

## HM the King Sends Message to Intergovernmental Conference on Global Compact for Migration (Full Text)

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HM King Mohammed VI sent a message to the Intergovernmental Conference on the Global Compact for Migration, which opened Monday in Marrakech.

Here follows the full text of the royal message, which was read out by Head of Government, Saad Dine Othmani:

"Praise be to God,

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

Your Excellencies, the Heads of State and Government,

Mr. Secretary-General of the United Nations,

Honorable Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for International Migration,

Distinguished Directors General of International Organizations,

Honorable Ministers,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

What more symbolic venue could there be for this landmark event that has brought us together today than Africa - the cradle of the first human movement - than Morocco, an origin, transit and destination country, and, finally, than Marrakech - its timeless melting pot?

It is with pride and humility that I welcome you to Marrakech, on African soil.

I say 'pride' because the international community has chosen to convene this global event in the Kingdom of Morocco; and humility, given the magnitude of the issue, of what has already been achieved and of what is still to be done.

It is not by chance that this event coincides with the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

As a matter of fact, it is a good omen. Back in 1948, mankind became conscious, once and for all, of the universal nature of human rights, over and beyond the notion of states and of different cultures and civilizations.

In the same fashion, in 2018, the world community is definitely coming to terms with the global nature of migration, over and beyond considerations relating to borders, divides and continents.

History will record that it was during the mandate of His Excellency Mr. António Guterres and under his aegis that this founding event took place.

I want to pay tribute to Mrs. Louise Arbor, Special Representative for International Migration, and to all the well-meaning people who have championed the cause which has brought us together today.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Kingdom of Morocco's interest in migration is neither recent nor incidental.

Quite the contrary. It reflects a longstanding, voluntary commitment expressed through a policy which is humane in its philosophy, global in its substance, pragmatic in its methodology and responsible in its approach.

Our Vision consists in anticipating the future to build orderly mobility.

Our approach consists in invariably seeking to strike a beneficial balance between realism and proactive action - between the legitimate interests of States and respect for the human rights of migrants.

Because of the national success of this approach - to which we have always been committed - my African brothers entrusted me with the mandate of African Union Leader on the Issue of Migration.

It led to the African Agenda on Migration, which was unanimously adopted by the African Union Conference in January 2018.

Quite naturally, therefore, our domestic and continental vision is fully in line with our international commitment, through the Global Compact.

Both reflect a constant pursuit of innovative compromises between border management requirements and the protection of migrants' human rights, between migration issues and development needs.

Both concern and imply collective responsibility, answerable sovereignty and humane pragmatism.

Migration is not a security issue - nor should it become one.

A repressive migration policy will not be a deterrent. Through some perverse effect, repression deflects migratory dynamics, but does not stop them.

Migrants' rights cannot be ignored simply because there are security concerns. Their rights are inalienable.

The side of the border on which a migrant stands does not make him or her more or less human.

Addressing security concerns should go hand in hand with socio-economic development policies which tackle the root causes of risky migration.

Finally, security concerns should not be invoked to deny mobility. In fact, the latter can be turned into a lever of sustainable development, at a time when the international community is seeking to implement the 2030 Agenda.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

For the time being, the Global Compact remains a promise which history will judge. The time for celebrating its success has not come as yet.

The challenge for this conference is to show that the international community has opted for responsible solidarity.

To achieve this objective, the sovereign right of each Member State to determine and apply its own migration policy ought to be fully respected.

This conference should show that multilateralism is not about empty chairs, desertion or indifference. Multilateralism is about synergies and about making commitments in which the right to differ is respected.

The challenge for this Conference is therefore to unite, in the face of populism, to bring together, in the face of isolationism, and to come up, through dialogue and international cooperation, with meaningful solutions to one of the major issues of our time.

No single country can, on its own, face up to such a challenge. Just as there is no alternative to cooperation, there is no alternative to action, either.

The Global Compact is not an end in itself. It will be meaningful only if it is effectively implemented. Viewed from this angle, the Marrakech Conference is, first and foremost, a call to action.

And Africa has already responded to this call! It does not intend to be on the sidelines.

Africa will not be the subject of the Global Compact, but the African continent will be an actor – a key one.

The African Agenda on Migration has laid out its roadmap. It has played a pioneering role, anticipating the importance of being aware of migratory dynamics, something which has been acknowledged by the Global Compact.

The African Agenda has dedicated a fully-fledged institution to migratory dynamics, the African Observatory for Migration and Development, which will have its headquarters in the Kingdom of Morocco and which is explicitly mentioned in the Compact.

My hope is to see the work of this Observatory effectively enhanced through networking with similar institutions in other regions.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At each stage along migratory routes, with each level of integration achieved and each proven complementarity between migration and development, it is the voice of young people that we hear. And it is to their needs that we are responding.

Between unacceptable laxity and the intolerable ‘all-about-security’ approach, there is a course of action which we are initiating today.

A course of action which embraces solidarity-based sovereignty rather than exclusion-centered nationalism, multilateralism rather than ostracism, and shared responsibility rather than institutionalized indifference.

After all, this is what it is all about: putting an end to disorder, while injecting humane values into the order.

The international community can be proud of the page of history being written in Marrakech today. It is taking us a step closer to a new, more equitable, more humane migration order.

Thank you."