



Tanger Med port complex, the largest in Africa

# MOROCCO

## King Mohammed VI opens doors to Africa

Moroccan players are now well placed to develop internationally, thanks to the unyielding commitment of His Majesty King Mohammed VI to the co-development of Africa

Since he came to the throne in 1999, Morocco's King Mohammed VI has made some 50 visits to more than 25 African countries, signing around 1,000 partnership agreements and methodically establishing the Kingdom of Morocco's presence throughout Africa. His objective: to strengthen the country's diplomatic, economic and trade relations with the rest

a member of the AU. Then, in June 2017, Morocco applied to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with positive reception; it had left the continental body in 1984. The Kingdom's application to ECOWAS is a logical continuation of its return to the AU; belonging to regional communities opens up essential channels through which a mem-

**“His Majesty King Mohammed VI opened the doors to Africa for us.”**

Joseph Roger Sahyoun, Chairman, SOMAGEC

of the continent, simultaneously transforming Morocco into a gateway to Africa.

In 2017, the King's campaigning led to important milestones being achieved in Moroccan-African relations. In January 2017, the country was readmitted to the African Union (AU), three decades after leaving the body's previous incarnation as the Organisation of African Unity. Prior to rejoining, it was the only country in Africa that was not

member country's relations with the AU transit.

While culturally speaking Morocco's identity may be said to align with Arab states, its economic interests increasingly lie in Africa and the King is backing moves to explore opportunities in sectors from mining and construction to medicine, insurance and banking across the continent. Morocco is no newcomer to the world of heavy investing in Africa — it



King Mohammed VI of Morocco

was the leading African investor in terms of capital expenditure in 2016 and now has the most attractive business and investment climate on the continent, according to Ernst & Young. But the King is fully aware that Morocco's development has never been more dependent on that of the continent as a whole and wants the Kingdom to be a key protagonist in pan-African structural projects.

Few Moroccan companies know better about expanding into Africa than SOMAGEC (Société Maghrébine de Génie Civil), one of the first to do so with moves into countries such as Senegal and Equatorial Guinea. Founded in 1966, it is the largest construction company in Maghreb, and one of the continent's most important civil-engineering firms. It has contributed to the construction of all

the major ports in Morocco, and taken part in the majority of key mega-projects in the Kingdom, from monuments and wind farms to tourist resorts. Joseph Roger Sahyoun, the company's Chairman, credits the King with making the company's expansion possible, saying “His Majesty King Mohammed VI opened the doors to Africa for us.” And in 2018, the King plans to further pick up the pace, with his agenda for official visits to Africa even fuller than in 2017.

In 2018, several major projects will see Moroccan investments in sub-Saharan Africa bear fruit. However, the Kingdom's investments in this region remain largely the preserve of big groups, with home-grown SMEs lagging behind when it comes to making their mark on the continent.

This may be partially due to the fact that many Moroccan SMEs are family-run and do not easily mobilise the human and financial resources required to set up abroad and cope with competitive pressures. However, it is a reality that is deemed “perfectly normal” by Mohamed Boussaid, Morocco's Minister of Economy and Finance, who stresses that public authorities are actively supporting SMEs through a framework of cooperation agreements and facilitation measures with partner countries, as well as through awareness-raising and networking actions carried out by economic development agencies.

# SOMAGEC: A case study for Moroccan companies seeking to expand in Africa

Chairman of Moroccan infrastructure expert SOMAGEC, Joseph Roger Sahyoun, says financing is the major hurdle for Moroccan companies eager to operate across the continent

**PR** To what do you attribute the company's success in becoming a Moroccan leader in the construction sector?

**JRS** Our company SOMAGEC (Société Maghrébienne de Génie Civil) grew in tandem with the country's economy and infrastructure. Foreign companies fed this growth and gave us the means and tools to develop. At that point in time, the state put all its trust in them, making it hard for Moroccan companies to gain a foothold and do business with the government. The categorical refusal of foreign companies to operate on a level playing field with us meant we were forced to compete head-to-head with them. This wasn't hard; as a local sub-contractor we were 40%

cheaper. But our real challenge was to earn the trust of the state, which we achieved over time by building a solid reputation in the very complex maritime sector where we became the leader.

**PR** In 2005, you created your subsidiary in Equatorial Guinea. How did you manage to conquer the African market?

**JRS** Morocco was our launchpad and our testing ground. The first country we expanded into was Senegal where it quickly became apparent that we were 25 to 30% cheaper than the French companies that were already there. SOMAGEC ended up generating higher margins than in Morocco although we were cheaper than the market rate. The multinationals were slow to react, thinking they had the market conquered. Our next destination was Equatorial Guinea where we helped the recovery of the local economy and spent a decade working on the country's major construction sites. We really landed

## SOMAGEC — TOP FACTS

- **Founded** in 1966 (its 50-year anniversary was in 2016)
- **Pioneer** in port and maritime infrastructure in Morocco
- **A leader** of civil engineering in Africa and among the first Moroccan companies to start operating across the continent
- **Contributed** to the construction of all the ports in the Kingdom (from Casablanca to the ongoing Tanger Med's second phase — Tanger Med is one of the largest ports in Africa)
- **Participated** in most major infrastructure projects in Morocco (strengthening the foundations of the Hassan II Mosque, developing Rabat's Bouregreg Valley and the Casablanca Marina)
- **2004: Won** the tender for the extension of Senegal's Port of Dakar
- **2005: Joseph Roger Sahyoun**, Chairman, created the Equatorial Guinea subsidiary
- **2007: Riad Motors** was created, a wholly owned subsidiary dedicated to the adaptation of professional vehicles

**“Morocco is overbrimming with players who are equally as talented and knowledgeable as SOMAGEC. But an inability to self-fund often puts the breaks on ambitions.”**

Joseph Roger Sahyoun, Chairman, SOMAGEC

on our feet.

Competitors try to carve out their place in this market but experience does count; I've been training our engineers for over 30 years and we boast strong technical skills.

SOMAGEC has also been luckier than others to some degree. Oil prices were high during the years that we entered the African market. It would now be much harder for a Moroccan company to survive the business adventure we threw ourselves into. The truth is that it's a huge challenge today to be a Moroccan professional embracing the international market. What happens if the client doesn't pay? You can't do a thing. Now with oil prices very low, I can't see how a



Tarfaya wind farm, on the Atlantic coast

Moroccan company could even contemplate exporting its savoir-faire without the backing of a funder.

**PR** Funding is the real sticking point for Moroccan SMEs as they try to compete with multinationals, wouldn't you say?

**JRS** Morocco today finds itself in a delicate situation: we have some of the best professionals but hardly any ability to self-fund. His Majesty King Mohammed VI has opened up Africa

any interest in letting us win market-share? I constantly see companies trying to set up in Africa thinking they have found a golden opportunity, only to be dealt a hard blow.

**PR** How are the Chinese stepping in with financing?

**JRS** The Chinese have been a step ahead in investing heavily across the continent and offering simple solutions for the public works sector, which is one of Africa's main priorities. But at some point we're going to have to come up with an alternative model. Underpinning Morocco is a strong economic fabric of individuals able to rival the best and take on the continent's infrastructure projects.

How about a US-Moroccan support fund for Moroccan companies? If we just do nothing the whole of Morocco's economic tissue could unravel, undoing over two decades of hard work. Now that His Majesty has led Africa to put its faith in us, we have to really go for it. We have just one boss and that is His Majesty. As his political and economic actors on the ground we are all part of one army striving towards a common goal.

for us, but if a Moroccan company wants to be involved in a large-scale project, it has no option but to find a partner to finance it, which often puts the breaks on ambitions. Morocco is overbrimming with players who are equally as talented and knowledgeable as SOMAGEC. Even for us, we have to face tough competition such as the US giants present in Mozambique. Do you really think they have

### Société Maghrébienne de Génie Civil (SOMAGEC)

Rue Mohamed El Mesfioui & Corbi,  
Casablanca, Oukacha, Morocco  
Tel: +212 5 22 35 45 91  
Website: www.somagec.ma



# Africa's most attractive economy in great shape

Standing head and shoulders above its nearest competitors on the continent, Morocco's economy and FDI flows are booming

Morocco remains Africa's most attractive investment destination by far, as the ambitious nation captures significant inward flows of foreign capital — FDI was estimated at an impressive \$2.5 billion in 2017 (up 12% year-on-year) — particularly in key sectors such as banking, tourism, and energy.

Earlier this year, Morocco's Minister of Finance and Economy, Mohamed Boussaid, reaffirmed the upbeat outlook of annual economic growth of 3.2% for 2018, a figure that would mean the nation maintained its fiscal upward trajectory despite the headwinds buffeting the global economy.

That positive forecast was echoed by the Washington D.C.-based International Monetary Fund (IMF), which issued a 70-page report in which it described Morocco's medium-term pros-

pects as "favourable", with growth expected to reach 4.5% by 2021.

IMF's Executive Directors commended the authorities for the "sound macroeconomic policies and reform implementation that have helped improve the resilience of the Moroccan economy, upgrade the fiscal and financial policy frameworks, and increase economic diversification.

"Growth has recovered and should reach 4.4% in 2017, although non-agricultural activity remains subdued. Inflation is low and well-anchored. The fiscal deficit is expected to decline to 3.5% in 2017 and public debt is sustainable," the team of economists added following a visit to the country."

Morocco received a further vote of confidence from the IMF and the World Bank Group (WBG) when the pair announced their

2021 annual meetings will take place in Marrakech — the first time the high-profile meetings have been held in Africa since 1973.

## Setting the benchmark for Africa

According to the latest Africa Investment Index 2018 by Quantum Global Research Lab, Morocco is the most attractive economy for investments flowing

ment that it has embraced," states Mthuli Ncube, Head of Advisory, Managing Director of Quantum Global Research Lab.

"Morocco's receptive business environment, along with its low-risk profile, the size of its economy (the fifth largest in Africa), and its strong social capital factors, makes it the best place to invest on the continent."

**What has propelled Morocco to the top position of the AAI is the size of its economy, its very favourable business climate, and the macroeconomic risk management."**

Mthuli Ncube, Head of Advisory, MD of Quantum Global Research Lab

into Africa and is considered as one of the best emerging markets anywhere in the world for overseas investment.

"What has propelled Morocco to the top position of the Africa Investment Index (AAI) is, above all, the size of its economy, its very favourable business climate and the macroeconomic risk manage-

Always open to new ideas, Morocco recently introduced crowdfunding to its 35 million citizens and established a bill to regulate it.

Spearheaded by Minister Boussaid, the draft was a continuation of steps the pro-business administration has taken to improve entrepreneurial spirit and nurture innovative projects across the nation.

## Why invest in Morocco?

### Morocco, a true African success story



#1 African country for American FDI



#3 Doing business in Africa in 2018



#1 Financial center in Africa



#2 African investor in Sub-Saharan Africa



IMF lauds Morocco's currency liberalization in 2018



Ranked among the safest destinations by US government

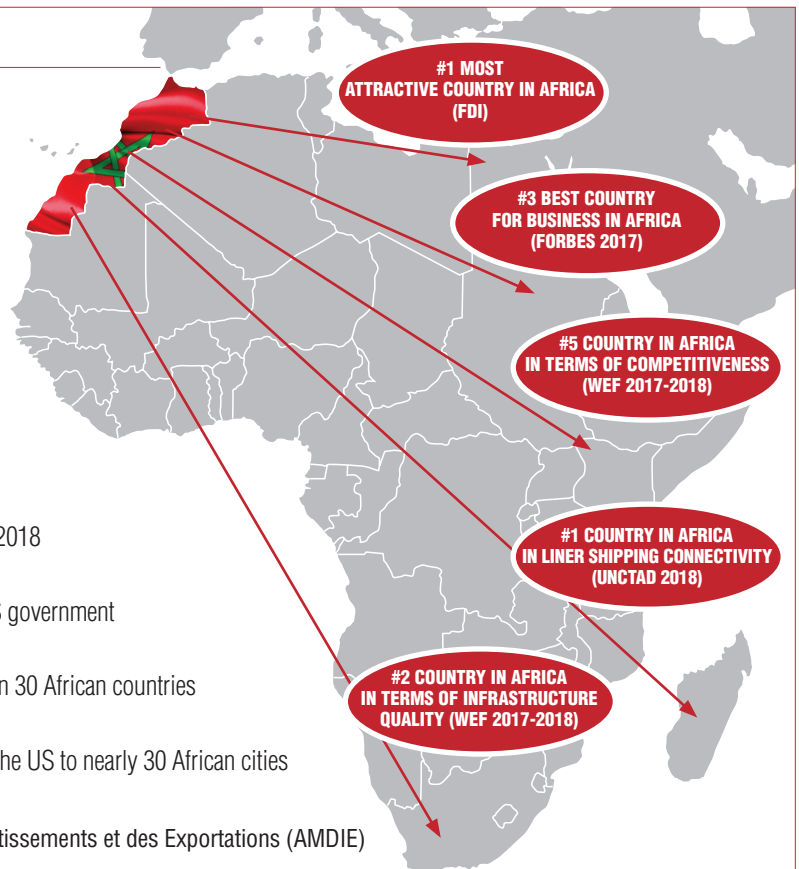


Moroccan companies are present in more than 30 African countries



National carrier Royal Air Maroc connects the US to nearly 30 African cities

Agence Marocaine de Développement des Investissements et des Exportations (AMDIE)



# Banking on Morocco, Africa's partner for growth

The banking sector is not only the most modern and open in the country, but has also attracted the most talented people

Considered the ideal example for other countries on the continent to learn from, Morocco's banking and financial services sector benefits from a modern and stable regulatory framework that is a powerful catalyst for socioeconomic development through its considerable contribution to the financing of the economy.

states Mohamed Boussaid, Minister of Economy and Finance.

"The sector is very profitable and plays in the big leagues. The expansion of Moroccan banks across sub-Saharan Africa is remarkable. Moroccan banks share their know-how with other African countries that today face the problems Morocco once faced."

**Morocco has had a strong, well-managed banking sector for decades, which contributes to development. The sector is very profitable and plays in the big leagues."**

Mohamed Boussaid, Minister of Economy and Finance

Strong macroeconomic fundamentals have helped to eliminate shortages of liquidity, and the banking landscape is competitive with around two dozen banks actively serving companies of all sizes, and millions of individuals.

Such success has certainly caught the attention of many international experts, as in late 2017, the Central Bank of Morocco (CBM) was named the best in Africa by the American magazine Global Finance. Judges awarded CBM a prestigious 'A' grade, with only three other African nations having won such a rating.

"Morocco has had a strong, well-managed banking sector for decades, which today contributes to the country's development,"

The Casablanca Stock Exchange (CSE) is one of the largest and most important in Africa. While in 2016, and only a few years after its creation, Casablanca Finance City (CFC) dethroned Johannesburg as the best financial center in Africa, according to the Global Financial Centers Index.

Comprising CSE, the Central Bank of Morocco, and La Caisse de Dépôt et de Gestion (CDG), Casablanca Finance City Authority (CFCA) aims to position Casablanca as the premier gateway into the lucrative African markets.

"Africa is the continent of the future, but it is also a fragmented continent with many small economies; large international groups cannot be present in 54 different



**Mohamed Boussaid**  
Minister of Economy and Finance

countries," explains Saïd Ibrahim, CEO of CFCA. "These multinationals need a base camp from where they can pursue business opportunities."

### Sowing the seeds for GDP growth

As an eager supporter of the "Green Morocco" plan — an initiative launched a decade ago to make agriculture a growth engine for the economy — and with around 1.5 million of its clients based in rural areas, Crédit Agricole is a key figure in the retail banking industry.

Scheduled to list on the CSE by

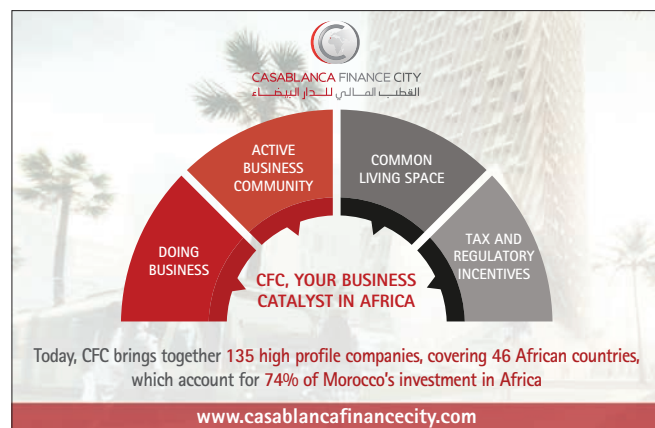
late 2019, Crédit Agricole is majority-owned by the government and ideally positioned to support firms and investors seeking to take advantage of the wealth of openings in the agricultural industry.

"With the development of agro-industry, agriculture has become an interesting market for classic retail banking says Tariq Sijilmassi, President of Crédit Agricole, adding the group has grown rapidly to become the fourth largest bank in the country.

"Financing needs have increased dramatically with the launch of the Green Morocco plan, demonstrating the growing role of agriculture as the engine of Morocco's economy," adds Crédit Agricole Director General, Jamal Eddine El Jamali.

"Agricultural GDP has grown at an annual rate of 7%, well above the rate of growth of the Moroccan economy observed in recent years.

"We created an innovative new system of credit (mesocredit) that has become an international model for the financial inclusion of smallholder farmers who traditionally have been excluded from the conventional banking system."



**MOROCCO'S LEADING BANK IN AGRICULTURE**

**GROUPE CREDIT AGRICOLE DU MAROC**

UN ENGAGEMENT DURABLE

# BMCE Bank of Africa leads the way

BMCE Bank of Africa is helping to drive Morocco's economic development, while also enabling its strategic partners to use the country as a gateway to Africa and Europe

With ambition and success hard-wired into its DNA, BMCE Bank of Africa (BBOA) is an industry titan and pioneer blazing a trail across the region's banking and financial services sectors.

Now the second largest banking group in Africa by geographical coverage, and boasting operations in 20 countries, BBOA covers four of the continent's five main economic regions. Since privatisation, BBOA has consolidated its position as an international banking institution through the adoption of a universal banking model that has served as a sturdy platform for growth.

In addition, a diversification strategy has expanded the SME customer segment and helped BBOA consolidate its position in the corporate arena thanks to its

recognised expertise and valuable experience in project finance.

Such knowledge will certainly be called on for current, and future, infrastructure projects, including the showcase initiative launched last year by the King of Morocco: Tanger Tech.

Involving at least \$11 billion of investment, this giant smart city aims to transform the Tanger region into a state-of-the-art economic hub and a hi-tech gateway to Europe by 2030.

### Sky's the limit for infrastructure

The exciting world-scale project is the brainchild of BBOA Group President Othman Benjelloun, so it is fitting his firm will play an integral role in its development over the next decade.

Meanwhile, BBOA is working on its own impressive project,

a luxury resort and apartment complex that will dominate the skyline of the city of Rabat: BMCE Tower.

"Through this tower, I want to send a message to our majority shareholders: we can do banking in Morocco while being aligned with the priorities of the nation and the needs of our communities," explains Benjelloun.

"A true banker is someone who thinks about the impact that their activities will have on their communities, hence why we are very proud to be the initiators of projects like Tanger Tech and BMCE Tower.

"Our impressive track record is why we are one of only 20 institutions in the world chosen to be signatories of the United Nations' Principles for Positive Impact Finance."

## Fast facts about a true industry giant

■ Founded in 1959 by the government, BBOA is now proud to be a subsidiary of the Moroccan financial and industrial goliath Finance Com Group.

■ So large and successful is the Finance Com Group, that the business generates an incredible quarter of Morocco's entire GDP.

■ More than 14,000 employees in 32 countries serve 5.5 million BMCE Bank of Africa customers, but the target is to establish a presence in 53 countries.

■ Unsurprisingly, given its size and reach, BBOA is highly active in many economic sectors, including banking, insurance, telecoms, transport, and tourism.

■ BBOA is committed to corporate social responsibility (CSR) and devotes 3-4% of its gross operating income to the BBOA Foundation.

bmcebank.ma

## To Support a moving Africa

There is nothing better than a bank open to the world to support the emergence of a dynamic Africa. A bank in continuous evolution with branches in 21 countries in the continent to fund projects in a forward-looking Africa.

BMCE Bank of Africa has always built on its network mobilising its 14,000 partners to open the gates of Africa to world investors thus contributing to the continent's influence at the international level.

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# Lighting the path to African energy sustainability

Vast investment in power generation infrastructure and technology is energizing the economy

A comprehensive energy revolution is well underway in Morocco as the government harnesses the power of nature to develop infrastructure in the wind, solar, and hydroelectric sectors.

“Over the past decade, Morocco has experienced a veritable energy revolution allowing us to achieve ambitious objectives in terms of energy independence and the integration of new technologies for renewable energies,” explains Abderrahim El Hafidi, Secretary General of the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Sustainable Development.

“We are building one of the largest wind farms on the continent, with a capacity of 850MW, which will allow us to produce the cheapest energy in the world.

“The Moroccan energy model is becoming more attractive, and between 2017 and 2030 will mobilize over \$42 billion of investment.

Morocco’s rich natural resources include more than 900,000 km<sup>2</sup> of sedimentary basins, onshore and offshore that may contain substantial gas or oil reserves.



**Amina Benkhadra**  
Director General, National Bureau of Petroleum and Mines (ONHYM)

“We play the role of catalyst of mining and hydrocarbon exploration in Morocco,” comments ONHYM Director General, Amina Benkhadra. “The density of our drilling operations is 0.004 wells per 100 km<sup>2</sup>, compared to the international average of 10 wells per 100 km<sup>2</sup>. Even though more companies are arriving than before, we need to invest more and drill more.

“More than 30 wells have been drilled offshore, which is very few given the extent of the basin and

each sector. At the forefront of Morocco’s growing import and export activities is port management firm Marsa Maroc.

The partially state-owned company is the kingdom’s leading port terminal operator with nine ports, meaning its large workforce works around the clock to satisfy the logistical demands of companies in all sectors.

Handling around 40 million tonnes of goods per year from a diverse range of industries, Marsa Maroc has been so successful since its foundation in 2006 that it was listed on the CSE just a decade after its creation.

“Marsa Maroc handles the majority of the flow of Moroccan goods that are imported and exported each year,” says CEO Mohammed Abdeljalil.

“The port sector has an important role to play in the context of Morocco’s international cooperation, especially in Africa.

“Morocco’s great infrastructure makes it an ideal destination for investors targeting the Mediterranean and West African markets. Marsa Maroc’s goal is to remain the national leader while becoming a recognized player in the African port sector by 2025.”

Société Nationale de Transports et de Logistique (SNTL) is the foremost public company in the logistics arena.

“We are the leading freight carrier in the domestic market, transporting nearly 20 million tonnes per year,” says SNTL former CEO, Nouredine Dib. “This represents roughly a fifth of the country’s total road freight.

During King Mohammed VI’s most recent tour of Africa, SNTL signed agreements with African firms in the public and private sectors for the implementation of a number of projects, including seven memorandums of understanding (MOUs).

**As the national leader in the ports sector, Marsa Maroc handles the majority of the flow of Moroccan goods that are imported and exported each year.”**

Mohammed Abdeljalil, CEO, Marsa Maroc

Discovering and developing this hydrocarbon and mining potential in a sustainable way is the responsibility of the Office National des Hydrocarbures et des Mines (ONHYM).

The state-run entity conducts research, explores and exploits deposits; and negotiates with international partners to maximize output and returns on investment.

the length of our Atlantic Ocean coastline. Morocco is a country with many undiscovered resources, but to find them we first have to invest more.”

## Logistics maps out the future

Successful logistics networks and infrastructure are essential to support the government’s development strategies for



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# World-class infrastructure drives Morocco forward

Morocco had the foresight to build the critical infrastructure that acts today as the resilient backbone of the economy

Morocco's development of an efficient and streamlined logistics network did not happen overnight, but followed decades of significant public and private sector investment in modern transport infrastructure.

In addition, for each mode of transport — marine, rail, road, and air — there is a public company whose mission is to develop infrastructure and related services.

“Morocco's goal is to play a key role in the development of the African continent,” outlines Abdelkader Amara, Minister of Equipment, Transport, Logistics and Water.

“We have about 40 ports, including large hubs meaning we are well-positioned for global trade, both in terms of transshipment and import-export.

“From Tangier to Casablanca, from Marrakech to Agadir, we have a motorway network con-



**Abdelkader Amara**  
Minister of Equipment, Transport,  
Logistics and Water

then a high-speed line connecting Marrakech to Agadir.

“These are key routes for the economy, and will allow business leaders to move quickly between different commercial centers.”

Morocco's rail network is rated the best at the Arab-African level in terms of competitiveness and quality, according to a recent re-

## Morocco's goal is to play a key role in the development of the African continent.”

Abdelkader Amara, Minister of Equipment, Transport, Logistics and Water

necting key commercial centers.

“In aviation, our airports serve a significant number of African capitals. While, our flagship rail project is the high-speed line between Tangier and Casablanca, connected to a medium-speed line between Casablanca and Marrakech,

port by the World Economic Forum (WEF).

The kingdom's award-winning rail operator is Office National des Chemins de Fer (ONCF). In 2017, ONCF carried 40 million passengers and 30 million tonnes of freight on a network compris-



## ADM is a catalyst for trade and economic activity. We are always on the lookout for the latest traffic technologies.”

Anouar Benazzouz, Director General, Autoroutes du Maroc (ADM)

ing 3,600 kilometers of tracks, and 133 stations.

The state-owned firm's rolling stock includes a new high-speed train that will transfer people between cities in record time.

### Highways fuel economic growth

As the economic arteries of Morocco, the thousands of kilometers of motorways and highways are vital to the nation's socioeconomic performance.

Two thirds of the population is directly connected to the motorway network, with 70% of the population served by the motorway network or expressways.

All cities with more than 400,000 inhabitants are connected to motorways, with only a handful of cities of at least 100,000 people not linked to the motorway system.

“Our projects are attracting businesses that are gradually investing in newly connected regions, like Fez,” explains Anouar

Benazzouz, Director General of Autoroutes du Maroc (ADM), the state-owned entity responsible for maintaining the highways that criss cross the country.

“ADM is a catalyst for trade and economic activity. Infrastructure is not governed by a financial equation, but by socioeconomic reason.

“We have adapted to this exceptional growth by focusing on security, fluidity and services, and are always on the lookout for the latest technologies to streamline traffic.

“Electric charging stations will gradually be installed along our highways from 2018. We are in talks to make this investment sustainable, and this initiative more than symbolic.

“We have won the respect and esteem of international institutions and donors; moreover African countries are replicating the model of ADM and all that we have accomplished in 25 years.”



## Connecting Morocco to its future

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# Morocco: Africa's thriving industrial hub sets high continental benchmark

A complete transformation of the Moroccan economy and its industrial sector has occurred over the past few years

Morocco's incredible industrial revolution over the past decade has been a sight to behold, with some of the world's largest companies battling to secure prime real estate for state-of-the-art factories, support infrastructure, research facilities, and offices.

Billions of dollars of FDI have flooded into sectors such as aeronautics, automobile production — Renault Nissan makes around 1,000 cars daily — and manufacturing operations — where train giant Bombardier is investing heavily — and creating thousands of jobs, so generating huge revenues for the government.

Impressive progress has also been recorded in industrial areas like agri-food, textiles, pharmaceuticals, and various free zones, making the industrial sector Mo-

**“Morocco is no longer a source of cheap labor, but a source of well-trained engineers, with a competitive logistical infrastructure.”**

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

rocco's real growth engine. Between 2017 and 2020, more than 300,000 new industry jobs will be formed.

Guiding this eye-catching industrial growth is Morocco's Industrial Acceleration Plan, which



**Moulay Hafid Elalamy**  
Minister of Industry, Investment,  
Trade and Digital Economy

is performing even better than officials ever imagined, according to Minister of Industry, Investment, Trade and Digital Economy, Moulay Hafid Elalamy.

The pioneering plan is centered on the implementation of efficient ecosystems that boost integration in value chains, as well as the consolidation of the local relations between big firms and SMEs.

The innovative and comprehensive industrial growth blueprint was launched in 2014, and provides for the formation of a €2 billion public industrial investment fund. The strategy includes a range of fiscal incentives and tax advantages, and commits participants to work to support Morocco's partnership with African countries to reinforce its position as the principal gateway for FDI across the continent.

“For years, we had to solicit credit companies, but now, it is the com-



panies who come to us every day,” states Minister Elalamy. “We sign contracts every week that bring huge investments. At the Frankfurt Motor Show, we met 320 players in the automotive sector and in 48 hours reached agreements with two of the world's market leaders.

“Today, Morocco is no longer a source of cheap labor, but a reliable source of well-trained engineers, with a competitive logistical structure, with state support and a high level of investment protection.”

The development of a digital ecosystem is a must for Morocco so it can nurture a successful and innovative digital sector. Three operators offer 4G mobile broad-

band, positioning Morocco at the forefront of African ICT uptake.

Now in its 20th year of regulating the fast-growing telecoms sector and ensuring healthy competition, Agence Nationale de Réglementation des Télécommunications (ANRT) is a forward-thinking public agency that aims to position Morocco as a leading player in the field of ICT.

“In 2017, subscriptions, especially in mobile networks, continued to grow at a very high annual rate,” notes ANRT Managing Director, Az-El-Arabe Hassibi.

“Mobile Internet 4G reached over 6.8 million customers at the end of 2017, against 2.8 million customers at the end of 2016, up 143% year-on-year.”

## Maximizing investors' competitiveness

A \$100 million annual investment for multinationals

**PR: How would you describe MEDZ?**

**OE:** It is a subsidiary of CDG Group, Morocco's first institutional investor, that supports sectoral policies launched by public bodies. We have set up more than 20 business parks in high-potential sectors, such as automotive, aeronautics, agro-industry, offshoring and tourism, to provide quality infrastructure for firms and attract foreign investment. We have provided space to over 300 firms and about 100 multinationals, such as Bombardier, Eaton, Lear, Delphi, DELL and IBM. Today, our parks employ more than 60,000 people, meaning that MEDZ has enabled profitable foreign investments in Morocco.



**Omar Elyazghi**  
Chairman, MedZ

**PR: What two projects best represent the MEDZ's business model?**

**OE:** We are satisfied with all our achievements and tailor-made solutions. In the industrial sector, MEDZ offers equipped lands and turnkey plants in strategically located industrial zones. Atlantic Free Zone could be our emblematic project, with 20,000 people employed there and the future implementation of PSA Group and its suppliers. In outsourcing, we propose plug-and-play office spaces and a world-class service through four parks (in ITO, BPO, CRM and ESO). Our flagship is Casanearshore, which has attracted the world's largest multinationals and helped promote Morocco as a regional outsourcing hub. These achievements motivate us to consolidate our offer and to ensure a business-friendly environment for our customers' sustainable competitiveness.





## Wealth of human resources is powerful magnet for foreign investors in broad spectrum of sectors

With a growing economy rapidly moving up through the gears, Morocco is fortunate to have a young population eager to take full advantage of all the opportunities created

With almost 17 million people aged under 25, Morocco has a huge pool of talent from which to satisfy its growing appetite for energetic, ambitious and skilled workers for all economic sectors.

Placing the right individual with the right company is all in a day's work for leading temporary recruitment agency Tectra.

Boasting more than 800 clients, over two dozen agencies and 32,000 temporary workers, the human resources specialist has certainly come a long way in a little less than two decades.

With an impressive track record for matching employees with employers, Tectra's strong client portfolio now includes large multinational operator such as Unilever, and Delphi.

### “Morocco is positioning itself at the forefront of future technologies.”

Hicham Boudraa

Acting CEO, Moroccan Agency for the Development of Investments and Exports (ADMIE)

“We have grown from the 202nd largest Moroccan company about 10 years ago, to 66th in 2017.” says Tectra CEO, Roland Gaudiau. “At this rate, we will be one of the 50 largest firms in the country in the next few years.

“Our strength lies in our proximity to our partners and customers via our 27 agencies. Morocco has grown at a crazy pace in recent years, as evidenced by

the infrastructure network linking the north and south, and east and west. New ports, motorways, and airports have been built, and investors have been very perceptive of these structural changes.”

### Teamwork achieves great results

Based on the concept of “Team Morocco”, a dozen ecosystems have been created through the bringing together of highly-skilled professionals from the public and private sectors.

“Our role is to communicate that there are platforms in Morocco that allow giants such as Boeing to produce up to 20% cheaper while respecting their requirements in terms of quality and production time,” explains Hicham Boudraa, Acting CEO of the Moroccan Agency for the Development of Investments and Exports (ADMIE).

“Investors will not settle for Morocco producing goods for just the local market. We must manufacture for the world as a whole, which we cannot do if we do not incite demand for our products.

“Morocco is gradually positioning itself as a country at the forefront of future technologies by promoting new sectors, such as the production of electric cars by the Chinese giant BYD Auto Co. Ltd.”

Boudraa is certainly very upbeat and excited about a new digital development agency that will kick off a national digital strategy modeled on successful experiences from around the globe.



**Hicham Boudraa**

Acting CEO, Moroccan Agency for the Development of Investments and Exports (ADMIE)

“Morocco is a country that has achieved only 20% of its economic potential to date. We still have a lot to accomplish and achieve.”

## Kitesurfing hotspot hits new heights

Investors are flocking to Dakhla to tap its massive potential



**PK25 Hotel, Dakhla**

One of the world's top kitesurfing destinations, sun-soaked and wind-swept Dakhla attracts tens of thousands of thrill-seekers and tourists a year, and recently embarked on an ambitious strategic development plan as the region looks to establish itself as the Gateway to Africa.

With an enviable strategic location and a fresh focus on economic diversification through greater activities in agriculture, fisheries, and logistics, Dakhla is a hive of activity for economic development and a powerful magnet for major international investment.

“Dakhla is undergoing a complete transformation and major economic development,” says Yanja El Khattat, President of the Regional Council of Dakhla-Oued-Eddahab. “In 2015, a new model of development for the southern regions was launched involving investment of \$8.3 billion.

“This new model represents a key vector for the development of the regional economy, and includes several major infrastructure projects, such as an Atlantic port, a fishing port south of Dakhla, and a modern highway that will link Europe and sub-Saharan Africa.”



**Tectra**

51 Bd d'Anfa, Casablanca, Morocco  
Tel: +212 5 22 43 03 49  
www.tectra.ma

**We help you find and train the talents you need to succeed in Morocco and Africa**

