



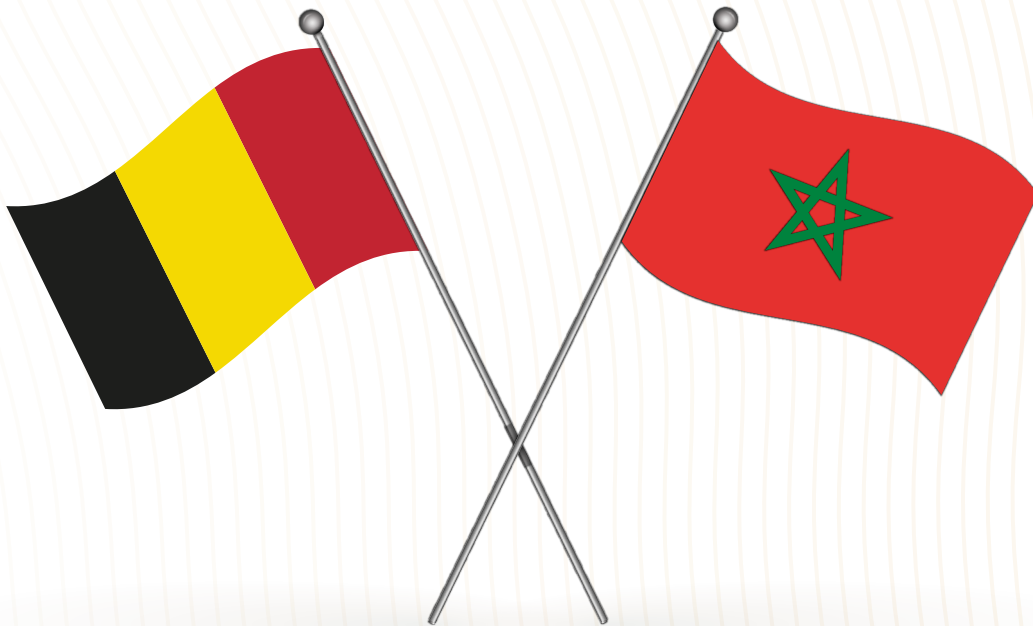
*Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
African Cooperation
and Moroccan Expatriates*



KINGDOM OF BELGIUM
Federal Public Service
**Foreign Affairs,
Foreign Trade and
Development Cooperation**

Joint Declaration

Kingdom of Morocco - Kingdom of Belgium



Rabat, October 20, 2022

1. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates, Mr. Nasser Bourita, welcomed in Rabat, on October 20, 2022, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Affairs and Foreign Trade and the Federal Cultural Institutions of the Kingdom of Belgium, Ms. Hadja Lahbib, for a working visit.
2. The two Ministers had fruitful talks and stressed the importance of a strategic relationship between Morocco and Belgium.
3. The two ministers commended the friendship and great esteem that exist between the Royal Families of the two countries.
4. Belgium welcomes the reforms carried out by Morocco, under the leadership of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, during the last two decades, for a more open and dynamic Moroccan society and economy.
5. The two Ministers confirmed their commitment to strengthen dialogue and cooperation and reaffirmed their shared willingness to further deepen bilateral relations, with a view to establishing a strategic partnership that meets the expectations and potential that exist between the two countries, in order to meet current and future challenges.
6. In this context, they agreed to hold a regular political dialogue and to structure the Belgian-Moroccan partnership in the various areas of common interest, including economic and trade cooperation, renewable energies, security, justice, migration and readmission, and cultural cooperation. This should lead to the holding in Rabat of the 3rd session of the High Joint Commission of Partnership.
7. While welcoming the election of Morocco and Belgium to the Human Rights Council, the two ministers also discussed potential cooperation themes. They stressed their willingness to continue their dialogue on issues related to the defense of human rights, including the promotion of women's and children's rights, the fight against all forms of discrimination and the fight against violence against women and girls.
8. The two countries reaffirm their support and commitment to strengthening the Strategic Partnership between the Kingdom of Morocco and the European Union. They welcome the adoption of the Green Partnership between Morocco and the EU, which will provide a framework for the development of enhanced cooperation between the two parties.
9. Recalling the success of the economic mission led by Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid in 2018, the two ministers reaffirmed their willingness to strengthen and expand bilateral economic and trade relations, in a

spirit of mutually beneficial partnership, particularly in the areas of energy transition, green hydrogen, circular economy, blue economy, digitalization and health.

10. They stressed their aspiration to further develop economic and trade relations between the two countries, encouraging Belgian companies to explore, following the new Moroccan law on investment, new investment opportunities in Morocco both bilaterally and in the framework of a triangular Moroccan-Belgian-African trade cooperation.
11. The two ministers noted the dynamic of interregional and inter-municipal cooperation between the two countries which plays an important role in further strengthening cooperation between Morocco and Belgium.
12. Examining the challenges and issues of migration in its various aspects, they agreed to intensify and increase migration cooperation in various areas such as return, readmission and the fight against human trafficking. The two ministers welcomed the establishment of a joint Moroccan-Belgian Migration Group, whose first meeting should be held before the end of 2022. Our common fight against irregular immigration requires shortened and more efficient procedures for the identification and return of persons who do not have or no longer have the right of residence, including those who have committed offences against public order, or for the transfer of convicted persons to serve their sentences in their country of origin.
13. The two ministers also undertook to improve cooperation in the field of justice, particularly with regard to the practical implementation of the Convention between the Kingdom of Belgium and the Kingdom of Morocco on assistance to detainees and the transfer of sentenced persons, signed in Brussels on July 7, 1997 and its Additional Protocol, signed in Rabat on March 19, 2007. They support the convening, in the near future, of a meeting between the central authorities of both countries, with a view to the concrete implementation of the commitments contained in this convention.
14. The two ministers also agreed to continue negotiations on the revision of the treaty on mutual legal assistance, including the expansion of the scope of this treaty.
15. The two ministers stressed the common interest of Morocco and Belgium to strengthen the close bilateral cooperation to counter threats to national and international security, including transnational crime and terrorism. In this context, they welcomed the recent entry into force of the convention on cooperation in combating organized crime and terrorism, which provides a solid basis for intensifying their police cooperation.
16. The two ministers also reaffirmed their support for peace, stability and sustainable development in the region and underlined their particular

commitment to fighting against international terrorism and transnational organized crime, which is essential for the security and stability of the Euro-Mediterranean region.

17. The two ministers also expressed their deep concern about the worrying evolution of the terrorist threat in Africa, aggravated by the proliferation of armed non-state actors, and more particularly in the Sahel region. In this regard, they welcomed the establishment in Rabat of the United Nations Program Office for Counter-Terrorism and Training in Africa.
18. Belgium commended Morocco's contribution to regional and international counter-terrorism efforts, notably through its co-chairmanship of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum and its co-chairmanship of the Africa Focus Group of the Global Coalition against Daesh.
19. The two ministers, who noted their convergence of views on regional and international issues of common interest, agreed to continue this dialogue to strengthen peace and security in the region.
20. The two Ministers reaffirmed the paramount importance of the fundamental principles of the UN Charter. They expressed their condemnation of any violation of the fundamental principles of the UN Charter and the use of violence. In this context, the Ministers expressed their deep concern over the repercussions of the war in Ukraine, with regard to the aggravation of the global humanitarian, food and energy crisis. They recalled the importance of facilitating and encouraging the flow of food and agricultural products to world markets.
21. With regard to the Sahara issue, the Belgian Minister reiterated Belgium's long-standing support for the UN-led process for a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution for the parties.

The two ministers agreed on the exclusivity of the UN in the political process and reaffirmed their support for UN Security Council Resolution 2602, which noted the role and responsibility of all parties in the search for a realistic, pragmatic, sustainable and compromise-based political solution.

In this context, Belgium considers the autonomy plan, presented in 2007, as a serious and credible Moroccan effort and as a good basis for a solution accepted by the parties

Morocco and Belgium also welcome the appointment of the Personal Envoy of the UN Secretary General, Staffan de Mistura, and reaffirm their active support to his efforts to advance the political process on the basis of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. They also reaffirm their support for MINURSO.

22. With regard to the situation in the Middle East, the two Ministers reaffirmed their countries' commitment to a two-state solution, with the State of Israel

and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable State of Palestine, living side by side in peace, security, and mutual recognition with Jerusalem as the future capital of both states. The Ministers emphasize the preservation of the special status of the city of Jerusalem and the unique multi-religious character of this holy city.

23. The two Ministers welcomed the role that Moroccans living in Belgium, and Belgians living in Morocco, play as pillars of strengthening the relations between Morocco and Belgium. To this end, they agreed on the importance of promoting cultural cooperation actions to strengthen the ties between the two countries.
 24. Morocco and Belgium welcome their coordination on issues of common interest in international and regional organizations.
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