

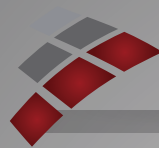


Morocco in Focus

2016 Edition



A Publication of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in New Delhi (India)



Invest in Morocco



**1 LE MAROC, 1^{ER} EN AFRIQUE DU NORD
EN MATIÈRE DE COMPÉTITIVITÉ
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**2 LE MAROC, LE PAYS LE PLUS ATTRACTIF
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His Majesty the King at the 3rd India-Africa Forum Summit Pressed for Speedy South-South Cooperation

His Majesty King Mohammed VI stressed in New Delhi on October 29, 2015 that Morocco has become the top African investor in West Africa and the second biggest in the continent, noting that South-South cooperation is now a "pressing need".



His Majesty Mohammed VI, King of Morocco

The Sovereign underlined in a speech delivered at the 3rd India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi that both at the bilateral level and in the framework of triangular cooperation, Morocco is keen to carry out tangible projects in productive areas which boost development, create jobs and have a direct impact on the citizens' lives.

His Majesty the King went on to say that the Summit is "an

opportunity for us to assess South-South cooperation, which is the cornerstone of the African-Indian partnership", stressing that it should serve "as a platform to lay the foundations for an efficient, solidarity-based, multidimensional South-South cooperation model, through which we can make optimal use of the resources and potential available in our countries".

"Our cooperation therefore has to turn the page on the legacy

of the past and seek to serve our countries' strategic interests", the Sovereign recommended, insisting that South-South cooperation "is neither a mere slogan nor a political luxury".

"This is a pressing need", said the Sovereign, highlighting "the scale of the challenges faced. Indeed, we cannot rely on conventional patterns of cooperation that today no longer help us respond to the growing needs of our peoples", pointed out HM the King.

His Majesty King Mohammed VI Meeting With Prime Minister Narendra Modi



His Majesty Mohammed VI, King of Morocco meeting with Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the 3rd India Africa Forum Summit 2015, in New Delhi on October 29, 2015.

His Majesty King Mohammed VI held on October 29, 2015 in New Delhi a meeting with Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the 3rd India-Africa forum summit 2015.

The meeting took place in the presence of the Sovereign Advisors Fouad Ali El Himma and Yassir Znagui, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Salahedine Mezouar, Morocco's Ambassador in India, Larbi Reffouh and India's Ambassador in Morocco, Dinesh K. Patnaik.

Source: MAP, Morocco

"Just as, on an earlier occasion, I pointed out that Africa should learn to trust Africa, today, from this rostrum, I would like to call upon the countries of the South to trust themselves and to invest their assets and skills in the pursuit of shared progress for their peoples and thus catch up with emerging countries", said the Sovereign at the opening of the India-Africa Forum Summit that happened in New Delhi.

After recalling that Africa's adhesion to a number of bilateral and continental cooperation forums which are quite useful, although "some of them suffer from overlapping and imbalance, which often result in a lack of commitment and affect their efficiency", HM the King noted that "Today, Africa deserves fair partnerships, rather than unbalanced relationships and conditional support."

"As I indicated in my address in Abidjan, Africa does not need assistance as much as it needs mutually beneficial partnerships as well as human and social projects", the Sovereign stated noting that "securing a bright future for our peoples is a responsibility that we must shoulder."

"Our countries should continue to work together and uphold the principle of solidarity in order to serve their interests; otherwise, we will, once again, miss a historic opportunity", insisted the Sovereign who warned that "this would be tantamount to a leap into the unknown."

His Majesty The King also voiced "appreciation to India and its Prime Minister for making sure this Forum Summit is different from previous ones in terms of its objectives and general orientation as well as the nature of

.....
**HM the King said
he firmly believes
that the "promising"
African-Indian
partnership can
grow and prosper
thanks to the
complementary
nature of resources
and skills**
.....

its recommendations and follow-up measures."

"Given the mix of development challenges and unprecedented terrorist threats they face, the Member Countries of this Forum should adopt a comprehensive approach rooted in close cooperation with India", the

Sovereign said at the opening of the third India-Africa Forum Summit.

After expressing Morocco's readiness to set up "a joint working group to ensure coordination and information sharing", HM the King said he firmly believes that the "promising" African-Indian partnership can grow and prosper thanks to the complementary nature of resources and skills, and "thus help us achieve our objectives and serve our peoples."

The sovereign also argued that security and stability are the bedrock of development, insisting that "without them, our countries cannot achieve social progress nor undertake meaningful development initiatives."

"I should like to express our appreciation for the Republic of India's constructive position concerning the Moroccan Sahara issue and for supporting the UN process to resolve this artificial conflict", said the Sovereign.

His Majesty The King regretted, on the other hand, "that some countries have been unable to move forward; they continue repeating obsolete discourses and theses that date back more than 40 years."

The Sovereign also expressed admiration for India's "pioneering development model" that has enabled it to become one of the emerging global powers, noting that this evolution makes "India's ambition to play a key role within UN agencies in charge of global peace and security all the more legitimate."

HM The King further lauded India's "balanced, responsible foreign policy based on respect for international legitimacy and for the territorial integrity of states, as well as on the defense of developing countries' interests and just causes", praising Morocco-India "outstanding relations"



His Majesty Mohammed VI, King of Morocco

dating back to the time of "His Majesty King Mohammed VI - may he rest in peace - and of the great leader Jawaharlal Nehru, who were both engaged in the struggle for the liberation and independence of African States."

The Sovereign recollected "fond memories" of his first visit to India in 1983 to lead the Moroccan delegation to the Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement and also of his first official visit here in 2001, stressing that Morocco is looking 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", pointed out HM The King who also voiced Morocco's resolve to expand prospects for bilateral cooperation, particularly in such sectors as agriculture, the pharmaceutical industry, research in science and technology and the training of managerial staff, making sure we build on that experience to serve African peoples. ■

Source: MAP, Rabat

Morocco-India Historical Ties

A Pictorial Presentation



← Late King of Morocco, HM Hassan II with first Prime Minister of India, Late Jawahar Lal Nehru



→ Late King of Morocco, HM Hassan II with Late Mrs Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India and daughter of Late Jawahar Lal Nehru



← Crown Prince and current King of Morocco, His Majesty Mohammed VI with Late Mrs Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India



Late King of Morocco, HM Hassan II honouring the then Prime Minister of India, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee



His Majesty Mohammed VI, King of Morocco with Chairperson of United Progressive Alliance in India, Mrs Sonia Gandhi



←
His Majesty Mohammed VI, King of Morocco honoured Indian film actor, Mr. Amitabh Bachchan



His Majesty Mohammed VI, King of Morocco paying floral tributes at the Samadhi (Mausoleum) of Mahatma Gandhi at Raj Ghat in New Delhi



Kingdom of Morocco's Focus on Africa to Strategise South-South Business



Senegal's President, H.E. Mr. Macky Sall welcomes King of Morocco, His Majesty King Mohammed VI at Leopold Sedar Senghor Airport in Dakar, Senegal, on May 21, 2015

His Majesty King Mohammed VI at the Presidential Palace in Libreville, Gabon with Gabonese President, H.E. Ali Bongo Ondimba on June 8, 2015



His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco talks with Ivory Coast's President Alassane Ouattara at Felix Houphouet Boigny airport



His Majesty King Mohammed VI meets with Guinea-Bissau's President



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Morocco, India: Shared Vision to Diversify Partnerships

Omar Er-Rouch from MAP News Agency analysis the high profile visits by His Majesty Mohammed VI and the Vice President of India, Mr. M. Hamid Ansari.



The Vice President, Mr. M. Hamid Ansari and the Prime Minister of Morocco, Mr. Abdelilah Benkirane witnessing the exchange of MoUs, in Rabat, Morocco on May 31, 2016

8,500 kilometers away from each other, Morocco and India have many differences, but share the same vision to diversify their partnerships as a part of their adaptation to new realities on the international scene, which requires preserving national interests, deploying a subtle diplomacy which is more diversified and more balanced.

The kingdom of Morocco, though committed to its strategic ties with its traditional allies, has clearly expressed its will to diversify its partners, India atop of them.

"Though it remains committed to its strategic relations with its allies, Morocco has, in recent months, sought to diversify its partnerships at political, strategic and economic levels," HM King Mohammed

VI stressed in a speech to the first Morocco-GCC summit held, in April in Riyadh.

Recalling his recent visit to Russia that he described as "successful", the Sovereign said: "We are also looking forward, in Morocco, to launching a strategic partnership with India, and also with the People's Republic of China, to which I will soon be paying an official visit".

Thus, after reaching out to Russia, China and the Gulf countries, Morocco has endeavored to develop relations with India, which regards the Kingdom as a gateway to Africa and southern Europe.

In his visit to India, in October 2015 to take part in the India-Africa Summit, HM King Mohammed VI was the first head of State to arrive in New Delhi, accompanied with a large delegation.



The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Morocco, Mr. Nasser Bourita calling on the Vice President of India, Mr. M. Hamid Ansari, in Rabat, Morocco on May 30, 2016





The Vice President of India, Mr. M. Hamid Ansari laying wreath at the Mausoleum of Mohammed V, in Rabat, Morocco on May 31, 2016.

This says long about the importance the Sovereign grants to the Moroccan-Indian partnership.

"Morocco looks forward to launching joint initiatives with India in areas which are a priority for our peoples and in which our two countries have gained extensive expertise". His Majesty the King said at the opening session of the 3rd India-Africa forum Summit in New Delhi back in October 2015

"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", the Sovereign said, adding that "I

am also keen to ensure that we expand prospects for bilateral cooperation, particularly in such sectors as agriculture, the pharmaceutical industry, research in science and technology and the training of managerial staff, making sure we build on that experience to serve African peoples".

The same vision is shared by India, as Indian Vice President Hamid Ansari stressed, in his last visit to the Kingdom on May 30th to June 1st, 2016, that Rabat and New Delhi insisted on the need to promote their current cooperation and identify new fields of cooperation as ICT, water resources management and vocational training.

In a meeting with Moroccan

Head of Government Abdelilah Benkirane, India's Vice-President, Mohammad Hamid Ansari, stressed the need for further efforts to give practical content to partnership between the two countries.

The two officials also stressed the importance of implementing concrete projects to broaden cooperation in various fields of economic and social development, particularly through setting up thematic working groups in charge of developing a roadmap for a Moroccan-Indian strategic partnership.

During this visit, Morocco and India created a Chamber of Commerce and Industry to promote exchanges and cooperation between the two countries.

Sensing the need for more partners and diversified markets as the North African Kingdom is becoming also a regional player and growing power in Africa, India regards Morocco as a strategic gateway for Indian companies seeking access to promising African markets.

Another key word for Moroccan-Indian relation is phosphates, a vital commodity for agrarian India, which is one of the major markets for Moroccan phosphate and its derivatives.

To reinforce its waning presence in Africa, India relies on the increasingly significant role of Morocco in the black African continent to have a foothold in the continent. This is especially pertinent given India's ambitions to obtain a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. ■



The Indian Minister for Road Transport & Highways and Shipping, Mr. Nitin Gadkari meeting the Morocco delegation, at the Maritime India Summit, in Mumbai on April 15, 2016



Address by Vice President "Accommodating Diversity in a Globalising World: The Indian Experience" at the Mohammed V University in Rabat during visit to Morocco



The Vice President of India, Mr. M. Hamid Ansari addressing at the Mohammed V University, in Rabat, Morocco on June 01, 2016

A traveller from a distant land in Mashriq-al-Aqsa comes to Maghrib-al Aqsa and marvels at his good fortune. His sense of history quickly reminds him that centuries earlier a great name from this land had travelled to India and recorded in some detail his impressions about the governance, manner and customs of Indians. He attained high office and also had his share of minor misfortunes.

I refer, of course, to Sheikh Abdullah Mohammad ibn Abdullah ibn Mohammad ibn Ibralim al Lawati, better known as Ibn Batuta of Tanja. I thank the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco, and His Excellency the Rector of the University,

for inviting me to address the Mohammad V University.

Even in distant India, the contribution of Moroccan intellectuals to modern thought and challenges is known and acknowledged. Names like Abdullah Al-Arui and Abid al-Jabri readily come to mind; so do the contributions of feminist writers like Fatima Mernisi and Fatima Sadiqi. The challenge in each case was that of modernity and the contemporary responses to it. Each addressed a specific aspect of the problem; the general question was posed aptly by al-Jabri: 'How can contemporary Arab thought retrieve and absorb the most rational and critical dimensions of its tradition

and employ them in the same rationalist directions as before – the direction of fighting feudalism, Gnosticism, and dependency?

This is a rich field, amply and productively explored by contemporary thinkers in Arab lands. This included the debates on Arabism, nationalism, democracy and Islam. Much has also been written about the trauma, self or externally inflicted, experienced individually and collectively by Arab societies in the past seven decades. The misfortunes visited on Arab lands since the 19th century was in good measure a result of their proximity to Europe in the age of imperialism.

II

I would like to pause here and take up a related matter to draw the attention of the audience to some terminological questions. In current discussions in many places, the terms 'Arab' and 'Islam' are used together or interchangeably. But are the two synonymous? Is Arab thought synonymous with Islamic thought? Is all Arab thought Islamic or vice versa? Above all, can all Islamic thinking be attributed to Arabs? I raise these questions because for a variety of reasons and motivations the contemporary world, particularly the West, tends to create this impression of 'a powerful, irrational force that, from Morocco to Indonesia, moves whole societies into cultural assertiveness, political





intransigence and economic influence. The underlying basis for this, as Aziz Al-Azmeh put it, are 'presumptions of Muslim cultural homogeneity and continuity that do not correspond to social reality.

Allow me to amplify. Islam is a global faith, and its adherents are in all parts of the world. The history of Islam as a faith, and of Muslims as its adherents, is rich and diversified. In different ages and in different regions the Muslim contribution to civilisation has been note worthy. In cultural terms, the history of Islam 'is the history of a dialogue between the realm of religious symbols and the world of everyday reality, a history of the interaction between Islamic values and the historical experiences of Muslim people that has shaped the formation of a number of different but interrelated Muslim societies.

This audience is in no need of being reminded of the truism that reasoning should proceed from facts to conclusions and should eschew a priori pronouncements.

What then are facts?

The Wikipedia indicates the world's Muslim population in 2015 as 1.7 billion. The Pew Research Center of the United States has published country-wise and region-wise religious composition and projections for 198 countries for the period 2010 to 2050. It indicates that in 2010 Muslims numbered 1.59 billion out of which 986 million were in Asia-Pacific. It projects that four years from now, in 2020, the corresponding figures would be 1.9 billion out of which 1.13 billion (around 60 percent) would be in Asia-Pacific. The comparative figures for West Asia-North Africa would be 317 and 381 million (19.9% and 20.52%) and for Sub-Saharan Africa 248 and 329 million (15.59% and

17.31%) respectively. Within the Asia-Pacific region Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Iran, Turkey together would account for 830 million in 2010 and 954 million in 2020.

These numbers underline the fact that an overwhelming number of Muslims of the world are non-Arabs and live in societies that are not Arab. Equally relevant is the historical fact they contributed to and benefited from the civilisation of Islam in full measure. This trend continues to this day.

where followers of the Islamic faith do not constitute a majority of the population (India, China, and Philippines).

Amongst both categories, India is sui generis. India counts amongst its citizens the second largest Muslim population in the world. It numbers 180 million and accounts for 14.2 percent of the country's total population of 1.3 billion. Furthermore, religious minorities as a whole (Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, and Parsis or Zoroastrians) constitute 19.4 percent of the population of India.



The Vice President of India, Mr. M. Hamid Ansari being conferred an honoris causa degree by Mohammed V University, in Rabat, Morocco on June 01, 2016. The Prime Minister of Morocco, Mr. Abdelilah Benkirane is also seen.

The one conclusion I draw from this is that in ascertaining Islamic and Muslim perceptions on contemporary happenings, the experiences and trends of thinking of the non-Arab segments of large Muslim populations in the world assume an importance that cannot be ignored. These segments include countries with Muslim majorities (principally Indonesia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey) as also those

India's interaction with Islam and Muslims began early and bears the imprint of history. Indian Muslims have lived in India's religiously plural society for over a thousand years, at times as rulers, at others as subjects and now as citizens. They are not homogenous in racial or linguistic terms and bear the impact of local cultural surroundings, in manners and customs, in varying degrees.

Through extensive trading ties



before the advent of Islam, India was a known land to the people of the Arabian Peninsula, the Persian Gulf, and western Asia and was sought after for its prosperity and trading skills and respected for its attainments in different branches of knowledge. Thus Baghdad became the seeker, and dispenser, of Indian numerals and sciences. The Panchatantra was translated and became *Kalila wa Dimna*. Long before the advent of Muslim conquerors, the works of Al-Jahiz, Ibn Khurdadbeh, Al-Kindi, Yaqubi and Al-Masudi testify to it

the extent of Muslim influence over Indian life in all departments. But nowhere else is it shown so vividly and so picturesquely, as in customs, in intimate details of domestic life, in music, in the fashion of dress, in the ways of cooking, in the ceremonial of marriage, in the celebration of festivals and fairs, and in the courtly institutions and etiquette’.

Belief, consciousness and practice became a particularly rich area of interaction. Within the Muslim segment of the populace, there

at a personal level with a baffling variety of problems.

It also produced a convergence or parallelism; the Sufi trends sought commonalities in spiritual thinking and some Islamic precepts and many Muslim practices seeped into the interstices of the Indian society and gave expression to a broader and deeper unity of minds expressive of the Indian spiritual tradition. The cultural interaction was mutually beneficial and an Islamic scholar of our times has acknowledged ‘an incontrovertible fact that Muslims have benefited immensely from the ancient cultural heritage of India.

I mention this because I am aware, but dimly, about the role of Sufi movements and ‘zawiyas’ in the history of Morocco. There is, in my view, room for comparative studies of Sufi practices in Morocco and India.

III

It is this backdrop that has impacted on modern India and its existential reality of a plural society on the basis of which a democratic polity and a secular state structure was put in place. The framers of our Constitution had the objective of securing civic, political, economic, social and cultural rights as essential ingredients of citizenship. Particular emphasis was placed on rights of religious minorities. Thus in the section on Fundamental Rights ‘all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion.’ In addition, every religious denomination shall have the right to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes, to manage its own affairs in matters of religion, and to acquire and administer movable and immovable property. Furthermore, all religious or



The Prime Minister of Morocco, Mr. Abdellah Benkirane with The Vice President of India, Mr. M. Hamid Ansari in Rabat, Morocco on May 31, 2016

in ample measure. Alberuni, who studied India and Indians more thoroughly than most, produced a virtual encyclopedia on religion, rituals, manners and customs, philosophy, mathematics and astronomy. He commenced his great work by highlighting differences, but was careful enough ‘to relate, not criticize’.

Over centuries of intermingling and interaction, an Indo-Islamic culture developed in India. Many years back, an eminent Indian historian summed it up in a classic passage:

‘It is hardly possible to exaggerate

was a running tussle between advocates of orthodoxy and those who felt that living in a non-homogenous social milieu, the pious could communicate values through personal practice. In this manner the values of faith, though not its theological content, reached a wider circle of the public. This accounted for the reach and popularity of different Sufi personalities in different periods of history and justifies an eminent scholar’s observation that ‘Sufism took Islam to the masses and in doing so it took over the enormous and delicate responsibility of dealing



linguistic minorities shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. A separate section on Fundamental Duties of citizens enjoins every citizen 'to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities' and also 'to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture.

Given the segmented nature of society and unequal economy, the quest for substantive equality, and justice, remains work in progress and concerns have been expressed from time to time about its shortfalls and pace of implementation. The corrective lies in our functioning democracy, its accountability mechanisms including regularity of elections at all levels from village and district councils to regional and national levels, the Rule of Law, and heightened levels of public awareness of public issues.

The one incontrovertible fact about the Muslim experience in modern India is that its citizens professing Islamic faith are citizens, consider themselves as such, are beneficiaries of the rights guaranteed to them by the Constitution, participate fully in the civic processes of the polity and seek correctives for their grievances within the system. There is no inclination in their ranks to resort to ideologies and practices of violence.

The same diversity of historical experience, and the perceptions emanating from it, is to be found in Indonesia that has the world's largest population of Muslims and where two Islamist parties – Nahdatul Ulema and Muhammadiyah function legally, have large memberships, and participate in political activities including local and national elections. On a visit to Jakarta a few months back, I had

occasion to solicit their views on contemporary debates on Political Islam. They said Islam in Indonesia has united with the culture of the people and their Islamic traditions have adapted themselves to local conditions. They felt Indonesian Muslims are moderate in their outlook, that Islam does not advocate extremism, and that radicalization of Islam is harmful and does not benefit the community.

Both instances cited above indicate that in countries having complex societal makeup, accommodation

sociologist has defined it as 'the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole.' [10] An obvious implication of this would be assimilation and homogenization. In a world of intrinsically diverse societies at different levels of development, this could only result in denial of their diversity and imposition of uniformity. Such an approach can only result in conflict.

The challenge for the modern world is to accept diversity as an existential reality and to configure



The Prime Minister of Morocco, Mr. Abdelilah Benkirane with The Vice President of India, Mr. M. Hamid Ansari in Rabat, Morocco on May 31, 2016. The Minister of State for Chemicals & Fertilizers of India, Mr. Hansraj Gangaram Ahir is also seen.

of diversity in political structures and socio-economic policies is not an option but an imperative necessity ignoring which can have unpleasant consequences.

IV

I come back to the principal theme of this talk. Why is the Indian model of relevance to our globalizing world?

Globalization has many facets – economic, political and cultural. All necessitate the emergence of a set of norms, values and practices that are universally accepted. A

attitudes and methodologies for dealing with it. In developing such an approach, the traditional virtue of tolerance is desirable but insufficient; our effort, thinking and practices have to look beyond it and seek acceptance of diversity and adopt it as a civic virtue.

We in India are attempting it, cannot yet say that we have succeeded, but are committed to continue the effort. We invite all right-minded people to join us in this endeavour. ■

Source: Press Information Bureau, India



Morocco uses Security, Development and Moderate Islam to Counter Extremist Ideology: Salaheddine Mezouar

Recently, the 3rd India-Africa Forum Summit was attended by all 54 African nations including Morocco which remains outside the African Union. Morocco's Foreign Minister Salaheddine Mezouar spoke with Rudroneel Ghosh about gains from the summit, how India-Africa ties can be furthered – and Morocco's gameplan against terror:



The Morocco King Mohammed VI being received by the Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Sanjeev Kumar Balyan, on his arrival, in New Delhi on October 25, 2015.

What is Morocco's King Mohammed VI's perspective of India?

His Majesty holds great esteem for India, a country which played a leading role in the Non-Aligned Movement. His Majesty has expressed many times his profound admiration for the success of India's unique development model, which has allowed it to join the big emerging powers.

He has also noted that India's foreign policy is characterised by a balanced approach, a sense of respect for international norms and territorial integrity and the defence of interests of developing countries. We must not forget that relations between India and Morocco go back 600 years when the great Moroccan traveller Ibn Battuta visited India.

China's presence in Africa is huge. How can India make itself more relevant there?

Africa today is very attractive for emerging countries, including India. Trade relations between India and Africa go back to antiquity. Many people of Indian origin remained in African





countries. Since its independence in 1947, India played an active role in the fight against colonialism in Africa.

Today, it continues to play an active role in the promotion of new instruments of international governance aimed at economic development and eradication of poverty. We appreciate efforts made by India for the development of Africa through its strong presence in the private sector. India's approach of South-South cooperation is also a marked shift from the old model of cooperation on the continent.

How can India and Morocco partner in Africa?

Like India, Morocco has always given importance to the setting up of concrete cooperation projects in Africa.

Morocco has partnerships with African countries in social sectors like health, urban development and social housing as well as cooperation in finance, banking, insurance, telecommunications, infrastructure and mining. Through such projects, Morocco has become the top African investor in East Africa and the second largest at the continent level. Morocco looks forward to launching joint initiatives with India, in areas which are priorities for our peoples.

Given rising extremism in the Middle East and North Africa regions, how can the two countries cooperate on security?

No development project can succeed if it doesn't take into account peace and security. Morocco has always played and continues to play a major role in efforts to protect Africa from the dangers of terrorism, cross-border organised crime and illegal immigration. It's also leading the



Mr. Salaheddine Mezouar, Foreign Minister of Morocco



Mr. Salaheddine Mezouar, Foreign Minister with Minister of State for Agriculture, Mr. Sanjeev Kumar Balyan

fight against extremist groups in the Sahara-Sahel region.

Both India and Morocco need to jointly face terrorism and adopt a comprehensive approach through initiatives like exchange of intelligence. As announced by the King at the summit, Morocco is ready to set up a joint working group to this effect.

Morocco has adopted an innovative approach to fighting terrorism based on three essential elements – security, social and economic development to fight poverty and promotion of moderate Islam to counter extremist ideology. ■

Source: *The Times of India*



“We Want To Raise The Level of Strategic Partnership with India”- Minister Moulay Hafid Elalamy

In an exclusive interview with Journalist Harun Riaz, the Minister of Trade, Industry, Investment and Digital Economy, Mr. Moulay Hafid Elalamy spells out the Kingdom's plan to strategise business ties with India.



The Minister of Trade, Industry, Investment and Digital Economy,
Mr. Moulay Hafid Elalamy

Mr. Minister, how will you describe the recent high-level exchange between Morocco and India? H.M the King's visit in October 2015 and Vice President of India in June 2016

The Visit of His Majesty the King in India in October 2015 illustrates the excellent bilateral relationships and the common eagerness to build strong relationships that are multidimensional between our two countries.

It predicts a promising partnership that will open new future perspectives of economic relations

between the Kingdom of Morocco and India, in the sectors with high job potential creation and added value.

The Royal visit was marked by the participation of His Majesty the King Mohammed VI in the 3rd India-Africa Forum Summit 2015, in which Morocco has reaffirmed its firm willingness to raise the level of strategic partnership with India. The Increased volume of trade, promotion of commercial trade and enhancing of cooperation between the two countries' businessmen are the three identified priorities.

Morocco is also advocating its enthusiasm to reinforce the triangular cooperation among India-Morocco-Africa and to move towards a shared vision of sustainable development. Complementarities of resources and potentialities plead in favour of this ambition.

I should like to add that this common willingness to raise the Moroccan-indian strategic partnership level, was emphasized in his Majesty's speech in the Morocco-Gulf Countries Summit which occurred in Riyadh in April 2016.

In short, I would say that recent high level exchanges between Morocco and India that were held during His Majesty the King's visit and the Indian Vice President's visit predict a promising reinforcement of a bilateral partnership. They witness for engagement on both sides to build a relationship that we want to be solid and meaningful.

What will be the main agenda for the forth coming Morocco-India joint commission meeting in Rabat in November 2016?

Like I have previously mentioned, there is a common willingness at the highest level to raise the level of Moroccan Indian strategic partnership

The next commission should formulate projects of common interests. It will be the occasion to identify avenues of initiatives in order to convey a strong and concrete effect to this willingness.

As much as we have fertile ground that allows us to make joint investments in promising sectors. Sectors of automobile, training, new technologies, agri-business, pharmaceutical, are the ones in which both countries reaped great experiences. Real opportunities exist.

Likewise, the permanent engagement of Morocco in favor of African development and Indian politic which aim to

Morocco-Africa cooperation platform, aimed at assisting and supporting staff from African countries

How soon can Morocco diversify its relationship with India, which is entirely dependent on OCP venture in fertilizer?

.....
We have decided to adopt a new orientation based on diversification of our economic relationships with India through the setting up of a bilateral strategic partnership.

Our two countries are thus already on this path. Beyond Phosphates

maximize their gains through mutually strengthened cooperation and partnership relations. Visiting India and meeting Indian representatives and businessmen will be, in this respect, a good opportunity to proceed together to a concrete identification of partnership opportunities that our two countries offer, and build substantial economic assets to serve our bilateral relations, that are already excellent.

The five sectors namely Aerospace, textiles, ICT, health and automotive have been identified by Morocco as the



3rd Session of Morocco-India Political Consultations held at Rabat on December 10, 2014, led by Nasser Bourita, Secretary General, Foreign Ministry from Moroccan side and Anil Wadhwa, Secretary (East), External Affairs from Indian side

reinforce the exchanges with the Continent, open new perspectives of cooperation and tripartite mutually beneficial partnership.

Hence, the mixed commission will be an opportunity to activate the set up of the Center of Excellence in Information Technology (CETI), whose MOU was signed in December 2014. Our objective is to make of this structure, dedicated to training in the certification in different ICT thematics, a multilateral India-

and its derivatives, we wish to develop our cooperation in different value added sectors. Like I have previously mentioned, the automobile industry, the aerospace, electronics, technology, agribusiness, textile and pharmaceutical industries hold great partnership opportunity.

Mr. Minister when are you going to visit India ?

.....
Both Morocco and India can

key to attract Indian investment . Can you elaborate?

.....
As we know, Morocco has patent assets of interest to India: good sectoral ecosystems, an innovative incentive system, outstanding logistical competitiveness, a good geographical position allowing Indian operators to easily reach their targeted markets, etc.

Our goal now is to drain the whole investment potential offered by the two countries and make out





The Chairperson, Central Board of Direct Taxes, Dr. Sudha Sharma and the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco, Mr. Larbi Reffouh signing the Protocol on Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC), in New Delhi on August 08, 2013.

of Morocco an active player in the internationalization dynamic undertaken by the Indian companies.

The sectors that you mentioned are part of a development dynamic driven by the reorganization of the Moroccan industrial sectors into operating ecosystems, propped by favorable supporting mechanisms,

and an adapted and innovative offer.

These sectors present a clear potential of complementarity and shared competitiveness between our two countries. They make up a growth opportunity for Indian companies.

The Industrial dynamics that Morocco is going through, will

only be stimulated by new Indian investment plans. These will contribute to complement our local value chains, and achieve greater integration rates, namely in the aforementioned sectors.

How can Morocco and India overcome the twin challenge of good air connectivity, distance and language?

Cultural factors, including the language one, no longer constitute a hinder to the rapprochement of business communities. The same applies to the Moroccan and Indian businessmen. English is increasingly establishing itself as a working language in Morocco and is being integrated into our educational system.

With that being said, many efforts are yet to be deployed, and new alternative ways to achieve this rapprochement are yet to be explored. I can name, among many, the necessity to establish a direct air route between Casablanca and New Delhi that would make transportation, including freight, an easy task. I also think of the multiplication of delegations visits and roadshows, helping the Moroccan and Indian business communities get acquainted with the business opportunities offered in both countries.

Do Morocco and India share similar concerns on WTO, Tariff barriers and South - South cooperation?

Regarding South-South cooperation, the two countries share a proactive and strategic approach that consists first in making the South-South cooperation a basis for co-development and co-emergence, and second, to draw the full potential out of the Moroccan-Indian-African partnership both at the bilateral and trilateral levels.

In this context, Morocco's ongoing commitment to Africa's development, together with the Indian policy that targets the strengthening of exchanges with Africa open up new and mutually beneficial prospects for tripartite cooperation and partnership. ■



Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco, Mr. Larbi Reffouh with the Indian Minister for State of External Affairs, Gen. (Retd.) V.K Singh





“We Need More Tourists from India. Will popularize Morocco as Tourist Destination”- Minister of Tourism

In an exclusive interview the Minister of Tourism of Morocco, Mr. Lahcen Haddad explains the Kingdom's strategy to target the growing numbers of Indian tourists exploring new destinations. Journalist Harun Riaz spoke with the Minister in Casablanca in July 2016.

H.M. King Mohammad VI during his visit to New Delhi in October, 2015 indicated that the Kingdom of Morocco want strategic ties with India. Also part of the plan is diversification of Morocco-India relationship by reducing dependence on fertilizer joint venture. What role the tourism sector can play?

.....
We consider India to be one of the promising market in terms of tourism. The sustained growth in India over the last few years has helped India emerge as one of the key players from the emergent market. There is rising middle class in India and this section of society travels frequently and we are very much keen on attracting some of the Indians to come to Morocco. Morocco has a good image in India. Moroccans like India, love Indian movies and love things which are Indian. There exists opportunities between Moroccans and Indians. One of the measure we are taking is to open an office in New Delhi. For Morocco the potential Indian tourists are likely to come from Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkatta, Bangalore, Jaipur and several parts of Tamil Nadu.

We are also taking steps to offer partnerships to airlines which serve India specially

By Darem Bouchentouf



Minister of Tourism of Morocco, Mr. Lahcen Haddad with Journalist Harun Riaz in Casablanca in July 2016

the gulf based air carriers. For example Ethiad Airways comes to Casablanka and Rabat, Qatar Airlines comes to Casablanka and Marakech and Emirates which comes to Casablanka. These three air carriers have daily and direct flights to Morocco. Potential Indian tourists can have stop overs in Doha, Abu Dhabi and Dubai before coming to Morocco. We are also working with different travel agents. There are travel agents who handle the Indian market but we want to have more travel companies. Soon we will be organizing a familiarization trips for the travel agents as well as

for the media. We will very much welcome the travel agents talk to each other and prepare packages for Indian tourists wanting to travel to Morocco. It could be UK-Morocco or France-Morocco package for Indian tourists. We definitely want to grow in the Indian market.

According to the Ambassador of India to Morocco, H.E. Mr. Dinesh Patnaik, around 20,000 Indians visited Morocco in year 2015. But only 4,000 Moroccans visited India. Your comments.

.....





Indian Lady

The Indian culture in Morocco is not limited to Movies and Bollywood stars, it is also present during the many cultural events that the country organise yearly to open a window on other civilisations and cultures.

Shot taken during festival Mawazine 2015 in the old city of Chellah, Rabat - By Darem Bouchentouf

No, its not a surprise. In the forties lot of Indians used to live in Casablanca and they were merchants. So our relationship with India is old. In fact it dates back to the fourteenth century. In 1356 Ibn Battuta travelled to India and went on to become a Judge In fact he arrived in India via Sri Lanka and went to the south of India. He also went to China. As you can see that it was in the fourteenth century

that Moroccans were introduced to India.

Even today people read about Ibn Battuta's world wide travel including India. I want more than 20000 Indian tourists visiting Morocco. The number of Moroccans traveling to India is also increasing.

Whats the secret behind Moroccans liking Indian

movies specially Bollywood films? You have also recognized and awarded actors Shah Rukh Khan and Amitabh Bachhan. Do you plan to invite Indian film crews to shoot movies in Morocco?

India is a powerhouse of films production. When I was a child, I also watched Indian moves like other Moroccans. I have noticed that Moroccans can memorise popular Indian film songs by heart. One of the reasons of popularity is because we Moroccans find affinity with Indian culture like the concept of beauty and love.

Three years ago India was the Guest of Honour at Marrakech International Film Festival and I met number of Indian actors and producers. According to my knowledge there are movies in Morocco which are being produced by Indians and we would like to see more of these films being made here. There are also Indian actors who are now participating in advertisements and products promotion in Morocco including Shah Rukh Khan. So I think this is the best time for Indian movies to be in Morocco and also filmed at different locations here.

Have you received any proposal from the Indian film fraternity to shoot movies in Morocco at subsidized rates?

The subsidy is not given by the Ministry of Tourism and there is a procedure for that. It is given by the Moroccan Cinematographic Centre and there is a fund for it. This fund helps in the production of cinema in Morocco. We are ready to receive an application and we will process it immediately. I have been told by the Moroccan Cinematographic Centre has informed me that there is lot of interest from Indian film producers to shoot movies.





Immersive experiences.

Every city has its own style, colors and architecture. Walking through these narrow streets lets you discover more about the authentic Moroccan living experience.

Shot taken in the narrow streets of Oudaya, Rabat - By Darem Bouchentouf

Handcrafts Legacy.

It is often a legacy transmitted through centuries, with love of the tradition. The Moroccan handcrafts are the living example of the respect of tradition as a link between the glorious past and the bright future.

Shot taken in the Medina (old downtown) of Rabat - By Darem Bouchentouf

Mr. Minister, do you plan to start a tourism advertisement campaign in India? What's the USP of Morocco as a tourist destination? What is it that Morocco offers to Indian tourists which is not available at other destinations?

.....
Yes, we need to advertise in India and also use the social media

to do that. We need to use the medium of English language to reach out potential Indian customers.

Moroccans are the most hospitable people in the world. Morocco is a highly diversified country with a lot of wealth. The country also has a very rich culture which is centuries old. We also offer one of the best cuisines in the world.

Is the tourism sector a part of the growing economy of Morocco? And do you plan to ask Indian investment into this sector?

.....
We believe that Moroccan tourism is growing and Indian companies have shown interest to invest here. For example, the Banyan Tree Hotel is getting completed in capital Rabat. I want more Indian companies to do business in the tourism sector. I have had discussions with some of them. Indian companies with an international outlook need to diversify their portfolio. ■



“India Offers Huge Potential for Morocco”- Minister Delegate to the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Ms. Mbarka Bouaida, the Minister Delegate to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation confirms the fact that the Kingdom of Morocco is more and more geared towards the South and India occupies an important position in this strategy. Interview by journalist Harun Riaz in Rabat.



Minister Delegate to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Ms. Mbarka Bouaida at her office in Rabat (Morocco) with Journalist Harun Riaz

Madam Minister the talk about tripartite cooperation between India, Morocco and Africa, whats the possibility?

.....
Few years ago we were talking about the triangular or tripartite cooperation thinking about developing a mechanism for this to happen. Then we really started working on the tripartite relationship. We realized that this will help us in achieving South- South Cooperation. The

Moroccan's foreign policy is more and more geared towards South. Africa is one of our major partner. One of our objective is to be present in Africa and we are already present in several African countries. This objective is being achieved by working closely with several African countries. We try to identify needs and common projects and we also try to identify areas to work together, raise funds jointly to achieve tripartite results.

Three years ago Morocco was elected to lead Millennium Challenge Corporation. (MCC). In the second stage Morocco has negotiated triangular cooperation within MCC. We have started this with Benin and Niger and on going example is electrification drive.

The major challenge for Morocco and India is to diversify their relationship by reducing dependency on the OCP Joint Venture fertilizer project. How do you plan to do that?

.....
For us India is a big country with huge potential not only for Morocco but for Africa. We think that India can be a great partner for Morocco. Both countries have common values and also complement each other in number of areas. Based on this we need to diversify our ties and first thing we can do is meet more often.

I think visit by H.M. King Mohammed VI to New Delhi and participation in 3rd India-Africa Summit in October, 2015 was a strong signal to enhance bilateral ties. Both foreign ministries and other ministries need to work together and create a road map for diversification of the relationship. There is a need to identify sectors, organize business meetings, bring in Indian delegations to discover opportunities for investment. We also need to send Moroccans business delegation to India. There is also a need to protect the investment by signing a legal document. We must



push more and more companies and enterprises from both countries plus also encourage small and medium enterprises. However we must keep in mind that government can only facilitate private sector meetings. The next step is to be taken by them.

Morocco has been expressing the desire to convert ties with India into a strategic partnership. How this can be achieved?

As I told you H.M. King Mohammed VI visit was a strong signal. Recent visit by the Vice President of India,

Morocco has played to achieve this?

The Moroccan companies are working in different countries in Africa. This is a very good example of South-South Cooperation. We have developed good know-how in areas such as housing, banking, finance, energy distribution and transportation. We are sharing this experience with other countries. Through the network of airlines Morocco is trying to reach out to more and more capitals in Africa. The South-South Cooperation also

Madam Minister what are the main features of the Moroccans foreign policy?

One of the main feature of our foreign policy is to diversify the relationship. That is why we used to have the classic partnership with the European Union and also the United States. Morocco is also diversifying its relationship with the Gulf and Asia and focusing more on South-South Cooperation. Morocco is also trying to be present more and more in foreign policy forums.



The Prime Minister of Morocco, Mr. Abdelilah Benkirane with the Vice President, Mr. M. Hamid Ansari in bilateral discussions in Rabat, Morocco on May 31, 2016. The Minister of State for Chemicals & Fertilizers, Mr. Hansraj Gangaram Ahir is also seen.

Mr. Hamid Ansari was also a strong signal from India. We should be adding more and more agreements to be signed. When Vice President of India came to Rabat only two agreements were ready and they were signed. Remaining three agreements were not ready by both sides and shall be signed soon. The strategic partnership can be established by having real projects and we need to identify them.

The issue of South-South Cooperation has been talked about for long. What role

exists through visits by number of African leaders. We also have more than 15000 students from Africa and Morocco is providing hundreds of scholarships to these students. There is a need to do more and the political willingness is there. Wherever you go in Morocco now everyone thinks about South-South Cooperation. All the Moroccans are thinking of going to markets in South. We in Morocco also give importance to markets from the South when it comes to imports.

The other part of our foreign policy is to protect our territorial integrity and sovereignty. This is one of the principle we share with India. Morocco has also been working hard to find social projects in Africa. We also try to enhance the relationship by exchange of students. When it comes to India we share the same foreign policy features and concerns. At the international and multilateral forums we try to coordinate with India. On big international issues our both Ambassadors share similar views and assist each other. ■



Morocco could be Hub for Indian Trade to Africa and Europe

Morocco is a beautiful country on the far edge of North Africa, with coasts on the Mediterranean Sea as well as the Atlantic Ocean. The bazaars there look similar to many in Indian towns and food habits are quite similar. A version of the Indian paratha (bread) is available all over. The country is in overdrive towards modernisation, and thanks to its proximity to Europe, French companies have set up facilities to make aircraft parts. King Mohammed VI has laid top priority on building infrastructure, as that is the fundamental requirement for modernisation in any field.-

Nilova Roy Chaudhury interviews H.E. Larbi Reffouh, the Ambassador of His Majesty the King of Morocco to the Republic of India. He comes out strongly for bilateral cooperation, observing that that Morocco could be the hub for Indian trade to Africa and Europe. Morocco also supports a permanent seat for India in the UN Security Council. Excerpts:



Moroccan King Mohammed VI

The historic visit of His Majesty to India in October 2015, as well as the recent visit of Vice President, Mr Hamid Ansari, to Morocco, significantly contributed to injecting fresh momentum into the bilateral relations, which I think, has now reached sufficient maturity so as to develop into special partnership covering all fields.

IS: Relations between India and Morocco go back to the 14th century when the famous traveller and writer from Tangier, Ibn Batuta travelled to India. A former foreign minister of Morocco, Mr Mohamed Bena ssa, has described your country a cultural extension of India. Why, then, is India not such a high priority for Morocco?

India Strategic: June 20th marks 60 years since India recognized Morocco. Diplomatic relations were established a year later. Today, how would you describe our relations? What is the political, strategic nature

of the relationship?

Larbi Reffouh: Larbi Reffouh: Morocco and India enjoy very close and cordial relations, marked by understanding, mutual respect and support in the international fora.

LR: India occupies a key place in the Moroccan foreign policy. There is a strong political will at the highest level in the Kingdom of Morocco, to further enhance ties with India in all fields. Suffice it to



say that in His recent address to the Morocco-GCC Summit, held in Riyadh, His Majesty mentioned India as an important country with which Morocco is looking forward to launching a strategic partnership.

IS: Better connectivity would help, don't you think? Are you hopeful that direct air links between Indian cities and Rabat and Casablanca can be established soon? People to people links and tourism would then improve?

LR: The opening of direct air links between Morocco and India would surely play a crucial role in building bridges between our peoples, promoting mutual understanding and improving their perception of each other. When I first came to India, I was delighted to note that Indians very much appreciate Morocco's civilization, culture and gastronomy.

Air connectivity should definitely help in attracting an ever greater number of Indian visitors to our country and boost tourist flow from India.

But the opening of a direct air service requires feasibility and profitability studies. I hope that one of our country's airlines takes the initiative to connect both countries. Morocco has already proposed to the Indian side to partner with its national airlines so as to establish a direct link between Morocco and India, bearing in mind that Royal Air Maroc (RAM) flies to (nearby) Abu-Dhabi.

IS: Morocco has been relatively free of the scourge of terrorism and could provide valuable inputs to stay safe from terrorist influences. How has Morocco managed? Do India and Morocco cooperate on countering terrorism? Has

the Joint Working Group to counter terrorism between the two countries been established?

LR: Given the rise of terrorism in the region, Morocco has devised a preventive strategy, aiming at eradicating extremism and terrorism from their roots. Its approach is based primarily on strengthening security governance by improving the institutional and legal framework, as well as on the development of capacities in terms of anticipation, prevention, investigation and border surveillance.

Morocco has also restructured the religious field, in order to immunize people against extremist influences which are alien to the specificities of the Islam practiced in Morocco, which advocates moderation and tolerance, gives great importance to training and education, promoting the role of mosques and the mastery of fatwa processes.

Morocco, convinced that the scourge of terrorism cannot be eliminated without collective and concerted action by all countries, has engaged, in a very responsible way, in the international community's counterterrorism initiatives. To that end, Morocco has set up many partnerships both bilaterally and at the multilateral level, focused on capacity building and intelligence sharing.

In this spirit and in response to the requests from a number of African nations, His Majesty launched the Higher Council of the Mohammed VI Foundation for African Ulema, which aims, through its branches in African countries, and together with other religious institutions, at disseminating enlightened religious precepts and combating extremism, reclusiveness and terrorism.

IS: Do you envisage any form



Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco to India, H.E. Mr. Larbi Reffouh

of linkages in the defence arena? Closer ties, beyond joint training of officers?

LR:LR: Morocco is keen to partner with India and enhance mutually advantageous bilateral relations in all fields, without exception.

IS: India's Vice President Hamid Ansari visited Morocco in June. Two Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with Morocco for improving bilateral relations in different areas including cultural exchange, water and information technology were signed. Reports suggest that three more substantive MoUs were not signed. Is that correct? Why is that?

LR: Two agreements were signed during the visit of Honorable





Vice President Hamid Ansari with Moroccan Prime Minister Abdelilah Benkirane

Vice President Hamid Ansari, namely, Cultural Exchange Programme and a Memorandum of Understanding between the Moroccan Academy of diplomatic studies and Indian Foreign Service Institute. Three other agreements were also in the agenda but could not be signed because of the need to make further finalisation.

IS: Morocco could be a springboard for Indian exports and investment into Europe, West Africa and to the US, the President of the General Confederation of Moroccan Companies (CGEM) Miriem Bensalah-Chaqrour has said. It has free trade agreements (FTA) with 55 countries, giving it access to a market of one billion people. Morocco is the only country in Africa to have an FTA with the US, besides having 22 such pacts with African nations. Are India and Morocco working on a possible FTA sometime soon?

LR: Indeed, located just 14 kilometres away from the European coast and at the crossroads of the main trade routes linking America, Africa, Europe and the Middle East, Morocco has a market that is teeming with economic activities and business opportunities.

With the free trade agreements concluded with its main trading partners, Morocco has become an attractive platform for foreign investments and a global gateway for exporting products free of duties towards a market of 55 countries, representing over a billion of consumers.

Morocco can become an ideal hub for India to expand its business activities in the region and both sides have strong desire to take the bilateral relations to the next level. An FTA with India could be a good lead!

IS. Trade between the two countries stood at \$1.36 billion in 2014, with India's

exports to Morocco amounting to \$500.5 million, and imports valued at \$855.8 million. In what areas can trade be improved and diversified this figure be raised? What are the brightest prospective areas to expand investment and trading ties?

LR: Phosphates and derivatives constitute the major area of bilateral cooperation between both countries, since India is one of the key partners of the Kingdom both regionally and globally in terms investments in this sector. But Morocco wants its trade with India to expand beyond the supply of phosphates, by establishing innovative partnerships and paving the way for new investments in areas such as automobile industry, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, renewable energy, and IT, scientific research.

Morocco also seeks investments from India in the hospitality sector





Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco to India, H.E. Mr. Larbi Reffouh

particularly for construction and maintenance of hotels.

IS: Morocco supports India's candidature for a permanent seat at the UN Security Council. Is it working with India to help garner support among other African Union nations and to push for UN reforms?

.....
LR: Morocco fully supports India's bid for a permanent seat at the UN Security Council.

India has been able to become one of the emerging global powers. This makes its ambition, to become a permanent member with full rights in an expanded UN Security Council, legitimate. Keeping with the spirit of the 2015 India Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) declaration, Morocco, alongside other African countries, supports strong cooperation between India and Africa towards the implementation of a genuine

reform of the United Nations and its working methods, particularly the reform and expansion of the Security Council.

IS: Finally, Excellency, you are nearing the end of your tenure as Ambassador to this country. What are the most enduring memories you will take with you and how have you seen the bilateral relationship grow?

.....
LR: I will carry with me a multitude of marvellous memories of the people, fine arts, age-old history, culture, creeds and cults which all of them make what we call the Indian genius.

During my tenure in India, I have seen relations between our two countries growing from strength to strength. The best illustration is the visit of H.E Salman Khurshid, the first visit of its kind of a Foreign Minister of India to Morocco as well as the recent visit of Honorable

Hamid Ansari, Vice President of India, which was the first high-level visit to Morocco after that of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 1999. These visits were prepared by the Embassy, in close coordination with the Indian authorities.

The economic ties have also witnessed tremendous growth, especially after the launch of joint ventures between both countries.

I remain hopeful that the bilateral relations will be further enhanced, more particularly after the official Visit of His Majesty the King to India to participate in the India -Africa Summit last year which is a significant milestone in the history of the relations between our two countries, likely to give a fresh impetus to our cooperation in all fields. In fact, the visit of H.E Mr Ansari to Morocco was a major step to build on diplomatic gains from this visit. ■

Source: India Strategic Magazine



Amina Benkhadra: “We want Indian Oil Companies to Invest in the Moroccan Hydrocarbons Sector”

By Rudroneel Ghosh

Amina Benkhadra, Morocco’s former Energy Minister and current Director-General of the Moroccan National Hydrocarbons and Mining Company, spoke with Rudroneel Ghosh about India-Morocco synergy in hydrocarbons, Morocco hosting the next UN climate summit and what it means to be a woman politician in the Arab world:

You attended the 4th India-Africa Hydrocarbons Conference in New Delhi in January. What are your thoughts about boosting cooperation between the two sides in the hydrocarbons space?
.....

The 4th India-Africa Hydrocarbons Conference held on the 21st and 22nd of January 2016 in New Delhi, was a clear illustration of the Indian and the African governments’ aims to boost their bilateral cooperation in the hydrocarbons sector. India

has emerged as the fourth largest consumer and third largest importer of hydrocarbon products. On the other hand, Africa plays a significant role in this sector with 14.5% of current proved recoverable oil reserves and 13.2% of the recoverable gas reserves in the world. This supply-demand complementarity is a natural avenue for a long-term and sustainable partnership between Africa and India in the hydrocarbons sector. It is with this in mind that we want to strengthen ties between Morocco and India by attracting Indian oil companies to invest in the Moroccan hydrocarbons sector.

What’s your take on the future of oil given the current low price environment?
.....

Despite substantial adverse implications for the oil and gas industry, the collapse in the price of oil will generally have positive implications for the global economy. A \$60 reduction in the price of crude oil translates into a \$5 billion per day stimulus to the global economy, or more than \$2.3 trillion per year. However, benefits to the broader economy would be somewhat offset by the



Ms. Amina Benkhadra, Morocco’s former Energy Minister and current Director-General of the Moroccan National Hydrocarbons and Mining Company



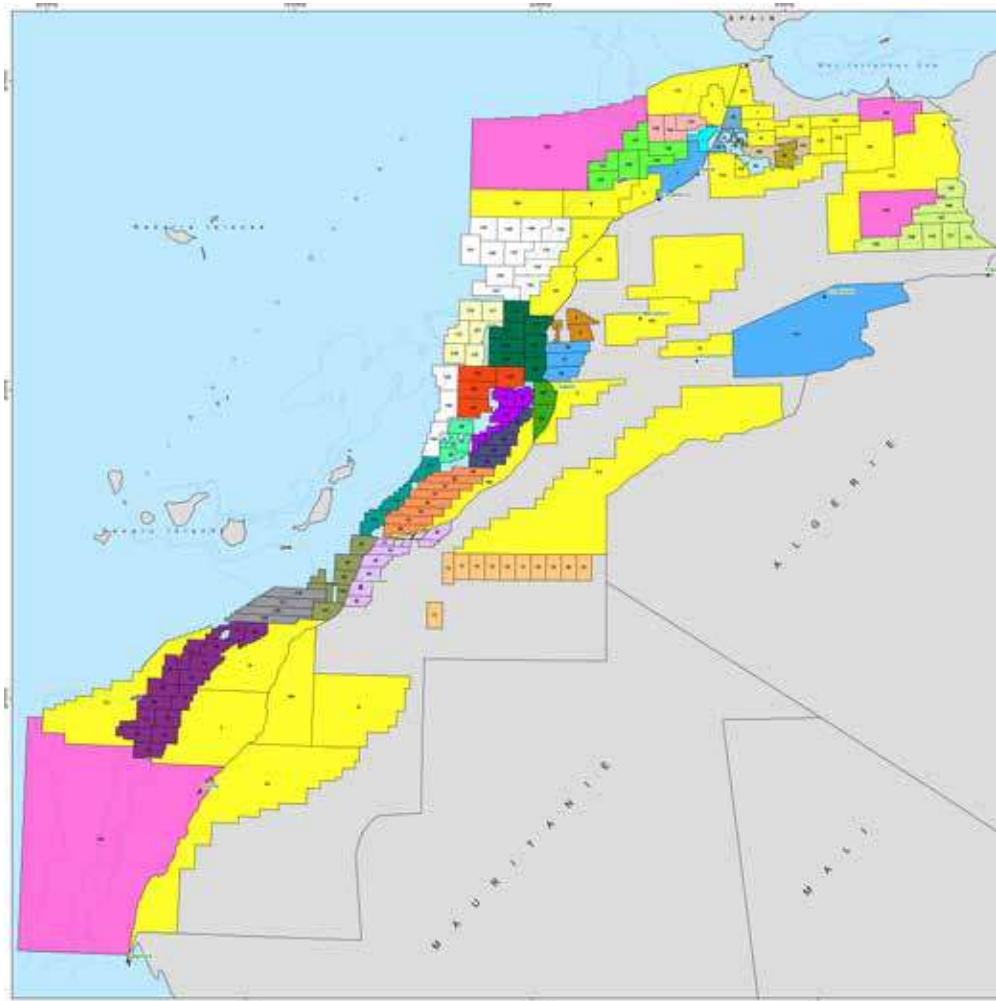
negative impacts to the oil and gas industry.

In spite of these market circumstances, I believe that an extended period of low oil prices might actually help reset the industry for the better and place it on a more sustainable development path for the medium term.

Please elaborate on Morocco's push for renewables and your country hosting the UN Climate Conference (COP22) this year.

.....
Morocco imports 94% of its energy needs. In this context, the energy strategy Morocco adopted in 2009 aims to mobilise domestic energy sources, mainly renewables such as wind and solar. Our Solar Power Programme and Wind Power Programme totalling 2000 MW each will be achieved by 2020. These projects accelerate the massive introduction of renewable energy sources in electricity generation as they will represent 42% of the global electrical capacity installed in 2020 (solar, wind and hydraulic power representing each 14%). By 2030, renewable energy will represent 52% in the total capacity installed equivalent to 12,850 MW.

Morocco's commitment to environmental protection did not start today. Indeed, this strategy is in our national interest and conforms to our international commitments. It reflects the supreme interest that our King Mohammed VI has placed on sustainable development and preservation of the environment. His majesty has expressed this with force and determination on various occasions including the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992, Rio + 5 in New York in 1997 and at the World Summit on sustainable development in Johannesburg in 2002. Since the



Oil and Gas opportunities in Morocco

Earth Summit in 1992, Morocco has participated actively and regularly in international efforts to protect the global climate.

In moderating COP22, Morocco will highlight its determination to advance negotiations and solutions that should be followed. We must continue efforts to support a large part of the Southern countries, particularly African countries and island nations. We already know that COP22 will address the issues of funding, innovation and technology transfer to fight the effects of global warming.

As a politician and a former minister, how do you view the dynamics of being a woman leader in the Arab world?

.....

Being a woman leader in the Arab World is a challenge. In Morocco, under the leadership of our King, the government has adopted a variety of laws, strategies and action plans in order to promote and protect women's rights and women's position in society. Since the implementation of the new family code in 2004, Morocco is presented as a country which invests in favour of gender equality. Important progress has been made in the last fifteen years which has improved women's access to high offices. It is a huge honour for me to be holding such an office. As women, we have to show that we are not only equal but that we can surpass the limits set for us. ■

Source: The Times of India



Morocco Invites Indian Companies

The Managing Director of Maroc Export, Ms Zahra Maafiri addressed an Indian business gathering on 27th October, 2015 during the 3rd India-Africa Summit in New Delhi. Following are the main points focusing on Morocco-India enhanced business resulting in tripartite arrangement with Africa.

"The Ministry in Charge of Foreign Trade, the Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in New Delhi, the Moroccan Confederation of Entreprises CGEM and Maroc Export have a great honor and pleasure to be with you today in New Delhi during this 3rd edition of the India-Africa Forum Summit enhanced by the presence of His Majesty The King of Morocco, Mohammed VI.

I would like to express my gratitude towards our friends and Indian partners for being with us in this convivial moment for more united India-Morocco partnership. I would like also to thank them for opening us their doors and helping us to organize the participation of the Moroccan delegation to this Summit.

The Moroccan business delegates that are here in Delhi are engaged on the economic development partnership oriented by the will of our two countries. Nearly 50 Moroccan institutions and enterprises representing a large scope of sectors like Infrastructure, Telecommunication and Information technology, Engineering and Consulting, Banking Textile, Electricity and Renewable Energy, Agribusiness and Education.

The CEOs of all this companies are full of energy to work hand in hand for jointed projects with a substantial added value for our two economies. The Moroccan Indian partnership has progressed in various fields. Our two countries have been linked since the 14th century at the time of the Moroccan explorer Ibn Battuta. This secular relationship has been economically reinforced towards a real strategic partnership under the



Ms Zahra Maafiri, Managing Director, Maroc Export

High Orientations of His Majesty, The King Mohammed VI, who is paying a visit for the 3th time to India since 2001.

It is true that Phosphates still constitute the major product of our commercial exchange but we succeeded to diversify our cooperation with other important sectors such as Automotive Industry, Textiles, New Technology, Offshoring and Pharmaceutical products.

Some of these partnerships are real success stories. The best example that I can share with you is : The settling in Morocco of the Indian giant "TATA". The partnership between Moroccan Phosphate Office and the group "BIRLA". The investment in Morocco of big pharmaceutical laboratory "RANBAXY".

On the other hand, Morocco is for India a major partner to develop a tripartite cooperation India-Africa. Since many years, the Kingdom of Morocco, second investor in Africa, has developed

concrete actions in the favor of our continent's economic development.

In fact, the Moroccan private sector initiated important projects that contribute to the vital African economy such as banking sector, insurance, infrastructures and constructions, telecommunications, education, electricity, new technology, medial service and so on.

Regarding the Indian companies, they have been engaged in such development projects in various sectors in Africa as well. Therefore, our business women and business men can think of identifying complementarities between them and launch joint initiatives for a south-south development in Africa.

I would like to let you know that Maroc Export is a founding member of the Trade Promotion Organisation Network of Africa, that has been constituted in December 2014 at Casablanca. This Network is an excellent tool to reinforce the "Made in Africa" Label.

And we are very proud to proceed to the signature of two MOUs with The Federation of Indian Export Organisations and The PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry. These MOU's will definitely strengthen the institutional Network by sharing our experience and knowledge and to constructe

I wish you a good luck and i'm sure that you will know how to take advantage from this important event to explore new opportunities that can be mutually beneficial for both parts, and for the development of a tripartite cooperation India-Morocco-Africa," and conclude. ■

GOOD LOOKING THINGS GET PICKED UP FIRST



HERE IS WHERE **WE COME IN.**

TCPL Packaging Ltd, is one of India's leading packaging company with state-of-the-art manufacturing plants in four distinct locations across India. It is one of the few Indian companies to have achieved the prestigious BRC/IOP certification and the first in the field to achieve ISO:9001:2000 and ISO:22000:2005 certifications.

As a leading Indian manufacturer of folding cartons, TCPL offers a complete range of printing technologies (offset and gravure) combined with every conceivable finishing technology. Continuous investment guarantees high performance and greater flexibility.

TCPL offers customized printing and packaging solutions to India's leading corporate giants from diverse industries and segments such as cigarettes, liquor, food & beverages and FMCG etc. Over and above, TCPL also exports significant volumes to Western Europe and the Middle East for similar requirements there.



Why India is Interested in Morocco

By Christopher Thomas

Indian Vice President Hamid Ansari returned from his 3-day visit to Morocco from May 30th to June 1st, 2016. During his time, Ansari met with Moroccan Prime Minister Abdelilah Benkirane, and a Chamber of Commerce and Industry was formed to facilitate bilateral trade. But why might India be interested in Morocco?

The most immediate answer is phosphates. Phosphates are used for fertilizer, making them extremely valuable to agrarian societies such as India. Moroccan phosphate resources are among the most extensive in the world, with only China and the United States reaching similar levels of production.

China, as of 2015, far outpaced Morocco's phosphate production

at roughly 100 million tons. However, China and India have a well-known rivalry that has resulted in war and seizure of territory in past decades. The strategic benefits of relying on Chinese resources to feed India's people and bolster its economy are dubious.

The United States produced 27.6 million tons of phosphates in the same year, but Morocco produced 30 million tons, earning it a place among the two leading global superpowers. However, Moroccan phosphate reserves are the largest in the world by a significant margin; some estimates place Moroccan phosphate reserves at half of the world's total.

This makes the kingdom an ideal trading partner to India, with resources that will only increase.

Given the importance of food resources to a nation as populous as India, obtaining phosphates is a top priority. In return for these and other resources, India offers automobile manufacturing and pharmaceutical production to Morocco.

India's influence in Africa has waned over recent decades, with rival China increasing its economic presence. To improve its own position on the geopolitical stage, India must become more involved with the affairs of so large a continent as Africa. This is especially pertinent given India's ambitions to obtain a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.

On a more fundamental level, India and Morocco share certain societal outlooks and political situations. They certainly have no animosity for one another, as characterized by Vice President Ansari's statement: "There are no points of conflict [between India and Morocco] and politically our outlooks do not clash."

Similarities run deeper than a mere lack of conflict; both nations have a clearly dominant religion, but are nonetheless hubs of multiculturalism. Morocco has been an Islamic nation since the Arab conquest in the 8th Century, but garnered a reputation for tolerance in al Andalus by fostering a society in which Muslims, Jews, and Christians could coexist. It later became a haven for Jews fleeing the Spanish Inquisition, and enjoyed a rare peace among religions in the Middle Ages and later centuries.

India is also home to significant religious minorities. As of 2015, it houses the third largest population



The Vice President of India, Mr. M. Hamid Ansari interacting with the accompanying media delegation on board, Air India Special aircraft on his way to Morocco and Tunisia visit, on May 30, 2016. The Minister of State for Chemicals & Fertilizers, Mr. Hansraj Gangaram Ahir is also seen.





The Vice President of India, Mr. M. Hamid Ansari and Mrs. Salma Ansari visiting the Bahia Palace, in Marrakech, Morocco on June 01, 2016. The Minister of State for Chemicals & Fertilizers, Mr. Hansraj Gangaram Ahir is also seen.

of Muslims in the world, as well as a sizeable Sikh minority. Tensions and clashes among these groups have become central to the political stage. Morocco's history of coexistence may provide a worthwhile point of reference to Indian political leadership.

Likewise, both nations govern territory that is internationally disputed. Morocco's governance over its Southern Provinces/ Western Sahara is a point of contention with the United Nations, which has encouraged a referendum that has proved unworkable.

Similarly, India governs large territories in Jammu and Kashmir, and the United Nations has also advocated a referendum that has failed to come about. India and Morocco share similar political flashpoints, which remain unresolved.

India and Morocco are separated by 8,458 km (5256 miles), but united by trade. The economic advantages to a partnership are abundantly clear, but the relationship could go far beyond an exchange of goods alone.

Perhaps Morocco and India can learn from their shared social and political issues and move forward together, expanding their relationship to a deeper and more lasting engagement. This may not be the intention of either government, but the parallels

between their circumstances are clear, and may present an opportunity for progress and mutual understanding.

Source:



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“OCP Instrumental in Cementing Morocco-India Ties”- Adnane El Ktiri

Young and dynamic Mr. Adnane El Ktiri is Vice President of Sales for India and Middle East for OCP Group. For more than eight years he has frequently been travelling to India and handling the Indian operations. Journalist Harun Riaz during his July 2016 visit to Morocco visited OCP headquarter at Casablanca.

Following are the excerpts from the interview;

What has been the contribution of OCP as far as Morocco's business ties with India are concerned?

.....
OCP is the oldest and single largest supplier of Phosphate in all its forms into India and more importantly, the sole foreign fertiliser company to have invested in a production facility in India. OCP started to supply India in the late 40s and has since then been India's preferred and most regular supplier of phosphate in all its forms'. OCP has been instrumental in solidifying

business ties between Morocco and India via cross investments. The first one was with two leading fertilizer companies from India, Chambal Fertilizers and Tata Chemicals who along with OCP have invested in a MAD 2 billion phosphoric acid plant in Morocco (IMACID). The second investment has been made jointly by OCP and the erstwhile KK Birla Group company – Zuari Agro (now part of the S.K Poddar led Adventz Group), for the acquisition of Paradeep Phosphates Ltd, one of the largest producer of fertiliser in India. Both these investments

are the largest cross investments between Morocco and India, and have been instrumental in kick starting the development of business ties between Moroccan and Indian companies.

Moreover, OCP's recent launch of a large phosphate centered investment programme in Morocco has triggered the interest of many Indian companies. OCP initiatives in India have also been instrumental in launching the Indo -Moroccan Business Council which has given a lot of exposure to businessmen and industry players in both countries.



Mr. Adnane El Ktiri, Vice President of Sales for India and Middle East for the OCP Group

What's the annual purchase by India of the phosphates produced by the India-Maroc Phosphate SA Joint Venture? Is there a plan to enhance production capacities of both the Moroccan and Indian JVs ?

.....
OCP supplies annually to India around one million MT P₂O₅ of phosphoric acid (almost half of the country's requirements) and in excess of one million MT of rock phosphate. Out of the million MT P₂O₅ of phosphoric acid, around 40% comes from the Indo -Moroccan JV (IMACID). It is important to stress that OCP supplies this key raw material to all the regular producers of fertilisers in India. In terms of production capacity, IMACID has been initially designed to produce annually 375 KT P₂O₅.



OCP's recent launch of a large phosphate centered investment programme in Morocco has triggered the interest of many Indian companies. OCP initiatives in India have also been instrumental in launching the Indo-Moroccan Business Council

With the growth of the demand for phosphoric acid, this capacity has been increased a couple of years ago and is today touching 430 KT P₂O₅ per annum.

On the other hand, it is important to mention that OCP fully supports the vision "Make in India" and believes that the domestic fertilisers industry should be given full priority and encouraged in order to remain competitive. In this regard, OCP and its partners have shown their commitment to the Indian market by investing heavily in increasing the production capacity of their JV Paradeep Phosphates Ltd.

When did OCP Group opened an office in India and what role does it play?

OCP opened its first office in New Delhi in the early 90s. At that time, the scope and the size of the office were limited and not reflecting the size of OCP and the importance of its presence in India. In 2010, it was decided to move the office to Gurgaon, to staff it with various profiles and increase its role and responsibilities. Currently, the role of our local office is to provide support to OCP as a whole whenever there is a particular business-related request and to

assist the commercial department in coordinating all of the day to day operations in the Indian market. The Indian office team ensures smooth dealing and continuous communication between the head office and our customers. This requires a very close follow-up of all sales and related logistics while being able to address our clients' questions and concerns. We also have a team of analysts who provide valuable information on the Indian fertilizer market – such as general market trends, market forecasts and competition. A team of agronomists provide the much needed understanding in agronomy developments and help in maintaining connect with the end consumers.

As Vice President of Sales for India, you frequently travel to the country. How can Morocco and India increase business, despite physical distance and language hurdle?

Well, today the physical distance and the language are



absolutely not considered as barriers which would prevent companies from both countries to establish and develop business relationships. English is today the language of global business and businessmen in both countries speak it. Moreover, access to technology and communication tools further minimizes the impact of geographical distances. As far as business is concerned, we have noticed that after the recent visit of His Majesty King Mohamed VI, there has been renewed interest from the business community of both countries which lead to the formation of the Indo- Moroccan Chamber of

3 additional years, up to 2018, and according to impact studies of different projects, new initiatives will probably materialize.

Also, OCP Foundation is facilitating linkages between the Consortium of the National System of Agricultural Research and Higher Education in Morocco constituted by National Institute of Agricultural Research (INRA Morocco), the Agronomic and Veterinary Institute Hassan II (IAVHII), the National School of Agriculture (ENA Meknes), the Polytechnique University Mohamed VI, and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research

strategic partnerships in line with OCP's strategy and at the same time we are contemplating those projects that would reflect the ambitions that His Majesty and Prime Minister Modi have for the relationships between Morocco and India.

Agriculture is also one of the important sector of the Moroccan economy. What role OCP Group has played for sustainable practices, clean environment and creation of new jobs for the economy?

.....
The environment is at the cornerstone of the group strategy. As an example, the optimization of water use remains a strategic component of OCP's industrial projects. The Group has developed programmes that better value water resources including desalination of seawater, the construction of a slurry pipeline between the mines of Khouribga and Jorf Lasfar industrial platform. OCP is also engaged in reducing energy consumption and promoting the use of renewable energy.

As Morocco's largest employer and consumer of goods, OCP, is strengthening its development by creating jobs and contributing to local economies directly and indirectly. The Group is also promoting and enhancing the economy of the regions where it operates by supporting culture and education. As an illustration of its commitment to its ecosystem, The Fom El Oued technopole, the large scale project initiated by Phosboucraa Foundation, a subsidiary of OCP, should mobilize nearly 1,800,000 man-days during the construction phase and is expected to create 1200 permanent jobs by 2022. ■

“ The visit of His Majesty has taken the relationships between India and Morocco to a new level ”

Commerce in Morocco. One needs also to mention that the embassies of both countries played an important role in connecting the people and the businesses.

OCP has been funding CSR activities in India. Are there plans to support more NGOs in India in the agriculture sector, help marginal farmers and also fund agriculture research?

.....
OCP Foundation is continuing to support agribusiness, research and agri-extension initiatives in collaboration with national NGOs and international institutions located in India. As per the AES-Karnataka project initiated in 2010 and extended to a second phase, other projects could have the same fate to sustain farmers' livelihood or target new resource poor farmers in new localities. The on-going OCPF collaboration programme in India is lasting for

(ICAR) in order to explore opportunities in the general areas of collaborative research, higher education, training and capacity-building, institutional strengthening, visit exchange, and identification of funding opportunities.

Does OCP Group plan to invest in India as H.M. the King of Morocco has decided to build a strategic partnership with New Delhi?

.....
The visit of His Majesty has taken the relationships between India and Morocco to a new level. As mentioned earlier, it has triggered a renewed interest from the business communities to contemplate investment opportunities in both countries. As far as OCP is concerned, we are indeed studying various investment opportunities in India to see which could translate into





OCP Group Plays Major Role in Morocco – India Ties

Beyond strategic considerations, India and Africa shared a long and distinguished history when both sides gained independence. More than that, their relations refer to political, economic as well as cultural connections.

Becoming an increasingly important economic partner for Africa, India held from 26 to 29 October 2015, in New Delhi, the “Third India-Africa Forum Summit 2015”. Under the theme “Partners in Progress: Towards a Dynamic and Transformative Development Agenda”, this high level summit witnessed a record participation of leaders and representatives of 54 African nations. It was an occasion to celebrate the close partnership between Africa and India and to unveil a “dynamic and transformation agenda” of mutual empowerment that will bring India and Africa closer in years to come.

Over the years, India and Morocco have enjoyed cordial and friendly relations. In modern history, India was active in the UN supporting the Moroccan movement and recognized Morocco in 1956, when it became independent. His Majesty the King Mohamed VI attended the summit to consolidate Morocco's relationship with India. He expressed “appreciation” for India's “constructive” position on Moroccan Sahara issue and support to the UN process.

As one of the world's leader producer of phosphates in all its forms, OCP Group strives for the creation of a larger body within which sharing experiences,

reinforcing cooperation and initiating South-South partnerships would pave the way for long-lasting food security.

Today, India is representing a strategic market for OCP. Indeed, OCP accounts for nearly half of Indian imports of phosphoric acid and about 20% of its needs for phosphate rock. Relations date back to 1948, year of the first phosphate delivery, and they have grown stronger ever since. Originally an importer of phosphate rock, over the years, the country has gradually become an importer of phosphates in all its forms, fertilizers as well as phosphoric acid. It is now the largest importer and the second largest consumer of fertilizer in the world. India aims to develop effective and high-yield agriculture to feed an ever-growing population. This ambition requires an increased and balanced used of fertilizers. Consumption increases by 2 to 3% per year on an average.

For several years now, the Group has no longer been a mere supplier of phosphate, but a full partner. With OCP, Indian farmers can rely on a dependable supplier for their imports of phosphate and its derivatives that is able to offer quality products in sufficient quantity. The Group's partners in India provide outlets for its products and strengthen its industrial presence. OCP has forged close ties with Adventz Group (i.e. Zuari Industries Ltd, a subsidiary of the Birla group) located in the southwest of the country, where it supplies phosphoric acid and

fertilizers. Adventz also partnered with OCP in the Indo Maroc Phosphore (Imacid) joint venture formed in 1997 in Jorf Lasfar. It exports more than 400,000 tons of P2O5 phosphoric acid to India. In 2002, OCP and Zuari went further in their cooperation by becoming a majority shareholder in the Indian company Paradeep Phosphates Ltd., which is very well established in the east of the country. This transaction made OCP the first and only foreign investor, to this day, to have a phosphate fertilizer production unit on Indian territory.

The Group also relies on a second partner: Tata Chemicals Limited, one of the largest producers of chemicals and a subsidiary of the Tata Group, whose international importance has been undeniably demonstrated.

For India, fertilizers have become a strategic raw material and the Indian industry is in an investment mindset in order to secure supplies. OCP plays a key role in this strategy. Its strength lies in its very large phosphate reserves and a clear willingness to remain a leading participant both internationally and on the Indian market.

Moreover, OCP is also a committed player in the development and improvement of agricultural practices in India. Indeed, conscious of its social responsibility, OCP has implemented several programmes alongside specialized Indian institutions and NGOs whose aim is to provide small farmers with the means to improve yields on their land. ■



Automotive: 1st Exporting Sector

The Kingdom of Morocco is focusing on six core sectors to enhance and strengthen ties with India, automotive industry being one of them.

❖ Strategic sector in the national industrial policy

Since the 2000s, the automobile industry release a two-digit annual growth towards the creation of employment and export.

The Moroccan automotive industry has risen to sustained levels of growth over the last decade. Its performance is particularly remarkable for export and in terms of job creation, indicators for which the segment generated an annual double-digit growth.

The automotive sector is now the 1st Moroccan exporting sector generating more than 50 billion dirhams export turnover in 2015 with 86.500 employees. Those performances make Morocco as the 1st manufacturer in North Africa an 2nd in the continent.

The positioning of Morocco as a platform of production and export of equipments and motor vehicles is consolidated by the setting-up of renowned foreign groups such as RENAULT, SNOP, GMD, BAMESA, DELPHI, YAZAKI, SEWS, SAINT-GOBAIN and more recently Peugeot Citroën.

❖ Ecosystems of the sector

To provide the best support to the automotive industry, the 2014-2020

Acceleration Plan and the new ecosystem approach which it introduces bases to a steady and long-lasting development of the companies of the sector.

The new strategy reinforces the expanded value offer and further anchors the Morocco destination in the global automotive industry. The new ecosystem approach promote greater integration of the sector, as well as a better organization of his actors who win in competitiveness, in quality and in reactivity.

To boost the productivity of business operators, an appropriate support and targeted assistance are made to business ecosystems regarding financing, industrial land and training.

5 leading automotive ecosystems have been launched to date and cover the fields of:

- Automotive wiring,
- Vehicle interior and seats,
- Metal pressing,
- Automotive batteries
- Motors and Transmission.

The ecosystem Motors and Transmission illustrates the point of inflection which knows our industry; the Kingdom joined, in record time, the closed circle of motors exporters, proof again, of the technological step which we crossed. Morocco will have browsed in only 14 years, a path which will have required on average 17 years to Emerging countries.

Other ecosystems will be deployed around builders settled in Morocco such as Renault and PSA and foreign-based manufacturers such as Ford and Volkswagen.

Integrated and innovative support measures have been implemented to benefit the automotive ecosystems:

- Support for leading trades reaching up to 30% of total Investment;
- Easier access to property (development of rental property at attractive prices);
- Skills training for 90,000 profiles fitting the specific needs of the sector.;
- 275 hectares of rental property reserved for the automotive industry of which 95 hectares are already committed;
- The establishment of a Centre of Studies, Testing and Development;
- Specific help for companies of the "heavy goods and industrial bodywork" ecosystem.

In the framework of the Industrial Acceleration Plan, the Ministry plans for the mobilization of 1,000 hectares to create Integrated Industrial Rental Parks (PIL) with turnkey premises: each park will include a one stop shop for administration, a local job pool, ad hoc services and a training programme.

In parallel, general and sectoral Integrated Industrial Platforms (P2I), possibly benefiting from the free zone status, guarantee the availability of property at an attractive price, comprehensive and diverse real-estate and logistics options conforming to the best international standards, as well as on-site services and a one stop shop for administration.

Aeronautics: Outstanding Dynamism

A brief introduction of the aeronautics sector, second of the six core sectors.

❖ A key driver of economic growth

During recent years the Moroccan aeronautics sector has shown an outstanding dynamism and remarkable growth. The development of varied sectors, especially in wiring, mechanics, sheet metal work, composites and mechanical assembly, has made Morocco a preferred destination for subcontracting in aeronautics.

A clear illustration of the growth of the aeronautics industry in Morocco is the establishment of the giant Bombardier group that is now a force driving the development of the sector, thanks to the substantial economic benefits resulting from the development of Moroccan exports and local industry. With an investment of around 200 million US dollars, the Bombardier project will ultimately create 850 direct jobs and 4,400 indirect jobs.

The recent establishment of other global players such as BOMBARDIER, EATON, STELIA and ALCOA confirms Morocco's ability to attract industry leaders.

Indeed, the global aviation industry releases a significant potential for growth (doubling the world fleet over the next 20 years, full order books for the next 10 years and a turnover of 4.8 trillion dollars for the same period): With the launch of aeronautical ecosystems, Morocco is perfectly entitled to seize this opportunity by positioning itself more as competitiveness niche in the aviation value chain.

❖ Ecosystems of the sector

The Industrial Development Fund (FDI), operational since 1 January 2015, allocates 3 billion dirhams

per year for the period 2014-2120 to ecosystem companies to enable them to realize their ambitions in upgrading, development and internationalization.

State support is also backed up with integrated and competitive bank financing.

On 28 July 2015, performance contracts were concluded between the Minister in charge of Industry and the profession in order to support the launch of four aeronautics ecosystems in the following fields:

- Assembly;
- Electrical Wiring Interconnection System (EWIS);
- Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO);
- Engineering.

The implementation of these first four ecosystems will contribute by 2020 to create 23,000 new jobs, that is to say three folds the present workforce, to double the export turnover thus reaching 16 billion dirhams, achieve a 35%

local integration and attract 100 new actors.

Integrated and innovative support measures have been implemented to benefit the aeronautical ecosystems, the support intended mainly aims at:

- the promotion of investment in the sector (installation offers);
- easier access to property (development of rental property at attractive prices);
- the training of specialized profiles that meet the needs of the sector;



Signing ceremony of 2 performance contracts related to the aeronautics ecosystems on 28 July 2015 in Rabat

- the development of local integration by means of bonuses;
- improving logistical competitiveness of the sector;
- the establishment of appropriate financing solutions;
- This sustained support provided for ecosystems' companies will make the sector a key driver of economic growth, attracting investments and creating jobs and exports. ■

Source: Ministry of Industry, Trade, Investment and Digital Economy



OCP Group's Strategy to Energise South-South Cooperation

❖ Almost a century of expertise

As it edges towards its 100-year anniversary in 2020, the global integrated phosphate and fertilizer producer OCP Group has much to celebrate. With sole responsibility for Morocco's vast phosphate reserves, OCP has adapted its role over the decades with dynamism and flexibility, setting itself new priorities that reflect the changing global economic landscape and growing demand, in an era where challenges differ greatly from those faced decades earlier. Today the Group is a major player in the global drive to boost sustainable agricultural productivity, with a particular focus on protecting the environment and supporting African farmers.

❖ About OCP

OCP Group is proud to contribute to feeding the expanding world population by providing it with elements that are essential for soil fertility and plant growth.

With almost a century of expertise, OCP Group is one of the world leaders on the market for phosphate and its derivatives. The Group offers an extensive range of fertilizer products for use in enriching soils, increasing agricultural yield and feeding the world in an economic and sustainable way. Based in Morocco, OCP Group works in close partnership with over 160 clients across the 5 continents.

❖ Operational excellence

OCP's proactive business strategy, based on offering clients tailored solutions in the form of customized products and logistical services, lies at the heart of its modern-day operations. The Group has developed a portfolio of innovative and high-quality products

that can be adapted for use on a wide variety of soil and plants.

Its operations today are the legacy of an in-depth industrial transformation, developed through an outstanding R&D arm, which has brought broad based change and innovation in production tools, processes, technologies and practices. OCP's R&D team includes over 170 researchers, working across the entire industrial value chain.

separate development, the launch of the slurry pipeline in 2014 proved pivotal, revolutionizing phosphates transport and transforming the group's industrial value chain by facilitating the use of an integrated method based on the hydraulic conveyance of phosphate pulp.

❖ OCP AFRICA

In February 2016, OCP Group announced the creation of its subsidiary OCP AFRICA, a new



Africa Fertilizer Complex (AFC)

By combining methods and practices developed in-house with international best practices, OCP has been able to create a global production system capable of serving its world-class ambition and excellent standards of delivery. Major milestones have included the rolling out of soil knowledge enhancement programmes, which transformed OCP's entire operation. In a

African company committed to the development of the agricultural ecosystem in Africa which marks the first fruits of the issues identified at the Third India-Africa Forum Summit 2015.

OCP AFRICA aims to contribute to meeting the challenge of creating structured, efficient and sustainable agriculture in Africa, by providing African farmers all the resources needed to succeed:





Panoramic View of Jorf Lasfar Industrial Platform

affordable products, services and partnerships, logistics and financial solutions.

This new OCP subsidiary supports sustainable and precision farming through products adapted to local soils and crops. To achieve this, OCP AFRICA is investing heavily in research and innovation and will strengthen its agronomic skills to serve sustainable and precision agriculture: soil mapping, test campaigns and local farming operators.

Also, to succeed in the agricultural transformation of Africa, OCP AFRICA aims to secure the production of competitive fertilizers with production units as close as possible to the major farming areas. A first fertilizer production unit, with a capacity of one million tons per year, Africa Fertilizer Complex (AFC), has been inaugurated on February 2016.

Logistics, marketing and distribution are at the cornerstone of OCP AFRICA's strategy. Guaranteeing farmers the right products, at the right time, in sufficient quantity and at the right price is one of its main objectives. OCP AFRICA is putting in place, both internally and with its local partners, storage and blending facilities in ports close to consumer areas and a network of distributors at the service of the agricultural sector.

Moreover, the subsidiary has been granted "Casablanca

Finance City" (CFC) status which facilitates its investments and operations across the continent, thanks to the various advantages that it offers, notably a propitious business environment including administrative facilities, a relaxation of the foreign exchange regime and an attractive taxation framework.

❖ Feeding the future

Faced with several complex challenges when it comes to feeding both the earth and the planet, OCP's dynamic approach and enterprising spirit have proved essential in plotting growth. OCP is strengthening its anchorage in the international phosphate markets and responding to rising global demand by undertaking a major capital investment programme on the back of a successful \$1bn bond loan. The funds raised will be used to finance an ambitious industrial development plan, which aims to increase annual phosphate rock production in the coming years, doubling mining production capacity and tripling processing capacity by 2025, while also financing its ongoing operations. OCP's multibillion dollar capital investment campaign comes against a backdrop of rising demand for agricultural products. Figures suggest that world agricultural production will need to increase to 7.5 bn tones in 2015 to meet demand, heightening the role played by fertilizers. OCP's integrated factory in Jorf Lasfar is

set to be boosted by the addition of four new units, pushing up annual fertilizer production capacity to 2m tones.

Going forward, OCP will maintain its focus on protecting and promoting global agriculture through sustainable development, championing environmental protection through the use of the most advanced technologies available. A culture based on the exchange of ideas and a collective thought process is also key, highlighting OCP's commitment to making a major contribution to the global debate on sustainable agriculture production. OCP will continue to collaborate with partners and undertake joint actions to promote agriculture prosperity, maintaining a particular focus on promoting innovation and investment in Africa, as part of a broader bid to revitalize agriculture across the continent and elsewhere in the Global South.

❖ OCP Key Figures

- Number one globally for phosphate exports
- 27% of the global market share of phosphates
- Almost 100 years of operations
- 21,000 collaborators
- 20,7% share of Morocco's exports countries
- Over 160 clients across all five continents
- Phosphate rock annual capacity of 32,4m tones
- Looking to double mining production capacity and triple processing capacity by 2025. ■



Women Empowerment in Morocco

By Bouthaina El Kerdoudi



The Kingdom of Morocco, since its independence in 1956, has made the promotion of women's rights the very pillar of the democratic society it seeks to build.

Under the guidance of late His Majesty Mohammed V, his daughter, H.R.H Princess Lalla Aisha was the symbol of the renaissance and emancipation of Moroccan women. At early age, she played significant role in promoting women's education by urging Moroccans to send girls to school and women to take their places as full-fledged citizens in the Moroccan society.

In March 1965, her brother, late His Majesty King Hassan II appointed her as an ambassador of Morocco to the United Kingdom to be the first female ambassador in the Arab world to occupy such a position. She was then nominated Ambassador in Greece (1969-70) and then in Italy (1970-73).

Besides, various women's organizations in Morocco were created after independence with the aim of advancing of the cause of women's rights.

Under the leadership of late His Majesty King Hassan II, various Moroccan women have held positions in political parties and high ranks in the ruling government, cabinet, as seven women were appointed as ministers, including Nawal El Moutawakel, the Olympic champion who was named the Minister of Sports.

Over the past 15 years, under the leadership of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Morocco made

great achievements in terms of women's empowerment by making the promotion of their rights a priority.

Central to these achievements was the reform of the Personal Status Law known today by its Arabic name Moudawana, which was introduced in January 2004, aiming at achieving gender equality and family balance. In his October 2003 speech introducing this reform, His Majesty King Mohammed VI asked, "How can society advance while the rights of women-who form half of it-are squandered and they are subjected to injustice, violence and marginalization?"

This family law was hailed as one of the most progressive laws on women's rights in the Arab world, as it eliminates language

degrading to women, raises their status as full partners with men. It raised the minimum age of marriage for girls from 15 to 18, gave wives joint responsibility of the family with their husbands, and equal rights to property upon divorce, gave custody of their children to the mother, abolished the unilateral repudiation of the wife and restricts the practice of polygamy.

Other reforms included the review in 2007 of the Citizenship Act which makes it possible for a Moroccan mother to pass on her nationality to her offspring, regardless of her husband's nationality.



Nawal El Moutawakel, the first Arab Muslim Woman Olympic Champion and former Minister of Sports of Morocco





Morocco Female Police Officers

Seven years after the groundbreaking reform of the family code, Morocco passed in 2011 a new constitution, which calls for gender equality. Its article 19 stipulates that the state should work towards the establishment of parity between men and women and guarantee women's rights and ensure their access to political and decision-making positions.

In this spirit, Morocco lifted all reservations on the international Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), entrenching equality and parity expressed in the new constitution.

Among recent developments in women rights promotion, are the adoption by Moroccan government of the law on violence against women, and new law on domestic workers, in which women constitute a large category, granting them the right to care, social security and minimum wage, as well as annual holidays.

To ensure women's entry in the political spheres, the government adopted a system of positive discrimination, through quota system; which results in women making up 21% of local councils and 17% of parliamentary seats. As such we have 67 women MPs.

Today, in the public arena, Morocco has 6 female Ministers, several women Ambassadors and senior civil and Army officials, including governors and Walis and Colonel Majors. The recent reshuffling of Morocco's diplomatic corps has made Morocco the leader in the Arab and Muslim world for the representativeness of



Moroccan Woman casting her vote

women in diplomacy, as 14 women were appointed as Ambassadors.

Besides, the State adopts gender approach in all areas and programmes. The National Human Development Initiative (INDH), which is Morocco's large-scale anti-poverty programme, launched in May 2004 by His Majesty the King, benefiting to about 10 million people, is mainly focused on women.

On the economic front, Morocco also endeavored to put women in board rooms. According to the latest figures, there are 5000 women entrepreneurs, accounting for 10% of Moroccan enterprises. With this number, Morocco is well ahead of several emerging countries and stands out as a leading country on the African scale. Morocco's General Confederation of enterprises of Morocco (CGEM), the main employers' Association in the country, is headed by Miriem Bensalah-Chaqroun, one of the most consistently noted female business leaders in the Middle East and Africa.

Forbes Middle East magazine selected six business women from Morocco, in its 2015 annual ranking of the Arab World's Most Powerful Women.

Gender approach has even extended beyond the economic sphere. In the religious field, which is in most Muslim countries a preserve of men, Moroccan women are also well represented. 3 women became full-fledged members of the Supreme Council of Ulema or religious leaders and 77 female Alimates (female religious leaders) are members of the regional Councils of Ulema. Their appointment to this rank was a mark of the Royal trust in Moroccan women's capacity to shoulder high responsibilities in all walks of life, even in the religious field. Morocco was also a pioneering country in the Arab-Muslim world in nominating in April 2004 a new group of female religious instructors known as murshidat whose mission is to conduct campaigns for raising female and youth awareness against extremism and introduce a tolerant and mainstream version of Islam.

In April 2015, His Majesty the King also gave instructions to increase the number of "Alimates" meaning female religious leaders both in the Supreme Council and Regional Councils of Ulema, to ensure the spiritual guidance of Moroccans.



President, General Confederation of Moroccan Enterprises



OCP Foundation Funding Agriculture Research in India

In light of the South-South cooperation programme promoted by OCP Group and the Government of Morocco, OCP Group through OCP Foundation is engaged in the promotion of a sustainable agriculture for a better food security of the rural populations in southern countries, particularly in India, a major partner of OCP Group.

In 2010, OCP Foundation launched its first agricultural development project in India, in the State of Karnataka, to support

small farmers. By 2014, more than 6000 small farmers from three districts of northern Karnataka increased their crop productivity and income by more than 70%.

The successful experience of OCP Foundation in Karnataka led to the implementation of other projects across India, the India-Morocco Food Legumes Initiative 2012-2018 that is research and technology transfer oriented, and the Rajasthan Agricultural Programme 2014-2018 which is socio-economic

development oriented. Today, OCP Foundation is supporting small Indian farmers across nine Indian states, particularly in Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, West Bengal and Karnataka. Indeed, in collaboration with a consortium of partners including MS Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF), Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), International

Agricultural Extension Services Project



Nursery established under agricultural extension project in the State of Karnataka



Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), Indian NGOs such as the Indian Society of Agribusiness Professionals (ISAP), National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA Morocco) and Hassan II Institute of Agronomy and Veterinary Sciences (IAV), OCP Foundation contributed to enhancing the productivity and socio-economic

conditions of almost 40 000 small Indian farmers, directly.

These achievements are the result of a comprehensive agricultural development programme put in place by OCP Foundation to improve the livelihood in rural India through the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices, the development of small farming entrepreneurship, the creation of

value for better access to markets, the use of ICT, as well as the support to women, youth and children for better access to health and education.

Last but not least, it is through this diversified and integrated approach that OCP Foundation strives to contribute to a better food security and human development in rural India.



Integrated Farming System project in Rajasthan



India Morocco Food Legumes Initiative in the state of West Bengal



OCP Foundation Projects in India

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Project: Agricultural Extension services project Phase I & II</p> <p>Duration: 2010 – 2016</p> <p>Targeted beneficiaries:</p> <p>6000 first phase 2010-2013 and 7000 in second phase 2014-2016 in Raichur, Bidar and Gulbarga Districts, Karnataka state.</p> <p>Axes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dissemination of good agricultural practices - Farmer producers organization - Promotion of Agribusiness | <p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a farmers call center • Creation of 6 Farmer producers organization • Establishment of 5 agribusiness centers for value addition and marketing of pulses • Establishment of Agricultural Machinery Custom Hiring Centers • More than 70% yield improvement |
| <p>Project: Integrated Farming System project in Rajasthan</p> <p>Duration: 2014 – 2019</p> <p>Targeted beneficiaries:</p> <p>9600 in Bundi, Baran, Sawai Madhupur Districts, Rajasthan state</p> <p>Axes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Income and products diversification - Encouraging mechanization and promotion of best - agricultural practices - Promotion of Agribusiness and Human Development blocs. | <p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a farmers call center • Creation of 6 Farmer producers organization • Establishment of three Human development blocs providing health, education and women trainings services. • Establishment of three agribusiness centers for value addition and marketing • Establishment of Agricultural Machinery Custom Hiring Centers |
| <p>Project: India Morocco Food Legumes Initiative</p> <p>Duration: 2012 – 2018</p> <p>Targeted beneficiaries: 15000 in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, West Bengal and Karnataka.</p> <p>Axes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food legumes value chain analysis and organization promotion of best agricultural practices for enhancing productivity - Value addition through post-harvest processing, storage and labeling of food legumes - Technology transfer and scientific collaboration under South-South Cooperation - Pro-food legumes enabling policy nationally and internationally | <p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 Crops: chickpea, lentil, fava bean, pigeon pea, groundnut, black gram, green gram... • 6000 demonstration plots for farmers • 900 Field days • 8 cooperatives supported • 5 Seed Village Enterprises promoted • 4 Village Knowledge Centers supported • More than 30% yield improvement.  |



Digital Economy (ICT) Offers Opportunities for India

Morocco in the Global Knowledge Economy and business opportunities.



The new strategy "Morocco Digital 2020"

The Minister of Industry, Trade, Investment and the Digital Economy, Moulay Hafid El ALAMY announced June 27 in front of His Majesty King Mohamed VI outline the plan "Morocco Digital 2020". This is a new strategy resulting from a progress report on the ambitions and achievements of Morocco in the field of ICT, which will take the Digital Morocco 2013 relay and will place our country in Digital Economy.

This new vision will allow Morocco to significantly reduce the digital divide, with the ambition to achieve 50% of administrative procedures online and connect 20% Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

A specific structure and specialist was recently created. The Development of Digital

Presentation of the sector

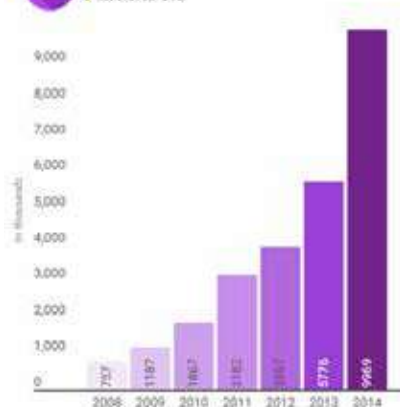
Information Communication and Technology (ICT) usage is essential for the emergence of the knowledge society and can actively contribute to human development, improvement of social cohesion and national economy growth. The challenge for Morocco in the ICT sector for years to come is not only to sustain the progress already made, but also to allow the insertion of Morocco in the global knowledge economy, through amplified and widely distributed integration of ICT across all actors of society: government, governments, businesses and citizens.

According to the index preparedness networks (NRI) of the "Global Information Technology Report 2016" newly published by the World Economic Forum (WEF) and on the use of information and communications technology (ICT), the Morocco is a locomotive in the Maghreb region in the field of ICT.

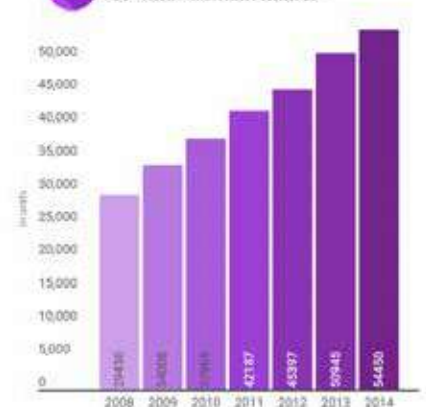
Economy Agency (ADEN) is responsible for bridging the digital divide currently affecting the country and meets the demands and requirements of professionals. The creation of an independent structure with own financial resource is important to allow the feasibility and implementation of projects included in the strategy "Digital Morocco 2020". There are expectations regarding the tasks of the Agency to include the development and implementation of digital services to citizens and businesses, but also the support and sustainability of the projects launched. It will be the privileged interlocutor of professionals with the state.

Keys figures :

Evolution of ADSL + 3G subscribers



Evolution of the number of «.ma» domain names



Source: Ministry of Industry, Trade, Investment and Digital Economy



Pharmaceutical Industry Ecosystems Launched

The pharmaceutical industry is part of the 2020 Industrial Acceleration Plan by Morocco.

❖ 2014 pharmaceutical counts

- 9155 Jobs: high productivity jobs: 1.5 million Dhs in revenue per employee
- a turnover of 13.7 billion dirhams: a high rate of Value Added 34%
- 4.6 billion Dhs of added value: major investment effort and continuous since 1998: Dhs 700 million invested on average each year;
- Trade balance: 6.4 billion Dhs production capacity concentrated on medicines, with significant room for growth: current utilization rate - 50%.

❖ Ecosystems of the sector

The pharmaceutical industry is structuring two of its sectors in ecosystems as part of the 2014-2020 Industrial Acceleration Plan.

Medicines and Medical devices are the two sectors concerned by the two new ecosystems which cover all of the medicine and medical devices production value chain, from development to commercialisation.

The following trades will hence be regulated:

- Clinical trials,
- Active ingredients and packaging,
- Manufacturing for local markets and export,
- Bio-similar medicines
- Medical devices.

Ultimately, the implementation of the launched ecosystems will help create between 4,700 and 5,000 new direct jobs with high added value, generate an added value and an additional trade surplus of respectively about 4.2 and 7.8 billion dirhams and to increase the

direct turnover of the sector of about 11.1 billion dirhams.

The pharmaceutical industry ecosystems are called upon to strengthen their many assets and to address the limitations that are still preventing their full expansion, namely their strong dependence on imports, the limited size of the local market, the underutilisation of the medication production capacity (only 50% of capacity is currently used), and the fragmentation of the industrial fabric for medical devices, primarily focused on low added value consumables.

The medicine ecosystem, which includes 4 distinct activities (clinical trials, active ingredients and packaging, manufacturing for local markets and export, bio-similar medicines, medical devices), is setting goals capable of ensuring sustainable and constant growth in the sector, namely:

- Positioning Morocco as a strong destination for international clinical trials.
- Strengthening the Moroccan medicine in the local market and create opportunities for export.
- Positioning Morocco on niche production for active ingredients and packaging.
- Enabling Morocco to enter the bio-similar technology market.

Regarding the sector "Medical Devices", which presents vast opportunities and a major development potential (over 7% and 11% a year of potential growth for Moroccan and African markets respectively in 2020; large local market, ranging from textiles to electronics consumables; international offshoring trend...),

the implementation of an ecosystem will essentially encourage the emergence of local consumables manufacturers for the domestic market and export, as well as a better positioning of Morocco as an offshoring platform for the production of devices and electronic equipment.

With the launching of the pharmaceutical industry ecosystems, Morocco is set to play a central role of expertise and reference in the region regarding the production of medicines and health supplies.

Accompanying measures projected for the sector, as part of the concluded performance contracts are:

- The implementation of a canvassing plan for FDI's: International CRO's, research centres and international universities, equipment manufacturers and electronic equipment.
- The implementation of targeted regulatory measures: enforcement decrees of the law on clinical trials, sites certification, guarantee of patents' protection, decrees relating to bio-similar medicine and medical devices...
- The introduction of measures that will encourage local integration: export licenses for vegetal resources not valued locally;
- Access to land through the provision of 8 hectares of land, at competitive prices.
- Implementation of a training scheme covering 100% to the ecosystems' needs: 4700 to 5000 profiles.
- Introduction of the national preference clause in public calls for tenders.

Agribusiness: The Green Moroccan Plan

The Green Morocco Plan aims to double agricultural production by 2020

The IAA sector is a valuation factor and regulation of agricultural and fisheries production. It holds an important place in the industrial sector through its participation in the improvement of the trade balance and job creation.

In figures, this sector includes more than 2,000 companies and employs nearly 141,000 people, about 25% of industrial employment. It realized, in 2013, a production of 107 Billion DHS, 27% of total industrial production and export value of about 20 Billion DHS (figures from the Exchange Office).

The production sector has increased significantly over the last decade from 60 DHS billion in 2002 to 107 Billion DHS in 2013, an average annual growth rate of 5%.

❖ Sector Development Strategy:

Recognizing the importance of the IAA sector, the State has undertaken in close collaboration with private operators, several measures aimed at the

development of the sector and improve its competitiveness, in particular through the establishment of a network of six agropoles in major farming areas and targeted support for intermediary channels (biscuits, chocolate and confectionery).

The Green Morocco Plan (PMV) aims to double agricultural production by 2020 and to increase the share valued by the IAA, and this through a number of levers, including grants and subsidies under Agricultural Development Fund, aggregation, strengthening the inter. Similarly it is appropriate to mention the

signing between 2008 and 2014 from 20 channels programme contracts between the State and inter concerned.

The IAA sector continues to benefit from state support. Thus, and as part of the 2014-2020 Industrial Plan acceleration, a study was launched in partnership with the Department of Agriculture, which should lead to the conclusion of a programme contract between the Government and the profession. Said study aims to restructure the sector by functioning ecosystems to bring about a synergy between the food industry and the national agricultural upstream through better convergence of industrial strategy with the agricultural strategy. ■



Source: Ministry of Industry, Trade, Investment and Digital Economy



Textile: A Strategic Sector

❖ First employer in Morocco with more than 156.648 employees

The textile sector is of strategic importance as it largely contributes to the national industry aggregates (27% of jobs and 7% of the industrial added value).

Considering the context of the economic crisis hitting principal partners (notably Spain and France which account for nearly 60% of exports in the sector), the textile and leather sector has proven to be quite resilient.

With a view to attracting better profits from its potential and to assure a sustainable growth, the state has developed a comprehensive vision, integrating both the export and the domestic market, an objective pursued within the framework of Industrial Acceleration Plan 2014-2020.

Ongoing support will be especially drawn to the emergence of a competitive and innovative textile sector, able to draw more foreign direct investment, notably Chinese, and develop win-win partnerships.

❖ Ecosystems of The Sector

Ecosystems, the cornerstone of the Industrial Acceleration Plan 2014-2020, are designed to reduce sectoral fragmentation and to promote integrated development of industrial activities. The aim is to integrate the local industrial fabric around leading companies by encouraging mutually beneficial partnerships with SMEs, first by acting as catalyst and second by providing perspective and visibility, which in turn bring creativity, a sense of innovation and dynamism.

Appropriate and targeted support is provided to companies in the ecosystems regarding finance, industrial land and training.

The Industrial Development Fund (FDI), operational since 1 January 2015, allocates 3 billion dirhams per year for the period 2014-2120 to ecosystem companies to enable them to realize their ambitions in upgrading, development and internationalization.

State support is also backed up with integrated and competitive bank financing.

❖ Ecosystem companies can also:

- o access to quality industrial property, thanks to an innovative rental industrial parc concept;
- o employees benefit from proper training.

Three leather sector industries were structured in ecosystems on 11 February 2016:

- o Footwear;
- o Leather clothing and tanning;
- o Leather goods.

The growth targets that have been set for 2020 are:

- o The creation of 35,000 new permanent jobs;
- o Achievement of 5.5 billion dirhams of turnover from exports.

The structuring of these sectors in efficient ecosystems shall provide them with a new momentum for development and bring in tangible answers to the challenges and shortcomings their stakeholders are currently facing: gradual loss of competitiveness in both local and traditional markets, weak competitive advantage from upstream despite the availability of hides and



Textiles Ecosystem the Dynamic Investment Engages 29-03-2016

raw hides of good quality, threat of substitutes to leather, dominance of informal production in the domestic market.

The textile and clothing sector has benefited from the first three ecosystems on 24 February 2015 as per the Industrial Acceleration Plan 2014-2020. The sectors concerned are Denim, Fast Fashion, and the distributors of national brands. The creation of ecosystems in these sectors will encourage the development of an upstream competitive and innovative textile sector which is a prerequisite for better integration of the sector thus improving its responsiveness and providing better control of logistics costs for supplying clients.

These first 3 ecosystems alone will contribute by 2020 to the creation of 44,000 new jobs, which is 46% of the target set for all the textile ecosystems for 2020, generate additional revenue of 6.3 billion dirhams in the sector, and complete 57 investment projects supported by driving forces. In the wake of structuring these ecosystems, 46,000 further jobs will be created by satellite companies thus forging collaborations with other driving companies.

ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT

1. SUPPORT FOR THE SECTOR'S ECOSYSTEMS

Integrated and innovative support measures have been implemented to benefit the textile ecosystems:

Tailored financial support:

- o Investment incentives;
- o Incentive to conquer export markets;
- o Support for innovation and creativity.

An integrated and competitive banking offer:

An agreement was concluded between AMITH/Banque Populaire in June 2015 to develop innovative



financing solutions for the benefit of textile operators.

Targeted training strategy:

Deployment of training programmes tailored to the new needs of the sector.

Attractively priced rental property:

95 hectares of rental property reserved for the textile industry.

For leather ecosystems, the planned support perfectly fits the needs and expectations of operators and aims at :

- Support for material investment (property, construction, installations, machines, commercial networks for national brands...) and immaterial investment (creativity, innovation, design, technical assistance...), through the Industrial Development and Investment Fund (FDII). This support takes the form of direct aids, financing up to 30% of the overall tangible and intangible investment.
- Strengthening the Morocco offer through the Moroccan Investment Development Agency and Maroc Export.
- Upgrading the regulatory framework and the introduction of quality labels;
- Structuring the upstream sector;

- The deployment of best efforts for the integration of the informal sector (under-invoicing on imports, support for small business and self-entrepreneurs ...);
- The establishment of a training scheme, in partnership with training institutions, including OFPPT;
- Access to property at an attractive price (96,7 hectares reserved for the sector);
- Access to bank financing through the development of an integrated offer dedicated to investment and operating funding;
- Backing of the sector's SME's and self-entrepreneurs as part of the Government/ANPME (National Agency for the Promotion of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) agreement 2015-20120;
- Encouraging foreign clients, the customers of the ecosystem' of companies, to settle down and open sourcing offices in Morocco.

2. INVESTMENT PROMOTION FUND (FPI)

Under the Investment Charter, the FPI offers partial coverage by the Government of certain expenses related to the acquisition of property (up to 20% of the cost of land), external infrastructure (up to 5% of the total amount of the investment programme, or 10% in



the case of an investment in the sector of spinning, weaving or finishing) and vocational training (up to 20% of the cost of the training).

These contributions may be combined as long as the total contribution of the state does not exceed 5% of the total investment programme; or 10% in the case of investment in the sector of spinning, weaving or finishing; or when the investment project is located in a suburban or rural area.

Eligibility criteria:

The investment project must meet at least one of the following five criteria:

- Represent an amount of 200 million dirhams or more over a 3-year period;
- To be located in one of the provinces or prefectures mentioned in Decree No. 2-98-520 dated 5 Rabii I 1419 (30 June 1998);
- Create a minimum of 250 stable jobs over 3 years;
- Provide technology transfer;
- Contribute to the protection of the environment.

3. TAX INCENTIVES

Tax incentives are provided for by article 123-22°-a) of the General Tax Code and Article 7.1 of finance law No. 12-98 for the 1998/9 budget year as amended and supplemented by the following:

- The exemption from import duty on capital equipment, materials and tools necessary for the implementation of an investment project with a total cost greater than 200 million dirhams during 36 months after the signing of the investment agreement; this exemption is extended to parts, replacement parts and accessories imported at the same time as the aforementioned equipment;
- The exemption from VAT on imports of capital equipment, materials and tools necessary for the implementation of an investment project with a total

cost greater than 200 million dirhams until 36 months after the start of activity by the company or from the date of issuance of the building permit, and which may be extended by six months in the event of force majeure (renewable once); this exemption is extended to parts, replacement parts and accessories imported at the same time as the aforementioned equipment.

4. SUPPORT FOR SMES

1. SMEs in the sector may benefit from special support within the programmes developed by Ecosystems of the sector Maroc PME;

2. IMTIAZ CROISSANCE

3. ISTITMAR CROISSANCE

4. AUTO-ENTREPRENEUR

5. FREE ZONE STATUS

A free trade zone (ZFE) is a specified area of land devoted to export activities for industrial purposes and related service activities. Each free zone is created and delimited by a decree that determines the nature and business activities that can be established there.

The operational free trade zones are located at Tanger (Tanger Free Zone – TFZ and Tanger Automotive City – TAC), at Kenitra (Atlantic Free Zone – AFZ), at Casablanca (Midparc), at Rabat (Technopolis) and at Oujda (Technopole d'Oujda).

To obtain free zone status under law No. 19-94, companies must have obtained authorization from the local commission of the free export zone, which is presided over by the wali or governor of the region, and must make at least 70% of their turnover from exports.

Free zone status allows for

the exemption of foreign trade and exchange controls, as well as access to the following state aid:

Tax incentives resulting in:

- Exemption from income tax (IR) during the first 5 years, and then a reduction of 80% of tax on gross earned income during the following 20 years;
- Exemption from corporation tax (IS) for the first 5 years, and then a rate of 8.75% for the following 20 years;
- Exemption from professional tax for the first 15 years;
- Exemption from urban tax for the first 15 years;
- Exemption from participation in national solidarity;
- Exemption from tax on income from corporate rights, dividends and similar income for non-residents and a reduction in tax to 7.5% for residents;

Customs benefits:

- Exemption from import duties, and simplified customs procedures;
- Unlimited exemption from value added tax in respect of products delivered and services supplied to the free export zones and from the subjected territory;

Administrative facilitations:

- Exemption from registration fees and stamp duty on instruments of incorporation or increases in the capital of the company, as well as on land acquisitions;
- The establishment of a one-stop service to the investor.

TRAINING

The training of human resources is a strategic activity of the Industrial Acceleration Plan 2014-2020. The availability and quality of human resources determine the attractiveness of Morocco as a destination, and increase the productivity and competitiveness of the companies.

Amongst other things the strategy aims at providing the ecosystems in place with skilled profiles.





The detailed mapping of training needs - with a quantification of the human resource requirements by sector, profile, region and year - and the identification of training opportunities available in Morocco are ongoing, which will enable the development of a national training plan.

As for textiles and leather, a training scheme for fashion design aimed at the international market is provided by the Casa Moda Academy (CMA) at Sidi Maarouf in Casablanca, the first public higher education establishment of fashion design in Morocco.

Details of the CMA:

- Types of training: initial and continuing;
- Method of governance: public-private partnership (delegated management);
- Capacity: 90 places;
- Starting date: October 2010.

RECEPTION INFRASTRUCTURE

In the framework of the Industrial Acceleration Plan, the Ministry plans for the mobilization of 1,000 hectares to create Integrated Industrial Rental Parks (PIL) with turnkey premises: each park will include a one stop shop for administration, a local job pool, ad hoc services and a training programme.

In parallel, general and sectoral Integrated Industrial Platforms (P2I), possibly benefiting from the free zone status, guarantee the availability of property at an attractive price, comprehensive and diverse real-estate and logistics options conforming to the best international standards, as well as on-site services and a one stop shop for administration.

The structuring of these sectors in efficient ecosystems shall provide them with a new momentum for development and bring in tangible answers to the challenges and

shortcomings their stakeholders are currently facing: gradual loss of competitiveness in both local and traditional markets, weak competitive advantage from upstream despite the availability of hides and raw hides of good quality, threat of substitutes to leather, dominance of informal production in the domestic market.

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in the sector, and complete 57 investment projects supported by driving forces. In the wake of structuring these ecosystems, 46,000 further jobs will be created by satellite companies thus forging collaborations with other driving companies. Appropriate and targeted support is provided to companies in the ecosystems regarding finance, industrial land and training. It covers:

- Emergence of national locomotives as part of functioning ecosystems (supporting innovation, mobilization of expertise, ...);



national brands. The creation of ecosystems in these sectors will encourage the development of an upstream competitive and innovative textile sector which is a prerequisite for better integration of the sector thus improving its responsiveness and providing better control of logistics costs for supplying clients.

These first 3 ecosystems alone will contribute by 2020 to the creation of 44,000 new jobs, which is 46% of the target set for all the textile ecosystems for 2020, generate additional revenue of 6.3 billion dirhams

- Promotion of investment (installation offers and production capacity extension);
- Improving competitiveness;
- conquer new export markets ;
- Access to property at affordable prices;
- Access to bank financing through the development of an integrated offer dedicated to funding of investment and operations;
- Integration of the informal sector;
- the training of specialized profiles that meet the needs of the sector.

Source: Ministry of Industry, Trade,
Investment and Digital Economy





Chronology of the Visits of HM King Mohammed VI and Moroccan Personalities to India Since the Enthronement of HM King Mohammed VI

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| February 21st-24th, 2000 | -Visit to India of Prime Minister Abderrahmane Youssoufi as the head of a large delegation of members of the government, parliamentarians and economic operators, upon invitation of his Indian counterpart Atal Bihari Vajpayee. |
| February 12th, 2001 | -Visit to India of a delegation led by Miloud Loukili, Director of the Higher Institute for Maritime Studies "ISEM". |
| | During the visit, the delegation discussed with Indian officials cooperation opportunities between the two countries' maritime training institutions and reached a twinning agreement between the INSEM and Indian maritime training institutions including the Maritime Academy of Mumbai. |
| February 15th-20th, 2001 | -Visit to Bombay of The Moroccan Royal Navy Warship "Lieutenant Colonel Arrahmani" to take part in the Indian Navy Parade held on the occasion of the 50th Republic Day. |
| February 26th-28th, 2001 | -Official visit to India of HM King Mohammed VI at the invitation of the President of the Republic of India, K.R. Narayanan, which was marked by an official welcoming ceremony in honor of HM the King at the Presidential Palace. |
| | During His visit, HM King Mohammed VI and the Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee chaired at Hyderabad House, seat of the Indian Prime ministry, the signing ceremony of four cooperation agreements between Morocco and India. |
| February 26th-March 1st, 2001 | -Visit to India of a large delegation of Moroccan businessmen led by Hassan Chami, President of CGEM, Morocco's Employers Association. |
| April 15th -22nd, 2002 | -Visit to New Delhi of Minister of Education, Abdellah Saaf, as part of a series of meetings with Indian officials in education and information technology. |
| January 24th, 2003 | -Visit to New Delhi of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Abdelouahed Radi to take part in the International Parliamentary Conference. |
| January 9th, 2004 | Visit to New Delhi of Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign, Rachad Bouhlal, who led the Moroccan delegation to the second session of the Indo-Moroccan political consultations. |
| December 6th-9th, 2004 | -Official visit to India of Prime Minister Driss Jettou, as the head of a large ministerial delegation. The visit was marked by talks with the new Indian government and major economic operators in the country. |
| June 25th-26th, 2006 | - Working visit to India of Foreign Minister, Mohamed Benaissa, who held talks with Indian officials, including Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed. |
| | During his visit, Mr. Benaissa chaired at the Hyderabad House in New Delhi the works of the third session of political consultations between Morocco and India. |
| November 1st-3rd, 2006 | -Visit to New Delhi of Minister of Economic and General Affairs, Rachid Talbi Alami, who led a delegation to meet Indian officials and businessmen in preparation for the participation of the country in the 4th International Conference on "the Fundamentals of Investment," scheduled for December in Rabat. |
| November 27th – 30th, 2006 | -Official visit to India by a delegation of the two Houses of the Parliament, led by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Abdelouahed Radi, at the invitation of the Speaker of the Indian National Assembly. |
| December 3rd, 2006 | -Visit to New Delhi of a delegation of the Office Cherifien des Phosphates (OCP), led by its Chairman Mostafa Terrab to participate in the Annual Conference of the "Fertilizer Association of India" (ISP) and to sign an agreement with the new Indian partner. |
| December 29th, 2006 | -Visit to New Delhi of the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Omar Hilal who had talks with officials of the Indian Foreign Office in Delhi, India. |





| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| January 29th -30th, 2007 | -Visit to New Delhi of the Minister in charge of the Moroccan community living abroad, Nouzha Chekrouni, to take part in the International Conference commemorating the centenary of the "Satyagraha," marking the launch by Mahatma Gandhi of the non-violent political action in India. |
| January 9th, 2009 | -Visit to New Delhi of the Director of the National School for Agriculture (ENA), Mohamed Boulif, to sign a cooperation agreement with the African-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO) on the sidelines of its 16th General Assembly. |
| February 9th, 2010 | -Visit to New Delhi of Secretary General of the Ministry of Mining and Energy, Mohamed Yahya Zniber, who had talks with Indian officials in the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy. |
| February 14th-15th, 2010 | -Visit to New Delhi of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Mohamed Ouzzine, during a tour which took him to Malaysia and Thailand. |
| January 24th-25th, 2011 | -Visit to India of the Minister of Industry, Trade and New Technologies, Ahmed Reda Chami, the Director General of the Office Chérifien des Phosphates (OCP), Mustapha Terrab and officials of the Moroccan Investment Development Agency (AMDI) and Maroc Export to take part in the 17th edition of the Partnership Summit in Mumbai. |
| April 6th-7th, 2011 | -Official visit to India of Moroccan Foreign Minister, Taib Fassi Fihri. |
| | During his visit, the minister held talks with his Indian counterpart Samanahalli Mallaiah Krishna on many issues of common interest and met with the Vice-Speaker of the Indian Senate, Rahman Khan. |
| April 27th-30th, 2011 | -Working Visit to India of Minister of External Trade, Abdellatif Maâzouz, who led a large delegation representing the public and private sectors to discuss the prospects of strengthening bilateral relations. |
| | During his visit, Mr. Maazouz chaired the works of the 4th India-Morocco Joint Economic Commission in New Delhi. |
| December 7th, 2011 | -Visit to New Delhi of a delegation of the Office Chérifien des Phosphates (OCP) to participate in the annual Assembly of the Indian Fertilizers Association. |
| April 2nd, 2012 | -Working visit to India of the Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry, Nasser Bourita. The visit comes within the framework of the relations and political consultations between the two countries' Foreign Ministries. |
| March 18th-19th, 2013 | -Visit to India of Moroccan MPs as part of a programme initiated in favor of a group of young MPs from Africa by the Indian Foreign Ministry. |
| April 17th, 2013 | -Visit to India of executives of seven Arab parliaments, including Morocco to attend a seminar in New Delhi on the initiative of the Lower House of the Indian Parliament. |
| May 30th, 2013 | -Visit to India of the Minister of Industry, Trade and New Technologies, Abdelkader Amara, to launch in Mumbai, a campaign for Indian entrepreneurs and industry operators so that they seize investment opportunities offered by Morocco. |
| October 23rd, 2015 | - Minister for Exterior Trade, Mohammed Abbou takes part in New Delhi in the fourth preparatory meeting of African Trade ministers with their Indian counterpart for the third India-Africa Summit. |
| October 26th, 2015 | -Chairwoman of the CGEM, Morocco's Employer Association, Miriem Bensaleh Chaqroun, visits India as part of the third Summit of the India-Africa Forum (2015). |
| | During this visit, CGEM and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry signed a Memorandum of Understanding in New Delhi. |
| October 27th, 2015 | -Foreign Minister, Salaheddine Mezouar participates in New Delhi in the Foreign Affairs Ministers' meeting of the Summit of the India-Africa Forum (2015). |
| October 29th, 2015 | - HM King Mohammed VI attends the Third Summit of the India-Africa Forum (2015) in New Delhi at the level of Heads of State and Government. |
| | The Royal visit to India was marked by a speech delivered by HM King Mohammed VI and by talks with the Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi. |
| January 20th, 2016 | - Minister of Energy, Mining, Water and Environment, Abdelkader Amara holds talks in New Delhi with Indian Minister for Oil and Natural Gas, Dharmendra Pradhan on means to explore new opportunities for bilateral cooperation. |
| January 21st, 2016 | - Executive Director of the National Office of Hydrocarbons and Mining (ONHYM), Amina Benkhadra highlights in New Delhi, the potential of sedimentary basins in Morocco during a meeting held on the sidelines of the 4th "India-Africa" Conference on hydrocarbons. |
| April 14th-16th, 2016 | -Morocco is represented in Mumbai at the 1st e"Maritime India Summit 2016" by a delegation led by the Minister Delegate to the Minister of Equipment, Transport and Logistics, in charge of Transport, Mohamed Najib Boulif. |
| April 24th-May 2nd, 2016 | -A Moroccan economic mission led by the President of the Moroccan Institute of International Relations (IMRI), Jawad Kerdoudi, visited India to explore investment and cooperation opportunities with Indian businessmen. |





Chronology of Visits to Morocco by Indian Delegations since the Enthronement of HM King Mohammed VI

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| September 2nd, 1999 | -Visit to Morocco of an Indian delegation consisting of the Director General of the Indian organization "Projects and Equipment Corporation LTD" and a representative of the company Fenner India LTD. |
| January, 2001 | -Visit to Morocco of a delegation of the Indian national oil and natural gas company ONGC that was received by the Director General of the National Office for Research and Petroleum Explorations (ONAREP), Amina Benkhadra. |
| June 24th-27th, 2001 | -Visit to Morocco of a delegation of Indian businessmen representing several major Indian companies to explore partnership and trade exchange opportunities. |
| November 1st, 2001 | -Visit to Morocco of an Indian delegation led by the General Secretary of the Indian Foreign Ministry, who had talks with Moroccan counterpart, Mohamed Benaïssa, on several bilateral and international issues. |
| January 23rd-25th, 2002 | -Visit to Morocco of Indian Minister of State for Trade and Industry, Mr. Rajiv Pratap Rudy, who led a delegation to take part in the works of the 3rd session of the Moroccan-Indian Joint Committee. |
| January 28, 2002 | -Visit to Morocco of an Indian parliamentary delegation led by the spokesman of the Bharatiya Janata Party and the president of its group in Parliament. |
| May 20th, 2005 | -Visit to Morocco of Indian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Ahmed Edappakath. |
| | During his visit, the Indian official had talks with his Moroccan counterpart and met with Foreign Minister, Mohamed Benaïssa, in order to boost political, economic and social cooperation and reinvigorate the partnership established between two countries during the historic visit of HM King Mohammed VI to Delhi on February 2002. |
| June 23rd, 2005 | -Visit to Morocco of Indian Government's Special Envoy, Sayed Shahbuddin who held talks with Foreign Minister, Mohamed Benaïssa, on the UN reform process. |
| September 7th-11th, 2005 | Visit to Marrakech of a delegation representing the International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) to study the possibilities of organizing an award ceremony to honour Indian film personalities in Morocco's Ochré City. |
| January 13th, 2006 | -Visit to Morocco of the Indian Union Minister of State in charge of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Ms. Selja Kumari, as part of the signing of a cooperation agreement in the area of social housing between Morocco and India. |
| January 24th, 2006 | -Visit to Morocco of the chairman of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), a subsidiary of Indian group Tata, who held talks with Prime Minister Driss Jettou on investment opportunities in Morocco. |
| December 8th, 2006 | -Visit to Morocco of Indian State Minister in charge of Industry, Ashwani Kumar, who held talks with Foreign Minister, Taib Fassi Fihri on developing cooperation prospects between the two countries. |





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| February, 2007 | -Visit to Morocco of Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed, who had a series of talks with Moroccan officials on means to strengthen economic cooperation between the two countries. |
| May 24th, 2007 | Visit to Morocco of Indian State Minister in charge of Industry, Ashwani Kumar, who held talks with Moroccan Foreign Minister, Taieb Fassi Fihri, on means to further strengthen bilateral cooperation. |
| March 26th, 2008 | -Visit to Morocco of Ram Vilas Paswan, Indian Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers. |
| | During his visit, Mr. Paswan held talks with Moroccan officials on economic exchange between the two countries, particularly in the area of phosphates. |
| July 23rd, 2008 | -Visit to Morocco of a Special Envoy of Indian Prime Minister, C.R. Gharekhan, who held talks with Moroccan officials on ways of strengthening relations between Morocco and India. |
| March 10th-13th, 2009 | -Visit to Morocco of a delegation of Indian plastics industry professionals to explore investment opportunities in the Kingdom. |
| October 7th-8th, 2010 | -Working visit to Morocco of an Indian business delegation to explore investment and partnership opportunities offered by the Kingdom. |
| July-August, 2010 | -Visit to Morocco of an Indian trade mission to explore investment and partnership opportunities offered by the Kingdom. |
| May 14th-19th, 2012 | -Visit to Morocco of an Indian military delegation led by Air Marshal PK Roy VM VSM, Commander of the Indian National Defense College, who held talks with General of Army Staff Abdelaziz Bennani on cooperation bilateral military. |
| June 14th-17th, 2012 | - Official visit to Morocco of India's Minister of State for External Affairs Shri E. Ahamed. During his visit, the Indian minister held talks with several Moroccan officials on strengthening bilateral cooperation relations. |
| January 29th, 2014 | -Working visit to Morocco of Indian Foreign Minister, Salman Khurshid, for an exchange of views on issues of common interest at the bilateral, regional and international levels. |
| | During his visit, the Indian minister was received in Marrakech by HM King Mohammed VI and had a series of talks with several Moroccan officials on future prospects and means to include a new strategic dimension to bilateral relations, particularly in the area of preserving security and stability, Economy and development. |
| March 31st, 2014 | -Visit to Morocco of Indian expert in geostrategic issues and international security, Chitrapu Uday Bhaskar. |
| December 10th, 2014 | -Visit to Morocco of Secretary of India's Foreign ministry Shri Anil Wadhwa to take part in the third session of the Moroccan-Indian political consultations. |
| July 6th, 2015 | -Visit to Morocco of Sanjeev Kumar Balyan, Special envoy of the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This visit is part of preparations for the India-Africa Summit to be held on October 26th through 30th in New Delhi. |
| March 2016 | - The House of Elects of the Marrakech-Safi region hosts the director of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), Rajeev Bhargava, to learn about the democratic experience of the Asian country. |
| | The meeting held under the theme "The Democratic Experience of India" is part of study sessions and scientific meetings organized by the House in collaboration with the German Konrad Adenauer institution. |
| May 30th-June 1st, 2016 | - Official visit to Morocco of India's Vice President, Mohammad Hamid Ansari, who led a large delegation of government officials and parliamentarians. |
| | During his stay the Indian VP was received by HM King Mohammed VI and by several government officials. |





Agreements Signed between Morocco and India since the Enthronement of HM King Mohammed VI

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| February 2000 | -Signing of an Agreement protocol between Morocco's Employers' Association (CGEM) and the Indian Confederation of industries. |
| February 23rd, 2000 | - Signing In New Delhi of four cooperation agreements between Morocco and India, covering agriculture, communications, transport and the establishment of a joint Council on business to strengthen bilateral trade. |
| February 24th, 2000 | -Signing in New Delhi of an important agreement between Morocco and the "Oberoi Hotels" chain to carry out a tourism project with an investment of around 100 million dollars. |
| February 27th, 2001 | -Signing in Heydarabad Palace, seat of Indian Prime Ministry, of four cooperation agreements between Morocco and India in the presence of HM King Mohammed VI and Indian Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee. |
| January 25th, 2002 | -Signing in Rabat of a Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation in the industrial field by the Office of Industrial Development (ODI) and its Indian counterpart as part of the 3rd session of the High Joint Committee. |
| January 9th, 2004 | -Signing in New Delhi of a Memorandum of Understanding and cooperation in the field of training and development of officials of Moroccan and Indian Foreign Ministries. |
| December 7th, 2004 | -Signing in New Delhi of three cooperation agreements in the areas of agriculture, air transport and Energy by Morocco and India. |
| March 23rd, 2005 | -Signing in New Delhi of an agreement for the entry of Indian company "Tata Chemicals Ltd" (TCL) as an equal partner in a Moroccan-Indian venture dubbed "Indo-MarocPhosphore S.A. (IMACID) by the two companies' Board of Directors. |
| January 13th, 2006 | -Signing in Rabat of a cooperation agreement in the area of affordable social housing between Morocco and India. |
| | This agreement aimed to promote a scientific and technical training programme, develop Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and intervention methods to fight against poor housing. |





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| December 3rd, 2006 | -Signing in New Delhi of an agreement between the Office Cherifien des Phosphates (OCP) and "Fertilizer Association of India" (ISPs) on the sidelines of its annual conference. |
| September 15th, 2008 | -Signing in Casablanca of an agreement between the "El Alami Holding", a Moroccan private group operating in the area of real estate, and Indian Group "Oberoi Hotels and Resorts" for the development and management of a luxury resort in Marrakech for a total investment of 600 million dirhams. |
| February 1st, 2014 | -Signing in Marrakech of two cooperation agreements in the area of environment and sea fisheries between Morocco and India. |
| | Both agreements concern sharing expertise and information between the two countries in the areas of environment and sea fisheries and will be followed in the future by "new generation" agreements. |
| December 10th, 2014 | -Signing in Rabat of a memorandum of understanding to set up in Morocco a Center of Excellence in Information Technology (CETI) between the Minister of Industry, Trade, the and investment in the digital economy, Moulay Hafid Elalamy and the Secretary to the Ministry of external Affairs of India, Shri Anil Wadhwa. |
| October 26th, 2015 | - Morocco's Employers' Association (CGEM) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) signed in New Delhi, a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen trade relations between the two countries. |
| October 27th, 2015 | -Moroccan Export Promotion Centre "Morocco Export" signs in New Delhi, two Memoranda of Understanding with Chamber of Industry and Commerce and the Federation of Indian Export Organisations. |
| October 28th, 2015 | -The Moroccan Association of Exporters (ASMEX) and the Indian Association of Importers, which counts more than 200,000 importers in several Asian countries in the region, signed in New Delhi, a Memorandum of Understanding for the strengthening of trade relations and investment between the two countries. |
| October 30th, 2015 | -Attijariwafabank and ICICI Bank Limited, India's leading private bank, sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the establishment of a wider cooperation framework between the two groups in preparation for economic meetings in New Delhi on the occasion of the 3rd India-Africa Summit and on the sidelines of the financial conference Sibos 2015. |
| November 17th, 2015 | -Signing in New Delhi of an Agreement between India and Morocco on the exemption of visas for holders of diplomatic and service passports in both countries. |
| May 31st, 2016 | -Signing in Rabat of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Moroccan Academy of Diplomatic Studies (AMED) and the Indian Foreign Service Institute and a cultural exchange programme (2016-2019) to boost cooperation between the two countries in the diplomatic and cultural fields. |





The Foum El Oued Technopole - Laâyoune

OCP Subsidiary Phosboucraa Foundation Working on Growth of the Southern Regions of Morocco

With an investment of nearly US\$ 205million, Phosboucraa, a subsidiary of OCP Group, together with the Phosboucraa Foundation have launched a large-scale project, the Technopole Foum El Oued.

The Technopole is located in Foum El Oued, 18 km from Laayoune city and unfolds on the Atlantic coast, on nearly 126 ha between ocean and desert.

The Technopole will be devoted to support the Southern Regions¹, especially the industrial development of Phosboucraa through training, skills development, and supporting the creation of local and regional businesses.

The Foum El Oued Technopole - Laayoune will offer many benefits, particularly in terms of job creation and investment. It should mobilize nearly 1,800,000

man-days during the construction phase and is expected to create 1200 permanent jobs by 2022.

The approach for designing the technopole was to put the human at the heart of the project, by adopting a participatory approach in consultation, training and support, and in the improvement of local productivity since the project's planning phase.

Besides, the environment and natural heritage have been valorized through the integration of ecosystems and their specificities, and turning them into major assets for the project design.

¹Guelmim-Oued Noun, La youne-Sakia El Hamra, Dakhla-Oued Ed Dahab

Moreover, it is also aiming to be a sustainable hub (the integration of innovative systems for the recycling of waste water, the recycling of organic waste into usable energy), a smart territory at the forefront of digital urban innovation as well as an open-air "green museum" by the design of architectural landmarks.

The Fom El Oued Technopole - Laayoune will accommodate three major centers:

1. A teaching and research pole around themes related to the Saharan environment. R & D will focus on four main areas:

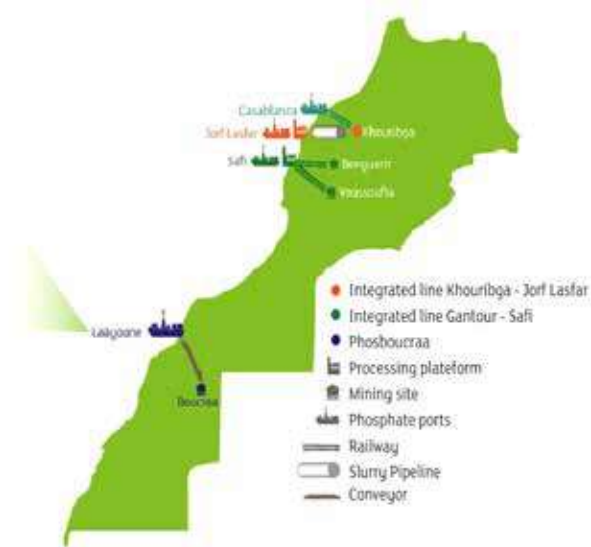
- Agriculture: Saharan agriculture; Biosaline agriculture; water nutrient and energy efficiency, in agriculture; Animal Health (camels);
- Water: recycling for irrigation, watering and industrial processes; new wastewater treatment technologies, saline waters; desalinization;
- Energy: renewable energy; natural resources valorisation: solar, wind, marine, hydro; energetic efficiency;
- Eco-construction: Research for the enhancement of eco-construction concepts and techniques in the Saharan context.

2. A regional economic development support pole (business incubator, business center ...)

3. A cultural pole (museum, retail and crafts village, ...)

Those poles are complemented with social infrastructures (health, hospitality, sports and recreation, village Gherj El khil) and environmental infrastructures (coastal preservation of Fom El Oued).

Like all OCP Group urban development projects, the Technopole Fom El Oued - Laayoune is designed according



OCP MAP Focus on Laayoune

to international environmental standards.

A teaching and research center to develop capacities and share expertise and know-how

• Mohammed VI Polytechnic University, Laayoune, A RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTER

The Mohammed VI polytechnic University of Laayoune will be dedicated to research, innovation and training in the fields of science and technology related to arid and Saharian areas. In addition, the University innovative design favors sustainability especially in terms of water recycling and conservation, waste treatment and renewable energy. Thus, the University will produce a part of the energy consumed.

• Highschool of Excellence

The Technopole Fom El Oued will also feature a Highschool of Excellence, providing a high quality education, which will stand as a process of training, exchange and maturation, where the most deserving students will be stimulated with scholarships.

• Industrial skills center of Laayoune

Also, an Industrial skills center will be launched. It will meet several objectives as supporting the development of new industrial units of Phosboucraa, innovation initiatives, industrial and technological developments of Phosboucraa, its ecosystem and also the OCP Group's African partners.

Together, The Industrial Skills Centre and the School of Excellence with a research-based curriculum, and extracurricular activities, the "knowledge city" strives to provide students with a well-diversified environment to allow them to effectively contribute to the development of the regions while preserving the environment and coastal areas.

This large scale project reflects the Phosboucraa Foundation's will to support sustainable development of the southern regions and the well-being of local people/communities. The Fom El Oued Technopole - Laayoune will offer many benefits, particularly in terms of job creation and investment. It should mobilize nearly 1,800,000 man-days during the construction phase



and is expected to create 1200 permanent jobs by 2022.

ABOUT PHOSBOUCRAA FOUNDATION

Phosboucraa Foundation was created in May 2014. Headquartered in Laayoune, its mission is to carry out OCP Group's social and societal commitment in the region. The Foundation also strives to support the social and economic development led by Phosboucraa (OCP Group's fully owned affiliate), in the

- Environmental protection;
- Conservation and promotion of culture and sports;
- Revitalization of the territory and improvement of its economic and tourist attractiveness.

To ensure its long term success, Phosboucraa Foundation has adopted an integrated approach that combines partnerships with several stakeholders. It also mobilizes all the expertise needed for the implementation of each project that it carries out.

Phosboucraa is a fully owned subsidiary of OCP. Phosboucraa develops Boucra mine whose reserves are estimated at less than 2% of national reserves, with a total production capacity of 3 million tons per year.

The nature of Boucra deposit and the difficult geography of the site of implantation involve a cost of extraction which is 2.5 times higher than in OCP's other mines throughout Morocco.

Thanks to the rigor and perseverance of OCP Group, it is for these reasons that this mine has begun to be profitable in 2008.

Indeed, OCP has invested significantly to improve operational efficiency and competitiveness of Phosboucraa, to upgrade its assets and to enhance the mine's sustainability and its associated infrastructure. Today, these investments continue and take a new dimension in the context of industrial processing programme 2008-2025.

Thus, OCP Group has retained a large part of its investment in the development of Phosboucraa activities to ensure sustainability in the long-term reserves Boucra, diversify its product portfolio and to actively contribute to socio-economic development of regions from South.

This strategy is part of the vision of the Group which is to invest in regional development projects in collaboration with local stakeholders, encourage collaboration with local suppliers, and implement structuring projects for OCP activity pools.

Today Phosboucraa employs nearly 2,300 employees mainly in the region, making it the largest private employer in the local level and a major contributor to the economic and social infrastructure. ■



Perspective View of The Technopole

Southern Regions. Its mission is to implement human development actions for the benefit of the local population.

The Foundation focuses on five main areas:

- Social Development and youth support (promoting education for all, access to health and improvement of living conditions of the most vulnerable populations);
- Agricultural development;

ABOUT PHOSBOUCRAA

Phosboucraa is a subsidiary fully owned by OCP S.A. since 2002.

Phosboucraa was founded in 1962 by the Spanish National Institute of Industry (Institute Nacional de Industrial (INI)). In 1976, OCP has bought a 65% stake in Phosboucraa.

The joint venture OCP-INI continued until 2002 when OCP acquired the remaining 35% stake in Phosboucraa. Thus, since 2002,



My Visit to Morocco

By Harun Riaz

Finally, visited Morocco. Should've done it earlier as my journalistic writing about the Kingdom began sometime in 2006. But better late than never. Atmosphere on both sides been euphoric because of the desire to forge "strategic ties". Rabat is pushing, so too New Delhi. HM King Mohammed VI, was the first Head of State to reach India for the 3rd India-Africa Summit and the last to leave, followed by scholarly Vice President Hamid Ansari who toured Rabat and impressed his hosts with his knowledge.

Hence, my media trip got the boost in the month of July, got appointments with dignitaries I needed to meet and everything else fell in place. Four day stay in Hotel Tour Al Hassan is worth remembering for its location, Moroccan architecture, cleanliness and quiet neighbourhood of Rabat, the capital city. There is not a corner or space in the huge hotel without the beautiful sitting arrangement. Reflects rich Mediterranean culture.

Will remember Morocco, for being an amalgamation of Arabic, African and European mix society. There are hardly any Indians in Rabat, but I could feel at ease and at home. A senior diplomat from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs looked after the entire trip, made job easy to interview key Ministers of the Government. Made arrangements to frequently visit the coastal city and commercial hub Casablanca.

I sneaked in and found time to visit the old handicraft market in Rabat called old medina, also offered evening prayers at historic Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca. Was pleasantly surprised to see a separate entry and enclosure for women in this beautiful Mosque.



The fast growing development project in Rabat's coastal area as visited by editor Harun Riaz



The beautiful entrance to an ancient house in Kasba in Rabat

An indication towards equality in Islam. In fact, this has been a prevalent practise in Morocco since the 8th Century when Islam spread in the country.

I will also remember my visit to the headquarter of the OCP Group and meeting the all women team barring the Vice President, whom I have interviewed in the magazine. He was kind enough to treat us for Mediterranean lunch.

There is absolutely no doubt that Morocco is waiting for India with open arms. Endless doors of opportunities are there to open. The Official News Agency MAP, OCP Policy Centre, the Royal Library, the Institute of African Studies, the Ministry of Tourism, these are some of the institutions I could visit and interact. Countless others are there to explore.

The coming global event COP22 in Marrakech in November this year and the Morocco-India Joint Commission meeting in Rabat are next two events, which I am going to watch, and write about. ■



Morocco wants Ties with India to go beyond Food Security

Morocco wants its relations with India to expand beyond trade and supply of phosphates, a key ingredient for fertilizers of which it holds two-thirds of global reserves, to investment in services and manufacturing with a slew of tax sops.

"India is our top trading partner in Asia and the third largest globally. We have set an excellent example of South-South cooperation. These ties now must expand. There is a great scope for that as well," said Moroccan Ambassador to India Larbi Reffouh.

"There are already two major joint ventures between our two sides in the broad area of fertilizers. But scope exists in virtually every field -- from automotives and textiles to agro-processing and IT," Reffouh said.

Morocco, which shared bilateral trade worth US\$ 1.6 billion with India last year, accounts for some 60 percent of the country's phosphatic needs, a mineral primarily used in the manufacture of di-ammonium phosphate, an important plant nutrient.

"In many ways, Morocco is contributing to India's food security."

India's Aditya Birla Group and the Tatas have an equal joint venture with a state-run company of Morocco at Jorf Lasfar, some 150 km from Casablanca, to produce 430,000 tonnes of phosphoric acid, nearly all of which is exported to India.

This apart, Morocco has also invested in Paradeep Phosphates



Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco to India, H.E. Mr. Larbi Reffouh

for a unit in Orissa with a capacity of over 2 million tonnes per annum of phosphatic fertilisers. The Zuari Group and the Indian government also hold stakes in the company.

According to the Ambassador, Morocco, which has 70 pristine tourist destinations, also seeks investments from India in the hospitality sector, particularly for construction and maintenance of hotels.

He said help was at hand even for acquisition of land.

The Tata group already runs a luxury hotel in Marrakech, and hopes to open another in Casablanca by the end of this year.

The Ambassador explained that among the incentives given to foreign investors in

his country include freehold land ownership and financial support in acquisition of land for factories, modern infrastructure and liberal taxation and other norms.

Under Moroccan law, local and international investors are treated equally. Whatever incentives are available for national investors are also available for overseas investors.

Morocco is the largest recipient of foreign investment in North Africa. It received US\$ 18 billion between 2000 and 2009, according to the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The majority of it is in fertilizer and minerals.

India and Morocco have set up a Joint Commission to facilitate two-way investments and trade. "We are trying to schedule the joint commission sometimes in the last quarter of 2015" the ambassador said.

Reffouh said Morocco and India share a common vision in a host of both regional and multilateral forums, notably in the UN where the two nations are currently non-permanent members of the Security Council.

"We appreciate that India was among the very first countries to recognise Moroccan independence. It was also the first to establish diplomatic ties and open an embassy in our country," he said.

"Our ties, in fact, date back to the 14th century when our explorer Ibn Butata travelled to India." ■

Source: Indo-Asian News Service



On
the occasion of
Morocco National Day
and the 17th Anniversary of the
Enthronement of His Majesty Mohammed VI,
King of Morocco, we extend our hearty
congratulations to the King and his people.

Together, we will continue to strengthen our ties
for the mutual benefit of our nations.



Basant K. Chaudhary
Honorary Consul General
Kingdom of Morocco to Nepal

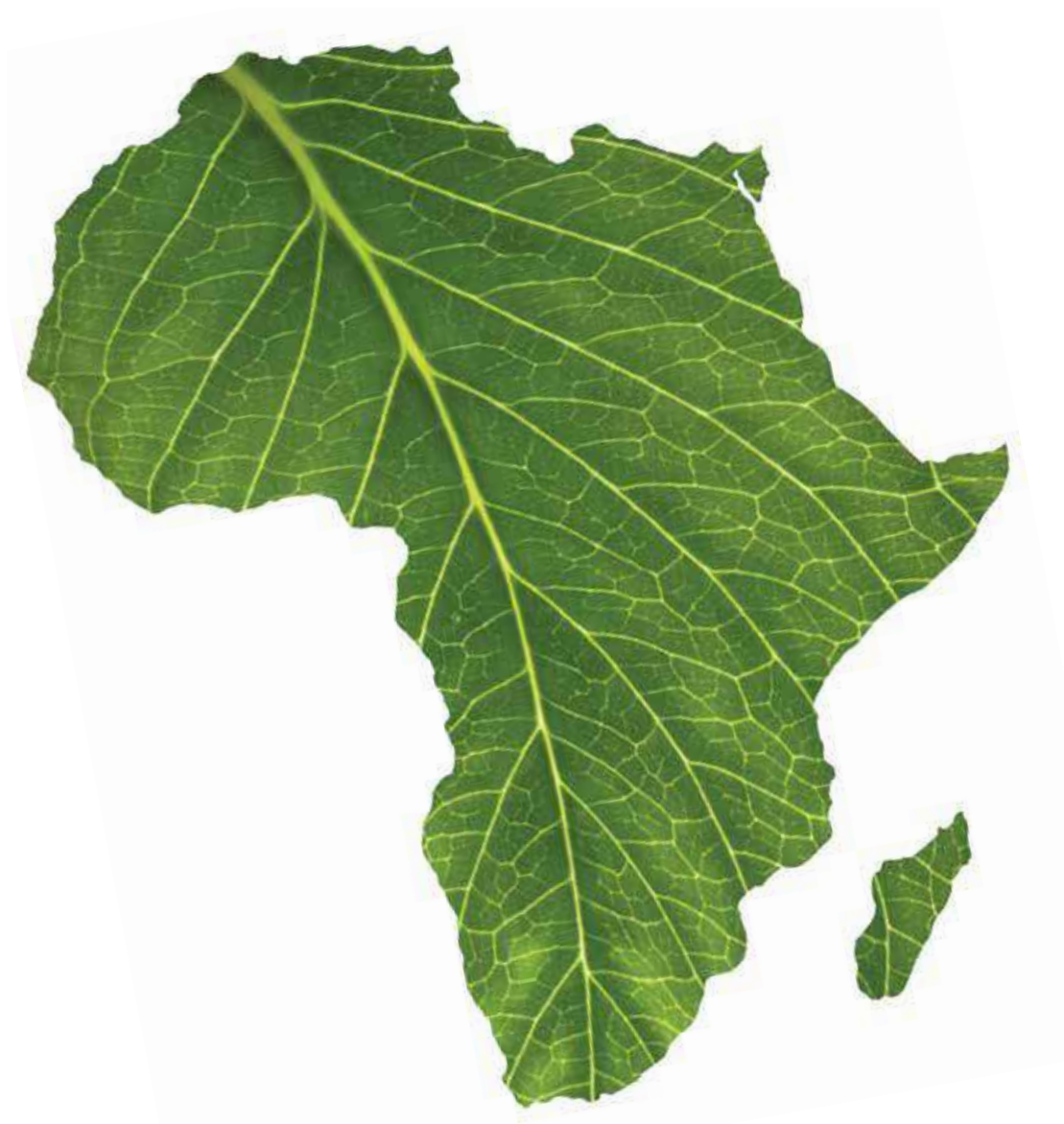
Chairman
BL Conglomerate (BLC)
Basant Chaudhary Foundation



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OCP helps to feed the world by providing essential nutrients for soil fertility and plant growth. With almost a century of experience, and global leadership in the phosphate market, we provide a diverse range of adapted fertilizers to enhance soils, increase agricultural yields, promote sustainability and help farmers across the globe become more productive and prosperous.

As a leader in Africa's agricultural development, OCP is strongly committed to improve the fertility and productivity of African soils, and to increase African farmers' access to affordable, appropriate fertilizer products and services needed to feed sustainably the world's growing population.

Headquartered in Morocco, OCP is proud to be firmly rooted in Africa, while serving more than 160 customers over 5 continents.



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