

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



البعثة الدائمة  
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Assembly**

**High Level Meeting on Interfaith Dialogue**

**Address  
by  
H.E. Mr. Abbas El Fassi  
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Morocco**

**New York  
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*Check against delivery*

*In The Name of God Almighty and Merciful*

**Mr. President,  
Your Majesties and Highnesses,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Allow me at the outset to express my appreciation in participating with you in this High Level Meeting of the utmost importance. The Kingdom of Morocco welcomes this noble initiative which represents an opportunity to further strengthen the fundamentals of communication between the representatives of all faiths. It also encourages Interfaith dialogue and reinforces international cooperation with a view to ensuring spiritual security and peaceful coexistence in our societies.

I would like also to express our deep and sincere gratitude to the Brotherly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its Sovereign, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdallah Bin Abdelaziz, May God preserve Him, who spares no effort in promoting and institutionalizing continuously and constructively dialogue among religions.

His Majesty was instrumental in convening various International Meetings aiming at the promotion and consolidation of this dialogue and integrating it in a common system of Human values both at the religious and civilizational levels. These meetings are part of other international efforts reflected in several initiatives which aimed at consolidating the foundations of Interfaith and Intercultural dialogue with a view to promote a common ground for peaceful coexistence between nations and people.

This meeting offers us an opportunity to recall the outcome of the Madrid Conference on Interfaith Dialogue, in mid July, convened by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz and His Majesty King Juan Carlos, with the participation of spiritual leaders of the three Monotheistic Faiths as well as representatives of other religious and philosophical beliefs. We are convinced that today's meeting will be a step further in strengthening UN Member States' positions to address the challenges and to ensure wider support to the common system of Human values.

**Mr. President;**

The Kingdom of Morocco places great emphasis and importance on Interfaith dialogue, an issue that has acquired a far-ranging reach in a Globalized, borderless world subject to a transnational technological order. Morocco's interest in Interfaith Dialogue stems from its awareness of the risks of ethnic and religious extremism and their consequences be it violence or the denial of the Other among various strata of numerous societies. The latter are often victims of religious misconceptions propagated by ill-intentioned persons with the objective to damage and negate human values derived from spiritual beliefs.

Bearing in mind the above, and thanks to the various initiatives undertaken by His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Morocco has been and still is a key player in the reinforcement of the values of Interfaith and Intercultural dialogue at regional and international levels. The Kingdom's initiatives aim at promoting a culture of tolerance, openness and dialogue as well as supporting initiatives serving the same purpose, namely understanding and coexistence among the various components of the International community.

In this regard, it is worth noting that after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, His Majesty has called for a permanent and strategic dialogue among States based on the respect of Human Rights, notably the Right of Freedom, Dignity and Peace, without distinction between ethnicity, religions and cultures. King Mohammed VI also called for defusing the tensions and combat extremism which affect averteedly world peace and stability.

In connection with this principle, His Majesty spares no effort to bridge the gap between the parties of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the Middle East to push forward the Peace Process. These efforts aim at reaching a just, lasting and comprehensive peace according to International legality, in a way that preserves the inalienable Political and Civil rights of the Palestinian people by allowing them to live in dignity in a national, sovereign state, side by side with Israel in peace and security, with Al Qods as capital.

In his capacity as President of Al Qods Committee, His Majesty has always insisted on the respect of the special status of Al Qods and on preserving its religious and civilizational identity as well as its historical monuments so that it can remain a vivid symbol of dialogue and coexistence between religions and beliefs.

**Mr. President,**

The support of the Kingdom of Morocco for the initiative of the Brotherly Saudi Kingdom falls in the framework of seeking the right tools to translate in a concrete way the principles and goals of the International community into applicable measures that allow for the activation of Interfaith dialogue and the spread of a culture of peace and cooperation.

In this context, it is important to recall some of the following objectives:

- Support, define theoretically and conceptualize "Interfaith dialogue" through the creation of a mechanism for the follow up of Member States contribution to the different initiatives aiming at establishing a responsible and genuine dialogue among religions.

- Encourage academia to promote the culture of dialogue. In this regard, we propose the establishment of a network between educational institutions as a forum of interaction between youth of the world, intellectuals and theologians.
- Include modules on Interreligious dialogue in school programs;
- Increase the primary role that the media play in the spread of a culture of tolerance and the promotion of the values of openness, while reconciling between the freedom of expression and the respect of the sacred religious and spiritual beliefs.

**Mr. President,**

The responsibility of achieving these objectives lies on the willingness of countries, either individually or collectively to make the necessary efforts to carry out their implementation. This can be done through setting a structured **work/action** plan, which focuses on different activities, supported by States that will grant such work/action plan with the operational context that it deserves.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

The Kingdom of Morocco is preoccupied by the rise of what is known as the non-respect of the sacred religious and spiritual beliefs phenomenon, for what it has of terrible consequences, among which “Islamophobia” can be cited. It is worth mentioning that islamophobic acts are increasingly being carried out in several regions of the world.

In this context, the Kingdom of Morocco reaffirms the necessity for UN Member States to work in a collective effort to engage a serious and responsible dialogue between religions, in order to promote the culture of dialogue, and countering through ideas the calls for “the Clash of Civilizations” and “the End of History”, which remain two predominant paradigms determining orientations of International Relations.

From this forum, the Kingdom of Morocco expresses its full support to all efforts made, with the view of countering all attempts to discredit religious and sacred values, through a global approach that takes into consideration the specificities of all religions and beliefs, thus prioritizing national and regional policies related to development.

The Kingdom of Morocco seizes this opportunity to express its support for its initiative to interfaith dialogue and the culture of peace, and looks forward to the adoption of the outcome document, which, we hope, will give the necessary financial and moral, impetus, to reach the noble goals that we strive for, collectively.

I thank you.