



## PRESS RELEASE

### First Day of the 48th Edition of the Hassan II Trophy and the 27th Edition of the Lalla Meryem Cup

Rabat, February 20, 2024 - Under the High Patronage of **His Majesty King Mohammed VI**, The Royal Moroccan Golf Federation (FRMG) and The Hassan II Golf Trophy Association (ATH), chaired by **His Royal Highness Prince Moulay Rachid**, held the opening press conference for the 48th edition of the Hassan II Golf Trophy and the 27th edition of the Lalla Meryem Cup at Royal Golf Dar Es Salam in Rabat.

On Tuesday, February 20, FRMG and ATH held their traditional inaugural press conference for these events. This annual meeting in Rabat gathers media representatives and two of the world's most significant golf institutions. Mr. Miller Brady, President of PGA Tour Champions, and Alexandra Armas, CEO of Ladies European Tour were accompanied by Mr. Hassan El Mansouri, FRMG's Second Vice-President & ATH member; and Mr. Jalil Benazzouz, President of FRMG's Competition Organization Committee. The title holder Stephen Ames and Moroccan champion Ines Laklalech completed a unique mixed panel.

In his speech, **Mr. El Mansouri** highlighted this event's significance: *"The Hassan II Trophy has provided an international platform to promote Morocco for over 50 years. In partnership with PGA Champions Tour and complete broadcast on Golf Channel available in nearly 130 countries enhances this promotion further with between 60 to 80 million golfers worldwide; this event is crucial for Morocco."*

Following this, **Mr. Miller Brady**, President of the PGA Tour Champions, proudly expressed the global significance and prominence of the two tournaments, highlighting the synchronization of these events. He also emphasized the return of these competitions to the Royal Golf Dar Es Salam, thus underlining the growing enthusiasm for golf in Morocco. *"It is a great pleasure to be back in Morocco, at the Royal Golf Dar Es Salam, for our second tournament on this magnificent golf course. We warmly thank His Royal Highness for his renewed hospitality. This competition marks the third stage of the PGA Champions Tour this year. We anticipate an even greater challenge this year, with possibly more difficult playing conditions, but we are thrilled to be here,"* he added.

An emotional moment was shared by **Mr. Stephen Ames**, Canadian player of the PGA Tour Champions and winner of the previous edition of the Hassan II Trophy. His return to the Red course of the Royal Golf Dar Es Salam was warmly welcomed, expressing his attachment to this iconic venue of Moroccan golf. *"I think it's obvious that I have a soft spot for Morocco... The golf courses where we play here are very American-style and always in excellent condition. The weather is always beautiful: sunny and pleasant,"* he shared.

With enthusiasm, **Ms. Alexandra Armas**, CEO of the Ladies European Tour (LET), rejoiced in the LET's consistent presence in Morocco and the players' excitement for the events held in the country. *"Being in Rabat feels like coming back home. We are delighted to see the positive evolution of the tournament. We thank Morocco for this unique event that contributes to the development of golf,"* she stated.

**Mr. Jalil Benazzouz**, President of the FRMG Competition Organization Commission, also highlighted the peculiarities of

the 27th edition of the Lalla Meryem Cup, especially with the strong participation of Moroccan players, including Ines Laklalech, Maha Haddioui, and notably the young hope of Moroccan golf, Sofia Cherif Essakali, who will strive to repeat her performance from the previous season.

**Ines Laklalech**, for her part, expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to participate in such an event on her home soil. *"I am thrilled to be back here for the second time. It is an honor and a privilege to participate in the Lalla Meryem Cup at home, with my family, friends, and the support of Moroccans. I am very excited for the tournament to begin."*

Until February 24th, the two flagship tournaments of the Moroccan golf calendar promise a program rich in emotions and high-level sporting performances. All of these events are broadcast worldwide, reaching millions of households across the globe.

For more information on the full schedule of these events, please visit the official website: <https://hassan2golftrophy.com/>

### **About the Royal Moroccan Golf Federation "FRMG":**

Presided over by His Royal Highness Prince Moulay Rachid since January 2018, the Royal Moroccan Golf Federation "FRMG", founded on March 12, 1960, is a sports association aimed at providing access to golf practice in all its forms to everyone. It ensures compliance with the ethical rules laid down by the international sports movement, particularly the



International Golf Federation and the African Golf Confederation. Its missions include:

- Promoting and developing the practice of golf
- Organizing and managing competitions
- Regulating the practice of golf
- Training and professionalizing golf-related professions
- Supporting professional players
- Managing High-Level golfers

### **About the Hassan II Golf Trophy Association "ATH":**

The Hassan II Golf Trophy Association (ATH) is a recognized public utility sports association created on September 4, 2002, and chaired by His Royal Highness Prince Moulay Rachid, also President of the Royal Moroccan Golf Federation (FRMG). ATH's mission is to organize national and international golf competitions on behalf of the Royal Moroccan Golf Federation and to promote golf in Morocco by positioning the Kingdom as an essential golf destination on the international scale. Respecting achievements and innovating without denaturing are the values that guide ATH's approach towards progress and excellence.

### **About the PGA Tour Champions:**



The PGA Tour Champions, also known as the Senior PGA Tour, is a series of professional golf tournaments reserved for players aged 50 and over.

The Tour brings together players who have made history in golf and continue to captivate fans with their refined play and unmatched experience. Fairways and greens become the stage for unforgettable moments as these golf legends compete for coveted titles.

The Hassan II Trophy continues its prestigious tradition through the PGA Tour Champions. The tournament offers a unique opportunity for golf fans of all generations to see their favorite heroes in action, create lasting memories, and be inspired by their perseverance.

Each PGA Tour Champions tournament is characterized by a warm and respectful atmosphere, where fierce competition is accompanied by a deep camaraderie among players.

It is a reminder for everyone that talent and determination know no age limits, and that the legends of the past continue to write their story on the course, much to the delight of golf enthusiasts worldwide.