

New Delhi –

HM King Mohammed VI delivered this Thursday a speech at the opening session of the 3rd India-Africa forum summit in New Delhi. Here follows the speech full text:

“Praise be to God

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

Mr. Prime Minister,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to say how delighted I am to take part in this third India-Africa Forum Summit, which is being held in New-Delhi, India, one of Morocco’s major partners.

I have fond memories of my first visit to India, back in 1983, when I led the Moroccan delegation to the Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement and also of my first official visit here in 2001. Our two nations enjoy outstanding relations which date back to the time of my revered grandfather, His Majesty King Mohammed VI – may he rest in peace – and of the great leader Jawaharlal Nehru, who were both engaged in the struggle for the liberation and independence of African States.

I admire the way India has crafted its pioneering development model which has enabled this country to become one the emerging global powers.

This makes India’s ambition to play a key role within UN agencies in charge of global peace and security all the more legitimate.

In this regard, India’s main asset is its balanced, responsible foreign policy based on respect for international legitimacy and for the territorial integrity of states, as well as on the defense of developing countries’ interests and just causes.

I should like to express our appreciation for the Republic of India’s constructive position concerning the Moroccan Sahara issue and for supporting the UN process to resolve this artificial conflict. I regret, on the other hand, that some countries have been unable to move forward; they continue repeating obsolete discourses and theses that date back more than 40 years.

Your Excellencies,

The third India-Africa Forum Summit is an opportunity for us to assess South-South cooperation, which is the cornerstone of the African-Indian partnership.

The Forum should serve as a platform to lay the foundations for an efficient, solidarity-based, multidimensional South-South cooperation model, through which we can make optimal use of the resources and potential available in our countries.

Our cooperation therefore has to turn the page on the legacy of the past and seek to serve our countries' strategic interests.

The South-South cooperation we are yearning for is neither a mere slogan nor a political luxury.

This is a pressing need, given the scale of the challenges faced. Indeed, we cannot rely on conventional patterns of cooperation that today no longer help us respond to the growing needs of our peoples.

Morocco is therefore keen to carry out tangible projects, both at the bilateral level and within the framework of triangular cooperation, in productive areas which boost development, create jobs and have a direct impact on the citizens' lives.

Morocco's growing diversified partnerships with a number of African states in the area of human development as well as in various social, economic and religious fields clearly illustrate this policy.

This has enabled our country to become the top African investor in West Africa and the second biggest in the continent.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Africa has taken part in a number of bilateral and continental cooperation forums which are quite useful. However, some of them suffer from overlapping and imbalance, which often result in a lack of commitment and affect their efficiency.

Today, Africa deserves fair partnerships, rather than unbalanced relationships and conditional support.

As I indicated in my address in Abidjan, Africa does not need assistance as much as it needs mutually beneficial partnerships as well as human and social projects.

Just as, on an earlier occasion, I pointed out that Africa should learn to trust Africa, today, from this rostrum, I would like to call upon the countries of the South to trust themselves and to invest their assets and skills in the pursuit of shared progress for their peoples and thus catch up with emerging countries.

Securing a bright future for our peoples is a responsibility that we must shoulder. Our countries should continue to work together and uphold the principle of solidarity in order to serve their interests; otherwise, we will, once again, miss a historic opportunity. As far as our peoples are concerned, this would be tantamount to a leap into the unknown.

I should like, in this respect, to express my appreciation to India and its Prime Minister for making sure this Forum Summit is different from previous ones in terms of its objectives and general orientation as well as the nature of its recommendations and follow-up measures.

He has seen to it the Forum will be a success and has made sure it has the means needed to be an effective model of cooperation between our countries.

Morocco looks forward to launching joint initiatives with India, within the framework of this Forum, in areas which are a priority for our peoples and in which our two countries have gained extensive expertise.

An example of fruitful partnership between our two countries is our cooperation in the field of phosphates and their derivatives, which we seek to expand to include food security programs, putting our know-how at the disposal of some African countries.

I am also keen to ensure that we expand prospects for bilateral cooperation, particularly in such sectors as agriculture, the pharmaceutical industry, research in science and technology and the training of managerial staff, making sure we build on that experience to serve African peoples.

Mr. Prime Minister,

Your Excellencies,

Security and stability are the bedrock of development. Without them, our countries cannot achieve social progress nor undertake meaningful development initiatives.

Given the mix of development challenges and unprecedented terrorist threats they face, the Member Countries of this Forum should adopt a comprehensive approach rooted in close cooperation with India.

Morocco is ready to set up a joint working group to this effect, in order to ensure coordination and information sharing.

I firmly believe that the promising African-Indian partnership can grow and prosper thanks to the complementary nature of our resources and skills, and thus help us achieve our objectives and serve our peoples.

Thank you.

Wassalamu alaikum warahmatullah wabarakatuh.”