The Royal Address delivered Friday, 09 October 2020 before the two Houses of Parliament together, comes at a special time this year, due to the health crisis that has hit the Kingdom of Morocco.

His Majesty King Mohammed VI stressed that the opening of this last year of the legislative mandate, comes in exceptional circumstances, due to the health crisis and its economic, social and psychological repercussions.

In these circumstances, in order to safeguard the health and safety of citizens, it is essential to show vigilance and a firm commitment by providing the health sector with unfailing support. At the same time, it is important to work to stimulate economic activity and strengthen social protection," the Sovereign said.

His Majesty King Mohammed VI indicated that this crisis has revealed a series of imbalances and deficits, which have had a negative impact on the national economy and employment, recalling that an ambitious economic recovery plan and a major project of universal social coverage have been launched. His Majesty also underlined the imperative to apply the rules of good governance and the need to reform public sector institutions.

The Sovereign stressed that the economic recovery plan had been placed at the top of the priorities of the current phase and that it aimed to support the productive sectors, particularly the small and medium-sized enterprises and to enhance their capacity to invest, create jobs and preserve sources of income.

More than 20 thousand Moroccan companies have benefited from the support provided to them through the State-guaranteed loan scheme, and through this support they have managed to mitigate the effects of the health crisis, preserving jobs.

His Majesty King Mohammed VI stressed that the economic recovery plan is based on the Strategic Investment Fund which the Sovereign has recommended the creation and given the name of "Mohammed VI Fund for Investment".

This Fund, which will be endowed with 15 billion dirhams from the State budget, plays a leading role in promoting investment and raising the capacity of the national economy. It will intervene to provide the productive sectors with the necessary support and to finance and accompany the major projects envisaged, within the framework of public-private partnerships. It will make it possible to amplify their

economic, social and environmental impact.

‘’In order for this fund to fully carry out its mission, We have given Our Guidelines so that it can be endowed with legal personality and adequate managerial structures, so that, in the end, it will impose itself as a model of good governance, efficiency and transparency,” emphasised His Majesty King Mohammed VI.

The Sovereign noted the importance that must be given to agriculture and rural development in this dynamic economic recovery, in order to support the resilience of this key sector and accelerate the implementation of all agricultural projects.

In addition to boosting investment and employment, this mechanism, backed by the new agricultural strategy, will contribute to the enhancement of national agricultural production and facilitate the process of professional integration in rural areas, through the mobilisation of one million hectares of collective agricultural land, for the benefit of investors and beneficiaries, as well as the establishment of an incentive environment for young people in the rural world, through the creation of businesses and support for training, particularly in trades and services related to agriculture.

At the social level, His Majesty King Mohammed VI has called for the generalisation of social coverage for the benefit of all Moroccans, a major national project, of an unprecedented nature, which can be broken down into four key areas:

– extending compulsory medical coverage by the end of 2022 at the latest, so that 22 million additional beneficiaries will have access to basic health insurance covering, the costs of care, medicines, hospitalisation and treatment.

– generalising family allowances, which will thus benefit nearly seven million children of school age, to the benefit of three million families.

– broaden the membership base of the pension system by including around five million Moroccans among the working population not entitled to a pension.

– generalise access to job loss compensation for the benefit of Moroccans in regular employment.

The Sovereign called on the Government to carry out a thorough review of the criteria and procedures for appointment to senior posts, in order to encourage national skills to enter the civil service and ultimately make it more attractive.

‘’We take advantage of this important constitutional meeting to urge all the nation’s institutions and active forces, and first and foremost Parliament, to rise to the challenges of the current situation and thus meet the expectations of citizens,” said His Majesty King Mohammed VI.