



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



HM the King Addresses Message to Participants of 'Africa for the Ocean' Summit (Full Text)

His Majesty King Mohammed VI, may God assist Him, addressed a message to the participants of the "Africa for the Ocean" Summit, co-chaired by Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Hasnaa, Representative of HM the King, and French President Emmanuel Macron, on Monday in Nice, France.

Here follows the translation of the full text of the Royal Message, read out by HRH Princess Lalla Hasnaa.

**"Mr. President of the French Republic,
Distinguished Heads of State and Government,
Mr. Chairman of the African Union Commission,
Honorable Ministers,
Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like to commend the personal commitment of the President of the French Republic, His Excellency Emmanuel MACRON, regarding the oceans. This commitment is perfectly in line with the present juncture, in which Africa, with its strong voice, its assets and its vision, intends to express its views in full regarding the Continent's maritime destiny.

I also wish to thank my African brothers and leading figures from the Continent for their participation in this unprecedented Summit devoted to our common coastline, which is more than 30,000 kilometers long.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Africa's seas and oceans are rich, but they are also vulnerable. They are strategic, but under-exploited; promising, but still inadequately protected. This paradox means that we must move from a potential-based logic to one of ownership.

The environment is a key element of ocean governance, but it is not its only facet. The ocean is also about our food sovereignty, our climate resilience, our energy security and our territorial cohesion. It is about who we are, what we consume, what we exploit and, consequently, what we shall hand down to others.

In this regard, Morocco is advocating a strategic rethink of Africa's maritime role, based on the following three pillars:

FIRST, BLUE GROWTH:

The blue economy is not an ecological luxury: it is a strategic necessity. Sustainable aquaculture, offshore renewable energies, port industries, marine biotechnologies, responsible coastal tourism... all these sectors have a promising future provided they are structured, interconnected, designed as value chains, and backed up by substantial investment and appropriate standards.

That is the very essence of the National Strategy wanted and deployed by Morocco as a real engine for growth, social inclusion and human development.

To this end, the Kingdom of Morocco started implementing several large-scale projects, which have reshaped the country's port landscape, in particular, like the large Tanger Med container port and the future ports of Nador West-Med and Dakhla Atlantic, both of which will build on an impressive logistics and industrial ecosystem.

NEXT, STRONGER SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION AROUND OCEAN SPACES

A joint effort is needed because the challenge is not just national; it is continental. It is not enough to share an ocean. We need to think about it together, manage it together, defend it together. Only a concerted African approach can optimize maritime value chains, secure trade routes and capture a more equitable share of the world's ocean wealth.

This is why Africa should be fully engaged in the protection of marine biodiversity, genetic resources and marine protected areas. Our continent must have maritime safety mechanisms adapted to its needs and must, from now on, speak with one voice on the global ocean scene.

FINALLY, MARITIME EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH ATLANTIC SYNERGIES.

Geopolitical dynamics in Africa must not suffer from the inertia of geography, nor from the burdens of the past. Africa's Atlantic seaboard has long been a particularly neglected space, notwithstanding its infinite potential in terms of opening up the continent, and promoting trade as well as Africa's positioning on the global scene.

With that in mind, I launched the Atlantic African States Initiative, which aims to turn this coastline into a platform for strategic dialogue, collective security, mobility and economic integration, using a new form of governance that is collegial, rallying and pragmatic.

My vision of an Atlantic Africa that makes the most of this ocean involves not just the coastal countries, but also the sister countries of the Sahel, to which we should offer a structured, reliable maritime outlet.

It is also in the same spirit of solidarity and shared prosperity that I initiated the African Atlantic Gas Pipeline project as an energy interconnection corridor and a lever for new geo-economic opportunities in West Africa.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The ocean is, and will remain, a link, a shared space which we must protect and turn into an area that promotes peace, stability and development. Africa – a continent never stronger than when it speaks

with one voice – is at the heart of this ambitious project. With its 3,500 kilometers of coastline, and some 1.2 million square kilometers of maritime space, Morocco resolutely commits to playing its part in this collective endeavor."

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