

Kingdom of Morocco 2010 throne celebration

Stability bolsters social, economic progress

Dr. Samir Arrour
AMBASSADOR OF THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

July 30 marks the 11th anniversary of the enthronement of His Majesty the King Mohammed VI. On this auspicious occasion, and as ambassador to Japan of His Majesty the King of Morocco, I would like to extend my respectful greetings to Their Imperial Majesties the Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the Imperial Family, Prime Minister Naoto Kan, the members of the government and the friendly people of Japan.



Japan always shows great interest in the stability, security, environment, and socioeconomic development of Africa and the Middle East. I would like to praise the Japanese initiatives for our region as well as for the Kingdom of Morocco. I am confident that our relationship will be further developed and expanded since the two nations share so many similar ideals and goals.

Morocco's renowned stability as well as the wise and enlightened leadership of H.M. King Mohammed VI have endowed Morocco with acclaim and distinction. Since the accession to the throne of H.M. the King in 1999, Morocco has undergone some profound changes through homegrown reforms aiming at economic perfor-

mance as well as human and social development. The purpose is to consolidate democracy and the rule of law, to promote human rights and to provide a better share of national prosperity, giving the political and socioeconomic development of Morocco a human dimension. Very successful local elections were held on June 12, 2009. Their results confirm the increasingly active participation of women: They secured 12 percent of the seats.

Providing the best conditions to meet the basic needs of the Moroccan people, i.e., health care, education as well as job creation, are of paramount importance in the government agenda.

The strategy of the government consists first in supporting growth, mainly through the acceleration of major construction projects, the development of the rural community and the promotion of an economy of proximity. In addition, the government will monitor the consolidation of transport infrastructure and the implementation of regional logistics and industrial platforms.

Significant progress has been achieved in recent years in stabilizing the macroeconomic environment, bolstering the capacity of the economy to withstand crisis and strengthening the fiscal position. These achievements place the country in a favorable position to absorb, in the short term, shocks linked to the deterioration of the global economic environment



King Mohammed VI

and to adopt the appropriate economic policy responses to the sustained financial and economic crisis. This will be necessary not only to preserve the gains already achieved, but also to bring about a lasting improvement in the income and employment of the Moroccan people.

Economic overview

2010 has been marked by the consequences of the international financial crisis that broke in 2008 and which occasioned an international economic slowdown. The Moroccan economy has resisted the crisis.

The resilience of the Moroccan economy may be explained by:

- the large-scale national development projects initiated by His Majesty the King;
- the strong macroeconomic

performance during these last years following years of reforms in the 1980s; and — the multicurrency basket-based exchange rate.

The combination of these elements has cushioned the effects of the financial crisis.

With billions of dollars committed to improving the country's infrastructure, Morocco aims to become a world player in terms of marine transport.

The government is aware that a well-oiled transport sector is essential to accelerate growth in such key economic sectors as agriculture, tourism and industry. The 2008-2012 investment plan aims to invest \$16.3 billion and will contribute to major projects such as the combined port and industrial complex of the Tangier-Med and the construction of the TGV (French high-speed train) line between Tangier and Casablanca.

The plan will also improve and expand the existing highway system and expand the Casablanca Mohammed V International Airport. Morocco's transport sector is one of the kingdom's most dynamic and will remain so for years to come. The improvements in infrastructure will boost other sectors and will also help the country in its goal of attracting 10 million tourists by 2010, and 20 million in 2020.

Many international investors such as Renault, Valeo, Maersk, Dell and Japanese companies such as Yazaki, Makita, Sojitsu, Sumitomo Electric, Fujikura, YKK, etc., have discovered Morocco to be a new credible investment hub right at Europe's doorstep.

Development plans

Morocco launched several sector-specific national development strategies.

The Emergence Plan for industry focused on a development strategy of seven key sectors: offshoring, automotive, electronics/aeronautics, textile, agro-industry, transformation of sea products and handicraft. Morocco benefits from a variety of assets for the emergence of a dynamic and competitive industrial sector.

The Green Morocco Plan is a very important landmark project. To be enacted over a period of 10 years, this ambitious plan aims at developing the agricultural and food production sectors at a cost of about \$13.8 billion. The project consists of a yearly investment of \$1.4 billion.

The Halieutis Plan, on the other hand, aims to develop the maritime sector of the country

and to preserve its resources from overexploitation.

Among these strategies, we can also mention the Azur Plan for promoting tourism and the Digital Morocco Plan for developing the technologies of information and communications.

With a view to becoming a regional renewable energies hub, owing to its assets of wind and solar energies (wind potential: 25,000 megawatts; solar potential: more than 5 kilowatt-hours per sq. meter per day), Morocco is offering:

- an attractive business environment
- a new law to develop renewable energies
- a new law dedicated to energy efficiency
- a new agency for developing renewable energies

The Moroccan Solar Energy Project represents a regional investment opportunity. It is one of the biggest projects in the world. This project complies with The Royal High Orientations related to mobilizing national renewable energy resources and to preserving the environment.

All of these major projects have been carried out across the country and are not hindered by the global economic gloom.

Bilateral relations

We are very pleased to note that during 2010 the relations between our two countries have continued to develop harmoniously and diversify to cover all spheres of activity.

On the political level, we note with satisfaction that from Oct. 27 to 29, 2009, the first Joint Commission Morocco-Japan was held in Tokyo. The Moroccan delegation to this important meeting was headed by the general secretary for foreign affairs of Morocco, who co-chaired the meeting. The two sides had very important and frank exchanges of views regarding the bilateral and international issues of common interest to Japan and Morocco.

Likewise, I am very pleased to report that my country took part in the first Economic Forum between Japan and Arab countries, with a very important delegation headed by H.E. Amina Benkhadra, Moroccan minister of energy, mines, water and environment. The delegation included the general manager of the National Electricity Office and the general manager of the Moroccan Agency for the Development of Investment (AMDI). This noteworthy international meeting, which took place last year in Tokyo from the 6th to the 9th of December, marked an important point in the relations between Japan and the Arab world.

On the sidelines of this forum, the Moroccan delegation held meetings with Japanese government officials and leading businesses. The minister briefed her counterparts on the then recently approved Moroccan solar plan that targets the production of 2,000 MW of solar energy by the year 2020.

Morocco is also working closely with all stakeholders to



Spectacular: The Amelkis Golf Club in Marrakech is set amid wonderful views of the snow-capped summits of the Atlas Mountains. EMBASSY OF MOROCCO

ensure a very successful outcome for the Second Japan-Arab Economic Forum, which will be taking place in Tunis on Dec. 11-12, 2010.

H.E. Latifa El Abida, secretary of state at the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education, Staff Training & Scientific Research, took part, in October 2009, in the Science and Technology in Society Forum (STS Forum).

In March 2010, Morocco took part in the 35th International Food and Beverage Exhibition, Foodex 2010, in Makuhari, Chiba. The delegation was headed by the general secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Trade. It included five managers of leading Moroccan companies in the agrifood sector and the general manager of Maroc Export.

In the field of fisheries, the Japan-Morocco Joint Commission on Fisheries took place in Tokyo from March 28 to April 1, 2010.

This meeting coincided with the visit to Japan, from March 27 to April 2, of H.E. Aziz Akhannouch, minister of agriculture and fisheries of Morocco, who was accompanied by officials from the ministry and affiliated fishery agencies.

During his visit, Akhannouch held talks with many Japanese

officials at the governmental level and in JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency), to whom he presented the Moroccan project Halieutis, aiming at developing and valuing the fisheries sector.

On cultural exchange, I am happy to report that at the invitation of Tsukuba University, the presidents of Moroccan national universities in Marrakech, Fes, Rabat and Mohamedia-Casablanca and Al Akhawayn University, and the director general of the National Center for Scientific Research have visited Japan to take part in the seminars and others activities organized by the university for North Africa.

From the Japanese side, we are happy to note that last year was marked by the very important visit to Morocco in December of H.E. Koichi Takemasa, secretary of state for foreign affairs, who took part in the sixth edition of the Forum for the Future held in Marrakech from the beginning of November.

H.E. Yasue Funayama, parliamentary secretary for agriculture, headed the Japanese delegation participating in the 62nd Annual Meeting of IWC (International Whaling Commission), which was held in Agadir from June 21 to 28, 2010.

An important delegation from JCCME (Japan Cooperation Center for the Middle East) paid a visit to Morocco in a prospecting mission from the 4th to the 8th of July 2010. This delegation held talks with officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and AMDI, and visited the Tangier Free Zone.

A delegation of professors from various Japanese universities paid a visit to Morocco within the framework of the Global 30 Project launched a couple of years ago by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), with the support of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry.

Between June 30 and July 2 a seminar was held on "Business and investment environments in Morocco," organized by AMDI and presided over by H.E. Ahmed Reda Chami, minister of industry, trade and new technologies, and attended by H.E. the ambassador of Japan to Morocco together with the general director of the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO Paris), who was accompanied by an important business delegation of about 50 companies.

Excellent relations continue with high-level visits

Yuichiro Hata
PRESIDENT, THE JAPAN-MOROCCO PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

On the auspicious occasion of the 11th anniversary of the accession to the throne of His Majesty the King Mohammed VI, and on behalf of the Japan Morocco Parliamentary Friendship League, I would like to seize this happy occasion to extend my warmest greetings and heartfelt congratulations to His Majesty, His Royal Highness the Crown Prince Moulay Al Hassan, the members of the Royal Family, the government and people of Morocco.



The 11th anniversary of the accession of H.M. King Mohammed VI to the throne is an

occasion to ponder the development of Japan-Morocco relations in the last few years.

In fact, the excellent relationships binding the Imperial Family of Japan and the Royal Family in Morocco have strengthened the commitment of high-level officials from both sides to work together in order to consolidate these relations.

This year has witnessed a positive dynamic development in terms of high-level visits from both sides and confirmed the mutual commitment to enhancing close cooperation and expanding them to areas of common interest.

Japan and Morocco share so many noble values that have recently marked both the bilateral and multilateral levels of cooperation. Both countries have been enjoying very friendly relations based on a deep faith in peace, dialogue and cooperation

since they established diplomatic relations in 1956.

The elected institutions of Japan and Morocco have significant roles to play in promoting dialogue and collaboration on issues of common interest to both countries. In this regard, we shall work together to empower the Morocco-Japan Friendship League. The respective legislatures should translate the will of the peoples of our countries to ensure mutual understanding and full comprehension of the need to achieve development and prosperity for the Japanese and Moroccan peoples.

To conclude, I would like once again to convey my heartfelt congratulations to His Majesty and the people of Morocco on the throne celebration day with a strong wish to make relations between our friendly countries expand even more.

Bright future ahead for Mediterranean nation

Seigi Hinata
PRESIDENT, THE JAPAN-MOROCCO ASSOCIATION, FORMER JAPANESE AMBASSADOR TO THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

On the occasion of 11th anniversary of enthronement, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco on behalf of all members of the Japan-Morocco Association. On this auspicious occasion, I would like to express also my sincere greetings to Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Salma, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Moulay Al Hassan, Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Khadija and all other members of the Royal Family as well as the people and



the government of the Kingdom of Morocco.

I am happy to note that the bilateral relations between Japan and Morocco are on a steady development track in various fields such as the economic and technical cooperation through ODA (Official Development Assistance), the investments in the private sector, tourism and others.

We have learned with great pleasure that the first Joint Commission between Morocco and Japan was successfully held in Tokyo in October 2009 and that it will continue to provide one of the forums where the two governments will strengthen their dialogue.

No doubt Morocco will become one of the most promising nations in the Mediterranean region through the establishment of a free trade zone with the European Union in the near

future.

The Japan-Morocco Association works closely with the Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in Japan every year to realize various events of interest to the general public.

The association, for example, organized in November 2009 "La Soiree du Maroc" with great success in close cooperation with the embassy and we will also organize such an annual event in November of this year.

On the other hand, the association plans to dispatch another Friendship Mission to Morocco, a move expected to contribute to an increase in the number of Japanese tourists to the enchanting country.

To conclude, I would like to reiterate my sincere wish to enhance the existing excellent relationship between the people of Japan and the people of Morocco.

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on the 11th Anniversary
of the Accession to the Throne of
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