



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



HM the King Addresses Message to Participants of High-Level Conference on Protection, Support of Al Quds

His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Chairman of the Al-Quds Committee, addressed, on Sunday, a Message to the participants in the High-Level Conference on the Protection and Support of the City of Al-Quds held in Cairo.

Here follows the full text of the Royal Message, which was read by Head of Government Aziz Akhannouch.

"Your Excellency Mr. Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine,

Your Excellency the Secretary General of the League of Arab States,

Your Highnesses,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is gives me great pleasure to send this message to the participants in this High-Level Conference being held in Cairo by the League of Arab States in support of the city of al-Quds, pursuant to a decision by

the Arab Summit.

The participation of eminent political and religious figures, rights activists and media experts in this important forum reflects a common desire to address the protracted challenges of global peace in the Middle East.

The Kingdom of Morocco's participation in today's conference attests to my country's renewed commitment to the Palestinian cause in general, and to al-Quds in particular, in keeping with my sacred duty as Chairman of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's al-Quds Committee. Indeed, the Palestinian cause is just as important to me as my country's foremost national cause. As it has been pointed out on various occasions, it is also one of the enduring pillars of our foreign policy.

What gives special meaning to this important conference is that it is taking place at a difficult juncture as regards the Palestinian cause and the question of al-Quds and of Islamic and Christian holy shrines there, foremost of which is the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque.

As part of joint Arab action, we therefore have a collective responsibility to shoulder. It includes the obligation to close Arab ranks in order to face up to the violations committed in the Holy City, and the attempts to obliterate its unique cultural identity and change its legal character, which the relevant UN Security Council resolutions have pledged to protect.

The unilateral measures designed to create illegitimate facts on the ground in al-Quds and its surroundings represent a threat to the city's legal status, its demographic make-up, and its historical character, which is rooted in a diversity of cultures and faiths.

Furthermore, the systematic measures taken, which are at odds with international law and United Nations resolutions, do not help build trust. Rather, they undermine the chances of reaching a permanent solution based on two states living side by side, in peace and security.

It is a fact that the difficult reality prevailing in al-Quds cannot be considered separately from the general context relating to the evolution of the Palestinian cause. The interruption of negotiations between the Israeli and Palestinian sides, and the continuing impasse and stalemate in the peace process, give radicals an opportunity to exacerbate the conflict, stir up religious feelings, and increase tension and agitation in the city of al-Quds. As a result, there is a risk that this political conflict might turn into an ideological one, with potentially dire consequences for the entire region.

Therefore, protecting the city of al-Quds from plans to change its historical and legal status should be an honest and sincere endeavor, far from empty slogans, useless outbidding tactics, and narrow-minded calculations.

Your Excellencies,

Your Highnesses,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On a number of occasions in the past, I have pointed that the City of al-Quds holds a special place in the hearts and minds of Arab and Muslim peoples. This makes the City a sacred trust for all of us - a great responsibility before God and history. Therefore, defending al-Quds should not be a momentary, circumstantial act. Rather, it should involve effective diplomatic actions and actual work on the ground, inside the Holy City.

The tangible field work carried out under my personal supervision for more than 25 years by the Bayt Mal al-Quds al-Sharif Agency, which is the operational branch of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's al-Quds Committee, aims to support the Holy City and preserve its cultural specificity through the implementation of social and development projects that concern all segments of the City's population.

Thus, the Agency has managed to implement more than 200 projects, at an estimated cost of about US\$65 million, with Morocco accounting for 100 percent of the funding, under state donations, and approximately 70 percent of the budget, under contributions from institutions and individuals.

In this regard, the Kingdom of Morocco stresses the need for concerted Arab and Islamic efforts to protect and support the Holy City of al-Quds, and to facilitate a political détente that can open up prospects for optimism as to the future. In that future, peace, security and prosperity would prevail in the region, thanks to a commitment to the principles of coexistence and the perception of cultural, religious or sectarian differences as common sources of enrichment, which bring communities together, rather than separate them.

That is the approach adopted in the "Al-Quds Appeal", which I signed in Rabat on 30 March 2019, with His Holiness Pope Francis, Sovereign of the Vatican. In that Appeal, we stressed that it was "important to preserve the Holy City of Jerusalem / Al-Quds Acharif as the common patrimony of humanity and especially the followers of the three monotheistic religions, as a place of encounter and as a symbol of peaceful coexistence, where mutual respect and dialogue can be cultivated".

With that in mind, I reiterate the call for setting up a global alliance of all driving forces that are committed to peace and that believe in the values of tolerance and coexistence. The aim is to save the City of Peace and preserve its common cultural and human heritage, in

keeping with the appeal I made in Rabat, in 2009, on the occasion of the International Conference on al-Quds.

Your Excellencies,

Your Highnesses,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Morocco remains convinced that the Palestinian question is a fundamental political issue and that it is the key to a lasting, comprehensive solution for the establishment of peace and stability in the Middle East region. Therefore, a just settlement must be found for this issue, in keeping with international legitimacy, and in accordance with the principle of the Two-State solution agreed by the international community.

Convinced that peace in the Middle East region remains an inescapable strategic option, the Kingdom of Morocco will keep up its efforts and leverage its capabilities and its outstanding relations with all the influential international parties and powers so as to contribute to any international effort aimed at re-launching dialogue and negotiations. That is, indeed, the only way to put an end to the conflict and achieve security, stability and prosperity in the Middle East region.

I should like to take this opportunity to express my full support for the Palestinian National Authority, under the leadership of my brother, His Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas, and for the efforts it is making to achieve the aspirations of our Palestinian brothers and sisters, as well as their quest for freedom, independence, unity and prosperity.

To conclude, I hope this high-level conference will provide strong support for al-Quds and its inhabitants, and shed further light on the fairness and centrality of the question of al-Quds al-sharif. May the Almighty grant us success, help us serve the cause of peace and preserve the character of the City of Peace, so that it may remain a land of coexistence and concord between the followers of the revealed religions.

Wassalamu alaikum warahmatullah wabarakatuh."

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