



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



HM The King Sends Message To Participants In 61st Global Women Entrepreneurs Congress

HM King Mohammed VI sent a message to participants in the 61st Global Women Entrepreneurs Congress which is scheduled September 25-27 in Marrakesh.

Here follows the full text of the message read out by HM the King's Advisor Zoulikha Nasri:

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

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to send this message to the participants in the 61st Global Women Entrepreneurs Congress. Welcome to Marrakech, a city steeped in history, a venue for major international meetings and a symbol openness and interaction.

Consistent with the special interest I take in the World Association of Women Entrepreneurs, I have granted my high patronage to your Congress. I wish to commend the Association for the efforts it has been making since its inception, 68 years ago, to promote women entrepreneurship, expanding its network to more than 70 countries across the five continents.

Thanks to the competence of its members and the values it seeks to uphold, FCEM has acquired a solid reputation and undeniable credibility. This is clearly shown by the original, pertinent and forward-looking character of the themes it selects for discussion at its congresses. For decades now, FCEM has been serving as an important platform, a must-attend event for women who have left a mark on the economic, political and social landscape of their country.

I wish to commend the work of Morocco's Association of Women Entrepreneurs. Thanks to its dynamism, its commitment to civic values and its dedication to serving your organization's ideals, it has actively contributed to promoting women entrepreneurship in the Kingdom, thus supporting my project of building a modern, developed nation that relies on the contributions of all its citizens, men and women alike.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Deeply convinced of the crucial importance of mobilizing all of the nation's stakeholders in order to achieve comprehensive, sustainable development, I have sought to enhance the role and involvement of women in all economic, political, social and cultural sectors. Our ultimate goal is to enable all our citizens - without exception - to reap benefits from the country's modernization and progress.

To this end, Morocco is resolutely pressing ahead with efforts to achieve gender equality in terms of rights and obligations, particularly

through the optimal implementation of the Family Law, which has given women a status that safeguards their dignity while guaranteeing justice and fair treatment. Similarly, the Nationality Act has been reviewed, especially to enable Moroccan women who are married to non-Moroccan men to pass on their nationality to their children.

Pressing ahead with efforts in this regard, I was keen to see gender equality enshrined in the Constitution, which was massively endorsed by the Moroccan people in July 2011.

In this respect, all constitutional provisions regarding the basic rights and freedoms of citizens give women the same rights and obligations as men, thus empowering women to participate fully in public life.

The Constitution also provides for the creation of an authority for equality and for the fight against all forms of discrimination. Similarly, and in order to promote participatory democracy, the Constitution provides for the establishment of an advisory council for the family and the child.

This reform brings the national legal and institutional framework regarding the status of women in line with international standards - which Morocco fully supports - in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are well aware of the important role played by Moroccan women in the national movement as part of the struggle for Morocco's independence as well as their significant contribution to building a modern nation.

Moroccan women have also been very active members of political parties and trade unions, thanks to a genuine and culturally-rooted pluralism. They have also been involved in activities relating to social and economic development.

I would like to commend the Moroccan women's struggle for their rights and wish to pay tribute to their selfless involvement in national associations, especially community organizations concerned with children, handicapped people and vulnerable women.

Women have been playing an active role in every single region in the Kingdom - whether in urban, peri-urban or rural areas. They have thus become real catalysts for comprehensive and sustainable development and this is truly a source of pride and hope.

This dynamism was highlighted when the objectives of my vision for sustainable development were defined and implemented through the National Initiative for Human Development, a defining project of paramount importance for the Kingdom, which I launched in 2005.

In this context, I have made sure National Initiative programs benefitted first and foremost women in rural areas in order to improve their quality of life. I have also made sure the necessary importance is given to promoting girls' schooling in rural areas, which is the main target of all programs aimed at developing infrastructure and encouraging income-generating projects.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The recent evolution in Morocco clearly shows that the role of women entrepreneurs has been consolidated by their active participation in all productive sectors. As demonstrated by the Moroccan Association of Women Entrepreneurs, which has organized this important

Congress and which is a member of the General Confederation of Moroccan Businesses (CGEM) - that is currently headed by a woman entrepreneur - the percentage of women in business has increased significantly, thanks to the aforementioned reforms.

I am convinced that the development process I have launched on the basis of actual equality between men and women will facilitate greater involvement of women in socio-economic development, as well as in the creation of wealth and of successful, job-creating businesses.

In this respect, education and training have a key role to play in terms of fostering entrepreneurship in young people, male and female, in order to prepare them to become tomorrow's business leaders. It is important, in this regard, that entrepreneurship and the acquisition of business skills become part and parcel of the learning process.

The policy followed in terms of improving women's conditions and the untiring efforts made to empower women to work for the achievement of progress for all, on equal footing with men, are assets that ought to be consolidated if we want Moroccan women to have their rightful place in society, particularly through better access to education and training.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The choice of theme for your Congress: "Women Entrepreneurs: dependable actors for a sustainable performance", is a highly relevant topic, given the current unstable economic situation.

By exchanging experiences and sharing opinions, you will be able to achieve the progress we all hope for, as you uphold the values and beliefs that form the guiding principles of the FCEM:

- First of all, the belief that women value entrepreneurship as highly as men do ;

- Secondly, the necessity to encourage and motivate women, giving them access to funding, as the intention of creating a business releases their energies and potentially boosts growth in the sectors they choose to invest in ;

- Finally, the deep belief that we all have in the need to change the preconceived idea that a woman's enterprise cannot be successful. Entrepreneurship is something that can be learnt. Young girls' education therefore has to include entrepreneurship incentives and behavior.

I am sure that thanks to the valuable input from the prominent figures attending it, this congress will open up new prospects for women seeking support and coaching in order to create their own businesses, take part in the effort to achieve growth and thus contribute to their country's comprehensive and sustainable development.

Welcome, once again, to Morocco. I wish you success in your endeavors as well as a pleasant stay.

Thank you.

Wassalamu alaikum warahmatullah wabarakatuh.