

ROYAUME DU MAROC
MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT SOCIAL
DE LA FAMILLE ET DE LA SOLIDARITÉ



المملكة المغربية
وزارة التنمية الاجتماعية
والأسرة والتضامن

KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

**Address by Mrs Nouzha SKALLI
Minister of Social Development,
the Family and Solidarity**

ECOSOC

Substantive Session 2010

**« Implementation of International Objectives and Commitments
Related to Gender Equality and Women Empowerment »**

New York 29 June - 2 July 2010

**Your Excellency Mr Hamidon Ali, Chairman of the
Economic and Social Council;**

Excellencies;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to attend the 2010 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council and the high level segment on the theme of

**« Implementation of the International Objectives and
Commitments Related to Gender Equality
and Women Empowerment »**

I would like to congratulate His Excellence Mr Ali Hamidon for chairing ECOSOC and for the choice of a theme that is at the heart of the concerns of the international community as illustrated by several major events aimed at achieving gender equality and women empowerment, and notably:

- the Beijing+15 assessment carried out in March 2010 by the 54th Commission for women's rights. I would like to point out that our country, the Kingdom of Morocco, is fully committed to the Beijing Declaration and Action programme.
- The CEDAW convention the 30th anniversary of which was celebrated last December.

- And of course commitment to achieve the Millennium Development Goals the state of advancement of which will be reviewed at the MDG summit here, in New York, in September 2010.

The MDGs are closely linked to the issue of gender equality, and their achievement is particularly related to fighting discrimination and violence, and to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women.

At the Beijing+15 assessment we all underlined the need to focus on the implementation of CEDAW, the Beijing action plan and the MDGs, while fully aware that the issue of equality cuts across the 8 objectives.

While the international community has made undeniable progress in the domains of decision making, access to education, participation in the formal economy and promotion of the fundamental rights of women, some difficulties still remain and are even aggravated by the financial and economic crisis, food insecurity and climate change.

The stakes and challenges linked to the issue of equality are considerable and we clearly affirm that gender equality is a priority for our world, for sustainable development and for the progress of humankind.

The promotion of women's rights and of equality is the principal avenue for building a fairer and more human world with greater solidarity, that requires new global

governance designed and implemented with major involvement of women.

That is the very option chosen by the Kingdom of Morocco thanks to the leadership and vision of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, who has engaged our country towards building a society based on strong standards of human rights, liberty and gender equality.

**President,
Excellencies,**

The Kingdom of Morocco has made a clear commitment to implement an agenda of reforms targeted at promoting human rights and equality.

Combating discrimination is a formidable lever to further social justice, equal chances and women's rights in Morocco and in the world.

In 2004, we have achieved a major reform of the Family Code that, today, is based on equality and joint responsibility. This was followed by the reform of the nationality code whereby women were given the same right as men to pass on, in any event, their nationality of origin to their children born from a Moroccan father.

We have intensified the fight against discrimination through a national strategy of equality and equity that is reflected today in a government agenda of equality.

Since 2002 we have been implementing a national strategy to combat violence against women, mobilising

key institutional stakeholders and civil society partnerships.

Morocco has become one of the pilot countries of the MDG fund through the setting up of TAMKINE, a multi-sectorial programme aimed at fighting gender-based violence through the empowerment of women and girls.

This programme brings together 13 ministerial departments, 8 UN agencies and NGO's with the common goal of convergence, institutionalisation and territorialisation of the fight against gender-based violence through the empowerment of women.

Within the framework of this programme, important achievements have been made on several levels:

- legislative: a draft law against partner violence has been initiated and the penal code is being revised;
- knowledge and availability of data through the first national survey on the prevalence of violence;
- awareness and combating of stereotypes;
- And finally the availability of services to assist women and girls that are victims of violence. In addition to the national Watch-out Centre, which falls under the Ministry of Social Development, Families and Solidarity, there are 345 centres and reception units that are under the control of the National Security Department, the Gendarmerie, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health and NGOs.

Within this context, multi-purpose spaces for women will be created in the 16 regions by 2012. They will be designed according to an integrated vision that includes hospitality for women that are victims of violence, and their training and rehabilitation with a view to their empowerment.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

With regard to MDG5, it is to be noted that the maternal mortality rate declined from 227 deaths per 100 000 live births in 2004 to 132 deaths in 2009, that is a 42% decline, owing to the "Zero risk Maternity" strategy that provides for free hospitalisation for childbirth.

Gender-aware budgeting has reached an advanced stage in our country and a gender report is published on a annual basis. For the current year it related to 25 government sectors.

Parity in the management of public affairs was a major concern and 2009 has been a turning point in this domain.

At the municipal elections in June 2009, the number of women elected increased by 3000% rising from 127 to 3428 elected women. The representation rate of women in communes therefore rose from 0.56% to 12.38% of all the commune counsellors. Consultative committees on equality have been set up in all communes and equal chances are open to civil society associations.

This major achievement has taken place in symbiosis with systematic efforts to promote women at all levels of decision-making and to fight gender disparity.

It should also be stressed that His Majesty the King has made Human Development a priority issue. It is called National Initiative for Human Development (INDH) and aims at combating inequalities - be they territorial between urban and rural areas or gender-based - by fighting poverty, insecurity and exclusion.

INDH is based on an innovative approach of participation and proximity and targeting capacity building for local stakeholders.

Thanks to this inclusive and participatory partner approach and to gender awareness, INDH today constitutes a governance model that is based on participatory democracy and major concept change in conducting public policy aimed at social and human development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

All these reforms and efforts have enabled the Kingdom of Morocco to achieve successes and to be in a very good position to qualify in 2015 as one of the countries that have fulfilled their international Millennium Goals.

To fight for equality is to fight against discrimination, violence and exclusion. It is to curb poverty and endeavour towards sustainable and fair economic, social and human development which, in turn, contributes to progress, democracy and peace.

Equality helps the world to make progress!

Today the poor people in the world are mostly women. Women also constitute tremendous potential for wealth, intelligence and competence that is not sufficiently used to further sustainable development and protection of the environment.

In societies today, the dynamics of equality is conducive to performance, innovation, progress and sustainable development and hence to wealth.

We have to mobilize to put the defence of women's rights at the centre of the debate and to make the dynamics of equality, that brings us together today, the driving force of a new world that is fairer, more human and more inclusive.

Our future must be built in partnership with the active components of the international community that endeavour towards the construction of a better world.

Let us act together ... let us take joint action...

Thank you