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HM the King Sends Message to Participants in National Day on Early Childhood Education (Full Text)

ARCHIVAL REFERENCE

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HIS MAJESTY KING MOHAMMED VI
MAY GOD ASSIST HIM

HM the King Sends Message to Participants in National Day on Early Childhood Education (Full Text)

HM King Mohammed VI sent a message to participants in the National Day on Early Childhood Education, which opened Wednesday in Skhirat.

Here is the full text of the Royal message, which was read out by Minister of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research, Said Amzazi.
“Praise be to God,
May peace and blessings be upon the Prophet, His Kith and Kin
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me pleasure to send a message to the participants in the "National Day on Early Childhood Education", to which I was keen to grant my patronage given how much I care about the reform of education, training and scientific research, which I consider to be a lever for balanced development as well as the cornerstone of any effort to upgrade human resources.
This is an opportunity for me to say how keen I am to ensure the success of this reform, particularly with regard to improving children’s access to early childhood education, given the latter’s positive implications for the individual, the family and the community. As regards this crucial reform project, I believe a bold, ambitious approach should be adopted, putting public interest above all other considerations. With as much importance attached to the quantitative

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as to the qualitative aspects, this integrated approach should contribute to offering quality pre-school education to every child.
I commend the convening of this meeting given the special context in which it is taking place. Indeed, your meeting is being held within the framework of the education reform, which is itself part of the 2015-2030 strategic vision. The latter aims to set up a new school system, which I am determined to see established – a system based on quality, fairness, equality, personal advancement and community development.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As far as the reform of the education system is concerned, I am sure you all realize the importance of early learning. Any reform should be based on this solid foundation, since early years education enables children to acquire mental and cognitive skills and abilities that ensure smooth access to learning and success in school, thereby reducing the risks of repeating a class or dropping out of school altogether.
Pre-school education not only enables children to exercise their right to good education by upholding the principle of equal opportunity, it also helps ensure the optimal use of human resources. This is urgently needed to enhance the performance of Moroccan schools.
In this regard, I commend the Higher Council for Education, Training and Scientific Research for concluding that early childhood education is the basis on which to build a new Moroccan school system and for pointing out that it is an essential frame of reference for universal, quality early childhood education.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Kingdom’s Constitution attaches special importance to consolidating basic principles for improved education. It stipulates that “Basic education shall be provided to children as a right; it shall be a binding obligation for the family and the State”. The Constitution also provides that government agencies and local authorities “shall muster all the means available to facilitate equal access of citizens to their right to (…) modern, accessible and quality education”.
To give concrete substance to these constitutional requirements, efforts should focus on reducing disparities between groups and regions, especially rural, remote and semi-urban areas, as well as

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areas suffering from a clear deficit in education infrastructure. In parallel, we need to encourage young girls' access to pre-school education and take care of children with disabilities, in accordance with the principle of affirmative action.
Important steps have been taken in the area of basic education in Morocco, and although the enrolment rate has increased, early childhood education has not benefited from government efforts in this field. The number of beneficiaries is markedly low, and there are significant disparities between urban and rural areas. In addition to variations with regard to the teaching methods used and the number of educators and teachers, there is a large number of stakeholders involved.
To rise to the challenge of reforming the education system, early childhood education must be made compulsory for the State and the family, as per the law. It should also be incorporated gradually in the compulsory education system, within the framework of an overall, integrated education policy.
Furthermore, legal and regulatory texts governing this type of education should be adopted using a modern vision. This effort should be fully in line with the comprehensive reform we seek to achieve. To this end, we need to use an innovative pedagogical model that takes into account the major achievements made in the field of education sciences as well as successful experiences in pre-school education.

In the same vein, I wish to stress the need to develop a national frame of reference for early childhood education. This frame of reference should address all the components concerned, especially curricula, quality standards and teacher training. Efforts should also be made to enhance current education models in order to improve the quality of education in pre-school settings across the Kingdom’s regions.
Ladies and Gentlemen,
The reform of the education and training sector, particularly early childhood education, is of great importance to future generations because today’s children are tomorrow’s men and women.
I should like to praise the various stakeholders involved in the educational process, especially civil society organizations, for their efforts. In this respect, I call for constructive partnerships between the various actors involved in the education and training sector, particularly in matters relating to early childhood education.
Whatever their level, local authorities have a crucial role to play as we

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seek to rise to this challenge, given the powers they now have thanks to advanced regionalization. Thus, they should give priority to the creation, equipping and maintenance of schools, especially in rural and remote areas, so as to make them more accessible to children throughout the country.

The education reform concerns us all: government agencies, local authorities, advisory councils, national institutions, civil society, intellectuals, thinkers…etc. Naturally, families have a decisive, pivotal part to play in children’s early education and in follow-up to school performance.
This major, national project requires the extensive, responsible involvement of all the stakeholders concerned in order to rise successfully to the challenge and achieve set objectives within the timeframe prescribed.
I hope this national gathering will serve as an effective platform for us to carry out the desired reform on solid foundations, keeping in mind the principles of fairness, equality and equal opportunity. The aim is to build a country for the future – a country embracing all its sons and daughters, giving them a chance to contribute to its progress and development.
I urge you to keep up your efforts and work together to achieve these goals. May Almighty God grant you success.
Wassalamu alaikum warahmatullah wabarakatuh."

MAP 18 July 2018

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