

PANORAMA OF MOROCCO IN THE WORLD

The Kingdom's International Relations

Updated Version of December 2019

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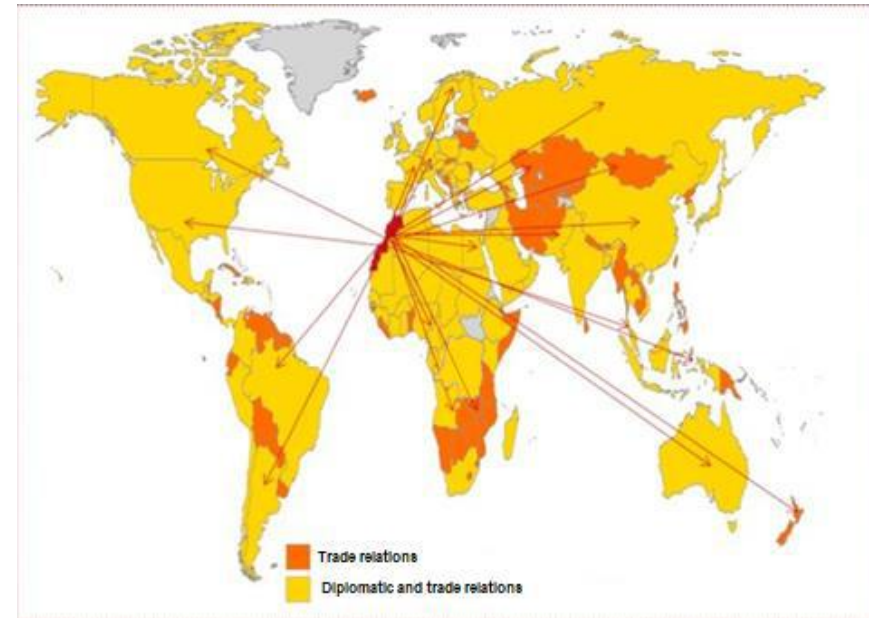
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FOREWORD

In 2015, the Royal Institute for Strategic Studies (IRES) has launched a new series of strategic reports: **Panoramas of Morocco in the world**. A common feature of these annual strategic reports is that they describe a given situation in its general context (the *Big picture*): a broad perspective.

The first report in this series examined the major transitions underway at the global level and their impacts on Morocco, in terms of risks to be avoided, opportunities to be seized and disruptions to be anticipated. The second Panorama was devoted to the Kingdom's International Relations (2016). The third Panorama (2017) addressed the crucial issues of climate change and the ecological footprint. The fourth Panorama (2018) focused on the autonomous development of Africa.

Figure 1: Morocco's international relations
(May 2, 2019)



Foreword (2)

This strategic report is an update of 2016 Panorama. IRES has dedicated this report to the **Kingdom's international relations**, starting from the Directions contained in the Royal Message of August 30, 2013, calling on the Institute to devote its efforts to Morocco's external relations and the diplomatic field.

This **Panorama** highlights the foundations of the Kingdom's foreign policy, as they stem from the Vision of His Majesty King Mohammed VI. It explores Morocco's relations with its neighbours and devotes three chapters to the Kingdom's areas of affiliation, one chapter to relations with America and one to relations with Asia.

The strategic report refers mainly to the conclusions of the studies carried out by IRES on Morocco's external relations, which have given priority in recent years to the African continent. The report has been enriched by the proposals made during the meetings organized by the Institute.

Mohammed Tawfik MOULINE
Director General of IRES

INTRODUCTION

Morocco is a crossroads for several civilizations. Inhabited since prehistoric times by the Amazigh, it has experienced, to varying degrees, the influence of Phoenician, Carthaginian, Roman, Vandal, Byzantine and Arab civilizations, which enabled **Morocco to build a plural cultural identity.**

From the 8th to the 15th century, **Morocco has been a place of great importance in the history of mankind**, interacting with Al Andalus, a land of peaceful coexistence between the peoples of the three monotheistic religions. This period was characterized by the works of great thinkers and scholars, including Al-Bakri, Sharif Al Idrisi, Moses Maimonides, Ibn Rochd – Averroes -, Ibn Khaldun and Hassan al-Wazzan - Leon the African -.

Morocco's openness to the world has also been marked by the travels abroad of illustrious explorers, such as Ibn Battuta. It has been consolidated with the establishment of close cooperation links with great powers such as England, a country with which Morocco has eight centuries of diplomatic relations.

From the 15th century, however, due to the end of the Muslim era in Andalusia in the north and the presence of the Ottoman Empire in the east, **Morocco has given priority, from the sixteenth century, to its openness to Africa**, turning its back to the rest of the world.

INTRODUCTION (2)

It was not until the second half of the seventeenth century that Morocco opened up to the world again, with the construction of a new port in Essaouira and the restoration of other ports on the Atlantic coast, including the port of Casablanca. In addition, **Morocco was the first country in the world to recognize the independence of the United States in 1777** and established **trade relations with Russia in 1778**.

From the nineteenth century, Moroccans settled in Africa and Europe. **Ties were forged with the new Republics of South America** thanks, in particular, to **Moroccans of Jewish faith**.

INTRODUCTION (3)

Since the twentieth century, Morocco has continued to open up to the outside world and has made a vital strategic choice, building on the assets available to the Kingdom, including in particular:

- its geographical position, at the crossroads of the European and African continents, with a projection on the Arab world, placing Morocco at the centre of the preoccupations of the great powers (security in the Strait of Gibraltar, political stability in the southern Mediterranean, the fight against terrorism and organized crime in the Sahel...),
- an international behaviour, based on political and religious moderation, which allowed the Kingdom to play a role as a privileged mediator and a bridge between the Muslim world and the West,
- acute sensitivity to global issues (human development, global security, climate change, defence of a fair and just international order...),
- judicious choices, based on the development of promising sectors, contributing to the emergence of a modern Morocco which remains, nevertheless, attached to its values and its age-old traditions.

INTRODUCTION (4)

The pattern of cooperation and partnership relations developed by the Kingdom places it, today, at the heart of major international stakes. It requires Morocco to constantly re-adapt the tools for deploying its foreign policy to the accelerated changes at the regional and global levels.

Being at the same time Mediterranean, Arab-Muslim and African, Morocco is perfectly at ease in its different areas of affiliation and claims this plurality.

As a soft power advocate, Morocco intends to use the cultural component as one of the key drivers of its alliance and partnership strategy.

The emergence of a new global geopolitical landscape, consecrating the pre-eminence of integrated spaces, brings the Kingdom of Morocco to question the means to consolidate its areas of belonging.

Chapter I

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

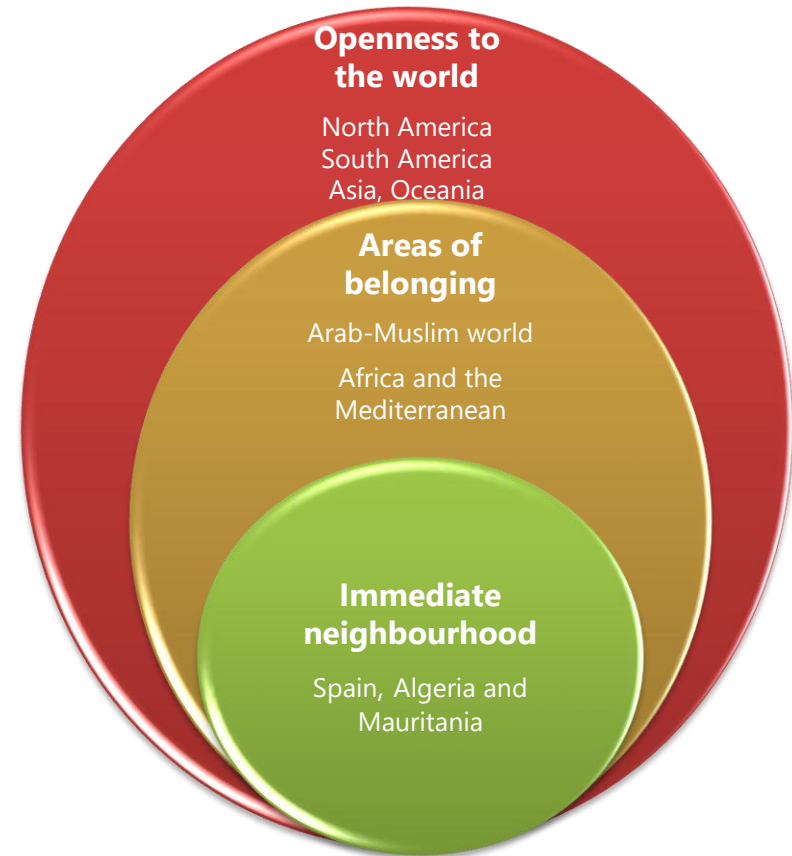
READING GRID

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.

Figure 2: Morocco's openness to the world



DOCTRINE

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.



THE ROYAL VISION

"... 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

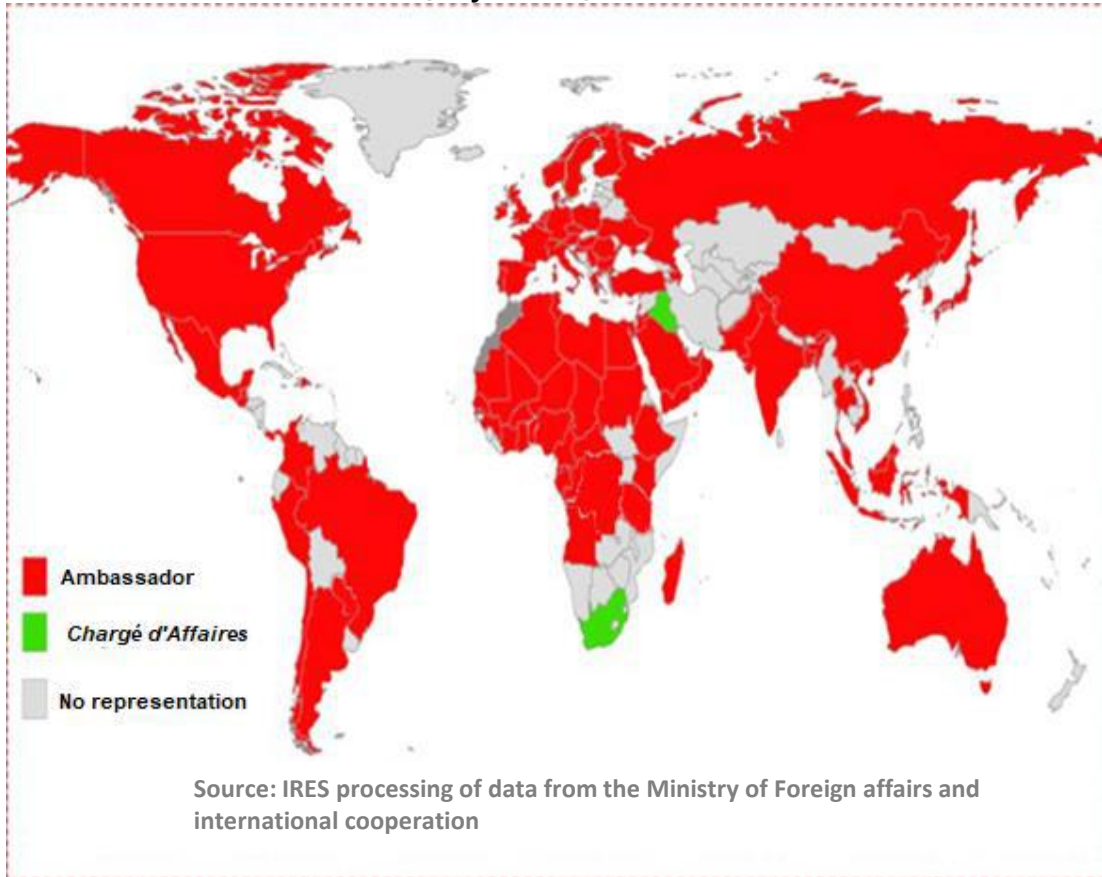
IMPLEMENTING THE COUNTRY'S FOREIGN POLICY

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.

DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIONS ABROAD

Figure 4: Morocco's representations abroad
(May 2, 2019)



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.

MOROCCO WITHIN THE SYSTEM OF 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:

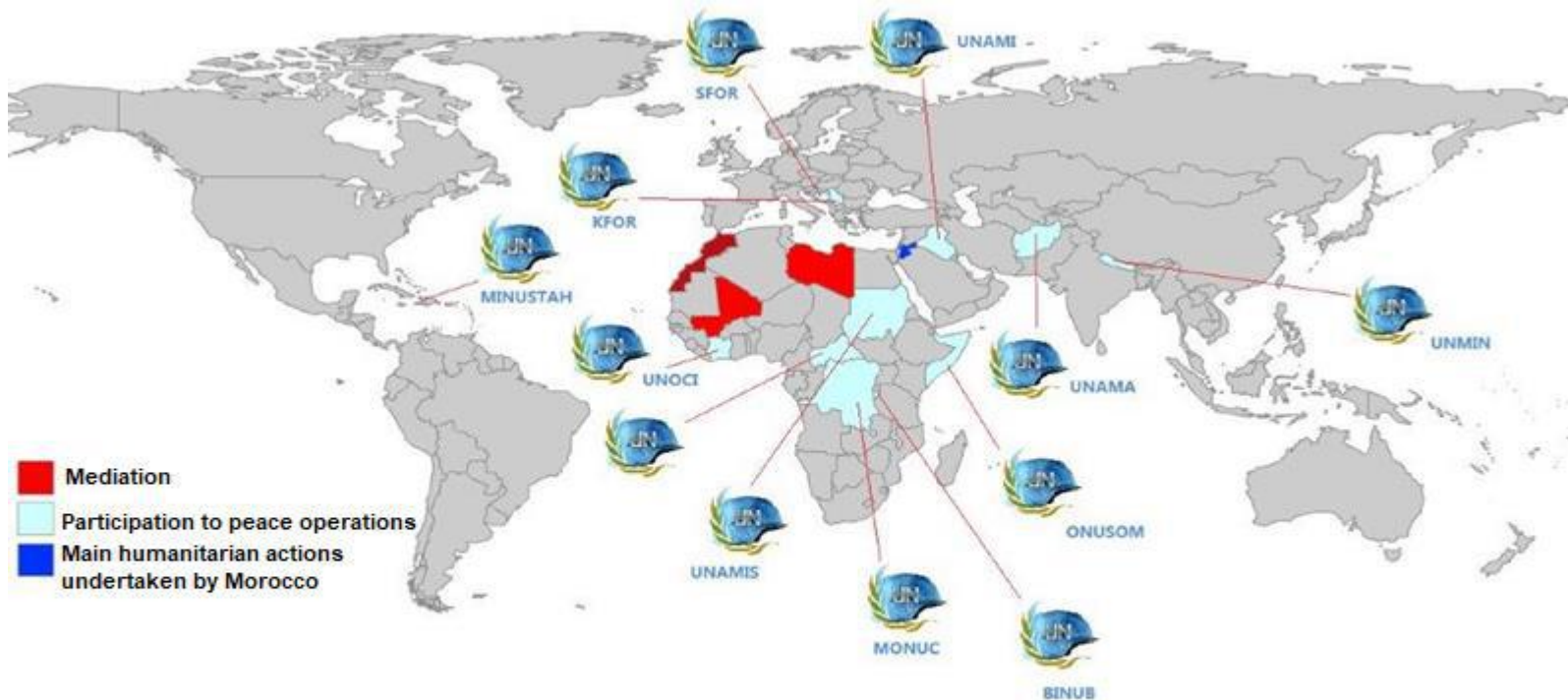
- Fostering job creation in the private sector, through the promotion of a more enabling environment for business and competitiveness, support for private sector growth and facilitation of access to financing.
- Enhancing human capital by improving the quality of the education and health systems and 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.

MOROCCO WITHIN THE SYSTEM OF MULTILATERAL COOPERATION (3)

Figure 5: Morocco's participation in peace-keeping operations and humanitarian actions (May 2, 2019)



Source : IRES processing of SIPRI data

MOROCCO'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE RESOLUTION OF GLOBAL PROBLEMS

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.

MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH NATO

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.

A MULTIFORM DIPLOMACY



- ❖ **Parliamentary**
- ❖ **Economic**
- ❖ **Cultural**
- ❖ **Spiritual**
- ❖ **Climatic**
- ❖ **Citizen**

"... 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

PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY

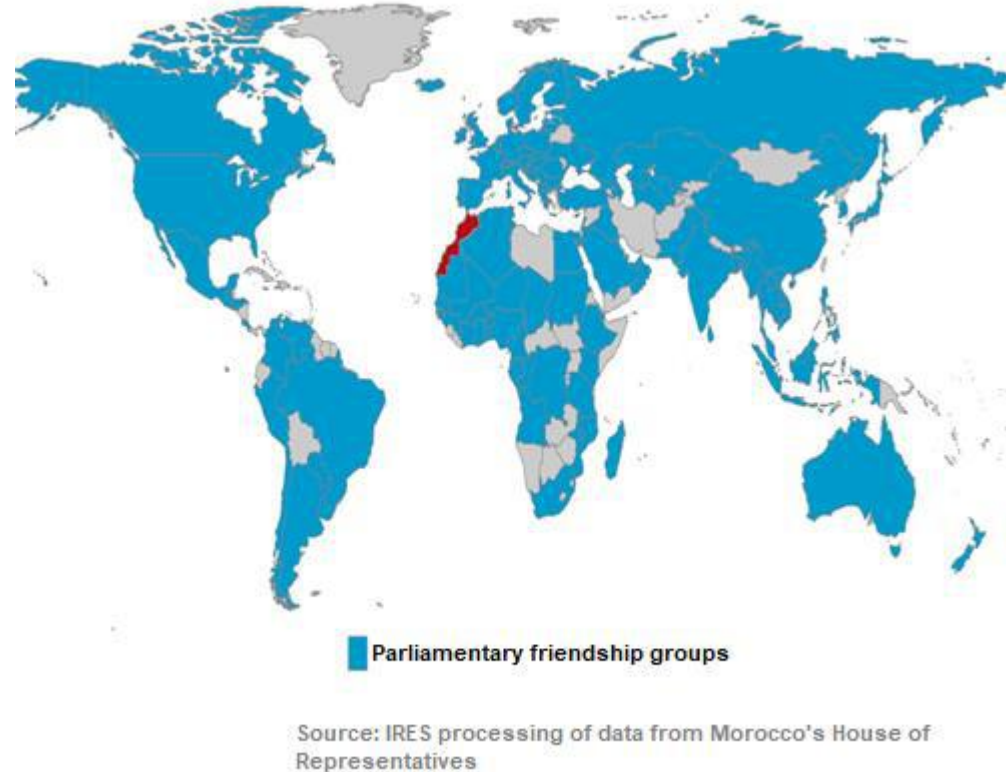
The 2011 Constitution has granted broad prerogatives to the legislative institution, which now plays a significant role in political life, but also in diplomacy, whether with the parliaments of foreign countries or with parliamentary organizations of which Morocco is a member.

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.

Figure 6: Parliamentary friendship groups



ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY

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.

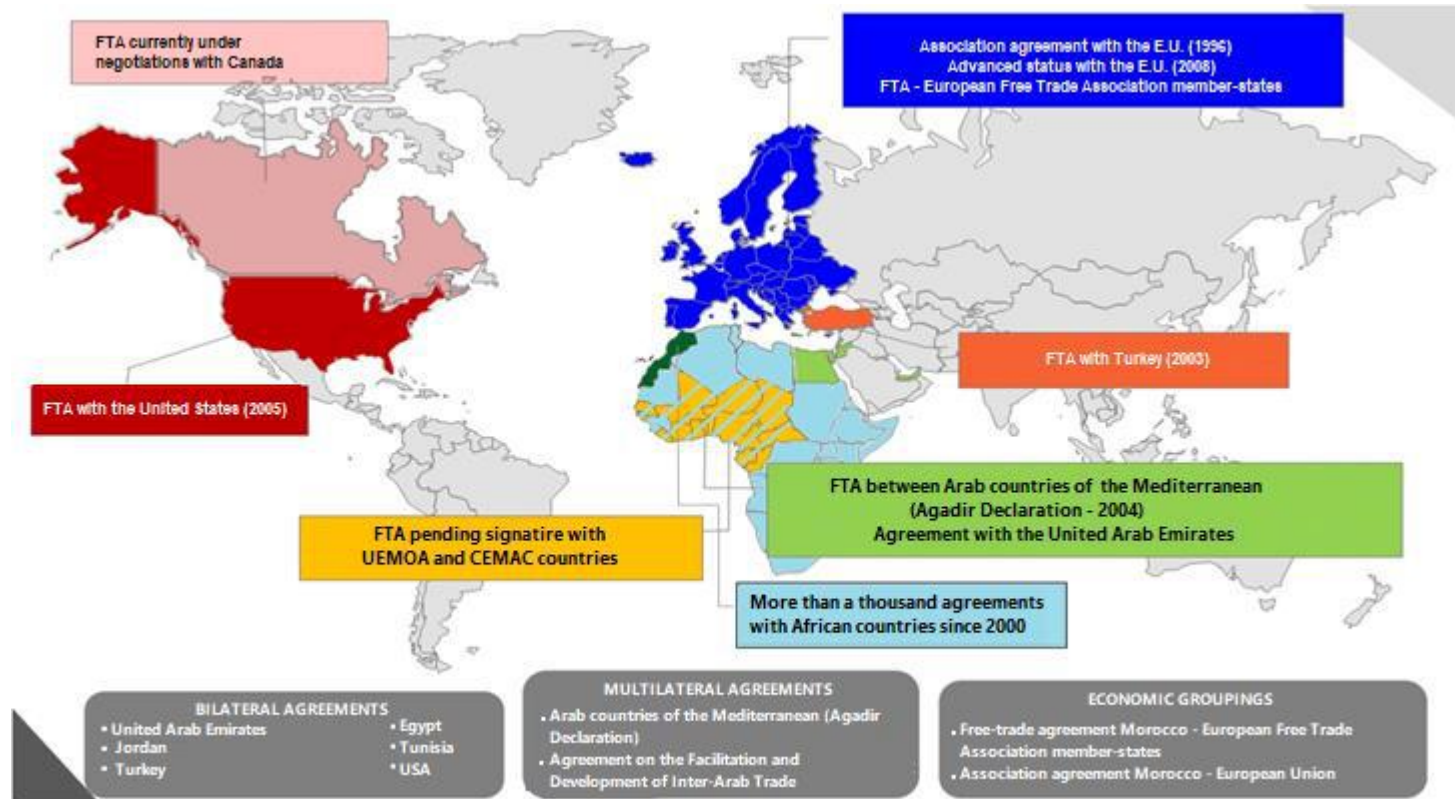
His Majesty King Mohammed VI has given a strong impetus to diplomatic action in the economic field, which should foster the transition to a form of diplomacy, in the service of the Kingdom's economic development, and contribute to the preservation of its priority strategic interests. In this context, 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.

PATTERN OF ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIPS IN MOROCCO

Figure 7: Morocco's network of relations



Source: IRES processing of data from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

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 competitiveness, 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.

CLIMATIC DIPLOMACY

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

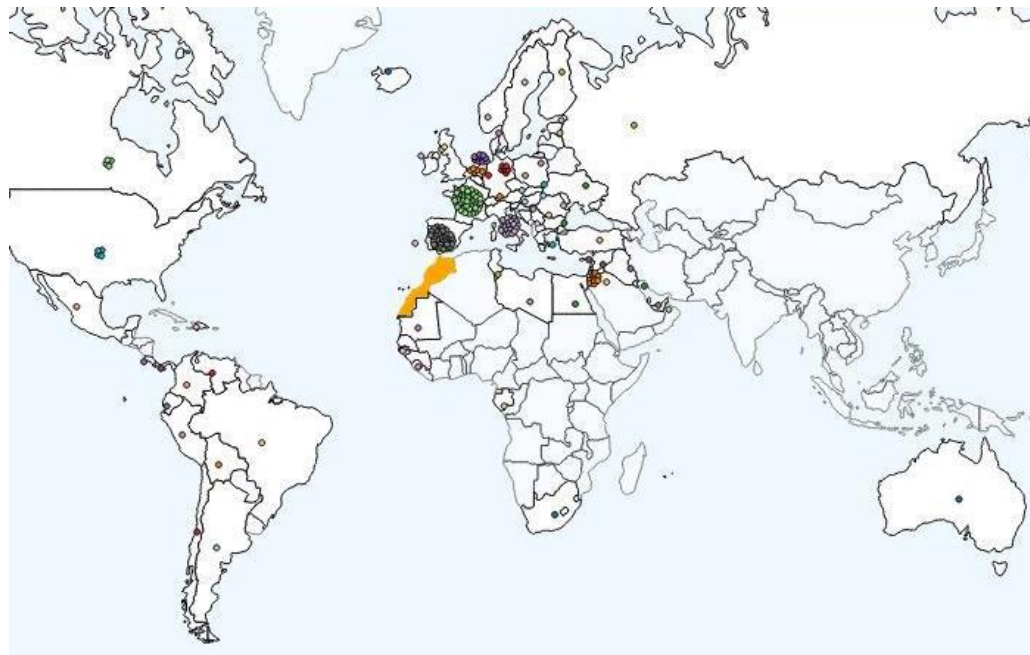
Today, civil society actors are exerting a growing influence on international relations. Most states associate these actors in their diplomatic actions to assert their strategic interests.

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.

MOROCCANS ACROSS THE WORLD

Figure 8: Distribution of Moroccans across the world in 2017

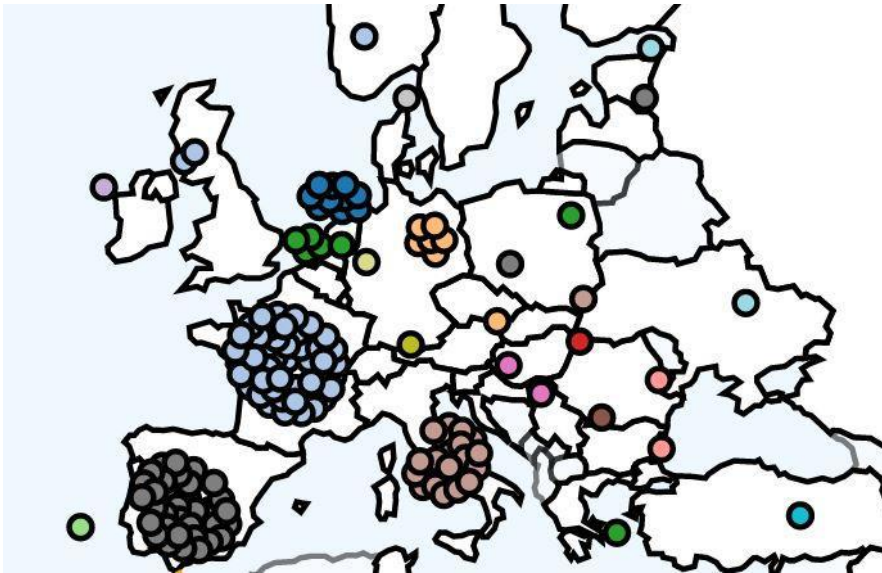


Source: International Organization for Migration

- 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.

MOROCCANS ACROSS THE WORLD (2)

Figure 9: Distribution of Moroccans across Europe in 2017



Source: International Organisation for Migration

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.

MOROCCANS ACROSS THE WORLD (3)

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.

Chapter II

MOROCCO AND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNTRIES

SYNOPSIS

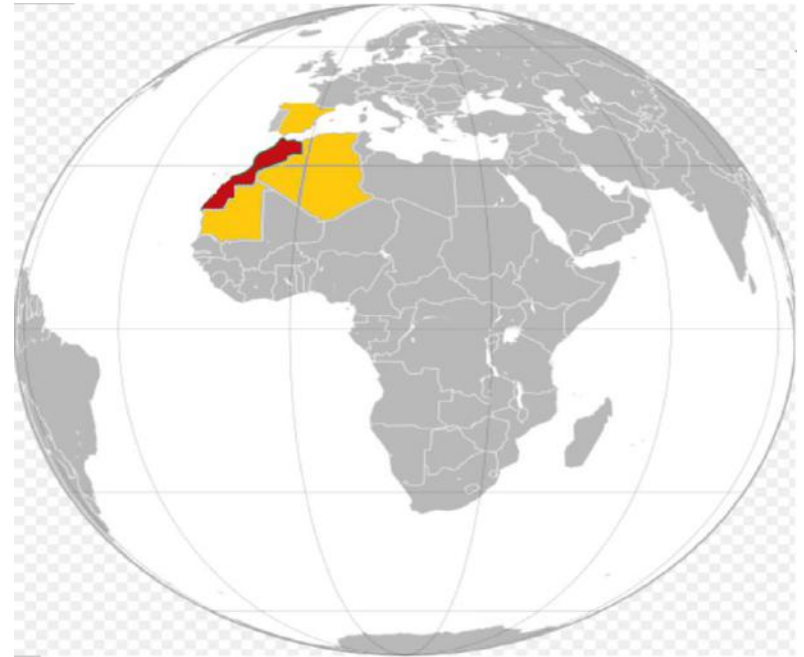
Morocco's neighbourhood is determined by its geographical continuity by land with Algeria and Mauritania and by sea with Spain.

Being the space where the Morocco's territorial security is at stake, this area is of crucial importance.

Security is not only of a military nature (neighbourhood conflicts), but also of a civil nature (migration, transnational threats...).

Morocco's specific geographical position as a bridge between Africa and Europe and between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic makes security an important element for regional and international stability.

Figure 10: Morocco's neighbourhood





THE ROYAL VISION

The vision of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, with regard to relations with neighbouring countries is based on two interdependent pillars:

- **The preservation** of the Kingdom's **territorial integrity**.
- **The development of cooperation** with neighbouring countries and its extension to structuring areas.

"...I should like to say today, in a very straightforward and responsible way, that Morocco stands ready for a direct and frank dialogue with our sister nation, Algeria, in order to settle the transient and objective differences impeding the development of relations between the two countries. To this end, **I suggest to our Algerian brothers that we set up a joint political mechanism for dialogue and consultation**. This mechanism's format, nature and level of representation can be mutually agreed upon. I should like to stress that Morocco is willing to consider the proposals or initiatives Algeria may want to offer in this regard so as to break the stalemate... ".

Excerpt from His Majesty's Speech on the occasion of the 43rd anniversary of the Green March on November 6, 2018

" ... Today, given the current circumstances facing Arab peoples and the Maghreb region, **we are in great need of that spirit of solidarity to enable us to rise to common development and security challenges**. We hope that the commitment and sincere solidarity which have always bound the Algerian and Moroccan peoples will be rekindled so that we may continue to work together, honestly and in good faith, to serve Arab and Maghreb causes and rise to challenges facing Africa. "

Excerpt of His Majesty's Speech on the occasion of the 63rd Anniversary of the Revolution of the King and the People on August 20, 2016

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The history of the neighbourhood

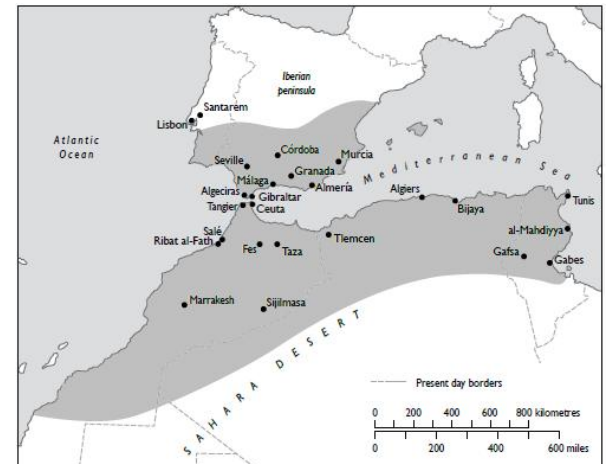
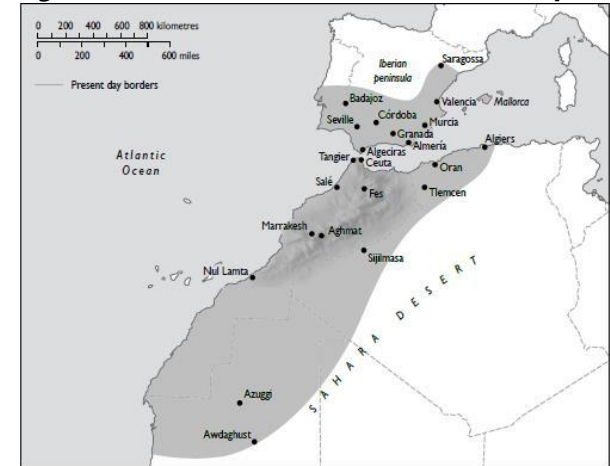
Since Antiquity, several civilizations have interacted in North Africa and nurtured **Morocco's natural appetite for dialogue with other peoples.**

Morocco is one of the few countries to have preserved its independence for more than a millennium, from the 8th to the 20th century. In addition, it is **one of the first nation-states in the world.**

The Almoravid Empire extended at the beginning of the 12th century from the Senegal River to the centre of the Iberian Peninsula. Morocco developed a clear capacity to **integrate territories and peoples as different** as those of Sub-Saharan Africa and the West.

The **strong interactions** established between Morocco and Spain, at the time of Al-Andalus, still fuel the relations between the two countries.

Figure 11: The Almoravid and Almohad Empires



Source: Bennison, Amira K., *The Almoravid and Almohad Empires*, Edinburgh University Press, 2016

RECENT HISTORY

Algeria

- Morocco's multifaceted support to the Algerian resistance in its struggle for independence.
- Establishment of diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Algeria on October 1st, 1962.
- "Sand War" in 1963 and political disputes with Algeria, because of its position on the Moroccan Sahara issue since 1975.
- Closure of borders with Morocco by Algeria in 1994.

Spain

- Signature on February 11, 1957, of the Diplomatic Treaty between Morocco and Spain.
- Madrid Agreement of 1975, establishing the conditions for Spain's withdrawal from the Moroccan Sahara.
- Signature in 1991 of the Treaty of Friendship and Good Neighbourliness between the two countries.

Mauritania

- Recognition of the independence of Mauritania by Morocco in 1969, with the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1970.
- Morocco : the leading African investor in Mauritania. Moroccan operators are active in many sectors, including telecommunications, banking, construction, fishing and services. Mauritania is also the Kingdom's third customer in Africa after Senegal and Djibouti (2019).

GLOBAL NEIGHBOURHOOD INSTRUMENTS

Common to the proximity area

Cooperation with the **Union for the Mediterranean** is based on joint regional projects: depollution of the Mediterranean, renewable energy, higher education and scientific research, development of SMEs...

The **Forum for dialogue in the Western Mediterranean** (5+5 Dialogue) advocates the development of close cooperation on defence issues, including joint military exercises, sub-regional coordination, the fight against irregular migration and organized crime...

NATO's Mediterranean dialogue is a framework for enhanced security cooperation, with joint maritime surveillance operations, the "Active Endeavour" operation and exchange of information.

Distinct

Morocco/Algeria/Mauritania

The three countries belong to several regional organizations and groupings, such as the Arab Maghreb Union, the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Morocco/Mauritania

Both countries are part of CEN-SAD, a community of Sahel-Saharan States, comprising 28 African states, and the Conference of African States bordering the Atlantic.

Morocco/Spain

As a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), the European Neighbourhood Policy was established in 2004 to foster closer relations with countries bordering the European Union.

BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

	Number of agreements resulting from bilateral cooperation	Typology of agreements
Algeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 100 cooperation agreements and conventions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bilaterally: sectoral agreements in higher education, transport, agriculture... At the regional level: a treaty establishing the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) in 1989.
Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 105 agreements concluded with Morocco against only 55 treaties signed by Spain with the other countries of the Maghreb altogether 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two types of agreements: some are bilateral and others are multilateral with the European Union (economic, financial, security and cultural agreements). Existence of a high joint Moroccan-Spanish commission.
Mauritania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80 agreements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conventions, memorandums of understanding and cooperation programmes in the economic, social, cultural and technical fields. Establishment of several sectoral commissions and specialized working groups.

GLOBAL ISSUES

The global and cross-cutting issues emerging in this area of proximity are as follows:

- The construction of a common space of cooperation, guaranteeing the stability of the region and enabling it to forge an influential position in international affairs.
- The rise of transnational threats, in this case terrorism and organized crime, which undermines regional and international stability.
- The risks caused by irregular immigration and its related humanitarian and security issues.
- The increasing impact of climate change and the urgent need to build capacity to adapt to this global phenomenon.

MOROCCO AND ALGERIA

Issues at stake for Morocco

Political

- Reconsidering the Algerian position on the Moroccan Sahara issue.

Economic

- Mobilizing the full potential of Maghreb integration.
- Improving the Maghreb economic attractiveness for foreign direct investment.

Security

- Strengthening cooperation in the fight against terrorism and organized crime.
- Securing the borders with Algeria, the point of access to Morocco for Sub-Saharan migrants.

Cultural and human

- Strengthening cooperation between civil society actors.
- Calling for the media to contribute to the development of a positive image of the two countries in the respective public opinions.

Levers for developing bilateral cooperation

- Establishing a political dialogue in order to relaunch bilateral relations on a new basis, by restoring the collective memory of the two peoples and by setting up a cooperation platform bringing together the border communities of the two countries.
- Broadening the field of common interests in order to accelerate the transition from a situation marked by a logic of narrow competition to a logic of shared gains.
- Directing economic cooperation towards sectors where there are genuine complementarities between the two countries.
- Setting up an appropriate communication strategy towards Algeria, promoting the values of ethics and mutual respect and targeting, in particular, young Algerians, some of whom would be the future senior leaders of this country.

MOROCCO AND SPAIN

Issues at stake for Morocco

Political

- Resolving the issue of the enclaves of Ceuta, Melilla and the Jaafarine islands.
- Maritime delimitation in the Atlantic.
- Maintaining a favourable position of Spain regarding the Moroccan Sahara.

Economic

- Extending bilateral cooperation to Morocco's global trades and sectors of the future.
- Developing tripartite cooperation at the level of Africa and South America.

Security

- Securing the Strait of Gibraltar.
- Addressing the issue of irregular migration.
- Combating terrorism and organized crime.

Cultural and human

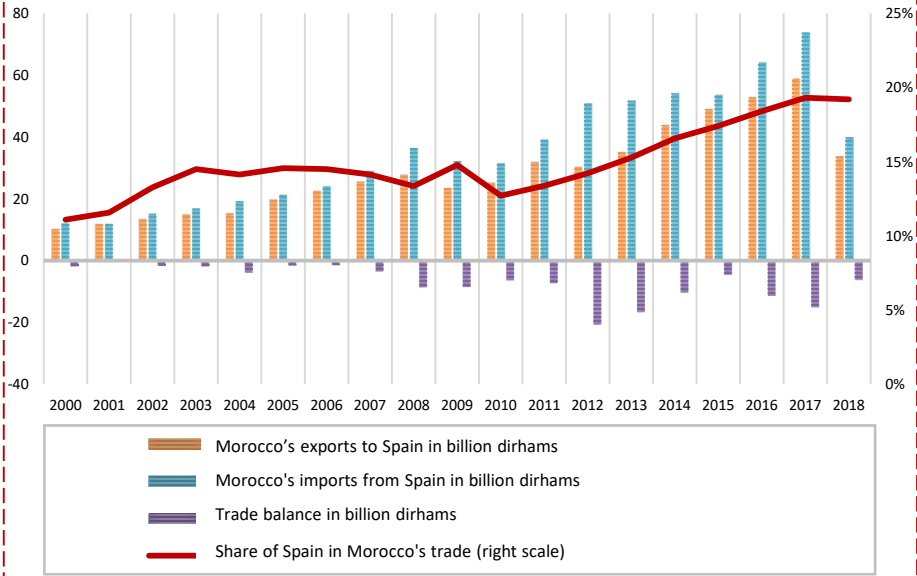
- Deepening the socio-economic integration of Moroccans living in Spain.
- Improving the image of Morocco and Moroccans in Spain.
- Rebalancing cultural exchanges.
- Bringing together the civil societies of the two countries.

Levers for strengthening cooperation

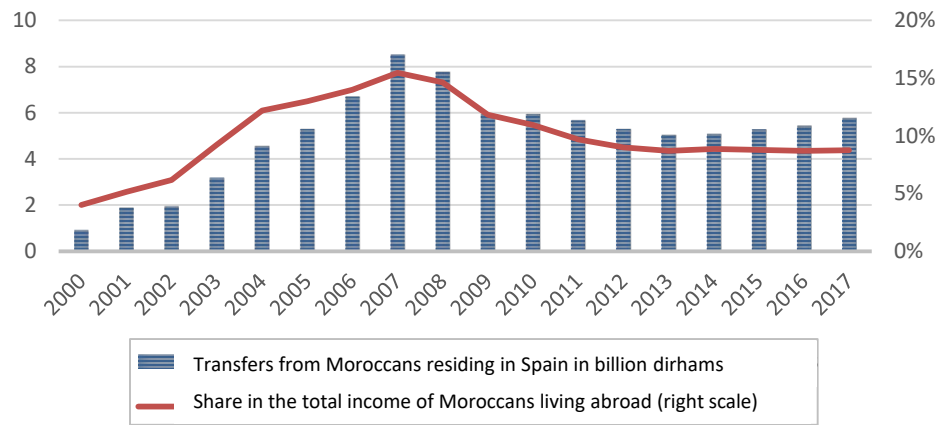
- Rewriting the common history of the two countries, as a prelude to a profound revision of the relationship between the north and south of the Mediterranean.
- Strengthening the Euro-Mediterranean dimension of Morocco-Spain relations.
- Anticipating possible tensions by setting up permanent mechanisms for consultation and coordination.
- Rebalancing trade relations and broadening the scope of cooperation to areas of common interest, particularly Africa and Latin America.
- Improving Morocco's image among the media and opinion leaders in Spain.

ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN MOROCCO AND SPAIN

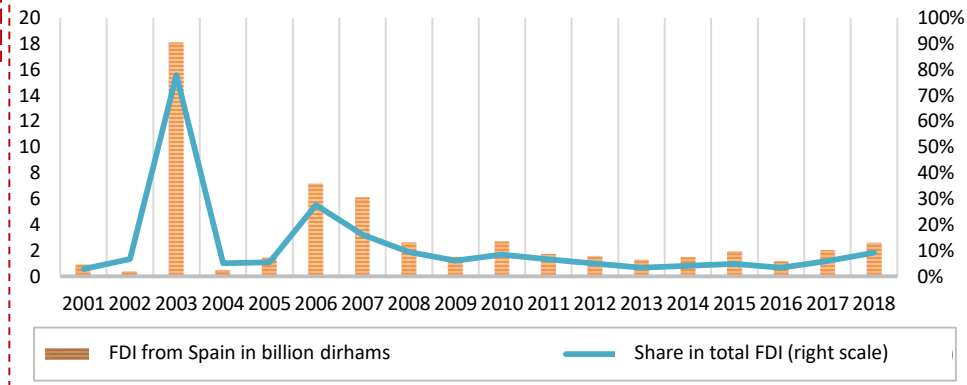
Trade in goods between Morocco and Spain



Remittances from Moroccans living in Spain



Spanish foreign direct investments in Morocco



Source: Foreign Exchange Office

Economic cooperation between Morocco and Spain has developed significantly in recent years. Spain is, since 2012, the first trading partner of Morocco.

Figure 12: Morocco-Spain economic relations

MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA

Issues at stake for Morocco

❖ **Political**

- Consolidating ties with Mauritania, as with other countries in West Africa.
- Adopting common positions on continental and regional integration matters.

❖ **Economic**

- Diversifying and increasing trade through removing barriers to investment and movement of goods.
- Developing Moroccan investments in promising sectors in Mauritania and their diversification into promising sectors.

❖ **Security**

- Establishing a common vision for regional security.
- Cooperating towards the securing of the border area and the strengthening Mauritania's military capacities.

❖ **Cultural and human**

- Promoting the common cultural legacy: the Hassani heritage.

Levers for the development of relations

- Strengthening Mauritania's place in foreign policy priorities by rehabilitating the Rabat-Nouakchott axis and developing cooperation and consultation within regional groupings such as CEN-SAD.
- Deepening economic cooperation, encouraging Moroccan operators to further target the Mauritanian market as an outlet and investment location.
- Broadening the scope of cooperation to structural areas including, in particular, education and vocational training, human development and infrastructure.
- Making cultural and spiritual cooperation a lasting relay of relations between the two countries, by promoting the Hassani cultural heritage and the common memory shared by both countries and by encouraging proximity between civil society actors.

Chapter III

MOROCCO AND THE ARAB-MUSLIM WORLD

SYNOPSIS

The Arab-Muslim area is characterized by an important cultural diversity, a great economic potential and a dynamic demographic asset.

Since the middle of the 20th century, this area has been the epicentre of security crises that challenged great powers: from the conflicts of the Middle East to the socio-political transformations known as the "*Arab Spring*".

The importance of the strategic dimension of Morocco's relations with the countries of the Arab-Muslim world varies from one region to another.

Figure 13: The Arab-Muslim world



Source: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019



THE ROYAL VISION

" ... Therefore, we must remain focused on **designing and developing the right partnerships within the Arab family**, with regard to needs, priorities and areas of cooperation so as to boost the development dimension of our joint action. All our endogenous capacities should be leveraged to enable Arab citizens to enjoy a serene, dignified life. "

Excerpt from the Royal Speech on the occasion of 27th Arab Summit on July 25, 2016

" We need a **comprehensive Arab order based on economic integration and political unity and cohesion to turn the Arab world** into an influential geopolitical force in the international arena – a bloc which is capable of defending the crucial Arab causes. "

Excerpt from the Throne Speech of July 30, 2014

"... Morocco's adherence to **Arab reconciliation efforts**, as well as its **commitment to the peace process**, is a concrete expression of the strategic choice it has always made: since decisive issues are at stake for the future of the Arab nation and in particular the **Palestinian cause**, it is constantly keen to ensure that **the spirit of dialogue, consensus and solidarity** prevails, within the framework of law and legality. "

Address by His Majesty King Mohammed VI on the occasion of the 21st Ordinary Arab Summit of March 30, 2009

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The history of Arab-Muslim affiliation

Islam was introduced to Morocco in the 7th century. A large part of Morocco's population became Muslim. Morocco has maintained ongoing political, economic and spiritual relations with Middle Eastern countries ever since.

Since the Middle Ages, Morocco's action has been marked by its resolute support to and solidarity with other Arab-Muslim nations:

- against the Crusaders in the countries of the Levant,
- against the Reconquista that threatened Al Andalus,
- against France, in support of Emir Abdelkader in Algeria.

Morocco has tirelessly committed itself to strengthening its historical, and cultural relations and cooperation with the Arab-Muslim countries. Thus, some major events of cooperation between Arab and Muslim countries have taken place in the Kingdom:

- On September 25, 1969, several leaders of Muslim-majority countries met in the Kingdom, following the arson of Al-Aqsa Mosque, to establish the Organization of Islamic Conference.
- Since joining the Arab League on October 1st, 1958, Morocco has hosted six Arab Summits (1965, 1969, 1974, 1981, 1985 et 1989).

Figure 14: The Arab League member-states



RECENT HISTORY

Deeply rooted in its affiliation to the Arab-Muslim world, Morocco has campaigned since its independence in favour of the causes and supreme interests of this community, including:

- the independence of Algeria,
- the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to establish their own state,
- the resolution of the civil war in Lebanon, the respect of the sovereignty of Kuwait, Sudan, Bahrain and Iraq,
- the search for political and diplomatic solutions to crises affecting certain countries in the region: Libya, Syria, Yemen and Somalia.

Morocco has intervened militarily only four times in all the conflicts in this area, always preferring the spirit of dialogue and negotiation to the logic of confrontation and violence.

RECENT HISTORY (2)

Construction of the Maghreb

The construction of an integrated Maghreb space is a strategic priority for Morocco:

- 1948: creation of the Committee for the Liberation of the Maghreb.
- 1958: conference of Maghreb political parties in Tangier.
- 1989: signing of the Treaty of Marrakech, creating the Arab Maghreb Union.

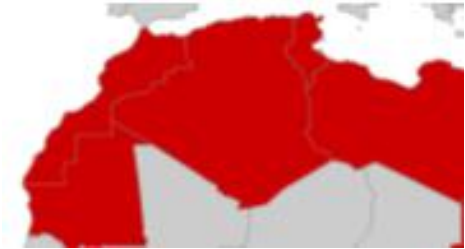
The achievements of the Arab Maghreb Union, after almost 30 years of existence, remain far below the aspirations of its founders.

Indeed, the Maghreb is one of the least economically integrated regions in the world, despite the multiple complementarities that characterize its member countries.

THE INSTRUMENTS OF ARAB-MUSLIM AFFILIATION

- **Arab Maghreb Union:** Building the Maghreb is a strategic priority for Morocco. In 1989, the Treaty of Marrakech was signed, creating the Arab Maghreb Union.
- **Arab League:** Morocco has always been convinced of the need to support joint Arab action. The Kingdom is strongly committed to Arab causes, particularly the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to an independent state, with Al-Quds as its capital.
- **Organization of Islamic Conference:** It was established during the Rabat Summit of September 25, 1969, following the arson of Al-Aqsa Mosque.

Figure 15: Morocco and the Arab-Muslim world



MOROCCO AND THE MUSLIM WORLD

North Africa (outside the neighbourhood)

- **Tunisia:** Relations with this country are stable and lasting, within the framework of respect for the societal choices of both countries and their firm commitment to democracy.
- **Libya:** Morocco considers "the new Libya" (*post-Arab spring*) as a fundamental partner in the construction of the Maghreb. Since the outbreak of the inter-Libyan conflict, Morocco has sided with the Libyan people and supported UN efforts to end this conflict. As such, it hosted the inter-Libyan political talks on peace, which led to the signing of the Skhirat Agreement in December 2015, with a view to establishing a national unity government. For the United Nations, this agreement constitutes a common basis for all Libyans and also remains the ideal political framework in this transitional phase.
- **Egypt:** Relations with this country are marked by their durability, within the framework of respect for mutual societal choices advocated by both sides.

Middle East

- **Gulf Cooperation Council:** Morocco benefits from a privileged relationship with this grouping which has resulted in:
 - ✓ the conclusion, in November 2012, in Manama, of an Action Plan for the period 2012-2017 which defined the areas of cooperation, objectives, general orientations and means to be implemented. In view of the global economic situation related to the fluctuation of oil prices, this Action Plan has been extended until 2019.
 - ✓ the convergence of points of view, particularly on the urgency of a political transition in Syria, the two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Iran's non-interference in the internal affairs of Arab countries.
- **Jordan:** the bonds of fraternity that unite His Majesty King Mohammed VI and King Abdullah II of Jordan have strengthened the excellent relations between the two countries, based on understanding and consultation. These relations are characterized by a convergence of views on several regional issues and by the commitment of the two monarchies to peace in the Middle East.
- **Yemen:** Morocco has undertaken several attempts at mediation for the resolution of the Yemeni crisis. It has taken part in the Saudi-led "Decisive Storm" coalition against the Houthi rebels. Morocco withdrew from this coalition in early 2019.

MOROCCO AND THE MUSLIM WORLD (2)

- **Palestine:** Morocco has always assumed its role of defending the Palestinian cause, preferring the virtues of dialogue and negotiation to the logic of confrontation and violence. It has set up a funding mechanism for educational, socio-economic and cultural projects for the benefit of the inhabitants of the holy city (Bayt Mal Al-Quds Agency).
- **Iraq:** the quality of relations with Iraq have been preserved despite the crisis in that country. Since the beginning of the war in Iraq in 2003, Morocco has maintained its constant position of support for Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity and stressed the importance of the participation of all components of Iraqi society, without exclusion, in the political process.
- **Syria:** marked by episodic tensions, relations between Morocco and Syria deteriorated after Morocco's firm stance in favour of political transition in that country. In December 2012, Morocco hosted the international conference of friends of Syria. The position of the Kingdom of Morocco is in line with the will to restore peace, territorial integrity and dignity of the Syrian people. Morocco insists on a rational involvement of the international community in the final resolution of this crisis.
- **Lebanon:** relations between Morocco and Lebanon are based on understanding and mutual respect and encompass the areas of political, cultural and socio-economic cooperation.

Other Arab countries

- **Sudan:** Morocco's relations with Sudan are based on respect for the societal choices advocated on both sides. Morocco is a member of the Arab Ministerial Committee responsible for facilitating peace talks between the Sudanese government and opposition factions in Darfur. After independence in 2011, South Sudan, which has a Christian majority, was visited by His Majesty King Mohammed VI in 2017. During this visit, nine agreements were concluded in trade, tourism, mining and legal fields.
- **Somalia:** since the outbreak of civil war in Somalia, Morocco has continued to contribute to Arab and international efforts to end the suffering of the Somali people and achieve national reconciliation. Following the adverse effects of the drought, the Kingdom provided emergency assistance to Somalia in February 2006.

MOROCCO AND THE MUSLIM WORLD (3)

Non-Arab Middle East countries

- **Iran:** relations between Morocco and Iran have deteriorated since the Islamic revolution of 1979. After breaking up in 2009, diplomatic relations between the two countries were re-established in 2015. However, Iran's indirect interference in the Sahara issue, through pro-Iranian Hezbollah's support for the "polisario", prompted Morocco to break diplomatic relations with Iran in 2018.
- **Turkey:** Morocco enjoys good political and economic relations with Turkey, with which there is a convergence of views on certain regional issues of common interest. Both countries concluded a free-trade agreement in 2003.

South Asian countries

- **Pakistan:** relations between Morocco and Pakistan are based on mutual respect, solidarity and sharing of the common Islamic cultural heritage. Since 2012, a new dynamic has been injected into bilateral relations through the strengthening of the legal framework, exchanges of visits, cultural cooperation and consultation on international issues of common interest.
- **Indonesia:** since diplomatic relations were established between the two countries in 1960, they have been characterized by regular dialogue and convergence of views on major regional and international issues.
- **Malaysia:** diplomatic relations between Morocco and Malaysia were established in 1963. They were given a boost, following the visit to Malaysia by His Majesty King Mohammed VI in 2003.

Central Asian countries

Diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Morocco and the former Soviet republics of central Asia were established between 1992 and 1993. Central Asia remains one of the most recent areas of interest for Morocco's diplomacy.

MOROCCO AND THE ARAB WORLD

Socio-political changes in the Arab world suggest a new geopolitical reconfiguration in the region:

- Early signs of a new geopolitical reconfiguration, materialized by the emergence of a Shiite axis, composed of the two Shia majority countries in the region, Iran and Iraq plus Syria, a Sunni majority country ruled by Shia leaders, in opposition to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Sultanate of Oman).
- A new geopolitics of the region is taking shape, under the influence of actors which are not members of the Arab League (Iran, Turkey and Israel), with signs of strong disruptions, such as Turkey's new position on the Middle Eastern chessboard and the opening towards Israel (Arab peace initiative formulated by Saudi Arabia at the Arab League Summit in 2002, which is still relevant today).
- Despite the regression of the "Islamic State", the terrorist threat remains a topical issue in the Arab world. This scourge still threatens the stability of the region, especially in the presence of numerous security loopholes in several countries of the region.
- The many failed states in the MENA region have become zones conducive to all kinds of trafficking, namely: raw materials, human beings, weapons, drugs and endangered species. The monopoly of legitimate violence in these countries is challenged by the existence of guerrillas, armed gangs, paramilitary groups and terrorist organizations.

MOROCCO AND THE ARAB WORLD (2)

Issues at stake for Morocco

Political

- Strategic repositioning, in the light of the new post-*Arab Spring* regional balances.
- Regaining influence on major regional issues.

Economic

- Implementation of the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA).
- Enhanced attractiveness of investments from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

Security

- Fighting against religious radicalism and extremist groups.
- Constitution of an Arab army, sharing a common doctrine.

Cultural and human

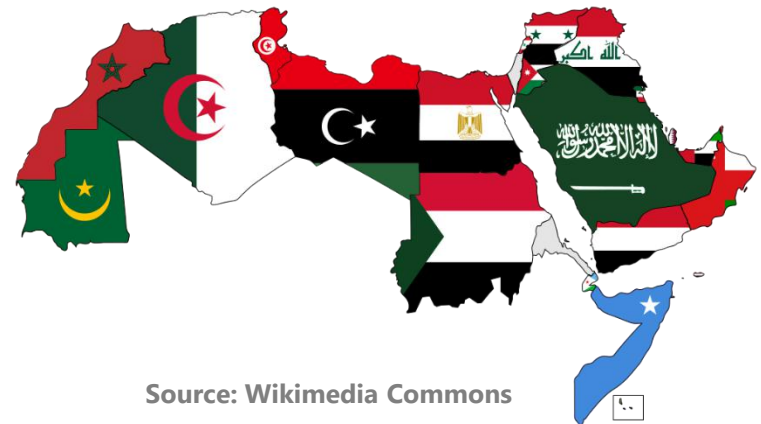
- Strengthening cultural exchanges.
- Concerted and mutually beneficial migration policy, in particular between Morocco and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

The Agadir Agreement

The initiative of the Agadir Declaration was launched by Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia and Jordan on May 8, 2001. The Agadir Agreement was signed in Rabat on February 25, 2004. It came into force on March 27, 2007.

The Agreement allows the diagonal cumulation of rules of origin, which promotes the development of trade between the signatory countries.

Figure 16: The Arab League



Source: Wikimedia Commons

THE LEVERS OF STRENGTHENING MOROCCO'S COOPERATION WITH THE ARAB WORLD

- **Provide Morocco with a medium-long term strategic vision towards the Arab world:** based on the principles of solidarity and firm commitment to Arab causes, this vision should take into consideration the new reconfiguration of the spheres of influence in the Arab region which is more particularly the outcome of the work of actors that are non-members of the League of Arab States (Turkey, Iran, Israel). It should enable Morocco to put forward a diplomatic discourse representative of the southern Mediterranean Arab countries, aimed at promoting peace, security and prosperity. Morocco should also use its central positioning vis-à-vis the European Union and its close ties with the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to play an active role in rebalancing forces at the regional level.
- **Be increasingly vigilant to cope with the terrorist threat:** while deploying security and military actions to curb this phenomenon, in coordination with the action of the international community, Morocco could use its multidimensional approach to preventing and combating terrorism to deconstruct the ideological reference framework that underlies the strategy of indoctrination and recruitment of terrorists.
- **Use triangular cooperation approaches** involving Morocco and Arab countries on the one hand, and Africa and Europe on the other.

Source: IRES

FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COUNTRIES

Morocco's relations with the Gulf Cooperation Council countries have reached a turning point with the conclusion of a strategic partnership in 2012. This framework is a recognition of Morocco's international role and its many assets in various fields.

In November 2012, the Action Plan, concluded in Manama, for the period 2012-2017 and extended to 2019, defined the areas of cooperation, objectives, general orientations and means of implementation:

- Establishment of working groups to explore areas of cooperation in agriculture and food security, transport, telecommunications, renewable energy, tourism, education, scientific research, media, youth and sports, in addition to judicial cooperation.
- Holding an annual Morocco-Gulf Cooperation Council meeting to assess progress in cooperation in the agreed areas.

Figure 17: The member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council



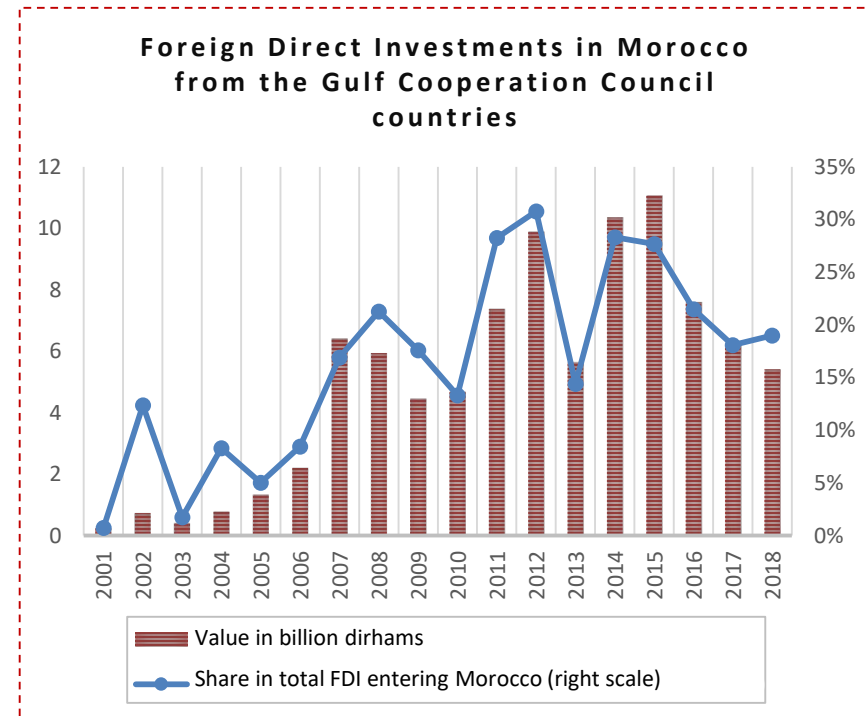
Faced with the break-up of relations with Qatar by Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, Morocco has decided to maintain positive neutrality. This position stems from the foundations of the Kingdom's foreign policy, which is based on fraternal relations with all the Gulf countries. Morocco has declared itself in favour of resuming dialogue and has also offered to play the role of mediator in this crisis.

FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COUNTRIES (2)

FDIs from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries have shown an encouraging trend and, since 2011, averaging 18% of the FDI flows received by Morocco, except for the year 2013. The main sectors benefiting from these FDIs are tourism, real estate and, more recently, energy and mining.

Such a dynamic has not been able to extend, so far, to trade relations since the market share held by Morocco in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries remains well below 1%. Margins for progress exist if, however, the objectives of the strategy followed by the Moroccan Agency for Investment and Export Development, which targets the Gulf countries as niche markets, are realized.

Figure 18: FDIs in Morocco from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries



Source: Foreign Exchange Office

FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COUNTRIES (3)

In addition to their investment and trade potential, Gulf Cooperation Council countries could play a major role in triangular partnerships with Morocco, particularly in Africa and Europe. These partnerships would allow both parties to broaden the scope of their strategic interests, according to a “win-win” cooperation logic.

Morocco's close proximity to the Gulf countries could open a new phase in Morocco-Africa relations by establishing with these countries winning joint ventures in high value-added sectors and by involving them in Moroccan initiatives and diplomatic actions, namely the Forum of Atlantic African States and the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD). Such a prospect would certainly further strengthen Morocco's presence in Africa, especially with the return of the Kingdom of Morocco to the African Union and the prospect of its membership in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Morocco would benefit from building a triangular community of interest to accompany the transitional process in some Arab countries, by playing an important role in political mediation and in the peace and security process in the region. Thus, the three parties could pool their assets in order to seize the many economic opportunities that abound in Arab countries devastated by civil war.

FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COUNTRIES (4)

In order to **exploit** the potential of the strategic partnership between Morocco and the Gulf Cooperation Council, a few levers have been identified including:

- **the development of trade**, by deploying vigorous actions, such as multiplying information campaigns and raising the awareness of economic operators on both sides and setting up direct shipping lines,
- **the implementation of a concerted migration policy**, to meet the needs of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries for Moroccan labour and to promote the geographical diversification of Moroccan emigration. To do this, the countries of this Council should be encouraged to improve the legal and social protection framework to allow Moroccans to better access to the labour market and to secure the conditions of their stay in the Gulf countries,
- **Improving the protection framework for investment in Morocco from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries**, particularly with respect to the speedy settlement of trade disputes to encourage the development of joint ventures between Gulf companies and their Moroccan counterparts,

FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COUNTRIES (4)

- **Expanding the scope of cooperation of these companies to Africa:**

- In the finance field: the regional dimension offered by "Casablanca Finance City", particularly towards African markets, could be a vector for attracting capital from the Gulf in search of profitable investments,
- In the infrastructure field: Morocco's experience and the financing capacities of the Gulf countries could be mobilized to carry out joint projects in Africa,
- In the food security field: the food potential of the African continent and Moroccan expertise within the framework of the Green Morocco Plan, combined with OCP Group's production capacities in the field of fertilizers, could contribute to the efforts made for food security on the continent, and even on a global scale.

Chapter IV

MOROCCO AND THE AFRICAN CONTINENT



SYNOPSIS

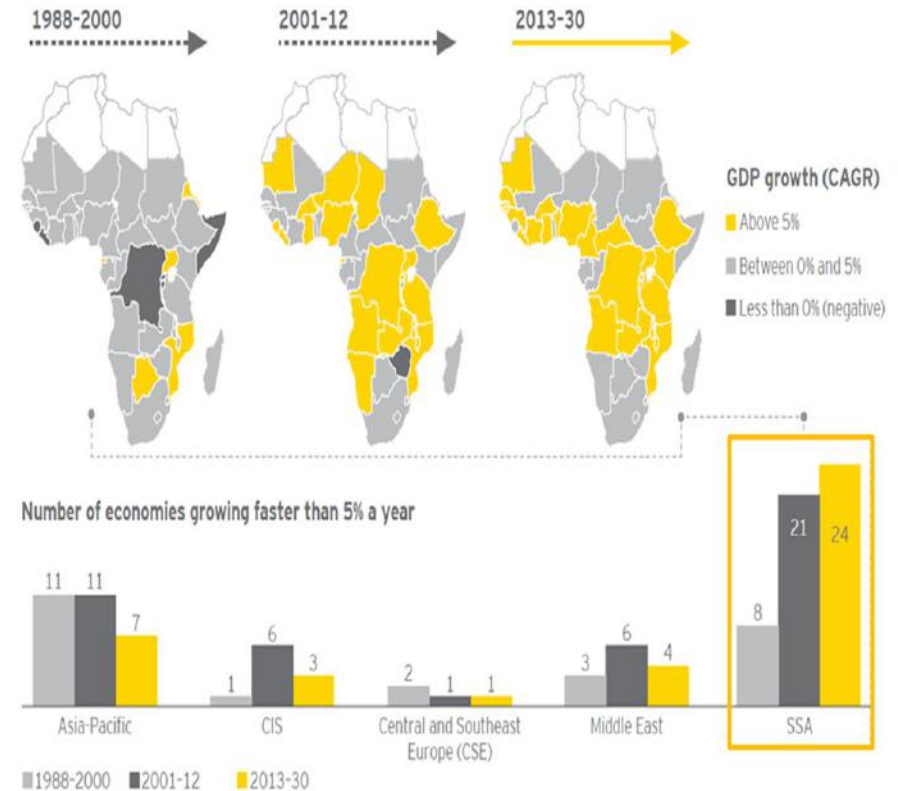
Africa, whose population will reach 2.5 billion people by 2050, i.e. more than a quarter of the world's population, has multiple potentialities that make the African continent a strategic global challenge.

This continent is an important geostrategic area witnessing a fierce competition between traditional and emerging powers.

Morocco's relations with African countries have boomed since the accession of His Majesty King Mohammed VI to the Throne in 1999.

Morocco's positioning vis-à-vis Africa is driven mainly by considerations related to the continent's development. These reflect the Kingdom's firm will to accompany the process of economic, social and institutional convergence of its African partners, particularly in Central and West Africa.

Figure 19: Economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa



Sources: Oxford Economics database estimates, accessed in August 2014; EY analysis.



THE ROYAL VISION

" ... It is possible that Our Continent may hold countless promises; but one thing is for sure: Africa is the continent of all expectations. Above all, our continent is front and centre in the world order. By rising to Africa's challenges, the world would be tackling international geostrategic issues, in addition to changes that are currently unfolding. **Africa's moment has come. This century must be Africa's century.**

... These are challenges to which Africa must rise to ensure its emergence.

19: that is the median age in Africa today. This generation of young people will build the Africa of tomorrow; African youths will contribute to peace, stability and socio-economic development on the Continent..."

Excerpt from the Royal Message Royal addressed to the participants of the 5th Crans Montana Forum of Dakhla on March 18, 2019

" ... Morocco believes in a kind of **co-development which is based on intra-African cooperation**, economic complementarity, active solidarity and the pooling of resources and efforts. These are prerequisites for any inclusive growth and for sustainable human development on the Continent..."

Excerpt from the Speech of His Majesty on the occasion of the Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union on the Continental Free Trade Area of March 21, 2018

" ... A year ago, the Kingdom of Morocco regained its natural place within its African institutional family. Since then, my country has been pleased to contribute to the actions undertaken, the projects launched and the meetings held under the aegis of our organization. Morocco will continue to **endorse the lofty causes of the continent** and will work untiringly towards the promotion of peace, stability and development in the continent... "

Excerpt from His Majesty's Speech on the occasion of the 30th African Union Summit on January 29, 2018



THE ROYAL VISION

" Morocco's commitment to defend the Causes and interests of Africa does not date from today. Rather, it is an unchanging direction that We inherited from Our Ancestors, and that We continue to uphold with confidence and pride (...) **Africa has always been and will remain a top priority for Us.** What matters, ultimately, is to contribute to its development and to serve the African citizen...".

Excerpt from His Majesty's Speech on the occasion of the 64th Anniversary of the Revolution of the King and the People on August 20, 2017

" ... Morocco wants to **contribute to the emergence of a New Africa:** a strong, daring Africa that defends its interests; an Africa that is influential on the world stage...".

Excerpt from His Majesty's Speech on the occasion of the 29th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union on July 4, 2017

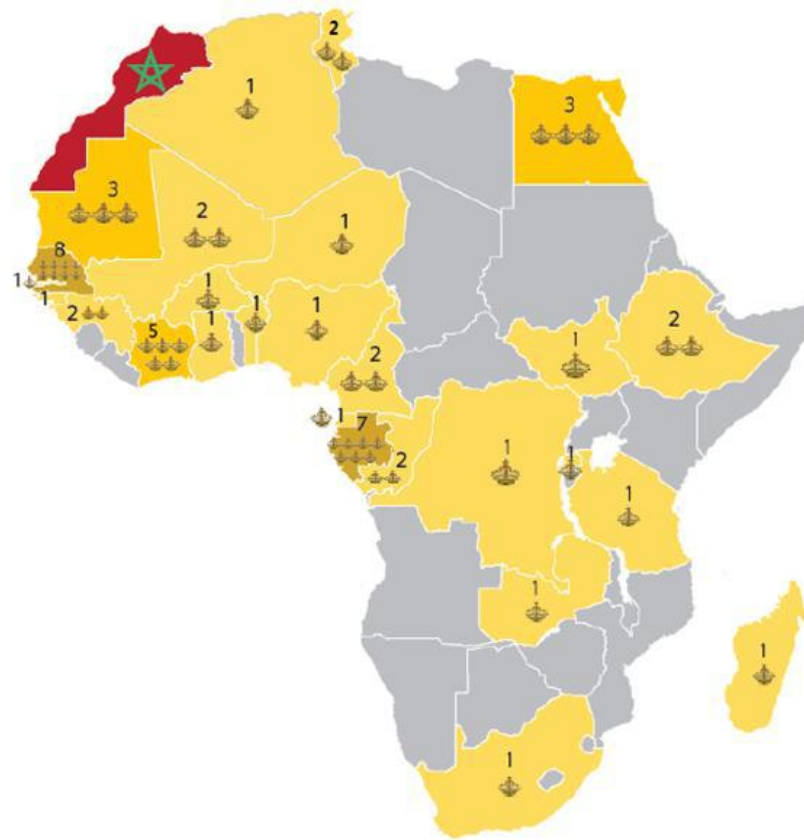
" ... It is so good to be back home, after having been away for too long! It is a good day when you can show your affection for your beloved home! **Africa is My Continent, and My home.**

I am home at last and happily reunited with you. I have missed you all... ".

Excerpt of His Majesty's Speech on the occasion of the 28th Summit of the African Union in Addis-Ababa on January 31, 2017

THE ROYAL VISITS IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES

Figure 20: Official visits by His Majesty King Mohammed VI to African countries between 1999 and April 2019



HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The history of African belonging

During the Lower Palaeolithic (about one million years ago), Homo erectus populated almost all of Morocco. It is on the archaeological site of Thomas 1 Quarry in Casablanca that a tool dating from this period was discovered. In addition, half of the fossils of North Africa have been discovered in Morocco.

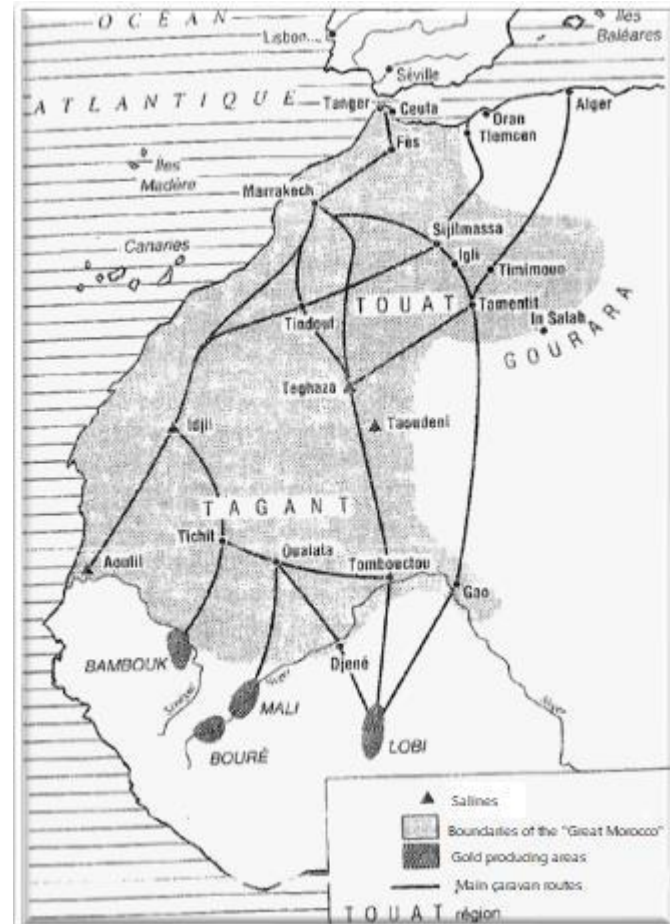
Morocco's relationship with Africa has remained linked to the transformations experienced by the Sahara, which has been the subject of human migration movements and exchanges northward and southward.

Morocco has always maintained close relations with Sub-Saharan Africa through caravan trade.

- From the 11th century to the beginning of the 18th century, successive dynasties unified a political and civilizational area, centred on Morocco and extended as far as the Senegal and Niger rivers.
- Since its independence, Morocco has been committed to supporting liberation movements on the African continent and extending its support for and solidarity with the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa.
- Morocco is a founding member of the Organization of African Unity (now the African Union), established in 1963 in Addis-Ababa.

Sahara, an area of exchange

Figure 21: Morocco in the 17th and 18th centuries

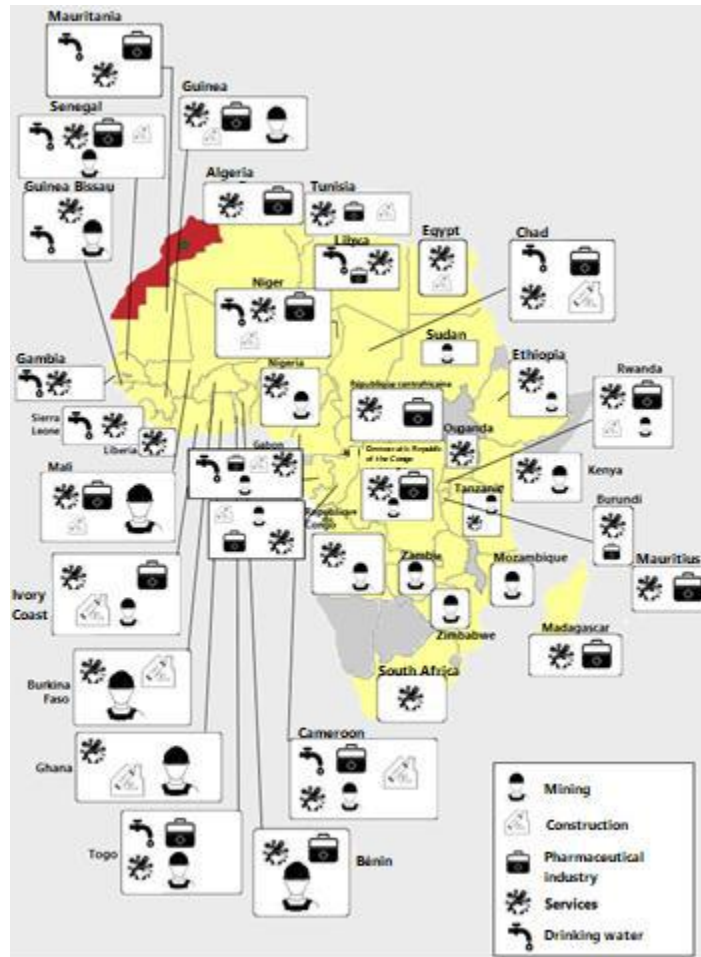


THE INSTRUMENTS OF AFRICAN AFFILIATION

- **African Union:** Morocco returned to the continental organization in January 2017. Determined to play an active role in achieving the objectives of the pan-African organization, the Kingdom was elected in January 2018 to serve in the Union's Peace and Security Council. Designated Leader of the African Union on the issue of migration, His Majesty King Mohammed VI has elaborated the African agenda for migration.
- **Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD):** Morocco, which has been a member of CEN-SAD since 2001, plays an active role in it. It has hosted three meetings of the organization's Executive Council.
- **Conference of African States bordering the Atlantic:** the conference was established as a result of the Moroccan initiative of the Ministerial Conference of African States bordering the Atlantic in order to strengthen security and economic cooperation and promote an African Atlantic identity.
- **West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA):** eight West African countries are represented in UEMOA, with a population of nearly 96 million in 2018, according to the World Bank. Since 2000, Morocco has been engaged in negotiations for the establishment of a preferential trade and investment agreement with this organization.
- **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS):** an observer member since 2005, Morocco applied for membership in February 2017.

ESTABLISHMENT OF MOROCCAN OPERATORS IN AFRICA

Figure 22: Moroccan operators in Africa by sector of activity



Source: IRES processing of data available online from certain Moroccan operators as well as data from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

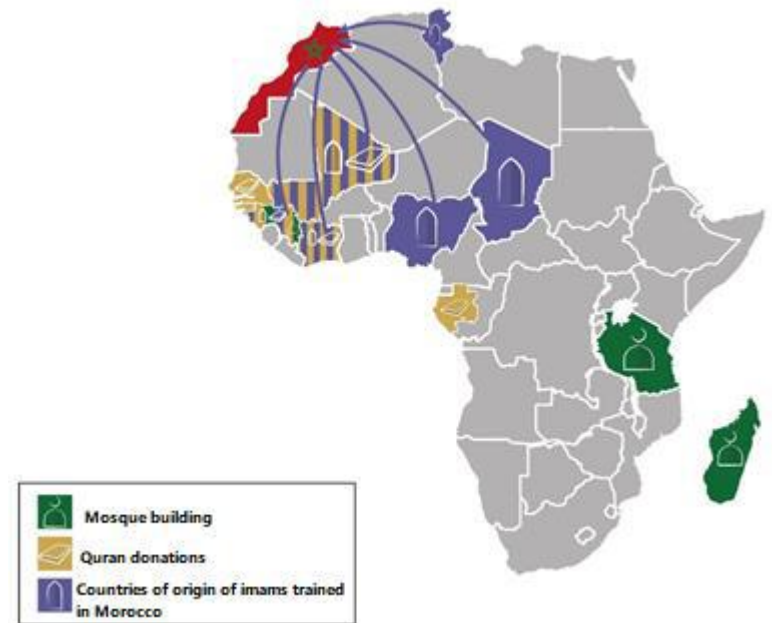
MOROCCO AND AFRICAN COUNTRIES

The cooperation framework is rich and constantly evolving: more than 1000 cooperation agreements have been concluded by Morocco with more than 40 countries since the early 2000s. In addition, cooperation ties have been strengthened with regional groupings (JEMOA, ECOWAS).

Morocco's relations with African countries go beyond the mere framework of economic relations to encompass structuring dimensions: development aid to sub-Saharan African countries, the spiritual dimension of cooperation, the welcoming to Morocco of more than 25,000 students from 47 African countries, a large majority of whom have benefited from Moroccan scholarships (75% in 2017), the training of more than 5,000 public sector executives from 30 countries, the Kingdom's effective contribution to strengthening peace and stability in Africa and the launch by Morocco of an immigration strategy, based on a humanitarian and human rights approach.

Morocco's position remains, however, focused on West Africa and on a few Central African countries, due, in particular, to the geographical remoteness of the remaining countries, their belonging to different linguistic communities and the ambivalent, even hostile attitude of some Southern and Eastern African countries towards the territorial integrity of the Kingdom.

Figure 23: Spiritual diplomacy towards Africa between 1999 and 2017



Source: IRES processing of data from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

ISSUES AT STAKE FOR MOROCCO IN AFRICA

Political

- Defending Morocco's territorial integrity.
- Developing the diplomatic network, particularly in Southern and East Africa.

Economic

- Strengthening Morocco's positioning as a regional hub in the economic, financial and transport fields, but also in education and scientific research.
- Developing and securing Moroccan investments in Africa.

Security

- Fighting against transnational threats (terrorism, maritime piracy, arms trafficking...) by favouring a multilateral approach and an active role for the Kingdom of Morocco within the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.
- Building the Sahelian States' capacity to address the risks posed by separatists movements.

Cultural and human

- Enhancing the common cultural heritage.
- Transferring knowledge and know-how in the implementation of human development projects.
- Consolidating spiritual diplomacy actions in Africa.

LEVERS FOR STRENGTHENING MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH AFRICA

A HOLISTIC VISION

- **Creating the right conditions for the sustainable development of Morocco's relations with Africa**, through strengthening the competitive capacities of the Moroccan exportable offer, the pursuit of the international diversification of Moroccan groups in Africa, the choice of appropriate modes of integration into the African economy and the creation of joint ventures with foreign firms.
- **Renovating and strengthening the instruments for the Kingdom's economic promotion in Africa**, by establishing a new institutional framework for economic and financial relations with African countries, by developing direct lines of land, sea and air transport to Morocco's partners and by providing the economic missions of the Moroccan embassies with the necessary means of action.
- **Consolidating Morocco's position as a regional hub** in the fields of finance, transport, higher education and vocational training. Morocco should take advantage of its position as a link between Africa and Europe, strengthen its role in the processes of Africa-Europe dialogue and cooperation, participate in the building of value chains between the two continents and enhance triangular cooperation in socio-economic sectors with a high impact on Africa's development.

LEVERS FOR STRENGTHENING MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH AFRICA (2)

WEST AFRICA AXIS

- **Intensifying security cooperation to contain the proliferation of the terrorist and criminal threat in West Africa as part of a common response:** This should be done by increasing the capacity of vulnerable countries through funding mechanisms offered as part of regional and international cooperation and through the transfer of skills to improve security governance. Beyond the Atlantic coast, this cooperation should also target neighbouring areas that are hotbeds of tension, notably the Sahel-Saharan region.
- **Extending Morocco's cooperation with West African countries to Southern African countries bordering the Atlantic,** according to a logic that combines the investment dynamics, the development of trade and the strengthening of African partners' development capacities. Priority should be given to structuring areas including, in particular, food security, renewable energy and port infrastructure.
- **Involving non-governmental actors in order to create sustainable cooperation relays in the southern part of the Atlantic:** This is essential in order to foster mutual understanding and the appropriation of common issues. In this respect, it would be advisable to create a transatlantic network of chambers of commerce and industry to encourage relations between economic operators in this area and to set up an NGO platform to increase human and cultural exchanges.

LEVERS FOR STRENGTHENING MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH AFRICA (3)

SOUTHERN AND EAST AFRICA AXIS

- **Making Southern and East Africa one of the priorities of Moroccan foreign policy**, for considerations related to the defence of the Kingdom's national integrity and the need to mobilize the potential for economic cooperation with countries in these two regions. To this end, a new approach to cooperation, adapted to the specificities of Southern and East Africa, is essential. It should target the partners that entry gateways into both regions, place cooperation in a multilateral framework and focus on economic issues.
- **Providing the Kingdom with an appropriate communication policy towards Southern and East African countries** in order to fill the information gap on Morocco and to convey a peaceful discourse towards these two regions, while mobilizing civil society actors to strengthen mutual understanding between peoples.
- **Strengthening scientific and technical cooperation**, by promoting collaboration between Moroccan universities and those of Southern and East African countries, including through a circular mobility programme for students and research staff from both sides and by creating a fund dedicated to technical cooperation, which could be partially financed through the mobilization of regional and/or international instruments.

FOCUS: MOROCCO'S APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP OF ECOWAS

More than half of the Royal Visits to Africa and cooperation agreements linking Morocco to its continent have been concluded with ECOWAS countries, a region which constitutes the natural area of belonging for the Kingdom. Morocco's application for membership of ECOWAS stems from its desire to strengthen the integration of African countries in line with the constitution of the Continental Free Trade Area, called for by the African Union (almost all African countries have signed the agreement on the African Continental Free Trade Area):

- From an economic point of view, membership of ECOWAS offers an opportunity of expansion for Moroccan economy. This community has a population of more than 330 million. The projected GDP growth rate would be 3.6% in 2019, according to data from the African Development Bank and the Islamic Development Bank. In 2016, 35.5% of the Kingdom's exports to Africa were directed to ECOWAS.
- From a social point of view, increased mobility between territories strengthens cultural integration and facilitates the consolidation of a broader and more open identity. In this respect, the new Moroccan immigration and asylum policy, advocated by His Majesty King Mohammed VI, could constitute a model for the management of free human movement in this area and, therefore, facilitate Morocco's integration and strengthen the links between its various communities.

Figure 24: Real GDP growth in West Africa



Source: African Development Bank. West African Economic Outlook, 2018

FOCUS: MOROCCO'S RETURN TO THE AFRICAN UNION

MOROCCO, PARTNER OF AFRICAN NATIONS

Relations between Morocco and other African countries have always been dominated by multifaceted cooperation:

- Historically, Morocco has always been a privileged trading partner of African countries. This trend has accelerated sharply, in line with the Royal Will to strengthen ties with the continent. Today, the Kingdom of Morocco is the first African capital investor and the third largest investor on the continent. It is also the most prolific African investor in terms of the number of projects. Moroccan companies are established in eighteen African countries in many sectors such as banking, construction, telecommunications or agricultural industries.
- On the diplomatic level, Morocco has representations in thirty-six African countries. Thirty friendship groups bring Moroccan parliamentarians together with their counterparts in other African countries.
- As a cultural and spiritual hub of the continent, the Kingdom has maintained close links with the Muslim communities of Africa throughout history. Being an advocate of a moderate Islam, Morocco supports the different Sufi orders on the continent, finances the construction of mosques and donates copies of the Koran. It also trains Imams from Africa and elsewhere at the Mohammed VI Institute for the Training of Imams, male and female preachers. Finally, the Mohammed VI Foundation of African Ulema, created in 2015, works to coordinate the efforts of Muslim Ulema in Africa, to spread the values of tolerant Islam and to revitalize Africa's Islamic cultural heritage.

FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S RETURN TO THE AFRICAN UNION

MOROCCO'S ACTION IN FAVOUR OF PEACE AND STABILITY IN AFRICA

- Morocco is now the third largest contributor to the **United Nations mission in the Central African Republic**. The Royal Armed Forces are also the eighth contingent of the 56-member UN mission in the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, which has been present in the country since 1960.
- On the diplomatic level, the Kingdom has acted as a mediator in various African crises, such as within the **Mano River Union** or more recently in **Mali**. Morocco's role in the successful conclusion of the Skhirat Talks between **the Libyan parties** has also been welcomed by the international community.
- Morocco has always expressed solidarity with its African counterparts during various humanitarian crises. The Kingdom has thus participated in humanitarian operations in **Niger, Senegal, Gabon and Gambia**. It has also delivered humanitarian aid wherever African citizens have felt the need: in Mali, but also in **Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Sierra Leone** and more recently in **South Sudan**. In addition to this, the Kingdom's regular medical donations benefit several African countries.

Within the African Union, Morocco is determined to put six decades of experience in the political, diplomatic, economic, military and scientific fields at the service of Africa's autonomous development. Morocco's contribution will significantly strengthen the African Union's capacity to give substance to its motto: "*African solutions to African problems*".

FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S RETURN TO THE AFRICAN UNION

MOROCCO, AN ACTOR IN THE REFORM OF THE AFRICAN UNION

The African Union took over from the Organization of African Unity in 2002. Its Constitutive Act illustrates the will of African states to create a more autonomous and dynamic organization capable of providing African solutions to African problems.

However, financial dependence and institutional fragmentation have hindered the African Union's action, preventing it from achieving its objectives. In January 2017, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government decided to undertake a profound institutional reform of the Union with a view to addressing its shortcomings in a sustainable manner.

In line with its commitment to the prosperity of the African continent, the Kingdom of Morocco is determined to take an active part in this reform which, in view of its scale and scope, entails major stakes and challenges of several kinds that call for a pragmatic and cross-cutting approach.

Figure 26: Flag of the African Union



FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S RETURN TO THE AFRICAN UNION

MOROCCO, AN ACTOR IN THE REFORM OF THE AFRICAN UNION (2)

- **Financing the Union:** as part of the reform, the principle of a tax on imports, formulated by economist Donald Kaberuka, has been approved by the Assembly of Heads of State. As a member of the World Trade Organization, Morocco could accompany its African counterparts in the implementation of this tax. In addition, with its experience in free trade, the Kingdom will be able to actively contribute to the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area.
- **Peace and security:** to strengthen the Union's capacity in this area, an overhaul of the African Peace and Security Architecture is necessary. In particular, it would be advisable to change the decision-making process in the Peace and Security Council of which Morocco is a member and also to clarify the relationship between the African Union and the contingent coalitions active in various parts of Africa.
- **Regional Economic Communities:** the prerogatives of these communities have been greatly expanded in recent decades. It is therefore necessary, as part of the ongoing reform, to clarify the division of competences between the Union and these communities and, furthermore, to rethink the role they are called upon to play in African integration.

FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE MANAGEMENT OF THE MIGRATION ISSUE IN AFRICA

THE AFRICAN AGENDA FOR MIGRATION

Following His designation as African Union Champion for migration, His Majesty King Mohammed VI developed and presented to this organization, in January 2018, the African Agenda on Migration, aimed at unifying Africa's voice on the issue. Four flagship measures punctuate this agenda :

- The creation of the African Migration Observatory, “whose terms of reference would be the triad Understand, Anticipate, Act. Its mission would be to develop observation and the exchange of information between African countries in order to promote controlled management of migration flows”;
- The creation of the African Union Special Envoy for Migration, “who would be tasked with coordinating African Union policies in this area”;
- Participation in the negotiations for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, through this African Agenda for Migration, which enables Africa to speak with a unanimous voice during these discussions and frame its approach in this area within the broader framework of its international cooperation;
- Morocco’s pledge to making two major multilateral meetings a platform for Africa in 2018 : first, the 11th edition of the Global Forum for Migration and Development which took place in Morocco, from December 5 to 7, 2018. The second meeting was the Intergovernmental Conference for the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which took place in Marrakech on 10 and 11 December 2018 and during which the Compact was adopted by consensus.

Chapter V

MOROCCO AND THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN



SYNOPSIS

The Euro-Mediterranean area has several assets. Its two shores present important complementarities in terms of demography, economy, energy and food security... The Mediterranean is also an eco-region, given the richness of its biodiversity.

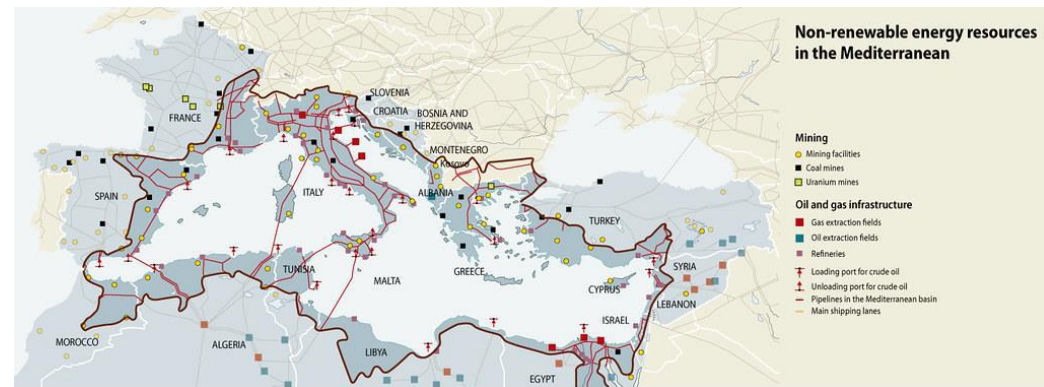
However, the different partnership approaches adopted (Barcelona Process, European Neighbourhood Policy, Union for the Mediterranean...) have not led to the expected results, i.e. the reduction of the divide between the two shores of the Mediterranean and the construction of an area of peace and prosperity.

Being the most advanced country in terms of integration with Europe, and in view of its advanced status, Morocco has always advocated the revitalization of cooperation between the countries of the Mediterranean, which constitutes a space for the projection of Moroccan foreign policy

Figure 27: Some data on the Mediterranean Maritime traffic in the Mediterranean



Source: Marine Vessel Traffic



Source: GRID-Arendal



THE ROYAL VISION

"... **For decades now, the Kingdom of Morocco has had a special and fruitful relationship with its European partner**, especially through the Advanced Status it has with the EU. My country looks forward to even closer relations with the EU based on partnership. Morocco is indeed ready to help turn Arab-European cooperation into an innovative partnership that build upon the cultural heritage of each party..."

Excerpt from the Royal Message at the first Arab-European Summit on 24 February 2019

"... In this regard, I do not perceive **Morocco's Advanced Status with the European Union as an end in itself**, but rather as a milestone on the path towards **strengthening the Morocco-EU partnership, which I would like to be balanced and equitable.**"

Excerpt of Throne Speech on July 30, 2014

"... We are also delighted that Morocco's vocation to set itself up as an emerging economy converges with its strategic ambition to **build a common economic space with the European Union**. To serve this purpose, Morocco advocates going beyond the simple establishment of a free trade area and calls for boosting investment flows, promoting industrial and agricultural synergies, redeploing service activities and implementing common policies on research and development and the knowledge economy. **Such a vision necessarily requires the prompt and effective implementation of all the commitments agreed by both parties.**"

Speech by the Sovereign at the Morocco-European Union Summit in Granada in March 2010

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The history of Euro-Mediterranean affiliation

A common cultural wealth and heritage have linked Morocco to the Euro-Mediterranean area since Antiquity (3000 years of common history):

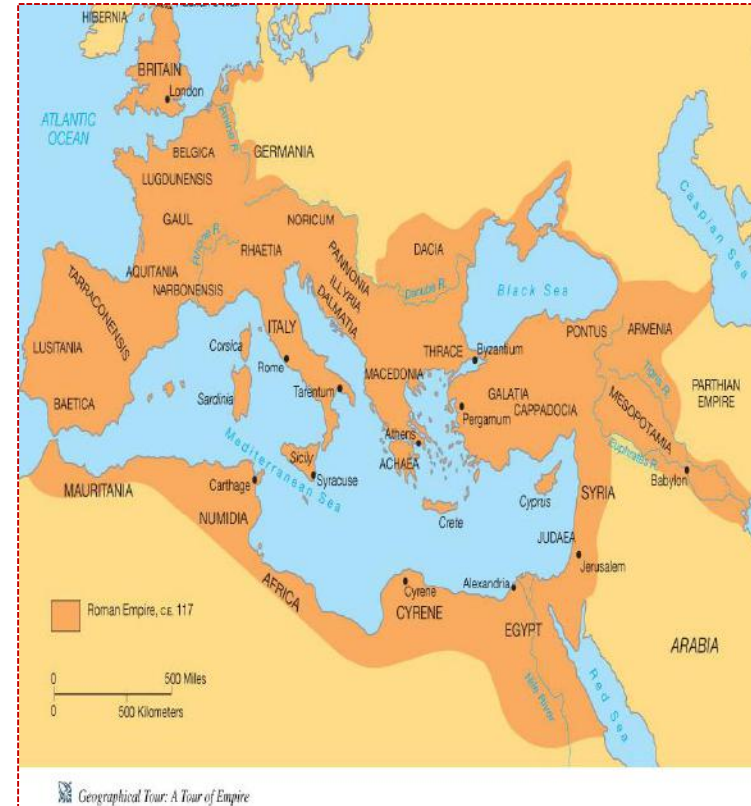
- Several populations from the Mediterranean basin have settled in North Africa since Antiquity (Greeks, Phoenicians, Hebrews, Romans, Vandals and Byzantines).
- From the 8th to the 6th century B.C., Phoenician trading centres were established on the Moroccan coast.
- Mauretania Tingitana was a Roman province for several centuries.

From the 8th century, Morocco played an influential role in the Western Mediterranean:

- Eight centuries of openness to Andalusia and the western Mediterranean basin states.
- From the 11th to the 14th century, a succession of dynasties: Almoravid, Almohad and Marinid dynasties have unified the two shores of the Strait of Gibraltar (Andalusia).
- From the 15th to the 19th century, Morocco was, along with Spain, France and the Italian Kingdoms, the only 4 powers capable of opposing the Ottoman expansionism in the Mediterranean.

→ **The Mediterranean has been and remains for Morocco an essential space of strategic articulation and exchange with its neighbours.**

Figure 28: The Roman Empire in 117



THE INSTRUMENTS OF AFFILIATION TO THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN

- **The 5+5 Dialogue:** was set up in 1990 in Rome and comprises all ten countries of Western Mediterranean. As an informal coordination platform, this dialogue aims to promote peace and security among the member countries. Morocco plays an active role in this dialogue.
- **European Neighbourhood Policy:** this partnership framework was established at the end of the enlargement process of the European Union to the East in 2004. It aims to accompany the South-Mediterranean and Eastern European partners in their reform process, through financial assistance and institutional capacity building. This policy has seen several attempts at reform, the most recent of which dates from November 2015. Among the southern Mediterranean countries, Morocco is the first beneficiary from the instruments of this cooperation.
- **The Union for the Mediterranean:** launched in 2008 and bringing together 43 countries, it focuses on cooperation projects in the field of education, environment, gender... Morocco has actively participated in the establishment of this Union. It had provided the General Secretariat until February 2018 .

MOROCCO AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

The importance of the European Union for Morocco lies in the fact that it is its first customer, its first supplier, its first foreign investor and its first source of tourist flows and remittances from Moroccans living across the world.

Morocco's relations with the European Union are characterized by a reinforced political dialogue, the creation of consultation channels, such as the joint Parliamentary Committee, the partnership with the Council of Europe as well as by the multiplication of institutional twinning operations and the strengthening of technical assistance within the framework of the TAIEX and SIGMA programmes.

The economic aspect is of great importance in the relations between Morocco and the European Union. Economic relations date back to the conclusion of the **Cooperation Agreement** in 1976, which entered into force in 1978. It is under this agreement that industrial products from Morocco enter the Union at zero duty. Morocco and the European Union are also linked by an **Association Agreement**, which was signed in 1996 and entered into force in 2000. In addition to the political and human dimensions, this agreement includes a broad economic, financial and social component.

Relations reached an important turning point in 2008, with Morocco's accession to **Advanced Status** with the European Union. This status, which lies between association and membership, offers undeniable opportunities for Morocco, allowing it to access Community agencies and programmes and to ensure the convergence of the national normative and regulatory system with the Union's acquis.

The agreement between the European Union and Morocco relating to reciprocal liberalization measures for agricultural and fisheries products, which came into force in 2012, aims at the total liberalization of products, except for sensitive items. Moreover, Morocco has requested European certification allowing it to export its poultry to the European market.

MOROCCO AND THE EUROPEAN UNION (2)

Relations between Morocco and the European Union have experienced difficulties following the ruling of the Court of Justice of the European Union against the inclusion of the territory of the Sahara in the scope of the fisheries agreement. In order to comply with the Court of Justice of the European Union's case law on this issue, Morocco and the European Union extended the application of the free-trade agreement to the Kingdom's Southern Provinces and concluded a new Sustainable Partnership Fisheries Agreement (SPFA) including the waters of the region of the Sahara. The Parliament and Council approved these agreements after a joint Commission-European External Action Service report highlighted the economic benefits of these agreements for the Sahara.

The European Commission, in its evaluation report on the current fisheries agreement, had underlined its effectiveness in terms of « sustainability and exploitation of the resource, its support for employment, the transparency provided on investments in the projects of the Halieutis strategy and the good return on investment of the agreement for the European Union ». For the European Commission, the objective is to preserve and further develop the fisheries partnership between the European Union and Morocco by concluding an agreement and protocol that is environmentally sustainable, economically profitable and fully compliant with international and European law.

Morocco and the European Union have placed their relations since July 2019 under the sign of a Euro-Moroccan partnership for shared prosperity, which implies a paradigm shift based on equality. Within the framework of this new partnership, the two parties aim to give their strategic, multidimensional and privileged relationship a new impetus that is commensurate with their expectations and the challenges of the contemporary world ».

MOROCCO AND THE EUROPEAN UNION (3)

In this respect, Morocco and the European Union should identify the mechanisms, propose the *modus operandi* and specify the financial resources needed to implement the new convention. The Euro-Moroccan partnership for shared prosperity should:

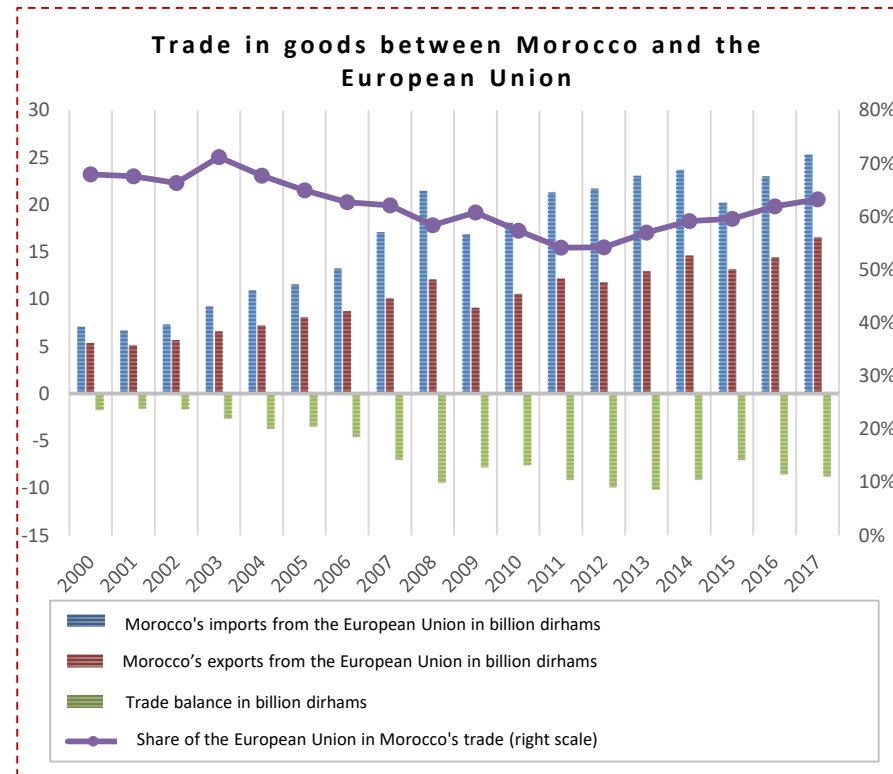
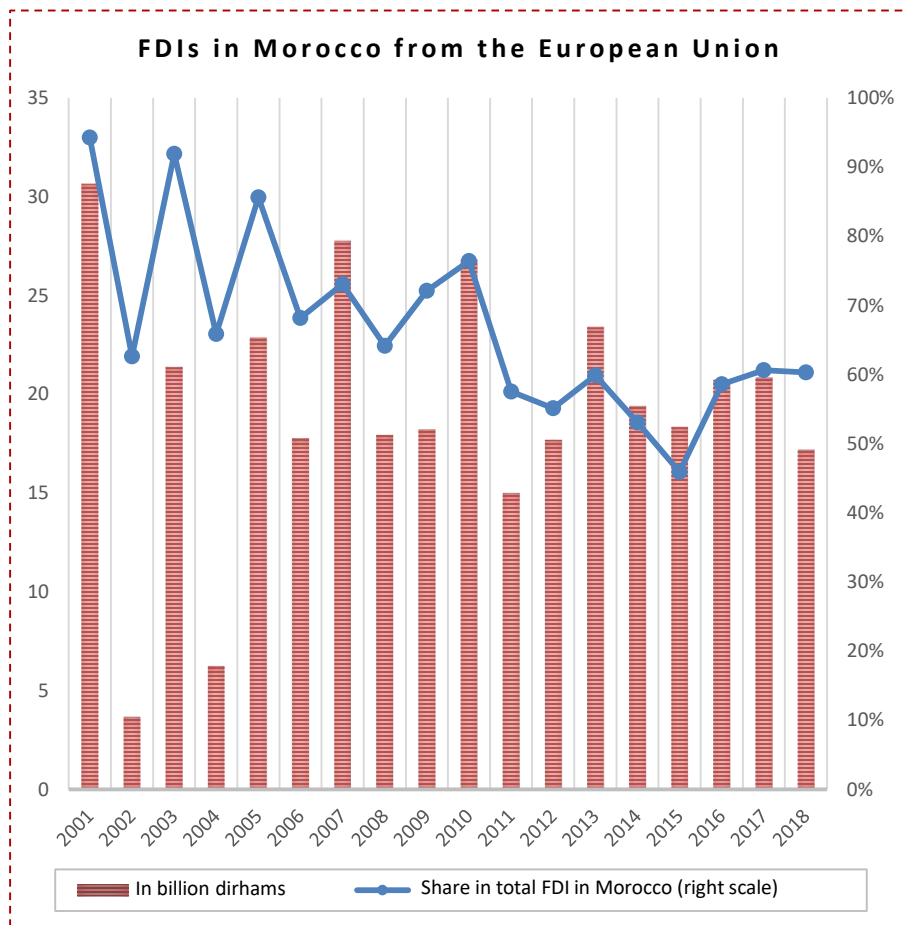
- contribute to the implementation of the new development model of Morocco called for by His Majesty King Mohammed VI,
- enhance decentralized cooperation,
- place Morocco at the centre of cooperation between the European Union and the African Union.

The resumption of negotiations for the conclusion of a **Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA)** should enable Morocco to integrate the European single market. Morocco is the first partner in the Mediterranean region with which the European Union has launched such negotiations. Negotiations under the DCFTA, which should involve the private sector, should seek as a matter of priority:

- the substantial reduction of Morocco's chronic trade deficit in its trade with Europe,
- the significant improvement in Morocco's share of the European Union market,
- an additional boost to the Kingdom's attractiveness to European investment,

MOROCCO AND THE EUROPEAN UNION (4)

Figure 29: FDIs and trade between Morocco and the European Union



Source: Foreign Exchange Office

ISSUES AT STAKE IN MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN AREA

- **Political issues:** stabilizing the political situation in certain southern Mediterranean countries and completing the ongoing mediation processes, which are major challenges for creating enabling conditions conducive to the success of the democratic transition in these countries.
- **Economic issues:** boosting South-South trade in the Mediterranean area with a view to creating a dynamic of economic progress within this area and ensuring the success of the process of regulatory convergence, provided for under the Advanced Status which could serve as a model for the other countries of the region.
- **Security issues:** combating transnational threats, including terrorism, organized crime and irregular immigration networks.
- **Environmental issues:** building capacity to adapt to climate change, especially in the southern Mediterranean, within the framework of a common regional vision.
- **Cultural and human issues:** promoting dialogue between civil societies, bringing together young people from both sides of the Mediterranean closer, with the aim of strengthening mutual understanding and improving the socio-economic integration of Moroccans living in Europe.

LEVERS FOR STRENGTHENING COOPERATION WITHIN THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN AREA

- **Embedding the vision of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership in the framework of a civilizational project where human, cultural and institutional aspects are also integrated:** This new 'variable geometry' vision would allow each of the partners to move forward at their own pace and according to their constraints, promote collective ownership of the partnership's issues and target priority sectors with a view to helping the south-Mediterranean countries win the battle of human development and accelerate their economic emergence and democratic transition.
- **Promoting integration between northern and southern Mediterranean countries:** Special attention should be paid to building an integrated productive system, enabling southern countries to raise their economic specialization profiles and northern countries to have new relays for growth.
- **Implementing a renewed migration policy with a human face:** This policy should facilitate, within the framework of the "*brain gain*", mobility between the two shores of the Mediterranean, while taking into account demographic complementarities and providing in-depth responses to massive flows of migrants.

LEVERS FOR STRENGTHENING COOPERATION WITHIN THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN AREA (2)

- **Facing the new security challenges:** In order to do this, it is necessary to provide a single framework that would codify, within a single reference, the instruments for securing the Mediterranean area. Moreover, security cooperation and information sharing between the countries of the northern and southern Mediterranean should be the general rule and not the exception.
- **Pooling experiences in order to enhance the effectiveness of regional cooperation:** This would involve developing cooperation between regions and local actors on both sides of the Mediterranean in order to build *de facto* solidarity in areas that promote mutual understanding. It would also be important to promote the development of think tanks at regional level to serve as a consultative forum on issues related to regional construction, particularly in the southern Mediterranean countries.
- **A thorough review of the European Union's financial contribution to the southern Mediterranean:** To accompany the convergence process of the southern Mediterranean countries, the European Union's financial commitment should be increased and indexed on the "*more for more*" principle. In addition to the establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean employers' association to boost cooperation between private operators on both shores, it would be advisable to promote long-term financing of the southern Mediterranean economies, giving priority to the accessibility of SMEs to financing.

FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH FRANCE IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

Relations between Morocco and France are dense and diversified. The two countries maintain a strengthened political dialogue, favouring the convergence of points of view within international bodies.

Economic cooperation is characterized by its dynamism and continues to diversify to the benefit of areas that are among Morocco's priorities, including, in particular, education and training, agriculture, industry, energy... as well as decentralized cooperation.

France remains a major trading partner for Morocco. It is the leading foreign investor, Morocco's main public creditor and the leading bilateral donor of official development assistance.

On another note, France is the main host country for Moroccans living abroad and is positioned as the leading country of origin for remittances from Moroccans living abroad and the main source of tourist income.

Although the two countries have forged the foundations of a promising strategic partnership, it is clear that, despite the progress made, this partnership is far from having exhausted its potential, in view of the sources of opportunities offered by the international context, but also the challenges to be addressed, among which:

the challenge of competitiveness: Morocco and France should, in addition to the creation of joint ventures, according to an approach based on the colocation of industrial and service activities, direct their cooperation towards the development of intangible capital, by associating companies and public players, at national and regional levels. They would benefit from widening the scope of their cooperation to geographical areas of common interest, in this case Africa, the Mediterranean and the Atlantic,

FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH FRANCE IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD (2)

the challenge of sustainable development: in a context of increasing scarcity of natural resources, and at a time when climate change even threatens the survival of mankind, cooperation between Morocco and France should be pursued and accelerated so that a response, commensurate with the stakes involved, can be provided to this global issue. There is also a need to jointly exploit the sources of opportunities in the field of renewable energy, water and food security and to promote new emerging concepts, such as the blue economy and the purple economy.

the challenge of security: in addition to transnational threats including, in particular, terrorism and organized crime, cooperation between Morocco and France deserves to be developed in emerging areas, particularly cybercrime in all its facets, which constitutes one of the channels most favoured by extremists in their activities of indoctrination and recruitment of young people,

the challenge of migration: given the size of the Moroccan community living in France and the need to strengthen its integration, in particular of young people born in host countries, it would be necessary:

- to implement a migration policy, based on an appropriate socio-cultural offer that recognizes the rich identity of Moroccans living in France and their belonging to a dual set of values,
- to encourage circular migration and mobilize the Moroccan community established in France with a view to making it an important relay for the development of bilateral or even triangular cooperation,
- to adopt a collaborative approach to cultural management, which would be relayed by a proactive communication strategy on the values of tolerance and coexistence, advocated by the model of Moroccan Islam, which is today a reference at the regional level.

THE IMPACT OF BREXIT ON MOROCCO

The withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union represents a precedent in the history of the European integration. Until January 31, 2020, the date of its effective withdrawal from the European Union, the United Kingdom was the 7th largest contributor to the Union's budget. It was represented by one in ten Members of the European Parliament, produced 18% of the Union's GDP and concentrated 75% of European activities in investment and corporate banking. Brexit should therefore have significant repercussions both for the United Kingdom and its political and commercial partners.

As for Morocco, the indirect repercussions of this withdrawal, via the European Union, will be greater than the direct impacts. They depend, in particular, on the outcome of the negotiations, underway between the United Kingdom and the European Union, which should end by December 31, 2020.

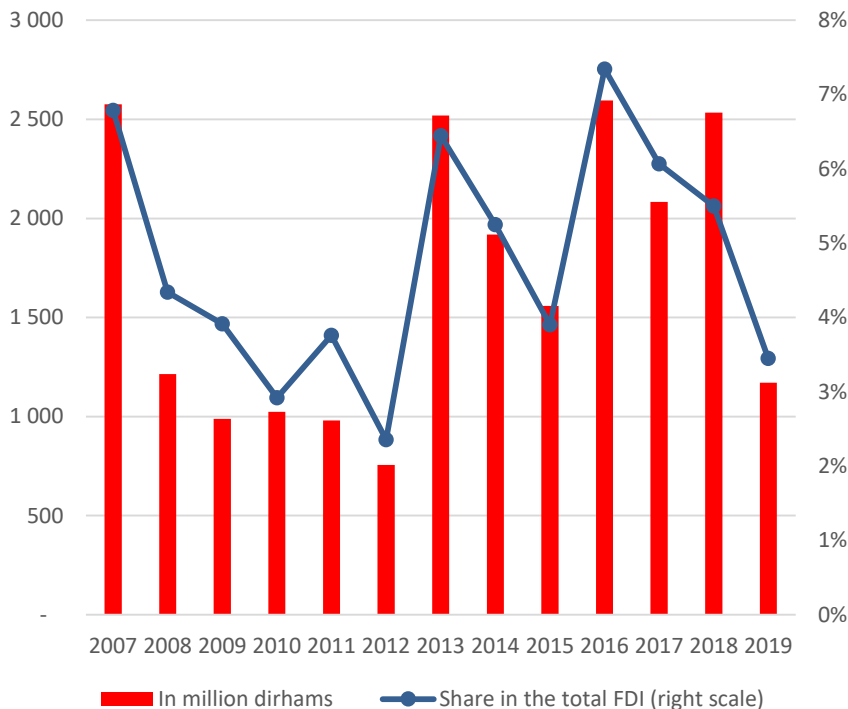
Faced with these uncertainties, Morocco and the United Kingdom anticipated the outcome of these negotiations. In the desire to perpetuate and consolidate their relations, they concluded, in October 2019, a *Continuity Agreement* which will take effect on the date on which the agreements concluded between Morocco and the European Union cease to apply to the United Kingdom. United:

- The new agreement with the United Kingdom mirrors the advantages granted and the commitments made under the Morocco-European Union association agreement. It also provides for the creation of an Association Council and an Association Committee to oversee the implementation of the agreement. These two bodies adopt, *mutadis mutandis*, the decisions previously taken by the Council and the Committee of Morocco-European Union association.
- The Continuity Agreement applies to the entire national territory of Morocco, including its southern provinces, that of the United Kingdom, as well as to the British Crown dependencies.

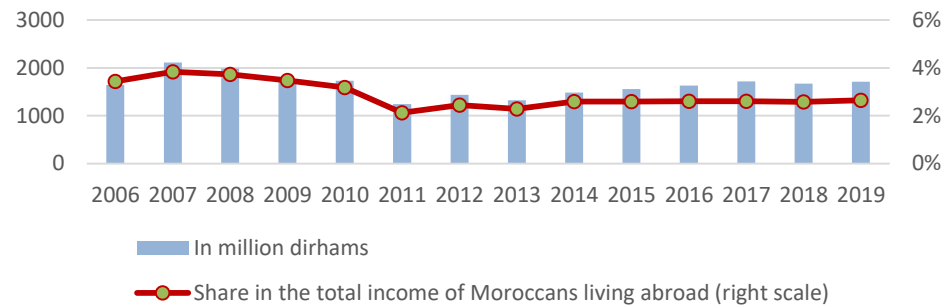
THE IMPACT OF BREXIT ON MOROCCO(2)

Figures 30 : Morocco's economic relationships with the United Kingdom

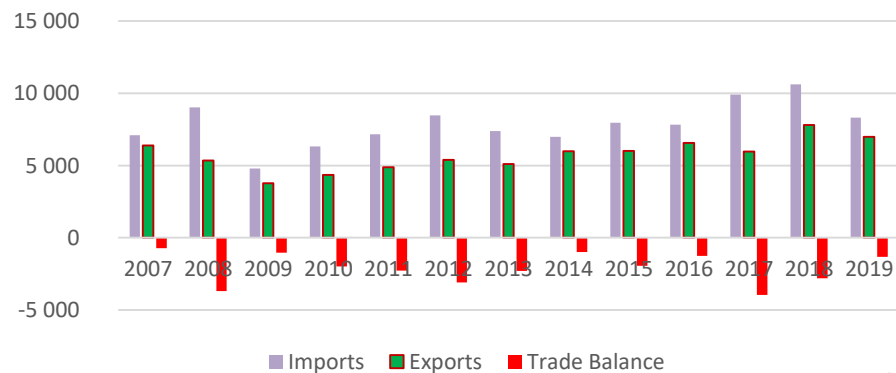
Foreign direct investment in Morocco from the United Kingdom



Remittances from Moroccans living in the United Kingdom



Trade in goods between Morocco and the United Kingdom



Source: Foreign Exchange Office

Chapter VI

MOROCCO AND AMERICA



SYNOPSIS

North America accounted for around 27.6% of world GDP in 2018, according to the International Monetary Fund, for only 6.8% of the world's population (World Population Prospects 2017). In 2017, 29.3% of FDIs in the world came from North American countries, according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

North America, which has a high degree of economic integration, had embarked on mega-processes of integration, in this case the Transatlantic Agreement and the Trans-Pacific Agreement. The latter was to be the largest free trade area in the world. This process was, however halted by the withdrawal of the United States under the Trump presidency.

North America holds a strategic place in the foreign policy options of the Kingdom of Morocco.

Figure 31: North America



SYNOPSIS (2)

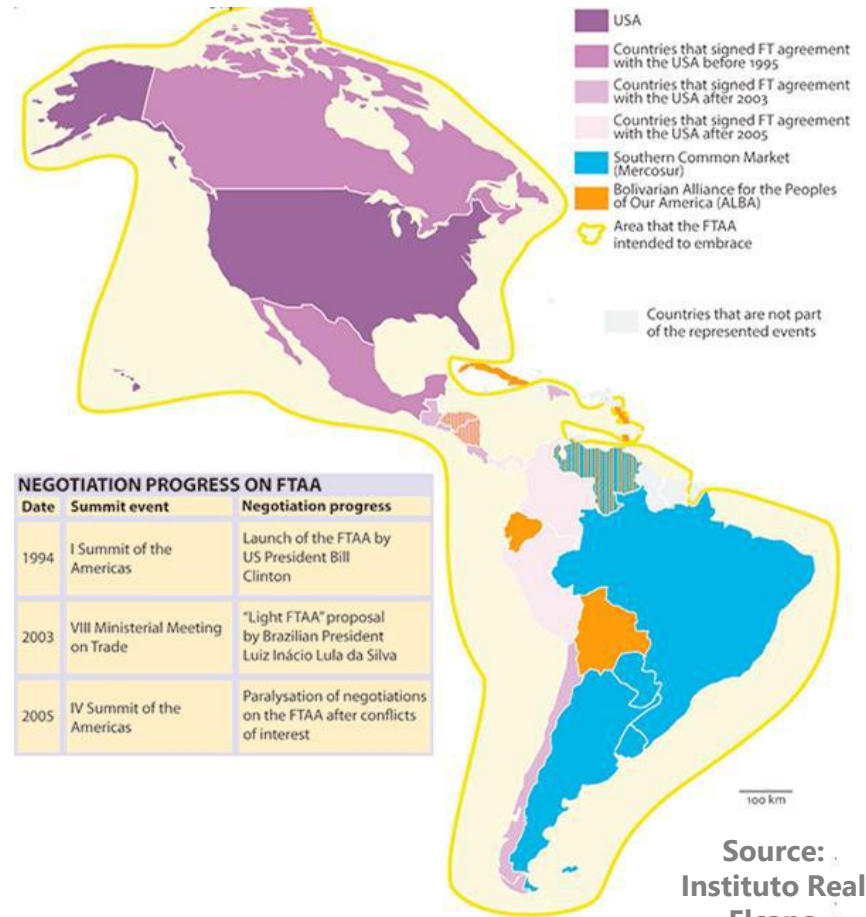
Today, **South America** is one of the regions whose geopolitical and geo-economic weight continues to grow, due in particular to the rise in power of Brazil.

The political, economic and social reform momentum in several South American countries has helped accelerate the region's democratic transition, increase its growth prospects and substantially improve its integration into the world economy.

Currently, South America is among the regions with a fairly high rate of regional integration. The latter has taken place gradually, through the constitution of two communities: Mercosur and the Andean Community together form the South American Nations Union (UNISAR), which is a cooperation framework similar to that of the European Union.

The strategic opportunities offered by South America make it a partner of choice for Morocco.

Figure 32: Integrations projects in the Americas: disputes and resistances



Source:
Instituto Real
Elcano



THE ROYAL VISION

"... **Consolidate our strategic partnership with the United States of America**, which is rooted in the values and principles that our two peoples have in common and believe in. "

Excerpt from the Throne Speech on 30 July 2015

"... As regards **Morocco's historical relationship with the United States of America**, I should like to reaffirm my commitment to **consolidating the strategic partnership** with the United States, particularly by **devising new mechanisms to support and promote the free trade agreement and continue our strategic dialogue with that country.**"

Excerpt from the Throne Speech on 30 July 2015



THE ROYAL VISION (2)

"... In this respect, I wish to insist on the need to establish an ambitious **partnership** between the Arab world and Africa, on the one hand, **and South America on the other hand, within the framework of South-South dialogue and cooperation.**"

Excerpt from the Royal Message on the occasion of the 5th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Morocco and Peru on 23 June 2014

"... We attach equal importance to the need to **consolidate Our relations with the countries of South America**, by working to explore broader perspectives for cultural and economic cooperation and the development of trade, both bilateral and multilateral... **Continue to reflect on the strategic value of this partnership and its extensions in the Atlantic area, in West Africa, in South America and in Europe.**"

Excerpt from the Royal Message on the occasion of the Colloquium on Arab-Afro-Latin American cooperation: governments and civil society, August 1, 2009

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The History of Morocco's openness to America

- **North America:** Morocco was the first country in the world to recognize the independence of the United States in 1777. A peace treaty was concluded between the two countries in 1786 under the Reign of Sultan Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah.
- **South America:** Moroccans were the first citizens from the East to initiate links between Morocco and the new South American Republics at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Relations with Brazil were formalized in 1890.

Figure 33: The Sultan of Morocco
Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah



MOROCCO AND NORTH AMERICA

Morocco's relations with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) countries are characterized by a significant strengthening of political dialogue, particularly with the United States of America, and by economic cooperation which is making encouraging progress, although their potential is not fully mobilized. As for cultural cooperation, it suffers from Morocco's lack of visibility in the North American cultural field.

United States

- Security cooperation in the fight against terrorism.
- High potential economic relations, in view of the opportunities offered to Morocco in the framework of the free trade agreement concluded in 2006.
- A promising trade potential despite the current chronic trade deficit, to Morocco's disadvantage.

Canada

- Bilateral relations have seen, since 2004, an increase in trade and a development of Canadian investment flows to Morocco.
- The presence of an important Moroccan community in Canada which could constitute a relay for the strengthening of Moroccan-Canadian relations.

Mexico

- Prevalence of economic pragmatism in the relations between Morocco and Mexico despite the ambivalent position of this country with regard to the territorial integrity of the Kingdom. The trade balance is in surplus in favour of Morocco.

LEVERS FOR STRENGTHENING MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH THE COUNTRIES OF NORTH AMERICA

- **Use intangible capital as a lever to mitigate asymmetry in Morocco's relations with the countries of North America**, by reducing the vulnerabilities that hinder Morocco's capacity to take better advantage of the cooperation opportunities offered in this area.
- **Take advantage of Morocco's relations with West Africa to strengthen the positioning of the Kingdom in the strategic agenda of North America**, so as to constitute a pivotal power hub for North America seeking to forge ties with Africa.
- **Mobilize effectively the potential of economic cooperation between Morocco and the countries of North America**, by enhancing the competitive capacities of Moroccan companies for better access to American markets and by adapting Moroccan regulations to the North American normative system, which is far more constraining than tariff barriers.
- **Lay the foundations for a lasting and balanced cultural relationship with the countries of North America**, based on a double conjunction: that of associative and diplomatic action, on the one hand, and that of Morocco's cultural affinity with the Maghreb and African communities, established in North America, on the other hand.

LEVERS FOR STRENGTHENING MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH COUNTRIES OF NORTH AMERICA

PRIORITIES BY COUNTRY

- **Fulfil the ambitions of the Joint Declaration with the United States**, aimed in particular at strengthening security cooperation and mobilizing the potential of the free trade agreement, which should enable Moroccan operators to make better use of the support mechanisms provided for in the framework of this agreement. On another level, it would be advisable to ensure better coordination between the Moroccan diplomatic representation in the United States and the Moroccan mission to the United Nations in order to develop a homogeneous discourse, in the service of Morocco's priority strategic interests.
- **Place the free trade agreement with Canada within the framework of a "win-win" cooperation approach**, with a substantial "development" dimension. Broadening the prospects for cooperation with Canada also means involving the Moroccan community living in that country as a relay for mutual understanding between the two peoples.
- **Use a pragmatic approach with the aim of broadening the scope of economic interests with Mexico**. Cooperation with this country should be extended to structuring areas and relayed by a strong involvement of non-governmental actors in order to establish cooperation on a solid and sustainable basis. The aim would also be to actively communicate on Morocco's achievements to Mexican opinion leaders.

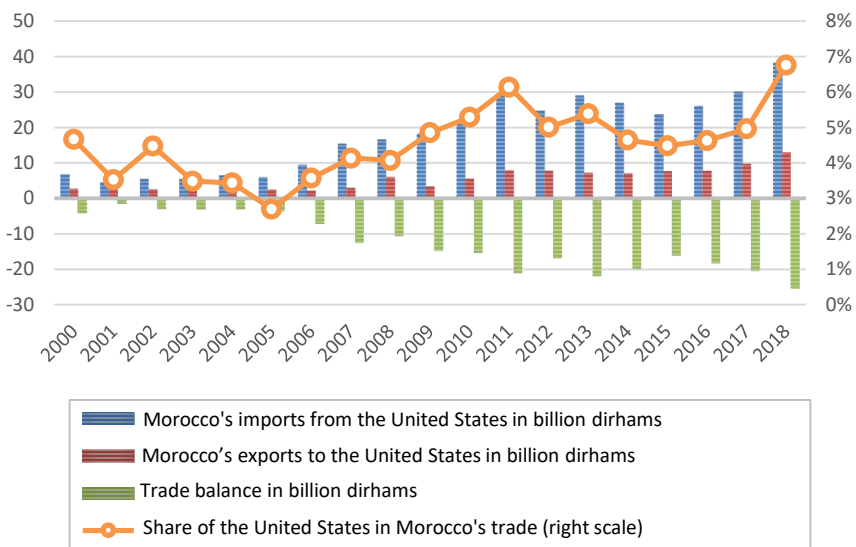
FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES

The importance of relations between Morocco and the United States does not need to be demonstrated, given the opportunities for the development of trade and investment, but also with regard to the geopolitical influence of the United States, which remains important on a global scale:

- On the economic level, several cooperation agreements have been concluded: abolition of double taxation in 1977, investment arrangement in 1985 and reciprocal protection of investments... In 2004, after 7 rounds of talks, a free trade agreement was signed, setting a new milestone in the deepening of economic and trade relations between the two countries. Despite a promising trade potential, economic cooperation still falls short of the real opportunities offered to both Morocco and the United States. Indeed, despite the entry into force of the free trade agreement between the two countries in 2006, obstacles persist in several economic sectors.
- On the political level, the importance of consolidating diplomatic alliances between Morocco and the United States in a globalized world must be highlighted. The global context, marked by a return to bilateralism as desired by President Trump, requires Morocco to **rebuild and strengthen the historic diplomatic relations that link it to the United States.**

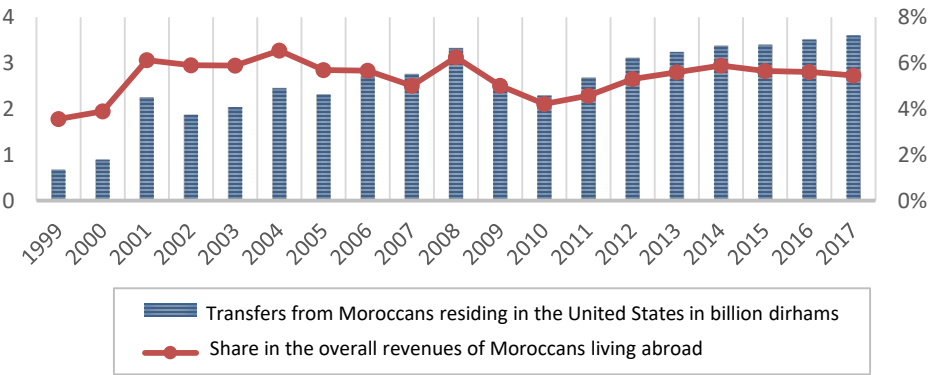
ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN MOROCCO AND THE UNITED STATES

Trade in goods between Morocco and the United States

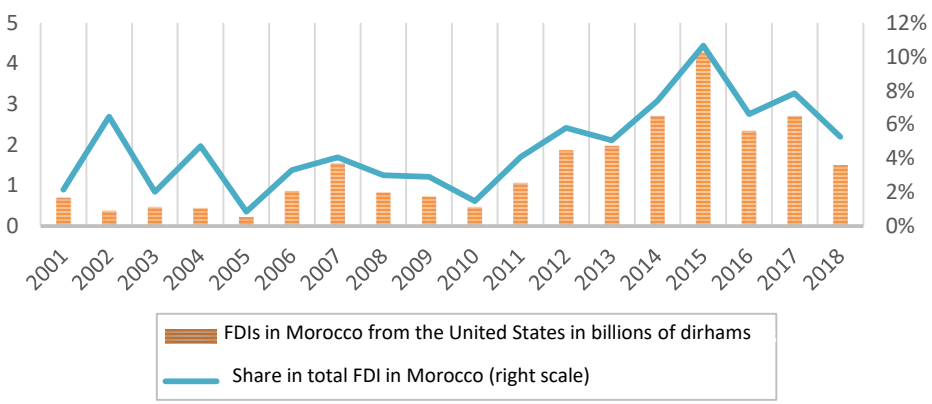


Despite an increase in volumes, trade is characterized by a chronic deficit, to Morocco's disadvantage. Morocco's trade deficit with the United States has only worsened since the entry into force of the free-trade agreement. It has in fact tripled between 2006 and 2018. Trade between the two countries is also characterized by its low level of diversification and its focus on a limited range of products.

Remittances from Moroccans living in the United States



US foreign direct investment in Morocco



Figures 35: Economic relations between Morocco and the United States Source: Foreign Exchange Office

FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES (2)

- On another level, cultural cooperation suffers from the lack of Moroccan initiatives in the American cultural landscape. Morocco has many assets conferred by the richness and diversity of its historical and cultural heritage, which should be given greater prominence to ensure the country's influence in the United States.
- Although the two countries have developed a promising strategic partnership, it is clear that this partnership is not optimal. The ambitions of the Joint Declaration agreed at the end of the Royal Visit to Washington in November 2013 must therefore be fulfilled. This will necessarily involve strengthening Morocco's position in the framework of the strategic dialogue and the enhancement of levers that are under-exploited by Morocco.
- The strategic dialogue with the United States includes, among other things, a development strategy of the US Agency for International Aid (USAID) in favour of Morocco as well as American support for the Autonomy Plan presented by the Kingdom. It also concerns the continuation of cooperation between the two countries within the framework of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF), as well as the strengthening of regional political, economic and security relations in North Africa and the Sahel.

MOROCCO AND SOUTH AMERICA

The South Atlantic offers countless opportunities, but at the same time exposes the riparian countries to multiple challenges that can only be addressed through coordinated approaches.

Morocco's relations with South American countries are important for geopolitical, geo-economic and security considerations. They are in line with Morocco's strategy, which is centred on South-South cooperation. However, these relations have, for a long time, been dominated by the issue of the Kingdom's territorial integrity.

The Visit of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, in 2004, to four countries of South America involved both a political dimension, linked to the defence of the Moroccan Sahara and a strong economic dimension, reflected in the signing of a Morocco-Mercosur framework agreement, with a view to the establishment of a free trade agreement and the setting up of joint cooperation commissions.

MOROCCO AND SOUTH AMERICA (2)

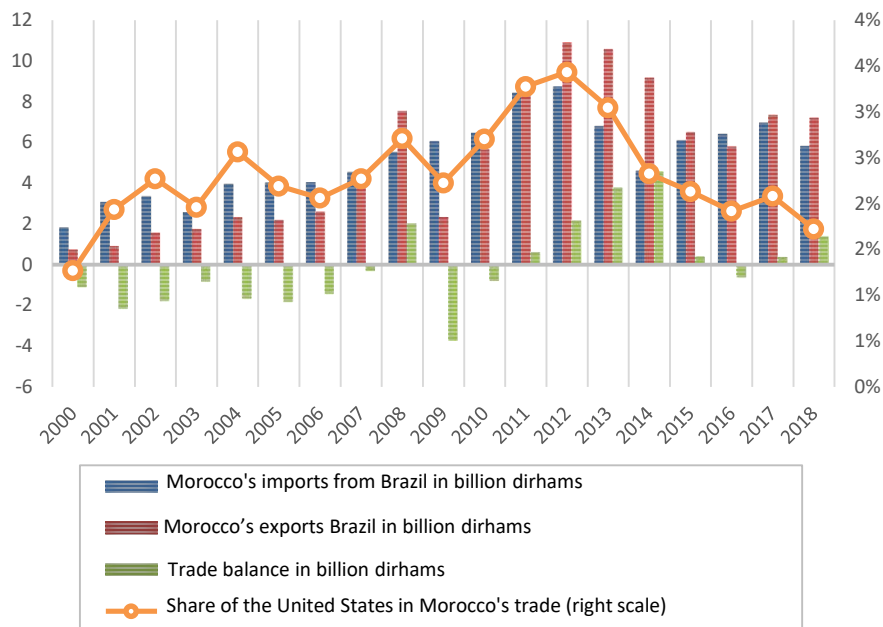
Morocco's relations with each of the countries of South America are experiencing contrasting evolutions, with a focus on a few leading countries of this sub-continent:

- In 2014, **Brazil** became the Kingdom's 3rd largest customer. Based on a consistent legal framework, cooperation with this country includes a military aspect, a cultural and technical dimension as well as decentralized cooperation between the cities of the two countries.
- Relations between Morocco and **Argentina, Chile** and **Peru** have received a particular boost following the Visit of His Majesty King Mohammed VI in 2004.
- **Relations with Colombia and Paraguay** have improved significantly over the last decade. These countries maintain a permanent dialogue with Morocco, but the economic and trade partnership remains very weak.
- **Ecuador** and **Uruguay**, whose position with regard to the Kingdom's territorial integrity is not entirely clear-cut, do not host Moroccan diplomatic representation.
- The Sahara issue is also at the origin of tense relations with **Bolivia** and **Venezuela**. The Kingdom is neither represented in La Paz nor in Caracas.

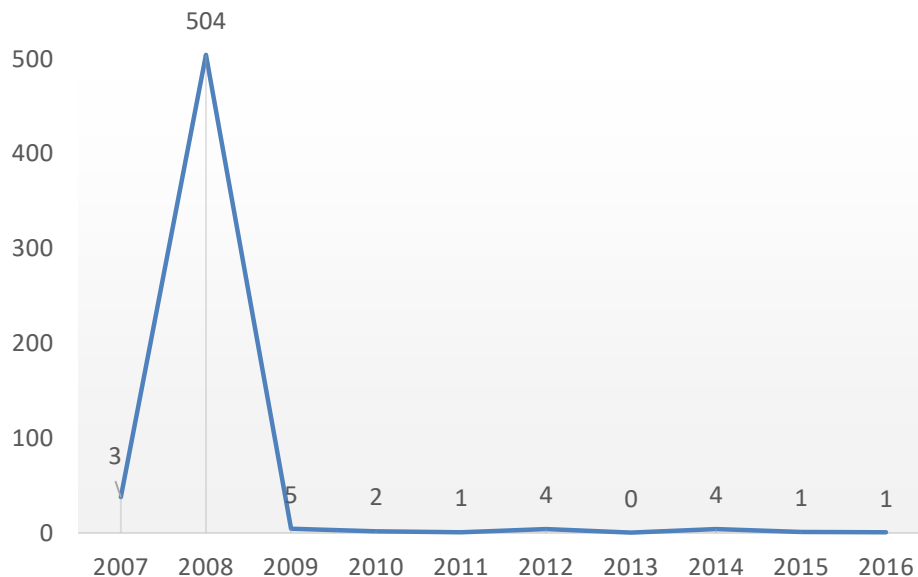
ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN MOROCCO AND BRAZIL

Figures 36: Economic relations between Morocco and Brazil

Trade in goods between Morocco and Brazil



Foreign direct investments from Brazil to Morocco (in million dirhams)



Source: Foreign Exchange Office

THE CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTH AMERICA

Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Peru and Colombia have a generally favourable position on the national Sahara issue. The potential for the development of trade is quite real. These countries could also be the key to Morocco's entry into South America for economic purposes, but also to defend the issue of the Kingdom's territorial integrity.

Ecuador, Paraguay and Uruguay do not automatically align themselves with notoriously anti-Moroccan positions. These are countries where Moroccan diplomatic action should be deployed with vigour, considering new approaches to cooperation and using the influence of some key partners in the region.

Bolivia and Venezuela are the two countries where the prospects for cooperation with Morocco remain limited. Nevertheless, a change at the head of the regime in Venezuela could open up a breach that the Kingdom should seize to mitigate, and eventually even reverse, that country's hostile stance to Morocco's national integrity.

LEVERS TO STRENGTHEN MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTH AMERICA

- **Improve Morocco's positioning in South America**, through the strengthening of Moroccan diplomatic relays on there, while giving priority to countries whose position with regard to the artificial conflict in the Sahara is shaky and not definitely settled.
- **Set up mechanisms to monitor and support bilateral relations**, particularly with countries where joint commissions have not yet been set up.
- **Involve Moroccan non-state actors in the new positioning strategy of the Kingdom in South America**, in particular political parties, associative actors and the private sector.
- **Strengthen Morocco's presence in South America** through multilateral groupings (MERCOSUR and the Andean Community).
- **Make the South Atlantic a common area of cooperation**, through the creation of an international platform, bringing together the states bordering the Atlantic in Africa and South America. It should be noted, in this respect, that Morocco has become the first African "observer" country in the Association of Caribbean States.
- **Promote an economic partnership based on buoyant sectors**, in line with the specificities and characteristics of the emerging economies of South America (agriculture, renewable energies, knowledge society...).
- **Involve Moroccans living in South America** with a view to making them a real transmission belt between Moroccan and South American civil society.

Chapter VII

MOROCCO AND ASIA

SYNOPSIS

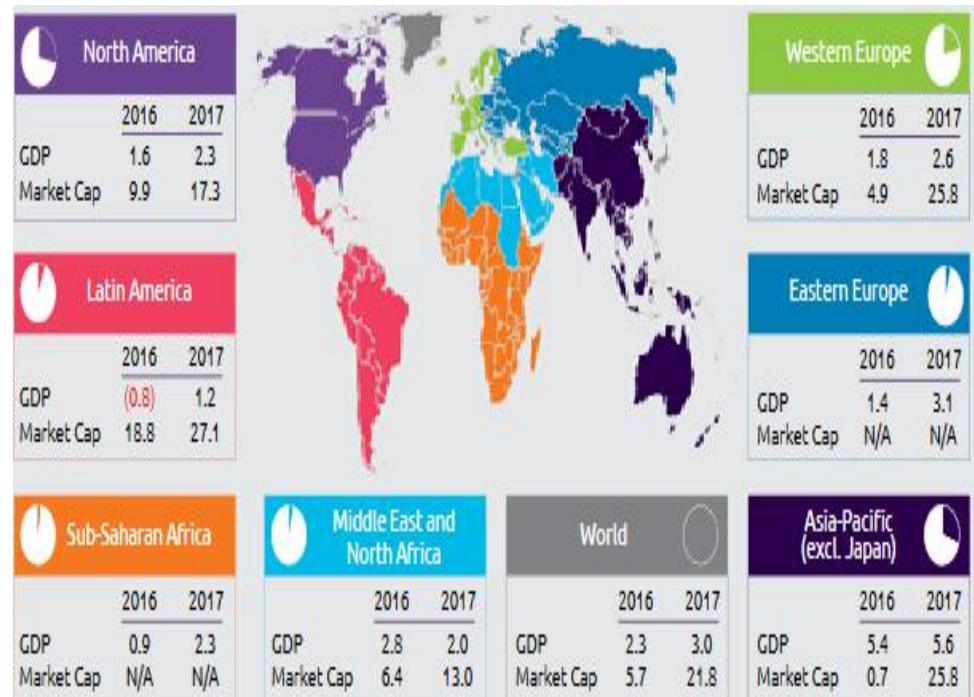
The acceleration of the decentring process of the world, induced, among other things, by the global economic crisis, gives the Asian space a strong strategic value and illustrates the desire for emancipation and openness of its members.

Asia, the most populated area on the planet, is also a leading hub of the world economy, with nearly 27% of world GDP in 2017 and 26% of FDIs received, according to the World Bank. Asia is, moreover, the region that has contributed the most to the increase in trade volume in 2017, with a growth of 8%, according to the World Trade Organization.

The dynamics in this region has gained momentum, as a result of China's rise to prominence and its special position in the international division of labour.

In this chapter, the focus is on China, India, and the Russian Federation, a large part of whose territory being in Asia, even though this country is not part of that continent, according to the classification of international organizations.

Figure 37: GDP and market capitalization growth by region (in %)



Source: Capgemini, World Wealth Report 2018



THE ROYAL VISION

"... Beyond these bilateral partnerships, Morocco will continue to share its accumulated experience and consolidated know-how, in order to establish a **rich and diversified triangular cooperation, based on a real "win-win" partnership with China...**".

"... My country, which firmly believes in the **Sino-African partnership** is ready to do everything possible to further strengthen this process and win the challenge of building, together, a stable and prosperous Africa. We must look to our common future with optimism, because Africa has faith in its potential, resources and skills ...".

Excerpts from the Royal Message to the Summit of the Sino-African Cooperation Forum of 5th December 2015

"... **Morocco looks forward to launching joint initiatives with India**, within the framework of this Forum, in areas which are a priority for our peoples and in which our two countries have gained extensive expertise...".

"... An example of fruitful partnership between our two countries is our cooperation in the **field of phosphates** and their derivatives, which we seek to expand to include **food security programmes, putting our know-how at the disposal of some African countries ...**".

Excerpts from the Royal Address to the 3rd Summit of the India-Africa Forum on 29 September 2015

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The history of Morocco's openness to Asia

- **China:** trading relations between Morocco and China date back to the Middle Ages: in 1336, the Chinese traveller Wang DAYUAN visited Morocco, while Ibn Battuta made a trip to China in 1345. Diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Morocco and the People's Republic of China were officially established in 1958.
- **India:** relations between India and Morocco date back to the 14th century and Ibn Battuta's trip to India. His writings on medieval Indian society are an important source of historical information. In modern history, India had strongly supported the process of Morocco's liberation from the French protectorate and recognized the Kingdom's independence in 1956. Diplomatic missions were established in 1957.
- **Indonesia:** the first links between Morocco and Indonesia were forged during the preparatory phase of the Bandung Conference in 1955, which was a source of inspiration for African and Asian countries aspiring to independence. Official relations were established in 1960.

MOROCCO AND ASIA

The Kingdom's relations with Asian countries are marked, overall, by the sharing of common values, namely support for peace and international stability, the peaceful resolution of conflicts and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. These relations, which have been established since Morocco gained its independence, are characterized by the following features:

- Absence of conflicts or tension in bilateral relations. The major Asian countries have always taken a favourable position on the issue of the Kingdom's territorial integrity, with the exception of India. The latter had finally withdrawn its recognition of the pseudo "rasd" on June 26, 2000, which opened up new prospects for cooperation between Morocco and India.
- The regular progression of trade was accompanied, however, by a strong worsening of the trade balance to Morocco's disadvantage, except in the case of India. The potential of trade cooperation remains insufficiently mobilized.
- The development of tourist flows from Asia is still limited, despite the progress recorded over the last few years.
- The existence of areas of common interest, in this case Africa and the Arab world.

MOROCCO AND ASIA (2)

China

Cooperation between Morocco and China is rich, diversified and fruitful. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1958, Moroccan-Chinese friendship has grown stronger, as illustrated by the many high-level visits made by both sides since 1963.

India

Morocco's relations with India are the subject of several cooperation agreements in the political, economic, commercial and cultural fields. India is the only Asian country with which Morocco has a trade surplus, due to the weight of Moroccan phosphate exports in bilateral trade.

Japan

Morocco's economic relations with Japan are developing, mainly due to the dynamics of imports from Japan. Japanese FDIs in Morocco rose from 4.1 million dirhams in 2014 to nearly 2 billion dirhams in 2018. In January 2018, the two countries concluded a memorandum of cooperation to promote investment in infrastructure, thus encouraging cooperation between public and private organizations and enterprises of both countries aimed at investing in quality infrastructure in Morocco and African countries.

South Korea

Morocco's relations with South Korea are characterized by a regular increase in trade. Since the beginning of the years 2000, the South Korean companies have been operating in the Moroccan market in various domains, such as household appliances, telephone, automobile, construction sites, etc.

MOROCCO AND ASIA (3)

Cooperation between Morocco and ASEAN

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is, today, one of the most dynamic regional organizations in the world. Transformed into an economic community in 2015, it is a model of successful international cooperation. This experience of economic integration could be useful for Africa which, beyond the achievements of the regional communities, intends to develop economic and trade cooperation within the framework of the Continental Free Trade Area.

Morocco has expressed its willingness to further develop and deepen cooperation with ASEAN by joining the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in September 2016 and by becoming a development partner of the Mekong River Commission. The Kingdom also submitted the action plan for its application for the ASEAN Sectoral Dialogue Partner status in February 2018 in Jakarta.

Economic and trade cooperation between Morocco and the ASEAN countries deserves to be strengthened. Growing from 207 million dollars in 2000 to just over one billion dollars in 2016, trade between the two parties does not, however, exceed 2% of Morocco's overall trade.

THE CHALLENGES OF MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH ASIAN COUNTRIES

The shift in geostrategic equilibrium in favour of Asia will eventually have repercussions on the nature of the international relations of Morocco, which is faced with three major challenges:

- Accelerating the diversification of the Kingdom's partnership relations and strengthening their resilience to enable it to cope with the collateral effects of cooperative or conflictual relations between the emerging powers of Asia and the traditional powers.
- Developing national export capacities despite the geographical distance from Asia and the cultural and linguistic differences between Morocco and Asian countries.
- Positioning Morocco as the main interlocutor of Asian countries, particularly in Africa. The possibility of a shift in cooperation instruments from bilateral to multilateral, under the aegis of the African Union, is a risk that the Kingdom should anticipate, particularly with regard to China, South Korea, India and Japan.

LEVERS TO STRENGTHEN MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH ASIAN COUNTRIES

- **Consolidating Morocco's diplomatic positioning**, through active involvement in Afro-Asian forums. Through its adherence to the New Silk Roads project and its participation in the Forum on Sino-African Cooperation, Morocco has clearly expressed its willingness to contribute constructively to the rapprochement between Africa and Asia and to the strengthening of South-South cooperation. It is now time to capitalize on these achievements by deploying a multidimensional diplomatic strategy aimed at consolidating the Kingdom's position as a true partner of Asian regional groupings such as ASEAN, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Morocco should also increase its presence in multilateral forums such as the Asia-Arab World Forums, the Arab-Japanese Dialogue, the Japanese-Islamic Dialogue, the Forum on Sino-Arab Cooperation...
- **Building a dynamic and sustainable economic partnership**, by encouraging the investment of large Asian firms in Morocco and by developing cooperation between the Moroccan and Asian banking sector with a view to providing efficient support to Asian investors in Morocco and sub-Saharan Africa and Moroccan and African companies in Asia.
- **Using a renewed approach to promoting Morocco's image in Asia** with a view to increasing Morocco's visibility in all Asian communication media. This effort could be based on Moroccan-Asian friendship groups and forums between Moroccan and Asian businessmen.

LEVERS TO STRENGTHEN MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH ASIAN COUNTRIES

PRIORITIES BY COUNTRY

China: fulfilling the prospects for cooperation offered within the framework of the strategic partnership concluded by Morocco with China in 2016, as well as the New Silk Roads project which Morocco joined in 2017.

India: diversifying the partnership with India, beyond phosphates, by widening the field of cooperation to include ICTs and by attracting Indian investments in niche markets, such as port and rail logistics, the automotive industry, especially the low-cost segment, and the film sector.

Japan: focusing economic cooperation on the world trades of Morocco and on the sectors where Japan has expertise, such as the design of transport networks and on tourism. To this end, reopening the offices of the Moroccan National Tourist Board (ONMT) in Tokyo is to be considered.

South Korea: exploring the opportunity of concluding a free trade agreement, by first assessing the macroeconomic and sectoral impacts of this draft agreement, which should help to make Korean investments more attractive in structuring sectors such as the green economy and technological innovation. Furthermore, South Korea has accumulated, over the last few years, significant experience in the industries of the future, experience which could benefit Morocco in the framework of its Emergence Strategy.

FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

As a tribute to their rapprochement, Morocco and China concluded, during the visit of His Majesty the King in 2016, a strategic partnership aimed at strengthening bilateral cooperation in sectors with high potential for job creation. This partnership is made up of fifteen agreements including, in particular:

- a memorandum of economic and industrial partnership aimed at strengthening cooperation between the two countries in sectors with strong potential for job creation and added value, notably the automotive, textile/clothing, household appliances, aeronautics and logistic sectors,
- a memorandum of understanding on the exemption of certain categories of visas and the reciprocal simplification of procedures for issuing certain categories of visas, including, inter alia, the facilitation of visa issuance procedures for Chinese nationals wishing to travel to Morocco for tourism purposes, as well as Moroccan and Chinese businessmen holding ordinary passports,
- a memorandum of understanding on railway cooperation between the Chinese National Railway Company "China Railways" and the National Railway Company (ONCF) of the Kingdom of Morocco,
- a memorandum of understanding to strengthen cooperation in the infrastructure construction sector,
- a memorandum of understanding to strengthen cooperation in the tourism sector, particularly through the promotion of activities, the training of professionals in the field of tourism, the organization of training sessions and exchange of experts and collaboration between travel agencies and national tourism offices.

FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA (2)

Moroccan-Chinese relations in the light of the new Silk Roads

Morocco's accession, at the end of 2017, to the memorandum of understanding on the Belt and Road Initiative marked a new turning point, both in the bilateral relations between the Kingdom and China, and in the triangular relations between China-Morocco-Africa and China-Morocco-Europe. Morocco has, in fact, shown its willingness to participate actively in the realization of this project, which can contribute to the development of the African continent.

With an open economy which is diversifying, with modern infrastructures (Port Tanger Med, airports, high-speed train - TGV...) and thanks to its partnerships with Europe and the United States, Morocco, as a regional hub, can play an active role in the deployment of the New Silk Roads. Furthermore, with their proven experience in African markets, Moroccan companies could be ideal partners for Chinese companies wishing to expand their activities on the African continent. Moreover, Morocco's reputation, its cultural and spiritual influence and its age-old ties with the peoples of Africa are undeniable assets and open up important prospects for this global project.

Figure 38: The new land and sea silk roads



Source: New China News Agency

FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH INDIA (1)

Diplomatic relations between Morocco and India were officially established in 1957. Overall, they are characterized by their positive evolution and the convergence of the two countries' points of view within multilateral bodies. The legal framework governing these relations is marked by its richness and covers the economic, tourist, cultural and energy fields.

The evolution of Moroccan-Indian relations went through three phases:

- The 1960s and 1970s were characterized by relations that were, at best, neutral, due to the prevailing ideology of the Non-Aligned Movement, of which India was the champion, and, above all, due to the effects of the divisions resulting from the Cold War.
- The second phase of the 1980s and 1990s was characterized by crises leading to the breaking of diplomatic relations between the two countries, caused by India's recognition of the so-called "rasd" in 1985.
- India's policy towards Morocco during the decades 2000 and 2010 proved to be more favourable, due to the coming to the power of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), a conservative and Hinduist party. The new political situation in India, which allowed the country to withdraw its recognition of the "rasd", paved the way for a rapprochement of Moroccan and Indian points of view within multilateral bodies. It has also favoured cross-investment in the fertiliser industry, which until now has been an important lever, marking the positive development of economic links between the two countries

FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH INDIA (2)

The Visit of His Majesty King Mohammed VI to New Delhi in February 2001 gave a strong impetus to these relations. Similarly, the last Royal Visit in October 2015, on the side-lines of the Kingdom's participation in the India-Africa Summit, opened up promising prospects for cooperation that could be extended to the African continent.

As Morocco's trading partner, India is the only Asian country with which the Kingdom has a trade surplus, due to the volume of its phosphoric acid and fertiliser exports. Currently, Morocco covers, on average, one third of India's fertiliser imports. This country accounts for 20% of the OCP Group's exports.

Despite an increase from 360 million dollars in 2000 to nearly 1.4 billion dollars in 2017, trade between the two partners remains relatively low and their weight in the overall trade of Morocco and India hardly exceeds, respectively, 3% and 0.2%.

The prospects for strengthening cooperation between Morocco and India are promising:

- **Agriculture:** create partnerships in this field in order to meet national needs and benefit the entire African continent.
- **Health:** implement the provisions of the memorandum of understanding concluded between the two countries in December 2017, with a view to developing telehealth, training and medical research.

FOCUS ON MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH INDIA (3)

- **Pharmaceutical sector:** to promote the creation of bi-national companies capable of meeting Morocco's needs and, ultimately, supplying Africa with low-cost medicines, especially as India is a world leader in the field of generic medicines.
- **Tourism:** to develop tourist exchanges between the two countries through the simplification of visa procedures and the establishment of direct air routes.
- **Space cooperation:** to implement the memorandum of understanding, signed in September 2018, on the peaceful uses of air space.
- **Digitalization:** to draw inspiration from the experience of India, which has implemented a strategy of digitalization of its diplomacy and has thus succeeded in adapting to the changes in international relations brought about by the digital switchover, such as the involvement of new players in international affairs or the emergence of new concepts such as data-diplomacy or public diplomacy.
- **Cybersecurity:** to develop cooperation to strengthen the fight against cybercrime, cyber-terrorism and cyber-espionage.

MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Relations between Morocco and the Russian Federation have received a strong boost since the Visit of His Majesty King Mohammed VI to this country in 2016, which led to the conclusion of an in-depth strategic partnership, including judicial cooperation, environmental protection, maritime fishing, investment protection and the fight against terrorism.

This visit also made it possible to sign memorandums of understanding in the religious and cultural field and to draw up a programme of joint actions in the tourism sector.

The visit to Morocco of the Russian Prime Minister Dimitri Medvedev, in 2017, confirmed this desire to develop cooperation, since it was the occasion for the signing of a series of agreements in the fields of agriculture, customs, energy as well as a cooperation programme in the cultural field.

Figure 39: The Russian Federation



Source: Foreign Exchange Office

MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION (2)

Despite relative growth, trade between Morocco and the Russian Federation remains modest, marked by a strong imbalance to Morocco's disadvantage, about 83% in 2018.

Petroleum products account for 80% of Moroccan imports from Russia, while the Kingdom exports, mainly agricultural products, which illustrates the low diversification of trade between the two countries.

Russian direct investments in Morocco also remain weak.

Figure 40: Morocco's trade with Russia

In billions of dirhams

	2016	2017	2018
Imports	10	9.29	16.53
Exports	1.82	1.92	2.78
Trade balance	-8.18	-7.37	-13.75
Cover ratio	18.20%	20.66%	16.81%

Source: Foreign Exchange Office

CONCLUSION

Morocco's foreign policy choices are characterized by their relevance. In order to make this policy proactive and in tune with tomorrow's world, a few proposals are made with respect to the Kingdom's international relations and its diplomacy.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Partnership policy

- Consolidate the partnerships already established by Morocco and contribute to their diversification in order to adapt the pattern of the Kingdom's alliances to the new global geostrategic realities.
- Broaden the scope of bilateral cooperation to geographical areas of common interest and embed relations with partner countries in a globalized world, taking into account the challenges of competitiveness, sustainable development, security and migration.
- Make South-South cooperation a driver for the deployment of the Kingdom's foreign policy and give precedence to triangular cooperation approaches involving Morocco and partner countries on the one hand, and Africa and Europe on the other.

Immediate neighbourhood

- Restore the collective memory, rewrite the common history with neighbouring countries, especially Spain, and anticipate possible tensions, by setting up permanent consultation and coordination mechanisms.
- Promote cooperation between economic operators in order to broaden the scope of economic interests and release cooperation relations from the ambivalence of the political agenda.

CONCLUSION (2)

Aeras of belonging

- Continue to play an important role in political mediation and in the peace and security process in the Arab world.
- Take advantage of Morocco's relations with West Africa to strengthen the Kingdom's position in the strategic agenda of the major powers.
- Extend cooperation in Africa beyond French- and Arabic-speaking countries to English- and Portuguese-speaking countries and make Southern and East Africa one of the priorities of Moroccan foreign policy.
- Consolidate the Kingdom's return to the African Union by becoming more involved in the various organs and structures of this organisation, particularly within the ongoing institutional reform process.
- Advocate a vision of Euro-Mediterranean partnership that is part of a civilizational project in which human, cultural and institutional aspects are also integrated.
- Make the Euro-Moroccan partnership of shared prosperity a reality.

Openness to the world

- Make the South Atlantic a common area of cooperation, through the creation of a platform for dialogue and consultation and bring together the States bordering the Atlantic in Africa and South America.
- Use intangible capital as a lever to reduce the asymmetry in Morocco's relations with developed countries, particularly those in North America.

CONCLUSION (3)

- Improve Morocco's positioning in South America, by targeting countries whose position with regard to the artificial conflict in the Sahara is shaky and undecided, in a definitive manner and by using the privileged relations with the sub-continent's leading countries as a gateway to the South American regional economic communities.
- Build a dynamic and sustainable economic partnership with Asia, by encouraging the investment of large Asian firms in Morocco and by developing cooperation between the Moroccan and Asian banking sector, especially in Africa.

DIPLOMACY

Political component

- Take an active role in rebalancing forces, on a regional scale, by taking advantage of Morocco's Advanced Status with the European Union and the Kingdom's links with the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

Economic component

- Reinvigorate economic diplomacy and renovate the instruments of economic promotion of the Kingdom with the aim of rebalancing trade relations between Morocco and the partner countries, reinforcing the attractiveness of foreign direct investment and encouraging the internal diversification of Moroccan companies.

CONCLUSION (4)

Cultural component

- Give the cultural dimension the importance it deserves at the level of the Kingdom's diplomatic action, on an equal footing with the political and economic dimension.
- Lay the foundations for a lasting and balanced cultural relationship with countries with which cultural affinities exist or which host a large Moroccan community.

Security component

- Intensify security cooperation to curb the threat of terrorism and crime.
- Integrate the fight against terrorism and violent extremism into a comprehensive vision, based on a doctrine to counter the radical discourse of extremist movements, in particular towards youth and pursue the multidimensional approach to preventing the terrorist threat.
- Provide Morocco with a cyberspace diplomacy.

Environmental component

- Consolidate the achievements of the COP22 conference and put Morocco at the heart of the challenges of a new climate governance.
- Strengthen the means of action of climate diplomacy and direct it towards the defence of the Kingdom's interests, namely adaptation to climate change.

CONCLUSION (5)

Parallel diplomacy

- Encourage the involvement of civil society in the effort to promote the image of the Kingdom internationally and enable it to make its contribution, particularly with regard to the national issue of territorial integrity.
- Involve Moroccans living abroad and encourage them to act as a real transmission belt between Moroccan and foreign civil societies.

Intellectual diplomacy

- Develop close cooperation between Moroccan and foreign think tanks, particularly those operating in the field of international relations and security.
- Develop prospective watch and promote Morocco's capacities in strategic thinking of international standard.
- Promote scientific and technical cooperation, by encouraging collaboration between Moroccan and foreign universities.

Communication component

- Provide the Kingdom with an active communication strategy on the image of Morocco which is differentiated according to the continents, in order to publicize the progress made in different fields, to fight stereotypes and negative prejudices and to increase the country's visibility abroad.
- Implement an appropriate "Morocco Brand", by associating the public authorities as well as the economic operators and the media, and use it as an instrument at the service of the Kingdom's influence abroad.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ALECA – DCFTA	Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area
BM – WB	World Bank
CCNUCC – UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
ERASMUS	European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students
FMI – IMF	International Monetary Fund
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GIEC – IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IDE – FDIs	Foreign Direct Investments
IGM – WGI	World Governance Index
IRRHM	Royal Institute for Research on the History of Morocco
MAEC	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
MDM	Marocains living abroad
OCDE – OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OCP	Office Chérifien des Phosphates
OMC – WTO	World Trade Organization
ONG – NGO	Non-Governmental Organization

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