

November, 6th 2005

Here follows the full text of the royal speech :

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

My loyal subjects,

Before giving my address on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the Green March, I must strongly condemn the despicable kidnapping, by terrorist gangs in Iraq, of the two Moroccan citizens working at the Kingdom's Embassy in Baghdad. Like you, I have been following this hideous crime with great concern and deep disapproval. It is a crime which is condemned by the Moroccan people. Indeed, the entire Moroccan nation has been making humanitarian appeals and relentless endeavours to secure their release. Reiterating my strong condemnation of this irresponsible act, which is unacceptable by any moral or religious standards, I still expect the criminals to come to their senses, and set free those two innocent citizens, who are from an Arab, Muslim country that has spared no effort to stand by the brotherly Iraqi people in their ordeal, advocating dialogue and wisdom to overcome their crisis.

Today we are celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of the glorious Green March for the recovery of our Saharan provinces, an event which attests to the symbiosis between the Throne and the people, as well as to the nation's unanimous stand regarding the country's national unity and territorial integrity. This is a special occasion on which we reiterate the pledge to remain ever loyal to the oath we all took before the architect of the Green March, my revered father, His Majesty King Hassan II, may he rest in peace, and to continue to rally the nation's forces, under the guidance of the country's First Servant, in order to defend the homeland and preserve its integrity.

Upon the decolonization of our Saharan provinces in 1975, comprehensive development turned the region into towns and urban centres enjoying security, stability and prosperity, thanks to sacrifices made by all Moroccans, civilian as well as military. This strong, national solidarity enabled our Saharan provinces to be an integral part of the great progress achieved in fostering democratic, economic and social development.

Our Saharan provinces also stood up, with great steadfastness, against the thinly-veiled plots contrived by the enemies of our territorial integrity to undermine their Moroccanness. Despite our enemies' desperate attempts, Morocco, convinced that its cause is a just one, and bolstered by the nation's unanimous determination not to give up one inch of its Sahara, has remained committed to

the bonds of brotherhood and neighbourliness, and sought to make dialogue and peace prevail, thus adopting a wise, sensible approach.

I am sure these virtues constitute the best way to come out of the dark tunnel in which this artificial dispute has plunged us, and to promote a spirit of coexistence and concord that is likely to help us fulfil the aspirations of young generations, who look forward to building a common future in the Maghreb.

Our commitment to the Moroccanness of our Sahara is second only to our keen desire to reach a negotiated political solution to the artificial dispute over the territory; a solution that would give self-rule to our southern provinces, and effectively enable their populations to manage their regional affairs themselves, within the framework of the Kingdom's sovereignty, national unity and territorial integrity.

The tireless efforts we have been making to achieve a consensual, final settlement are a constructive response on our part to the United Nations' sound recommendations and good offices.

In this respect, when receiving the new Personal Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General, I stressed that my country was prepared to cooperate in good faith with His Excellency and, through him, with the international community, engage in serious negotiations, and take constructive measures in order to reach an equitable solution to this artificial dispute, in a confident, responsible way, as part of a wise, clear-sighted vision of the future.

Remaining faithful to the spirit of the Green March which, thanks to the nation's mobilization, made it possible to liberate the Sahara, and in keeping with the democratic approach of involving all the forces that count in the defence of the Moroccanness of the Sahara, I have decided that, given the key role they play in the nation's issues, political parties shall be consulted. The goal is to find out, in practical terms, about their perception of self-rule within the framework of the Kingdom's sovereignty, ahead of preparing and presenting the Moroccan proposal in this respect.

Once again, I call on all national bodies and institutions to play their part in mobilizing public opinion, and in structuring and expanding people's involvement in the field. The aim is to support this sound approach in a conscientious, responsible way, reflect the unanimity of the nation on this question, and seek greater international support for it. I also call on them to be ever vigilant and to rally more closely together, in order to lift the blockade imposed on our compatriots in the Tindouf camps. Their future lies in a democratic, united Morocco, which provides all the conditions needed for full-fledged citizenship and a decent life.

Given their competence and wisdom, as well as the high regard I have for them, the region's sons and elected officials, especially the sheikhs, will, like political parties, be consulted to secure their views on setting up an advanced regional system that suits the specificities of this beloved region. They will also be involved in the restructuring of the Royal Advisory Council on Saharan Affairs, in appreciation of their sincere, unwavering loyalty to the nation's immutable values, and their extensive knowledge of the region's affairs and its population's aspirations.

I should like to say, once again, that I attach great importance to this Council, which should become an effective institution for the development of the southern provinces and the defence of their Moroccanness. It should have balanced membership made up, not only of notables, but also of new elites and active community-based associations, especially young people and women.

My loyal subjects,

The Green March has given rise to a new Morocco, and I am particularly keen to enhance the achievements our country has accomplished with respect to unity, democracy and development, thanks to the endeavours of all Moroccans, at home as well as abroad.

I should like, in this regard, to praise the Moroccan community abroad for the effective part it has been playing. I consider it to be one of the main ingredients of the new Morocco. In fact, it has been at the forefront of the dedicated, earnest struggle to achieve the country's development, defend its territorial integrity and enhance its influence abroad, thereby showing how deeply committed it is to its authentic Moroccan identity.

To show how keen I am to fulfil the legitimate aspirations of the various generations making up our expatriate community, who look forward to full-fledged citizenship, and in order to guarantee effective, credible participation of Moroccans who live abroad in the nation's institutions and in public life in general, I have made four important, complementary decisions :

First, to enable Moroccans residing abroad to benefit - deservedly - from appropriate, realistic and rational representation in the House of Representatives;

Second, and building on the first decision, to have constituencies set up abroad so that Moroccans may elect their representatives to the Lower Chamber. Moroccans abroad enjoy the

same political and civil rights as those guaranteed by the law for their fellow citizens at home, which means they, too, can vote and seek office.

Third, to make it possible for members of the new generations of Moroccans abroad to vote and to run for office, just like their parents, in accordance with the principle of equal citizenship. I therefore call on the government to take the steps needed to implement these three decisions when reviewing the electoral system. Over and beyond these decisions, however, my goal is to continue responding to the legitimate aspirations of our citizens who live abroad, seeking to enable them to participate as actively and as fully as possible in the country's development.

Fourth, and further to what I have just said, to set up a higher council for the Moroccan community abroad, to be placed under my chairmanship. Its membership shall be determined in a democratic, transparent way in order to guarantee true representation, as well as credibility and efficiency. It will be composed of members whom I shall choose from among distinguished persons known for their commitment to defending the rights of Moroccan emigrants as well as the nation's interests. The council will also include representatives of state agencies and institutions concerned with emigrants' issues.

These decisions and guidelines are part of a comprehensive, three-pronged strategy, which takes into account the fact that Morocco is a migrant-emitting country, a transit country as well as a migrant-receiving nation.

Because Morocco is a migrant-emitting country, I have always attached great importance to the members of the Moroccan community abroad, their positive interaction with host countries, and their effective involvement in the major reforms and projects I am spearheading.

Similarly, I have sought to provide appropriate legal residence conditions for foreigners who choose to live in Morocco for studies, training, work, investment, tourism or other reasons, making sure they enjoy security and tranquillity, within the rule of law.

It should be pointed out that our country's geographical location and the constraints of the regional and international environment have led to the emergence of a new, more intricate situation, whereby Morocco has become a transit country for emigrants from sub-Saharan sister nations, bound for an elusive European destination.

Despite the fact that Morocco has been the main victim of this situation, it has been doing its utmost, using its limited resources to deal with it, in close coordination with neighbouring Spain. Yet, the problem exceeds, in its essence, the bilateral framework of the two neighbour countries and concerns all African, Maghrebian and European nations affected by immigration.

The growing flow of illegal emigrants from the world of poverty to the world of affluence requires a comprehensive approach that goes beyond security aspects, as they are not enough to address the economic and social roots of the phenomenon in emigrant-emitting countries. Only by providing the necessary assistance for the local development of African sister nations will we solve this problem, and make it possible for people to remain in their countries and enjoy a decent life, in an environment of shared prosperity and global security.

With this in view, Morocco and Spain have jointly called for a conference to be attended by EU member states, Arab Maghreb nations and the African countries concerned, to develop a common policy with clear-cut responsibilities, means of action, integrated programs and a strategic approach, since immigration is a structural, not a short-lived, phenomenon.

Whatever the transient difficulties, they will not undermine Morocco's firm determination to rise to this challenge and respect the rights and dignity of emigrants, Moroccans and foreigners alike. Morocco thus confirms its belief in the requisites of openness, interaction, solidarity and brotherhood dictated by its geographical location, democratic system and cultural heritage.

Wassalamu alaikum warahmatullah wabarakatuh.