



**HIS MAJESTY KING MOHAMMED VI
MAY GOD ASSIST HIM**



Full Text of Royal Message to the 27th African Union Summit

HM King Mohammed VI sent a message to the 27th Summit of the African Union, which is being in Kigali.

The Royal Message was handed over, on Sunday, to Chadian President and current Chairman of the African Union (AU), Idriss Deby Itno, by speaker of Morocco's Lower House, Rachid Talbi Alami.

Here follows the full text of the royal message:

Praise be to God

May peace and blessings be upon The Prophet, His Kith and Kin

Your Excellency, Mr. Idriss Deby Itno, President of the Republic of Chad and Chairman of the 27th Summit of the African Union,

Your Excellency Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda and Host of the Summit,

Distinguished Heads of State and Government,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with no small measure of emotion that I am addressing our great, lofty African family today.

I am doing so as the grandson of His Majesty King Mohammed V, who was one of the emblematic figures of the development of Pan-African consciousness as well as one of the most committed architects of the historic 1961 Casablanca Conference - alongside Presidents Jamal Abdel Nasser, Ferhat Abbas, Modibo Keita, Sekou Toure and Kwame N'Kruma - a conference which heralded the advent of an emancipated Africa and which paved the way for African integration.

I am also addressing you as the son of His Majesty King Hassan II, who, that same year, convened the Conference of Nationalist Organizations of Portuguese Colonies, who patiently contributed to ensuring stability in many regions of our Continent and who strengthened the bonds of brotherhood and friendship with many African countries.

I am also speaking to you as the King of an African country - a country whose identity has been shaped as much by geography as by a

common history with several defining milestones and by centuries of human intermingling, enriched by time-honored cultural and spiritual values.

Mine is a country whose commitment to just causes needs no further proof. Indeed, my country has been and always will be guided by an unshakable faith in Africa, in a Continent which derives its strength from its economic riches and potential, which is proud of its cultural and spiritual heritage, and which confidently looks to the future.

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Heads of State and Government,

Even when it was no longer a member of the OAU, Morocco never left Africa.

Morocco is an African nation and it always will be. And all of us, Moroccans, shall remain at the service of Africa. We shall be at the forefront of actions to preserve the dignity of African citizens and ensure respect for our Continent. These were the words of His Majesty King Hassan II, in his Message to the Twentieth OAU Summit on 12 November 1984, announcing Morocco's withdrawal.

Those words pronounced by His late Majesty proved prophetic, and the conclusion today is obvious: Morocco has kept its promise.

Three decades later, Africa has never been so much at the heart of Morocco's foreign policy and its international action as it is today.

My country has forged a unique, authentic and tangible South-South cooperation model which has made it possible not only to consolidate cooperation in the traditional areas of training and technical assistance, but also to engage in new, strategic sectors such as food security and infrastructure development.

This process will not be ending any time soon. And - like it or not - it is irreversible.

The important involvement of Moroccan operators and their strong engagement in the areas of banking, insurance, air transport, telecommunications and housing are such that the Kingdom is now the number one investor in West Africa.

My country is already the second largest investor in the Continent, and our ambition is to be ranked first.

Moreover, Morocco holds membership in two of the eight Regional Economic Communities of the African Union, namely the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) and the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD).

It also has observer status in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and looks forward to a promising partnership with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). In 2009, Morocco launched the Ministerial Conference of African States Bordering the Atlantic.

Furthermore, the Kingdom's participation in all of Africa's bi-regional and bi-continental partnerships is further evidence of my country's readiness to defend the Continent's interests at the international level and to leverage its exchange network to promote Africa's relations with the rest of the world.

Finally, true to a longstanding tradition of solidarity and commitment to peace in the world, the Kingdom of Morocco, even after it left the OAU, has continued to launch initiatives to promote stability and security.

These include active involvement in peacekeeping operations in Côte d'Ivoire, in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in the Central African Republic, in mediation efforts in the MANO River region, and more recently in Libya, as well as in post-conflict reconstruction in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Mali and Guinea Bissau.

The commitments made by Morocco in this respect are far too many to list here. Please allow me to stop here out of propriety and modesty.

And yet, notwithstanding all of the above, some countries continue to claim that Morocco is not in a position to represent Africa, arguably because its population is not predominantly black. Does this mean Africa comes down to nothing more than a color? To continue insinuating this is tantamount to misreading our realities.

I know Africa and African cultures better than many others claim to do. Thanks to my numerous visits, I also know the facts on the ground and, choosing my words carefully, I have this to say: African reality is made up of considerable daily challenges and a lack of material resources; but Africa is also about dignity, success stories and civic engagement.

That is why all those who denigrate Morocco are, in fact, harming Africans themselves. The Kingdom's popularity and its stature in Africa are well established and need no further proof.

I am not here to showcase Morocco's presence in Africa. Results speak for themselves and call for no further comment.

Nor am I here to give lessons. I respect Africans far too much to do that.

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Heads of State and Government,

When it withdrew from the OAU, Morocco never left Africa. In 1984, it simply left an institution in very special circumstances.

My country's passionate relationship with the Continent explains why the recognition of a pseudo state was understandably too hard for the Moroccan people to accept.

Indeed, it is difficult to admit that the Kingdom - a nation steeped in history - could somehow be compared to an entity that meets none of the attributes of sovereignty and that is deprived of any representativeness or effectiveness.

For years I have dreamed of the opportunity to share my feelings about this wound with you. That opportunity has been provided today and I have no doubt in my mind that this lofty Assembly will listen carefully and serenely.

That immoral fait accompli, that coup against international legality, led the Kingdom of Morocco to seek to avoid the division of Africa, and the price Morocco had to pay was the painful decision to leave its institutional family.

The Moroccan people and the nation's driving forces unanimously felt that the admission of a non-sovereign entity, by means of transgression and collusion, was something they simply could not accept.

History will remember this episode as an act of deceit and as a misuse of procedures to serve interests that are yet to be elucidated - an act similar to the abduction of a child, since the OAU was fairly unseasoned at the time.

How did we get there? I am sure everyone knows the answer, which is quite self-evident.

The time has come to reject manipulations and funding for separatist movements and to stop sustaining timeworn conflicts in Africa in order to concentrate on one course of action, that of promoting human and sustainable development, combating poverty and malnutrition, ensuring healthcare for our people, providing education for our children and raising the living standards for everyone.

This ethical requirement means we should reject and condemn the misjudgments of the past and whatever acts that go against the course of history.

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Heads of State and Government,

More than a decade after the birth of the African Union, the challenge still facing our Continent is that of achieving our family's unity and cohesion.

To accomplish that objective, we must embark on the path of clear-mindedness and courage, the path our elders - the first pan-Africans - chose to take.

A continent long neglected, Africa can no longer be ignored. The era during which our Continent was treated as a mere object in international relations is over. Africa is progressing and is asserting itself in the international arena. Today, it is an active, respected partner in the debate on global governance.

For this reason, and with respect to the Sahara issue, institutional Africa can no longer bear the burden of a historical error and of a cumbersome legacy.

Surely the African Union is out of step with international law since this so-called state is not a member of the United Nations Organization, nor of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Arab League or any other sub-regional, regional or international institution.

In fact, I am more interested in our Continent's stance. Will the AU

remain out of step with its own Member States' national stances, since at least 34 AU countries have never recognized or no longer recognize that entity?

Even among the group of 26 countries that chose the 'division camp' in 1984, only a small minority of some ten countries remains.

This positive development is consistent with the trend observed worldwide. Since 2000, 36 countries have withdrawn their recognition of that phantom state.

The African Union is thus completely out of step with developments in the Sahara issue at the level of the United Nations Organization. A process is underway, under the auspices of the UN Security Council, to reach a final political solution to this regional dispute.

As it is, the AU is the only organization prejudging the outcome of that process. Through newfound neutrality, however, it could make a constructive contribution to the achievement of that solution.

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Heads of State and Government,

Our friends have long been asking us to return among them so that Morocco may take its natural place within its institutional family. That time has now come.

On reflection, it has become clear to us that when a body is sick, it is treated more effectively from the inside than from the outside.

The time for ideology is over. Our peoples need concrete, tangible action. One cannot change geography, nor can one escape the burden of history.

In view of the above, Morocco should not remain outside its African institutional family and should regain its natural, rightful place within the AU. From within, Morocco will contribute to making the AU a more robust organization - one that is both proud of its credibility and relieved of the trappings of an obsolete era.

By returning to the African family, Morocco aims to keep up its commitment to Africa and strengthen its involvement in all matters it feels strongly about.

Morocco pledges to make constructive contributions to the AU agenda and activities.

Morocco, which will host the COP22 Climate Conference next November, will defend the position of our Continent, which is greatly affected by climate change and sustainable development issues.

Cooperation, which is already intense with many countries at the bilateral level, will be further expanded and revitalized. Moroccan expertise and know-how can therefore be offered on an even broader scale and in a more streamlined framework.

This is particularly true regarding issues relating to security and the fight against terrorism. The Moroccan expertise, which is widely

recognized at the international level and is sought by many countries - including European ones - would be leveraged to promote security and stability in all African countries, particularly those in West and Central Africa.

This well-thought-out decision to come back is endorsed by all of the nation's forces.

Through this historic, responsible act, Morocco seeks to work within the AU to transcend divisions.

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Heads of State and Government,

Today, Morocco wishes resolutely and unequivocally to regain its place within its institutional family and to continue to live up to its responsibilities, with even more resolve and enthusiasm.

Morocco firmly believes in the wisdom of the AU and its ability to restore legality and correct mistakes along the way. As the French proverb says, the only proof of truth is obviousness.

Thank you.

Wassalamu alaikum warahmatullah wabarakatuh.

MAP 17 July 2016