



**WELCOME ADDRESS BY
HER HIGHNESS PRINCESS LALLA JOUMALA ALAOU**

**- AMBASSADOR OF THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO
TO THE UNITED KINGDOM -**

**AT
THE FIRST MOROCCO BRITISH TRADE DAY**

- 21 JUNE 2010 -



*Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

I would like to start by wishing you all a warm welcome and by thanking you for accepting our invitation.

I would like to express my sincerest thanks and appreciation to all the British and Moroccan business operators present here today. Their support and commitment will undoubtedly contribute to the success of this 1st British Moroccan Trade Day.

I would like to welcome H.E. Mr Maazouz Minister of Foreign Trade for his presence here today.

My Special thanks go also to Minister Alistair Burt who despite his busy schedule has taken the time to be here amongst us today. His presence is a clear sign and acknowledgment of the strong commitment that exists to reinforce the bilateral relations between our two Kingdoms in all aspects.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank my colleague, His Excellency, Timothy Morris, Her Majesty's Ambassador to Morocco and his team in Rabat for all their continuous contributions, efforts and invaluable support for all our actions.

I would like to convey my warmest thanks to Dr Afnan Al-Chuaibi, Secretary General and Chief Executive officer of the Arab British Chamber of Commerce, our Partner for its crucial role in making this event possible.

Last but not least, I would like to thank Mr. Mostafa Terrab, CEO of OCP and co-Chairman of the Moroccan British Business Council for being here with us today.

*Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Today's event represents yet another milestone in the consolidation of the ties between the Kingdom of Morocco and the United Kingdom. It offers us the opportunity to explore new avenues of cooperation, which will, in turn, bring us closer to the attainment of a strong and sustainable strategic partnership.

Firstly, our Governments have established several institutional mechanisms to enable our senior officials to exchange views and engage in a regular dialogue on political and economic issues of mutual interest.

During the last session of our Bilateral Trade talks in January 2010, Morocco and the UK proposed concrete actions with regards to sectors such as textiles, agro-business, aeronautics and automobile, to name but a few. Moreover, number of recommendations discussed during the last Ministerial Forum's are being implemented.

Morocco has in the past 18 months, organized in London a number of events covering areas such as agriculture, energy, textiles, investments with the intention of not only showcasing the potential and the real opportunities but also to reinforce and broaden the scope of our economic activities and the areas of cooperation.

In this regards, I would like to inform you that Morocco will be participating in the Farnborough air show next month where sessions on 'How to do business in Morocco' will be conducted.

It is fair to say that the combination of these actions, and our commitment to improve our position in the UK on the economic scene, has placed Morocco on the agenda of British operators as a genuine partner, a business friendly country, and a hub in the Mediterranean from which to reach out to the four corners of the world.

*Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen*

Our bilateral commercial exchanges have exceeded 1 billion Pounds bar in 2008, two thirds of which represent imports by Morocco from Great Britain.

According to these figures, Great Britain is Morocco's 7th client worldwide and its 9th supplier, but more importantly, Morocco is also UK's first partner in the Maghreb.

It is our firm belief that our relation holds the potential for greater cooperation, which can only be boosted by Morocco's commitment to trade liberalisation and modernisation, as illustrated by the signing of numerous Free Trade Agreements, massive improvements of port infrastructure and an attractiveness rarely seen in the region.

A number of Free trade agreements not only with Europe, the USA, Turkey but also between Morocco, Tunisia Egypt and Jordan, are shaping Morocco into a platform for production and export, which offers access to an area of more than one billion three hundred million customers.

Dedicated industrial and services zones have been created such as Casa Near Shore Centre, Rabat Shore for call centres, Kenitra and Tangier automotive cities for car components, Casa Aeropole for aeronautics...

The Tangier Mediterranean Port Complex includes a deep-sea harbour, logistics platforms, integrated industry platforms, industrial and commercial free zones, infrastructure with rail and highways links. It is being extended to reach a capacity of 8.5 million containers a year with a perfect geographical location for intercontinental transshipments.

Excellencies

Ladies and gentlemen,

Morocco is a land of investment and business opportunities.

I hope that today's conference will present an additional step in further strengthening the trade links between our countries and our business communities.

To this end, the Moroccan Government, The Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in London, and the various Moroccan promotion agencies such as Maroc Export shall spare no effort in offering you their support, help and advice .

I would like to conclude by taking this opportunity in thanking and congratulating Mr `Saad Benabdallah Chief Executive of Maroc Export, his team and all those involved in organising today and for all their efforts in making today a success.

Thank you