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Session 8 : Building Climate Resilience and Accelerating the Energy Transition in African LDCs

Excellencies, Dear Colleagues and Distinguished Guests,

Allow me to say how delighted I am to speak to you today on two subjects that are dear to my heart, namely Energy Transition and South-South Cooperation.

First of all, I would like to say a few words in regards to the crisis resulting from the pandemic that we are currently experiencing. Covid-19 is a plague that threatens each day the already vulnerable populations throughout the world, and particularly in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs). According to a report of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), up to 32 million more people could fall into extreme poverty in the LDCs due to the impact of the Covid-19 crisis, thus reducing years of laborious progress. This crisis is also contributing to their growing debt overhang, making access to financing even more difficult for the LDCs, which are in dire need of financial assistance, particularly to accelerate the dynamics of developing access to energy. A sector which, you will agree, is one of the pillars of any development program, as it is at the crossroads of all socio-economic sectors. It is therefore imperative to find solutions to deal with this situation. As such, it is important to initiate an ambitious program to support LDCs and ODCs in structuring bankable projects that meet the best international standards based on best practices that have already been proven elsewhere, in order to improve their attractiveness for much-needed investment and financing.

It is in this sense that, under the enlightened leadership of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, for the implementation of a sustainable development approach, concerned with the preservation of our environment within the framework of a strengthened South-South Cooperation, Morocco has taken the initiative to establish a policy of dialogue and cooperation, making a positive contribution to the international community's efforts to promote access to clean and sustainable energy for all. This commitment is particularly reflected in the launch with Ethiopia of the Coalition for Sustainable Energy Access for LDCs and Other Developing Countries, announced at the last UN Climate Action Summit in New York.

In this regard, the Coalition for Sustainable Energy Access intends to facilitate the linkage between existing initiatives and institutions acting in its sector and the beneficiary countries so that their needs can be identified and met in a rapid and effective manner. The Coalition will provide them with the necessary support to mobilize partner institutions and accelerate the implementation of energy access projects.

Furthermore, since we believe that best practices can be drawn from the experiences of some of the most advanced southern countries, South-South cooperation is one of the key founding principles of this Coalition. Moreover, a main center of expertise will be set up to promote technical exchanges between countries of the South. High-level events will also host exchange sessions between Southern countries to promote the sharing of experience and best practices.

Lastly, based on our successful experience in renewable energies, we are firmly convinced that innovation and new technologies are also essential to make this dynamic a new lever for the economic and industrial development of Southern countries. In this sense, the Coalition, with the support of UNIDO, will work to strengthen the development of innovation and industrial integration in the countries of the South.

This theme being of major importance for us Southern countries in search of new levers for industrial development, I am pleased to announce that Morocco was designated a few days ago, World Champion of the theme "Innovation, Technologies and Data" in the framework of the UN High-Level Dialogue on Energy 2021. We are therefore strongly committed to fulfilling the UN promise of the Agenda 2030 "Leave no one behind".

In order to frame this entire process, we have also undertaken the definition of a roadmap with the UNDP, which will include the various concrete actions required to make the Coalition project operational. This plan is currently being finalized and will be examined in the near future by the Coalition's Advisory Board. The Board will then steer the Coalition's Secretariat, which will be in charge of implementing the roadmap and will be established during this year.

With your help and mobilization for a more just and inclusive approach towards LDCs and developing countries, we can build a safer, more equitable and more sustainable future.

Thank you,