

Excellencies: Ambassador CUTTS, Archbishop of Rabat Christobal Lopez Rome, Dr. Ahmed ABBADI, Secretary General of the Rabita Mohammadia of the Oulema,

Family, colleagues and friends of Late John Paul Quinn,

High representatives of Australian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we are commemorating the memory of Ambassador Quinn who, in the evening of 12 September 1961, deceased, tragically, along with 78 citizens and diplomats representing several countries and Morocco, in the air crash of "La Caravelle" Rabat-Paris, in the neighborhood of Rabat.

Allow me **first of all to thank His Excellency Ambassador Cutts** for organizing this gathering today, and I would like to extend my appreciation to the family of Ambassador Quin, the representatives of diplomatic missions and the Australian ministry of foreign affairs and trade, for sharing with us this commemoration.

Tribute should be paid to the "*travail de mémoire*" for the victims and for the Australian Ambassador John Quinn who passed away at a time when he was prospecting new opportunities for a rapprochement between our two countries.

As we are celebrating this year the **45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations** between our two countries, I would like to recall the excellent relationship between Morocco and Australia, which is undergoing a tremendous momentum, enhanced by new opportunities of cooperation in various fields such as: agriculture, education, academic research, climate change, as well as mutual support at the international level.

Sharing the same humanitarian values of peace and tolerance, Morocco and Australia have made the irreversible choice to open up to the world, and to promote dialogue and peace. I therefore thank his Excellency Ambassador CUTTS for proposing a panel on the subject on this occasion.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

We recall, today, diplomats' dedication to serve their countries, their engagement and devotion while performing their duties, having to face different challenges and risks.

Indeed, the challenges have changed over time. Nowadays, Diplomats need to adapt to a new reality marked by sanitary crisis caused by global expansion of pandemics; high threat areas, where political or social consequences can be unpredictable; terrorism; extremism and other threats. Hence, a new **paradigm** of "*Diplomatic security*" has emerged and is more challenging in our work.

Finally, I would like to warmly thank the Directors of the National Library of the Kingdom of Morocco and the Moroccan press agency for their invaluable help in sharing press articles dated from the time of the tragic accident.

Our thoughts today, as we commemorate the victims of "la caravelle", are also with the families of the Moroccan citizens who perished in the air crash, two of them were diplomats, public servants overseas, namely, M. Mhamed ALAOUI, and M.Salah CHERKAOUI, May Peace be on them.

Thank you.