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## Power and Authority in Morocco

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In December 1990 tens of thousands of Moroccans filled the streets of Fes and smaller cities across the country.<sup>1</sup> Organised protests quickly turned to riots. The rioters were mostly young, many of them unemployed university graduates, frustrated by socio-economic hardship, lack of opportunity and poor job prospects.<sup>2</sup> King Hassan II responded forcefully at first. In the ensuing violence, security forces killed more than 30 people and arrested more than 200 in Fes alone.<sup>3</sup> But Hassan II's response evolved. In the following years, he acknowledged mounting public calls for greater political, civil and economic rights and launched a series of managed political and constitutional reforms.<sup>4</sup> The Fes riots were not the first time that Moroccans had taken to the streets in protest. But it was the first time that protests led to such direct constitutional changes.

Almost exactly two decades after those riots, in February 2011, tens of thousands of Moroccans took to the streets again in 53 cities across the country. The protesters called to amend the constitution, limit the king's powers and end corruption. They also called for justice and dignity. Their message was clear: they wanted change. Most of the protesters had come of

age at a time when mass media and information were changing the way people throughout the region thought about their rights as citizens. After seeing the power of popular demonstrations to change regimes in Egypt and Tunisia only weeks earlier, many Moroccans were hopeful and fearless. Except for several isolated incidents, security forces allowed protesters to march peacefully with little interference.<sup>5</sup> King Mohammed VI, who had ruled for over a decade since the death of his father Hassan II in 1999, responded quickly. Seventeen days after the first protests, he addressed the nation on television, promising 'comprehensive constitutional reform' and a 'new charter between the throne and the people'.<sup>6</sup> The most significant constitutional reforms included a mandate that the prime minister would be chosen from the largest political party, and Morocco's indigenous Amazigh language would be established as an official language alongside Arabic.

The king's response stabilised a volatile situation at a time when regimes in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya were crumbling. His actions followed a pattern by Morocco's monarchy of adapting to public pressure in order to maintain stability and survive. While the monarchy uses coercive mechanisms and co-opts elites, similar to other regimes, its most powerful tool in the past two decades has been managing a process of gradual political reform. The reforms have attempted to satisfy just enough public discontent while maintaining a monopoly of executive power in religious, political, diplomatic and security affairs.

Although Mohammed VI's response to popular uprisings in 2011 has mostly succeeded, it has revived a persistent question of whether gradual, palace-driven reforms from above can produce tangible institutional change in how power is shared and exercised. For Moroccans eager to see their country change, the process appears to be endless. What will Moroccans call for in one, five or ten years from now?

The challenge is that the reforms carried out may – if they are successful – only partially address the frustrations underpinning protests since the 1990s. While the king’s response to popular uprisings has focused on constitutional and parliamentary reforms, core public grievances, especially among young people, centre on an unequal system characterised by corruption, favouritism and lack of opportunity. What many young Moroccans want – dignity and justice – are intangible and difficult to measure, let alone deliver. But without addressing these popular demands, the future will remain turbulent.

### **The nature of authority and power**

Once a year, for the past several centuries, Morocco’s notable family heads, senior civil servants and tribal representatives gather in one of the king’s palaces. Assembled in neat rows and wearing traditional clothes, they wait for the monarch to emerge. Once he appears, each row of men bows and shouts an oath of allegiance (*ba’ya*) to the king. The annual ceremony reinforces the king’s authority as the foundation of the Moroccan state and nation. That authority is based on both secular political rule, and his religious authority, as a descendant of the Prophet and his title of commander of the faithful (*amir al-mu’minin*).

For centuries, however, Morocco’s kings or sultans faced opposition and have struggled to enforce that authority. Before independence in 1956, the struggle depended on the sultan’s ability to collect taxes and raise armies from quasi-independent tribes in the hinterland.<sup>7</sup> Many tribes resisted, but even those that refused to pay and rejected the sultan’s political authority still maintained contact with the sultan and acknowledged his religious lineage as a descendant of the Prophet.<sup>8</sup> Even if they resented his powers and violently resisted him at times, they did not question the monarchy as an institution. The debate, instead, was over the monarchy’s appropriate political powers.

Today, the debate concerns the king's executive authority, the division of power between the monarchy and elected representatives in government and parliament, and the king's relationship with the Moroccan people.<sup>9</sup>

### *The monarchy's support base*

The king can mobilise a range of support bases to promote his agenda, most importantly loyal political parties, business elites, civil-society groups, security services and religious institutions. For example, on the Friday prior to the 2011 constitutional referendum, the Ministry of Islamic Affairs reportedly issued instructions for imams to urge their congregants to vote, on religious grounds, in favour of the referendum. The king indirectly influences the editorial content of broadcast media by appointing the heads of all public radio and television stations. He can also direct economic resources to large-scale public initiatives, such as the National Initiative for Human Development (INDH) aimed at reducing poverty and the National Human Rights Council, created to support his reform agenda.

The security services and police are also an important tool, as they are in any system. During Hassan II's reign, known as the 'years of lead', the king used widespread force to intimidate and repress political opposition. Mohammed VI took a different approach when he ascended the throne, dismissing security chiefs and launching a process to publicise past abuses. However, following the 2003 Casablanca bombings, which killed 33 people, the security forces arrested between 2,000 and 5,000 people. Despite some improvements to the criminal justice system, allegations of torture in prisons and unfair or politically motivated trials persist. Regime opponents who cross unspoken red lines often find themselves in court on trumped-up charges that lead to jail or hefty fines. Unlike in many countries, however, in Morocco local and interna-

tional organisations routinely document and publicise these complaints.

One of the monarchy's most important support bases is the circle of the ruling elite, referred to as the *makhzen*. It extends throughout the country from the palace's inner circle of advisers to regional governors and local officials appointed by the king. Through the *makhzen* the king and his royal advisers set political agendas and influence debates through pro-palace party elites, parliamentary committees, state-controlled media, security services and business allies.

### **Managed reform**

The king's response to demands for change in 2011 was swift, making full use of his sources of influence. In the days after his 9 March speech he called for new elections, released nearly 200 prisoners arrested after the 2003 Casablanca bombings, and appointed a committee to draft a series of constitutional amendments.<sup>10</sup> It was the most sweeping set of political changes of his rule.

A hastily arranged constitutional referendum was passed in July 2012, followed by parliamentary elections in November.<sup>11</sup> The king appointed Abdelilah Benkirane, head of Morocco's Islamist Justice and Development Party (PJD), to form the new government, after his party won the largest share of votes.<sup>12</sup> It was not the first time the king had appointed an opposition party to lead,<sup>13</sup> but it was the first Islamist one in Morocco's history. What also made this case different was that, under the new constitution, Mohammed VI was now obligated to allow the PJD to form the new government; he could no longer use an ill-defined executive authority to name someone.

Morocco's 2011 constitution built on Mohammed VI's earlier reforms that centred on improving women's rights and investigated past regime abuses. These efforts further supported

the monarchy's democratisation and human rights agenda.<sup>14</sup> During this period, public debate and political space expanded on a range of sensitive subjects in unprecedented ways. A 2008 initiative on regionalisation also sought to empower local and regional governments, which remains an ongoing effort.

The country's reform process has combined progress on human rights and representative governance with traditional ways of exerting authority, including occasionally coercion, silencing dissent and using elite groups to promote the monarchy's decisions and agenda.<sup>15</sup> This strategy has been in part to enlist as many constituencies as possible to participate in the process. Unlike regimes in other parts of the region, which provide little or no space for political activism, Morocco's monarchy recognises the importance of sharing political space within boundaries, including with Islamist movements. By giving different segments of the population a stake in the process, the monarchy has been able to build a broad consensus for its gradual reforms and legitimise its actions.

Despite its limits, Morocco's reform process has generated robust public debate about the separation of powers. From this perspective, Morocco's reform process does not have a finish line by design. The monarchy reacts and adjusts to pressure when necessary in order to maintain equilibrium and preserve its powers.

### **Pressure points**

Since independence in 1956, the monarchy's authority has steadily grown. Nevertheless, it is not immune to political pressure from opposition parties, powerful families, trade unions, civil society, independent media and grassroots activists. It constantly assesses public sentiment in order to accommodate these constituencies in different ways. The king has been able to manage these different groups and maintain stability in part

because they have different demands and objectives, which the monarchy can respond to with different tools and policies.

Political opposition has traditionally emerged from three broad sources: political parties, which work through parliamentary politics; non-parliamentary Islamists; and civil-society or grassroots organisations. Morocco boasts over 30 political parties, most of which support the status quo. Some parties, such as the PJD, seek to slowly rebalance power from the monarchy to elected representatives. Very few want to radically alter the political and economic status quo by limiting the king's executive powers. Morocco also has a diverse and active civil society that advocates issue-specific policies, which often push the limits of public debate on nearly every issue facing the country. At times, these broad constituencies for reform overlap and share similar objectives.

### *Opposition within limits*

By the 1990s most of Morocco's parties largely accepted the king's dominant role in Moroccan politics and decision-making. They either worked to promote the palace's agenda or posed no serious challenge to monarchical rule. The king successfully co-opted the Istiqlal Party, which led Morocco's independence movement, and later the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP), which headed the government from 1997–2002. Both political threats were neutralised by giving them a stake in the parliamentary system, along with the prestige of heading the government, even with constrained powers. Only a handful of small leftist parties continue to call for a parliamentary monarchy in which the king's powers would be tightly constrained.

The PJD has been the greatest source of parliamentary opposition in the past decade. Whereas most political parties are ideologically indistinguishable from one another, the PJD is



well organised, disciplined, has a clear conservative ideological agenda and, most importantly, has a vision for Morocco, which it calls the 'third way'. Rather than advocating revolutionary change or the status quo, the PJD sees slow, deliberate reform as the most effective strategy to shift the balance of power in favour of parliament and elected government, and away from the palace. This strategy involves three main phases. Firstly, political parties focus on modest social and economic changes. Next, the government and parliament work toward strengthening national institutions and improving accountability and transparency. In the final phase, the balance of power between the monarchy and elected government will shift in the government's favour.<sup>16</sup> While the PJD sees a role for the monarchy in Morocco's future, it is a monarchy vested with a more symbolic role rather than wielding executive authority in policymaking.

For the moment the palace has neutralised the PJD as an immediate threat. It allowed the PJD to form a political party and compete in the 1997 parliamentary elections at a time when Islamists in neighbouring countries were denied entry into formal politics.<sup>17</sup> Unlike other Moroccan Islamists, most importantly the al-Adl wal-Ihsan (Justice and Charity) movement, the PJD accepts the king's religious role as commander of the faithful and the importance of the monarchy as a unifying national institution. Integrating the PJD in the 1990s not only broadened the political space and competition, but also prevented religion from becoming a source of political opposition and conflict as it was in neighbouring countries. Moreover, it more clearly divided Islamists between those who accept monarchical rule and those who reject it. This distinction is the dividing line between political participation and exclusion.

The PJD election victory in 2011 cemented the palace's co-optation of the movement by allowing the party to head the government and carry the burden that came with it. The PJD

went from an opposition party that challenged the government to condemning the February 20 demonstrators and defending the king in numerous venues. In doing so, the party hoped to demonstrate its support for the monarchy and silence any uncertainty about its loyalty. Given that the king sets the pace of reform, the party's strategy now depends on cooperation with the palace.

By heading a government with monarchical oversight, the PJD has become a convenient scapegoat for unpopular yet necessary economic policies such as subsidy and pension reform, which it has carefully started to implement as part of its commitments to the IMF. The PJD campaigned on promises of ending corruption, improving government transparency and services, and boosting economic growth and job creation. It has struggled at times, however, in part because it does not have the authority to shape government policies, which are set by the royal court. Early efforts to legislate media reforms, such as limiting alcohol advertisements and including the call to prayer on public broadcasting, sparked a backlash from pro-palace parties and the elite. Plans to investigate corruption have also been stonewalled. Despite these setbacks, the PJD overcame a coalition crisis in 2013 and remains popular as an authentic party that resonates with many people. It performed well in the September 2015 municipal and regional elections, especially in urban areas, where it demonstrated solid middle-class support. Its future role and success, however, will depend not only on whether it can meet the expectations of its voters and demonstrate progress on its core issues, but also on its ongoing accommodation with the palace.

### *Non-parliamentary Islamists*

Al-Adl wal-Ihsan, a popular grassroots Islamic movement that rejects the king's political and religious authority (and there-

fore does not participate in parliamentary politics), remains a long-term challenge to the monarchy. Because it does not compete in elections, it is difficult to gauge the movement's size and popularity, but it is widely believed to be one of the largest social-political movements in the country. Al-adl wal-Ihsan rejects violence as a strategy, but has a revolutionary vision for a new political and social order in Morocco without the monarchy. After the death in 2012 of its charismatic leader, Abdessalam Yassine, the movement debated whether to enter formal politics. For the moment, it has rejected the Moroccan political system and is not likely to pose a direct challenge. Instead, al-Adl wal-Ihsan will probably continue building grassroots support for its anti-monarchy message.

Salafists are also active and increasingly visible in Morocco.<sup>18</sup> After cracking down on them following deadly bombings in Casablanca in 2003, the king began pardoning leading Salafist sheikhs in 2011–12. This strategy allows greater space for Salafists, as long as they demonstrate loyalty to the monarchy, and it further divides the Islamist opposition. One sheikh, Mohammed Fizazi, for example, who had been sentenced to 30 years in prison for his links to the Casablanca bombings, declared his support for the monarchy after his release.<sup>19</sup> Whether Salafist preachers remain apolitical or not, non-violent Salafists are likely to remain part of Morocco's future religious and social landscape.

### *New coalitions*

The 2011 uprisings created new and diverse coalitions demanding fundamental and immediate change. In 2011, for example, the February 20 movement emerged when young activists, inspired by events in Tunisia and Egypt, called for a day of action and protest. Unlike previous efforts to rally young activists through social media, on that Sunday in February

tens of thousands gathered in cities across Morocco. Many of the organisers came from middle-class backgrounds, and some had experience working for civil-society organisations. Crucially, the February 20 movement tapped into a growing phenomenon of online activism by previously disengaged young people, which focused on specific causes, such as police brutality and economic inequality.

February 20's initial strength came from its success in uniting both secular and Islamist activists. The youth wing of al-Adl wal-Ihsan joined the movement in its first year. Overall, more than 40 civil-society groups, including several political parties, joined the broad coalition. This included some of Morocco's established non-governmental organisations, such as the Moroccan Association of Human Rights (AMDH), al-Adl wal-Ihsan and extreme leftist political parties, including the Unified Socialist Party (PSU) and Anahj Democrati (Democratic Way). While a core group of young activists had launched the movement, it remained largely decentralised, with no clear national leadership structure.

The February 20 protesters initially laid out seven broad demands, which fell into two categories.<sup>20</sup> The first focused on power and authority. These demands called for: an elected constitutional committee that would draft a new constitution to enshrine popular sovereignty and place limits on the king's authority; the dismissal of parliament and the government; the creation of an independent judiciary; and the release of political prisoners. The second category called for socio-economic justice, equality and an end to corruption. February 20 also demanded that Amazigh be recognised as an official language along with Arabic. Ultimately, what Moroccans called for during those early protests of 2011 was a system in which the monarchy's political and economic power would be substantially diminished to a more symbolic role enshrined in law.

## The limits of reform

Morocco's reforms have helped advance the debate on a range of issues and genuinely increased citizen participation, but they have not fundamentally altered the balance or separation of powers. More importantly, constitutional reforms only address part of Morocco's problems: namely, demands for greater political representation and participation. The reforms fail to address the favouritism, corruption and lack of opportunity that have created a marginalised and unemployed youth population with little chance of advancement. Without addressing these critical issues, popular protests will continue to threaten Morocco's stability.

Part of the challenge is that these problems are deeply ingrained in Morocco's social, economic and political structure. Although nearly all of the country's macroeconomic and human development indicators have improved over the last several decades, the numbers skew endemic and worsening problems, such as a growing income gap between rural and urban areas, poor public education and youth unemployment close to 30%. Access to healthcare remains unequal, especially between rural and urban areas, and between wealthy and poor populations.<sup>21</sup> Morocco is diversifying its economy away from overdependence on the agricultural sector, but greater economic growth has not translated into more jobs, and higher education does not necessarily help.

The king acknowledged these deep challenges in a speech marking Morocco's Throne Day in August 2013. In the speech, the king asked, 'Why is it that so many of our young people cannot fulfil their legitimate professional, material, and social aspirations?'<sup>22</sup> The speech bluntly acknowledged Morocco's deficiencies, especially its poor education system, but did not present a strategy to address them.<sup>23</sup> The following year the king marked the 15th anniversary of his rule with another speech

that addressed social injustice and the income gap. He cited World Bank studies that indicated growing income and wealth in Morocco and asked: 'Where is this wealth? Has it benefited all Moroccans or only some segments of society?'<sup>24</sup> Speeches addressing these sensitive questions display confidence but also require a delicate balance. They seek to acknowledge and champion widespread problems, while also distancing the monarchy from culpability. However, they could also draw greater scrutiny of the monarchy's role in overseeing a system that perpetuates these challenges if such questions remain unanswered.

Unlike its neighbour Algeria or the Gulf Arab monarchies, Morocco does not have the financial resources to buy political stability by providing public-sector jobs or large-scale spending projects. Following the protests in 2011, the government raised civil-servant wages and almost tripled the stabilisation fund, which keeps the prices of consumer staple goods down. But subsidies, especially for fuel and basic commodities, carry a significant financial burden on state revenues, and Morocco has searched for practical ways to direct subsidies more effectively to the population that is most in need.

Moreover, given that the monarchy's power depends in part on its large elite patronage network, any attempt to redistribute wealth would meet fierce opposition from the monarchy's key support base. Morocco's elite system is similar to other societies where wealthy families dominate economic activity and pass wealth and privilege to their children. What is different in Morocco's case is the vestige of a feudal class system, which often impedes social mobility. Hard work and education are not enough to secure a job, let alone greater prosperity and financial security. Without connections and favours from powerbrokers, it is difficult to gain entry into prestigious schools, secure credit and business loans or enter the civil service.

Serious reforms would also have to systematically address Morocco's corruption, which limits the country's economic potential. In 2013, Transparency International ranked Morocco 97th out of 177 countries on its global corruption perception index and gave it a score of 37 out of 100.<sup>25</sup> Morocco suffers from two types of corruption: low-level transactional corruption, to secure administrative favours for basic services, including medical treatment, and larger-scale corruption based on securing public procurement contracts.

There are limits to how much power the monarchy is willing to devolve in order to preserve and protect its status. It is unclear how much more authority the monarchy will devolve to parliament in the future. What is clear is that the king's role as commander of the faithful is a non-negotiable foundation of the monarchy. Mohammed VI has redoubled efforts to define and shape Moroccan religious identity, by implementing a number of reforms in the religious sphere, intended to strengthen his religious leadership, and promote Islamic values that are tolerant and respect authority.<sup>26</sup> His March 2011 speech and the revised constitution make it clear that his religious role is 'sacred' and an 'immutable value', and his public speeches since then have continued to stress the importance of this.

### **The next wave?**

The king's constitutional reform strategy in 2011 successfully outmanoeuvred and split the organised opposition, which had previously cooperated despite different agendas and objectives. Some of the protesters were satisfied with the modest reforms, while leftist activists continued calling for a parliamentary monarchy where the king's powers would be largely symbolic. Others, led by al-Adl wal-Ihsan, rejected the idea of the monarchy altogether and opposed any accommodation. By the close of 2011 al-Adl wal-Ihsan had ceased its coopera-

tion with February 20, breaking the coalition between Islamists and secularists and ending the unified opposition – one of the biggest threats to the monarchy. Violence and uncertainty were growing in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Syria, and many Moroccans preferred the stability of the status quo to uncertainty. Protests continued, but were smaller in numbers, and the police increasingly used force against demonstrators. In 2014, a few hundred people gathered to commemorate the third anniversary of the February 20 movement, rather than the tens of thousands who had assembled before.

But dissent in Morocco continues; protests over a range of local issues are routine across the country. The immediate threat has been neutralised but not eliminated. Crucially, Morocco's grassroots opposition is more willing to openly criticise the king in new ways.

The post-February 20 opposition is being driven largely by outspoken journalists, artists, and activists who are committed to continuing a public debate over the king's powers. Many of the taboos have been broken, and many of these activists are pushing the limits. A young rap musician and activist known as al-Haqed (the enraged or indignant) was the public face of individual protest in 2013–14. His lyrics take aim at the security forces and monarchy, accusing them of corruption and supporting injustice.<sup>27</sup> The authorities have used the justice system to harass and punish journalists and artists who are critical of the monarchy. However, rather than silencing dissent, the authorities are attracting more attention to these activists and their message.

Other issue-specific protests and calls to action continue. In early August 2013, thousands of Moroccans protested after the king pardoned a Spanish citizen in jail for committing heinous crimes against children.<sup>28</sup> The royal cabinet issued a statement following the protests that the pardon was a mistake. A few



days later, the king announced that he had reversed it. This was the first time the king had responded to a direct call to reverse an unpopular decision.

It would be shortsighted to view this as an isolated case. People have seen that public pressure, protest and specific calls for action can force the monarchy to make changes. Highly publicised incidents that highlight abuses of power or disregard for average citizens could potentially unite a broad cross-section of society, sparking off public protests and criticism. Such incidents would not only be difficult to contain, but would also make it increasingly difficult for the elected government to defend the king's actions, creating additional tension between government and monarchy.

The February 20 movement laid the foundation for a diverse network of organisers, activists and bloggers to build coalitions demanding change. While they have failed to connect their cause to broad-based national action, they have succeeded in keeping alive the debate on executive power.

Moreover, protests over socio-economic issues have become the norm in Morocco since 2011. One estimate in 2014 suggested that Morocco witnesses approximately 50 unrelated demonstrations every day throughout the country.<sup>29</sup> The largest protests, sometimes with up to several thousand people, are usually made up of unemployed youth and graduates.

So far, opposition groups disagree over ideology, priorities and objectives. Divisions between secularists and Islamists that were bridged in early 2011 have deepened again. Protesters' demands vary; most want jobs and better access to services such as education, healthcare and housing. Some demand a parliamentary monarchy where the king has more ceremonial authority. Others, chiefly al-Adl wal-Ihsan, question the necessity of the monarchy in any form and promote a more conservative social agenda. As long as these different groups

fail to coalesce around a coherent and unified set of demands, the monarchy will retain the upper hand.

### **Looking forwards**

Managing a process of gradual reform has been the monarchy's most effective tool in addressing public protest and discontent. In this sense, the king's strategy in 2011 stabilised Morocco at a volatile period and successfully reframed the political debate to focus on the new constitution and strengthening parliamentary powers. Morocco has made significant strides in many areas and shown an ongoing commitment to positive change. What Morocco has failed to do is address broader grievances concerning dignity and socio-economic justice. Progress in these areas is more difficult to measure and could take generations to achieve, even if the political will at the top existed.

The crucial challenge for the monarchy is to avoid discrediting the reform process, either by undermining the elected government, by over-extending the king's executive authority, or harassing its critics excessively. Though the reforms of 2011 did not change the balance of power in Morocco, they were an acknowledgement that there could be limits on the monarchy's authority.

Morocco's record over the last two decades, and since February 2011, demonstrates that widespread public protest can spur the monarchy to accelerate reforms and devolve power. Without addressing deeper issues of inequality, however, opposition will grow, and a future wave of popular uprisings could pose new threats. Then the protests of 1990 and 2011 will not be bookends, but chapters in Morocco's ongoing reform struggle. The next chapter is unlikely to be the last, and future protests could demand more revolutionary, rather than evolutionary, change.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> The protests were part of a general strike called by two Moroccan unions. The rioting lasted for several days.
- <sup>2</sup> Morocco's economic liberalisation policies of the previous decade had taken a toll on the disadvantaged.
- <sup>3</sup> '33 Dead in 2-Day Riot in Morocco Fed by Frustration Over Economy', Reuters, 17 December 1990, <http://www.nytimes.com/1990/12/17/world/33-dead-in-2-day-riot-in-morocco-fed-by-frustration-over-economy.html>.
- <sup>4</sup> Throughout the mid-1990s, Morocco held a number of parliamentary and local elections, and constitutional referendums. A constitutional amendment, passed in 1996, allowed for a directly elected lower house of parliament, a longstanding opposition demand. For a more detailed account of King Hassan II's policies, see Guilain Denoeux and Abdeslam Maghraoui, 'King Hassan's Strategy of Political Dualism', *Middle East Policy*, vol. 5, no. 4, January 1998, pp. 104–30.
- <sup>5</sup> According to Human Rights Watch the protests took place 'largely without interference from police, who in some areas were barely in evidence'. See 'Morocco: Thousands March for Reform', Human Rights Watch, 21 February 2011, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2011/02/20/morocco-thousands-march-reform>.
- <sup>6</sup> See text of King Mohammed VI's speech, 'King Mohammed VI Speech', 9 March 2011, <http://moroccansforchange.com/2011/03/09/king-mohamed-vi-speech-3911-full-text-feb20-khitab/>.
- <sup>7</sup> Morocco is a culturally diverse country with multiple identities: Arab, Islamic, Berber and African. The monarchy binds them together under a broad Moroccan national identity. The common thread through these multiple identities is the strong Islamic foundation of Moroccan society and the king's religious role as commander of the faithful (*amir al-mu'minin*).
- <sup>8</sup> See Rom Landau, *Moroccan Drama 1900-1950* (San Francisco, CA: The American Academy of Asian Studies, 1956), pp. 36–8.
- <sup>9</sup> King Mohammed V and the Istiqlal Party, which led Morocco's independence movement, found common cause in independence from France. However, in the ensuing years they competed over setting Morocco's political agenda.
- <sup>10</sup> The king appointed a constitutional drafting committee headed by Abdellatif Menouni, an adviser to the king. The king also appointed a consultative body to act as a liaison between the committee and a range of political parties, civil-society organisations, labour unions and other constituencies.
- <sup>11</sup> Morocco's first constitution was adopted in 1962. Subsequent constitutions under Hassan II's reign were issued in 1970, 1972, 1992 and 1996.
- <sup>12</sup> The National Democratic Institute estimated that up to 25% of ballots in parliamentary elections were either intentionally spoiled in protest or invalidated. The PJD won the largest share of valid votes with close to 23%, almost double

the number for the RNI, the second largest party. See 'Final Report on the Moroccan Legislative Elections', National Democratic Institute, 25 November 2011, <https://www.ndi.org/files/Morocco-Final-Election-Report-061812-ENG.pdf>.

- <sup>13</sup> At the end of 1997, Hassan II named Abderrahmane Youssoufi, a longtime leftist political opponent who had spent time in prison and living in exile, as prime minister.
- <sup>14</sup> In mid-2011 the king established the National Human Rights Council (CNDH), which evolved from the Advisory Council on Human Rights established in the 1990s. The organisation investigates and publicises human-rights issues including prison conditions, migration, child labour and women's rights.
- <sup>15</sup> This combination of progress and repression has been described as dualism. See Denoeux and Maghraoui, 'King Hassan's Strategy of Political Dualism'.
- <sup>16</sup> See remarks by Mustafa Elkhalfi in 'Islamists in Power: Views from Within, Building New Regimes After the Uprising', Carnegie Endowment event transcript provided by Federal News Service, Washington DC, 5 April 2012, [http://carnegieendowment.org/files/040512\\_transcript\\_openingnew-regimes.pdf](http://carnegieendowment.org/files/040512_transcript_openingnew-regimes.pdf).
- <sup>17</sup> The PJD emerged from the Movement of Unity and Reform, a coalition of Islamic movements that competed under the PJD banner in the 1997 parliamentary elections.
- <sup>18</sup> For an analysis of Moroccan Salafism, see Mohammed Masbah, 'Moving Towards Political Participation: The Moderation of Moroccan Salafis since the Beginning of the Arab Spring', SWP Comments, Comment 01, January 2013, [http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/comments/2013Co1\\_msb.pdf](http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/comments/2013Co1_msb.pdf).
- <sup>19</sup> 'Morocco King Attends Prayers led by Reformed Salafi-Jihadist', Al Arabiya News, 28 March 2014, <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2014/03/28/Morocco-king-attends-prayers-led-by-reformed-Salafi-jihadist.html>.
- <sup>20</sup> For a list of early demands and description of the February 20 movement written by movement activists, see Mamfakinich, June 2011, [http://pomed.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Press\\_Kit\\_June2011.pdf](http://pomed.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Press_Kit_June2011.pdf).
- <sup>21</sup> For a more complete summary of Morocco's economic challenges, see 'Morocco: Selected Issues', *IMF Country Report*, no. 13/110, 18 January 2013, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2013/cr13110.pdf>.
- <sup>22</sup> See 'HM The King Delivers Speech to Nation on Occasion of 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Revolution of King And People', Agence Marocaine de Presse, 20 August 2013, <http://www.map.ma/en/activites-royales/hm-king-delivers-speech-nation-occasion-60th-anniversary-revolution-king-and-peopl>.
- <sup>23</sup> In 2005 the palace launched its National Human Development Initiative (INDH) to address the country's dismal socio-economic conditions. The initiative sought to give broader powers to local communities to launch their own development projects to create

jobs, improve housing and address poverty. The programme was coordinated by the Ministry of Interior with a modest annual budget of US\$200 million a year. The INDH has undoubtedly helped people, but, after nearly a decade, not enough.

<sup>24</sup> See 'Full Text of The Throne Day Speech Delivered By HM King Mohammed VI', Agence Marocaine de Presse, 30 July 2014, <http://www.map.ma/en/discours-messages-sm-le-roi/full-text-throne-day-speech-delivered-hm-king-mohammed-vi>.

<sup>25</sup> See 'Corruption Perceptions Index 2013', Transparency International, <http://cpi.transparency.org/cpi2013/results/>.

<sup>26</sup> See Haim Malka, 'The Struggle for Religious Identity in Tunisia and the Maghreb', Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2 May 2014, <http://csis.org/publication/>

struggle-religious-identity-tunisia-and-maghreb.

<sup>27</sup> One of his songs substitutes the word 'freedom' for 'the king' in a national saying: 'God, the nation, and the king'. Al-Haqed has been arrested several times since 2011 on various unrelated charges and subjected to lengthy court proceedings.

<sup>28</sup> The king traditionally pardons prisoners every Throne Day (celebrated on 30 July to mark the king's ascension to the throne). One of those pardoned was Daniel Galvan, a Spanish citizen convicted of sexually abusing 11 Moroccan children and sentenced to 30 years in prison.

<sup>29</sup> 'Protest Culture in Morocco', *Economist*, 11 June 2014, <http://www.economist.com/blogs/pomegranate/2014/06/protest-culture-morocco>.