



**Twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 22),
twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting
of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 12) and first session of the Conference of the
Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 1)
Marrakech, 7 November 2016**

**Opening address by
Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

H.E. Mr. Salaheddine Mezouar, President of COP 22, CMP 12 and CMA 1,
H.E. Ms. Ségolène Royal, President of COP 21 and CMP 11,
Honourable Mohamed Larbi Belcaid, Mayor of Marrakech,
Mr. Hoesung Lee, Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change,
Distinguished representatives of the Moroccan government,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

”السلام عليكم“.

Welcome to Marrakech and welcome to this year’s United Nations climate change conference. This is a very special year because we will convene the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement. Congratulations to everyone who made this possible.

Let me start by thanking the incoming COP President, Mr. Salaheddine Mezouar, and his team for the enormous effort they have made to prepare for this climate change conference. Let me also thank the Government and people of Morocco for the warm welcome here in Marrakech.

This is my first COP as Executive Secretary of the United Nations climate change secretariat. It is an honour to support this process as it moves forward towards the ambitious goals and timelines of the Paris Agreement. I will do my best to meet your expectations and the expectations of the world.

This is the second COP hosted here in the shadow of the mighty Atlas Mountains. It is fitting that we meet in the city that produced the Marrakesh Accords. This should inspire you to continue your hard work writing the rules and advancing all issues needed to ensure this new and pressing international agreement is fully operational.

The Paris Agreement entered into force just three days ago, uniting Parties and stakeholders in climate action to truly achieve sustainable development – a fact that will be highlighted again here in Marrakech.

Friends, the urgency of the task at hand is underscored by the unprecedented commitments made in recent months. Early entry into force of the Paris Agreement is a clear cause for celebration, but it is also a timely reminder of the high expectations that are now placed upon us all.

Achieving the aims and ambitions of the Paris Agreement is not a given. We have embarked on an effort to change the course of two centuries of carbon-intensive development. The peaking of global emissions is urgent, as is attaining far more climate-resilient societies.

Marrakech is our moment to take forward climate action at the international and national levels as a central pillar of the successful realization of the Sustainable Development Goals. This is our opportunity to take the next steps towards an inclusive, sustainable path for every man, woman and child.

We need to work together with speed and scale on all fronts. Let me just mention a few key points:

- Finance is flowing, but we know it is not enough. It has to reach the level and have the predictability needed to catalyse low-emission and climate-resilient development.
- Nationally determined contributions now need to be integrated into national policies and investment plans.
- Support for adaptation needs to be given higher priority, and progress on the loss and damage mechanism has to be ensured to safeguard development gains in the most vulnerable communities.
- We have to address the capacity building needs of developing countries in a manner that is both tailored and specific to their needs.
- Non-Party stakeholders, from the North and from the South, need to be fully engaged as they are central to the global action agenda for transformative change.

Our work here in Marrakech must reflect our new reality. No politician or citizen, no business manager or investor can doubt that the transformation to a low-emission, resilient society and economy is the singular determination of the community of nations.

There are enormous opportunities inherent in this great transformation, but there are real challenges too, for all countries and some key sectors, especially at the beginning. We should not underestimate this.

Inaction and the status quo is no option at all given the real risks of unimaginable costs in terms of economies and human suffering.

Distinguished delegates, dear friends, our work is far from done. This is a new phase for the international climate process.

Together, we can deliver the promise of the Paris Agreement to billions of people on this planet today and to future generations.

Thank you very much. . “شكرا والسلام عليكم”
