PANORAMA OF MOROCCO IN THE WORLD

The Kingdom’s International Relations

PART I

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

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Chapter 1

THE FOUNDATIONS OF MOROCCO’S FOREIGN POLICY
Foreign policy is defined as the instrument by which a State acts on its international political environment. The policy followed by a State in its international relations is a matter for the sovereign power of its highest authority. Therefore, this strategic report highlights the Royal Speeches that form the basis of the Kingdom’s foreign policy doctrine.

The analysis of this policy has provided a reading grid that highlights three distinct geostrategic spaces, within which Morocco’s international relations are built:

• An area of proximity that represents Morocco’s neighbourhood relations with Algeria, Spain and Mauritania.
• A complex space, constituted by the Kingdom’s areas of cultural belonging: the Arab-Muslim world, Africa and the Euro-Mediterranean area.
• Finally, a global space which represents the new scale of globalization: the planet.
Morocco’s foreign policy doctrine is based on holistic approaches that are geopolitical, geo-economic and geo-cultural. Three guiding principles underpin Moroccan diplomatic action: neighbourliness, solidarity and partnership.

Under the Reign of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, reflection and action are combined to work tirelessly to resolve the artificial conflict over the Moroccan Sahara, by proposing an original autonomy plan, to comprehensively defend the interests of the Kingdom abroad, to consolidate the Kingdom’s traditional ties, to forge strategic partnerships and to involve Morocco in the new global issues (climate change, Millennium Development Goals ...).

Determination, pragmatism, realism, moderation, anticipation, firmness, participative approach, strategic vision and diversification are, among others, concepts or terms that constitute the vectors structuring the new modus operandi, in terms of attractive power, developed by the Sovereign.
"... Our government has to give priority to proactive economic diplomacy which is able to mobilize all available resources in order to develop partnerships, draw investment, enhance the country’s attractiveness, win new positions and improve foreign exchange”.

The Royal Vision is based on a new approach to the Kingdom’s diplomatic action according to which His Majesty’s ambassadors are considered "... soldiers who must deploy all their efforts in the service of their country’s economic objectives ...".

Excerpts from the Message of His Majesty King Mohammed VI on August 30, 2013

Moroccan diplomacy "... must today mobilize so as to capitalize on the new image that we have accredited to international public opinion, the image of a democratic and modernist Morocco, mobilized around its Sovereign, an example of moderation and tolerance. It must also work actively and seriously to explore new areas of economic cooperation, to deepen the strategic dimension of Morocco in order to make it a model partner for all countries, in the perspective of a proactive and exemplary partnership of solidarity, to consolidate Morocco’s position as a vanguard regional pole and a factor of stability and peace in its Maghreb, Arab, Islamic, Euro-Mediterranean, African and American environment, to make the most of globalization, to integrate into the global economy, while mitigating their negative impact on our development and to give a new breath to our external relations ...".

Excerpt from the Royal Message on the occasion of the celebration of the National Day of Moroccan Diplomacy held in Rabat on April 28, 2000
The foreign policy of the Kingdom of Morocco is being deployed through:

- the visits of His Majesty King Mohammed VI abroad,
- diplomatic representations abroad,
- diplomatic missions attached to the multilateral system,
- a multiform (economic, cultural, spiritual, climatic) diplomacy, and also a parliamentary and citizen diplomacy,
- the contribution of Moroccans around the world.
Figure 3: Official visits made by His Majesty King Mohammed VI abroad since His accession to the Throne (May 2, 2019)

Source: IRES processing of data from the MAP and the Ministry of Foreign affairs and international cooperation
Morocco has a fairly extensive diplomatic and consular network. Nevertheless, the Kingdom is poorly represented in East and Southern Africa, Central Asia and Oceania.

In 2019, Morocco had 97 embassies, 59 consulates and 75 honorary consuls, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. It also has 4 diplomatic missions in New York, Geneva, Paris and Brussels.
Chapter 2

MULTILATERAL COOPERATION
Morocco has always advocated a fair and beneficial multilateral system, ensuring global stability and fostering the emergence of developing nations.

"... I also wish to reiterate my commitment to multipartite and triangular cooperation mechanisms in order to forge balanced, mutually beneficial partnerships with countries of the North...".

Excerpt from the Throne Speech of July 30, 2014

"... Morocco strongly reaffirms its constant commitment to continue to work ... for a concrete renewal of multilateralism, based on international legality, solidarity and equity in economic and social relations, and relying on the efficiency and dynamism of the United Nations’ system in the accomplishment of its mission."

Excerpt from the Message of His Majesty King Mohammed VI on the occasion of the 59th ordinary session of the United Nations General Assembly of March 25, 2013

"... Morocco, which will pursue its untiring action within international organizations, reiterates its commitment to promote multilateral cooperation, in accordance with the lofty objectives enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations Organization."

Excerpt from the Throne Speech of July 30, 2012
**Morocco within the System of Multilateral Cooperation (2)**

**The United Nations**: Morocco has always been dynamic in defending Arab and African causes within the UN General Assembly. In addition to humanitarian aid, it has deployed military contingents in support of UN peacekeeping operations. Morocco has been elected three times as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, where it has been Africa's voice in the vote on several important resolutions, including on the situation in Mali, Burundi and the Central African Republic.

**World Bank**: Morocco has strengthened its partnership relations with the World Bank. After the successful implementation of the 2014-2017 partnership strategy, the Kingdom has concluded a new partnership framework with the World Bank, based on three main axes:

- Fostering job creation in the private sector, through the promotion of a more enabling environment for business and competitiveness, support for private sector growth and facilitation of access to financing.
- Enhancing human capital by improving the quality of the education and health systems and strengthening the social protection of vulnerable populations.
- Promoting resilient and inclusive land-use planning by improving the performance of key structure services in cities and towns, as well as building capacity for climate change adaptation and disaster resilience.

**International Monetary Fund**: Morocco’s relations with the IMF are long-standing. The Kingdom is a member of the Development Committee of this organization, which has 25 member countries.

**World Trade Organization**: Morocco hosted in 1994 the ministerial conference of Marrakech, which gave birth to the WTO on January 1st, 1995. The Kingdom has since been a signatory to all WTO multilateral trade agreements. In addition, Morocco plays an active role in this organization, promoting closer ties between developed and developing countries. In 2004, the Kingdom chaired the African group at the WTO, along with the Arab group.
Figure 5: Morocco’s participation in peace-keeping operations and humanitarian actions (May 2, 2019)

Source: IRES processing of SIPRI data
Morocco hosted the 22nd Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 22), held in Marrakech from November 7 to 18, 2016. This conference made it possible to speed up by two years the implementation of the commitments of the Paris Climate Agreement concluded in 2015. It was also an opportunity for countries such as Canada, Germany and Mexico to unveil their strategic plan to reduce carbon emissions by 2050. Other countries, for their part, have committed themselves to developing similar plans.

Similarly, Marrakech hosted, on November 17, 2016, the Africa Action Summit, bringing together thirty African Heads of State to discuss the issue of the sustainable development of the continent. This summit led to the adoption of a memorandum of understanding for the creation of the Blue Fund for the Congo Basin, the second largest carbon reservoir in the world, threatened by deforestation.

Morocco is also actively engaged in managing the migration issue. The Kingdom hosted the Global Conference on Migration in December 2018. In addition, His Majesty King Mohammed VI has been designated Leader of the African Union on migration issues. He developed the African Agenda for Migration, unveiled in January 2018, which includes, among other things, the creation of an African Migration Observatory, which will be based in Morocco, as well as the post of Special Envoy of the African Union for Migration.
As a result of its active commitment to the fight against terrorism and the promotion of peace and security at the regional and international level, the Kingdom of Morocco has obtained the status of a major non-member ally of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The Kingdom is, also, the first country of the Mediterranean Dialogue to have obtained an associate status with the Parliamentary Assembly of the same organization.

Morocco and NATO have a multifaceted cooperative relationship. Morocco has several achievements to its credit, including in particular:

• its participation in peacekeeping operations, under the aegis of NATO, in Bosnia and Kosovo,
• its contribution to operation Active Endeavour, launched by NATO to secure maritime routes in the Mediterranean against terrorist acts,
• the association of the Royal Armed Forces to nearly fifty military exercises and manoeuvres organized by NATO,
• training in NATO training centres.

Morocco has always advocated for taking into account, within the framework of NATO's new strategic concept, the risks related to piracy and illicit trafficking, extending security cooperation to certain sensitive regions, namely the Sahel and the South Atlantic coast, as well as involving Mediterranean partner countries in NATO's decision-making processes.
Chapter 3

MULTIFORM DIPLOMACY
"... To ensure our presence and an active role in this global turmoil, we are called upon to follow, in an even more forceful manner, the offensive strategy we have adopted, drawing on parallel, parliamentary, partisan, economic, cultural, media and associative diplomacy. This will be done within the framework of an integrated and coherent plan based on the already initiated enlargement of the three concentric circles of good neighbourliness, active solidarity and strategic partnership...".

*Excerpt from the Throne Speech of July 30, 2005*
The 2011 Constitution has granted broad prerogatives to the legislative institution, which now plays a significant role in political life, but also in diplomacy, whether with the parliaments of foreign countries or with parliamentary organizations of which Morocco is a member.

Parliamentary friendship groups help to strengthen cooperation with partner countries and to deploy a strategy of influence that complements that of governments.

In order to further boost parliamentary diplomacy, it would be necessary to:

• give more efficiency to the action of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Islamic Affairs and Moroccans Living Abroad,

• establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of the actions of parliamentary diplomacy,

• promote closer coordination between the two Chambers of Parliament and between them and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.
Moroccan economic diplomacy has gained experience in trade negotiations and has contributed to improving Morocco’s strategic positioning in Africa and its visibility on the international scene.

His Majesty King Mohammed VI has given a strong impetus to diplomatic action in the economic field, which should foster the transition to a form of diplomacy, in the service of the Kingdom’s economic development, and contribute to the preservation of its priority strategic interests. In this context, it is necessary to adopt a renewed approach, favouring coordination and pooling of the resources of various actors involved in the economic promotion of Morocco abroad.

The creation, in 2017, of the Moroccan Agency for Investment and Export Development (AMDIE), established from the merger of the Moroccan Agency for Investment Development, Maroc export and the Office of Fairs and Exhibitions of Casablanca (OFEC), reflects the desire to bring the Kingdom into line with the new competitive realities and to support the development of exportable supply.

Working according to a sectoral approach, AMDIE is an interface between professional associations and public administrations. Its missions include economic intelligence, support for Moroccan investors abroad and the search for foreign investors, for whom the agency is the main interlocutor in Morocco.
Figure 7: Morocco’s network of relations

Source: IRES processing of data from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
Today, cultural diplomacy constitutes an attribute of State’s power and a central channel for projecting their capacity of influence at the international level.

Thanks to its history, as a melting pot of civilizations, its cultural diversity and its societal choices, Morocco can rely on several assets to make its cultural diplomacy a pillar of its soft power. Actions carried out by the Kingdom consist in:

- Promoting Morocco’s cultural and artistic heritage, through events organized by Morocco abroad and through its participation in major international events and exhibitions,
- Developing two sectoral strategies: "Maroc Culturel 2020" and "Patrimoine 2020",
- Launching, in 2014, a process of reflection on intangible capital, of which cultural capital is one of the components.
CULTURAL DIPLOMACY (2)

To enhance the place of culture in the Moroccan diplomatic system and make it a factor of attractiveness and competitivity, in the service of the Kingdom’s international influence, it is timely:

• to give the cultural dimension the importance it deserves in the Kingdom’s diplomatic action, on the same level as the political and economic dimension,

• to use, at the level of cultural diplomacy, digital innovation and to implement an appropriate policy of the « Morocco Brand »,

• to reconsider the links between cultural policy and cultural diplomacy,

• to review the governance of the cultural field, according to an approach that makes culture a sector in its own right, productive and creator of added value and social cohesion.
SPIRITUAL DIPLOMACY

The Kingdom’s spiritual diplomacy draws its substance from the specificities of the Moroccan model of Islam. This model is based on the Sunni-Malikite rite and the Achaerite doctrine, which promote the virtues of moderation, the middle way and respect for opinions and beliefs.

The institution of the Commandery of the Faithful, which has been forged through twelve centuries of history, has established spiritual ties that unite secularly not only Moroccans, but also African populations, particularly those in the Sahel and West Africa.

The role of the Kingdom’s spiritual diplomacy has been further strengthened in an international context, currently marked by the proliferation of violent extremist currents. In addition to its recognized role as a platform for dialogue and cultural exchange between the Muslim world and the West, Morocco is now setting itself up as an international reference in the fight against religious radicalism. The Kingdom has set up, in 2015, the Mohammed VI Institute for the Training of Imams and Preachers, which also trains Imams from Tunisia, Mali, Guinea, Côte d’Ivoire and France, as well as the Mohammed VI Foundation of African Ulema.

To make the action of spiritual diplomacy even more efficient, a doctrine should be formalized to counter the radical discourse of extremist movements, especially towards young people. This doctrine could constitute a reference framework, useful to the international community in its fight against the indoctrination and recruitment of terrorists.
Morocco is strongly concerned by climate change. The country’s vulnerability to this global phenomenon is perceptible at several levels: increasing scarcity of water resources, threats to food and health security, weakening of ecosystems, high exposure of the coastline to climate risks, development of climate migration...

Faced with this vulnerability, climate diplomacy also has a role to play in supporting the country’s efforts to adapt to climate change. It should help to reach a better positioning of Morocco in the international climate debate, while seeking to make the Kingdom benefit from cooperation mechanisms, offered at bilateral and multilateral levels.

Morocco, which hosted COP22 in November 2016, should, at the level of international negotiations, put emphasis on adaptation to climate change, financing and mechanisms designed to offset the risks generated by climate disruption, in accordance with the interests of the groups of countries to which it belongs, particularly the Africa group.
CITIZEN DIPLOMACY

Today, civil society actors are exerting a growing influence on international relations. Most states associate these actors in their diplomatic actions to assert their strategic interests.

Aware of the importance of these actors, Morocco should encourage their involvement in the effort to promote the image of the Kingdom internationally and to defend its national interests, particularly the national issue of territorial integrity. To this end, it is important:

• to promote effective ownership by civil society of the major national issues at stake,
• to support networking among NGOs in order to optimize their actions and pool their resources,
• to strengthen their capacity to forge close ties with their foreign counterparts and to use them as a driver of influence, highlighting the progress made by Morocco,
• to exploit the communication spaces offered internationally to disseminate an image of Morocco closer to reality, while involving Moroccans across the world to facilitate the achievement of such an objective.
Chapter 4

MOROCCANS ACROSS THE WORLD
The High Directions of His Majesty King Mohammed VI have always highlighted the singular position of Moroccans across the world as full-fledged citizens, key players in the development process of Morocco and as ambassadors of the Kingdom abroad.

The number of Moroccans across the world amounts to 5 million people according to the study programme conducted jointly by the Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad (CCME), the Ministry Delegate in charge of Moroccans Living Abroad and Migration Affairs and the Royal Institute for Strategic Studies, completed in 2013.

Morocco is striving to maintain strong and regular ties with its nationals living abroad and whose skills can be mobilized, thus constituting a lever for accelerating the accumulation of Morocco's human capital.
Europe is home to 77% of the Moroccan community living abroad, 56% of which are in France and Spain (International Organization for Migration, 2017). However, the growth rate of emigration flows to Europe is slowing down markedly, reflecting the beginning of diversification towards other geographical areas, particularly the Gulf countries, North America and Africa.

Remittances from Moroccans around the world, which amount to about 7% of GDP, are a major contribution to the country’s macroeconomic balances and play an important role in poverty reduction.
Restrictive migration policies, conducted by countries hosting Moroccans living abroad and the fierce competition to attract talented and skilled profiles internationally require Morocco to implement a long-term strategy of mobility, which can be broken down into five interdependent axes:

- Continue to consolidate the ties of Moroccans around the world with the mother country.
- Create the conditions necessary for a vigorous mobilization of the skills of Moroccans across the world for the development of their country.
- Improve the governance of the institutional mechanisms dedicated to migration.
- Increase the mobilization of remittances from Moroccans across the world and maximize their impact on the national economy.
- Establish a judicious articulation between the migration policy and education and employment policies.