



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



HM the King Sends Message to Participants in Commemoration Ceremony of OIC 50th Anniversary

HM King Mohammed VI sent a message to the participants in the commemoration ceremony of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), held Thursday in Rabat.

Here follows the full text of the Royal message, which was read out by minister of foreign affairs, African cooperation and Moroccans abroad, Nasser Bourita.

"Praise be to God,

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

Your Excellencies,

Your Highnesses,

Mr. Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I should like to say how pleased we are, in the Kingdom of Morocco, that our brothers from the OIC Member Countries have joined us for this celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

I am sure you remember that this Organization was set up at the behest of my revered father, His Majesty King Hassan II - may he rest in peace - with the blessing of his two brothers, King Faisal bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud and King Hussein bin Talal - may God bless their souls. As a result, a resolution was adopted at the historic summit held in Rabat on 25 September 1969, following the heinous arson attack on the blessed al-Aqsa Mosque.

Ever since that time, this date has stood as a symbol of the unity of the Islamic Ummah, under the umbrella of the OIC - an Organization that carries the voice of the Muslim world and embodies its conscience. This is particularly true with regard to the central issue seared - today and forever - into the memory and the conscience of the Islamic Ummah, namely the just cause of Palestine and al-Quds al-Sharif - the First of the Two Qiblahs and the Third Holy Mosque.

Your Excellencies,

Your Highnesses,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we reflect on half a century of constructive work and continuous, fruitful presence, we should make sure this collective effort serves as a catalyst to redress the course of joint Islamic action so as to achieve political stability, economic prosperity and social well-being for the benefit of the peoples of our Muslim Ummah.

Over this fifty-year period, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation has become the second largest inter-governmental organization outside the United Nations system, with fifty-seven Member Countries, representing almost two billion Muslims of various ethnicities and from all continents.

Thanks to the OIC's rich experience, solidarity and cooperation between Member States have been strengthened. Dozens of Islamic summits have been held, during which historic decisions have been made and statements issued. Similarly, many honorable stances have been adopted, in keeping with the lofty goals enshrined in the OIC Charter.

The reference here is to action to champion the causes of the Muslim Ummah; defend the true values of Islam; correct misconceptions and misperceptions of the lofty teachings and mission of our faith; confront all forms of discriminatory practices against Muslims; protect Muslims' crucial interests in various regional and international forums, and resolve many disputes and conflicts in which Member States are involved.

Our Organization has also actively sought to promote inter-faith, intercultural dialogue, curb inclinations towards extremism and reclusiveness - which are amongst the most significant challenges facing the Islamic world - contribute to promoting the ideals of understanding, tolerance and coexistence between peoples and nations, and consolidate global security and stability.

Believing in the need to keep abreast of global developments, Member States took the initiative of amending the Organization's Charter, making it the pillar of future Islamic action, consistent with the challenges of the twenty-first century.

To reinforce this trend, a ten-year work program was adopted in

Makkah Al-Mukarramah in 2005 with a view to strengthening joint action between Member States. That process was successfully completed by the end of 2015. Subsequently, a new program was formulated covering the period 2016 - 2025, which defines priority areas and goals and takes into account the main issues of concern to the Islamic world.

Previous and current plans and programs have contributed to doubling the volume of trade between OIC Member States. In this regard, I support the development of economic blocs, as a prelude to establishing a free trade area for Islamic countries. Such an area should reflect the spirit of solidarity and pave the way for comprehensive, sustainable development, whose pillar would be our human resources.

I therefore call for the adoption of a new roadmap that would help us capitalize on our human and natural resources, and bring about a paradigm shift in the quality of life indicators in our Islamic countries.

Such a project requires the formulation of a new approach to development - one that takes into account the particularities of the global economic system and allows us to draw inspiration from successful experiences which relied mostly on the development and training of human resources. The aim is to achieve a quantum leap in the economic, social and environmental sectors.

Your Excellencies,

Your Highnesses,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The prime source of our strength and unity, and our greatest motivation to exert further efforts, is our firm belief in the justness of our foremost cause, namely the question of al-Quds and Palestine. As King of Morocco and Chairman of the al-Quds Committee, I reaffirm the unwavering commitment of my country - its King, Government and people - to defending al-Quds Al-Sharif and Palestine at political, diplomatic and legal levels in order to safeguard the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

Our untiring action to find a solution to the Palestinian question and to the issue of al-Quds stems from a firm belief that peace in the Middle East region hinges on the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, along the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

In this regard, I call on the international community to do all it can to develop a new roadmap that makes it possible to implement the resolutions of international legality as well as the peace agreements signed. I call on the comity of nations to find practical solutions to the crisis in the Middle East in order to end the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories within a specific timeframe, in accordance with the two-State solution and in conformity with the relevant international legality resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative.

As Chairman of the al-Quds Committee, I have been promoting an approach combining sound political action, diplomatic efforts aimed at preserving legitimate Palestinian rights and concrete endeavors on the ground, through field projects supervised by the Beit Mal al-Quds Al Sharif Agency. The goal is to support the inhabitants of al-Quds, to bolster their resilience in the face of the policy of systematic Judaization aimed at altering the legal, historical and demographic status of the Holy City, and to keep abreast of their priorities and changing needs.

Your Excellencies,

Your Highnesses,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of our Organization is taking place in a complex and intricate international environment, given the crises which have erupted in some OIC Member Countries. They have had serious repercussions at regional level, not only exacerbating the risk of division and horrible sectarianism, but also fueling extremism and terrorism.

It is therefore a matter of urgency to address the root causes that have led to this situation which portends many risks. We need to act in good faith to resolve inter-Islamic disputes and adopt measures and mechanisms to shield our Organization against the risks of fragmentation and division.

Similarly, we should stand up to the parties that are seeking to exploit the crisis in order to foment division or redraw the map of the Islamic world using, to that end, criteria that ignore identity as much as historical facts. These parties have been trying to interfere with the destiny of nations and are putting global security and stability in jeopardy.

An accurate, objective diagnosis of the situation prevailing in the Islamic world, coupled with an in-depth, impartial assessment can help us overcome this difficult situation. With that in mind, we need to devise and implement appropriate development strategies and programs, making sure national particularities are duly taken into account, and observing the principles of solidarity and cooperation enshrined in our Organization's Charter.

I am convinced that by adhering to the principles, values and goals that are the bedrock of our Organization, and by striving in good faith to strengthen the bonds of fraternity, cooperation and solidarity which

exist between our peoples, we would provide our bloc with the resilience and efficiency needed to make it a compact, closely-knit body, whose components sustain one another.

In this regard, the consolidation of South-South cooperation based on trust, realism and mutual benefit, coupled with the proper use of the skills available and an exchange of experiences in various fields, would increase our productive capabilities and strengthen our economies, thus enabling us to fulfil our peoples' aspirations for progress, prosperity and a dignified life.

To conclude, one can confidently argue that, deep down, our celebration today is an explicit call for greater unity and cooperation between OIC Member States - a call for active involvement in international political and economic decision-making to defend the interests of our countries and our peoples.

It is an urgent plea for a proactive, future-oriented approach - a call for the development of appropriate strategies and plans for upcoming generations in order to rise to the major challenges ahead, foremost of which is action to consolidate political stability, promote sustainable development, guarantee safety and food security, and protect the environment, among other concerns.

May Almighty God help us all to serve our Muslim countries, defend their just causes and achieve security and development for the benefit of our peoples.

“And say: Work (righteousness): Soon will Allah observe your work, and His Messenger, and the Believers” - True is the Word of God.

Wassalamou alaikoum warahmatoullahi wabarakatouh."

MAP 12 December 2019

