



Praise be to God,

Peace and Blessings be upon the Prophet, His Kith and Kin

Mr. Chairman,
Your Majesties,
Your Highnesses,
Your Excellencies,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on being elected President of the 59th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. This election is a tribute to Africa and to the State of Gabon. I am sure you will carry on the commendable work initiated by your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Julian Hunte, with a view to revitalizing the role played by the United Nations and enhancing its prestige.

I should also like to pay tribute to His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General, for his untiring action to achieve the objectives of our Organization. I want to assure him, once again, of our trust in him and of our full support.

The world today is faced with major risks and perils of such magnitude that a renewed multilateral system is required. In this regard, we must ask ourselves: Is the UN system, in its present form, capable of providing effective solutions to remedy the numerous malfunctions disrupting the international order?

The end of the Cold War, along with progress in science and technology and the opening of markets should have led to greater security and prosperity, but instead the world is still up against distressing conflicts, which cause considerable human and material loss, to the detriment of development. Human values and ideals are on the decline, while fanaticism, extremism and terrorism are on the rise. The gap between a rich North and a poor South is widening.

It is Africa that suffers the most from the scourges of poverty, hunger, desertification and deadly epidemics, in addition to the problems of illegal immigration, refugees and forced displacement, which countries of the South cannot effectively cope with on their own, without successful regional and international coordination, and effective support for local development efforts.



These problems and their pernicious impact, which is compounded by ethnic strife as well as regional tensions and conflicts, not only cause terrible suffering but also hamper progress, development, regional integration and the transition toward democracy. The international community is therefore called upon to step up its efforts so that the logic of dialogue and negotiation may prevail over that of force, destruction and war. It must give fresh impetus to preventive diplomacy, at regional and international levels, in order to preserve peace and security on our continent.

In this regard, Morocco considers that the artificial dispute over the Sahara is, regrettably, still hindering the construction of the Arab Maghreb Union. I should like to reiterate my country's readiness to cooperate in a sincere and determined way with the United Nations and all the parties concerned, in order to achieve, within the framework of international legality, a final, negotiated political solution, which guarantees the sovereignty, national unity and territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Morocco, and enables the inhabitants of its southern provinces to manage their regional affairs by themselves, in a democratic, stable environment conducive to integrated development. Such a solution would spare the area the risk of becoming a hotbed of tension. It would also foster Maghreb integration and enable the region to fully play its role in the Mediterranean and in its relations with African countries of the Sahel, thereby sparing the whole of North-West Africa the risks of balkanization and the threats of international terrorism.

As an active member of the African family and of the international community, the Kingdom of Morocco is keen to continue cooperating with the United Nations and the world community to settle disputes through peaceful means, volunteering to participate in UN peace-keeping missions, as is currently the case in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in Cote d'Ivoire. Morocco is also eager to help bring about reconciliation and the settlement of disputes through peaceful means, as illustrated by the mediation undertaken by my country to solve the crisis in the Mano River region.

Morocco takes pride in contributing to African endeavours designed to meet the challenge of achieving peace, development, progress and good governance which are, as a matter of fact, the very objectives targeted by the NEPAD initiative. Since the accomplishment of these ambitious goals exceeds the capabilities of African countries and requires considerable means, I urge the international community to support this initiative and to find generous and effective solutions to the debt problem. Morocco has already taken steps in this direction.



As far as the Arab-Israeli conflict is concerned, my country is as determined as ever to work with the international community to find a just, comprehensive and lasting solution within the framework of international legality, and in a way that guarantees Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories and the establishment of a viable, independent Palestinian State, with Al-Cuds Al-Shareef as its capital, living side by side, in peace and concord, with the State of Israel.

I would like to stress that, as Chairman of the Al-Cuds Committee, I am always ready to undertake whatever initiatives are needed and to support meaningful endeavours to restore peace and harmony to this region, cradle of the revealed religions and birthplace of many civilizations. Once again, I warn against the disastrous consequences which might result from any attempt to undermine holy sites.

Morocco hopes no effort will be spared to help Iraq out of its current predicament and to support its Interim Government in its efforts to ensure stability and security for Iraqis, and to create the right conditions to initiate constructive dialogue and organize elections which will enable all components of the Iraqi people to choose their institutions freely and peacefully.

Mr. Chairman,

To meet the challenges at this turning point in history, the international community has no alternative but to revitalize the current multilateral system.

After the First and Second World Wars, nations realized it was necessary to establish a global system to govern international relations, within the framework of law and legality. Setting up an alternative global system would not resolve the problem of the fierce trade wars currently raging worldwide, nor the ethnic conflicts, ideological fanaticism and perils of terrorism, whether latent or apparent. I am convinced the United Nations Organization, which has helped solve countless crises, is perfectly capable of managing the current international situation, in a peaceful and civilized way, by revitalizing the multilateral system. Such an objective, however, can only be achieved if the United Nations Organization is provided with the kind of resources needed to meet the geo-strategic requirements of the XXIst century, and if its working methods and its organs - including the Security Council - are reformed and invigorated. The UN system would then become an ideal forum for negotiation and interaction between cultures and religions. Furthermore, it would be effectively instrumental in upholding human ideals, enhancing security and stability and promoting sustainable development.



Morocco, through its chairmanship of the Group of 77 plus China and its participation in various regional and international events, including the Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg Conferences, sought to contribute effectively to building this multilateral system, as a top priority on its diplomatic agenda. My country will continue to work for the achievement of the objectives of the Millennium, urging countries as well as international financial and trade institutions to honour their obligations. Morocco reaffirms its commitment to support the emergence of a new multilateral system built on international legality, solidarity and fair social and economic relations, and based on an efficient and dynamic UN system.

This is the course of action to be taken to enhance faith in the United Nations Organization as the conscience of mankind and the bedrock of a new world order, where the values of peace, global security, co-development, equality, tolerance, democracy and solidarity prevail.

Wassalamu alaikum warahmatullah wabarakatu.