



Royal Message

From

His Majesty King Mohammed VI

King of Morocco

To the

High-Level Round Table

**"The power of education in preventing racism
and discrimination: the case of anti-Semitism"**

New York, 26 September 2018

الحمد لله، والصلاة والسلام على مولانا رسول الله وآله وصحبه

Mr. Secretary-General of the United Nations Organization,

Madam Director-General of UNESCO,

Distinguished Heads of State and Government,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I should like to pay tribute to UNESCO for the outstanding work carried out under the stewardship of its Director- General, Her Excellency Audrey Azoulay, to promote education for peace.

Today's meeting is taking place at a time when several parts of the world are witnessing tendencies towards exclusion, reclusiveness and rejection of the other. Migrants are too often made scapegoats, refugees are instrumentalized and minorities stigmatized. Hate speech is on the rise, fueling racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and many other forms of discrimination which provide a breeding ground for violent extremism and growing insecurity.

Racism in general - and anti-Semitism in particular - are by no means just a way of thinking. Anti-Semitism is the antithesis of freedom of expression. It implies a denial of the other and is an admission of failure, inadequacy and an inability to coexist. It implies an anachronistic return to a mythicized past.

Is that the past we want to bequeath to future generations as a legacy? These calamities, which are plaguing many communities, should not be allowed to dim the torch we are going to pass on to future generations.

Having said that, there should be no improvisation in the battle against these scourges. That battle is neither military nor financial. It is, above all, educational and cultural. And that battle has a name: education. For the sake of our children, it is crucial to win it because it is they who will benefit from it and be its torchbearers.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Education is the only achievement that produces both individual and collective benefits. It has the distinct - and crucial - power to help transcend fear of the other, reject deliberate confusion and break down prejudices. As a powerful antidote and

a salutary weapon, it cements social cohesion, is conducive to equality and is an essential pre-requisite for development.

In line with the recommendations I made in the State of the Nation Address, delivered on 29th July of this year, I have keenly sought to put youth issues at the core of Morocco's new development model.

Being resolutely committed to the achievement of Agenda 2030, the Kingdom of Morocco perceives the promotion of quality education as the transformative force linking the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Through this quality education, our children must be taught history, using, to this effect, a wide range of historical sources and narratives and shedding light not only on humanity's glorious moments, but also its darkest hours. Education must help children to embrace openness and human and cultural diversity. It should foster the emergence of curious, tolerant and enlightened minds that can flourish and thrive in countries like Morocco, where cultural interaction and mutual enrichment are part of everyday life.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My country, where Arab-Islamic, African and Judeo-Christian civilizations have long mingled, honors an immutable tradition of moderation, coexistence and mutual understanding.

Needless to say, the history of Moroccan Jews is an eloquent illustration in this regard. Shaped by the Sultans and Kings of Morocco, it tells the story of an intertwined destiny and a historical continuity – one in which Moroccan Jews have always been considered full-fledged citizens enjoying the same rights as their fellow Moslems. Jews and Moslems rub shoulders on a daily basis, mutually enriching one another and learning from their respective upbringing.

Religious coexistence is real. Mosques, synagogues and churches exist alongside one another in Moroccan cities. This is the image we want to see engraved in our children's minds. This is the legacy we want to bequeath to them, and this is the message of peace we have come to deliver by giving education the special, rightful place it deserves.

Thank you.

والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله تعالى وبركاته