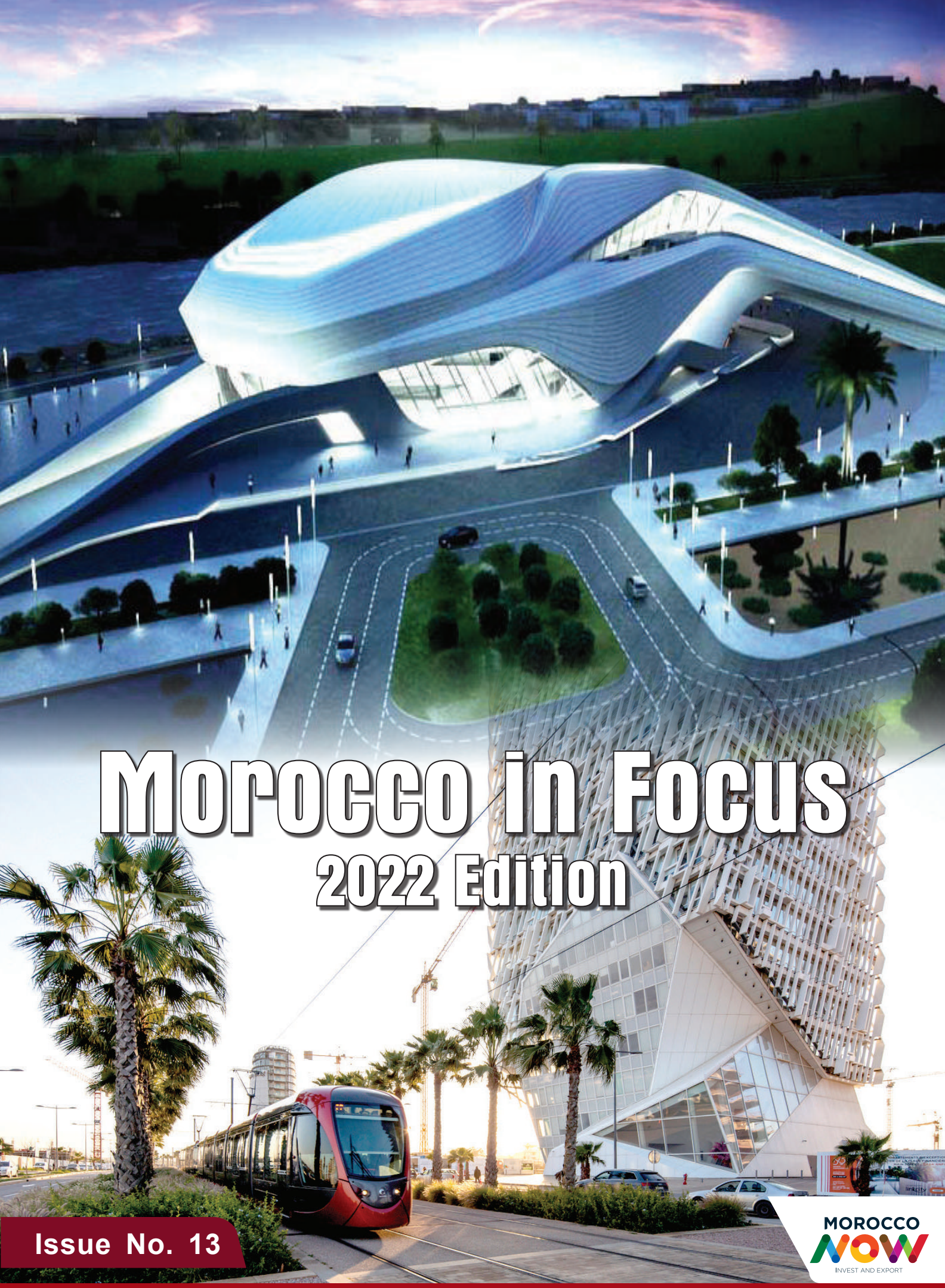

Morocco in Focus

2022 Edition

Issue No. 13

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INVEST AND EXPORT

A Special Edition of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in India

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Special Issue of Morocco in Focus 2022

Dear Readers,

The 13th edition of "Morocco In Focus" special magazine is a continuation of the Embassy's annual exercise to showcase the Kingdom of Morocco's different facets, mainly its business potential and investment opportunities. It also highlights the increasing Morocco-India engagements in various sectors of the economy. As the number of Indian companies present in Morocco has more than tripled in the past few years, we have focused on Indian businesses growing footprints in my country. This edition has also the particularity of sharing feature success stories and exclusive interviews with few of the Indian companies operating from the profitable land of Morocco.

Post the important India visit by His Majesty King Mohammed VI in 2015 and the subsequent announcement of building "strategic ties", the last seven years have registered impressive gains for Morocco-India ties. Despite Corona pandemic, lockdowns, economic downturn, both countries have continued to strengthen business, investment in sensitive sectors, exchange ideas and experiences, sign agreements, and receive high level delegations, resulting in Rabat and New Delhi becoming closer and reliable partners.

The current issue of the publication shed light and focus on the renewable energy push by Morocco and its emergence as a leading country for sustainable development worldwide. the Head of Government, H.E. Mr. Aziz Akhannouch has roped in Moroccan experts of repute, to join as serving Ministers, and speed up the process of sustainable development. Interview of Minister of Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development, Ms. Leila Benali provides important information about the all-important subject.

The publication also provides coverage to the June 2022 visit to India by Minister of Digital Transition and Administrative Reform, Dr. Ghita Mezzour. Coming from rich academic background and research helps her implement the Government policy in the IT sector, aiming to better the lives of the Moroccan citizens, to reinforce the country's leadership in Africa and to transform the North African stable Kingdom into a hub of digital outsourcing, cutting edge research and startups. The visiting Minister found time to share her views in an interview. It is to mention that India's IT major HCL has already been roped in to expedite the process of information technology revolution.

An effort has also been made to look into the potential of Morocco emerging as a biotech hub in the region and what role India can play in this critical sector. Morocco's Investment and Export Development Agency (AMDIE), like every year, has enriched the publication by providing news with statistics to be published in the magazine. India's pharma major Cipla, known as Cipla Maroc in Morocco has come forward also to provide meaningful information about the subject.

Since my appointment by His majesty as His Ambassador to this great nation, I have been touring India, bringing and sending delegations from and to Morocco, meeting the business community to invest, create partnerships, meeting Chief Ministers at State level, having regular dialogue with Senior Ministers of the Government of India and also visiting centres of education. The warmth and respect received from Government official, functionaries, business leaders, academicians, media, and common citizens of India, have given me energy to continue to expand scope of Morocco-India bilateral relationship.

Last but not least, I would like to mention about the participation of Morocco's Under-17 girls team at the FIFA World Cup held at Bhubaneshwar and Goa. Our team was happy to visit India, play matches with national pride, and take back very good memories. India and Morocco have in common talented and ambitious youth, which represent their real treasure and embodies the promising future and everlasting strength.

I wish you all a happy reading!

Mohamed Maliki
Ambassador of His Majesty the King of Morocco to India, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka

Autonomy Plan for The Moroccan Sahara Gaining Diplomatic Support as Morocco Celebrates the 47th Anniversary of the Green March

In his recent speech, given on the occasion of the Revolution of the King and the People, His Majesty King Mohammed VI stressed that Morocco's allies and friends need to express unambiguous support for the country's stance on the The Moroccan Sahara dispute. Apart from the evolution of this regional dispute politically and the call for a clear position from partners, His Majesty highlighted also the socioeconomic development and the tremendous changes which the The Moroccan Sahara region has undergone in the past few years.

His Majesty King Mohammed VI addressed the Nation on 6th November, on the occasion of the 47th anniversary of the glorious Green March

"I…expect certain states among Morocco's traditional partners as well as new ones, whose stances concerning the Moroccanness of the Sahara are ambiguous, to clarify their positions and reconsider them in a manner that leaves no room for doubt," said the Moroccan monarch.

"The commemoration of the forty-seventh anniversary of the Green March comes at a crucial time in the process to firmly establish the Moroccanness of the Sahara.

Whereas the glorious, epic Green March made it possible to liberate that part of our territory, the continuing marches I have been spearheading aim to make sure our citizens lead a dignified life, especially in those Saharan regions, which are dear to my heart.

Hence, our action to defend the Moroccanness of the Sahara is based on a holistic approach that combines not only political and diplomatic action, but also efforts to promote economic, social and human development in the region.

The development programme for the southern provinces, signed during the ceremony I presided over in Laâyoune, in November 2015, and in Dakhla, in February 2016, is part of that endeavor.

This is an integrated development programme, with a budget in excess of 77 billion dirhams. It aims to launch a real socio-economic dynamic, create jobs and investment opportunities, and provide the region with the

infrastructure and facilities it needs.

It is an ambitious programme which responds to the concerns and aspirations of the inhabitants of our southern provinces. The region's local governments and elected officials are in charge of implementing the projects included under the program.

Seven years into the programme, it is gratifying to note that the expenditure commitment rate stands at about 80 per cent of the total budget allocated to it. The Tiznit-Dakhla highway is in its final stages, the region's connection to the national electricity grid has been completed and the communication networks consolidated and extended.

Similarly, the solar and wind power plants programmed have been completed as well. The construction of the major Dakhla-Atlantic port will begin soon, once the various studies and administrative procedures are completed.

As regards the economy, which is the main driver of development, a number of projects have been completed concerning the valorization and processing of fish products – an industry that provides thousands of jobs to the region's inhabitants.

In the agricultural sector, more than six thousand hectares have been developed in Dakhla and Boujdour and placed at the disposal of young farmers from the region. The implementation rate of most projects planned in the phosphate, water and sanitation sectors is quite high.

Mr. Nasser Bourita, Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates

In the social and cultural sectors, many achievements have been made in the areas relating to health, education and training, support for self - employment initiatives, and the promotion of the Hassani language and culture – both of which are key constituents of our cohesive national identity", added His Majesty King Mohammed VI.

On the international level, the Moroccan position gains more and more momentum and indefectible support. Indeed, after the United States recognized Morocco's sovereignty over The Moroccan Sahara in December 2020, they renewed their support for Morocco's Autonomy Plan recently during UN Security Council meeting, qualifying as being a "credible" and "serious" solution to end the dispute over The Moroccan Sahara.

The US made the remarks following the adoption of Resolution 2654, last October, which extended the mandate of UN peacekeeping operation MINURSO for one year until the end of October 2023.

The newly appointed US Ambassador, Mr. Jeffrey DeLaurentis, emphasized the Security Council's support for UN Personal Envoy Staffan de Mistura and his efforts to facilitate a "just, lasting, and mutually acceptable political solution for The Moroccan Sahara."

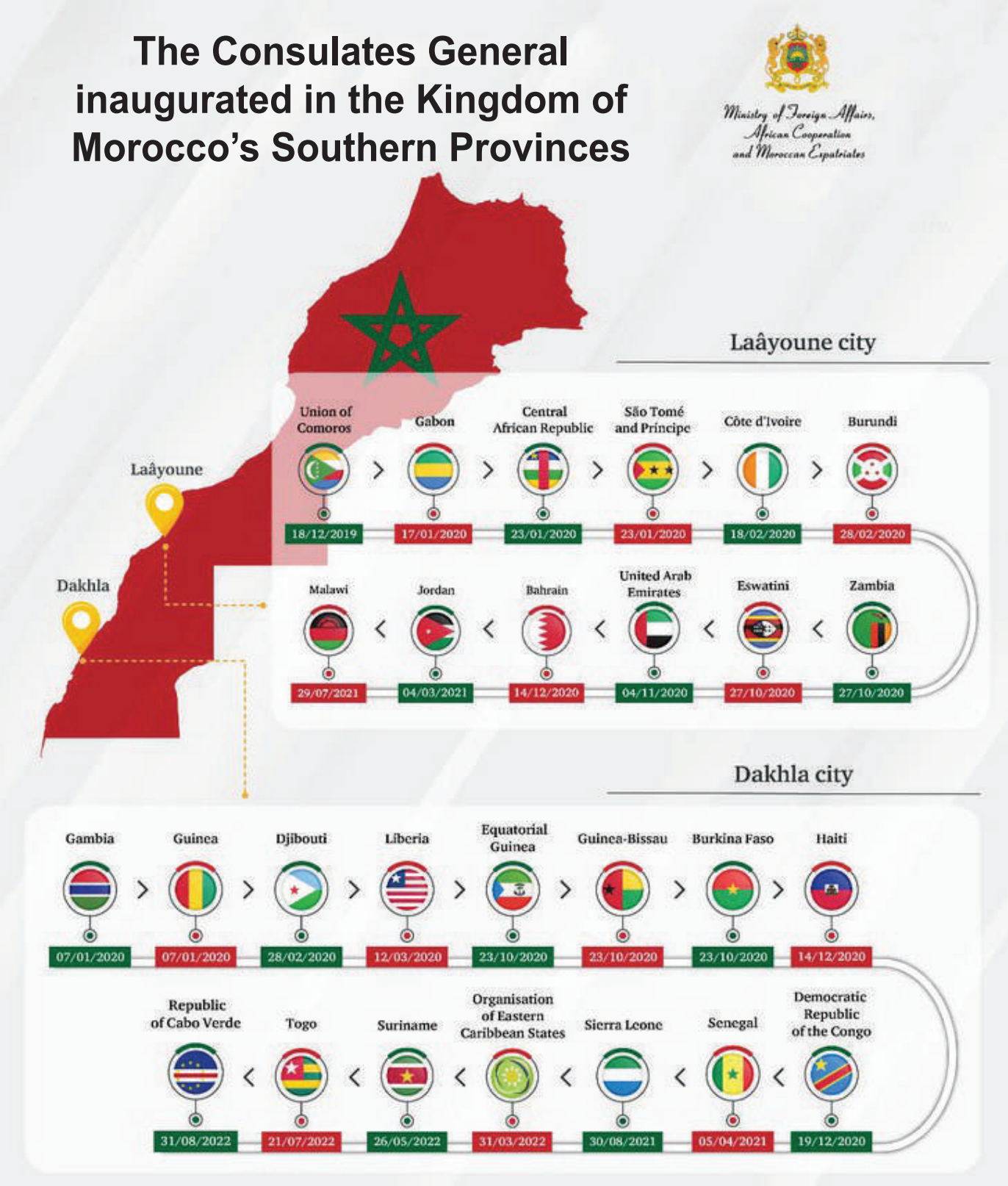
The statement not only reaffirms US support for Morocco's territorial integrity but also forms another setback to the so-called polisario and its supporters - most notably Algeria - which have been increasingly and insistently lobbying to convince the US Administration to reverse its stance.

However, and as correctly put by Honorable Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates of the Kingdom of Morocco, Mr. Nasser Bourita, more and more countries

are now becoming aware of the maneuvers of the enemies of the unity and territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Morocco.

Even the resolution 2654 adopted a new language that has "strongly" urged all parties to the dispute - including Algeria - to engage in the UN-led political process and to support UN Personal Envoy Staffan de Mistura and his efforts aimed at finding an agreed upon and mutually acceptable solution for The Moroccan Sahara.

Morocco welcomed the adoption of Resolution 2654 by the



Security Council, which renewed the mandate of peacekeeping operation MINURSO in The Moroccan Sahara to one year.

In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates of the Kingdom of Morocco expressed satisfaction with the UNSC's decision, extolling the viability of the roundtable talks initiated by former personal envoy Horst Kohler. The roundtable talks convened the parties to the dispute for dialogue in Geneva in 2018 and 2019.

Commenting on the resolution, the Ministry said that the Security Council confirmed that all actors who have a legal, political, and moral responsibility are required to engage in the political process throughout its duration in a "spirit of realism and compromise."

According to the Ministry, the resolution comes to attest that the format of roundtables is the "only framework of discussion with a view to reaching a definitive solution" to the regional dispute.

Morocco also reiterated its position on the dispute, recalling the viability of its "credible and serious" Autonomy Plan the country submitted to the Security Council in 2007 as part of its efforts and commitment to the UN-led political process.

The ministry emphasized that the resolution is a confirmation of the "purpose of the political process ", since the text reiterated that a political solution to the dispute "should be realistic, pragmatic durable and based on compromise. The Ministry argued that all criteria are stressed in Morocco's autonomy initiative ", whose re-eminence has been reaffirmed by the Security Council."

The Ministry also recalled the chorus of countries that expressed or frequently reiterate support for Morocco's autonomy initiative, emphasizing that 84% of the member states do not recognize the polisario front.

The ministry also recalled the opening of over 27 consulates generals in Dakhla or Laayoune by countries, supporting Morocco's position over The Moroccan Sahara. This number has now reached 28 following the inauguration, on 1 December 2022, in Dakhla, of Guatemala Consulate General.

The list of countries that opened consulates in the regions, includes Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, UAE, Bahrain, Jordan, Gabon, Togo, and Cape Verde, among others.

Morocco also secured the support of Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, and Belgium among the 10 European countries that have publicly expressed support for Morocco's Autonomy Plan as a good basis to end the dispute.

Morocco To Host Meeting of Countries Represented in The Moroccan Sahara

Minister Bourita has recently announced that Dakhla or Laayoune will soon host a ministerial meeting of "all countries that have opened consulates in the southern provinces"

The Minister said that Morocco and its partners will work over the next few months to organize the ministerial meeting in an effort to "create greater coordination between these countries." He made the announcement during a press conference organized on the occasion of the opening of Cape Verde's consulate general in Dakhla.

Minister Mr. Bourita noted that approximately 40% of African countries have opened consulates in Laayoune or Dakhla, adding this reflects a regional trend in support of Morocco's territorial integrity. More than 28 countries have so far opened diplomatic representations in the southern provinces, with Dakhla hosting 16 of the consulates.

Despite vocal opposition from pro-polisario circles, Morocco has succeeded over the past years to gather international support for its Autonomy Plan as the only serious and credible basis to solve the decades-long dispute. Establishing the Moroccanness of the Sahara has been a centerpiece of the country's foreign policy for the past four decades.

According to Minister Mr. Bourita, "there are many illusions and fallacies that hinder the real understanding and right awareness about the regional conflict over the The Moroccan Sahara. Yet, the history and chronology of the conflict is full of proofs of the plots hatched by enemies of Morocco's territorial integrity. These proofs can also serve to deconstruct and uncover the contradictions of the discourse hostile to the Moroccan sovereignty over the Sahara. Countries are becoming more and more aware of the maneuvers of the enemies of the unity and territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Morocco and which want this regional conflict to last.

"Morocco Committed to Energy Transition"- Minister Leila Benali

During an interview with Energy Intelligence magazine in August 2022, the Minister of Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development, Ms. Leila Benali spoke with confidence about Morocco achieving energy transition and emerging as a leading nation in the word towards green future.

The Minister of Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development, Ms. Leila Benali

Madam Minister, how is Morocco adapting to the global energy transition, which is accelerating and what are the greatest opportunities and challenges from your point of view?

Well, I think our energy transition, the acceleration about transition, was really a confirmation of a bold choice and a voluntary choice that Morocco has made more than 10 years ago. It was the one of the key pillars was an ambitious renewable energy program. So, for Morocco, which is a net energy importer net fossil energy importer, I think we view this transition, as first a way to reduce our dependence on external sources, but at the same time, very much decrease the cost of our energy. And we reviewed our national development mode that was a report that was submitted to HM the King, last year, where the decrease of the cost of energy on a structural basis was part of our key competitive advantage to increase the competitiveness of our industry and services.

The other aspect that I will need to provide with is our gas, and I think gas, and I said it a few times over the last few weeks, despite the volatility, and the turbulence that we are seeing in the market today, gas remains a key pillar of our energy transition because

first it's the obvious compliment to renewable. It's flexible, it has a low carbon content. But also, I think it's also huge geopolitical and regional co-operation arm that I think we need to use in the face of the highly volatile commodities market that we have today.

And so we've seen last year, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia were the first Gulf players to commit to set their net zero targets. Is this something we should be expecting from Morocco in the near future?

I mean, it's something that you already had from Morocco. And I think that our "Nationally Determined Contributions" (NDC) have been constantly updated over the last few years. And we worked diligently on the updated targets before COP26 in Glasgow. And we have submitted an ambitious plan to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by 46% compared to our baseline, so now, what we'd like to do before announcing any potential net zero target is to first work diligently on updating our scenarios and simulations, because what we are doing now, we are taking that low carbon roadmap to 20-50 and seeing what the implications that it will have first on power generation and that means for us a commitment to know new coal, but also an additional gas supplies to complement renewables and also basically model how the transportation sector and the industrial sector will also behave in that scenario.

So, we prefer to model before announcing I would say any target but the commitments, Morocco's commitment to the NDC is already there. And we don't want to announce something before finalizing our modeling exercise that will hopefully get finished over the next couple of years.

We know Morocco has huge potential in solar. Can you expand on your solar targets and also on your wind power ambitions?

Right, I think from a potential perspective, indeed the potential is huge, either wind and solar. And we have pockets of large wind and or solar opportunities in the country. And the number of investors that are knocking on our doors today to convert that potential into either green hydrogen or green ammonia is, I think, a testament to the potential of the country. But we know that we also have to accelerate the deployment of our renewable program. Today, we have roughly 1.5 Gigawatts of wind that is installed roughly one Giga watt of solar that is installed and we have additional 8 Giga watts roughly plans on the verge of being developed between now and 2030. However, as I said, that COP26 in Glasgow, this is definitely not enough for the country because we see that our competitiveness as a country as an industry is very much important when it comes to mobilizing our natural capital. And we view the potential of solar and wind as part of that natural capital.

So, my job today is to ensure that the utilization of our lands, utilization of our potential in renewables is also translating into development of human capital in various parts of Morocco and that energy infrastructures are being mobilized in this energy transition move. So, we are basically working in various parallel tracks. To improve our regulatory framework more than what we have, I think we have more roughly 10 years of advance in our regulatory framework compared to other countries with a similar potential. But we want to strengthen transparency, access to information on investment opportunities; we definitely want to simplify administrative

> **So, from when it comes to hydrogen, when it comes to ammonia, when it comes to gas and renewables, our view is that we want to open the country for a mix of sources of supply. That's why we've been working hard on making sure that our strategy is flexible and integrated.**

procedures for the opening of renewables in the medium and low voltage. In addition, we are working on this year; we want to further support renewable projects by granting Certificates of Origin and tradable green certificates at this stage.

And I think the other key signpost to watch in terms of deployments of our renewable potential in our energy transition is our national strategy for sustainable development. That's something that was enacted in 2017, by His Majesty the King, but we are launching the second phase at the end of this month as we speak. And there, we will start with actual by being more progressive than other regions, including Europe, when it comes to putting a price on positive externalities and putting a cost on negative externalities.

And is there a growing trend in Morocco similarly to the rest of the region in terms of financing more renewable projects and invest in new technologies such as hydrogen? Do you think Morocco could have a role to play in the hydrogen economy in the market?

I think. I mean I am. I do modern think in here; I execute. And I make sure that, again, investors who are very much interested in the potential of Morocco have the one stop shop that they need and the access to information that they need to deploy their investments ideas. And at the same time, as I mentioned in the previous question, we want to make sure that the regulatory framework is there to accompany those financing that we can capture on a multilateral basis, but also on a bilateral basis with the different countries that are definitely interested. So, I think from hydrogen and ammonia perspective, we are watching the costs. We already made a technological bet more than 10 years ago on another technology. And I think we learned from our lessons and we want to make sure that this time when it comes to other future green technologies, the state does not necessarily take the technological bets, particularly that there are investors that are willing to take that bet as long as they have.

The regulatory framework is a stable regulatory framework to invest and that's definitely something that we are making sure that we have in Morocco and I think the key competitive advantage that Morocco has compared to other countries with similar potential similar renewable potential and similar potential for green hydrogen and ammonia is not the availability of solar and wind resources only. It's definitely the stability of politics and the stability of the regulatory framework and the strategy that the country is pursuing. So, from when it comes to hydrogen, when it comes to ammonia, when it comes to gas and renewables, our view is that we want to open the country for a mix of sources of supply. That's why we've been working hard on making sure that our strategy is flexible and integrated.

And I think when it comes to, at the end of the day, we'll leave it to the investors to decide whether they want to invest in a blue hydrogen project or a green hydrogen project or a pink hydrogen project, as long as the private sector is willing to take that batch, we would follow.

Is this a few that you would be willing to export to because Morocco is often perceived as a potential supplier to the European hydrogen market? Is this something that is in the pipeline for your country?

Well, we are moving fast on that. And I think our relationships with Europe on that front specifically, is very much driven by our, again, potential for being a supplier to the world of green hydrogen and green ammonia or hydrogen in general and ammonia. So, I said, it's definitely part of the discussions that we're having with various European countries. And it's part of a package. As I said, we do not want our first trading partner, which is the European Union and our relationship with our trading partner to be linked to a very specific technology. And we have discussions on various aspects when it comes to our energy transition. And that's definitely something that we discussed during the COP26 in Glasgow in November, and that we continued after that with various countries in the European Union, and also with the UK, that is also moving fast in his relationship with Morocco, when it comes to leveraging the potential that we have. So, that's definitely we are moving fast on that in our discussions with our various partners.

And what is, in your view, the single greatest challenge that is facing the energy industry today as a result of the global push towards decarbonisation?

You want a single challenge because there are many challenges. But if I want to summarize it, I think it's a fair question. I think the key challenge and I think Morocco is a great case study. Because I remember, in November and December when I was having discussions with my European counterparts on allowing and or enabling the country to get access to the underutilize the gas infrastructure in Europe to be able to get access to the international LNG market, the benchmark that I was having in mind was Ukraine and Ukraine as a country that use the underutilized LNG infrastructure in its neighboring countries, basically to get away from dependence on Russian imports.

Now, here we are, I didn't know that, I would say three months later, we would be in a situation that we are today. So, I think the key challenge that the industry is facing is, first, it was barely emerging from its fourth financial and economic crisis in less than a decade. And at the same time, you had the drama or the issue that we had in the 20th century, in 2 years, we had a pandemic, we had the triple crises, health crisis, economic crisis and financial crisis and now a major war.

So, I think from that perspective, I think the energy sector will really have to ensure that it emerges from the situation, more flexible, move quickly, but at the same time, I think the immediate challenge that is facing is the high level of volatility that the commodities market is having because with volatility comes lower investments. And we already as I said, we're barely emerging from four crises in less than a decade which took huge hits were investments in the energy sector, oil, gas, renewables and others took a huge hit. So, I think the already dislocated commodity supply chain that we had over the COVID crisis, I think the only option that we have at the Ministry and as a sector is to come back with even bolder recovery plans, we are maintaining those bold recovery plans. But I just want to stress that energy importing countries like Morocco, have been deeply affected.

So, I think what we would want to do here is to call and I'm traveling to the International Energy Agency ministerial meeting tonight, we would want to call for a better and more consistent energy strategy, where we built in more flexibility and more sustainability and definitely more independence. And with independence, I mean, regional cooperation to build in that integration because now today, energy transition is not a choice. It's not a luxury, it's really a necessity that we need to have.

This leads me to my last question. So, how do you think the Russia Ukraine crisis and its effects on commodities will impact the energy transition both in Morocco and globally?

I think this is it's exactly what I've been, what I how I answered the earlier question. We cannot ignore the crisis that we have today, which, from my perspective, and I think from the energy policy of Morocco's perspective, had an impact much more important impact on if I take the example of the gas markets, that Fukushima, because we are, as I mentioned, coming to this to the Russia-Ukraine crisis, after four crises in less than a decade, in the energy sector, and 2 years of dramatic events in the world, primarily driven by the pandemics, but those event that totally dislocated the supply chain.

So, I think what we are dealing with today is definitely unprecedented. Moreover, that is why I have said we need to have, we need to build an even more resilience in our energy systems and our energy transition systems and if our health systems in Morocco, might have emerged more resilient, I think our economies globally and our financial systems globally are still sick. And from that perspective, I think what we have today is totally unprecedented. So, that's why our bold recovery plans need to be confirmed, that's what we are working on at the level of Morocco, but also with our partners and our allies in Europe and beyond to make sure that would build this resilience, flexibility and sustainability in our energy system and our energy relationships.

I think that's quite key to emerge today from this crisis. And I am not here to say whether the current crisis is going to accelerate or not the global energy transition or what I know if that is that in transition in the term transition, there is a need for sustainability and in sustainability there is a need for resilience. So, to building that resilience, we need stable relationships and stronger regional cooperation between the various countries. ■

MASEN Spearheading Morocco's Renewable Energy Push

By Ms. Fatima Hamdouch
Director (Strategy Division)

It is a well-known fact that from a solar and wind perspective, Morocco has one of the best potential. Thus, the country has been highlighted as one of the top five, or even top three, in some cases, in terms of this potential. This factor had led to the launch of the National Energy Strategy, under the high-level vision of His Majesty, King Mohammed VI, in 2009.

Paradoxically, despite the above advantages, the current situation in Morocco in terms of energy, is the same as it was in 2009, when the price of the variable was reaching $ 140, and therefore not sustainable for the social and economic development of Morocco. According to Ms. Fatima Hamdouch, Director (Strategy Division), MASEN, as Morocco had been in a process of launching national strategies in agriculture, tourism, and so many other sectors that needed energy, the context really showed that it was not sustainable in the long term to totally depend on the country's own inputs for domestic energy needs.

The National Energy Strategy of 2009, was the first strategy that really had as its objective the diversification of Morocco's energy mix, by increasing the renewable energy source as also looking at reducing energy consumption, thereby making energy efficiency another target of the strategy for regional integration.

The Director of Strategy Division of MASEN, Ms. Fatima Hamdouch

The above situation heralded the setting of clear targets of having more than 42% of the country's electric capacity sourced from renewables, which subsequently led to the creation of MASEN, in 2010, as the Moroccan agency for solar energy, whose first objective was to implement the Moroccan solar plan.

Then in 2016, again under the legislative leadership of His Majesty, the Moroccan objectives of its solar plan, had gone higher. "So now we're talking about more than 52% by 2030, which is really saying that more than half of our capacity will be from renewables," states Ms. Fatima Hamdouch, thereby enlarging the scope to all the renewable sector. 'We're still MASEN, but the 'S' has been moved from 'solar' to 'sustainable' and we are now the Moroccan agency for sustainable energy."

Aside from these new objectives of 52%, the new target is also about the regulatory framework in Morocco, because one could achieve the new objective through Amazon, but that is a limited company and MASEN is working as a private company, which is 100% public funded by public shareholders. "It's this duality of public-private within Amazon that is also very helpful, because one is implementing an institutional mission and institutional strategy, but still working with the private sector, with all our partners, and also be able to implement. So this public and private within the Amazon's, legislation (that) is also important."

The question therefore arises as to how realistic is the goal of achieving 50 to 52% from 50 to 51%, in the renewable energy for sustainable development. According to Ms. Hamdouch, of MASEN, though Morocco 's energy capacity is about 38% currently, "we are having 4000 megawatts of renewable energies that are operational, on a total of about 10,000 megawatts of the total capacity. So, it's mainly, that there are different types of projects and there are projects that have been developed a long time ago, even before the strategy Amazon creation, and it's the hydroelectric plants that have been in place for some time, that are yielding 1770 megawatts."

In addition, Morocco had the first wind projects in Africa, developed in the north of Morocco, in addition to other projects done also by the private sector. Hence in Morocco there are two streams of energy development, with the private wing developing projects for clients. If, for example, a project in an industrial sector needs renewable electricity, then that's a scheme. On the other hand, if the projects that have been developed by Amazon, and hence mainly at the start of the solar stage, then "that's where we have been implementing the Nova, as at plant, and in our deserts, and also in Lyon, and at a bookstore, in the south of Morocco. And, also some wind projects that we are currently developing, and also other that are being transferred over, in the course of one year, hereby summing up where Morocco stands today."

Responding to the query as to whether it is a challenge, Ms. Fatima Hamdouch pointed to the fact that there were other projects in the pipeline, either in the construction stage or at the development stage. With the projects that are currently ongoing, the target of 52% capacity in renewable energy is reachable by 2030.

As to whether this amalgam of projects will ultimately help Morocco reduce its dependency on fossil fuels especially the 90 % dependency on importing energy requirement, Ms. Hamdouch responded that it was actually the new projects that were compensating production from other operational plants, thereby gearing towards the objective of reducing dependency, and producing green electricity with less impact on the environment. "So just on the level of the nova as its complex, we can say that we are avoiding approximately one million tons CO2 per year by having the complex in operation today," she surmises.

Turning towards weather conditions, which too, is a focal point, in terms of energy requirement, Ms. Hamdouch shed light on the fact that an average temperature of 40+degrees is required. Thus, with sunshine available across the whole country, Morocco had a good energy resource complimenting its northern and southern parts., albeit there are parts which are more productive in terms of radiation for solar projects. And from a wind energy resource, there are good prospects along the coastal areas, leading to very viable projects being developed in the north, in wind energy complimenting the energy resource in the south, from solar energy.

Throwing further light on the green energy mix, Ms.

MASEN generates clean electricity through integrated renewable energy projects

Hamdouch pointed out, "Since we have been now in charge of other renewables, we can think also of some hybridization, so we're not thinking about one project." This changes mindsets from concentrating not just on solar or wind, but considering also, a solar and wind combined project, making it an interesting amalgam in terms of climate change impact. This trend towards a combination of resources hints at further improvements in terms of water resources and access to water, a sector that is also something of concern and which has a potential for solution by utilizing the energy potential available from renewables, according to Ms. Hamdouch. "So you can today have to treat water and desalinate it. And it makes sense if you do it with renewable energy, when it is available", is her surmise.

Mulling over other resources for the development of the Moroccan economy, the potential of making Morocco a good base for the automotive sector also looms on the development package. The country's automotive sector already plays a key role in the transportation of goods, and the running of private vehicles. Hence the prospect of manufacturing vehicles that would run on electricity has now become another proposition in the pipeline.

Prior to this development and during the first 10 years of Amazon, and even the years to come, the priority was to have green electricity. This meant generating renewable energy electricity, and alongside the existing projects that need to go further, Morocco can now reach out to other objectives. "So we always say that, since we have this resource, and we have demonstrated the capacity to have this project made operational, we should, as much as is possible, increase the electricity access for some sectors. So whenever possible, the sectors should rely on renewable electricity for their needs," is the overall summation. However, 'green' the prospect of running transportation in Morocco fueled by green resources might appear, it needed to be pointed out that electricity represented only 20% of the Moroccan energy.

Hydro Projects in Operation

Further to this, came the logistics of consumption and its compensation, For the industry sector it was surmised that the payment due from industry would be counted on a percentage basis, but that did not include the energy from the transport sector. Hence, it became clear on the basis of the new development model for Morocco, that was recently published, that the industry needed to go even further to decarbonize some of the sectors, and push further in the direction of greening. "Looking at how we could also have other sources of energies from renewables, such as heat from renewables, water treatment from renewables, we are talking a lot now about green hydrogen also to respond some energy needs of some sectors in the industry sectors. So those are definitely the things that we're looking at for the future years. And on the mobility aspects that's also some important part of our energy consumptions, from the transport sector."

In the light of the above, it becomes clear that in Morocco there are many streams of green energy potentialities that are being tackled at the same time. In this region of concern, the first area of interest is obviously from an infrastructure perspective, to see what can be done in the area of public transport in the cities, and also in the interconnections with the cities to avoid, having a lot of individual transports. Besides correction measures in this area, the planners are also looking at the overall transport needs, and how they too, can be altered to electric.

For all the above mentioned uses in Morocco, the challenge will be to make sure that electricity for the changeover is from renewable energy electricity, "because if at the end, you need more fossil fuels to generate your electricity for your electric cars, you're not

reaching the original objective," surmises Ms. Hamdouch. "So it is in that perspective that Amazon is looking at it, because it needs to be from renewable energy for the mobility, electric mobility, to reach our goal."

The question therefore arises as to whether by creating renewable energy for sustainable development from different sources, Morocco is also able to create jobs for young Moroccans, and whether there is a training system in place for those Moroccans to go into this critical sector. According to Ms. Hamdouch, "that gives me the opportunity to go back to, as I mentioned earlier, Amazon also was created by law. And our missions are also very clear in our law. The first objective is that we have a clear goal in our law of an additional 6000 megawatts between 2016 and 2030, plus 6000 megawatts. But in this law, we're also saying that electricity alone is one part of the puzzle. We also need to impact our national ecosystem, from an industry perspective, to see how we could also have more and more industries in Morocco involved in the projects that we are developing. The obvious beneficiaries therefore would be a fallout in the employment market, as its immediate outcome."

"We also make sure in an employment perspective, that whenever it is possible and the competency is available, the local employment is prioritized. We have been also put in contact these international developers with the local authorities in charge with the employment, to really improve the level of local employment and national employment. This is also part of our mission. And on competency development also, we are involved in national institutes of energy, renewable energy and energy efficiency, so there are national institutes that were created for this sector."

MASEN concludes integrated partnership on solar technology

To ease the development, process a notch higher, there's the formation of clusters, which has become a platform for making all the stakeholders that are around renewable network, be it from the research, from the academic perspective, from the industry, the national industry, or even international developers, come on board as partners. The latter component, which comprises automotive, aeronautics and competences from an electrical mechanical perspective, being encouraged to come and see what is being done in Morocco. Besides from an electrical, mechanical perspective, these sectors are already renewable as at the end it's an electricity plant. Thus, a lot of competencies are already available where a lot of work has been done in detail and adding to the value chain of what is possible in Morocco at a competitive price. Thus when the developers come and see these changes and potentialities, it has a positive impact on them as well and they come forth with industrial integration offers.

Surmising the ground realities further, Ms. Hamdouch stated: "And (with) our first projects we have seen, some have gone beyond our objectives in terms of interior industry integration, we're talking more than 40% of the value added that was done in Morocco. Hence this is very important. We also make sure in an employment perspective, that also, whenever it is possible and the competency is available, the local employment is prioritized. We have also put in contact these international developers with the local authorities in charge with the employment to really improve the level of local employment and national employment. This is also part of our mission. And on competency development we are involved in national institutes of energy, renewable energy and energy efficiency, so there are national institutes that were created for this sector. "

And Ms. Hamdouch added further, "We had also developed some very specific on-site trainings, on the particularity and specificities of the solar plants, for example. This is, you know, very important for us. We

are also having a mission on the R&D aspect. We have a team here dedicated to R&D, and there is also an R&D platform. We know, for this very innovative sector that we still, need to be really on top of the innovation from all aspects."

Elaborating further on the R and D sector she added: "This is done at the level of the solar cluster I mentioned earlier. They have really an incubator also, and they also developing some programs to support young innovators and startups. That's where it happens. It's an association, and MASEN has been with the creation at the beginning, and we have been also supporting this association. But now it's the National Association, mainly driven by the industry, the Moroccan industries. And lastly, we have those very great projects, and usually the resources ideal in areas where you're far from the cities, because what I forgot to mention, is that what we always do at the beginning, we make sure, of course, we have a need, which is we need this type of electricity."

This lead to the query of the locational aspects of such industries, the kind of project and with whom to do the projects. "And for that, we always make sure if there are any other users of the land, for example, agriculture,. In such cases, as also in the case of protected areas, it is not taken into account. And we also (have) other criteria, like renewable resources, that help us really to prioritize and decide what is the best location, and usually these locations are far from the cities. And the socio-economic development of this region is usually lower and so we're also very much engaged in contributing in the local development of such regions."

These initiatives are also in southern Morocco and as of today, the projects are in Lyon and bookstore. Accordingly, the needs are worked with the local authorities, with the local associations towards contributing to some actions in health, for example, in education, in tourism, thereby making sure that this population have access to electricity and water. So, this local development is also part of the overall approach. And when doing the projects, these various axes are also aligned.

Also, in the course of the above considerations about what can be done more there is the aspect of electric mobility, where there is waste to energy, production of heat hydrogen, which are comparatively new areas that are being tackled "So we're also looking at how we can contribute to also the development of renewables with our neighbors on the north and obviously, in Africa as well. So, we also have an international team, where we have a lot of partnerships around the world and with India as well, throughout our projects."

Incidentally there are Indian companies that have been involved in the solar projects. According to Ms. Hamdouch there is a strong focus on such partnerships with their closest neighbours, Europe for projects on the exchange of green energy. "We call it the set roadmap, the sustainable electricity trade roadmap. It has been launched at the COP 26 in Glasgow and COP 22, in Marrakech, and we have launched that with Spain, Portugal, France, and Germany. And the idea is really to see the potential for energy exchange."

There is also other bilateral collaboration, or multilateral collaboration, like the one with the African Development Bank, called the 'Desert to Power Initiative', or the one with the Islamic Development Bank also. There is one also very important, which is between Morocco and Ethiopia. It's the energy access coalition under the United Nations. So here, what we're really looking at is mutual exchange of expertise.

In short, the goal has been to examine if there is any area where Morocco could support in terms of technical assistance and if there are opportunities to co-develop projects. So that has been also the approach towards green and sustainable development beyond the frontiers, beyond Morocco. ■

"Morocco Already a Regional IT "Hub"

Exclusive Interview with Dr. Ghita Mezzour, the Minister Delegate in charge of Digital Transition and Reform of the Administration. It was held in New Delhi in May 2022, taken by journalist Harun Riaz. Excerpts are as follows;

Photo : Kapoor Photographers

The Minister of Digital Transition and Administration Reform, Dr. Ghita Mezzour

Madam Minister, welcome to New Delhi. My first question is about purpose of your official visit to India?

What brings me to India is first, the King Mohammed VI, may God assist him insisted that Morocco needs to diversify its economic partners.

And in terms of Information Technology (IT) prospects, India is a leading country. And HM the King visited India himself, so India was a natural choice to strengthen this partnership. Another goal is that we aim to promote Morocco as an investment destination in IT, especially the outsourcing possibilities. We had discussions with Chairperson of HCL Technologies, Madam Roshni Nadar Malhotra, and we signed a Memorandum of Understanding so that HCL would create a delivery center in Morocco to serve its customers worldwide. Therefore, we visited India to promote Morocco with other IT investors to show them what Morocco can offer.

Dr. Mezzour, I was listening to your speech during the Morocco Tech the inaugural event held in January 2022. And you mentioned that "the digital economy is more important than oil and gas and automotive sectors". How can Morocco emerge as a digital economy hub?

Morocco is already a regional digital hub. And, as I mentioned in that speech, we have a top IT infrastructure in Africa, more than 93% of Moroccans use the internet, with an increase of 17% per year, we're also seeing destination, top three outsourcing destination in Africa, we have a lot of Moroccan use, trained in IT technologies from coding all the way to AI technologies. Therefore, we are already a regional digital hub. Our goal is to take that further, and that's aligned with the new development model.

The new development model is a model that was developed with a huge effort of listening to all Moroccans and coordinating with Moroccans to build up what's the priorities for Morocco, up to 2030, and digital transition is on the top 5 priorities in this digital model. I think we have lots of ingredients and we're strengthened in that. And one way of strengthening with that struggling in this issue

international collaboration with top IT players like India.

Madam Minister, you also mentioned about made in Morocco digital technology, is this digital technology relevant and useful for the Indian market or the Asian market if it is, are you likely to promote this technology to prospective Indian partners?

Right now, Moroccan IT technology is already exported to Europe, Africa and to some extent to Asia. And we are here to develop partnerships with India. Maybe we can work with Indian companies to serve this market together. We enter into partnerships and we serve markets together.

Between Morocco and India, only one ICT Center of Excellence which is in Casablanca. When you're talking to HCL to develop this partnership, do you have something concrete in the pipeline to develop more centers?

I see, what you mean, yes. So the goal is for HCL to develop a delivery center in Morocco, that's going to have Moroccan people working there, plus some Indian people. That's going to be in Morocco to serve other markets. So that's the goal. That's the plan.

As you're developing this digital infrastructure, and you're also in charge of the digital transition in Morocco. This is an ambitious agenda. And for this, you need trained manpower.

Exactly.

Trained computer scientists and I think when I was listening to your address, you did mention that there is a shortage of trained computer scientists in Morocco. So, can India be a partner in this sector?

Did I say there was a shortage, I don't remember that, never mind it. I say, we have a lot of IT talents who are extremely competitive. They win awards at international places. I like to give this example I think what you saw in my talk about three Moroccan students that competed against 28,000 people at the NASA competition and won the first place. They were the students, Moroccan students that competed in the competition and went on to secure top places. So, we have the IT talent which is trained in latest technologies.

Of course, we need more talents, because of our ambition to

Minister Dr. Mezzour exchanging ideas with startups at the UM6P in Benguerir which is the capital of the Rehamna province, in Morocco. This traditional small town has presented itself in recent years, as an innovation and technology excellence center.

speed-up our digital economy, and we need to train even more, because I believe that human resources are the heart of any digital transition. Hence, we have a goal to train many more. And we're looking into partnering with India, because they have an expertise of training people at scale. And that was one of the discussions with HCL. We're talking to HCL to leverage their expertise to train people at scale. And we're also interested in other partners on how to train a larger number of, so there are means I will say this, there is talent in Morocco right now, because of our ambition to strengthen the digital economy, we need to train more. And that's one of the things we're looking into in this visit.

Dr. Mezzour by when we can hope for HCL to set up its let's say office and other infrastructure and start working Morocco?

We're working with HCL on that…I think, we can say it's very soon. But we don't want to give a date right now. And we're looking forward to see all the areas of cooperation that we can develop with HCL. It is progressing well.

I think it's going to be much sooner than you expect.

But if I may ask a related question. HCL is just one of the major Indian companies. There are other bigger plans. So are you planning to engage with them as well?

Yes, so Tuesday, I'm going to Bangalore, and I'm going to meet other major players. So HCL was the first one because top executives on HCL visited Morocco and showed very strong interest. And it was a natural choice for us to come and visit them because we're talking about very concrete things. They have very strong concrete interest. Yes. There are other ones we're going to engage to, I'm going to Bangalore, I'm going to engage other ones also.

Dr. Mezzour you are, I think perhaps the most qualified and well-known expert on the subject of cyber security, digital economy and you come from academics, I noticed that you have been encouraging and guiding and mentoring young Moroccan talent. And they are doing extremely well. The Kingdom of Morocco is known for sharing intelligence for its own security and for the regional and international security. So what are you planning to do that the data which is shared, you know, is absolutely safe?

So, you mentioned the first part about talents. Yes, I believe that I mentored the young students myself. I went to school in Switzerland and the US, at top schools and I came back to Morocco. And it's was a pleasure, an extreme pleasure for me to monitor young students. And I can tell you that the students have amazing talent and that amazing potential. So some of the students I mentioned, as I know, personally, they were the first ones to win Google scholarships from Africa. They won top awards, and they're extremely smart, hardworking and promising. I don't think they lack anything compared to other students training in Europe, or the US.

I think they won an award from NASA also?

Yeah, that's the one I mentioned. So, there's just so many examples as the one I can think of top of my head. But there's so many ones, and they're just amazing and in doing outstanding work. And actually, some of European countries know that very well. And they came and chase, though I chasing to hire them, because they know how amazing they are. And our goal right now is to have instead of taking them to go to other countries, we want country companies to come and hire them where they are, instead of European countries taking them and hiring them in Europe. We want them to be in Morocco, because it's a win-win for everybody. Because the cost of life in Morocco is much lower than the cost of life in Europe. If you hire them in Morocco, companies can pay much lower salaries and the people are much happier, because they live in their country. So that's the first part.

Now you're talking about next part of your question is data sharing. There are lots of regulations now about personal data and we have a special commission that about personal data sharing. I think people are very aware of the restrictions of data. The data that's shared, it's curated to contain no personal data content and curated to be safe. That we're not we take the privacy of people or the privacy of people's personal data extremely seriously.

Minister, you're talking about the young Moroccan talent and it's doing so well. It has this inborn talent, or the talent which is being they

Photo : Kapoor Photographers

Journalist Harun Riaz interviewed the visiting Moroccan Minister Dr. Mezzour at New Delhi on May 30, 2022

are getting the opportunity to develop this talent. And during my research, I came across the news about Moroccan startups from the IT sector. And I think you categorically mentioned that these startups can export their services, knowledge to other parts of the world. I have two questions. One is, we read all the time that more and more of our startups are becoming unicorns. Are there some examples in Morocco who have turned unicorn? But my important question is, how are you also planning to export this startup talent or the startup expertise to India, especially from the field of agriculture?

So Moroccan startups are flourishing, some of them are already expanding in Europe, or Africa, especially, I think more in Africa because they're selling their expertise. And again, there's this cultural, geographical proximity and also cultural sometimes proximity and they are selling and expanding in Africa. They're raising funds from American VCs, from European VCs from obviously African Moroccan VCs. So they're doing well, they're flourishing. We haven't seen a unicorn yet. But again, we started probably later than other countries. So I'm pretty sure we're going to see one pretty soon. That's our ambition at least.

Moroccan startup road show in India, for example?

Can they export their services? It should be I think they should be one. Yeah, they should be one.

During your Morocco Tech address, it was mentioned that Morocco has the most powerful supercomputer in Africa, but in my country here in India, nobody knows. Can you kindly provide details, as what is the capacity, what it can do?

It's actually developed at University Mohammed VI Polytechnic. It's a powerful supercomputer, it can do what supercomputers can do, super calculations pretty fast. And I know that fortunately, people don't know yet about all the potential Morocco can offer. And it can offer a lot and to do amazing work. And one of the reasons why I'm here is to have people aware of our potential. And I'm not here alone. There is another guy as we talk, there are other meetings with business like B2B meetings with other IT companies in Morocco, sorry in India. That's what Morocco can offer or could anymore.

I am also leading an economic delegation. So we're here as a Ministry, but we have also with us members of (AMDIE is Gov Org) the Moroccan Investment and Export Agency (AMDIE), you know, and also from a company called MedZ, which does outsourcing parks in Morocco. And all these players are like they're meeting as we talk.

Morocco Showcases Outsourcing Opportunities in India

The Minister of Digital Transition and Administration Reform, Dr. Ghita Mezzour, Ambassador of His Majesty the King of Morocco, H.E. Mr. Mohamed Maliki and the Moroccan delegation met with Chief Minister of Karnataka, Mr. Basavaraj Bommai at Bangalore

In an effort to strengthen Moroccan-Indian relations in the digital sector, a Moroccan delegation headed by Dr. Ghita Mezzour, Minister of Digital Transition and Administration Reform, and along with representatives of the Moroccan Agency for the Development of Investments and Exports and of MedZ (leader in Morocco in the development and management of business parks in industry, offshoring and tourism) held meeting with Mr. Rajiv Chandrashekar, Indian Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology and Indian Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Chief Minister Mr. Basavaraj Bommai, and Minister of Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Legislation of Karnataka, Mr. J. C. Madhuswamy and Dr. C N Ashwathnarayan, Minister of Information Technology, Biotechnology, Higher Education, Science and Technology, Government of Karnataka.

These meetings were an occasion to showcase the attractiveness of Morocco, which is in the top 3 outsourcing destinations in Africa, with highly qualified English speaking IT talents, competitive salaries, as well as a strategic geographical proximity to Europe, and its status as a gateway to the African continent and markets.

In that regard, prior to visiting Bengaluru, Dr. Ghita Mezzour and Ms. Roshni Nadar Malhotra, President of HCL Technologies signed, in the city of Noida, a Memorandum of Understanding on bilateral cooperation in coding and IT fields with HCL.

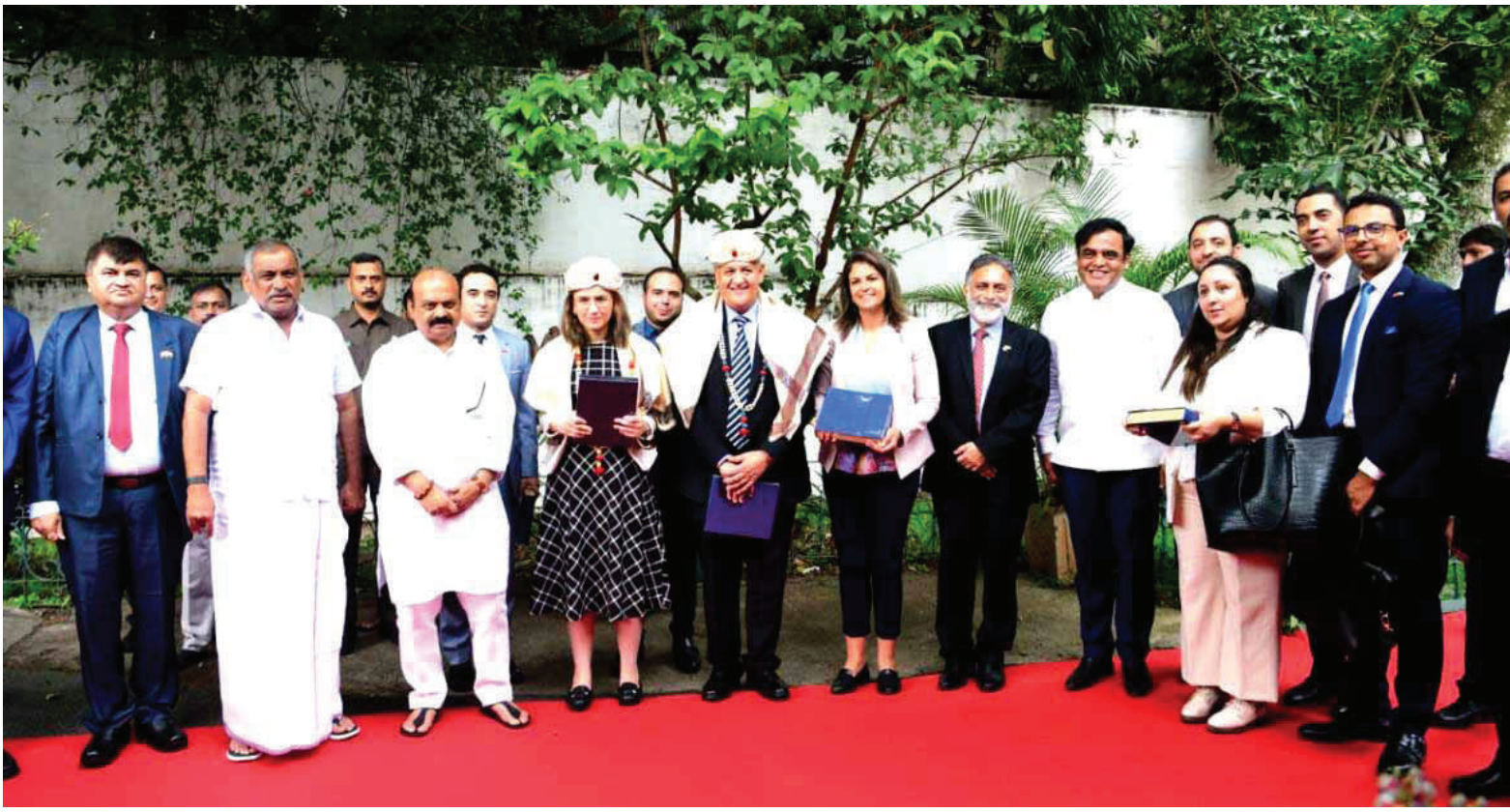
The Moroccan delegation visit to India was also an occasion to touch on the Indian experience regarding the digitization of public services.

"Within the next four years, all public services in Morocco must be digitalized. Our visit to India is primarily to strengthen

good strategic and political relationships, to study the Indian digitization process and the education system in India and to position Morocco as a perfect outsourcing partner, said Dr. Mezzour. We are looking at Indian companies to set up operations in Morocco. We are also very keen to explore training opportunities in the digital field between the two countries. Our meetings with officials from the Government of India and Government of Karnataka were fruitful and led to the commitment to expand strategic relationships in outsourcing, startups, and education. They showed considerable interest to take things forward." added Dr. Ghita Mezzour, Minister of Digital Transition and Administration Reform.

As part of their learning experience regarding the fostering of startup ecosystems, the delegation also visited NASSCOM Centre of Excellence, which represents the largest technology innovation ecosystem in India, and which brings together startups, innovators, companies and government authorities. This institution aims to accelerate the establishment of solutions aimed at addressing real-world challenges, using technologies such as IoT, AI, data science, Big Data, AR/VR, machine learning, and robotics. The visit enabled the Moroccan delegation to explore the achievements of the startups supported within the framework of the Center of Excellence and discuss opportunities for exchanges between the ecosystems of startups in Morocco and India.

The Moroccan delegation paid a visit as well to the International Institute of Information Technologies to explore the research in the IT industry and discuss ways for future collaborations.



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It is to mention that this visit to India comes in line with the Royal Vision of His Majesty Mohammed VI, King of Morocco, who called for promoting Morocco as a preferred destination for foreign investments in new markets such as India.

Morocco's Digital Push To Be An IT Hub

By Rida Chahoud and Lamyaa Boumarr

Digital transformation is a subject of crucial importance for Morocco and is considered as one of the pillars of the new development model initiated by His Majesty King Mohamed VI, may God assist him. It is a new development model designed by Moroccans, with Moroccans and for Moroccans.

Morocco has indeed been working for several years on establishing the foundations for a sustainable digital society and economy. Today, we can proudly say that our country has several assets in this field, we are the 1stcompetitive country in North Africa in terms of levels of productivity, 2ndmost attractive investment destination in Africa (what is the source/year/index in case the question is asked to the Embassy?) and 3rdoutsourcing country in Africa (which ranking/year in case the question is asked to the Embassy?).

The Ministry in charge of Digital Transition and Administration Reform is actually working on different global & national digital strategies that will come to unify and supports all digital actions and initiatives launched by our Kingdom, by mainly contributing to the improvement of the Moroccan citizen's quality of life. The Ministry is also supporting the sector through a set of measures and projects that will enable the economic and social shift of our nation.

One of the main achievements of this strategy was the launch of Morocco Tech in January 2022, which reflected our willingness and determination to highlight/show case digital technology as a real lever for economic and social development in our country. Morocco Tech is a movement, an umbrella brand, and a commitment to strengthen Morocco's position as a regional digital hub. This identity oversees different topics and activities related to the digital Made in Morocco, such as outsourcing, ecosystem startup, digital education, digital events etc... It has been created to support flagship efforts, programmes, projects, and communications

Minister of Digital Transition Dr. Mezzour's Advisors, Mr. Rida Chahoud and Ms. Lamyaa Bouamar met with visiting Journalist Harun Riaz at Rabat in July 2022

Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates

Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates

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around Morocco as a premium digital destination and it is designed to promote Morocco as:

- a home to well trained workforce and world-class level skills.
- a regional leader in terms of infrastructure.
- a future-oriented technology producer.
- and an attractive investment destination.

MoroccoTech is also the fruit of a collaborative dynamic that has brought together the efforts of the public and private sectors to achieve our common goals. Many different activities have been launched since January 2022.

On the social side the Ministry supports the digitization of the healthcare ecosystem by setting up a national platform for the exchange of digital data between actors and professionals in the healthcare sector. This project will have a positive impact on citizens in terms of saving time, money and efforts.

This project is essential for the success of the major national project to supply basic medical insurance to 36 million Moroccans.

With regard to digital infrastructures the Ministry supports the development of national e-services via the implementation of digital identification through the platform created by the National Police Department (DGSN) in partnership with the Digital Development Agency (ADD). This reliable citizen identification solution makes it possible to simplify the digitization of services based on a trusted third party and on the national identity card which is already deployed to citizens.

One of the key growth drivers in any digital economy are Startups. Moroccan startups have proven resiliency and agility through the different phases of our ecosystem building. Today we are very happy to see Moroccan startups winning in their local markets and scaling operations abroad, especially in French-speaking Africa and MENA regions. We are working, as a Ministry, on setting up the right policies and environment to unlock the full potential of startups with our partners in both the private and public sectors. We have seen tremendous opportunities to work together with our friends in India to build a more successful startup ecosystem based on their experience in SEA region since we share lots of similarities. Today, we see entrepreneurs tackling big challenges and building successful ventures in aggrotech, healthtech, retail and fintech. Our aim is to attract more capital and connect these startups with new market

opportunities in order to help them grow and scale.

In addition to that, our Minister always highlights that the key for a successful digital transition is the human capital, and it is something that is at the top of her priorities. In this context, Morocco is committed to develop a rich and diverse digital talent pool. We aim to reinforce training in digital technology, at all levels of qualification, from technicians to doctoral students.

Our Minister is keen to support the Moroccan IT talent pool and boost its growth both in terms of number and quality of training to meet the growing demand. In fact, our talents are recognized worldwide by leading companies and organizations, where many multinationals are launching operations in Morocco to sustain their HR growth in terms of IT profiles. The country is home for more than 180 training organizations and universities in IT such as leading engineering schools INPT, ENSIAS, EMI, UM6P, ENSA, … and all of them are playing a huge role to meet with industry requirements so as to cater to the investors' needs in terms of qualifications and curriculum updates. Today, every engineering school and university offers trainings in advanced CS fields such as cybersecurity, AI, IoT, embedded systems, …

Our goal is to sustain the growth of our IT talent pool and we will collaborate with Indian companies to learn from their experience in scaling their training programs to a broad population nationwide. The Ministry has also developed an e-learning solution named "Academia Raqmya" for professional education intended for administrations staff wishing to succeed in their digitization projects: Training in technologies and agile methods, raising awareness of good practices and standards, Methodological guides for conducting projects.

In terms of investment, the Ministry supports the simplification of all investor pathways through the identification and implementation of measures for reducing delays and the volume of documents required of investors. This work is a prerequisite for achieving the complete digitization of investor journeys. Among the digitization projects already started, we can mention the «100% online business creation solution» which is currently being finalized.

Since we are talking about digital acceleration, I would like to remind you that Morocco is one of the first countries to adopt the UNESCO Recommendation on the ethics of Artificial Intelligence. This marks our willingness to develop a digital ecosystem that puts the people, their needs and their rights, at the top of our priorities.

The acceleration of technological transformations, require countries like Morocco to place human capital training, R&D and innovation among its priorities. It also requires an upgrade in terms of technological infrastructure, with the aim to strengthen our competitiveness. It is therefore essential for our country to create international partnerships, in order to create the appropriate synergy for a successful accelerated transition. This transition is part of the challenges raised by the New Development Model and which are among the priorities of the Ministry of Digital Transition and Administration Reform, aiming to position Morocco as a digital nation and "Made in Morocco" as a trademark of quality, competitiveness and sustainability. Over the last three decades, India has become a major R&D hub and the birthplace of a variety of new technological solutions to a wide array of challenges.

Since we are talking about digital acceleration, I would like to remind you that Morocco is one of the first countries to adopt the UNESCO Recommendation on the ethics of Artificial Intelligence.

Today we are fortunate to build different promising partnership with multiple countries, such as the one with India, where large scale projects have been launched and new ones will, I hope, take place in the future.

The two countries share strong political ties, with bilateral relations witnessing significant growth over the last few years. With their industrial potential, the two countries complement each other and are expected to boost bilateral trade, which is currently around $2.1 billion.

India and Morocco need to launch a new era of collaboration and business exchange. For this partnership has to flourish and prosper it must be rooted in cooperation in the field of innovation and technology, and foster cooperation between the ecosystem of Moroccan companies and their respective Indian counterparts, in order to combine Indian Tech expertise, and Morocco's potential and strategic position. By joining these two models, competitive excellence can be achieved.

Services outsourcing is among the most dynamic sectors in Morocco. With its 120K jobs and a sustained annual growth, Morocco is positioned as a leading IT outsourcing destination in the region. Thanks to an important pool of well-trained IT talents speaking different languages, to a world-class telecom infrastructure and an operational support from the Government, Morocco is ranked 3rd best outsourcing destination in Africa. The sector has proven its resilience and agility during the covid 19 crisis. Today with over 200 worldwide references, Morocco is chosen as a premium destination to serve clients in Europe and across the globe. The delegation led by HE Minister Dr. Ghita Mezzour in June to India was the occasion to present the platform built in Morocco for IT outsourcing to leading Indian IT companies and many investors are considering Morocco to expand their operations and meet with their business objectives. We are very happy to build such bridges between our two economies where we see great potential, and we are only at the very beginning.

Morocco is ranked 3rd best outsourcing destination in Africa. The sector has proven its resilience and agility during the covid 19 crisis. Today with over 200 worldwide references, Morocco is chosen as a premium destination to serve clients in Europe and across the globe.

Honestly, it would not be appropriate for us, as a Ministry, to judge that one startup was more successful than another, because each startup grows in different environments and with different backgrounds. I think that it is more important to see what our country, our government and our Ministry offers to help Moroccan startups evolve and grow than doing a comparison between successful Moroccan startups. At this point we can exchange more about best practices and expertise that Morocco can export in India.

Today, the Morocco Startup Ecosystem is a Regional and Continental Hub for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. There are more than 140 actors working for the development of the Morocco Startup ecosystem, and Startups can benefit from more than 240 initiatives over their life cycle. Aware of the importance of startups, public and private actors are strongly involved in the development of the ecosystem from funding, to the promotion and support cycle. The Morocco startup ecosystem is indeed a promising and evolving ecosystem with the emergence of more than 300 startups in different sectors and technologies and a Sustained growth in fundraising during the last 3 years. Our country has Several regional hubs for startup incubating and accelerating. It is also important to mention that Morocco has a dynamic, competitive and qualified labor force, (42% of the population under the age of 25) with more than 12 K profiles per year employed in the "IT" professions and 152,000 new graduates each year. ■

MOROCCO'S DIGITAL SECTOR

STABILITY WITH ROYAL VISION

A CONTINUING DRIVE FOR **OPENNESS** AND **DEMOCRACY**

Release energies and restore confidence to accelerate the march towards progress and prosperity for all

The New Developement Model launched by His Majesty King Mohammed VI

- *A productive and diversified economy that creates added value and quality jobs*
- *Human capital strengthened and better prepared for the future*
- *Opportunities for all and a consolidated social link*
- *Resilient territories, anchor points for development*
- *Making digital technology and technological capabilities a key factor in competitiveness, in modernizing companies and in developing new professions and sectors in line with global transformations*
- *Using digital technology as a lever to transform for equitable access to basic services*

WHY MOROCCO?

PRO-BUSINESS

Business-friendly environment with political stability, resilient economy and Government incentives

COMPETITIVE

Advanced infrastructure, high qualified human resources and strategic position giving access to potential markets worldwide

SUSTAINABLE

Strong Royal vision with ambitious energy transition plan to make Morocco among the greenest and lowest carbon platforms in the world

IDEAL HUB TO ADRESS GLOBAL DIGITAL MARKET

- Booming sector at a global scale
- Ideal location to capture global demand

WITH HIGH TECH EXPERTISE DEVELOPED LOCALLY

- Driven by competitive IT sectors
- Expertise across high tech activities

AND BEST COST OFFER FOR ENGINEERING SERVICES

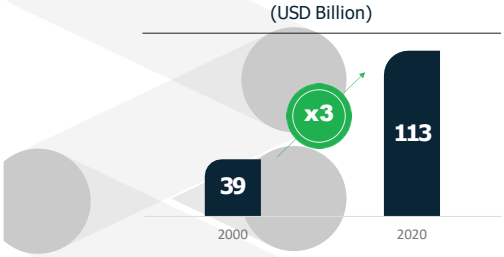
- Attractive talent pool
- Top notch engineering schools
- World class infrastructure

RESILIENT ECONOMY

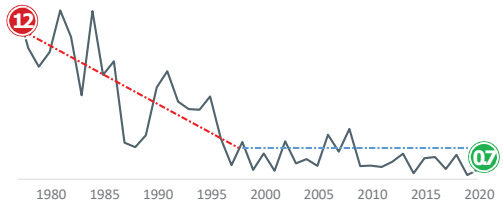
STRONG MACRO-ECONOMIC FUNDAMENTALS

Ranked **1st*** Among 141 countries in terms of inflation rate stability

GDP has tripled in less than 20 years
(USD Billion)



Stable inflation rate maintained under 2% since 2010
(annual inflation %)



Source : The World Bank / Global Competitiveness Report WEF 2019 (* Among the countries ranked first)

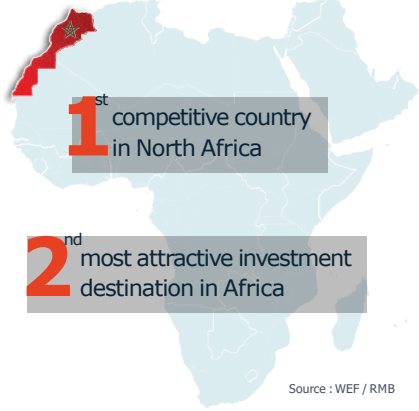
BUSINESS-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

EASINESS FOR BUSINESS TO **GROWTH**

MORE THAN 50 NON DOUBLE TAXATION AND INVESTMENT PROTECTION AGREEMENTS

NO RESTRICTIONS ON CAPITAL FOR NON-RESIDENTS

FREE REPATRIATION OF PROFIT AND CAPITAL FOR NON-RESIDENTS



Source : WEF / RMB

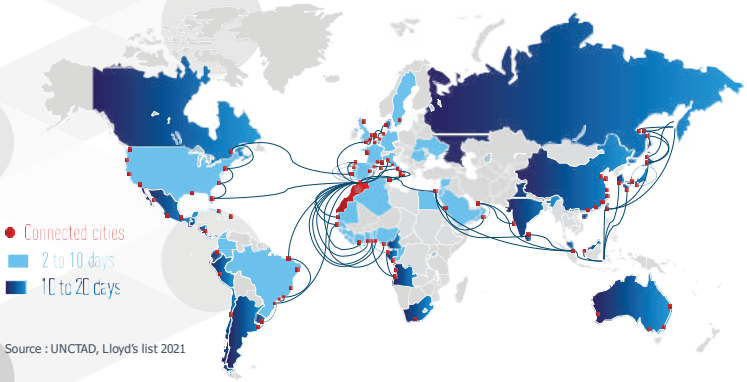
STRATEGICALLY LOCATED

TANGIER MED PORT, THE **1ST TRANSHIPMENT PLATFORM IN AFRICA**

186
186 connections with 77 countries

14 km
14 km from Europe

9M
Treatment capacity for 9 millions of containers per year



Source : UNCTAD, Lloyd's list 2021

MOROCCO'S DIGITAL SECTOR AT A GLANCE

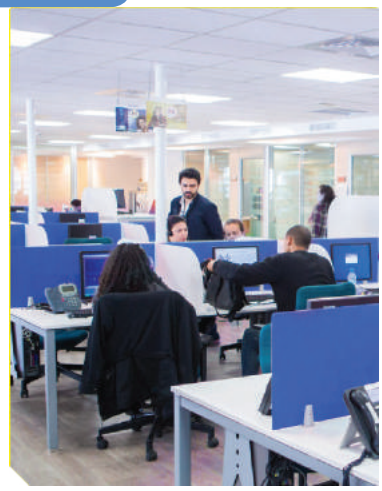
Strategic sector with tremendous opportunities

The Digital sector is one of the strategic levers allowing economic and social transformation in Morocco; on the one hand, Digital is one of the most value-creating sectors in terms of economic and social indicators, in Morocco and more globally, and on the other hand, Digital is an essential pillar of other sectors

7 Bn USD
Export turnover

1St
IT infrastructure in North Africa

2nd
African country with the fastest fixed broadband

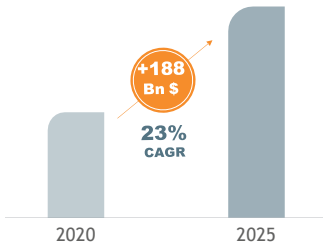


IDEAL HUB TO ADDRESS A BOOMING GLOBAL DIGITAL MARKET

3 key drivers behind

- **Globalization** of R&D and engineering by large IT groups
- Growth of **high-tech** industries, especially in developed countries
- **Talent** scarcity and geographic mismatch between supply and demand of engineer

A growing global engineering and R&D services market



Source : Technavio market report 2021

Morocco, ideal location to capture global market

GMT+1 time zone
facilitating communications with the USA (GMT-5) and Asia (GMT+5/6)

Young & attractive **Talent**

Located at **the gate of Europe**

Multilingual population
>Spoken languages :
Arabic, French, English, Spanish and more

AN ATTRACTIVE TALENT POOL

GROWING NUMBER OF

- Engineers **trained in Morocco**
- Moroccan students graduating every year **from top international engineering schools**

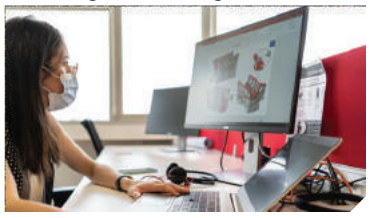
WELL-TRAINED

- **Ad hoc training modules** jointly developed with investors to address industry specific needs
- **Training subsidies**

50 training fields
in IT and network development

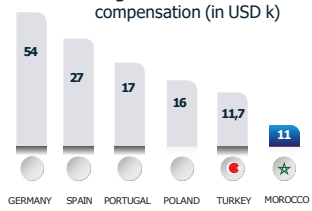
33 training fields
in software design and computer modeling

35% of the engineers trained
in the industries related to the Industrial Acceleration Plan (PAI) concern IT, outsourcing and CAD design



COMPETITIVE

Engineer - Median annual compensation (in USD k)



MULTILINGUAL TALENTS

- **4 languages spoken by Moroccans** : Arabic, English, French, Spanish and more

WORLD CLASS TECHNOPARKS

4 TECHNOPARKS

- More than 280 stratups and firms permanently
- +82% stratup success rate
- 93% satisfaction rate
- more than 1000 companies supported since 2001

WHY MOROCCO?

3rd Outsourcing destination in Africa*

DIFFERENTIATING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES
- Well trained talent pool
- World-class business parks
- HighTelecom and internet connectivity
- Attractive set of government incentives

AGILITY AND RESILIENCE TO THE INDUSTRY'S CRISES
- Covid-19 crisis : Government support
- Climate crisis :Decarbonization of outsourcing services

*Global services location index 2021 by AT Kearney

SERVICES OUTSOURCING AT A GLANCE

Strategic sector with tremendous opportunities
Outsourcing is one of the fastest growing industries in the Kingdom, placing Morocco among the top three African destinations for the sector.

It is a thriving sector thanks to its proven agility and adaptability and highly qualified services recognized worldwide.

1.5 Bn USD — Export turnover*

1st — IT infrastructure in Africa**

1st — North African country with the fastest fixed broadband***

*Morocco exchange office
**The TOP500 table - November 2020
***AKAMAI- a global content delivery network and cloud services company

OFFICIAL RANKING

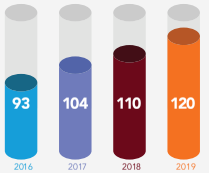
- **Competitive** country in **North Africa** in terms of level of **productivity***
- In Africa in terms of **internet users***
- Most attractive **investment destination** in Africa**

*Global Competitiveness Report 2019 by World Economic Forum
**Where to invest in Africa 2020 by Rand Merchant Bank

A COMPETITIVE TALENT POOL WITH STRONG

JOB EVOLUTION

Evolution of service outsourcing jobs (in thousands)



120.000+ jobs in the sector

+9% Average Annual Growth Rate (AAGR)

1/3 of population between 20 and 45 years

23,000 engineers /y

YOUNG AND ATTRACTIVE

TALENT POOL

400+ universities and private institutions

152,000 graduate students /y

4 most spoken languages by Moroccans: Arabic, English, French, Spanish and more

National vocational training institution offering dedicated outsourcing programs

EXPERTISE ACROSS

5 ECOSYSTEMS

Customer Relationship Management
- Digital
- Inbound Outbound
- Technical support
- Call Centers

Business Process Outsourcing
- Healthtech
- Human Ressources
- Accounting and finance
- Public sector

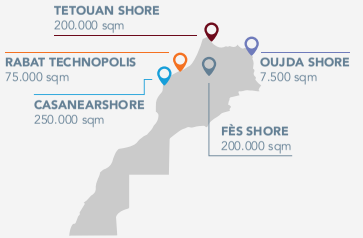
Knowledge Process Outsourcing
- Market Research
- Data analytics
- Specialized publishing
- Legal process

Information Technology Outsourcing
- Infrastructure management
- Application development and maintenance
- IT Consulting

Engineering Services Outsourcing
- Engineering
- R&D
- Knowledge and data management
- Digital simulation

WORLD CLASS OUTSOURCING

IT BUSINESS PARKS



5 Dedicated Zones
- Modularity and flexibility
- Fast Implantation and Expandibility
- Fiber Optic connections
- Access to the latest technologies with "Service Level Agreement"
- One stop shop
- Access to competitive renewable energies
- Availability of new eco-friendly offshoring business parks

THEY TRUST MOROCCO

MOROCCO'S GOVERNMENT

OUTSOURCING OFFER

- Administrative support
- Investment subsidies
- Incentives for training
- Attractive tax framework

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Morocco's Migration Policy Highlighted at Istanbul's Global Parliamentary Conference on Migration

Morocco's migration policy is based on the main fundamentals of human rights and cooperation with neighboring countries, stated MP Ahmed Touizi in Istanbul.

"Morocco attaches great importance to international cooperation within the framework of a comprehensive approach to the migration issue," said Touizi who is leading Morocco's delegation to the Global Parliamentary Conference on migration in Istanbul.

The parliamentarian, who chairs the Authenticity and Modernity group at the House of Representatives (Lower House), stressed the need to strengthen parliamentary cooperation to exchange expertise and experiences and promote partnerships with civil society and international organizations.

> Morocco continues its efforts to fight against illegal migration by dismantling illegal migration networks, said Mustapha Radad of the RNI Group.

For his part, Kamal Ait Mik of the National Rally of Independents (RNI) group at the House of Advisors (Upper House) called for a collective commitment to migration management and the implementation of ambitious strategies to regularize the status of migrants and provide them with adequate social conditions.

"This collective effort will help combat hate speech against migrants, promote cooperation and strengthen solidarity between countries of the south and north and within the African continent," he said.

MP Khadouj Slassi of the Socialist group at the Lower House stressed the need to adopt a proactive approach and act collectively to address the challenges of migration, especially in the context marked by several crises, including climate change.

Morocco continues its efforts to fight against illegal migration by dismantling illegal migration networks, said Mustapha Radad of the RNI Group.

Hassan Chamis, a member of the Authenticity and Modernity group at the Upper House highlighted the effective role of the African Migration

Observatory in Morocco, noting that the Kingdom has put in place several reforms and programs to regularize the situation of migrants and ensure favorable living conditions and dignity.

Co-hosted by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Global Parliamentary Conference on migration (June 21-22) provides an opportunity for parliamentarians to take stock of the state of implementation of the global covenants and the old and new challenges that stand in the way of collective, bilateral and national action.

Morocco's Ambassador to the UN, H.E. Mr. Omar Hilale

Morocco's Migration Strategy Based on Symbiosis Between Royal Vision, International Agenda - Ambassador to UN

New York (United Nations) - The strategy adopted by Morocco on migration is part of the natural symbiosis between the vision of HM King Mohammed VI and the international agenda on migration, said H.E. Mr. Hilale, Kingdom's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN, on Friday.

Speaking at the plenary session of the 1st International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), H.E. Mr. Hilale stressed that the action of Morocco "is neither circumstantial nor opportunistic. It rather embodies a natural symbiosis between principles and projections."

"A symbiosis between the Vision of His Majesty King Mohammed VI combining responsibility and humanism declined in the National Strategy for Immigration and Asylum and the international agenda on migration based on the same values," he explained during this Forum devoted to the review of the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration adopted in Marrakech in 2018.

The Ambassador also highlighted "the convergence of the Marrakech Pact with the African agenda on migration, for the promotion of which Morocco works tirelessly under the leadership of His Majesty the King" on the migration issue within the African Union, noting that the promises of the Pact and the African Agenda on migration are complementary.

"Therefore, a coherent scheme is emerging around a vision and a conviction," he noted, citing a passage from a speech by His Majesty King Mohammed VI in which the Sovereign emphasizes: "It is for us to consolidate the coherence between the national, regional and global commitment, and to get closer to the objective of optimizing and organizing migration instead of fighting it."

H.E. Mr. Hilale noted that Morocco's commitments in the field of migration are part of this effort. "They meet national needs with international repercussions. They are realistic, ambitious and multipartite, in that they are pan-societal and pan-governmental," he said.

> Announcing that migration will be taken into account for the first time in the national census to be conducted in 2024, the Moroccan diplomat also said that a module on international migration will be integrated into the permanent national employment survey.

Announcing that migration will be taken into account for the first time in the national census to be conducted in 2024, the Moroccan diplomat also said that a module on international migration will be integrated into the permanent national employment survey.

"We will ensure the permanent integration of the human rights dimension in policies affecting migration," he said, noting that Morocco will implement, with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other UN agencies, programs dealing with the impact of climate change on migration and inclusion.

He also expressed Morocco's willingness to provide training on migration in all these expressions to Arab and African francophone countries.

H.E. Mr. Hilale also noted that Morocco advocates for a cross-cutting approach to the migration issue, pointing out that through a look at Africa embodied by the African Migration Observatory in Rabat, Morocco vitalizes knowledge of the facts.

"Through the 5+5 configuration at the Mediterranean level, the Kingdom has supported the adoption of a clear roadmap for better governance," he said, adding that the Kingdom has opted, through the organization of the 1st Conference of the regional review of the Pact in the Arab region, for a coordinated approach and solidarity in a space sedimented with human movements.

He also emphasized the need to comply with the spirit and the letter of the Marrakech Pact "for those who try to normalize the migration phenomenon and act with responsibility and humanity."

"For those who try to experience the ambition and ownership, the obligation is to strengthen its commitments qualitatively and quantitatively. For the path that emerges can't be fully surveyed until the implementation of the Pact is not generalized," said the Ambassador, stating that respect for the human rights of migrants, regardless of their status," is the compass of our common action.

Referring to the 1st International Migration Review Forum, Mr. Hilale noted that this conclave is synonymous with a multilateral commitment, the result of successive contributions based on consultation, sharing and action.

He recalled in this regard the relevance of the Report of the UN Secretary General on the implementation of the Marrakech Pact, which emphasized the imperative of responsible management and solidarity of the migration issue.

He also said that the organization of regional meetings has allowed to combine adaptation and ownership by giving the Pact a strong regional dimension, noting that the adoption of the Rabat Declaration of the champion countries of migration has consolidated a movement in progress.

"Both a milestone and a new beginning, the first edition of the IMRF is above all an opportunity to measure the implementation of the Marrakech Pact, the breadcrumb trail of our common action," he said, adding that if the collective commitment is essential, so is the individual responsibility of States.

"Taken up by my country at an embryonic stage, the Pact must be constantly irrigated and strengthened," concluded the ambassador.

The 1st International Migration Review Forum, which brought together member states, observers, representatives of the UN system in addition to stakeholder groups, examined progress made at the local, national, regional and global levels in implementing the Marrakech Pact and addressed further concrete actions to better protect and support the world's more than 281 million migrants through changes in policies and practices.

The event culminated in the adoption of an inter-governmentally negotiated declaration on progress.

African Migration Observatory in Morocco Arose from HM the King's Vision for Migration in Africa

Addis Ababa - The African Migration Observatory in Morocco arose from the vision that His Majesty King Mohammed VI has for migration in Africa, says the Report of HM King Mohammed VI, Leader on the issue of Migration, on the follow-up to the operationalization of the African Migration Observatory in Morocco, presented Sunday before the 35th Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly, held in Addis Ababa.

It is one of the two flagship proposals contained in the African Agenda on Migration that the Sovereign presented to the 30th Summit of Heads of

State and Government of the African Union, in January 2018, stresses the report, presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates, H.E. Mr. Nasser Bourita, who represents the Sovereign at this 35th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly.

"My proposal has passed through the institutions of the African Union: At the 31st African Union Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Nouakchott, on 1st and 2nd July 2018, the African Migration Observatory was set up as a new Organ of the African Union by Decision 695 of the Assembly (Assembly/AU/Dec.695 (XXXI)). The Assembly endorsed Decision 771 of the Peace and Security Council, in which it was agreed to establish the Observatory, following to my proposal. Similarly, Decision 782 of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, dated 27 June 2019, requested the African Union Commission +to accelerate the establishment of the Migration Observatory in Morocco+", the Sovereign emphasized in the report.

> Only a few years after its return to the African Union, Morocco is pleased to host an African Union institution which, what is more, deals with an extremely important issue for our African continent.

For its part, the Kingdom of Morocco has spared no effort to create the right conditions for the operationalization of the Observatory. Thus, on the sidelines of the Intergovernmental Conference for the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco and the African Union signed, on December 10, 2018, in Marrakech, the Headquarters Agreement for the setting up of the African Migration Observatory, the report adds.

The Headquarters Agreement established the legal framework whereby the Observatory is established and carries out its functions and activities in the Kingdom of Morocco. Morocco has fulfilled all the commitments contained in that agreement, in particular by providing the necessary means for the actual start of the activities of the African Migration Observatory, according to the report.

The Statutes of the Observatory were adopted at the 33rd African Union Summit of Heads of State and Government held from 9 to 11 February 2020.

Based on the above legal framework and in compliance with those institutional decisions, the process culminated in the official inauguration of the African Migration Observatory in Rabat, on 18 December 2020, symbolically coinciding with International Migrants Day.

"This inauguration is one of the many concrete manifestations of my mandate as Leader of the African Union on the issue of migration. It has a threefold significance: for Morocco, for Africa, and for cooperation between Morocco and the other African countries", the Sovereign said in the report.

Only a few years after its return to the African Union, Morocco is pleased to host an African Union institution which, what is more, deals with an extremely important issue for our African continent.

As indicated at the 28th Summit of the African Union, "As soon as the Kingdom becomes a member and is able to contribute to the agenda of activities, its action will (…) help bring about unity and progress. This is precisely what we are doing through the Observatory", HM the King noted in this report.

Morocco Plans to Become Arms Producer

On July 13, 2022 Council of Ministers, chaired by His Majesty King Mohammed VI, approved a draft decree creating the post of military attaché to the Kingdom's Embassy in India.

The Defence Attaché of Morocco, Col. Abdelmajid Zeroual has since joined the Embassy in New Delhi. It will lead to the development of defence cooperation with India.

In latest news, Morocco is planning to establish a domestic arms industry with a focus on manufacturing drones, according to a statement by Morocco's Minister Delegate to the Head of Government, in charge of the National Defence Administration, Mr. Abdellatif Loudiyi.

In June 2021, Morocco's Council of Ministers adopted law 10.20 on defence and security materials and equipment, arms, and ammunition. The text set out the legal framework for the manufacture, transport, trade, import, and export of military equipment.

Morocco's debut in the global group of arms manufacturers represents a turning point for the country's defence industry, given that the country is currently reliant on arms supplies from the US, France, and the UK. China and Israel have recently emerged as key defence partners for Morocco while India is similarly developing defence ties.

According to the 2023 finance bill, Morocco is set to allocate MAD 119.8 billion ($11 billion) for its defence budget, up by nearly MAD 4 billion ($369 million) compared to last year.

The increase in the defence budget is likely to be directed to the development of the country's emerging arms industry, turning the country from a major importer of arms to a potential regional hub for the manufacturing of drones and other defence equipment.

The Indian experience can also provide learning lessons to the country given that India, a former importer of arms, has succeeded in establishing a domestic defence within a few years. In 2014, the country launched a major national programme, dubbed "Made in India," to attract investment, develop its manufacturing infrastructure, and boost capacity-building and innovation.

The strategy helped expedite the country's defence sector and boosted its arms exports by 334% in the span of five years. Today, New Delhi is exporting a variety of arms and ammunition to over 75 countries. ■

Source: Morocco World News

Morocco Participates in Biennial Defence Exhibition DefExpo 2022

A high level delegation from Morocco led by Air Marshal General El Abed Alaoui Bouhamid accompanied by the Ambassador of His Majesty the King to India, H.E. Mohamed Maliki, took part in DefExpo 2022, organised in Gandhinagar, State of Gujarat, from 18 to 22 October 2022.

General Alaoui Bouhamid led the Moroccan defence delegation also to the 2nd India-Africa Defence Dialogue. The visiting delegation had many activities and attended seminars during their stay in Gandhinagar.

According to Ministry of Defence of India, the event was an opportunity to discuss security and defense cooperation prospects between India and African countries, focusing on capacity building, training, cyber security, maritime security and counter-terrorism. The mega defence expo focuses on land, air, naval and homeland security systems.

NTPC and MASEN, Two Major Players in the Renewable Energy

NTPC-Masen Agreement

NTPC and MASEN (Moroccan Agency for Sustainable Energy) signed an agreement during the 17th CII EXIM Conclave on India-Africa growth partnership held in New Delhi. Cooperation in the renewable energy sector has been prominent.

The global energy context is one of reducing carbon emissions and dependence on fossil fuels. In this context, the development of alternative sources is inevitable. In Asia and Africa respectively, NTPC and MASEN are pioneers in renewable energy production.

NTPC is India's largest electric utility. In fact, it has an installed capacity of over 69 GW and plans to exceed 130 GW by 2032. Thus, the company really participates in the economic development of the country.

However, even though it is increasingly developing renewable energy sources, NTPC is still too dependent on fossil fuels. Indeed, out of its 55 power plants, 24 are coal-fired against 11 solar and 1 wind power projects. The rest of the plants are either combined cycle gas/ liquid fuel or hydroelectric.

For MASEN, the situation is different. In fact, the group places the development of renewable resources in Morocco and beyond at the center of its strategy.

This agency is also the lead group for renewable energy projects in Morocco. It therefore contributes to the national objective of increasing the share of these energies in the country's electricity mix by 52% by 2030. In addition, at the end of 2021, the group had 4,109 MW of wind, hydro and solar projects in operation.

With this agreement, the two companies promise to jointly develop renewable energy projects in Africa. The agreement also aims to encourage the sharing of experience, know-how and expertise in the field.

This cooperation could also lead to joint opportunities to develop renewable energy projects in other African countries.

According to the press statement, the MoU was signed in the presence of H.E. Mr. Mohamed Maliki, Ambassador of Morocco to India and Mr. Ujjwal Kanti Bhattacharya, Director (Projects), NTPC Ltd.

The MoU was signed by Rachid Bayed, Executive Director (Operations) and acting Director of Development, MASEN, and Narinder Mohan Gupta, Chief General Manager and Head of International Business from NTPC.

The pact signing function was part of the session titled 'Collaboration for Energy Security and Harnessing Alternative Sources'.

A relationship that becomes a bridge to prosperity.

Since the last 60 years, India and Morocco have cultivated and cherished a strong relationship. Being the largest exporter of rock Phosphate and Phos Acid to India, Morocco has immensely contributed to India's agri-business. Paradeep Phosphates Ltd further strengthens this bond with Maroc Phosphore S. A., a wholly owned subsidiary of OCP, Morocco, and looks forward to harvesting value and prosperity.

PPL Paradeep Phosphates Limited

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"Morocco Can Attract More Business from India"

Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates

The Editor of Morocco in Focus, while in Casablanca city, interacted with Indian businesses. Here in an Interview with Mr. Amit Kumar Rajput, General Manager & Head (North Africa) of L & T's (The Larsen & Toubro) power transmission and distribution in Africa, journalist Harun Riaz, asks questions about existing business, scope for expansion and overall experience.

Mr. Rajput, why it has taken L & T Construction so many years to start a business in Morocco? Has the Kingdom of Morocco been open for Indian business for many years?

The Larsen & Toubro Construction's power transmission & distribution journey in Africa started in 2013. It began in Nigeria and today you see we are present in 12 countries, so I will not say that we are new to Morocco. Our first business venture took off in Morocco in December 2017.

And now we are in the process of opening our local company which is called "Larsen and Toubro Star New", which is a locally registered company.

Because we are very keen to create jobs for Moroccans and to bring in investment to contribute to the development of the Kingdom of Morocco.

How has been the journey over the past five years? How will you describe Morocco as a business destination for Indian businesses and are you getting support from the Government and also from the local business community?

The business journey in any country when you enter there, you will always have beginning teething problems, you know, but you can always sort them out gradually. We had challenges in the beginning but we sorted them out and now it is quite smooth and it is very good for Indian companies, no doubt about that. We have business opportunities as well as support from the Moroccan Government.

There are certain restrictions like visa regulations and all that and from time to time for sure a lot of help from the Indian Government and also from the Government of Morocco.

Mr. Rajput Sir, what about Morocco as a potential business destination where more Indian companies can come in and enter into different sectors of the economy?

Definitely. If you see the economy of this country, you know…wherein the major portion of GDP revenue comes from agriculture or from the tourism sector, so here for Indian companies, who have good competency in other sectors of the economy, especially the IT sector, they can contribute to the growth and positive change in Morocco.

The Embassy of Morocco in New Delhi and the Embassy of India in Rabat also encourage other Indian companies to come and set up business in the Kingdom of Morocco.

Morocco, geographically, located in the Mediterranean is quite close to Europe and I have noticed European influence over business, in terms of work culture, technology used, and ethics. Do you face competition from European companies?

We do have a challenge from them, reason being…what's happening is, if we bring any material from Europe, you don't have to pay the duty, on the contrary, you have to bring material from India there you have to pay heavy duty, like there is a something you can say, entry barrier created by European Union for Indian businesses who are working in Morocco, you are taking this matter, you know, with the Government of Morocco, for sure we will have some success and hence, that is where the Government removes, you know, duty issues on other countries, especially Indian companies, for sure the project of cost, especially I am talking about EPC projects in Morocco, will come drastically down because there is a pseudo market level which is created.

After the level playing field and duty reduction, for sure, it will come down then.

Based on my experience of covering business events in Africa, including Morocco involving Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), the three main demands by African countries are technology transfer, joint ventures, and such projects, which can create jobs for local Africans. Is it possible in the case of Morocco also that we can have joint India-Morocco projects and also technology transfer which is suitable for the local environment?

In L&T we always believe in creating jobs locally, we never believe in…you know…that you do a job midway and go back and you do not know what the users will do…see, in construction, who are my brand ambassador, my brand ambassadors are the users, if I do a construction either it is a power transmission line or substation, if my users are happy, for sure they themselves

Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates

General Manager and Head (North Africa) of L & T, Mr. Amit Kumar Rajput at his Casablanca Office

will be brand ambassadors and I don't have to give any advertisement in any outlet or newspaper and all that.

If they are satisfied with my output, I am sure they will dig me out where so ever I am hidden, our company will get the next assignment. That's the beauty of this. So, what we do is we ensure that our stakeholders, like our client or our local society people are skilled and educated on that line, like recently when we completed a job, what we did is we locally hired lot of staff here and we told them, that the said job may go for 1 year or 2 years but in case you develop the skill for you it is the permanent employment opportunity, so they develop these skills and left then and now today there are a couple of local citizens who have got the jobs in electrical industry or likewise. We always believe in creating employment and long term employment for the locals and this goes across all verticals, you know various countries of Africa or worldwide…we believe in that.

What about joint venture possibilities?

L & T is open to joint venture options, it is not that we are server as if we can add value to the

Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates

Group photo of staff members of L & T's Casablanca Office with Mr. Rajput and Journalist Riaz

overall system, we can for sure make joint ventures, but right now in construction industry, we are using our expertise, material and know-how.

What can the Government of Morocco or the local industry do in immediate terms, near future, like in India we have an ongoing government strategy of Make in India, the Indian Government is promoting it? Can Morocco also emerge as a manufacturing hub?

See, it is a very good question which you have asked me, the strategic location if you see Morocco, it's wonderful place like, here you can feed entire Europe, you can even feed the US requirement as well in America, South America, North America so here if you put and then one more thing within Africa itself you have to see because in Africa we have a treaty, you know, there is no taxation within African countries, so if we set up a factory or if you have some investment here, you can fetch and cover almost, you know half of the globe.

So, strategically it is a very nice, clean place but here what happens is there are certain support required by the Government side, so if that comes then for sure it will become very friendly country like specifically for an Indian company, you know, like visa on arrival, the business, the ease you know… will come only once you know, you give these type of facility so those facility has to be increased, once it is increased then it will become very free trade between both the countries.

So, visa on arrival, or multiple entry visa, is this also the demand by the Indian business community?

Yes, there is. Big demand, like… see, multiple visa, anyways it is there but visa on arrival is what we are looking for because recently I have heard that UAE Government is considering this facility for Indians to convert into visa on arrival, just expecting, I don't know whether they have declared or not but as per my knowledge the UAE Government is going to declare it soon.

to work on the project, you are executing the project, are you also able to get skilled workforce in Morocco as well?

Getting a skilled workforce especially for the construction industry is difficult. But what happens is you get expertise from India and then you have to train local staff. And in case of Morocco, good thing is that local staff is getting trained fast. The Moroccans want to acquire new knowledge, new concept by way of being trained by Indian technical experts.

> So, if Morocco can implement visa on arrival facility for the business community from India, then the Kingdom will become very business friendly.

Already this facility is there in UAE for those Indians having valid US visa, so you will get on arrival visa but for all others also they were about to announce it shortly, it will come in the market so I wish that it happens in Morocco.

So, if Morocco can implement visa on arrival facility for the business community from India, then the Kingdom will become very business friendly.

Rajput Sir, L & T, Larsen and Toubro, any vertical including the power and transmission, it's a specific niche field where you need trained men power so when you enter Morocco and start

I am confident that as the time goes by, I expect a better business environment between Morocco and India. Because in the past five years while L& T was implementing projects in Morocco, we have observed a lot of improvements. When issues have popped up, Government has provided assistance. The different branches and departments have replied and understood the problem of a foreign entity and extended assistance.

"Morocco Offers New Opportunities for Indian Companies"

In its effort to reach out to Indian companies in Morocco, Journalist Harun Riaz, spoke with Mr. Vineet Pawaria, Co-Founder and CEO of moneyIN, an instant payment solution fintech startup. Excerpts from the Interview held at Casablanca city;

Mr. Pawaria, how your interest in Morocco grew and when did you come?

First I came in 2011 and at that time we were into ship breaking business so we were looking for some opportunities in Africa and we selected Morocco. We did a lot of research and development in four or five countries but we find Morocco safer and more organized if we compare it with other African countries and that's how we entered Morocco. We did this ship cutting for two years and then we switched into mining because the Government has some policies, they ban export of the iron from this country and then we switched into mining.

See, challenges and difficulties are everywhere, all over the world but because it is a different part of the globe, Arab and African mixed culture. Initially we needed to adapt to local people and their habits, but once we realized the work culture and how to manage with the people, we changed our way of working and we approached the Embassy of India local Ministries, Moroccan Embassy in New Delhi, so we were directed to the concerned Ministries and administrations, they really helped us.

Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates

Mr. Vineet Pawaria, Co-founder and CEO of moneyIN in conversation with Journalist Riaz at Casablanca in July 2022

A follow-up question. The Government of Morocco has extended a helping hand to Indian companies, yet they have taken time to start a business in the Kingdom. Why?

Observation : the answer to this question as formulated maybe interpreted as if Morocco have just started to promote and facilitate foreign investments. Thus, our country had implemented several sectorial policies that encouraged investment and job creation, - so that, I suggest that this question and its response could be removed.

See, initially there are limited opportunities if I can say I realized during my 10 years here, of course first is mining then there are some opportunities in medical fields, infrastructure, and then energy sector. Indian companies have these kinds of opportunities in India and other parts of the world. There was investing, they had their set up, that part of the world. These Moroccan, I think, they did not approach in that way so that people may know what they are doing now. Now they are doing one program called "Morocco Now" . They are in touch with all diplomats and all countries, they are promoting now. Now people have started to know

what kind of opportunities there are in Morocco.

Since the last five or six years number of companies coming have been exploring Morocco, making enquiries, investing and starting business.

Is the Indian Government also extending support to Indian businesses wishing to establish in Morocco?

See, I have been involved with the Indian Embassy more actively since the last four to five years. It is now actively engaging the Indian business community, arranging meetings with local reputed companies and finding a way to collaborate with help of local Ministries and I will mention the name of the last Ambassador Mr. Sambhu Kumaran. He met and listened to the Indian business community, and was involved in solving the issues faced.

Efforts were also made to bring Indian and Moroccan communities together on a single platform. It really supported local companies because if you have some problems and if you need some contacts, he really helped Indian companies and people to connect with the Government machinery, Ministries, etc.

What more can be done to facilitate more Indian businesses in Morocco?

By organizing and promoting business events so that the Indian companies will know the actual opportunities and how many companies are working here and what kind of difficulties they are facing and what is their journey and what is the success rate and now what is the current policies because now Morocco is changing with the world and now they are legally moving ahead and is one of the best countries in Africa with tremendous opportunities.

There are business opportunities as far as mining is concerned, pharmaceutical industries, energy sector and of course now in digital banking and payment solutions.

How will you describe your business entity in Morocco?

See, our main business area is in mining so we have been doing this mining exploration since 2017. We finished more or less like more than 35 permits for exploration in 2019 but then unfortunately COVID came, so it was a break but now again we are starting that activity, but now in FinTech industries because there are a lot of opportunities in digital banking and payment solutions. So, we are launching our financial product, we already created a company named «CapOne Research SL» and now we are launching MoneyIn. It's a payment solution likePaytm and PhonePay, like mobile payment solution.

Most of the growing economies look towards attracting foreign direct investment (FDI). Morocco has expedited this process by launching Morocco Now via AMDIE. Your comments.

True. The Geographical location of Morocco is close to Europe and it is also a gateway of Africa. The country has world class, you see highways, national, regional and local roads which are in high standards. The fast train TGV that is from Casablanca to Tangier is running. Now, Morocco is boosting train infrastructure from Casablanca to Marrakech but there is a huge investment possibility developing in trains from Marrakech to South of Morocco.

Do you plan to settle in Morocco for a long time?

Until now, yes because we found some good opportunities in mining and digital banking so I think for us we have now further planned for a minimum 15 to 20 years, rest we will see how it goes.

There is a lot of opportunities in Southern Morocco, so the Moroccan Government is exploring and encouraging private and public investments there.

Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates

Laayoune and Dakhla offer enormous investment opportunities in various sectors and are connected by road to Sub-Saharan Africa.

Morocco to Provide World's Third Cheapest Green Hydrogen in 2050

Morocco is expected to have the third lowest green hydrogen production cost in 2050 ranging between roughly $0.7/ kgH2 and $1.4/kgH2, the International and Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) said in its latest report.

IRENA recently shared forecasts for energy production costs in the third part of its latest report titled: "Global Hydrogen Trade to Meet the 1.5°C Climate Goals."

The study found that China's "high-quality solar resources" can provide the Asian powerhouse with the world's lowest production cost for green hydrogen in 2050, ranging between $0.65/kgH2 and roughly $1.2/kgH2.

Chile comes second in the ranking ahead of Morocco, Columbia, Australia, Mexico, Oceania, and India. The United States placed 9th with a minimum cost of $0.78/kgH2.

Morocco's installed renewable energy capacity and its plans to increase its share in the energy mix to up to 80% in 2050 as well as cut greenhouse gas emissions by 45.5% in 2030 reflect the country's ambition to accelerate the green energy transition and obtain net-zero by 2050 - the internationally agreed upon deadline.

Morocco also adopted last year a green hydrogen roadmap to accelerate the national transition to green hydrogen with the support of partners within and beyond the newly-created African Green Alliance such as UNIDO.

However, the high cost of electrolysis technology - used to create green hydrogen from water with renewable energy - remains a major burden for the adoption of the relatively new technology.

As Morocco is faced with water scarcity, IRENA expects the country to lose 63% of its hydrogen potential in the next three decades, which represents an additional challenge to the North African country. Yet, desalination can provide a solution to the problem.

"In water-scarce regions, desalination could be used,"

IRENA said. "Even in regions far from the coastline, water transport could be considered, which will increase the cost of water supply, but it will still represent a relatively small share of the total hydrogen production cost."

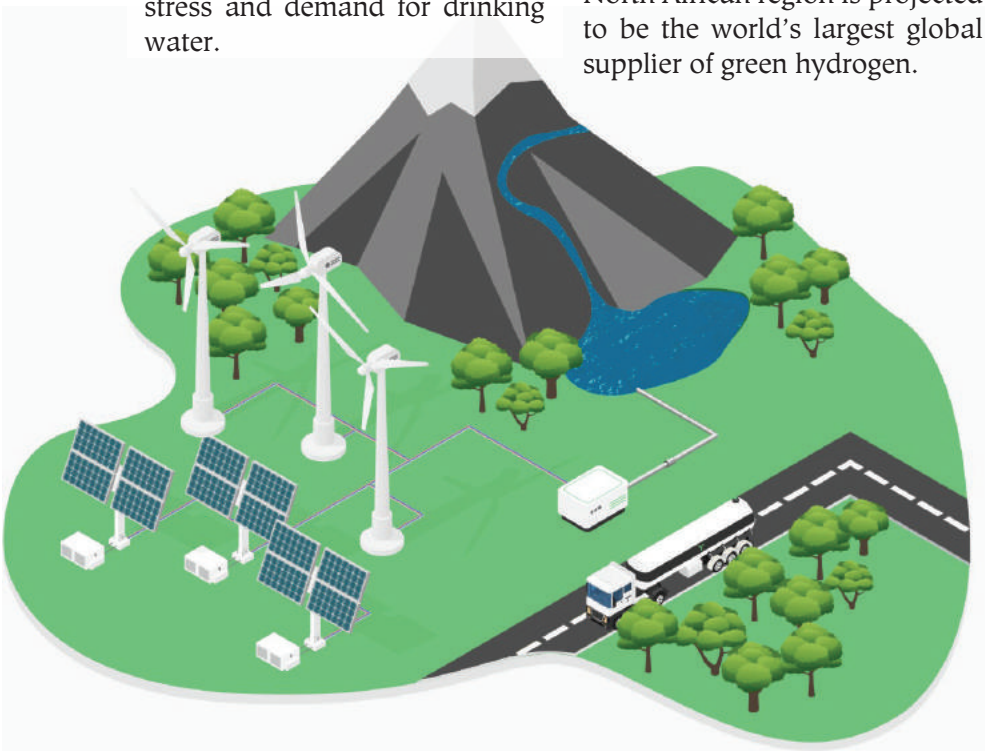
Well aware of its water scarcity challenges, Morocco has recently invested in desalination plants in Dakhla, Laayoune, and Casablanca to address water stress and demand for drinking water.

However, the technology raises concerns about its energy and environmental bills, including the impact of salty wastewater on marine life and the need for green energy to support the operations.

By benefitting from the global trend in favor of green hydrogen, Morocco can use the new technology along with its renewable energy assets to meet local and regional energy demands in transportation and heavy industries as well as export to Europe.

But some experts warn of an increased focus on export at the expense of local demand, saying that this will lead to increasing demand for coal electricity in the national market.

As a leading renewable energy producer, Morocco currently holds a 19.3% share of the total blue and green hydrogen projects in the MENA. Recent research by the Abu-Dhabi-based Clean Energy Business Council (CEBC) found that the Middle East and North African region is projected to be the world's largest global supplier of green hydrogen.



Green hydrogen is considered to be a vital asset for a global transition to net-zero emissions, as it produces hydrogen through a process called electrolysis which splits water with power produced by renewable energies. Meanwhile, blue hydrogen powers electrolysis with fossil fuels and then uses carbon capture technologies to cut greenhouse emissions.

Thus, blue hydrogen provides a less polluting transition option towards green hydrogen which is expected to play a "vital role.. in decarbonization and in the clean energy transition," according to CEBC.

The race toward blue and green hydrogen technology appears to be "significant" in the MENA.

CEBC Hydrogen and Energy Storage Working Group recently found that the participation of MENA countries in blue and green hydrogen initiatives grew from 11% to 89% between 2020 and 2021.

The UAE has notably led the regional race with a share of 29% of total projects, ahead of Morocco and Egypt at 19.3% each. Oman followed third with a 12.9% share followed by Tunisia and Saudi Arabia with a tie at 6.4%. Algeria and Bahrain then followed with 3.2% each.

According to CEBC, "pound for pound, hydrogen has about three times the energy of fossil fuels." In such a context, Morocco has adopted a hydrogen strategy to accelerate its energy transition towards green hydrogen. The country further plans to produce 183,000 tonnes of green ammonia from green hydrogen to secure the decarbonization of its fertilizer industry. ■

"Moroccan Start Ups Achieving Success"

The Director General, Ms. Lamiae Benmakhlouf of the popular IT hub known as Technopark is upbeat about the future of start-ups in Morocco. An interview by journalist Harun Riaz.

The Director General of Technopark, Ms. Lamiae Benmakhlouf, with her colleagues, Start Up Coordinator Ms. Hind Talamsi, Support & Partnerships Manager Ms. Ouafa Oualfi in conversation with visiting Journalist Riaz at Casablanca in July 2022

Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates

The first question about Morocco is that, how many jobs the Moroccan start-ups have created? And have these jobs been sustained?

Okay, so in Morocco, start-ups are created by people that are not directly from the university. So young Moroccans prefer to have two to three years of work experience in companies before starting their own start-ups, and every start-up when it set up its business recruits between 3 to 5 talented people. So these are our numbers. So 3 to 5 in the beginning, but then after 2 or 3 years, they can have until 10 or 12 employees.

Okay, So my question was, so far, how many jobs Moroccan start-ups must have created?

So it depends, so I don't have the numbers. In general, I have just some numbers for Technopark. So now we have our hosting 500 start-ups and they employ about 2500 people.

Another important question, the start-up cannot start or succeed without having seed capital, without attracting capital, from Moroccan investors and from international investors. So far, how much FDI the Moroccan start-ups have brought it into the country?

So this question is critical for Morocco, because until now, Morocco is not in the well ranked in attracting foreign investors, but we are working on that. So now we've attracted 700 million dollars to help start innovative start-up and start their business. And it was very important for us in Morocco, it was another stage, because we have seen a lot of start-up creating their business. We have seen some foreign investors that come to Morocco and start to invest in our start-ups. We have seen a lot of VC funds, Moroccan VC funds and financing start-ups, but we are not happy really with the numbers in attracting foreign investors. We have to work really on it with the Government, with Moroccan NGOs, and with other institutions.

Recently, an Israeli company, which is doing research into start-ups, published an article in Morocco world news. And it says that the ranking of Moroccan start-ups has

grown up. And have you seen the article?

No, really? No, I have not seen it. But yes, a Start-up American start-ups are growing in terms of innovation in terms of exporting their services to other countries. But you know, the Moroccan market is very attractive. So we should absolutely help our start-ups to go outside. And we should have also the Moroccan Government to attract more investors to invest in start-ups.

So what the Government is doing to encourage and assist start-ups?

I think there is a new law for encouraging investments (Investment Charter). And I think that we all are concerned to attract and support more investors in Morocco, and start-ups are reliever to attract investors.

Morocco according to various media reports also seems to have suffered a brain drain. Have Moroccan start-ups, you know, preventing the brain drain, including from the field of science, especially medical science?

Yes, I think that all start-ups based in Technopark suffer from that. And you know, that they recruit talented people from the university since the last year. And they bring them to work with them. And just 6 months, 10 months later, they quit.

And all start-ups in our survey mentioned that they cannot make them more than one year in their stuff and it's very critical for start-ups that are starting. Second thing, Multinational companies in Morocco propose to these talented people high salaries that start-up cannot pay. So they move to this multinational or we have French Tech, we have some foreign programs that give a lot of incentives to these young people, and they attract them to go abroad.

Moroccan start up Tectra is working out of Technopark. It helps in the recruitment processes.

The Director General of Technopark, Ms. Lamiae Benmakhlouf, with her colleagues, Start Up Coordinator Ms. Hind Talamsi, Support & Partnerships Manager Ms. Ouafa Oualfi in conversation with visiting Journalist Riaz at Casablanca in July 2022

Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates

And yes, it's a very critical issue for Moroccan start-ups and for Morocco as a country, because the best young professionals immigrate and perform outside the country, and Morocco pays a lot for making ingenious talents and then they go outside. So the country is losing money, performance and competitiveness.

More conservative Start-ups suffer from that. But we are working with the Government and the other players to set up a strategy with incentives that could maintain these talents in Morocco, and make them return to their home country to contribute to its economic performance. ■

"Sumilon Plan To Invest 100 Million Euros in Southern Morocco"

The *Morocco in Focus* spoke with Mr. Rajneesh Kumar Mittal, the Indian origin Founder CEO and Managing Director of Sumilon Eco Pet. In a free wheeling interview, the successful entrepreneur reveals the expansion plan of the company dealing in sustainable business development model. Employing close to 150 Moroccans, the soft spoken Mr. Mittal is upbeat about investment scenario in Morocco. Exerpts are as follows;

The Founder CEO and MD of Sumilon Eco Pet, Mr. Rajneesh Kumar Mittal

Mr. Mittal, how did you choose "Tanger Automotive City" in Morocco, to start your company "Sumilon Eco Pet SARL"?

For me it was just scanning Google Maps and spotting a wonderful geographical location on the crossroad of the Mediterranean Sea & the Atlantic Ocean. That's what excited us to explore. Few calls to Ministry of Industry and with AMDIE, which was very helpful in sharing details and opportunities of investment in Morocco. Once you are in Morocco, Tangier Automotive City (TAC) and Tangier Free Zone with excellent infrastructure and Port of Tangier MED with outstanding connectivity becomes an obvious choice.

Can you kindly describe your area of business and are you subscribing to sustainable development model? Are you getting the support from Tangier Automotive City administration and the Government of Morocco?

We do recycling of PET bottles (Water/ Cola & beverage bottles) into food grade packaging products. It was quite a challenge to set up collection infrastructure but with support of local administrative authorities, it became possible. Being in environment supportive/ circular economy business is quite satisfactory. We are quite clear that while doing something good for environment, you can create sufficient opportunities for community around you.

We are quite focused to produce 100% of our energy needs from solar and wind sources. By 2025, we are aiming to achieve this target, thus not only providing customers green products, but the whole process/ experience of producing a green products becomes green.

TAC and Moroccan government are very supportive on any challenge which comes up.

How has been your business journey and growth in Morocco? How challenging it is for an Indian business company to work in Morocco, in terms of local culture, food, environment, language and local workforce?

We are quite satisfied with our business here, we initially invested in one manufacturing unit here in TAC and now we are increasing our capacity by 150%. We are at the same time working to invest in South of Morocco with a budgeted investment of over Euro 100 million.

Setting up & running a new business in Morocco is quite smooth especially as an International company investing in free zone here. The administrative departments are very supportive & guide you through entire process.

> "Our current team size in Morocco is 140 people out of which only 1 person is from India. You can say we are nearly 100% working with local team. With new investment we will have additional 100 people and 95 % of them are targeted to be from Morocco"

Moroccan food & Culture are quite close to Indian. You will see similar family atmosphere. Locals enjoy lot of Bollywood and that sometime becomes icebreaker.

So far, what is the total Indian investment which has been invested in Morocco and how many Moroccan workforce, are part of Sumilon Eco Pet SARL?

We started with Euro 20 Millions and with additional ongoing investment of Euro 25-30 millions , we will be close to Euro 50 Millions of investment by 2023. The additional Euro 100 million in the South during coming years will take our investment to Euro 150 millions. Our current team size in Morocco is 140 people out of which only 1 person is from India. We are nearly 100% working with local

> My only suggestion to fellow Indian industrialist will be to come here and see the opportunities by themselves, sitting far and only researching through internet will not be sufficient.

The Founder CEO and MD of Sumilon Eco Pet,
Mr. Rajneesh Kumar Mittal

team. With new investment, we will have additional 100 employees and 95 % of them are targeted to be from Morocco

Do you plan to expand your business to other cities of Morocco? If yes, can you kindly provide the details, in terms of investment and hiring of local workforce?

As I said we are working on investment in the South of the Kingdom as it offers excellent opportunities and terrestrial connection with the other countries of Africa. This Continent in our opinion will be the fastest growing one in coming years.

Are you targeting the Moroccan market, or also exporting your product to the neighbouring European market, US market and the African market?

We are 100% export oriented company with our customers in USA/ EU/ UK/ Australia.

The King of Morocco, His Majesty, King Mohammed VI visited India in 2015, to establish strategic ties. And in the past seven years, the number of Indian companies doing business with Morocco has gone up to 40. Samta Mining and HCL are also entering Morocco in mining and IT respectively. What will you advice the Indian investors, if they want to explore business opportunities there?

His Majesty has always been an inspiring, thanks to his visit to India, people of the two countries are closest to each other. We could feel lot of care and love from local community here. Rise of Indian investment and trust in Morocco is due to the fact that this country offers overall a great package for investment. My only suggestion to fellow Indian industrialist will be to come here and see the opportunities by themselves, sitting far and only researching through internet will not be sufficient. ■

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Strategy to Make Morocco a Continental Champion in Vaccine Manufacturing

After the signing of three agreements relating to the project to manufacture the anti-Covid19 vaccine and other vaccines in Morocco on July 5, 2022, in the presence of His Majesty, King Mohammed VI, here are the details.

His Majesty King Mohammed VI inaugurated the vaccine manufacturing facility

Following the signing of three agreements in the presence of His Majesty, King Mohammed VI on Monday, July 5, the strategy to provide Morocco with complete and integrated industrial and biotechnological capacities dedicated to the manufacture of vaccines is becoming clearer.

The objective is to create, within the next five years, a continental champion of vaccines and biotherapies, capable of meeting the continent's short- and long-term health needs.

The project also integrates the pharmaceutical research dimension, clinical development, manufacturing and marketing of much needed biopharmaceutical products on the continent.

The project requires an overall investment of 500 million dollars, or more than 4.4 billion DH, part of which is financed by the Mohammed VI Fund for Investment and another by the consortium of three Moroccan banks (Attijariwafa Bank, BOA Capital and Groupe Banques Populaires).

The public-private partnership is the key word of this project whose ultimate objective is to

ensure Moroccan and African health sovereignty.

A project in three stages:

To achieve this, a roadmap in three phases has been proposed:

Phase 1: to ensure the filling capacity in clean room vials of the anti-covirus 19 vaccine to meet the immediate health need.

This is where the agreement signed between the State and Sinopharm comes in, as well as the one signed between the Ministry of Health and the Moroccan pharmaceutical laboratory Sothema.

Sothema will make available to the State its aseptic filling facilities for the manufacture of the anti-Covid19 vaccine owned by Sinopharm.

This phase starts now and will last until 2022/2023. In other words, the expected end of the pandemic by achieving national and continental herd immunity.

Phase 2: consists of the creation of a new production center for vaccines and biotherapies (active substances and finished products).

This new center has been the subject of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Moroccan State and the company Recipharm. The agreement was also signed by Mr. Othmane Benjelloun as representative of the consortium of Moroccan banks contributing to the financing of the project.

The new aseptic filling production unit requires an investment of $100 million (excluding infrastructure). This unit represents the first step towards vaccine health independence.

The Swedish company Recipharm's contribution to the project is as follows

- Assistance in managing the construction of the plant;
- Training of the work teams in Morocco and Europe in Recipharm's factories;
- Transfer of clean room manufacturing technologies and relevant know-how ;
- Management of the plant in Morocco and guaranteeing the quality of the manufactured batches ;
- Ensuring the viability of the plant and its commercial development on a private management basis ;
- Planning its expansion and growth based on the decisions taken by the board of directors ;
- Making available capacity in Recipharm's plants around the world during the current pandemic.

For this phase, Morocco has set a deadline of 2024. That said, work on this phase also begins this year with the establishment of governance and project management, the start of infrastructure development (land), the creation of a business plan and the creation and execution of a master plan.

The royal vision in this area should ensure Morocco's health autonomy and create the conditions necessary to raise Africa's capacity to produce vaccines and critical therapies," said Samir Machour, an international expert in industrial biotechnology and currently vice-president of Samsung Biologics, during his speech at the signing ceremony.

Phase 3: aims to develop a production of biotherapies, mRNA active ingredients and biosimilars.

This phase starts in 2024 with the objective of creating an African biopharmaceutical and vaccine

innovation cluster in Morocco.

To achieve this, it is envisaged to:

- setting up an incubator hub for the biotechnologies of tomorrow
- the creation of strategic partnerships in biotechnology with scientific institutions
- to promote a network of venture capital to help new startups with a biotechnology vocation
- Encourage the establishment of multinational pharmaceutical companies in R&D in Morocco.

Pharmaceutical industry and biotechnology: Morocco in the big league

The royal vision in this area should ensure Morocco's health autonomy and create the necessary conditions to boost Africa's capacities in the production of critical vaccines and therapies.

For the Moroccan pharmaceutical industry, July 5, is a date to be marked with a white stone. The sector took a decisive step in its evolution. Several agreements were signed that day in front of HM Mohammed VI at the Royal Palace in Fez. A vaccine manufacturing project, against Covid-19 and others, was initiated with an investment of 500 million dollars and the involvement of several organizations, public and private, Moroccan, Chinese and Swedish. The project aims to start in the short term with a production capacity of 5 million doses of Covid-19 vaccine per month, before gradually increasing this capacity in the medium term.

According to several observers, the project to manufacture and syringe the anti-Covid19 vaccine and other vaccines is a clear indication of the Sovereign's great ambition to make the Kingdom a continental hub for vaccine production and distribution. In the background, it is emphasized that the issue at stake goes far beyond the dimension of a national vaccination campaign, however successful it may be. It goes beyond protecting citizens against a potentially serious disease to anticipate the challenge of the future: providing the industrial capacity for local manufacturing of all types of vaccines.

The royal vision in this area should ensure Morocco's health autonomy and create the conditions necessary to raise Africa's capacity to produce vaccines and critical therapies," said Samir Machour, an international expert in industrial biotechnology and currently vice-president of Samsung Biologics, during his speech at the signing ceremony. This vision is built around three important steps, the first of which is an emergency phase, which will start immediately.

Moreover, its relations with the rest of the African continent,

Morocco is emerging as a biotech hub

its geostrategic position and its central role on the continental, regional and Mediterranean levels, as a link between the North and the South, are all factors that allow the Kingdom to opt for these projects. Already a pioneer in the global fight against the Coronavirus, Morocco has just taken a decisive step towards joining the select club of large producers of the anti-Covid19 vaccine, a rare commodity in a world badly affected by the epidemic. Morocco, through the project to manufacture and syringe the anti-Covid 19 vaccine, will become a continental hub in the field of vaccine production, confirms the director of medicine and pharmacy at the Ministry of Health, Bouchra Meddah, quoted by MAP.

The Kingdom adheres today to the African policy to achieve vaccine sovereignty at the continental level, she explains, noting that Africa has received less than 2% of doses of vaccine against Covid-19 at the global level. This is synonymous with a health gap that creates an imbalance in access to vaccines in an exceptional epidemiological context.

That said, thanks to this major project, said the head of the Ministry of Health, Morocco has moved to the rank of vaccine manufacturing countries in the world, which is a qualitative leap and a historic step. The "vaccine sovereignty" has consolidated the content of the national pharmaceutical policy on which the Ministry of Health is working in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO) for the period 2021/2025. With the launch of this project, the pharmaceutical sector in Morocco will experience a qualitative leap in terms of new technologies, methods, mechanisms and high technologies used in the Kingdom, in addition to the presence of Moroccan skills and concerted efforts between the public and private sectors. It must be said that the pharmaceutical industry is already quite developed in Morocco. The Kingdom is, in fact, the second largest in Africa. It produces between 60 and 70% of its needs and exports 10% of its production to the African continent, the Arab world, Asia and Europe. With the signing of these agreements, Morocco is now moving into the production of life-saving drugs, including vaccines and other biological drugs. This will allow the pharmaceutical industry to develop in order to guarantee the country's health security and sovereignty. ■

Morocco is emerging as a biotech hub

It must be said that the pharmaceutical industry is already quite developed in Morocco. The Kingdom is, in fact, the second largest in Africa. It produces between 60 and 70% of its needs and exports 10% of its production to the African continent, the Arab world, Asia and Europe.

MOROCCO NOW
INVEST AND EXPORT

WHY MOROCCO ?

WHY MOROCCO ?

PRO-BUSINESS

Business-friendly environment with political stability, resilient economy and Government incentives

COMPETITIVE

Advanced infrastructure, high qualified human resources and strategic position giving access to potential markets worldwide

SUSTAINABLE

Strong Royal vision with ambitious energy transition plan to make Morocco among the greenest and lowest carbon platforms in the world

PRO-BUSINESS

STABILITY WITH ROYAL VISION

A CONTINUING DRIVE FOR **OPENNESS** AND **DEMOCRACY**

Release energies and restore confidence to accelerate the march towards progress and prosperity for all

The New Developement Model launched by His Majesty King Mohammed VI

- *A productive and diversified economy that creates added value and quality jobs*
- *Human capital strengthened and better prepared for the future*
- *Opportunities for all and a consolidated social link*
- *Resilient territories, anchor points for development*

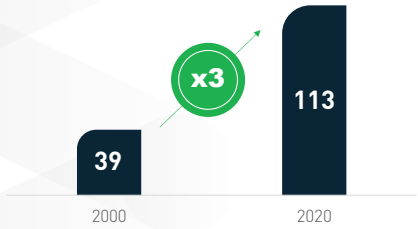
PRO-BUSINESS

RESILIENT ECONOMY

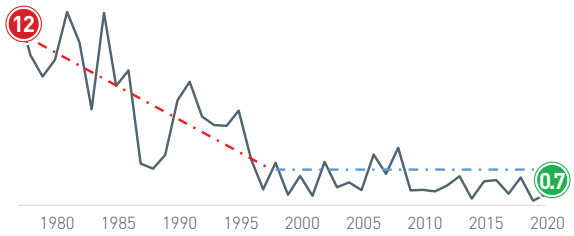
STRONG MACRO-ECONOMIC FUNDAMENTALS

Ranked **1st*** Among 141 countries
in terms of inflation rate stability

GDP has tripled in less than 20 years
(USD Billion)



Stable inflation rate maintained under 2% since 2010
(annual inflation %)



Source : The World Bank / Global Competitiveness Report WEF 2019 (* Among the countries ranked first)

PRO-BUSINESS

BUSINESS-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

EASINESS FOR BUSINESS TO GROWTH

MORE THAN 50 NON DOUBLE TAXATION AND INVESTMENT PROTECTION AGREEMENTS

NO RESTRICTIONS ON CAPITAL FOR NON-RESIDENTS

FREE REPATRIATION OF PROFIT AND CAPITAL FOR NON-RESIDENTS

Source : WEF / RMB

PRO-BUSINESS

GOVERNMENT INCENTIVES

AN ATTRACTIVE INCENTIVE PACKAGE

GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES

- Investment: tailor-made offer for investors.
- Recruitment & Training: financial incentives to cover costs

SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES

- Land, office space, and industrial plants in main economic zones
- Financial support for building and equipment

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

- Support from Moroccan Investment & Export Development Agency (AMDIE): end-to-end assistance

COMPETITIVE

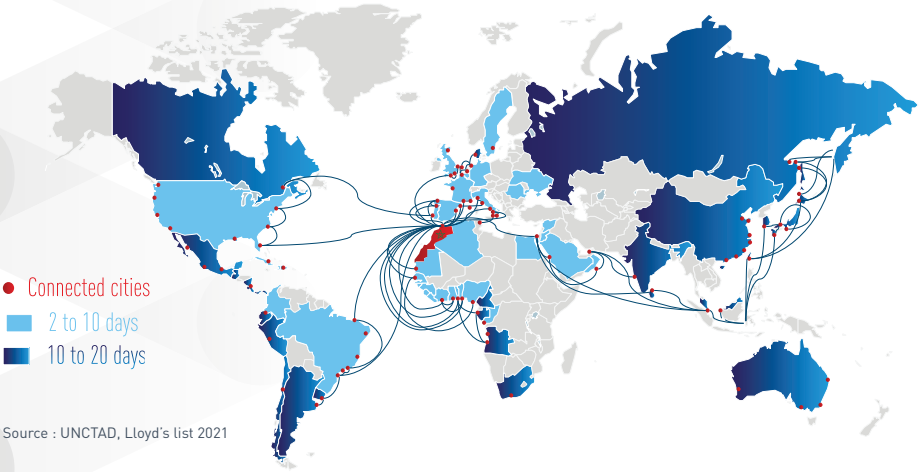
STRATEGICALLY LOCATED

TANGIER MED PORT, THE **1ST TRANSHIPMENT PLATFORM IN AFRICA**

186
186 connections with 77 countries

14 km
14 km from Europe

9M
Treatment capacity for 9 millions of containers per year

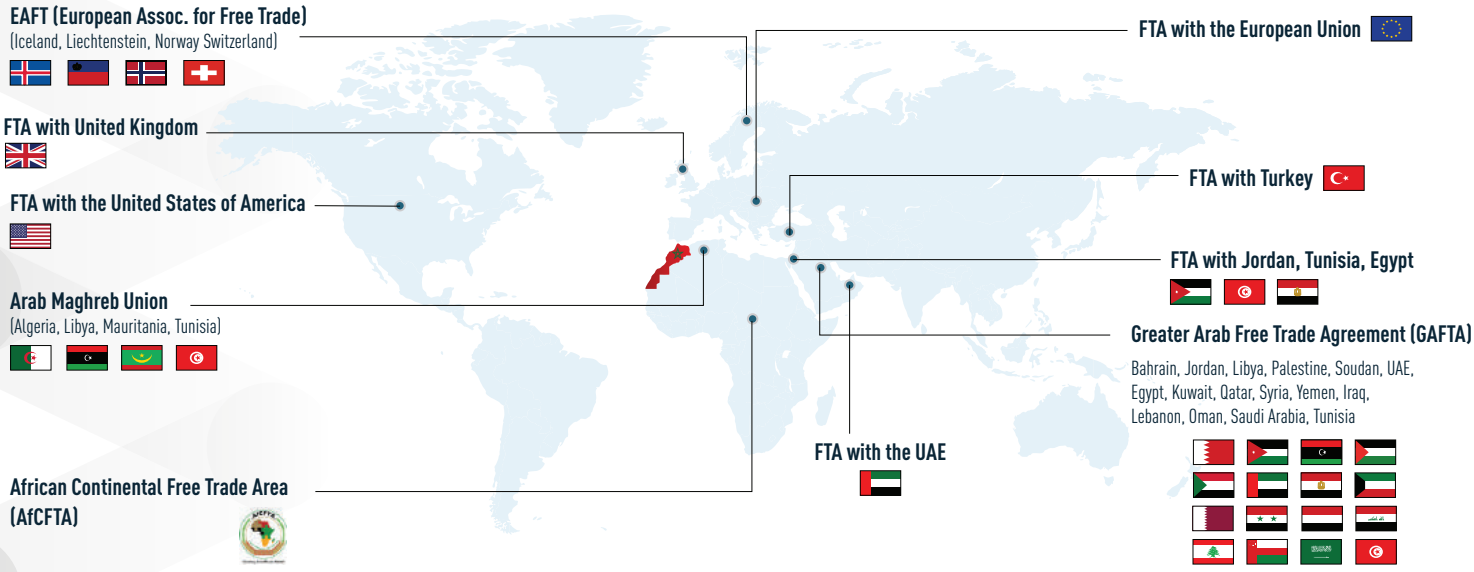


Source : UNCTAD, Lloyd's list 2021

COMPETITIVE

ACCES TO MARKETS OF OPPORTUNITIES

MORE THAN 50 **FTAS** GIVING ACCESS TO **1.3 BILLION CONSUMERS**



COMPETITIVE
WORLD-CLASS INFRASTRUCTURE

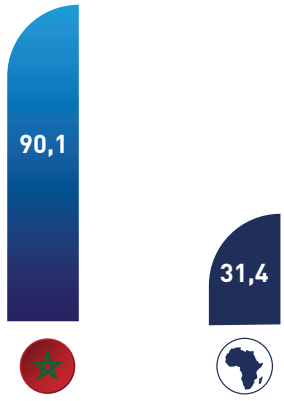
1ST IN AFRICA IN TERMS OF INFRASTRUCTURE & DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

1st
high speed train in Africa
Tangier-Casablanca

18
airoports
1st in Africa in terms of accredited airports

1.808 km
of highways

Bandwidth per internet user (kbit/s)



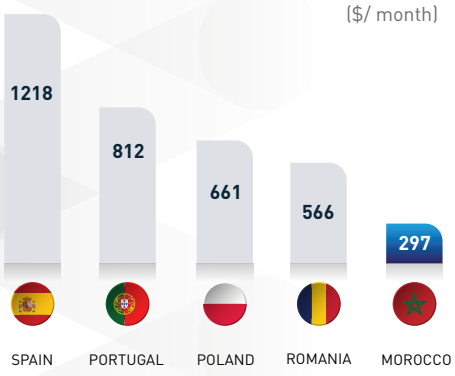
2020 Global ICT Regulatory Outlook benchmark across 193 countries worldwide

COMPETITIVE
DEMOGRAPHICS

DYNAMIC, COMPETITIVE AND QUALIFIED LABOR FORCE

COMPETITIVE LABOR FORCE

MINIMUM WAGE ($/ month)



Source : Global Wage Report 2021/2020 / World Bank

A TALENT POOL

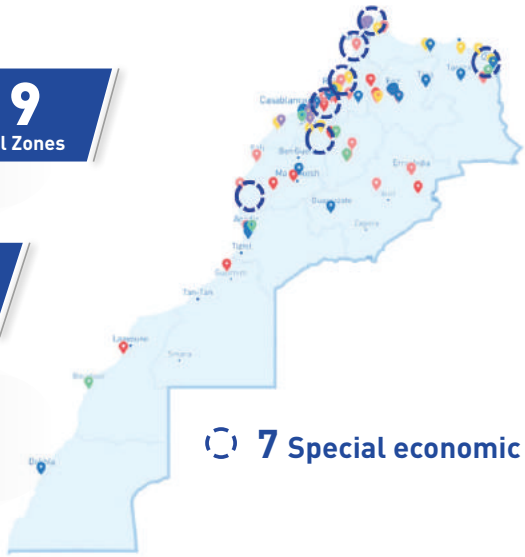
- **A young** and **competitive** workforce
- **42%** population under **25 years**
- **< 5%** Turnover in Aerospace
- **Ad hoc training** centers jointly developed with investors
- **152.000 graduates** per year
- A growing number of **partnerships** with leading international universities

COMPETITIVE
AVAILIBILITY OF INDUSTRIAL LAND

STRATEGIC INDUSTRIAL ZONES ACROSS THE COUNTRY

119
Industrial Zones

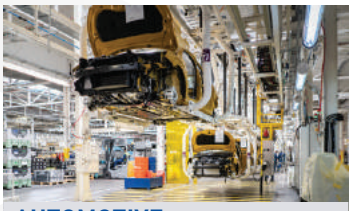
>10.000
Industrial operators



7 Special economic zones

COMPETITIVE
OUR LEADING GLOBALLY INDUSTRIES

RICH AND DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIES

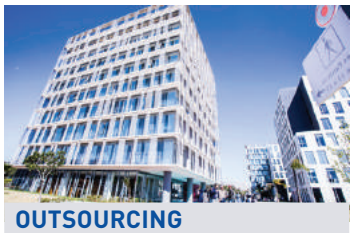


AUTOMOTIVE
1ST EXPORTING SECTOR
60% LOCAL INTEGRATION RATE

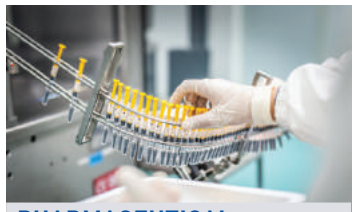
AERONAUTICS
+20% ANNUAL GROWTH
+140 AERONAUTICAL OPERATORS

TEXTILE
AMONG THE 1ST INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYER IN MOROCCO

AGRO-INDUSTRY
1ST MANUFACTURING SECTOR IN MOROCCO



OUTSOURCING
MOROCCO, A COMPETITIVE OUTSOURCING PLATFORM



PHARMACEUTICAL
MOROCCO, AFRICAN PHARMACEUTICAL LABORATORY

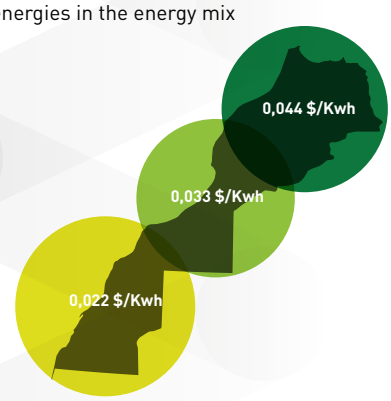
AND MORE ...
- ELECTRONICS
- MECHANICAL AND METALWORKING INDUSTRIES
- CHEMICAL INDUSTRY
- HEAVY TRUCKS
- PLASTIC PROCESSING
- LEATHER

SUSTAINABLE

GREEN ENERGY

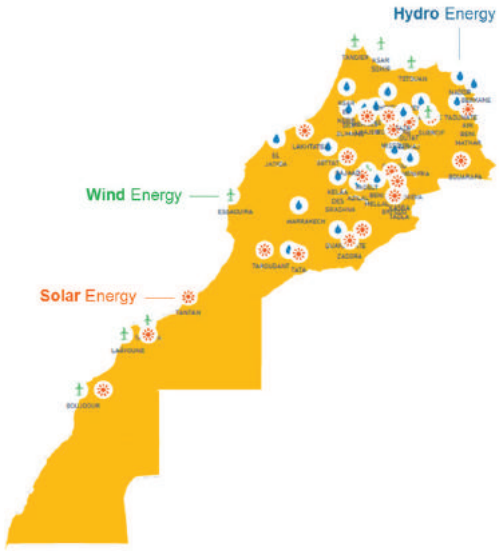
52% energy mix by 2030

Morocco will get 52% of its electricity from renewable energy sources by 2030, thanks to an ambitious plan with a strong Royal vision to increase the share of renewable energies in the energy mix



Source : ONEE / Moroccan Agency for Sustainable Energy

Morocco's Renewable Energy Projects Map



The avant-garde renewable energy plan, position Morocco as one of the most competitive **low-carbon industries** in the World

Stay connected

2 hours flight to Europe
7 hours to North America
7 hours to UAE

Open to the World with multicultural education

Major international Schools across the country

A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

AMONG THE MOST STUNNING COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD

Art of living and cultural heritage

A multicultural country, recognized as World Heritage by UNESCO

The 2nd Best gastronomy in the world

A unique place to live

Thanks to a rich & diversified landscape including a serene coastline, the desert, the Atlas mountains and more

Prospects for the Development of India Maghreb Relations

By Professor Abdallah Saaf
Senior Fellow, Policy Centre for the New South

Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates

Professor Abdallah Saaf, Senior Fellow, Policy Centre for the New South

On a methodological level, the dissociation between the Maghreb and the Mashreq is only useful for the convenience of comparison, but it is clear that the relations between India and the Mashreq have effects on the relations between India and Maghreb. The contribution of these relations to India's position in the world is not negligible.

India's policy has undergone major changes since the end of the Cold War, linked to the project of this country-continent to assert itself as a pole that counts in a multipolar international order. Research has highlighted the various dimensions of India's current foreign policy vis-à-vis the Arab world, Africa, and other regions: the domestic political life element, the geostrategic, energy, and economic elements.

Indian elites are inhabited by the idea of "the greatness of civilization" and the geopolitical characteristics considered as "exceptional" of their country and they make it aspire to the status of great world power, despite its limited financial resources and military capabilities. The reference to the prestigious past of India allows them. There is no doubt that India has a good chance of being a great nation in today's world, having already been one in the past.

The relations that thwart the Arab position, in particular the development of relations with all the countries of the Arab world and its sub-regions,

Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates

Journalist Harun Riaz visited the Policy Centre for the New South and met with Professor Saaf and Mr. Akram Zaoui, International Relations Specialist

the permanent support to the Palestinian cause on one hand, and the exponential growth in relations with Israel on other hand, reflect this philosophy which is deeply imbued with a tendency towards bilateralism, an attraction for face-to-face cooperation with each of the countries with which it is in contact.

The economic "pragmatism" made necessary by the desire for economic power favors the strengthening of these relations. The field of development of relations with the Arab countries, with the Maghreb in particular, seems however broader and more durable.

Behind this tendency towards bilateralism, however, stands Indian universalism. India's growing interest in relatively distant regions such as the Maghreb, the Mashreq and Africa expresses a certain notion of "extended regionalism" which goes beyond the immediately neighboring regions. Proximity is based on common ideologies, visions and histories.

The economic "pragmatism" made necessary by the desire for economic power favors the strengthening of these relations. The field of development of relations with the Arab countries, with the Maghreb in particular, seems however broader and more durable.

The orientation of the country's early leaders, like Nehru, fueled hopes of making India a leading power in the global South. Along with other southern leaders, he was a central player in the emergence of the non-aligned movement and its anti-colonialist, anti-racist and more or less socializing impulses. India's relations with the countries of the South, which includes its relationship with Arab countries, were nourished by these impulses and universal values that India shares with other countries favored by geographical remoteness, far from the disputes and conflicts with immediate neighbors and other rival powers and corresponding to India's idea to exercise "moral leadership".

India appears today as an emerging power endowed with a dynamic economy, adhering to the principles of democracy.

Indian governments seems to build their policy by positioning India as representing Gandhian values in the international arena, centering it on 'fair cooperation', 'capacity building' through an exchange of ideas and services more than just trade of consumer goods. At the same time, strong in her vision, India went to meet many countries through her demand for distributive justice and the reform of international organizations.

In the same perspective, the watchword of Nehru's time in the 1990s, that of "Look East", wanting to bring the country out of its isolation and free it from its immediate environment, and seeking to link his country to the rise of newly industrialized East Asian countries for cooperation purposes is still on the agenda. From pan-asianism to the non-aligned movement, the aim was to give the country the specificities of a great power, heir to a rich civilization built on specific values (democracy, secularism, federalism, linguistic autonomy) and carrying an international universalist (neutralism, anti-colonialism, peaceful coexistence, global disarmament).

Vis-à-vis the Arab countries, India is also a country that counts 161 million Muslims in 2009. A minority in a country of more than 1.324 billion inhabitants. She has, for a long time, sought to join the OIC, gathering the third largest group of Muslims in the world, behind Indonesia (203 million) and Pakistan (174 million). The law of geography soon imposed a "Look West" policy on India (56). This connectivity, initially mainly commercial, seems to be expressed in such diverse forms and in such large proportions that it is difficult to believe in a negative evolution. The exchanges amount to hundreds of millions of dollars. The region remains the main source of energy for India.

The little that the Maghreb has to offer in this regard to India explains the limited level of the Indian relations with the region. Admittedly, fertilizers from Morocco and Algerian oil are of interest to India. Their ability to influence the behavior of Indian investors in the economy of the sub-region remains marginal, however, especially as they overestimate the strength of European competitors in local economies.

At the same time, India is adopting an approach of alliances with other regional powers, such as Brazil and South Africa, in order to encourage interregional cooperation and to establish the position of the countries of the South on the international scene. As major regional and emerging power, India has made it its mission to defend other countries on development issues. Like other emerging countries, it pleads the cause of the developing world and its specific concerns for two reasons: it positions itself on areas of common concern and intends to impose itself as a counter-power in the face of powers already well settled in place.

This approach of India towards the Arab world, as towards Africa, centered on cooperation, multilateral benefit, and its action inspired by the Gandhian spirit of generosity, "functional and collaborative", has been evaluated to be of great support to her in her search for a central position in the international map of power.

This approach of India towards the Arab world, as towards Africa, centered on cooperation, multilateral benefit, and its action inspired by the Gandhian spirit of generosity, "functional and collaborative", has been evaluated to be of great support to her in her search for a central position in the international map of power.

From the point of view of the Arab world, cooperation with India broadens the horizon of its possibilities, seems to be beneficial to it and to the countries of Maghreb, works in favor of distributive justice. These potentialities, ambitions and hopes show that relations between India and countries of the Maghreb and the Mashreq are likely to be strengthened in the future, whatever the economic variations. ■

New Investment Charter of Morocco

PREAMBLE

In his Speech addressed to the Parliament, on the occasion of the opening of the 1st session of the 1st legislative year of the eleventh legislature, His Majesty King MOHAMMED VI, may God assist him, called for the establishment, as soon as possible a "new competitive investment charter".

Indeed, after more than twenty-six (26) years the adoption of Framework Law No. 18-95 establishing an investment charter, it has become imperative to carry out a reform of State policy in terms of development and investment promotion, with a view to adapting it to the requirements of the new development model and to the profound institutional, economic, social, environmental and technological changes taking place nationally and internationally.

The texts necessary for the implementation of all of these measures will be enacted according to a specific timetable.

If the investment support mechanisms are at the heart of the State's policy in terms of development and investment promotion, the fact remains that parallel reforms must be continued or initiated in terms of access to financing, strengthening the competitiveness of the logistics sector, use of renewable energies, access to land and facilitation of the act of investing.

The implementation of these parallel reforms to which this framework law refers will undoubtedly contribute to strengthening the attractiveness of the Kingdom and to increasing the share of private, national and international investment, in the total of the investments made which remain strongly characterized by the predominance of public investment.

This major reform, which concerns both the investment support system itself and the measures aimed at strengthening the attractiveness of the Kingdom, is in line with the structural reforms initiated, under the enlightened leadership of His Majesty the King, by Morocco in terms of investment development and facilitation of the act of investing. These reforms include the implementation of advanced regionalization, the adoption of the national administrative devolution charter, the reform of regional investment centers and the creation of unified regional investment commissions, the simplification of procedures and administrative formalities, the creation of the Mohammed VI Fund for Investment, the development of public-private partnership, the adoption of the framework law on tax reform and the launch of a profound reform of the establishments and businesses owned by the public sector.

This framework law consolidates this dynamic of reforms that our country is experiencing. Based on the recommendations contained in the 2021 general report drawn up by the Special Commission on the Development Model, it sets the fundamental objectives of State action in terms of development and investment promotion, in the prospect of making Morocco an attractive continental and international hub for investment.

To this end, investment support mechanisms have been put in place. These devices include a main device and specific devices.

The main mechanism aims to support investment projects that meet defined criteria, to reduce disparities between the provinces and prefectures of the Kingdom in terms of attracting investment and to develop investment in priority sectors of activity.

With regard to specific mechanisms, they tend to support investment projects of a strategic nature, very small, small and medium-sized enterprises and the development of Moroccan companies internationally.

FIRST CHAPTER

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Premier Article

In accordance with the provisions of the second paragraph of Article 71 of the Constitution, the fundamental objectives of State action in the area of development and investment promotion are set as follows:

- The creation of stable jobs;
- The reduction of disparities between the provinces and prefectures of the Kingdom in terms of attracting investment;
- The orientation of investment towards the priority sectors

and professions of the future;

- strengthening the attractiveness of the Kingdom with a view to establishing it as a continental and international hub for foreign direct investment;
- The encouragement of exports and the development of Moroccan companies internationally;
- encouraging the substitution of imports by local production;
- Improvement of the business environment and the facilitation of the act of investing;
- increasing the share of private, national and international investment in total investments made.

Article 2

The policy of the State in terms of development and promotion of investment is based on the following principles:

- Freedom of enterprise;
- Free competition and transparency;
- Equal treatment of investors regardless of their nationality;
- Legal certainty;
- The principles of good governance.

Article 3

Public development policies and investment promotion are defined by the State.

The application and implementation of these policies are ensured, as the case may be, at national or territorial level, by:

- the governmental authorities competent in matters of investment, the public establishments and enterprises concerned and the ministerial body provided for in article 34 of this framework law, each insofar as it is concerned;
- The Regional Investment Centers and the Unified Regional.

Investment Commissions, each within the limits of its territorial jurisdiction.

In the exercise of the missions or activities devolved to them in terms of investment, the authorities and the public establishments and enterprises referred to in the preceding paragraph act, under the authority or the supervision of the Head of Government, as the case may be.

Article 4

The regions contribute to the achievement of the objectives provided for in the first article above, within the framework of the competences devolved to them in terms of business support and investment attraction.

Article 5

The actions of all stakeholders in the development, promotion and attraction of investments must be exercised within a framework of coherence, convergence and complementarity.

Article 6

The investment support schemes provided for by this framework law and the schemes put in place by the regions in terms of business support and investment attraction can be combined.

Article 7

The provisions of this framework law are not applicable to investment projects carried out in the agricultural sector which remain subject to the laws and regulations governing them.

Investment projects carried out in the real estate and trading sectors for which specific measures will be enacted are excluded from the benefit of the main support mechanism provided for in paragraph 1) of Article 8 below.

CHAPTER 2

INVESTMENT SUPPORT SCHEMES

Article 8

With a view to achieving the fundamental objectives provided for in Article 1 of this framework law, the State shall put in place investment support systems consisting of:

1) A main device comprising:

   a) The common investment incentives referred to in Article 12 of this framework law;

   b) An additional investment bonus, known as the "territorial bonus", granted to investment projects carried out in the provinces or prefectures referred to in Article 13 of this framework law;

   c) an additional investment premium, known as the "sectoral premium", granted to investment projects carried out in the priority activity sectors referred to in Article 14 of this framework law;

2) Specific mechanisms intended for investment projects of a strategic nature,

for very small, small and medium-sized enterprises and for the development of Moroccan enterprises internationally.

Article 9

Any investor wishing to benefit from the main support mechanism provided for in paragraph 1) of Article 8 above, the specific support mechanism applicable to investment projects of a strategic nature or the specific support mechanism intended to encourage the development of Moroccan companies abroad must conclude with the State an investment agreement which defines, in particular, the reciprocal commitments of the State and the investor and the terms of their implementation.

Article 10

In addition to the support mechanisms provided for in this chapter, any investment project that has been the subject of an investment agreement concluded with the State benefits, under the conditions provided for by the legislative and regulatory texts in force, from tax and customs benefits.

Section one. – the main support device

Article 11

May benefit from the main support mechanism provided for in paragraph 1) of Article 8 of this framework law, investment projects whose total amount or number of stable jobs to be created are equal to or greater than fixed thresholds by regulation.

Article 12

The common investment bonuses are granted to the investment projects provided for in article 11 above according to criteria defined by regulation.

Article 13

In order to reduce the disparities between the provinces and the prefectures of the Kingdom in terms of attracting investment, the investment projects provided for in article 11 above benefit, in addition to the common investment premiums, from a territorial bonus, when they are carried out within the territorial jurisdiction of the provinces or prefectures, the list of which is fixed by regulation.

When an investment project is carried out in the territorial jurisdiction of two or more provinces or prefectures, the territorial bonus is granted in proportion to the total investment amount carried out in each of the provinces or prefectures concerned.

Article 14

With a view to developing investment in the priority sectors, the investment projects provided for in Article 11 of this framework law benefit, in addition to the common investment premiums, from a sectoral premium, when they are carried out in the sectors listed by regulation.

When an investment project is carried out in two or more sectors of activity, the investor concerned can only benefit once from this bonus, which corresponds to the sector of activity in which the largest part of his total investment is carried out.

Article 15

The basis for calculation and the rates of the common investment premiums, the territorial premium and the sectoral premium are set by regulation.

Article 16

The premiums referred to in article 15 above can be combined with each other within the limit of 30% of the premium able investment amount.

However, the cumulative total of investment grants granted to investment projects carried out in the field of energy production from renewable energy sources may not, under any circumstances, exceed an amount set by regulation.

Section 2. – Specific support mechanism applicable to investment projects of a strategic nature

Article 17

Investment projects of a strategic nature can benefit from specific negotiated advantages.

An investment project can be qualified as strategic when it meets one or more criteria set by regulation.

However, investment projects carried out in the field of the defense industry are automatically considered as projects of a strategic nature.

Article 18

The specific support mechanism applicable to investment projects of a strategic nature and the main support mechanism provided for in paragraph 1) of Article 8 of this framework law cannot be combined.

Section 3. – Specific support mechanism for very small, small and medium- sized enterprises

Article 19

The State undertakes to:

- pursue the reform of the financial sector through the establishment of support and guarantee mechanisms intended to facilitate access to financing for very small, small and medium-sized enterprises;
- take measures in favor of these companies in terms of access to public procurement, strengthening of productive capacities, training and support.

Article 20

In addition to the measures provided for in article 19 above, a specific support system will be set up intended for very small, small and medium-sized enterprises. The methods of implementing of this system are fixed, as the case may be, by legislative or regulatory means.

Section 4. – Specific support mechanism intended to encourage the development of Moroccan companies internationally

Article 21

A specific support mechanism intended to encourage the development of Moroccan companies abroad will be implemented.

The terms and conditions for implementing this system are set by regulation.

CHAPTER 3

VARIOUS INVESTMENT SUPPORT MEASURES

Article 22

In addition to the investment support mechanisms provided for in Chapter 2 of this framework law, measures will be taken to achieve the fundamental objectives of State action in terms of developing investments, improving business environment and facilitating the act of investing.

Article 23

The State should facilitate investors' access to easily mobilized land at competitive prices.

To this end, measures will be taken to encourage:

- the planning, development and operation of industrial, logistical, commercial, tourist and service activity zones meeting the needs of investors;
- the development of plots of land intended for investment projects that create added value and stable jobs.

Article 24

The State undertakes the necessary measures to strengthen the competitiveness of the logistics sector.

Article 25

In order to strengthen the competitiveness of companies, the State will take the necessary measures to reform the energy sector and promote the use of renewable energies.

Article 26

The State ensures, in partnership with the private sector and in coordination with the bodies concerned, the establishment of an initial and continuous training offer, adapted to the needs of companies.

Article 27

The State works, in partnership with the private sector, to promote research and development activities and to facilitate access to new information and communication technologies.

Article 28

As part of improving access to financing, the State is working to diversify financing methods, facilitate access to the capital market and implement innovative financing solutions.

Article 29

The State sees to the acceleration of the process of simplification of the administrative procedures related to the realization of the investments and their dematerialization.

Article 30

The State undertakes to pursue its policy of deconcentration of administrative decisions and management acts related to the act of investing.

CHAPTER 4

GUARANTEES GRANTED TO INVESTORS

Article 31

Natural or legal persons of foreign nationality, resident in Morocco or not, and Moroccan natural persons established abroad, who carry out investments financed in foreign currencies, benefit, in respect of these investments, of a convertibility regime guaranteeing them full freedom to:

- the transfer of profits net of tax without limitation of amount or duration;

- the transfer of the proceeds of sale or total or partial liquidation of the investment, including capital gains.

Article 32

The protection of the intellectual property rights of investors is guaranteed in accordance with the laws and regulations in force.

Article 33

Any person involved in the process of examining and processing investment files is bound by professional secrecy with regard to personal data and information of which he becomes aware during the performance of his duties.

CHAPTER 5

INVESTMENT GOVERNANCE

Article 34

In addition to all the stakeholders in terms of governance of investment, a ministerial body is created, responsible in particular of:

a) approving any draft investment agreement drawn up within the framework of the main support mechanism, when its total amount is equal to or greater than a threshold set by regulation;

b) to rule on the strategic nature or not of the investment projects with regard to the criteria referred to in the second paragraph of Article 17 of this framework law;

c) Approving draft investment agreements drawn up within the framework of the specific support mechanism applicable to investment projects of a strategic nature, subject to the provisions of Article 36 below;

d) To approve the draft investment agreements established within the framework of the specific support mechanism intended to encourage the development of Moroccan companies internationally and to take any decision or initiative relating to the implementation of this mechanism. ;

e) To carry out a periodic evaluation of the effectiveness of the support mechanisms provided for by this framework law and the texts adopted for its application and to propose, if necessary, the adjustments to the distortions observed;

f) To monitor the implementation of the provisions of this framework law and the texts adopted for its application;

g) To propose any measure likely to promote investment and enhance the attractiveness of the Kingdom towards investors.

The composition of the body referred to in the first paragraph of this article and the terms of its operation are set by regulation.

Article 35

The draft investment agreements drawn up under the main support mechanism are drawn up, approved and signed at the regional level, when the total amount of the project concerned is below the threshold referred to in paragraph a) of Article 34 above. -above.

The State will take the necessary measures to implement the provisions of the first paragraph of this article.

Article 36

Draft investment agreements relating to the defense industry are drawn up, approved and executed in accordance with the legislation and regulations relating to defense and security materials and equipment, arms and ammunition.

CHAPTER 6

DISPUTE SETTLEMENT

Article 37

Investment agreements may include clauses stipulating that, prior to any legal or arbitration appeal, amicable settlement of any dispute relating to the investment that may arise between the State Moroccan and the investor.

Article 38

Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 37 above, investment agreements may include clauses stipulating that any dispute relating to the investment that may arise between the Moroccan State and the foreign investor will be settled in accordance with the legislation in force or the international conventions ratified by the Kingdom of Morocco in matters of arbitration international.

CHAPTER 7

MISCELLANEOUS AND TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

Article 39

From the date of entry into force of this framework law, framework law n° 18-95 forming the investment charter, promulgated by dahir n°1-95-213 of 14

Joumada II, is repealed. 1416 (8 November 1995).

However, the texts adopted for its application remain in force until their repeal or replacement in accordance with the provisions of this framework law.

Article 40

This Framework Law will be implemented under the legislative and regulatory texts adopted for its application.

To this end, the State undertakes to enact the necessary texts:

- the implementation of the main support mechanism and the specific support mechanism applicable to investment projects of a strategic nature, within a period not exceeding three (3) months from the date of publication of this law - frame in the Official Bulletin;
- the implementation of the specific support mechanism intended to encourage the development of Moroccan companies internationally, within a period not exceeding nine (9) months from the same date;
- the implementation of the specific support mechanism intended for very small, small and medium-sized enterprises, within a period not exceeding twelve (12) months from the same date.

Article 41

Subject to the provisions of Article 42 below, investors who have concluded, before the date of entry into force of this framework law, an investment agreement with the State, retain the advantages granted to them granted and their acquired rights, until the expiry of the duration, and under the conditions, for which they were granted.

Article 42

Any investor who has entered into, as of January 1, 2022, an investment agreement with the State may, after the implementation of the main support mechanism referred to in paragraph 1) of Article 8 of this framework law, request to benefit from said device, when it turns out that it is more advantageous than that provided for by the aforementioned framework law no. 18-95 and the texts adopted for its application.

The ministerial body referred to in Article 34 of this framework law decides on the requests for benefit from the main support mechanism submitted to it pursuant to the first paragraph above. ■

Note: The text is a non-official translation.

On the Occasion of
Morocco National Day
the 23rd Anniversary of the Enthronement of
His Majesty Mohammed VI, King of Morocco
we extend our heartiest congratulations to the King
and the People of the Kingdom of Morocco

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CIPLA Maroc Strengthens Morocco's Pharma Status

Cipla Maroc is an Indian success story in Morocco and helping the Kingdom emerge as biotech hub. Feature story based on conversation with Mr. Wajih Jarnane, Product Manager of the pharma major at Casablanca.

By Harun Riaz

With India being established globally as a front runner among the foremost Pharma hubs, Indian pharma companies like Cipla have been active in establishing their presence on platforms globally. One of the latest developments in this quarter has been the entry of Cipla in the Moroccan medicine market with its setting up of a plant for the manufacture of aerosols for the treatment of asthma patients, under the aegis of Cipla Maroc, a joint venture between the two giant Pharma hubs.

Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates

The Product Manager of Cipla Maroc, Mr. Wajih Jarnane at the Casablanca Office

That the Pharma link up is not a recent development is confirmed by … who reiterates that Cipla has been present in the Moroccan medicine market even earlier, as an entity of Cipla Morocco, and are represented here in Morocco by partner firms, such as Cooper Pharma and PHI, where the firm (Cipla) was doing B2B Business by supplying raw materials for producing some products for Cooper Pharma or PHI in Morocco. This partnership with private companies in Morocco, had begun in 2000-2002 and thus the current follow-up shows that there is further opportunity of Indian investment in Morocco.

On the Moroccan side, just why the business climate was considered ideal for investment with an Indian firm is based on India's intrinsic advantages, emanating from India's climate of economic, political and social stability. It led to further discussions and negotiations as a follow through, for initiating business with the said companies.

In the course of their joint deliberations, a joint venture contract was signed in 2015, where Cipla Maroc was formed. The joint venture is thus between Cipla Limited, Cooper Pharma and PHI, and the new found entity created was Cipla Maroc. Under this arrangement, 14 % of the shares are held by Cooper Pharma, 26 % shares are of PHI and the rest are of Cipla Limited.

While some in Morocco, may question the wisdom of Cipla Limited entering a joint venture with Moroccan pharma companies in the private sector, the negotiators' fears are put to rest in that although the said firms are in the private sector, in Morocco, they have independent portfolios. Also, there are prior collaborations with Cipla Pharma already ongoing as the label 'Seriflo' is provided by Cipla to Cooper Pharma by Cipla India, and marketed as 'Seroflo' by the Cooper Pharma company of Morocco. Again, for the treatment of allergic rhinitis, the

product is manufactured under the label 'Nazar', and is already a collaboration in existence between the concerned parties. Another strong contender for this investment is the fact that both the above mentioned private companies are pharma establishments that already well entrenched and very well known here in Morocco, with each of them having their own portfolio.

A similar strategy was adopted in the case of PHI for the manufacture of the drug for schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, where Cipla took over this product and started its promotion as a Cipla product. So, prior to the current developments, the raw material or the Application Product Interface, (API) was being supplied by Cipla and Cipla was manufacturing these products at the start of their business, with a sizeable turnover of around seven million dollars.

Moving ahead from these initial investments, the giant leap ahead was in 2015-16 when the promotion trajectory had shifted to represent the two countries of India and Morocco, as entities. The areas undertaken for drug production were narrowed down to two therapeutic areas, with drugs for the central nervous system (CNS) and respiratory complaints.

Prior to the actual setting up of the business a series of discussions was initiated as to the business model to be adopted for the above purpose. The core idea that emerged was that the business was to be people-based manned by staff taking the business forward and making the Cipla or Indian dream become even bigger here in Morocco. To this end the idea emerged of setting up a production unit in Morocco for producing for the Moroccan market. This idea came into fruition with the establishment of the Cipla Morocco, in 2018, a production unit of 4000 sq m in a place near Rabat, where a production of aerosols has been started.

Cipla Maroc manufacturing unit

This joint venture, the second in Africa, is the first of its kind in Morocco and a Cipla exclusive in the country, which has started in 2022. Even the raw material for the production is imported from India. However, there are certain regulatory steps that must be adhered to.

In 2020, the Ministry have regulated that every manufacturing entity in Morocco, must obtain health approval and the first production should follow a certain number of steps to get the approval. Hence under this regulation, currently two of the Cipla products stand approved and ready for production in Morocco.

The two approved products are aerosols, dedicated to asthma. Also, in 2022, the Ministry has also granted approval to the company to start selling its products locally, a step that will

The Cipla Maroc plant at Ain Al Aouda near Rabat produces inhalers for the respiratory diseases

reduce the gap between demand and supply and initiate efficient measures of cost control.

Although the products are not seen on pharmacy shelves, work is in progress to avail ministerial approval for the locally manufactured sprays and aerosols and initiate sales not just in Morocco, but also in the adjacent West Africa region, targetting countries such as Senegal, Mali and Mauritania as also other French speaking countries, on their need basis and the approval of their respective ministries of health. It goes without saying therefore, that all the above measures will give legitimacy to Cipla as an Indian manufacturing company that is well established in Morocco.

Even the employment potential of this venture is positive Currently, the company has an employee strength of 69, who are all Moroccans, but with an annual turnover of 20% annually, the rate of recruitment is spiraling upwards, year on year.

That the company was given greater legitimacy and status at the ministerial level was visible when the plant was visited by the Cipla Chairman, Dr. Y. K. Hamied who had graced the inauguration of the Moroccan unit, in 2018. His visit had assured the authorities in Morocco that Cipla was not here to sell products, but to respond to a need, to respond to the demand of patients and healthcare professionals by bringing in new products and adding value in the Moroccan context.

The launch of the above mentioned products is not a haphazard selection of business potentialities but an undertaking that was launched following a long term market study, in terms of population, healthcare professional needs, economic needs and commercial viability. Hence every product that is launched by Cipla, has the ulterior motive of change in terms of context in terms of every respiratory or psychiatric condition.

As to the popularity of an Indian pharma brand in Morocco, among users and professionals, the prevalent idea is that of bringing products with good

quality at less cost. Hence it is a product that holds priority the offering of a facility for Moroccan patients and healthcare professionals that is committed to a philosophy of democracy in access to medication.

Looking further ahead as to whether Morocco could become a Pharma hub in the immediate future, there is a directive to reduce importations and give priority to local manufacture on the Moroccan side. At the same time there is a clear strategy to encourage manufacturing companies like Cipla, who are setti8ng up manufacturing sites in Morocco. On the flip side too, foreign companies conducting manufacture in the c0untry have favorable pricing benefits, in terms of price, in terms of costs, in terms of priority, in terms of speed of treating some documents, and for some files that they have to submit, for the registration.

Cipla Maroc manufacturing unit

> Also, the future strategy of development at the Cipla manufacturing plant is geared towards development at all stages.

This favorable climate of manufacturing has given the Moroccan economy a boost with local manufactured products starting to grow since 2014. Incidentally this policy of inviting foreign investment in manufacturing has started another rhythm of evolution and growth where locally manufactured products are getting weightage in Morocco by giving more importance to local manufacturing as well, thanks to their vigorous policy of concerted economic development.

Also, the future strategy of development at the Cipla manufacturing plant is geared towards development at all stages. At the initial stage the company has started filing for local manufacturing of the approved products. At the same time, work is in progress for the registration of the products currently produced. Also, research into the plausibility of launching new specialized products as also specialization in PMDIs is on the cards.

The alternative thing that is being looked into is the climate for new products to register here in Morocco and follow the same process, start with a local production unit directly. Currently the firm is specialized only in PMDI or Pressurized Metered Inhalers. There is also a possibility of moving into producing powder inhalers.

But all this comes with an investment and additional new investment in order to prepare the manufacturing site for this kind of production. Also possibilities of signed contracts between foreign manufacturing companies for the manufacture of products imported from other countries, which is a way of developing the local manufacturer sector of the economy is being examined.

Scouting for other markets in Africa and Europe for inhalers manufactured in Morocco to cover other market needs. This is therefore one of the plans of development in the future, for the Cipla manufacture.

With the open plan policy of encouraging serious business that is interested in setting up in Morocco the Cipla model is welcomed by the Ministry of Health. On the flip side, in India too, the picture appears rosy for companies interested in following in the footsteps of Cipla and setting up manufacturing hubs in Morocco, have a positive future ahead and geared for the mutual benefit of both nations. ■

Odisha Based CUTM Inks MoUs with Moroccan Institutions

An academic delegation from the Centurion University of Technology and Management (CUTM) from Odisha visited Morocco in September 2022 and signed three Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs).

This visit was a follow up of the University's seminar held on 28th of April, 2022, in Bhubaneswar, attended by Ambassador of Morocco, H. E. Mr. Mohamed Maliki as a special invitee. The CUTM invited Ambassadors and High commissioner from Africa. The Chief Guest of the seminar was Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh, India's Minister of State for External Affairs.

The Ambassador of Morocco was invited to gain first-hand experience of CUTM's skill integrated higher education model. Ambassador Maliki was impressed with the model of CUTM where he explored various courses and trades. The University submitted a

Ambassador of Morocco, H.E. Mr. Mohamed Maliki and Ms. Nadia El Hnot, Head of Cultural Cooperation Department, MAEC, with dignitaries from Odisha Centurion University, following a luncheon in Rabat Marina Bouregreg

proposal with the perspective of cooperation with Morocco through the possibility of collaboration in the various sectors of skill development and higher education.

During the September 2022 trip to Morocco, the CUTM delegation saw Al Qarawiyyine University: the oldest existing University, met with President of the University Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah.

The Indian delegation interacted with Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, toured Mohamed V University, Ministry of Skill Development & Vocational Training, and Office of Vocational Training and Employment Promotion.

The academic interaction was also held at International university of Rabat, Ibn Tofail University in Kenitra, The Higher Institute of Maritime Studies (ISEM), Casablanca, International University of Casablanca, Hassan II University and the Public University of Marakech. ■

Remarkable Participation of the Moroccan Women Football Team in the U-17 Women's World Cup in India

The Moroccan under 17 women football team participated for the first time in its history in the FIFA women's World Cup, being organised in the period between 11-30 October 2022, in Bhubaneshwar and Goa in India.

The Atlas lionesses, finishing third in the group stage, have left the competition after two defeats against Brazil 0-1 and USA 0-4 in the first round, and one win against the host country India, which was not sufficient to pave the way for Moroccan footballers to qualify for the second round.

Despite their elimination in the first round, the U-17 Moroccan women's football team performance was highly appreciated by football fans, either in Morocco or India, for their honourable participation, taking into consideration the lack of experience of the Moroccan players in such huge competitions and the quality of the opponents such as USA, Brazil and India.

The Moroccan first participation in this World Cup, comes after a historic win over Ghana 4-2 on penalties (2-2 overall at Prince Moulay El Hassan Stadium in June 2022 in Rabat.

The Moroccan female sport was also presented in the persons of 3 referees selected by FIFA to serve as officials at the U-17 women's world cup in India. Bouchra Karboubi was chosen to serve as primary referee, while Fatiha Jarmoumi and Soukaina Hamdi as assistant referees during this competition, as stated by the Royal Moroccan Football Federation (FMRF).

The U-17 women's world cup in India was also an opportunity to use the VAR technology for the first time for such category. The FIFA head of referees for women's football, Kari Seitz, stated that; "we are glad that, also for the first time, VAR technology will be used at a FIFA U-17 women's world cup". She added that; "As part of the project, road to Australia/New

Zealand 2023, this event will be another fantastic opportunity to display the talents of the designated VARs and further the growth of our female VARs''.

It is to be underlined that not only the Moroccan football infrastructure has developed steadily for the last few years allowing all kinds of teams to be qualified in different world competitions, but also massive investments have been done especially the Moulay Rachid Complex which has become a world class infrastructure for training both Moroccan and foreign footballers.

Moroccan football witnessed a great success in the last decade, and Moroccan footballers are playing in the biggest football clubs in the world. The Moroccan football team has qualified for the fifth time in its history to the 2022 world cup held in Qatar next November and Wydad of Casablanca were the African Champions league winners this year, altogether with Nehdat Berkane who were the CAF champions.

Ambassador of His Majesty the King of Morocco, H.E. Mr. Mohamed Maliki met with the visiting Moroccan U 17 Women football team during the Fifa World Cup at Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

All these achievements of Moroccan football are the fruit of a triangular approach based on facilities, talent and qualified personnel.

During a work visit to Morocco in February 2021, Gianni Infantino, the President of the FIFA, stated that; "Morocco is a great football country that has a role to play as a locomotive for the development of football in the continent (Africa)".

Visit to Siksha O Anusandhan University in Bhubaneswar

The Ambassador of Morocco, H.E. Mr. Mohamed Maliki visited Siksha O Anusandhan University at Bhubaneswar and interacted with the academicians

Morocco's Ambassador to India, H.E. Mr. Mohamed Maliki met with Prof (Dr.) Manojranjan Nayak, founder president of Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) in Bhubaneswar, Odisha capital on July 08, 2022.

Ambassador Mr. Maliki had a wide ranging discussion with Prof. Nayak and senior SOA officials and academics about the university's contribution in the field of higher education and healthcare.

Speaking about Morocco, Ambassador Mr. Maliki said the country accounted for 72% of the global fertilizer production while it was a front ranking nation in the field of pharmaceuticals and tourism as well. Stating that he was highly impressed by the infrastructure and faculty members of SOA, he said he would try to facilitate study of students from Morocco in the university.

SOA's Pro-Vice Chancellor and Registrar Prof BB Pradhan, Controller of Examination Prof Manjula Das, Dean (Students' Welfare) Prof Jyoti Ranjan Das, Additional Dean (Research) Dr Priyabrata Patnaik, Deans of different institutions and Prof Nachieketa K. Sharma, Director, University Outreach Program were present. ■

Agreements & MoUs Signed between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of India

1981	
1	Trade Agreement
2	Cultural and Scientific Cooperation Accord
3	Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation
1992	
4	MoU between the Federation of Indian Export Organizations (FIEO) and Casablanca Chamber of Commerce and Industry
1996	
5	MoU between the Federation of Indian Export Organizations (FIEO) and the Moroccan Export Promotion Centre (CMPE)
1998	
6	MoU on regular consultations between the two Foreign Ministries
7	Convention on Avoidance of Double Taxation
1999	
8	Agreement on Tourism
9	Agreement for Cooperation between Maghreb Arab Press (MAP) and Press Trust of India (PTI)
2000	
10	Agreement for cooperation in the fields of Merchant Shipping and Maritime
11	Agreement between Doordarshan and RTM (Radio-diffusion Television Marocaine)
12	MoU between the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the General Confederation for Moroccan Enterprises (CGEM) for setting up a Joint Business Council
13	MoU between the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) and the Moroccan Association of Professionals and Information Technologies (APEBI)
2001	
14	Agreement on Plant Protection and Plant Quarantine
15	Agreement on Veterinary Sanitation
2004	
16	MoU in the field of Agricultural Research and Education
2006	
17	MoU on bilateral cooperation in housing sector
2013	
18	Protocol amending the India-Morocco Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC)
19	MoU between National School of Applied Sciences, Tangier in Morocco, and Jaypee University of Information Technologies, Solan in India
2014	
20	Agreement on Environmental Cooperation signed in Marrakech
21	MoU on Cooperation in Marine Fisheries signed in Marrakech
22	MoU concerning setting up of a Centre for Excellence in Information Technology (CEIT) in Morocco
2015	
23	MoU between the General Confederation for Moroccan Enterprises (CGEM) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) for strengthening commercial relations by expanding and deepening economic, trade and investment cooperation

24	Agreement on Exemption of Visa requirement for Holders of Diplomatic, Official and Service Passports between India & Morocco signed in Delhi
25	MoU between the Moroccan Centre for Export Promotion (Morocco Export) and the Federation of Indian Export Organizations (FIEO)
26	MoU between the Moroccan Centre for Export Promotion (Morocco Export) and the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the Republic of India
27	MoU between the Attijariwafabank and ICICI Bank Limited on the establishment of a wider cooperation framework between the two groups
28	MoU between the Moroccan Association of Exporters (ASMEX) and the Indian Association of Importers
2016	
29	Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) for 2016-2019 between India and Morocco
30	MoU between the Foreign Service Institute at the Ministry of External affairs of India and the Moroccan Academy for Diplomatic Studies at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco
2017	
31	MoU between Indian Council for Cultural Relations and Mohammed V University on the Establishment of ICCR Chair for Hindi Language
32	MoU between Indian Council for Cultural Relations and Mohammed V University on the Establishment of ICCR Chair of Indian Studies
33	MoU between the Indian Council for World Affairs (ICWA) of India and the Royal Institute for Strategic Studies (IRES) of Morocco on Cooperation in Institutional Relations
34	MoU between "Prasar Bharati" of India and "la Société Nationale de Radiodiffusion et de Television (SNRT)" of Morocco
35	MoU between the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of the Government of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Health of the Kingdom of Morocco on Cooperation in the field of Health
36	MoU between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco on Cooperation in the field of Water Resources
37	Cooperation Agreement between Indian Railways (IR) Moroccan National Railways Office (ONCF)
38	Agreement to establish Cooperation between Indian Maritime University (IMU) and the Higher Institute of Maritime Studies (ISEM) of Morocco
39	Framework Agreement for Cooperation in Training between the Indian Maritime University of the Republic of India and the National Ports Agency (Port Training Institute) of the Kingdom of Morocco
40	Cooperation Framework Agreement between the Institute of Training in Engines and Road Maintenance (IFEER) under the Ministry of Equipment, Transport, Logistics and Water of the Kingdom of Morocco and the Indian Academy of Highway Engineers (IAHE) under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways of the Republic of India
41	MoU between Marrakech Mohamed VI University Hospital in Morocco and Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education & Research (JIPMER) in India for Telemedicine collaboration
2018	
42	Agreement on Scientific and Technical Cooperation between the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in India and the National Centre for Scientific and Technical Research (CNRST) in Morocco
43	MoU on Cooperation between the Ministry of Law and Justice of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Justice of the Kingdom of Morocco
44	MoU for Cooperation in the field of Renewable Energy
45	MoU in the field of Mining and Geology
46	Work Plan for the Years 2018-20 between the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Agriculture, Marine Fisheries, Rural Development and Waters and Forests of the Kingdom of Morocco under the MoU on Cooperation in the field of Agricultural Research and Education

47	MoU on Cooperation between the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) in New Delhi, India and the Moroccan Centre for Strategic Studies (CMES) in Rabat, Morocco
48	MoU on Cooperation between the Moroccan Agency for Tourism Development (SMIT) and the India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC)
49	Air Services Agreement between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of India
50	MoU between the National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) of the Republic of India and the National Agency for the Promotion of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (Maroc PME) of the Kingdom of Morocco on Cooperation in the field of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises between India and Morocco
51	MoU between the Government of Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco for Cooperation in Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
52	MoU between the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of India and the Moroccan Computer Emergency Response Team (ma-CERT), of the National Defence Administration of Morocco, on Cooperation in the area of Cyber Security
53	Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of India
54	Agreement on Legal and Judicial Cooperation in Civil and Commercial matters including the service of Summons, Judicial documents, Letters of Request and Execution of Judgment and Arbitral Awards
55	Joint Declaration of Intent between National Informatics Centre, under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of the Republic of India, and the Ministry of Justice of the Kingdom of Morocco on Cooperation in the field of Modernization and Use of Information Technology
56	Extradition Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco
2019	
57	MoU on Mutual Recognisation of Academic Qualifications between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of India
58	Partnership Agreement on the field of Vocational Training between the Office of Vocational Training and Employment Promotion of Morocco and the National Skill Development Corporation of Morocco
59	MoU on setting up of Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of India
60	MoU on Cooperation in Youth Matters between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of India
61	MoU on Housing Settlement between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of India
62	MoU on Facilitation of Business visa between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of India
63	MoU between the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Service of the Region Fez-Meknes (CCISFM) in the Kingdom of Morocco and the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the Republic of India
2020	
64	MoU on judicial cooperation between the Superior Council of the Judiciary (CSPJ) of the Kingdom of Morocco and the Supreme Court of the Republic of India
65	Memorandum of Understanding between Exim Bank of India and Bank of Africa.
2022	
66	On May 27, Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Digital Transition and Administrative Reform of the Kingdom of Morocco and the Indian multinational HCL Technologies
67	July 20 - MOU for cooperation in the renewable energy sector between NTPC and Masen (Moroccan Agency for Sustainable Energy)
68	September 16 - Comptroller and Auditor General of India G.C.Murmu and First President, Court of Accounts of Morocco, Zineb El Adaoui sign an MoU for Cooperation between the Supreme Audit Institutions of India and Morocco

Map of the Kingdom of Morocco

MOROCCO NOW

INVEST AND EXPORT

NOW SUSTAINABLE
Low carbon productions

NOW COMPETITIVE
Access to 1 bn consumers based on 54 FTAs

NOW WELL-PROVEN
Successful track record in mega projects

NOW AGILE
Morocco DNA illustratedin COVID19 management

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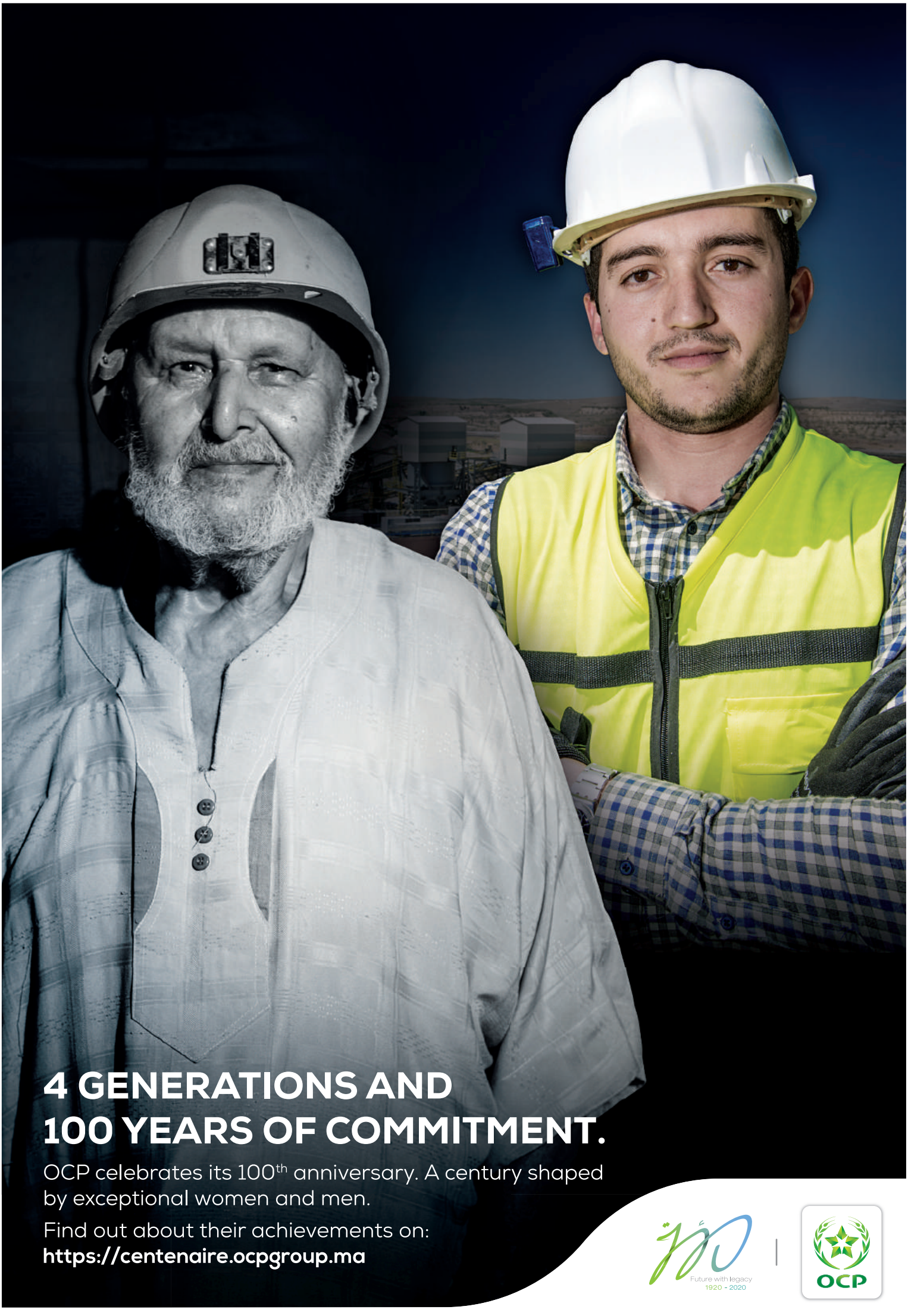
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