

Letter from George Washington to Muhammed Ibn Abdullah—Sultan of Morocco

City of New York December 1, 1789

Great and Magnanimous Friend,

Since the date of the letter which the late Congress, by their President, addressed to your Imperial Majesty, The United States of America have thought proper to change their government and institute a new one, agreeable to the Constitution, of which I have the honor, herewith, to enclose a copy. The time necessarily employed in the arduous task, and the disarrangements occasioned by so great though peaceable a revolution, will apologize, and account for your Majesty's not having received those regularly advised marks of attention from the United States which the friendship and magnanimity of your conduct toward them afforded reason to expect.

The United States, having unanimously appointed me to supreme executive authority in this Nation. Your Majesty's letter of August 17, 1788, which by reason of the dissolution of the late-government, remained unanswered, has been delivered to me. I have also received the letters which Your Imperial Majesty has been so kind as to write, in favor of the United States, to the Bashaws of Tunis and Tripoli, and I present to you the sincere acknowledgements and thanks of the United States for this important mark of your friendship for them.

We greatly regret the hostile disposition of those regencies toward this nation, who have never injured them, is not to be removed, on terms of our power to comply with. Within our territories there are no mines, wither of gold or silver, and this young nation just recovering from the waste and dissolution of a long war, have not, as yet, had time to acquire riches by agriculture and commerce. But our soil is bountiful, and our people industrious, and we have reason to flatter ourselves that we shall gradually become useful to our friends.

The encouragement which Your Majesty has been pleased, generously, to give to our commerce with your dominions, the punctuality with which you have caused the Treaty with us to be observed, and the just and generous measures taken in the case of Captain Proctor, make a deep impression on the United States and confirm their respect for and attachment to Your Imperial Majesty.

It gives me great pleasure to have the opportunity of assuring Your Majesty that, while I remain at the head of this nation, I shall not cease to promote every measure that may conduce to the friendship and harmony which so happily subsist between your Empire and them, and shall esteem myself happy in every occasion of convincing Your Majesty of the high sense (*which in common with the whole nation*) I entertain the magnanimity, wisdom and benevolence of Your Majesty.

May the Almighty bless Your Imperial Majesty, our Great and Magnanimous friend, with His constant guidance and protection.

—George Washington