

MOROCCO'S EMERGENCE AND ITS OPENNESS TOWARDS THE WORLD

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PRESENTATION OF IRES: A MISSION OF ENLIGHTENING DECISION MAKING ON STRATEGIC ISSUES

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Presentation of IRES

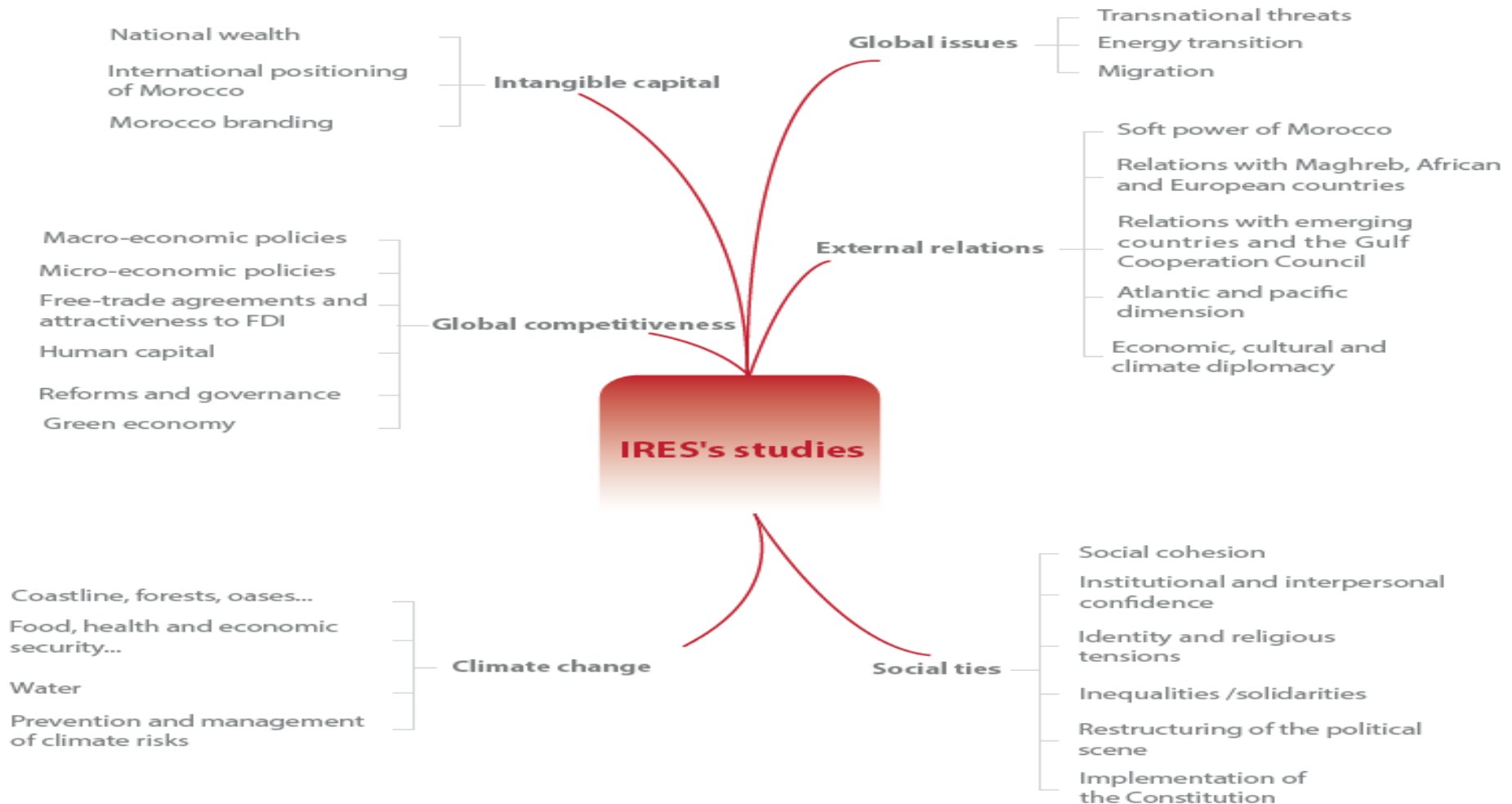
IRES.Think tank

Study of strategic issues of high impact on the country's future



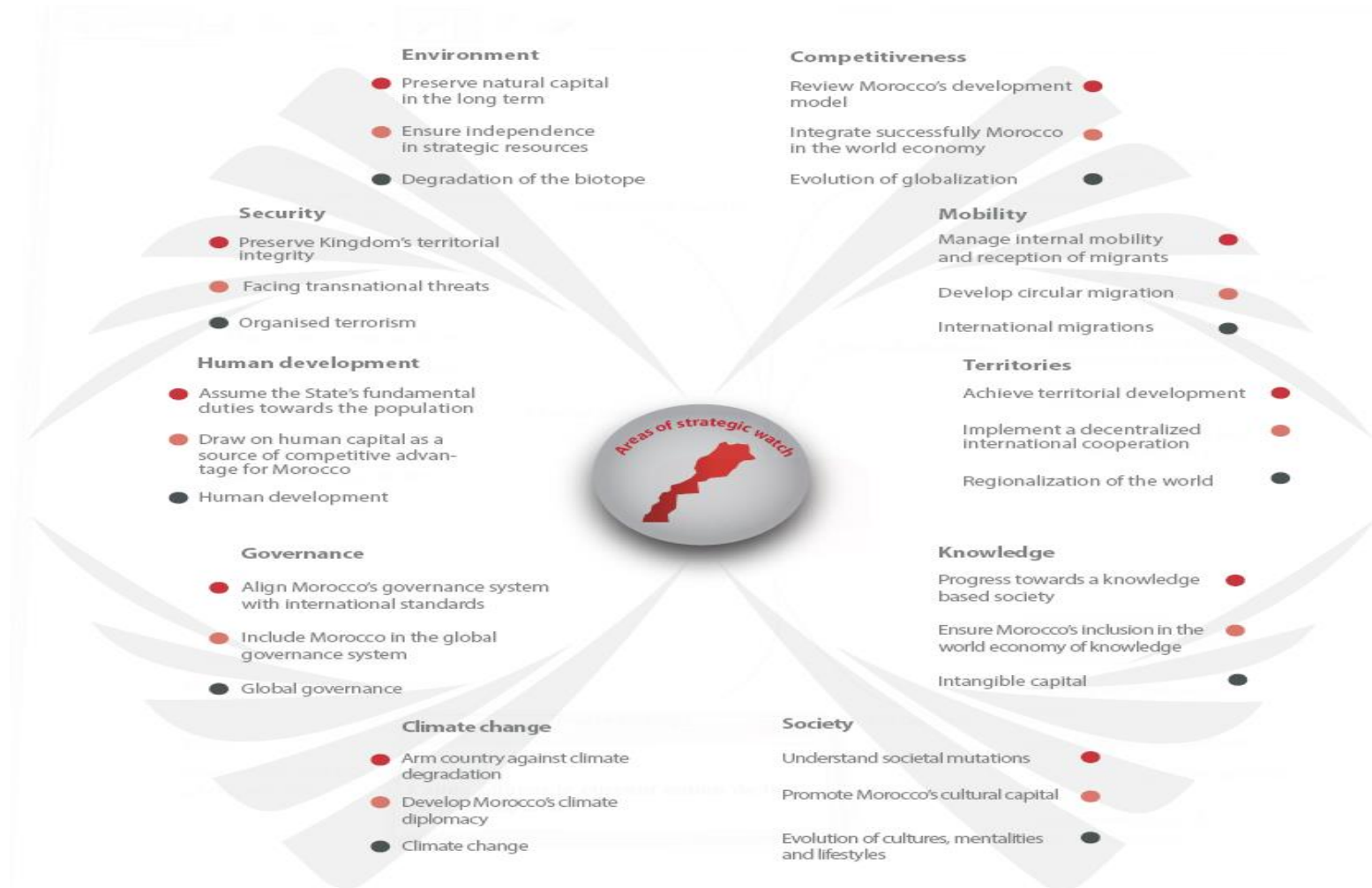
- Strategic reflexion device which relies on two major axes: study programs and strategic watch. These are two heavily interdependent components which upscale one another instantly. The two missions are relayed by IRES.Forum which aims, thanks to serene debate, to the outbreak of innovative ideas and to the sharing of new concepts.

Presentation of IRES (2)



- A work program centred on key issues related to domestic and foreign policy of the kingdom. These constitute an undivided whole, combining all the development efforts of the kingdom and its quest to position itself positively in a globalised system.

Presentation of IRES (3)



- A system of an advanced strategic watch, which allows to track closely evolutions at the national, international and global levels, to seize the opportunities, to prevent the threats and to anticipate the resulting ruptures.

1. DOMESTIC POLICY: A REFORMING MOMENTUM AIMING TOWARDS PROMISING DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES

The concept of emergence

- The concept of emergence is complex and difficult to define. However economic factors cannot be the sole measure of a country's emergence.
- The definition of emergence that seems most appropriate is the following: an emerging country is a country where economic and political freedom are heightened, which increasingly participates in a global market, has a growing middle class, where the standard of living steadily and markedly improves, where society is open and which increasingly cooperates with multilateral institutions.
- **Morocco meets all the criteria of emergence, except that of accelerating potential growth.** Though the Kingdom has experienced strong economic growth since the early 2000s (5% as a yearly average in the past decade), it has been slower than in emerging countries.
- Over the past years, Morocco's attractiveness for FDIs has grown. As it pursues its strategy for economic diversification and increased openness, Morocco has gathered significant momentum for reform, offering promising development prospects. The major reforms concern the following aspects:

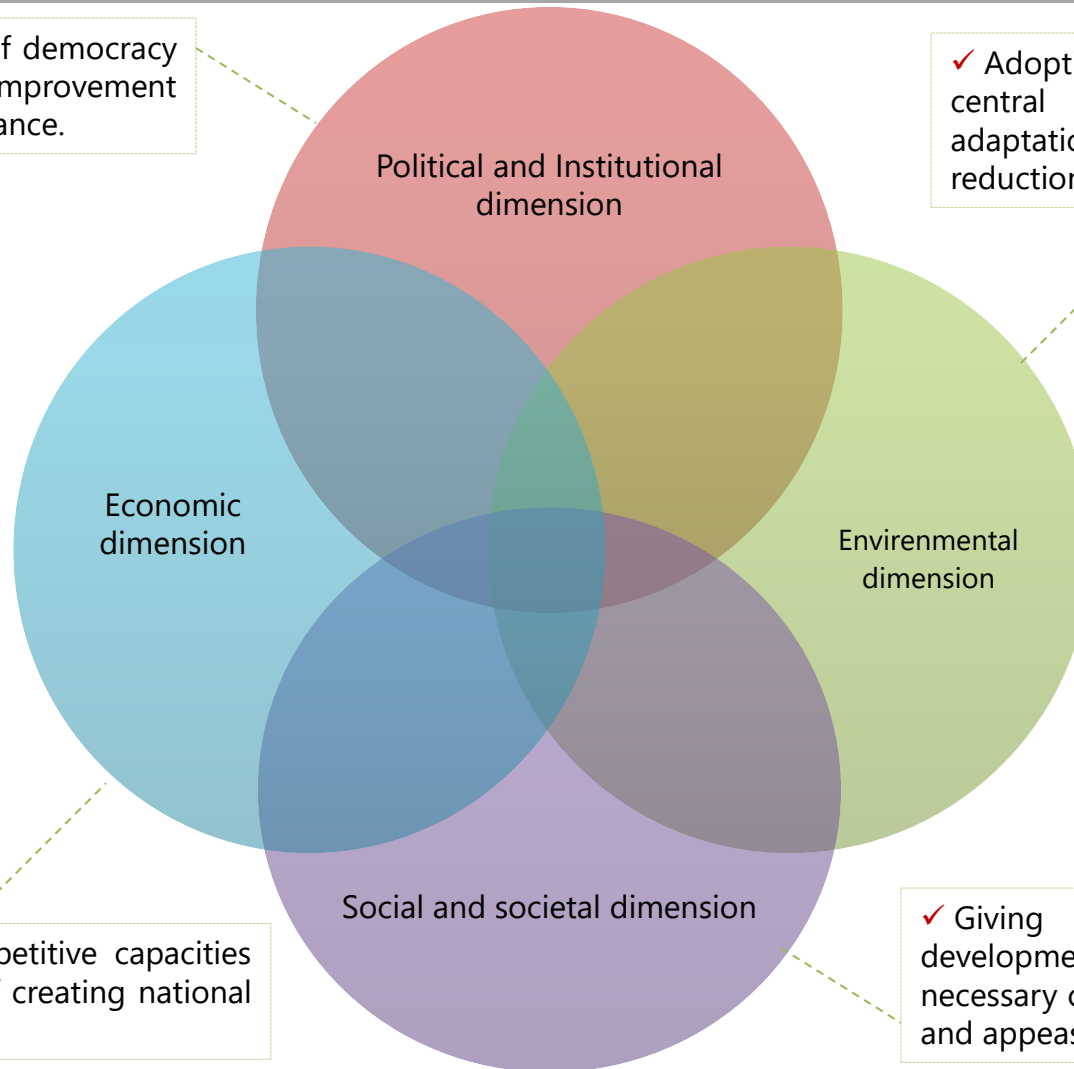
The concept of emergence (2)

- Political and institutional: a commitment to the values of democracy and human rights and improving the governance of institutions.
- Economic: building capacity to compete, to stimulate the process of wealth creation in the country.
- Social and societal: fostering human development and creating the necessary conditions for a sense of peaceful and harmonious community.
- Environmental: adopting the green economy as the central pillar of policies to adapt to climate change and reduce the ecological footprint.
- Foreign policy: moderate policy choices, keen awareness of global issues and ever-greater international openness through increased presence of Moroccan businesses in the African continent.

Key dimensions of Morocco's domestic policy

✓ Rooting of the values of democracy and Human Rights and improvement of the institutions' governance.

✓ Adoption of green economy as a central pillar of the policy of adaptation to climatic change and reduction of ecological footprint.



✓ Reinforcing the competitive capacities to boost the process of creating national wealth.

✓ Giving impulse to human development and building the necessary conditions for a harmonious and appeased living together.

Political and institutional advances, consolidated by the 2011 constitutional reform

- Morocco is a millennial monarchy, which enjoys genuine popular legitimacy. Ever since its independence, the Kingdom has opted for political pluralism, a people-friendly market economy, and has fostered the development of civil society.
- Between 2003 and 2005, Morocco conducted a national reconciliation process, with the support of political parties, trade union confederations and civil society. It sought to exhume the past to better apprehend the future: victims of human rights violations were compensated, and adequate mechanisms were introduced to prevent any violations thereafter.
- Morocco took a leap forward with the adoption of the Constitution in July 2011, The contributions of this new constitution focus on:
 - Recognizing **the plurality of the Moroccan identity**: Arab-Islamic, Amazigh, Saharan-Hassani, enriched by its African, Andalusian, Hebrew and Mediterranean tributaries.
 - Establishing a stronger rule of law and **justice as an independent power**.
 - Advocating for a **new generation of human rights**: the right to life, the right to safety, the right to a healthy environment, right to petition...

Political and institutional advances, consolidated by the 2011 constitutional reform (2)

- Consolidating the principle of **separation and balance of powers**: the head of government is fully in charge of the executive.
- Introducing a new principle according to which the head of government is chosen from the political party that came first in the House of Representatives elections.
- Constitutionalizing **Institutions in charge of good governance**, Human Rights and the protection of liberties.
- Establishing the **primacy of international law** over national law.

 **The main objective is to accelerate the transition from a representative democracy to a participative democracy where civil society plays an important role.**

Political and institutional advances, consolidated by the 2011 constitutional reform (3)

- 18 organic laws from the 23 prescribed by the 2011 Constitution have been adopted in a variety of areas. The other laws should be adopted during the current legislation which ends in October 2021.
- The full implementation of the constitution faces some challenges :
 - Regarding the Berber [Amazigh] language, which has become an official language, two positions are facing off: one advocating a national approach, and another one recommending an approach based on the regional specificities.
 - The establishment of the institution in charge of parity is still the subject of discussion.
 - Morocco's ability to handle two major challenges: the pace and constraints of progress towards democratic normality and the capacity of actors to construct normative compromises.

Political and institutional advances, consolidated by the 2011 constitutional reform (4)

- The constitutional reform conferred regions a key role. The Kingdom was subdivided into 12 regions, instead of the previous 16, laying the foundations for a Moroccan regional model based on "regions that are economically and geographically complementary and socially and culturally harmonious". This model is focused among other, on the following:
 - Regional councils elected by direct universal suffrage;
 - An overhauled composition and prerogatives of the lower house of Parliament, in favor of higher territorial representation by regions;
 - New funding mechanisms fostering solidarity between regions: regional cohesion funds, equalization system.
- To operationalize the 2011 Constitution, several organic laws were passed in many fields. To complete this major project, new ways of producing public policies must be adopted. This process requires that institutions, in particular representative, make a significant qualitative upgrade to further improve their operations and restore the confidence of the population.

- The Kingdom of Morocco has worked seriously for the settlement of the artificial dispute over the Moroccan Sahara, by proposing an innovative Autonomy Project. The plan, considered credible and realistic by the international community including the permanent members of the UN Security Council, is a reliable form of Moroccan southern provinces' self-determination.
- The **provinces of the Moroccan Sahara** are the first to benefit from the model of **advanced regionalization**, endorsed in the 2011 Constitution, whose foundations converge perfectly with the **autonomy plan** proposed by Morocco.
- The new development model of the Southern provinces is based on tangible progress :
 - **Regular holding of communal and legislative elections**, expressing the will of the citizens of the southern provinces, with a voter turnout rate exceeding the national average : This reflects the commitment of the population of these provinces to the Moroccan sovereignty and their effective involvement in the project of building a participatory democracy.
 - **Placing two offices of the National Council of Human Rights** in Laayoune and Dakhla to strengthen the anchoring of human rights values in these provinces.

Political and institutional advances in MOROCCAN SAHARA (2)

- **Infrastructure development** , especially in the priority social sectors : Southern provinces show a level of human development , well above the national level. This effort far exceeds the revenues from mineral resources and fisheries which feature these provinces : **for 1 dirham received from Sahara, Morocco invested 7 dirhams.**
- An **important cultural mix** , reflected in the sharp decline in endogamy levels in the southern provinces, as is clear from some reliable sociological studies .
- The **investment program of nearly 8 billion euros**, launched by the Sovereign on the occasion of the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Green March in November 2015, opens large perspectives not only for the provinces of southern Morocco , but also for the sub-Saharan neighborhood.
 - ➔ **the aim being to make the Moroccan Sahara a space of stability and shared prosperity, promoting the eradication of vulnerability sources that feed terrorism and crime in the lawless areas that thrive in the Sahel and to make it as an economic hub serving as an industrial and commercial "link" with the rest of the African continent.**
- India withdrew its recognition of the pseudo "rasd" in 2000. This decision has given a new dynamic to the bilateral relations between the two countries.

Some figures concerning the two provinces of the Moroccan Sahara

- ❑ The two provinces of the Moroccan Sahara represent :
 - 1.5% of Morocco's population;
 - 2.5% of GDP, on average, over the period 2009-2015;
 - 1.6% of the proven reserves of phosphates (the Kingdom of Morocco holds 75% of world's reserves of phosphates);
 - 6% of the national production of phosphates.
- ❑ The sustainable development of phosphate resources at the Boucraâ site (Laâyoune) requires extremely costly infrastructures. Given the high maintenance costs of mining equipment and the very short life of the assets at Boucraâ, a region characterized by severe geographic and climatic constraints, phosphate extraction costs in this zone represent 2 and a half times the costs of extracting this raw material from mines in the North of Morocco.
- ❑ OCP's investments at the Boucraâ site are estimated at over 2 billion dollars during the period from 1976 to 2010. OCP recorded operating losses for 27 years. It was not until 2008 that Boucraâ has become beneficiary.

An economic dynamic based on sound macro economic policies and sectorial strategies, promoting Morocco's global businesses

Morocco has undergone many economic and financial reforms since the early 1980s. Efforts have focused on:

- **Enhancing macroeconomic stability** (limited inflation, sustainable public debt...), so as to improve the resilience of Morocco's economy to external shocks, and to earn the best credit rating in the region (investment grade);
- **Territorial development** and the development of highway, railroad, port and airport infrastructure, thereby improving Morocco's international connectivity;
- **Implementing sector strategies** aimed at transforming Morocco's specialization profile: developing Morocco's global businesses with the Emergence plan, the Green Morocco Plan in agriculture, the 2020 vision for tourism, the energy strategy, growing the phosphate industry... the automotive industry is currently the largest exporting sector, ahead of phosphates and its derivatives;
- **Diversifying drivers of growth for Moroccan economic players**, in particular in Sub-Saharan Africa (strong presence of banking, telecom, construction ...).

An economic dynamic based on sound macro economic policies and sectorial strategies, promoting Morocco's global businesses (2)

However, Morocco must overcome a number of challenges to take the path of increasing and inclusive growth:

- Ensure that economic growth creates more jobs for skilled youth.
- Optimize opportunities offered by free trade agreements concluded by the Kingdom.
- Gradually integrate the informal sector into the formal sector and promote a social and solidarity economy.
- Further enhance Morocco's attractiveness for foreign capital flows, which promote the transfer of knowledge and know-how so that Morocco can catch up more quickly with regard to technology.

 **Morocco is considered to be a regional hub in many sectors, which amplifies the size of its economy.**

Societal reforms to strengthen social bonds and to promote the Kingdom's cultural diversity

Morocco has made significant progress in improving citizens' living conditions, fostering social equity and laying the foundations for a sense of harmonious and peaceful community. In this context, provision of basic social services was strongly developed:

- **Education:** generalized basic education, better access conditions for students in rural areas, reduced illiteracy...
- **Teaching and training:** higher education reform, emergence of private universities, developing vocational training as an education stream in its own right.
- **Health:** improving healthcare supply and generalizing medical coverage, in particular for vulnerable populations.
- **Housing:** promoting access to social housing, through substantial government assistance: use of public land for housing, home loan guarantees...
- **Absolute poverty** was eradicated, and relative poverty was strongly reduced.

 **Social reforms, along with the National Human Development Initiative introduced in 2005, built the capacities of vulnerable populations and promoted income-generating activities.**

Societal reforms to strengthen social bonds and to promote the Kingdom's cultural diversity (2)

Morocco has also enacted major societal reforms since the early 2000s:

- **Women's rights and status reforms**, made possible by the personal commitment of King Mohammed VI: the family code was reformed in 2004, Moroccan citizenship can be transmitted by the mother since 2007 and Morocco's reservations on the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women were withdrawn in 2011. The effect of these reforms was to strengthen gender equality. In some sectors, such as higher education, there are more young women than young men.
- **Reforms of the religious field:** preacher training, combating informal preaching, using audio-visual communication channels to heighten citizen awareness of the values of Islam of tolerance and respect of other faiths. The Moroccan experience in this matter has inspired some Arab and African countries, as well as some European countries.
- **Development of civil society**, expanding its role as a partner of public authorities. The number of associations in Morocco is currently over 130,000. Nowadays, civil society no longer focuses on advocacy; rather, it plays a role complementary to that of public authorities in several areas: non-formal education, health...

Societal reforms to strengthen social bonds and to promote the Kingdom's cultural diversity (3)

Despite its achievements, Morocco must rise to a number of social challenges:

- Accelerating the accumulation of human capital through the new education system reform, focused on equal opportunity, improving the system's quality and a greater openness to foreign languages.
- Developing intangible capital as a significant source of wealth creation and distributing this wealth more appropriately. This capital represents 75% of national wealth, a figure close to the OECD average of 80%.
- Better governance of social nets to maximize impact on beneficiaries, while also ensuring optimal allocation of public expenditure.
- Shifting from housing-based policies to fully fledged city policies, taking into consideration urban dimensions and the imperatives of social bonding: social mixing, values and identity...

Societal reforms to strengthen social bonds and to promote the Kingdom's cultural diversity (4)

As for societal challenges, they consist of the following:

- Protecting Moroccan youth from the influence of extremist views coming from outside and operating through the Internet.
- Ensuring that women's participation in politics is consistent with the levels set in the Constitution (27% of seats at the municipal level, 30% of seats at the regional and national levels) and facilitating women's participation in the economy.
- Building the capacity of civil society and involving it in public diplomacy.

A public policy shift toward environmental sustainability

Public policy choices in Morocco increasingly adopt a sustainable approach, for reasons related to adaptation to the inevitable impacts of climate change, but also to accelerate economic development :

- Morocco has earned international recognition for its **policy of water resources** development focused on the construction of dams, and has been implementing a water strategy since 1995, based on demand management and efficient mobilization of water resources.
 - **Renewable energy development**, in particular solar and wind power, constitutes a central pillar of Morocco's 2009 energy strategy. The share of renewable energy sources in national power generation capacity is set to reach 42% in 2020 and 53% in 2030. The Ouarzazate solar plant, which operates since 2016, should establish Morocco's status as a pioneer in the field of solar power.
 - Recently, the country introduced a new **coastline development mechanism**, which takes into account new data related to climate change and ecological footprint reduction.
 - The Kingdom pursues a **sustainable development strategy** aimed at enhancing citizens' living environment, improving sustainable management of natural resources and promoting environmentally friendly economic activity.
- ➔ **As an active country in the international climate and environment debate, the Kingdom hosted the COP22 in November 2016.**

A public policy shift toward environmental sustainability (2)

Morocco organized in November 2016 the Africa Action Summit, which sought to give the continent the opportunity to speak with a single voice so as to harmonize its policies to combat the impacts of climate change and to increase its negotiating power.

To maximize the impact of initiatives aimed at securing sustainable development, Morocco should:

- continue to align the national institutional and legislative arsenal with international standards,
- mobilize national funding,
- avail itself of international funds,
- but also promote modes of production and consumption consistent with the need to reduce the ecological footprint.

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II. PRIORITIES OF MOROCCO'S FOREIGN POLICY

THE FOUNDATIONS OF MOROCCO'S FOREIGN POLICY

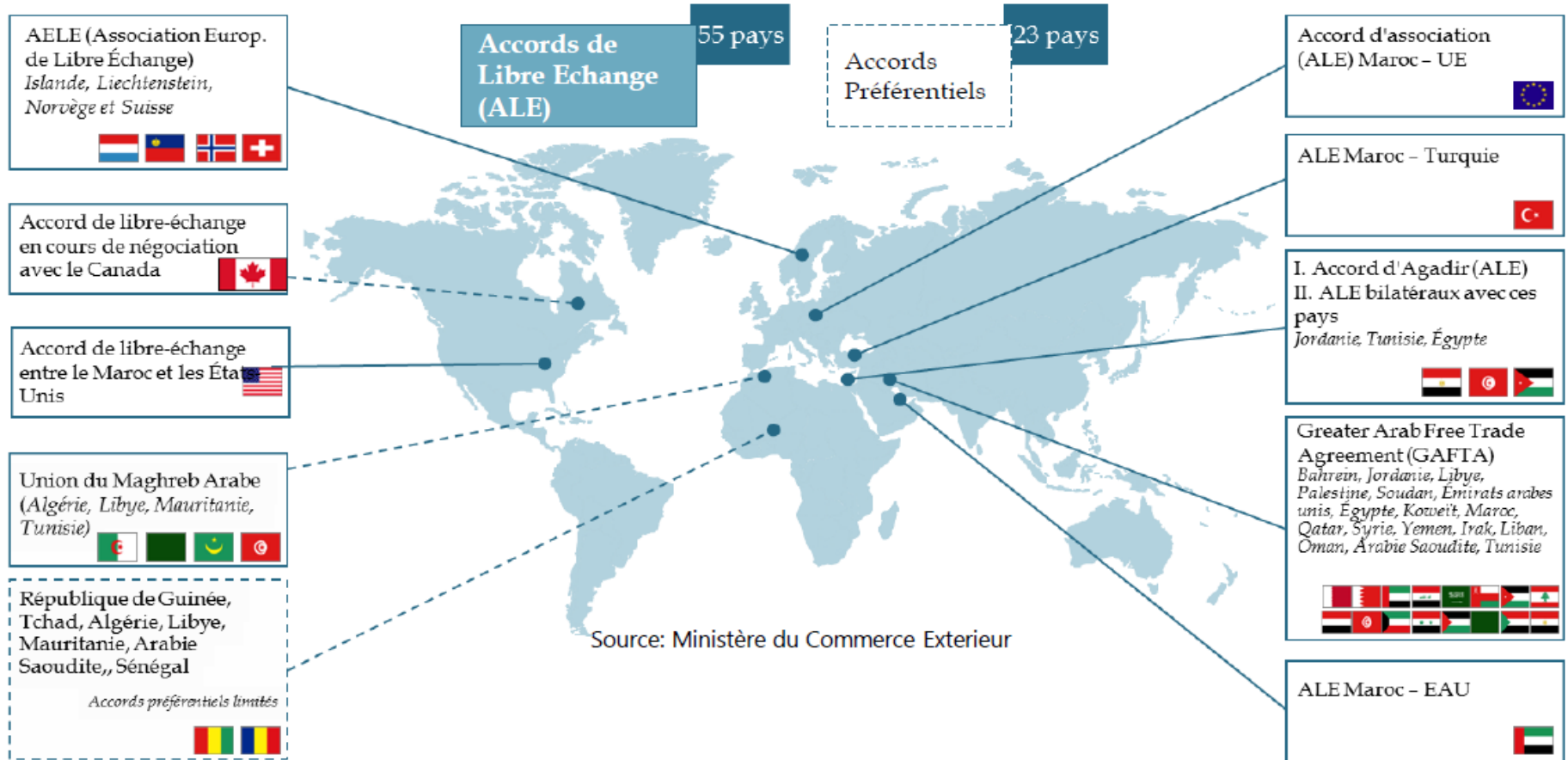
Morocco is opening up trade, whether it is in the multilateral WTO framework, or by signing free trade agreements with traditional and emerging powers as well as with developing countries, in particular in Africa. This has helped Morocco to create a dense and diverse network of relations based on cooperation, generated by:

- **Morocco's international behavior, based on political and religious moderation**, which afforded it the special role of mediator and bridge between the Muslim and Western worlds. This role is rooted in centuries of history, reaffirming Morocco's distinctiveness as a crossroads of civilizations;
- **Diligent participation in peacekeeping operations and humanitarian action**, under the auspices of the UN as well as NATO, in which Morocco has acquired strategic partner status,
- **Heightened awareness of global issues** (human development, global security, climate change, defending a fair and equitable international order...),
- **Morocco's emergence as a regional hub** in many fields: economic, financial, transport, logistics, teaching/education ...

 **Morocco's determined strides on the path of reform and economic modernization have helped it build a reputation with G8 countries that is better than MENA and African countries, and even than emerging countries, according to the surveys conducted by the Reputation Institute in 2015, 2016 and 2017, in collaboration with IRES.**

THE FOUNDATIONS OF MOROCCO'S FOREIGN POLICY (2)

A DIAGRAM OF MOROCCO'S ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIPS



An extensive network of free and preferential trade agreements giving access to Morocco to a large market of nearly 2 billion consumers .

THE FOUNDATIONS OF MOROCCO'S FOREIGN POLICY (3)

While remaining in a logic of diversification of its partnership through the development of the Asian and Atlantic dimension of its foreign policy, Morocco attaches great importance to strengthening its relations with Europe and Africa. Relations with these two regions have a particular dynamism not fully mobilizing their potential.



Morocco –European Union relationships

Morocco –European Union relationships

Strategic partnership

- By their bilateral and Euro-Mediterranean dimension, Morocco's relations with the European Union are strategic.
- The European Union is the first customer of Morocco, its main supplier, its largest foreign investor, its first source of tourist flows and remittances from Moroccans of the world (80% of Moroccans living abroad reside in Europe).
- Since October 2008, relations with the European Union are growing under the **advanced status framework, which is a position between association and membership**. This status offers clear opportunities to Morocco to achieve convergence of the national legislative and regulatory systems towards the European legal system ("**community acquis**"), based upon the principle of national sovereignty, while accessing European community programs and agencies.
- Currently, negotiations are underway to conclude a **comprehensive** and in **depth free trade agreement** (CAFTA), to enable Morocco to join the European single market.

Morocco –European Union relationships (2)

Morocco within the euro Mediterranean partnership

Morocco has always advocated for boosting cooperation between the countries bordering the Mediterranean, which is a projection space of Moroccan foreign policy. The Kingdom has continued to work towards the strengthening of regional integration since the launch in 1995 of the Barcelona process .

- Within the framework of the European neighborhood policy, **Morocco's** ability to carry out reforms allowed him to be the **first beneficiary of the financial instruments of this cooperation**.
- Morocco plays an **active role in the 5 + 5 dialogue in Western Mediterranean** and attaches strategic importance to the stability of the Mediterranean region, by actively participating in peacekeeping, the fight against terrorism and cross boarder crime.
- **The Kingdom has developed its Mediterranean vocation** with the implementation of major infrastructure projects on the Mediterranean coast.
- Morocco has actively participated in the establishment of the Union for the Mediterranean whose Secretary General is Moroccan. It is home to the Euro-Mediterranean University in Fez.

MOROCCO'S AFRICAN POLICY

MOROCCO'S AFRICAN POLICY

Morocco believes in Africa

Africa is the strategic depth of Morocco. The Kingdom is the first African investor in west Africa and the second in the continent.

Africa has a significant human potential and important natural resources that need to be developed autonomously so Africa can take control of its destiny.

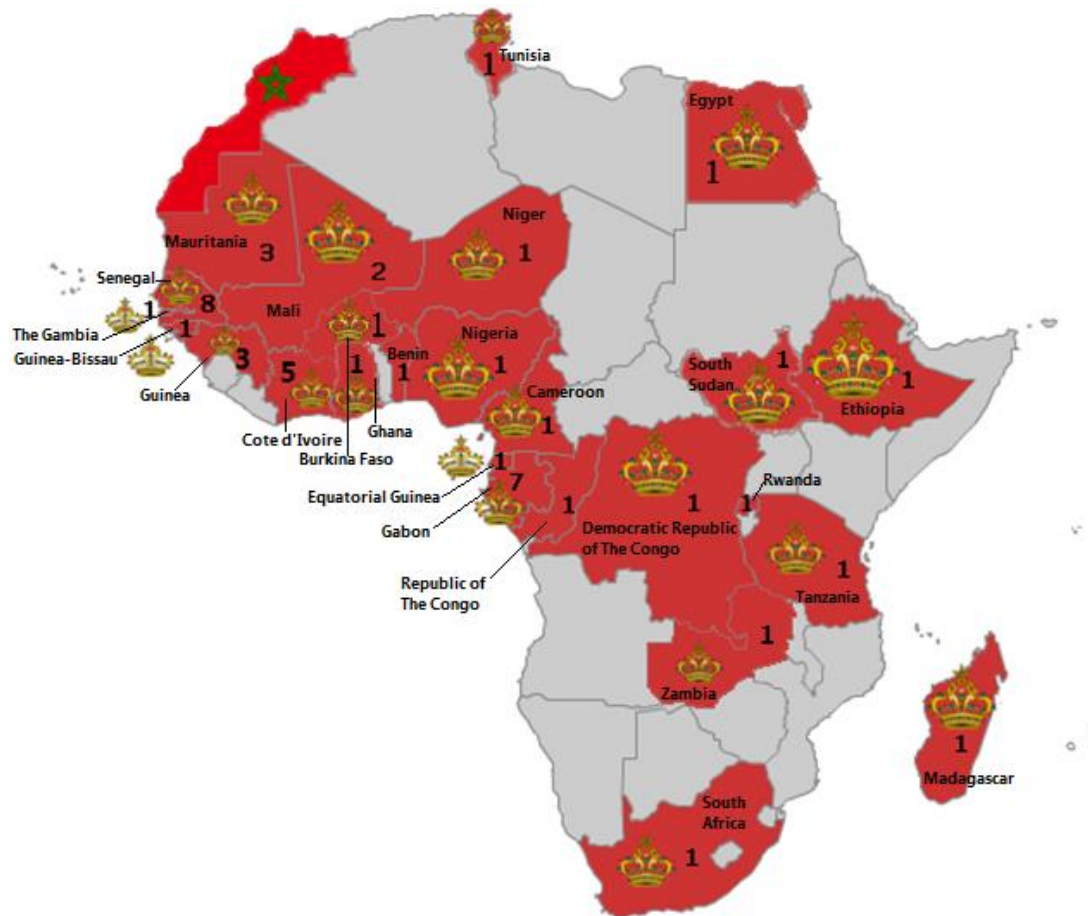
The doctrine of Morocco's Kingdom towards Africa is defined as follows:

- Africa must, from now on, be an actor and not an object of international relations;
- Old and outdated patterns must be abandoned in order to invent an innovative model for Africa's development which responds to the need of making an economic transformation of the continent by itself;
- Cooperation with African countries must be beneficial for all parts. Human and social dimension are constantly in the core of Morocco's action in favor of the continent;
- In the context of South-South cooperation, Morocco places Africa in the heart of its foreign policy priorities. Its objective is not to acquire leadership in Africa but rather to give Africa leadership at an international level.

MOROCCO'S AFRICAN POLICY (2)

Royal Visits to Africa

Official Visits of His Majesty King Mohammed VI to Africa, since 1999



Source: IRES processing_ data issued from Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

MOROCCO'S AFRICAN POLICY (3)

A rich framework of cooperation

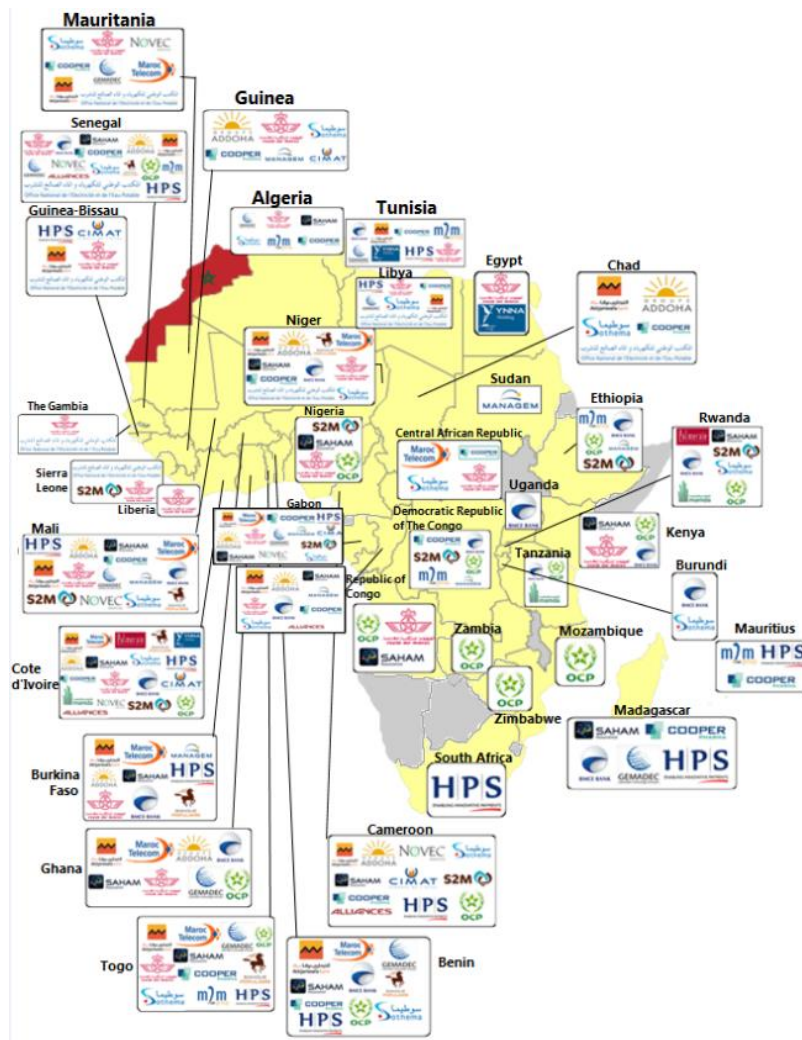
Since the year 2000, Morocco has concluded nearly a thousand agreements with African countries, aimed at deepening cooperation in several areas, in contrast with 500 agreements between 1956 and 1999. This cooperation follows multilateral approaches, as evidenced by the following:

- **Morocco rejoins African Union** on January 30, 2017.
- **Morocco's next accession to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) :** Morocco officially presented its application for accession to ECOWAS, at the 51st summit held on June, 4th 2017.
- The Kingdom's **deep involvement in a number regional cooperation initiatives**, such as the Conference of African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean, which Morocco initiated.
- **The effective contribution of the Kingdom of Morocco to strengthening peace and stability in Africa**, within the UN mechanisms.
- **Strong presence in cooperation forums linking Africa to emerging countries**, particularly Asian countries: the China-Africa Forum, the India-Africa Forum...

Another facet of Morocco's emergence lies in the **international development of its businesses**, some of which generate over a third of revenues in Africa. Most large Moroccan corporations operate in Africa, in diverse sectors such as banking, insurance, telecommunications, mining or construction.

MOROCCO'S AFRICAN POLICY (4)

Presence of Moroccan operators in Africa



Source: **IRES** processing_ data issued from Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

A noticeable presence of Moroccan operators in Africa. Some of them realize more than a third of their revenues in Africa

MOROCCO'S AFRICAN POLICY (5)

A security dimension of cooperation

The security situation in Africa is both complex and worrying. **The Sahel is today the epicenter of terrorism in Africa**, with the presence of the most dangerous terrorist groups. These groups, who take advantage of the fragility of the border areas, are provided with military capabilities exceeding those of some failing states in the region.

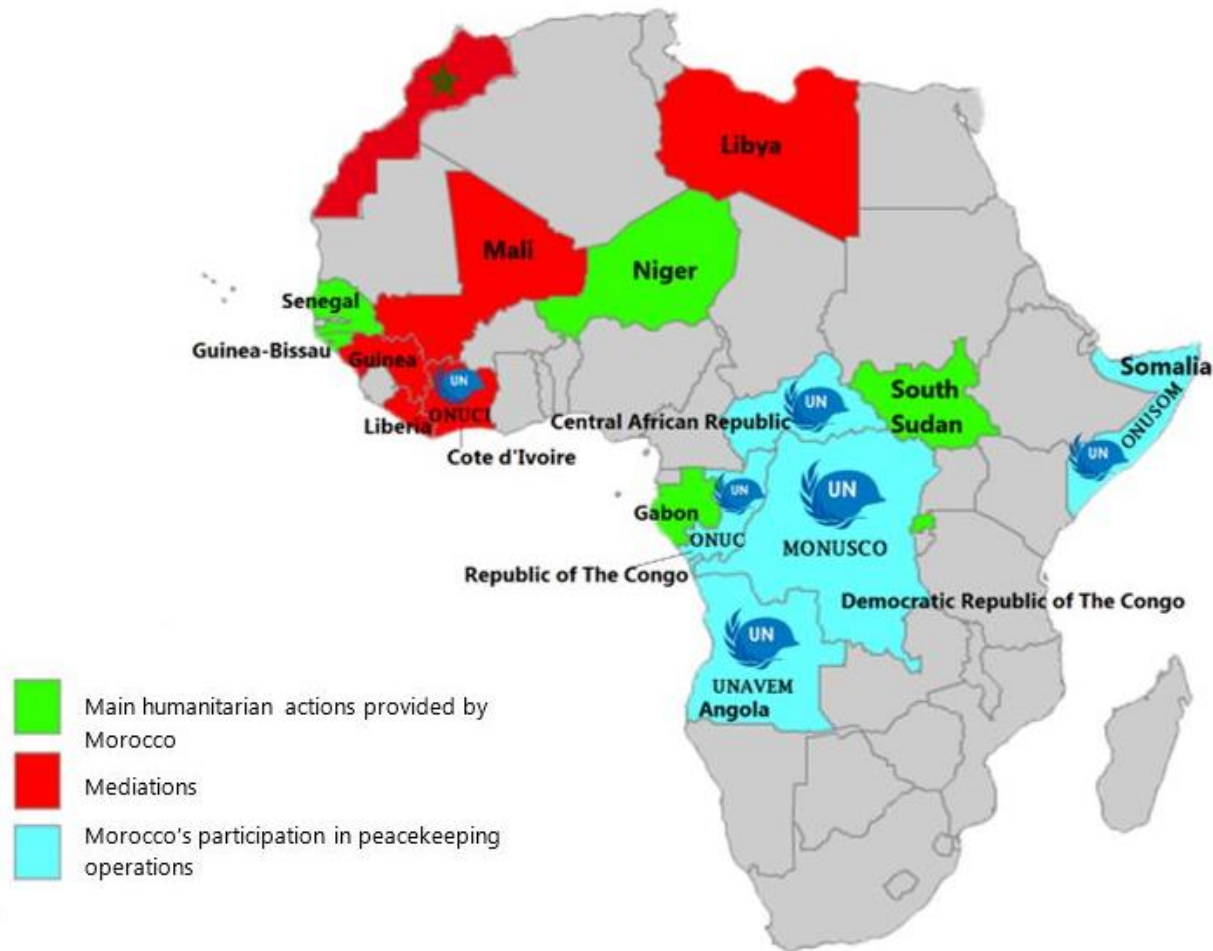
The seriousness of the security threats facing Africa makes sole **national management of security challenges an illusion**. The international and regional support to national efforts to fight against terrorism should be the rule and not the exception.

On the military side, **the answer to the security challenges in Africa must necessarily be backed by policies of socio-economic nature** to fight vigorously against the structural factors underlying security crises and their prevention. It is commonly accepted today that without peace and security, Africa will not be able to accelerate socio-economic development.

Morocco contributes to the international effort for stability in Africa, in particular by contributing to peacekeeping operations in Somalia, in Congo and in Côte d'Ivoire, through military support for operations in Mali and in the Central African Republic and by hosting negotiations between Libyan factions to break the deadlock in that country and prevent it from becoming a breeding ground for terrorism, threatening Africa as well as Europe.

MOROCCO'S AFRICAN POLICY (6)

Participation of Morocco in peacekeeping operations and humanitarian actions in Africa



Source: **IRES** processing_data issued from Multilateral Peace Operations Database (SIPRI) and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

MOROCCO'S AFRICAN POLICY (7)

- With regard to cultural cooperation, Morocco trains African imams on the values of tolerance of Islam, in line with the Maliki rite, and by welcoming 16,000 African students, 6,500 of whom receive a Moroccan scholarship.
- Moreover, Morocco pursues an immigration strategy based on a humanitarian approach, and has completed the first phase of an operation to regularize 25,000 African migrants. In late 2016, the second regularization operation was launched, by starting to review nearly 15,000 regularization requests.
- Expanding cooperation with East African countries, and Morocco's return to the African Union, will certainly build further momentum for the continent's development.

Perspectives of Morocco's positioning in Africa

Reinforce the positioning of the Kingdom in West Africa , by focusing on two strategic axes:

- The involvement of Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) in the process of diversification of Moroccan international private groups in Africa, forging alliances with foreign firms .
- Intensifying regional cooperation in the fight against terrorist and criminal networks in the Sahel and Gulf of Guinea, giving priority to capacity building in vulnerable countries in terms of security governance.

Develop the positioning of Morocco in Southern Africa and East Africa , through:

- Expanding the field of economic interests with the leading countries in this region.
- The use of a proactive communication strategy to bridge the gap of information on Morocco and to enhance the image of Morocco in the region.
- The development of relations between civil society actors and the encouragement of cultural and academic exchanges to promote mutual understanding between peoples.

Return of Morocco to the African Union

The Kingdom's return to the African Union offers undeniable opportunities:

- **Politically and diplomatically**, it reflects a paradigm shift in the way the Kingdom's foreign policy operates, focusing more on a pragmatic and offensive approach. The reintegration of Morocco in the African Union was carried out without preconditions and with majority support. The diplomatic dividends of this return reinforce the status of Morocco as a choice partner in its relations with major actors in the globalized system.
- **At the economic level**, it offers a new opportunity to the cooperative relations with its African partners, and will foster an expanded presence of the Kingdom in different regions of the continent as well as a strong involvement in constructing an African Continental Free Trade Area. It will also enable Morocco to be updated about the new trends in international cooperation towards the continent.
- **In terms of communication**, the return of the Kingdom to its institutional family has been highly appreciated by the African community and by several international actors. It offers important opportunities that should be well tackled by communicating judiciously on the actions undertaken by the Kingdom for the development of Africa.

Morocco's accession to ECOWAS

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is composed of 15 countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. It is a strategic region, located in the heart of west Africa and open on the Atlantic coast. It is rich in natural resources. It represents a market of some 327 million consumers and a GDP of around \$ 700 billion.

Morocco's accession to ECOWAS offer to Morocco new opportunities:

- Morocco will become a stakeholder in the reform of ECOWAS and, beyond that, of the African Union and an active player in the process of regional integration.
- This accession is likely to reinforce Morocco's position as a link between Africa and the developed countries, notably Europe, and also to broaden and deepen relations with the emerging countries, such as the BRICS, thus contributing to regional and international repositioning of Morocco.

Morocco's accession to ECOWAS

- This membership offers new economic opportunities for the Kingdom of Morocco :
 - ✓ Access a large market in a region rich in natural resources and located in a strategic geographical space,
 - ✓ Reduce the overall deficit in the current account balance,
 - ✓ Diversify external relations and reduce dependence on Europe,
 - ✓ Enhancing the attractiveness of the Moroccan economy, and
 - ✓ Promote the internationalization of Moroccan companies.
- However, Morocco's accession to ECOWAS presents some potential challenges :
 - ✓ massive sub-Saharan immigration;
 - ✓ insecurity and terrorism in the ECOWAS region and the Sahel Arc of instability;
 - ✓ edifice of a single monetary zone in a region that is still characterized by the heterogeneity of its economies and by a low regional integration .

MOROCCO'S OPENING ON ASIA

Morocco's opening on Asia

Asian space has got a strong strategic position due to the acceleration of the decentralization process in the world, resulting from the effects of the global economic crisis.

Asia, the most populous space in the world, has become a new guiding pole of the world economy, with, actually, 35% of the world's GDP, one third of international trade and 30% of FDI inflows, according to, respectively, IMF, WTO and UNCTAD. It would contribute at 55% of global wealth by 2050, according to CEPIL.

The relations of the Kingdom of Morocco with Asian countries are marked globally by sharing common values, namely support for peace and international stability, peaceful resolution of conflicts and non-interference in internal States affairs. These relations have been established since Morocco's access to Independence.

The shift of geo-strategic equilibriums to the benefit of Asia would ultimately have an impact on the nature of Morocco's international relations, which is confronted to two major challenges:

- Accelerate the diversification of the Kingdom's partnership relations and strengthen their resilience to the collateral effects of the cooperative or conflicting relations between the emerging Asian powers and the traditional powers.
- Develop national export capacities despite geographical remoteness of Asia and cultural and linguistic differences between Morocco and Asian countries.

MOROCCO'S OPENING ON ASIA (2)

The strengthening levers for Morocco's relations with Asian countries

- **As a member of the African Union**, Morocco intends to strengthen its presence in regional groupings such as ASEAN, APEC and Shanghai Organization for Cooperation...
- **Build a dynamic and sustainable economic partnership** by encouraging investment of large Asian firms in Morocco and by developing cooperation between the Moroccan and Asian companies.
- **Use a renewed approach to promote Morocco's image in Asia** in order to enhance the visibility of Morocco. This effort could be based on Moroccan-Asian friendship groups and business forums.

Royal Vision

*"... **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 programs, putting our know-how at the disposal of some African countries ...**".*

Extract from the speech delivered by His Majesty King Mohammed VI at the 3rd India-Africa Summit forum (29 September 2015)

RELATIONS BETWEEN MOROCCO AND INDIA (2)

- Relations between India and Morocco date back to the 14th century when Ibn Battouta had traveled to India.
- In modern history, India had strongly supported the process of liberation of Morocco from the French and Spanish protectorates and had recognized the independence of the Kingdom in 1956. Diplomatic missions on both sides were established in 1957.
- Today, relations between Morocco and India have experienced a particular dynamism since 2001, due to the visit of His Majesty King Mohammed VI to New Delhi in February 2001. Similarly, the last Royal Visit in October 2015, on the occasion of Morocco's participation in the India-Africa Summit, opened up promising prospects for promoting Moroccan-Indian relations towards a strategic partnership and for developing a tripartite cooperation in Africa.
- 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 which Morocco has a trade surplus with , because of the weight of Moroccan phosphate exports in bilateral trade.

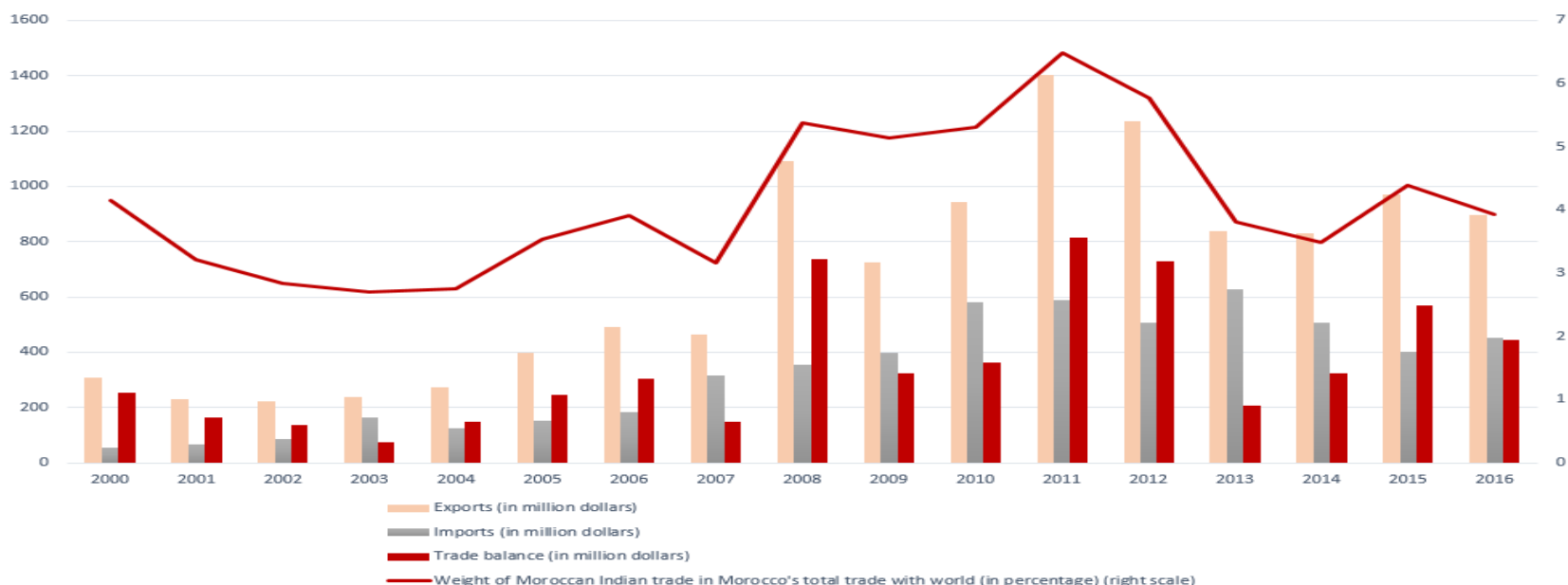
RELATIONS BETWEEN MOROCCO AND INDIA (3)

Economic relations between Morocco and India

The relationship between Morocco and India was a subject to particular dynamic ever since His Majesty the King of Morocco visited New Delhi back in 2001. However, the economic and trade aspects of the relationship are still limited to these days. Despite an increase from 361 millions dollars in 2000 to 1,35 milliards dollars in 2016, trade between Morocco and India remains very limited and his weight in Morocco's overall trade doesn't exceed 4%.

As a matter of fact, their trade suffers from a lack of diversification and includes only few products such as : the export of phosphoric acid and the import of cotton, iron and car equipment.

**Trade relations between Morocco and India
From 2000 to 2016**



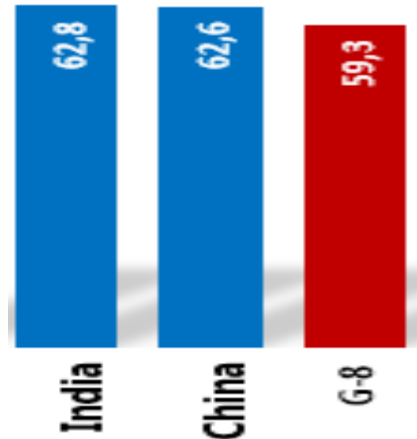
Economic relations between Morocco and India

- The economic cooperation should be intensified by ensuring a dynamic and diversifying trade exchanges via investments from both parties in new sectors such as new technologies, energy, health and the automotive industry.
- The cooperation between the two countries should be encouraged in new areas of common interest, such as the tripartite cooperation, in particular in Africa:
 - Morocco is strongly present in west Africa via its banking network and its companies in the field of telecommunications, infrastructures
 - India is strongly present in east and south Africa through its companies and its 3 million diaspora.
- The cultural cooperation between the two countries must be intensified by including the civil society for a better proximity.
- Both Morocco and India must cooperate at the security level despite their remoteness taking into account that terrorism is a transnational threat.
- The cultural cooperation should be considered : In 2050, India will be home to more than 300 million Muslims, the largest Muslim community in the world. The Moroccan experience in restructuring the religion field can benefit to India if needed.

MOROCCO'S REPUTATION IN ASIAN COUNTRIES

- In 2015, the Royal Institute for Strategic Studies (IRES) set up **an observatory on Morocco's reputation**. In partnership with *Reputation Institute*, a consulting firm specialized in assessing the reputation of many countries on a global scale, IRES elaborate, every year since 2015, a study on the **perception of the image of Morocco by the citizens of the G-8 countries and by those of 14 other developed or emerging countries**.
- The 3 editions of the study confirmed that India and China are among the specific countries with the best perception of Morocco, with a score almost 63 points (in a scale from 0 to 100 points), according to the Country Reptrak Pulse® index. **In these two countries, Morocco's reputation is far superior to that of the G-8 countries.**

Morocco's reputation in India, China and G-8 countries (Country Reptrak Pulse® index), 2017



CONCLUSION

- As a **crossroads of civilizations and a State for over 12 centuries**, the Kingdom of Morocco has made significant strides in the political, economic, social, environmental and security realms. Today, its geographic position, its infrastructure and reforms designed to boost global competitiveness have positioned it as a regional hub.
- Morocco, as many countries, is facing several challenges due to the world's evolution. This evolution is driven by events such as conflicts, financial crises, some structural factors such as demography as well as the gradual decentering of the global center of gravity and the increasing role played by emerging countries in global economic affairs. Morocco responded to all these challenges by opening up to the world and by diversifying the Kingdom's partnership relations, particularly with the BRICS.
- **Known for its stability, its domestic policy guided by sustainable development and its moderate foreign policy**, Morocco enjoys a good international reputation, in particular with G8 countries and Asian countries, such as India and China. The European Union considers it to be a special partner, while African countries see it as a credible and reliable partner.
- These accomplishments only strengthen **Morocco's resolve to push forward** and to make greater efforts to tackle internal as well as external challenges, so as to act as a driving force for the African continent's development.
- **Conditions are favorable today to implement an active communication strategy on Morocco's image** and to provide the country with a Morocco brand.

CONCLUSION (2)

- Finally, to increase its openness towards the world, **Morocco should have a better knowledge of its partners**. In particular, the Kingdom of Morocco should expand its economic relations with Asia, despite geographical distance and cultural and linguistic differences, by building a sustainable economic partnership and encouraging investment by large Asian firms in Morocco and by developing tripartite cooperation targeting Africa.



THANK YOU

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