This Saturday, November the 6th, The Kingdom of Morocco will commemorate the forty-sixth anniversary of the glorious Green March.

The glorious Green March is an outstanding example of collective mobilization, commitment, discipline and attachment to justice, through the spontaneous and sincere response of all Moroccans, as patriots to the call of the instigator of the Green March, the late His Majesty King Hassan II, may God rest his soul.

The whole world witnessed the Moroccan people's unity and their ability to take on challenges. And so, through this peaceful march, a positive outcome was reached in the recovery of our Southern Provinces. Through this process history, was made.

The Green March is not only a major national event and a milestone in the process of completing our territorial integrity. But It also embodies a dynamic whose spirit is perpetuated and renewed through the action carried out to consolidate the Moroccanness of the Sahara on the international scene.

Furthermore it aims to establish the Sahara as a driving force for regional and continental development.

Since, Moroccans of the old and new generations commemorate every year with great pride this significant date which profoundly shaped political life in the Kingdom and marked a decisive turning point in the struggle for the recovery of the southern provinces.

It was on October 16, 1975 that the late HM Hassan II announced this great popular march that led to the liberation of the southern provinces, following the confirmation by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague of the existence of legal ties and allegiance between the Sultans of Morocco and the Saharawi tribes.

This confirmation was in response to a request made by Morocco on December 13th, 1974 for the UN General Assembly to refer to the ICJ a request for its advisory opinion on the legal situation of the Sahara during the Spanish occupation.

On October 16th , In its response , the ICJ ruled that the Sahara was never "terra-nullius" and that there were "legal ties of allegiance" between this territory and the Kingdom of Morocco.

After hearing this statement, which represented a recognition of the legitimacy of Morocco's claims for the recovery of its lost territories, the late HM Hassan II

announced, in a historic speech delivered the same day, the organisation of a peaceful Green March, a call that rapidly mobilised 350,000 Moroccans, armed with their faith in God and in the validity of their just cause.

In this historic speech, the late Sovereign stressed that “the whole world has recognized that the Sahara has been in our possession for a very long time, the whole world has recognized that there were ties between Morocco and the Sahara which were only altered by the coloniser”, concluding that “all that remains is for us to undertake a peaceful march from the North to the South in order to go to the Sahara and to renew our ties with our brothers.

The call was therefore launched and 350,000 participants, including 10% women, from all over the country, came to join this liberating march, which demonstrated in the most eloquent way the firm will of the Moroccan people to recover their territory and reflected the political lucidity and wise vision of the late Sovereign.

By raising the national flag in the sky over Laayoune on February 28th 1976, the Green March became a reference in the peaceful struggle of nations and people to recover their violated rights.

Since then, Morocco has put the development of this integral part of its national territory at the top of its list of concerns, by providing it with the basic infrastructure necessary to break its isolation and guarantee the local population conditions of prosperity, security and peace.

Thus, the cities of the southern provinces, which constitute a real link between Morocco and the rest of Africa on the geographical, human and economic levels, have been transformed into well-structured urban centres and prosperous economic poles.

This dynamic has been carried under the prosperous reign of HM King Mohammed VI, who has ensured the completion of major projects in all sectors of activity to provide the population of these provinces with the conditions for a dignified life and to promote their development.

Thanks to the determination and unfailing patriotic commitment of the entire Moroccan people, especially the sons and daughters of the southern provinces, the new development model for these provinces, launched by the Sovereign with an initial budgetary envelope of 77 billion dirhams, has given a boost to this sustained

socio-economic evolution.

This model has helped lay the groundwork for an integrated policy to strengthen the influence of the Moroccan Sahara as an economic center and a hub for relations between the Kingdom and the countries in the region.

Since the launch in 2015 of the new development model for the southern provinces, this region, rich in fishing, mining and natural resources, has seen its economic growth accelerated with this ambitious expressway linking Tiznit to Dakhla, which will totally transform the economic landscape of the entire south of the country.

The region also ensures the development of sophisticated logistical and industrial platforms, especially through the establishment of a new industrial, commercial and distribution park in the city of El Marsa, for a global cost estimated at 259 million dirhams on an area of 73 hectares.

Higher education and vocational training are also among the major projects in the region.

In this context, the Faculty of Medicine of Laayoune, which is part of the new development model of the Southern Provinces, launched by His Majesty King Mohammed VI in 2015, is operational since October 1st, 2021.

This large-scale project required an investment of 250 millions dirhams.

This year, the faculty welcomed over a hundred students, all from the southern provinces. Their number will be doubled next year, and this university will soon welcome foreign students from other African countries.

In the field of housing, several projects have been launched to give Laayoune the aspect of a city adapted to the needs of its inhabitants. The project, which aims to build 34,220 housing units for a population estimated at 137,000 people, required the mobilisation of a budget of about 260 million dirhams.

As the gateway to the Moroccan Sahara and an essential passageway between the north and the south of the Kingdom, the region has recently been living to the rhythm of large-scale and structuring projects. Hydraulic installations are among the integrated projects that will give a strong dynamism to the agriculture and tourism sectors and create more jobs in the region.

As such, the ”Fask” dam project, whose works were launched in 2018, at a financial cost of 1.5 billion dirhams, is considered the largest in the southern provinces.

With a capacity of 79 million m3, this hydraulic work will irrigate agricultural land, ensure the supply of drinking water to Guelmim city and its region, improve the local water table and protect the region from flooding.

To strengthen its position as an attractive region for green investments, particularly in solar and wind energy, the Noor Atlas project in the municipality of Chbika in Tantan province will be carried out on an area of 200 hectares.

This project, which is part of the national strategy for the development of renewable energies, will help strengthen the capacity of the national electricity network and reduce energy dependence.

With a capacity of 250 beds, the regional hospital project will contribute to increasing the local hospitalisation capacity, developing the health care and bringing medical services closer to the region’s inhabitants.

Other projects already completed have contributed to strengthening the economic attractiveness of Guelmim-Oued Noun, notably the new Guelmim airport, which has an annual capacity of 700,000 passengers. This flagship project, which will have positive impacts on the region of Guelmim-Oued Noun, is equipped with modern technological facilities that meet international norms and standards.