

Praise be to God

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

**Your Majesties,
Your Highnesses,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First of all, I should like to congratulate you most warmly, Mr President, on your election as President of this session of the United Nations General Assembly. Your election is a mark of esteem for your country as much as a recognition of your vast diplomatic experience.

I also want to commend your predecessor, Mr. Nassir Al-Nasser, on his efforts and achievements during the past year.

Similarly, I would like to praise His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, the Secretary-General of our Organization, for his untiring action and his keen desire to tackle crises. I applaud his initiatives to enable the United Nations to rise to the growing challenges facing our world.

Mr. President,

Sweeping changes are affecting today's international arena. They include, in particular, a protracted global economic crisis - which has various implications and consequences - and a growing number of hotbeds of tension, political disputes and armed conflicts, as well as complex global challenges which exceed the capabilities of individual states, such as the achievement of sustainable development, the protection of the environment, respect for human rights, and the fight against the growing scourge of international terrorism and all forms of organized crime.

Given current changes in the world, we, the Member States, ought to provide the United Nations Organization with the means it needs to tackle challenges. To this end, we have to expand the scope of the Organization's action and revitalize its approach while preserving its principles and objectives, so as to make it an active player in effective political governance and an instrument for equitable economic governance.



Mr. President,

The Kingdom of Morocco fully backs your decision to give special importance to resolving disputes by peaceful means. My country applauds the General Assembly's decision to make the consolidation of this foremost principle in the United Nations Charter the key objective of the current session.

Achieving international peace and security remains the core mission entrusted to the United Nations. The tens of thousands of UN peacekeepers serving across the world to protect civilians and bring about the right conditions for political dialogue between the parties concerned clearly attest to the vital role played by our Organization in this domain.

The Kingdom of Morocco takes pride in being one of the first States to have contributed to peacekeeping operations under the UN banner. So far, my country has sent more than 50,000 members of the Royal Armed Forces around the world to serve the lofty objectives of the United Nations.

Morocco pledges to pursue its contributions to crisis management and will support efforts to promote preventive diplomacy.

The experience gained by the United Nations in conflict-affected countries points to the importance of securing smooth, systematic transition from peace restoration to peace consolidation. This requires, above all, that the pressing needs of the current crucial juncture be met. Otherwise, the threat of a return of violence and partition will continue to hang over the countries - even the regions - concerned.

Mr. President,

During the past year, the situation has seriously deteriorated in Africa, and more particularly in the Sahel and Sahara region, due to criminal, terrorist and separatist activism which now threatens the stability of the countries concerned.

The sister nation, the Republic of Mali, is confronted with a situation which threatens the country as well as its national unity and territorial integrity. Despite the sincere efforts exerted by countries in the region, including Morocco and the Economic Community of West African States, the contribution of the United Nations is needed in order to achieve national



consensus, overcome the political crisis and confront separatist activism in the north. Only an independent, focused effort on the part of the United Nations can help achieve those objectives.

I should like, in this respect, to reiterate to our brothers in Mali Morocco's commitment to continue to provide them with aid and active support for the success of the political process, and the preservation of their country's national unity and territorial integrity.

On the other hand, the Kingdom of Morocco commends the notable progress made in several parts of Africa, especially in the sister nations Côte d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, towards the promotion of national reconciliation and a return to political normalcy.

Moreover, Morocco reiterates its firm commitment to pursuing cooperation and solidarity programs with various African sister nations, using efficient, dynamic approaches to South-South cooperation for the benefit of African citizens.

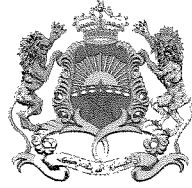
Mr. President,

The changes witnessed in the Arab region reflect the will of the peoples involved to build democratic societies where human rights are respected, and where citizens enjoy equal opportunities and a dignified life.

The peoples in the sister nations Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Yemen have ushered in a new era and made much headway towards democratic transition, despite a complex, troubled political environment, a fact which makes it incumbent on the international community to provide support and assistance to these countries to lift the constraints they face.

On the other hand, it is most regrettable that the Syrian people are each day paying the blood price for their freedom. They yearn for the kind of democratic change that would enable each component of the Syrian population to contribute to achieving the desired change.

Morocco which, as the only Arab country sitting on the Security Council, has significantly contributed to mobilizing international support for the Arab League's initiatives and resolutions, calls for concerted efforts and decisive action to compel the Syrian regime to put an end to the violence. It also calls



for a political transition process which would allow for the full spectrum of opinions to be heard, the aspirations of the Syrian people to be fulfilled, and Syria's national unity and territorial integrity as well as stability in the entire region to be guaranteed.

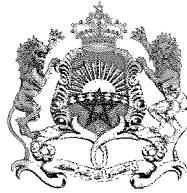
At the same time, it is necessary to raise the financial resources required to meet the needs of refugees in neighboring countries and those of internally displaced persons, as well as to ease the suffering of our Syrian brothers and put an end to their tragedy. In this regard, Morocco continues to show its solidarity by providing medical services on a daily basis to Syrian refugees in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

These rapid developments in the Arab region must not distract us from the fundamental, longstanding challenge of resolving the Palestinian issue.

In this regard, the Kingdom of Morocco calls for the mobilization of international support to back the steps taken by the Palestinian National Authority so as to secure non-Member State status. At the same time, my country is of the view that negotiation is the best way for the Palestinian people to regain their legitimate national rights, and to set up an independent, fully viable and geographically contiguous Palestinian state, living side by side with Israel, in peace and security.

I therefore look forward to seeing the international community change its approach to resolving this crisis by reconsidering its intervention mechanisms and work methods to make sure direct negotiations are resumed very soon and in the best possible circumstances, under the auspices of the influential powers and with their commitment.

This cannot be achieved if the fait accompli policy is allowed to continue. In this regard, and in my capacity as President of the Al-Quds Committee, I have strongly condemned the Israeli scheme for the Judaization of occupied East Jerusalem, as well as the designs to wipe out the city's spiritual and cultural identity and to change its demographic and urban features. Let me reaffirm, in this respect, that there will be no peace without East Jerusalem as the capital of an independent Palestinian state.



Mr. President,

Being convinced of the importance and effectiveness of joint regional action, the Kingdom of Morocco has undertaken initiatives and bilateral contacts to inject fresh momentum into the Arab Maghreb Union. Indeed, my country believes such a strategic, inclusive regional bloc is needed. Not only does it meet the legitimate aspirations of our peoples, but it is also necessitated by the security and development challenges facing the five Maghreb states.

In a bid to overcome obstacles that might hinder the fulfillment of this Maghreb ambition, the Kingdom of Morocco has contributed in a sincere, dedicated manner to negotiations aimed at finding a realistic, mutually acceptable political solution to the regional artificial dispute over the Moroccan Sahara – a solution that guarantees the Kingdom's national unity and territorial integrity, allows for reunification to take place and respects the characteristics of the region's populations.

Morocco remains committed and willing to negotiate on the basis of the principles set and repeatedly confirmed by the Security Council, as well as on that of the Autonomy Initiative which the international community has deemed serious, realistic and credible. Morocco will also pursue its constructive cooperation with MINURSO, on the basis of the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council – a mandate which will not change in any way, neither in form nor substance.

Your Majesties,

Your Highnesses,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I cannot conclude without referring to the need for collective, efficient and concerted action against all forms of extremism and hatred, as well as rejection and provocation of the other, and the undermining of his beliefs, whatever the reason and in whichever form.

Given the increase in such appalling acts - often with tragic consequences - I believe national efforts to confront them must be part of a concerted international strategy. The latter should take into account the constructive initiatives launched, build on the mobilization of all United Nations organs, be



based on clear commitments, and encourage lawmaking and the dissemination of national and regional best practices in this area.

As Member States, we have to provide the necessary means and reiterate our political will to support the Organization and reform its structures and intervention mechanisms. The aim is to enhance its efficiency in terms of achieving peace and security and promoting cooperation, while enabling it to fulfill its indispensable mission of furthering tolerance and coexistence, for the benefit of mankind.

Thank you.

Wassalamu alaikum warahmatullah wabarakatuh.