



Le Ministre Délégué

**SUMMARY MEETING HELD WITH UK AMBASSADOR  
ON STRATEGIC DIALOGUE TIMELINE OF EVENTS**

Mr. the Minister Delegate received March 26th, 2013 the United Kingdom Ambassador, Mr. Clive Alderton, for a follow up discussion, requested by the behalf of the Ambassador, on the Strategic Dialogue timeline of events. The meeting came after **this Ministry conveyed that Morocco is not ready to conclude a Strategic Dialogue in the time being.** The Minister Delegate argued that while **Morocco is keen to develop strong relationships with the UK**, the timing and the substance are **not at the level of the ambitions and expectations of the two countries.** Mr. the Minister Delegate highlighted that the **current framework of our current discussions could continue to be the framework of our fruitful exchanges.**

Upon the possible change to a future date expressed by the Moroccan party, the UK Ambassador wished to persuade otherwise. The UK Ambassador expressed his understanding of Morocco's position and concern, and iterated that both **parties are entering into an equal partnership**, and by no means is the UK pressuring Morocco to accept what is not beneficial for it. However, it is the belief of the Ambassador that the 15<sup>th</sup> of April is the ideal date to not only sign cooperation agreements, and re-launch the UK-Morocco Business Council, but also to announce the launch of the Strategic Dialogue. It is important for the British party to orchestrate all events at the same time, in order to **benefit from full media coverage and exposure**, which is hard to receive in London. The context within the UK government is such that any later date for the launch of the Strategic Dialogue, would include a 1 year wait to unite all members concerned. Such a time scope would push off the benefits of such a partnership to later times. The **UK perceives that 90% of the work required for the launch on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April to be already in place**, requiring minimum preparation on the Moroccan party. The presence, on the UK side, of the Junior Minister of Defence, the Minister of Interior (home office secretary), as well as the Foreign Minister, are confirmed. An example joint communiqué (see attached document) has been presented to Mr. Minister Delegate, to illustrate the course of the ceremony from the British perspective. Mr. Ambassador persisted that the

**importance is on the results and the outcome of such a Strategic Dialogue announcement.** London is impatient to receive Moroccan insight on international affairs that concern both parties, including further support of the United Kingdom on the Sahara issue.

Responding to the UK's perseverance of carrying out the scheduled timeline, Mr. the Minister Delegate expressed that the time required for the creation of **a profound and globally inclusive framework which will reflect the exemplary relations that tie the Kingdom of Morocco and the United Kingdom**, do not fall within the proposed schedule. **The time constraints of the current timeline do not permit the elaboration of such a substantial framework.** In addition, in-depth internal negotiation and work still remain to be conducted on the Moroccan side, in order to coordinate between all concerned ministries and parties. This will allow for an internal cohesion upon which to structure any future talks concerning the Strategic Dialogue. Furthermore, after a lecture of the Strategic Dialogue proposed by the United Kingdom, the Minister Delegate **firmly expressed his disapproval** of the wording concerning the **axis on the Sahara, which is not compatible with the spirit of Strategic Dialogue**, which must account for the interests of both countries.

Shifting the topic of **discussion on the Sahara issue**, the Ambassador vocally expressed the **strengthening of UK support on the Sahara issue**, in light of the tremendous advancements Morocco has undertaken on the issue. The **CES report** was praised by the Ambassador as a **great example of transparency and commitment of the Moroccan efforts** to arrive at a permanent and mutually agreed upon solution to the dispute. Mr Ambassador also mentioned the **points evoked during his lunch with UN Secretary General Special Envoy to the Sahara, Christopher Ross**. Matters of **governance and importance of continued Morocco/ Algeria contact** have been brought up. Mr. the Minister Delegate was keen to mention that **no such topic of Governance was brought up during the last meeting held in Rabat with Christopher Ross**.

In light of the friendship that unites the two countries, the UK Ambassador warned the Minister Delegate of **'negative' and 'undesirable' impact that bad media coverage** regarding Morocco and the Sahara can have on the international opinion. This warning came in the aftermath of the incident which saw the **refoulement of certain Euro deputies** from entering Moroccan territory, hence, preventing them from visiting the city of Laayoune. In response to this incident, Mr. the Minister Delegate explained

that the concerned **Euro deputies had a known pre-established political agenda that was hostile to the Moroccan position** and the Sahara issue, and whose presence on the ground would have only created further **'instrumentalisation' of the issue**. Moreover, the Minister Delegate reiterated that the Kingdom of Morocco remains open and willing to host any future visits, hence **upholding its position of promoting transparency and freedom**.

Many thanks and gratitude was expressed by the Minister Delegate, who **regards this act as one of true friendship**.

Mr. the Minister Delegate and Mr. Ambassador both reiterated the great friendship that unites the two countries, and the willingness of both parties to work together and closely in moving this relationship to higher grounds and standards.

**Destinataires :** Monsieur le Ministre  
Monsieur le Secrétaire Général  
SA Lalla Chrifa Joumala Alaoui, Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté le Roi à Londres  
Monsieur le Directeur des Affaires Européennes