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Royal Message To Participants In Third Gathering Of Followers Of Tariqa Tijania In Fez

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HIS MAJESTY KING MOHAMMED VI
MAY GOD ASSIST HIM

Royal Message To Participants In Third Gathering Of Followers Of Tariqa Tijania In Fez

HM King Mohammed VI, Commander of the Faithful, sent, on Wednesday, a message to the participants in the third gathering of followers of the Tariqa Tijania in Fez (May 14-16).

Here follows the full text of the message read out by minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs Ahmed Toufiq:

Praise be to God May peace and blessings be upon the Prophet, His Kith and Kin

Distinguished Scholars,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to say how delighted I am that the Kingdom of Morocco - with its spiritual capital Fes, where the eminent scholar Sidi Ahmed Tijani, the founder of the Tariqa Tijania, is buried - has been chosen as the venue for this blessed meeting, the third gathering of the followers of the Tariqa from all over the world.

As you know, the righteous saint Sidi Ahmed Tijani’s choice of this city as place of residence, as the seat for his Zawiya and as the center

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for the spiritual radiance of the Tariqa, was not random, nor was it a mere coincidence. He – may God be pleased with him – made this choice because he was aware of Morocco’s commitment to the Islamic faith and keenness to follow the Tradition of the Seal of prophets, my forefather, peace be upon Him. This choice was also motivated by the reputation of Moroccan monarchs, my revered ancestors, who showed immense respect for scholars and Sufi dignitaries, and by the fact that the Kingdom of Morocco has, throughout its history, been committed to "Imarat Al Muminin" (Commandership of the Faithful), which has been a pillar of moderate Sunnite Islam and a source of security, unity and cohesion for the Moroccan people.

Accordingly, Morocco has remained an impenetrable fortress of Islam in Northwest Africa and a lighthouse beaming guidance in the region, towards all sub-Saharan African countries, under the aegis of the Kingdom’s great monarchs, renowned scholars and resourceful Sufis, versed in Sharia, Tariqa and Haqiqa (Islamic law, doctrine and truth).

The Tariqa Tijania was founded in the eighth century of the Hegira by the righteous saint and prominent scholar Sidi Ahmed Tijani, on the basis of piety and submission to God, the study of both the apparent and the esoteric, the purification of the soul, the constant invocation of God and the commitment to the Tradition of the Prophet, while fully preserving the unity of the community and spreading love and harmony amongst the nation. Thus, it gained the unwavering solicitude of the kings of the Alawite dynasty, my revered ancestors, particularly that of Sultan Moulay Slimane, who welcomed and honored Sheikh Sidi Ahmed Tijani, when the latter arrived in this city, where scholars and their disciples interacted spiritually and positively with him.

The Tariqa Tijania played an undeniable role in spreading Islam, correcting the faith and advocating virtue in sub-Saharan Africa and along the west coast of the continent. Its adepts were truly keen to save thousands of Africans from erring towards paganism and polytheism and support them in their fight against colonialism. Thanks to the enlightening message and righteous education of the Tariqa,

Islam became a path to probity, rectitude, love and fraternity between its adepts, in every country where the Order was welcomed. Under the leadership of my venerated ancestors, Morocco kept up a long-established tradition, protecting Sufi groups and honoring their dignitaries and their Zawiyas, so long as they abided by the Tradition of Prophet Mohammad and remained committed to the unity of the nation and the community, under the Imarat Al Muminin, which is the guardian of the doctrinal unity of the nation and of its territorial integrity. Indeed, the Imarat Al Muminin endeavors to spread the values of moderation, tolerance, cohabitation and fraternity between African people. This fraternity is the base for building bridges of African cooperation in all fields of human development.

Bearing this in mind, as Amir Al Muminin - Commander of the faithful – I have been committed to overseeing the religious field, promoting the values of tolerant, moderate Islam and combatting blind extremism and biased use of religion for political purposes. This is the path we pursue in the Kingdom of Morocco, as well as in cooperation with our brothers, African Heads of State. We are also keen to build constructive cooperation with all Muslim sister nations to achieve unity and complementarity, ban dispute and disunion and promote good neighborliness with our brothers in the Maghreb region.

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

This blessed meeting of the Tariqa Tijania is being held as part of this wise policy, which we are pursuing with firm conviction and a clear vision to achieve unity. This policy is combined with an ambitious development strategy grounded in a will to revive the role of Sufism in spreading spiritual security, love and concord, while purifying souls and uprooting fanaticism and hatred. This meeting is an opportunity for the Order’s dignitaries to examine internal affairs, issues related to

their Zawiyas and coordination between the various bodies. It is also an opportunity for exchanging views on plans to promote spiritual education, in light of the latest developments. It is a clear indicator of your high level of awareness of the necessary evolution of the Tariqa's message, at a time - in the history of the Islamic community - when all scholars, clerics and Sufis are called upon to contribute in order to face the challenges of blind extremism, separatism and division.

This urgent mission can only be accomplished through the collective mobilization of all scholars advocating moderate Sunni Islam, in order to curb maneuvers by supporters of fanaticism, terrorism, fragmentation, division and misleading doctrines. Tijani Zawiyas and all their affiliates are indeed called upon to continue on the right path which has always been theirs, keeping up the Tradition of the Prophet, spreading love and fraternity amongst disciples, elevating their conduct and achieving genuine solidarity to promote unity and ban division.

In this context, Ladies and Gentlemen, your gathering today in the Kingdom of Morocco is in line with the interest we have in Sufism and in the educational approach it advocates with a view to shaping the personality of Muslims. The Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs has been instructed to show you the care and solicitude you deserve and to provide the necessary conditions for your interaction and understanding. Indeed, we look forward to your endeavors to discharge the educational and spiritual mission which is yours. This is how you can revive the role played throughout the centuries by Sufi congregations, including yours, combining Sharia and Tariqa, in perfect balance, to bring hearts together and unite the Islamic Ummah, particularly in the Maghreb region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As Commander of the Faithful, I have always shown solicitude towards Sufi Orders, whose objectives include that of educating adepts according to the lofty Tradition and enlightening guidance of

the Prophet, both inside Morocco and abroad, particularly in those African countries with whose leaders we are working to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and cooperation. Our sole objective is to help them achieve development, improve their capabilities and disseminate the values of tolerance, cohabitation, concord and harmony between their various communities. We know how important it is for them and for the shaping of their personality to reinvigorate their spiritual strength and stimulate their relation with God.

The Tariqa Tijania has undoubtedly built a valuable wealth of educational knowledge and achievements, aimed at purifying the soul and curtailing untamed materialistic inclinations, which have emerged as a result of growing uncertainties and widespread religious doubt. This has been largely fuelled by the dark image disseminated by extremists; hence the need to revive Sufi schools and doctrines in order to heal and harness souls and to restore the balance between matter and spirit, in the light of moderate, tolerant Islamic teachings.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the devotion and loyalty Tijanis have shown to the King of Morocco, Commander of the Faithful and descendent of the Prophet, since the inception of their Tariqa. I also want to assure them of my loyalty and my constant solicitude, wherever they live. I urge them to continue considering Morocco as their main destination, as did the founder of the Tariqa - may God be pleased with him - who was amply rewarded for choosing to settle in this country. I also ask you, distinguished scholars, to pray for me whenever you are gathered for invocation (dhikr) rituals and meetings, at the most appropriate times when prayers are heeded and fulfilled.

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Fes, the city of a thousand saints and eminent scholars of Islam. Let me assure you, once again, of my caring protection and unfaltering affection. May God assist you and grant you success in pursuing the path of the Prophet - peace be upon

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Him.

Wassalamu alaikum warahmatullah wabarakatuh.

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