

FAMILY PHILANTHROPY RETREAT: “Making a difference and achieving greater personal fulfillment”, Loedstar – Geneva,

Opening Family Speaker

Othman Benjelloun, Chairman and CEO, BMCE Bank

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My wife Leïla and I are honored to be here with you today and we wish to extend our deepest thanks to Synergos for inviting us to share our experience in such a unique environment. We regret that Peggy Dulany could not be with us at this opening session. Let's hope we will see her tomorrow. We are also here to learn from your personal experiences.

Patronage of one form or another has always been an integral part of my various business activities. My wife Dr Leïla Mezian and I decided in 1972, to set up the Benjelloun-Mezian Foundation, chaired by Leïla, which mainly provides scholarships to young Moroccan students worldwide, as well as restores national monuments nationwide.

1995 was definitely a turning point, when I chaired the newly privatized BMCE Bank, at the heart of a multi-specialty financial Group.

Beyond commercial and financial value-added, as the Chairman of the Bank and main shareholder, I wanted the Bank to contribute to growth in social capital. “Corporate Social Responsibility” became anchored in our strategic decision-making.

I felt that BMCE Bank Foundation should aim at sustainable development and we therefore chose the field of Education, more specifically primary education in rural areas, as a means to reduce poverty and inequalities - whether socio-economic, cultural, gender or technology related.

From the onset, Partnership has been our key word: 20 partners have been associated with our program: the Moroccan Government through 5 ministries, primarily the Ministry of Education, 4 public institutions, the United Nations Development Program, and 8 foreign partners from France, the UK, Spain, Japan, Monaco and Senegal.

I insisted on giving our school Model an architectural concept that blends into the environment, respecting local values and traditions, while being functional and adapted. Schools are indeed equipped with housing units for teachers and lavatories, a particular concern for retaining girls within the school system.

Our School network - called Medersat.com, which means “your school in Moroccan” - is based on three principles: Opening to the outside world, tolerance and modernity. Ethics and transparency are also essential elements of the program's governance.

I now would like to give the floor to Mr. Brahim Benjelloun-Touimi, General Manager of the Bank and Director on the Board of our Foundation, for more details about the objectives and the achievements of the Medersat.com program. ***

[Brahim Benjelloun-Touimi's presentation]

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Every time Leïla and I visit one of our schools, in the most remote regions of Morocco - and just last week in Nador, 4 members of Government and the Ambassador of Spain to Morocco joined us among other dignitaries - looking into the children's eyes, we can read their expectations, their hopes and their dreams... it's all there in front of you.

At that very moment, we recall it's our utmost responsibility to persevere in playing our part and contributing to such a dramatic change in their lives and in their futures.

Now, from a personal perspective and an international business career in the fields of industry, banking, insurance and telecom over the last 40 years, I consider the mission of building and managing community schools in Morocco's rural areas by BMCE Bank Foundation, as the most fulfilling and wonderful project I have ever accomplished in my life.

I would now like to ask Leïla to come and speak about the specificity of Amazigh in our Program.

Thank you

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