

*Excellency the Minister of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development of the Kingdom of Morocco
and President of the United Nations Environment Assembly*

Excellency the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme

Excellencies,

Distinguished Co Chairs, Members and Observers of the Major Groups Facilitating Committee,

Dear Major Groups and Stakeholders,

Esteemed colleagues and friends,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the Director of the Hassan II International Center for Environmental Training, the academic arm of the Mohammed VI Foundation for Environmental Protection, Chaired **by Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Hasnaa**, it is with tremendous excitement that I welcome you here at the Center.

We are thankful and grateful to the United Nations Environment Programme for the co organization of this meeting with us. Thank you very much indeed to Ulf, Isaiah, Laetitia and Aurora for the excellent collaboration. Since **Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Hasnaa's** visit to the UNEP headquarters in 2013 and since our accreditation, we have greatly deepened and widened the collaboration between our institutions and are currently working in close collaboration to finalise the renewal of our MOU. Yesterday, we also co organized here with the Children and Youth Major Group to UNEP the first youth consultations for UNEA 6 and are very inspired by the conversations that took place. Thank you to Zuhair, Gyubin, Oumnia, Clarence, Afi, Aishwarya, Olga, Mario, Hajar, Saad and Manal and to all the team for the brilliant work. As you can see, it is important for us to contribute, here from Morocco, to the momentum towards the important event that is the Sixth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

This momentum that we are, together, impulsing and accelerating from here is in direct alignment with a Leadership and a Commitment.

Leadership, that is the Leadership of **His Majesty the King Mohammed VI** for sustainable development in Morocco, in Africa and Globally. Mrs Andersen, I believe you spent some time yesterday at one of the many examples of that leadership when it comes to renewable energy when you visited part of the Noor Complex. Morocco is the only African country to have hosted two Climate COPs and, as we all know, Morocco is currently chairing, through the stewardship of H.E the Minister, UNEA. We were very grateful to welcome here last year H.E the Minister for the African Major Groups and Stakeholders Post UNEA 5 and Pre UNEA 6 meeting.

Commitment, that is the commitment of **Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Hasnaa** for environmental education, education for sustainable development and youth. As examples of that commitment, **Her Royal Highness** is a patron of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, Ambassador for the Coast with the United Nations Environment Programme Mediterranean Action Plan and Goodwill Ambassador of the Climate Commission of the Congo Basin and the Blue Fund of the Congo Basin. We are grateful that you took part during COP27 in Sharm El Sheikh to the High Level side event that was held in the Congo Basin Climate Commission and co Chaired by Her Royal Highness and H.E the Minister of the Environment, Sustainable development and the Congo Basin of the Republic of the Congo. I believe, Mrs Andersen, that you also visited yesterday two concrete examples of that commitment when you discovered the Marrakech Palm Grove and Ghabat Chabab

as positive examples of environmental education, biodiversity conservation and nature based solutions.

Indeed, the Mohammed VI Foundation for Environmental Protection, which **Her Royal Highness** chairs, is a prime vehicle of expression of that commitment.

In close collaboration with our partners, we implement programs such as Eco Schools, Young Reporters for the Environment, Global Schools, the African Green Universities and Youth Education Network that we launched in partnership with UNEP, and the Blue Flag, Clean Beaches, the Safeguarding and Development of the Marrakech Palm Grove, the African Youth Climate Hub, Voluntary Carbon Offsetting Activities, Air Quality and Health as well as Climate Finance trainings. We have developed and continue to develop a series of pedagogical tools in support of all these endeavors.

As representative of the Mohammed VI Foundation for Environmental Protection, I also happen to be, together with my brother David Munene, Regional Facilitator, Major Groups and Stakeholders, Africa to UNEP. It is a great pleasure to serve for a second term in that capacity as I am learning every day from African Major Groups and Stakeholders. Just as we have all learned from one another here yesterday and today.

Learning is such a central component of our collective and individual ability to tackle the triple planetary crisis of climate changes, biodiversity loss and pollution.

As **Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Hasnaa** indicated in a speech in May 2021:

“Educating young people to respect the environment means believing in the promise of a new, more harmonious and sustainable world. Let's resolutely commit ourselves, during this decade, to establishing education for sustainable development as an imperative priority. It's urgent. It's vital.”

Thank you very much.