



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



Full Text Of Royal Speech At Opening Of Fourth Legislative Year

Here follows the full text of the speech delivered on Friday by HM King Mohammed VI at the opening of the first session of the fourth legislative year of the 9th legislature.

Praise be to God

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

Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Members of Parliament,

The legislative session I am opening today is special in that it comes two years before the end of the current legislature, which, according to the Constitution, is the deadline for the adoption of all regulatory

texts.

It is also a session during which the development of the political and institutional setup should be completed in order to consolidate Morocco's economic and social achievements in various fields, which I had the opportunity to speak about in the State of the Nation and 20 August speeches.

As I said on an earlier occasion, we know who we are and where we are going. We also know what our assets are and what difficulties and challenges face us.

By the grace of the Almighty, Morocco has made substantial progress. Our vision is clear and our institutions are strong, thanks to the powers they have under the rule of law.

This is a source of pride for all of us. Whether individually or as groups, and wherever they may be, Moroccans can be proud to belong to this country.

As a Moroccan, nothing else is more valuable to me than the sense of belonging to this nation.

You, too, should express your pride in belonging to this country. You should express this pride every day and at all times, in your work, in your dealings, in your conversations, at home and in discharging your responsibilities.

For those who do not know the meaning of patriotism and who fail to praise Almighty God for all He has bestowed on this country, I say: Look at what is happening in several countries in the region. This is a lesson for those with good judgment. Morocco, for its part, is confidently forging ahead to catch up with emerging countries.

The sense of pride in belonging to Morocco is a sincere feeling of patriotism all Moroccans should share.

It is not some commodity which can be bought and sold, nor does it fall from the sky. It is a noble feeling which comes straight from the heart and is the result of a proper upbringing and strong moral principles. It grows inside the citizen, reinforcing not only his faith but also his sense of belonging to the nation.

This feeling of pride, however, does not mean reclusiveness or superiority over others. Moroccans are known for their open-mindedness and for positive interaction with other peoples and civilizations.

To preserve and nurture this feeling, many efforts are needed, together with untiring action to make sure all citizens lead a dignified life and enjoy their rights as citizens. In return, they are expected to fulfill their duties.

Now I should like to speak to you, the politicians, and say: You are at the forefront of those who are expected to maintain and consolidate this sense of pride by enhancing the citizens' confidence in public and elected institutions, and by increasing the credibility and efficiency of those institutions, so that the citizens feel they are actually being served by them.

To Moroccans in general, I say: You are both the source and purpose of this sense of pride. There can be no homeland without you. You should therefore strive to reflect that pride by engaging in all aspects of national life, especially by voting in elections - which is both a right and a national duty - and thus choose those who will be in charge of running public affairs.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Members of Parliament,

At both regional and global levels, Morocco is a respected, trusted country which enjoys credibility, and which has a positive image worldwide.

Nevertheless, we must keep in mind that there are, on the other hand, parties that are envious of Morocco, its political achievements, its march towards progress, its security and stability, its historical and cultural heritage and Moroccan national pride.

My ancestor, the Messenger of Allah, may peace be upon him, said: "O God, let the number of those who envy us grow". If many people envy you, it means you have abundant assets or you have achieved a lot. Conversely, if you have nothing, you cannot be envied.

Notwithstanding the schemes of the envious, we are keen to uphold rights and freedoms. In parallel, civic duty requires state institutions to be respected. The protection of those institutions is the responsibility of the government and judicial authorities concerned, together with human rights organizations and regulatory and good governance agencies - each within their field of competence.

We are not against freedom of expression or constructive criticism.

What we are against are nihilism and disloyalty to the homeland. Morocco will always be a country in which the freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution will be upheld and respected.

Our country needs all its sons and daughters - all its vital, influential resources, especially civil society organizations. In this regard, I have been encouraging the constructive initiatives undertaken by civil society groups, given the positive role they play as a counterbalancing force and as a powerhouse of suggestions that contribute to constructive criticism and balance between the different powers.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Members of Parliament,

Given the matters to be dealt with, the current legislative session is of great importance as far as the country's political process is concerned.

I should like to emphasize, in this respect, that the democratic choice made by the Moroccan people is irreversible. In fact, I am committed to seeing that this choice is further consolidated.

The pressing, inevitable question today is: Have all political stakeholders kept up with this evolution, in word as well as in deed?

Political discourse requires being honest with the citizens, making objective analyses and ensuring that stakeholders show mutual respect, so they can all be partners in serving the nation, and not just politicians divided by narrow interests.

Observers of the national political landscape in general, and of parliamentary life in particular, note that the political discourse does not always fulfill the citizens' expectations because it is excessively centered on partisanship and party politics.

While each Member of Parliament and all political parties are rightly entitled to keep their political future in mind and to seek the confidence of voters, this should not be done at the expense of the nation's major issues or of the citizens' real concerns.

Political practice should primarily be based on close attention to the citizens' needs, on constant contact with the people, on compliance with laws and on observation of ethical standards, contrary to what some elected officials do - thereby damaging their reputation and that of their party, harming their country's best interests and undermining political practice in the truest sense of the term.

This calls for the adoption of a broad-based ethics charter, which would not be limited to articles in the rules and regulations of the two Houses of Parliament.

Above all, it is necessary to determine national priorities in a very responsible manner, and to make the spirit of compromise prevail, particularly when adopting the regulatory texts relating to constitutional institutions and the nation's major reforms.

In this regard, the adoption of bills related to the reform of the justice system, particularly the setting up of the Higher Council of the Judiciary and the adoption of the statute for judges, should be given priority.

Indeed, the justice system guarantees the security and safety of

citizens and protects their property. It is also the backbone of judicial safeguards, which in turn boost development and investment.

Concerning constitutional justice, I will soon officially set up the Constitutional Court, which will have extensive powers. In this respect, I urge both Houses of Parliament to show a keen sense of national responsibility and take into account experience, competence and probity when choosing the members that the two Houses are constitutionally entitled to elect.

Similarly, the task of setting up the institutions for participatory democracy and good governance should be completed in accordance with the new provisions. I invite the Government and Parliament to take more advantage of the expertise available in these institutions.

As you know, there are many important matters to be addressed this year, particularly the launching of advanced regionalization.

With local and regional elections less than a year away, I want to ask all political stakeholders: What programs and elites are you offering with a view to improving the management of public affairs?

The greatest challenge facing Morocco today is not simply the distribution of powers between the central government and the regions and local governments, but more particularly how to ensure that these powers are used properly in order to serve the citizens.

Accordingly, the coming elections should not be perceived as an end in themselves, so much as an opportunity for political contest between programs and elites, avoiding outbidding tactics and partisan bickering.

As far as I am concerned, there are no winners or losers in an electoral competition. All are winners. And the biggest winner of all is Morocco, for even those who fail to win the confidence of most voters contribute, through their participation, to the dynamism of elected institutions.

They are also expected to form a constructive opposition bloc and propose realistic alternatives that will ultimately help them return to the management of public affairs.

The biggest losers are those who consider their seat as a source for rentier income, or as an inheritance that is there to stay forever. When they fail to be elected, they say the elections were rigged; when they are elected, they say nothing and take advantage of the integrity of the vote to run public affairs.

As is the case all over the world, it is true that there can be violations in an electoral process. Such abuses are dealt with by the justice system and the Constitutional Court, which cancelled a number of seats in the last poll.

I therefore invite you all to be well-prepared for the upcoming elections and to show a keen sense of sincere patriotism in respecting the will of voters.

I am sure you are aware of your duty to constantly defend the nation's territorial integrity.

In this respect, I commend the earnest efforts you have been making through party-based and parliamentary diplomacy. It is my duty as King to warn against flaws and to see to it that they are remedied. It is also my duty to give credit where credit is due.

Since my address to Parliament last year, MPs have made significant efforts, particularly to thwart attempts to exploit the issue of human rights in our Southern Provinces and during our negotiations with the European Union on a fisheries agreement.

I urge you to remain mobilized and vigilant, and to continue to counter the schemes of Morocco's adversaries.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Members of Parliament,

I perceive human capital as our foremost asset in building on the country's economic, social, political and human rights achievements. It is also our most important tool in rising to the challenge of development and in engaging with the knowledge and communication-based society.

I have therefore been attaching special importance to training and education, so that our citizens may be proud of their identity and embrace universal values. To this end, I have sought to carry on with efforts to reform the education and training system.

I call on the Higher Council for Education, Training and Scientific Research to reconsider the letter and spirit of the reform as well as the approaches used so far, and to focus on the core issues I defined in last year's 20 August Address.

I wish to refer in particular to the need to find a solution to the issue regarding the languages of instruction, to overcome ideological disputes that hinder the reform and to implement curricula that meet the requirements of development and the job market.

Moreover, particular attention should be given to vocational training and to ensuring a good command of foreign languages so that graduates may cope with technological progress and access the new jobs being created in Morocco.

I look forward to seeing the Council's action - regarding the evaluation of the education and training charter, the broad-based dialogue and the regional meetings - lead to recommendations that can help reform Moroccan schools and enhance their performance.

Until the Council comes up with a clear road map, the sectors concerned should carry on with their reform programs and avoid any wait-and-see attitudes.

Finally, and as we celebrate National Women's Day, on October 10, that coincides with the day on which I announced the Family Code, back in 2003, I would like to pay tribute to Moroccan women in all sectors, positions and social categories, at home and abroad, for their active contribution to the country's development.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Members of Parliament,

This session marks a watershed in legislation, be it in terms of completing the setting up of institutions, implementing advanced regionalization or reforming the education and training system.

So - may God protect you - be up to the task. Set a good example - in word and deed - for the Moroccan people, who are proud of belonging to this nation.

“And fulfill (every) commitment, for (every) commitment will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning)”. True is the Word of God.”

MAP 10 October 2014