

MOROCCO GOVERNMENT

Party Portrait

Morocco is dominated by the institution of the monarchy (Makhzan). The Makhzan is the protector and guarantor of Moroccan traditions, society, and state, and though it has ceded some powers to the elected parliamentary government, it is able to exercise control over the members of this government through its dual religious and temporal leadership role and network of business and media interests. The Justice and Development Party (PJD) has been in charge of the elected government since 2011. Public debates about religion, the king, and the nature of the Moroccan state are generally off limits, though these factors compose the center of political machinations.

Key Interests

- Minimize or eliminate the threat of the Polisario Front. To that end, either gain control over Polisario Front/SADR territory, or maintain the area as a neutral buffer zone.
- Become a manufacturing and exporting hub between Europe and sub-Saharan Africa. Increase sub-Saharan influence.
- Counter growing ISIS recruitment and influence in Morocco.
- Establish or maintain good relations with neighbors and donor countries.

Sources of Leverage

Geographic – Morocco is located at the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea. It therefore serves as a bridge to Europe for movement of goods and people, and plays an important role in migration and trade deals.

Military – Morocco operates a robust intelligence bureau, which may be used against terrorist threats.

Political – Morocco also has a strong relationship with the West on security issues and plays host to global summits, giving its diplomats access to world leaders.

Regional Strategy

Morocco recently rejoined the African Union, indicating a desire to increase its influence in sub-Saharan Africa while declining to make progress on the Western Sahara issue. The country also seeks increased security and prosperity, to raise its standing as a destination for international conferences and negotiations as well as building stronger trade and economic ties across Africa, the Arab Gulf, and the West.

Powerful Individuals

Moroccan King Mohammed VI, Abdelilah Benkiran (President of the Government of Morocco and leader of the PJD), Aziz Akhannouch (Secretary General of the National Rally of Independents Party (RNI)), Mohand Laenser (Secretary General of the Popular Movement (MP)), Hamid Chabbat (Secretary General of the Istiqlal Party's (IP))

Potential Negotiation Moves

Seek reconciliation with Algeria on the status of Western Sahara
Combine intelligence forces with Algeria regarding terrorist threats

Internal Conflicts

The monarchy (Makhzan) has near absolute leverage through its control of important government functionaries and royal prerogative guaranteed to it in the Moroccan Constitution, as well as its business and media interests. Although the Makhzan has ceded some power to the parliamentary government, overall it exercises strict control. As a result, political dissent is minimal. Nevertheless, the PJD is generally regarded as the cleanest and most effective political party among a political class struggling for authenticity and efficiency. It seeks increased power through the development of a more representative political system.

Memberships

ARAB LEAGUE, AU, IAEA, MEDITERRANEAN DIALOGUE, OIC, UN

Allies

SAUDI ARABIA, UNITED STATES

Partners

EGYPT Government, EUROPEAN UNION, FRANCE, SUDAN, TUNISIA

Rivals

ALGERIA

Adversaries

AQAP, ISIS, MOROCCO Polisario Front

Active Armed Opponents

N/A

Proxy

N/A

External Sponsor

N/A

Aid Recipient

N/A

Aid Donor

EUROPEAN UNION, SAUDI ARABIA, UNITED STATES