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## THE FIRST EDITION OF THE AFRICAN TALENTS SYMPOSIUM WAS A GREAT SUCCESS

PRESS RELEASE



Monday, October 26, 2020

### First Conference:

#### « The Crucial Role of Education in the Economic Development of Africa »

**Honorary Speakers:** Mr. Mohamed Berrada, Professor at Hassan II University and Mr. Ismail Douiri, General Manager in charge of the International Retail Banking and Specialized Financing Subsidiaries within the Attijariwafa bank Group.

#### Conference Summary:

In his introductory remarks, Mr. Ismail DOUIRI began by welcoming the choice of the theme of the conference by highlighting its importance for our continent, especially in the accompaniment of African youth through innovative, viable and structured educational models.

Mr. Douiri also stressed the importance of answering a number of questions that should invite us to reflect on how our continent will be able to meet future challenges in a rapidly changing world.

Mr. Douiri structured his introduction around several questions that should give rise to deep reflection in order to take stock of actions undertaken on the scale of the continent and to think about future strategies adapted to a context in full mutation in which Africa must find its place in building its future.

Mr. Douiri said that our continent has a pool of talent that must be able to play a decisive role in the development of Africa by putting education at the heart of the skills acquisition process.

In his introductory speech, Mr. Ismail Douiri also presented the career of Mr. Mohamed BERRADA, a career of excellence, rich and inspiring with an experience that honors our country.

In his introductory speech, Mr. Mohamed Berrada praised the initiative undertaken by the Attijariwafa bank Group in organizing a symposium with a pan-African dimension, which deals with a major subject related to the development of talents and skills on a continental scale.

Mr. Mohamed Berrada stressed the importance of thinking about education in a global framework linked to a social project that will enable African economies to create positive spillover effects between several sectors. For Professor Berrada, the design of an innovative, structured and forward-looking educational offer must be done within a broader framework that takes into consideration other topics such as (the demographic challenges of Africa, health, infrastructure, transport, food, housing ...).



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Mr. Mohamed Berrada stressed that African youth is the driving force of the continent which can rely on its talents to meet important challenges related to its future. Mr. Berrada highlighted the pressing need to make access to education in Africa a priority and pointed out that the continent has the highest rate of exclusion from education especially for women who have a major role in economic development. According to Mr. Berrada, more than one fifth of children aged 6 to 11 years is not attending school. This is an alarming observation that calls for a rapid, effective and sustainable response through urgent measures.

He also highlighted the importance of rapidly accelerating initiatives and structural projects to promote education in Africa, citing some countries that train 1 engineer for every 6,000 inhabitants each year, and emphasizing that China now trains 1 engineer for every 200 inhabitants every year.

Mr. Berrada insisted on the fact that education influences economic development in Africa by underlining the interdependence of the subjects and the fact that progress will be made through a roadmap that places its action in a global framework. Mr. Berrada highlighted the significant annual growth recorded each year in Africa but raised the fact that this growth must be better distributed, creating jobs and especially inclusive affecting the most disadvantaged populations.

This conference was punctuated by a series of questions/answers between the two keynote speakers, a session very rich in intellectual content and in-depth analysis. Mr. Ismail Douiri raised crucial points that he formulated in the framework of several questions to which Professor Berrada brought answers.

For his closing remarks, Mr. Berrada addressed a message to the African youth, a message of hope based on values, civism, social pact, living together, patriotism, respect for the environment, etc.

Mr. Berrada invited the youth to take their destiny into their own hands and to contribute to the development of the continent. For Professor Berrada, Africa must valorize the human, modernize its productive apparatus, locally transform its raw materials and undertake initiatives that enhance its potential and talents.



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### Second Conference:

### « The Role of AMCI in the Development of South-South Cooperation »

**Honorary Speaker:** His Excellency **Mr. Mohamed Methqual**, Ambassador-Director General of AMCI.

#### Conference Summary:

In his introductory speech, His Excellency Mohamed Methqual started by saluting the initiative undertaken by the Attijariwafa bank Group in organizing a symposium with a continental tone around a subject that is of particular importance for our continent.

His Excellency Mohamed Methqual stressed the importance of assisting the African youth through structured cooperation programs aimed at developing talents and promoting excellence within our continent that abounds in skills.

His Excellency Mohamed Methqual said that youth is the driving force of our continent. It is a major asset and must have a special place in the transformation process of Africa which must be able to rely on its talents to move forward and build its future.

His Excellency Mohamed Methqual also highlighted the importance of South-South cooperation as a pillar of the Kingdom's foreign policy and the priority of the Moroccan diplomatic agenda under the enlightened leadership of His Majesty King Mohamed VI, may God assist Him.

His Excellency also highlighted the crucial role played by the Moroccan Agency for International Cooperation (AMCI) to help strengthen the ties that unite Morocco with the countries of the South through structuring initiatives that concern 4 main areas, namely :

- Academic and cultural cooperation
- Technical cooperation and sharing of expertise
- Support for sustainable development projects
- Support for Morocco's humanitarian activities abroad

His Excellency Mohamed Methqual presented several major programs launched by Morocco in 47 African countries through the diplomatic network of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These actions aim to pool initiatives by making them converge towards the construction of a united Africa that builds on its assets to achieve its transformation.

His Excellency Mohamed Methqual stressed the important role of academic cooperation as the keystone of the continent's development. He stressed that Africa has a pool of skills and abundant talent that must play their full role in revitalizing the economic fabric, supporting technological transformation and the development of inclusive entrepreneurship.



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### Third Conference: «South-South Cooperation, a Lever for Accelerating Economic and Social Development in Africa»

**Keynote Speakers:** Mr. **Fathallah Sijilmassi**, CEO of Positive Agenda Advisory and former ambassador, together with Mr. Youssef Rouissi, Deputy Managing Director in charge of the CIB Unit.

#### Conference Summary:

The conference was initiated by Mr. Youssef Rouissi who started by thanking Mr. Fathallah Sijilmassi for his presence as a keynote speaker at the "African Talents" symposium organized by the Attijariwafa Bank Group. Mr. Rouissi also greeted the choice of the theme of the conference, a subject which is of particular importance in the construction of an Africa with solid and perennial economies.

Mr. Rouissi also stressed the importance of South-South cooperation as a lever of economic acceleration between the countries of the southern shore of the Mediterranean. For Mr. Rouissi, it is crucial to build development models based on innovating strategies that create a shared growth with high added value.

Mr. Rouissi said that economic development in Africa must be based on constructive economic synergies, new formats of innovative partnerships and a sharing of growth opportunities in a win-win logic.

Before giving the floor to Mr. Sijilmassi, Mr. Rouissi thanked him for his presence and presented the main lines of his rich and diversified career.

In his introductory speech, Mr. Fathallah Sijilmassi congratulated the Attijariwafa bank Group for this initiative that honors Africa through debates rich in intellectual content. He also underlined the importance of the theme of the conference which constitutes today a major subject to enable the continent to build economic bases capable of providing answers to the requirements and challenges of the present and future world.

In his introduction, Mr. Fathallah Sijilmassi highlighted 5 challenges to which our continent must provide pragmatic and concrete answers, namely:

1. The Challenge of Stability, Security and Peacekeeping
2. The Demographic Challenge
3. The Climate Challenge
4. The Innovation and Competitiveness Challenge
5. The Governance Challenge



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These challenges should enable us to ask ourselves concrete questions about the future of Africa by quickly putting in place appropriate mechanisms to enable the continent to be an actor in its transformation. These challenges must bring our nations together around a common objective, which is to promote a forward-looking Africa, capable of turning these challenges into real opportunities for development and progress. South-South Cooperation finds its meaning in this approach based on intelligent synergies that aim to give the continent a positive impetus, constructive energy and new momentum.

The conference was punctuated by a series of questions/answers between the two keynote speakers in a debate very rich in intellectual content and analysis. The two speakers delivered their readings on the subject by highlighting the importance of South-South cooperation in the dynamization of African economies.

Mr. Fathallah Sijilmassi also highlighted the important dynamics launched at the scale of the continent namely:

The continental dynamic / the sub-regional dynamic / the international dynamic / the entrepreneurial dynamic / the dynamic of innovation, research and university cooperation.

Mr. Youssef Rouissi underlined the importance of the commitment of the economic players by highlighting the commitment of the Attijariwafa bank Group in this direction through several structuring initiatives. He mentioned the project DAR ALMOKAWIL which aims at developing entrepreneurship by supporting young project holders in the structuring and maturation of their projects.

Mr. Youssef Rouissi also made an overall synthesis of the key elements that were discussed during this conference which was rich in content and which fascinated the audience.

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Tuesday, October 27, 2020

### Fourth Conference:

### «South-South Cooperation at the Core of the New Development Model»

**Honorary Speakers**, His Excellency **Mr. Abdelmalek Kettani** Ambassador of Morocco to Côte d'Ivoire and **Mr. Badr Alioua** Chairman of the Executive Board of WAFASALAF - Attijariwafa bank Group.

#### Conference Summary:

The conference was initiated by Mr. Badr Alioua who began by thanking His Excellency Abdelmalek Kettani for his participation as keynote speaker at the "African Talents" Symposium.

In his introductory remarks, Mr. Badr Alioua highlighted the role of the banking and financial sector in the development of South-South cooperation serving a shared growth that generates added value for our continent.

Mr. Badr Alioua also evoked the initiatives undertaken by the Attijariwafa bank group in order to support the realization of structuring projects that contribute to the development of Africa.

In his speech, His Excellency Abdelmalek Kettani started by expressing his gratitude to The Attijariwafa bank group for this initiative which honors our continent by creating the conditions for a constructive debate around a major subject which is that of the support of Talents at the continental level.

His Excellency Abdelmalek Kettani also praised the dynamism of the Attijariwafa bank group in Côte d'Ivoire by highlighting its role in supporting the realization of large-scale projects, its commitment to investment and its inclusive approach in favor of a structured economy that offers sustainable growth prospects.

His Excellency Abdelmalek Kettani stressed the solidity of relations between the Kingdom of Morocco and Côte d'Ivoire under the enlightened vision of His Majesty King Mohamed VI may, God assist Him. His Excellency Abdelmalek Kettani welcomed the fraternal ties that unite the two countries by highlighting several areas of cooperation that corroborate Morocco's desire to contribute actively to the development of the continent.

His Excellency Abdelmalek Kettani spoke of the importance of supporting African youth towards the path of excellence, because our continent needs all the energies and all the living forces that wish to contribute to making Africa a space for growth and creativity. For His Excellency Abdelmalek Kettani, Africa must believe in its potential, it is in this state of mind that our continent can strengthen regional integration, create constructive synergies and bring out new creative and forward-looking avenues of cooperation.



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His Excellency Abdelmalek Kettani emphasized the dynamism of Morocco in Africa and its role in the development of a sustainable and structuring investment under the leadership of His Majesty King Mohamed VI, may God assist Him. To this was added the launch of several major projects aimed at developing our continent and which are fully in line with an ambitious, sustainable and balanced South-South cooperation.

His Excellency Abdelmalek Kettani highlighted Morocco's leadership as a major player in African construction and its role in developing trade flows, economic cooperation and foreign direct investment South-South on the scale of the continent.

His Excellency Abdelmalek Kettani said that Africa is at the heart of global development. It must be able to identify relays of growth and ways of economic acceleration to ensure its development in a changing environment. Our peoples would benefit from building together high value-added development models by pooling our assets in the service of mutual progress.

His Excellency Abdelmalek Kettani shared a concrete initiative in terms of South-South cooperation which is that of the Mohamed VI Multisectoral Vocational Training Center of Yopougon whose first class named "Promotion of Ivorian-Moroccan Friendship" (His Excellency was appointed sponsor) saw its first winners last week with 195 young people including 121 women.



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### Fifth Conference: «Africa's Economic Attractiveness: Challenges and Prospects»

**Keynote Speakers**, His Excellency **Mr. Ibrahim Al Khalil Seck** Ambassador of Senegal in Morocco and **Mr. Jamal Ahizoune** Deputy General Manager within The Attijariwafa bank group.

#### Conference Summary:

The conference was introduced by Mr. Jamal Ahizoune who began by expressing his sincere thanks to His Excellency Ibrahim Al Khalil Seck for his participation as a keynote speaker at the African Talents symposium.

In his introductory remarks, Mr. Jamal Ahizoune presented the main characteristics of Africa, the stakes related to its development and the challenges it faces today and in the future.

Mr. Ahizoune referred to the continent's potential, its resources, its skills, stressing that Africa must accelerate structuring initiatives to transform its economies and create added value. He also wondered about the mechanisms that the continent must put in place quickly to occupy an important place in the design of its future. Mr. Ahizoune said that Africa had all the characteristics to fully play its role as an attractive space that inspires development and progress. However, this observation is mixed because the continent must modernize its productive apparatus by transforming its own raw materials and creating an inclusive economy whose development brings real added value for the people.

In his introductory speech, His Excellency Ibrahim Al Khalil Seck thanked the Attijariwafa bank group for this beautiful initiative by saluting the choice of the theme, which is of particular importance for the continent.

His Excellency Ibrahim Al Khalil Seck stressed the crucial role of South-South cooperation in the economic development of Africa through structuring actions aimed at making the continent a lever of development and progress. His Excellency said that the attractiveness of Africa and its ability to generate investments that bring growth prospects is a subject at the heart of the continent's development. Productive investment that generates shared and well-distributed growth is a lever that we must use to ensure the sustainability of Africa through the establishment of dynamic economic models open to the world.





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The conference was punctuated by a series of Questions and Answers between the two speakers who shared their rich and exciting readings of the subject around three main axes namely:

1. Economic growth in Africa
2. Business Environment
3. Human and Financial Resources in Africa

Mr. Ahizoune made a synthesis of all the key elements that were discussed during the conference, highlighting the extreme importance of establishing a stable and attractive environment capable of generating investments with shared values that contribute to the construction of an Africa that moves forward.

His Excellency Ibrahim Al Khalil Seck also stressed the potential of the continent, which must believe in its capabilities in order to enter a new era based on a model that advocates the creation of constructive synergies where Africa trusts Africa to move forward.

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### Round Table:

#### « Conference under the theme "South-South Cooperation, Where does Africa Stand Tomorrow»

#### Keynote Speakers:

Mr. **Abdou Souleye Diop**, President of the CGEM's Africa Commission

Mrs. **Meriem Zairi**, MENA Managing Director of the SEAF Investment Fund

Mr. **Reda Hamedoun**, Executive Director in charge of Institutional and Commercial Development Asia / North Africa (except Morocco) - The Attijariwafa bank group

Ms. **Karima Mkika**, Member of the Economic, Social and Environmental Council

Mr. **Daouda Coulibaly**, General Manager of SIB Côte d'Ivoire - The Attijariwafa bank group

Mr. **Gueye Babacar**, Executive Director in charge of Human Capital - CBAO Senegal

#### Round Table Summary:

The round table was introduced by Mrs. Mouna Kably in charge of the Edition and Debates pole within the Attijariwafa bank Foundation. She started by thanking the honorary speakers for their interest in the Attijariwafa bank group and in the African Talents symposium.

Mrs. Kably stressed the importance of taking advantage of this new period to accelerate the development of the Group.

The development of the continent especially on major issues that are the keystone of the construction of an innovative and future oriented Africa.

Mrs. KABLY also introduced the keynote speakers by highlighting their backgrounds and their actions in favor of the continent's development on the economic, social, environmental, etc.

**In his speech, Mr. Diop** stressed the impact of the health crisis on the acceleration of trade between the countries of the southern shore of the Mediterranean. Mr. Diop said that South-South cooperation in Africa must accelerate by creating greater trade and South-South foreign direct investment. Mr. Diop also raised the issue of industrial sovereignty that will allow Africa to build a new formula of win-win partnerships.

**Mr. Daouda Coulibaly** stressed that this crisis is an opportunity to rethink current models by implementing new development paradigms. Mr. Coulibaly said that it is important to create mechanisms adapted to the African reality and which provide concrete responses to the continental and regional context.



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Mr. Coulibaly said that the cooperation between Morocco and Côte d'Ivoire is strong and allows both countries to create constructive dynamics with interesting and sustainable economic prospects.

Asked about the dynamics carried by China in Africa, **Mr. Reda Hamedoun** stressed the fact that this crisis has allowed China to reposition itself in Africa with a dynamic of cooperation during the health crisis (donations, medical equipment, masks, signing of several partnerships). Mr. Hamedoun also pointed out the importance of the Chinese community in Africa estimated at 2 million on the continent and highlighted the economic and financial commitment of China in Africa through a few findings namely: China is the first economic partner of Africa, the first investor in Africa and the first infrastructure builder. Mr. Hamedoun also stressed that China will have more room following the slowdown of European and American initiatives on the continent.

In her speech, **Mrs. Meriem Zairi** shared her reading of the subject as an investor, highlighting the existing potential for entrepreneurship with young entrepreneurs who are innovative and create added value in Morocco and on a continental scale. Ms. Zairi stressed the importance of accompanying and supporting African talents who innovate by highlighting the need to be part of an approach to support these startups in the structuring and maturation phase of their projects.

Ms. Zairi also stressed the importance of adapting innovation to the context of emerging countries so that it is efficient and relevant by providing consistent responses to the real needs expressed in the field.

In her speech, **Mrs. Karima Mkika** evoked the crisis we are going through and the stakes linked to it at the international level. According to Ms. Mkika, whatever the country, its economy, its power, this crisis has challenged the global community on the importance of establishing new development paradigms.

Ms. Mkika highlighted the importance of putting human beings and human health at the heart of the debate and concerns of all stakeholders.

Mrs. Mkika also welcomed the momentum of solidarity launched at the level of our country under the impetus and enlightened leadership of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, may God assists Him.

Mrs. Mkika also insisted on the importance of being part of a sustainable solidarity approach based on constructive synergies between all the actors of the society. This complementarity will allow to build a solid, viable and forward-looking basis for action with large-scale and long-term actions.

**Mr. Gueye Babacar** stressed the importance of training as a fundamental lever of development within our continent. Africa abounds in talents that must find their place in order to contribute to its development and growth. Mr. Gueye insisted on the importance of setting up interactive training and learning formulas, adapted to a new generation of talents who carry new aspirations and a new perception of the world of work.

Mr. Gueye also evoked the importance of accompanying and monitoring the emergence of new professions and detecting talents in specific skill niches that are particularly necessary for the development and growth of our continent.