

HM the King Delivers Speech to Nation on 43rd Anniversary of Green March (Full Text)

HM King Mohammed VI delivered, on Tuesday, a speech to the Nation on the occasion of the 43rd anniversary of the Green March.

Here follows the full text of the royal message:

"Praise be to God

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

Dear Citizens,

I have been using an efficient approach when dealing with the nation's major issues - an approach based on serious action and a keen spirit of responsibility at the domestic level, and on clarity and ambition, which are principles underpinning our foreign policy.

Our action has always been based on these principles, even more so when we deal with our brothers, friends and neighbors, be it in terms of stances or reactions.

Having said that, I should like to refer to the division and lack of unity in the Maghreb. This unreasonable situation is utterly inconsistent with the brotherly bonds uniting our peoples, who share the same religion, language, history and destiny.

This reality is at odds with the ambition that induced the generation who fought for freedom and independence to seek to achieve the unity of the Maghreb, as symbolized, at the time, by the Tangier Conference, which was held in 1958 and whose sixtieth anniversary we are commemorating this year.

Before that, the Kingdom's position in support of the Algerian revolution strengthened the bonds between the Moroccan Monarchy and the Algerian Resistance. It also paved the way for joint Maghrebipolitical awareness and action.

Together, we fought colonial rule for many years until independence was obtained. We know each other very well, and many Moroccan and Algerian families are united by the bonds of marriage and kinship.

We also realize that our peoples' interests are best served by our unity, integration and complementarity. There is actually no need for third-party mediation.

Nevertheless, we must be realistic and admit that the state of our bilateral relations is not normal, much less acceptable.

Let me point out - and God is my witness - that soon after I acceded to the throne, I asked earnestly and in good faith that the borders between our two countries be opened and that Moroccan-Algerian relations be normalized.

I should like to say today, in a very straightforward and responsible way, that Morocco stands ready for a direct and frank dialogue with our sister nation, Algeria, in order to settle the transient and objective differences impeding the development of relations between the two countries.

To this end, I suggest to our Algerian brothers that we set up a joint political mechanism for dialogue and consultation. This mechanism's format, nature and level of representation can be mutually agreed upon.

I should like to stress that Morocco is willing to consider the proposals or initiatives Algeria may want to offer in this regard so as to break the stalemate in the relations between the two neighbors and sister nations.

The mission of this mechanism would be to analyze all the issues on hand in good faith and in a very frank, objective and honest way, using an open-ended agenda, without conditions or exceptions.

This mechanism can also serve as a practical platform for cooperation regarding all bilateral matters, particularly with respect to making the most of the numerous development opportunities existing in the Maghreb region.

It will also contribute to enhancing bilateral coordination and consultation and help us rise to regional and international challenges, particularly in terms of fighting terrorism and addressing the issue of migration.

I should like to reiterate, in this regard, my commitment to work hand in hand with my brothers in Algeria, making sure their national institutions are fully respected.

Given our warm feelings towards the Algerian people and leadership, and the esteem in which we hold them, we shall spare no effort in Morocco to build our bilateral relations on the solid foundations of trust, solidarity and neighborliness, in keeping with the words of my ancestor - may peace and blessings be upon Him - who said that Gabriel recommended so persistently that He treat neighbors well that He thought he would give them a share of the inheritance.

Dear Citizens,

The Green March, whose 43rd anniversary we are commemorating today, was a pivotal moment in the ongoing struggle to complete the nation's territorial integrity.

This process has been characterized by the symbiosis between the throne and the people and also by the peaceful and gradual recovery of our Southern Provinces.

Last April, we celebrated the 60th anniversary of the recovery of Tarfaya. In a few months, we shall commemorate the 50th anniversary of the recovery of Sidi Ifni, then the 40th anniversary of the recovery of OuedEddahab.

Those were historic events, during which the Moroccan people in general, and the Saharan tribes in particular, showed unparalleled unanimity in their commitment to the Moroccanness of the Sahara.

Today, we are linking the past with the present, and we continue to safeguard the territorial integrity of our country with the same clarity, ambition, responsibility and committed action, both domestically and at the United Nations.

This clarity can be seen in the unchanging principles and frame of reference underpinning Morocco's position, which I set out in the speech I delivered on the 42nd anniversary of the Green March, and which have informed our action until this day.

This clarity is also shown by the firm, resolute manner in which we have been tackling all transgressions - whatever their origin - aimed at undermining Morocco's legitimate rights or departing from the frame of reference agreed for the settlement process.

As for ambition, it is reflected by Morocco's cooperation in good faith with the UN Secretary-General and by the support our country lends to his Personal Envoy to establish a serious and credible political process.

Our ambition is also displayed in our country's constructive initiatives and in its positive reaction to various international calls for practical proposals that can help achieve a realistic and lasting political settlement based on compromise and on our Autonomy Initiative.

With regard to the current momentum and the UN's tireless efforts, Morocco firmly believes that the experience and the lessons of the past ought to be taken into account in order to avoid the shortcomings and pitfalls of the Manhasset process.

At the domestic level, I am pressing ahead with efforts to put an end to the policy of rent-seeking and privilege. I also refuse all forms of blackmail or exploitation in connection with the question of the Kingdom's territorial integrity.

In the same vein, no stone is being left unturned in the pursuit of progress in our Southern Provinces under the new development model. The aim is to make sure the Moroccan Sahara can once again play its historical role as an effective link between Morocco and its sub-Saharan African roots, be it from the geographical or historical perspective.

In parallel, the actual implementation of advanced regionalization is contributing to the emergence of a genuine political elite that can effectively and democratically represent the inhabitants of the Sahara and enable them to exercise their right to run their local affairs themselves, and to achieve integrated development in a free and stable environment.

Dear Citizens,

Following the same approach, I decided that Morocco's return to the African Union had also to be based on clarity and ambitious goals.

Morocco's return to its institutional family was not intended as a means to defend the question of the Moroccan Sahara, given that the position of most African nations is similar to ours.

Our return to the African Union was dictated by the pride we take in belonging to Africa, as well as by our commitment to share in the development dynamic it is witnessing and to contribute to tackling the various challenges facing the Continent, without compromising our legitimate rights and best interests.

I wish to commend, in this regard, the recent decisions made by the AU Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Nouakchott, which were consistent with the relevant international positions and principles.

This constructive attitude means wisdom and far-sightedness have prevailed. It also constitutes a break with ploys that used to proliferate within the African Union. Because of these practices, Africa and African peoples lost precious time that should have been devoted to promoting development and integration.

In the same spirit, Morocco will invest in effective, wealth-generating economic partnerships with all countries and economic blocs, including the European Union. However, we shall not be involved in any partnership that undermines our country's territorial integrity.

I am keen to make sure these partnerships benefit directly the inhabitants of the Moroccan Sahara first and foremost, and that they contribute to improving their livelihoods within their homeland, in an environment characterized by freedom and a dignified life.

Dear Citizens,

Commemorating the Green March is more than a celebration of a historical event which has special symbolic value and is deeply rooted in immutable national principles.

The Green March epitomizes the Moroccan people's firm belief in their legitimate right to see to it that the process of the Kingdom's territorial integrity is completed. It also reflects their unwavering commitment to make whatever sacrifices are needed to defend the homeland.

This has been a characteristic, longstanding policy rooted in national unanimity and across-the-board mobilization. The aim is to promote integrated development and preserve unity, security and stability.

There is no better token of loyalty to the architect of the Green March, my revered father, His late Majesty King Hassan II - may he rest in peace - and to the glorious martyrs of our motherland.

Wassalamu alaikum warahmatullah wabarakatuh."