for the future of young African generations, efforts must be properly guided and objectives firmly pursued.

Over and above classical South-South and North-South partnerships - which have become more dynamic and more numerous - I invite you to consider new forums and mechanisms for exchange and partnership, in order to ensure a brighter future for our populations.

Thank you.