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The ruling Parti de la Justice et du Développement (PJD) suffers a surprising electoral loss in Morocco's professional chambers' elections held on 6 August. The result raises questions on whether the ruling Islamic party will face similar results in the 8 September general elections. The government has enforced stricter measures to combat Covid-19 and its variants as it receives praise for its response to the pandemic from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), United Kingdom-headquartered data analytics and consulting company GlobalData, and international auditing and consulting firm Deloitte. Foreign minister Nasser Bourita receives his Israeli counterpart, Yair Lapid, in a visit that further solidifies relations between the two countries since their December agreement to resume diplomatic relations.

Ruling party suffers defeat in professional chambers' elections...

The ruling **Parti de la Justice et du Développement (PJD)** suffered a surprising electoral loss in the **Moroccan** professional chambers elections held on 6 August. While the professional chambers' members do not hold executive authority, representatives of each sector act as consultants, influencing policy within their respective sectors and pushing their interests through government consultations and lobbying. Political parties nominate their members for positions in order to expand their political influence across various sectors. Members of the opposition **Rassemblement National des Indépendants (RNI)** won 638 seats (28.61%) in the election while the PJD only secured 2.20%.¹ The result has raised questions on whether the ruling Islamic party will face similar results in the general elections scheduled for 8 September.²

The **Parti Authenticité et Modernité (PAM)** came second in the professional chambers elections with 363 seats (16.28%), followed by the **Istiqlal Party** with 360 seats (16.14%).³ The **Mouvement Populaire** took 160 seats (7.17%), followed by the **Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires (USFP)** with 146 seats (6.55%), the **Union Constitutionnelle** with 90 seats (4.04%), the **Parti du Progrès et du Socialisme (PPS)** with 82 seats (3.68%) and the PJD.⁴ Other political entities, 23 in total, gained 71 seats (3.18%), and independent candidates secured 271 seats (12.15%).⁵ Interior minister **Abdelouafi Laftit**, in a press conference on 7 August, noted:

*"These elections were marked by the participation of 882,736 voters, or 47.24% of the professional electorate, against 43% in 2015."*⁶

Given that no single party won close to or exceeded 50% of the vote, the three top parties have formed an alliance in order to pass legislation through the parliamentary opposition. RNI, PAM and Istiqlal announced a presidential alliance for the professional chambers on 8 August.⁷ The

¹ Morocco World News, 10 Aug 2021

² Morocco World News, 10 Aug 2021

³ Morocco World News, 10 Aug 2021

⁴ Morocco World News, 10 Aug 2021

⁵ Morocco World News, 10 Aug 2021

⁶ Morocco World News, 10 Aug 2021

⁷ Map News, 7 Aug 2021

RNI will preside over the chamber of agriculture, Istiqlal over the chamber of industry, commerce and services, and PAM will take over the chamber of traditional handicraft.

Analysts question whether the RNI will be able to replicate its remarkable electoral performance in the upcoming general election, with some observers claiming that the professional chambers election is unlikely to impact the 8 September election.⁸ Traditionally, the party that wins the professional chambers election often loses influence in the general election. In 2015, the PAM secured double the professional seats of PJD, but the latter won the general election by a landslide.⁹

Morocco tightens restrictions amid rising covid-19 cases...

The government has enforced stricter measures to curb the spread of **Covid-19** amid a “third wave” of infections. **Scientific Technical Committee for Covid-19** member **Azzedine Ibrahimi** expressed serious concern on 10 August about the deteriorating epidemiological situation in the country.¹⁰ Ibrahimi said the rapidly spreading delta variant has caused cases to double from earlier predictions. Ibrahimi noted the development was “expected” in the midst of the third wave of Covid-19, citing the large number of patients in critical condition as the greatest cause for concern:

“If we do not stop the infections today, the situation will worsen even more, because every decision we take now, we will be able to see its result dozens of days after. The hypothesis of tightening restrictions and partial quarantine and in the short term remains the only remaining solution.”¹¹

The government extended and expanded the 11pm-4.30am curfew to 9pm-5am, effective 3 August, while extending the health state of emergency to 10 September.¹² Travel to and from **Casablanca, Agadir** and **Marrakesh** has been banned, and only people with valid vaccination passports, a permit and in need of urgent medical conditions are allowed to travel to the three cities. Restaurants, cafes and stores are allowed to operate until 9pm daily. Businesses and services such as hotels, restaurants and intercity transport can operate, subject to certain capacity limitations.¹³ Domestic flights and public transport, including bus and rail service, are still in operation but private and public gatherings are banned.

For Covid-19 tracking and monitoring purposes, government has classified areas in the country as either “Zone-1” or “Zone-2” regions based on their local levels of Covid-19 activity. Restrictions in Zone-1 areas have been eased due to lower disease activity and residents can leave their homes without special permits; however, they must carry national identity cards at all times.¹⁴ Establishments in Zone-1, such as restaurants, beaches, hotels, cafes and all businesses, can only operate at 50% capacity and must adhere to social distancing guidelines. In Zone-2 areas, government has eased only some restrictions and residents may not travel outside their municipalities of residence without special permits.

For entry to Morocco, government classifies countries into “List A” and “List B”. List A includes countries with positive indicators regarding their control of the Covid-19 epidemiological situation. Travellers from such countries, whether Moroccan or foreigners living there, can enter Morocco subject to providing a vaccination certificate or a negative polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test taken 72 hours before departure.¹⁵ List B includes countries experiencing a

⁸ Morocco World News, 10 Aug 2021

⁹ Morocco World News, 10 Aug 2021

¹⁰ Morocco World News, 10 Aug 2021

¹¹ Morocco World News, 10 Aug 2021

¹² Garda, 3 Aug 2021

¹³ Garda, 3 Aug 2021

¹⁴ Garda, 3 Aug 2021

¹⁵ Garda, 3 Aug 2021

spread of variants or lacking precise Covid-19 case statistics.¹⁶ Travellers from these countries must obtain exceptional authorisation prior to travel, present a negative PCR test result taken less than 48 hours prior to arrival, and undergo mandatory quarantine on arrival. Unvaccinated or partially vaccinated individuals traveling from List B countries are required to undergo a mandatory 10-day quarantine period at a government designated facility at their own expense. Travelers from List B countries presenting a certificate of full vaccination against COVID-19 are exempt from quarantine requirements. In the most recent update to Morocco's travel restrictions published on 3 August, the foreign ministry announced that Moroccan residents will be able to self-isolate for five days at home upon arriving from a List B country.¹⁷ The foreign affairs ministry updates the countries on List A and List B regularly and at least twice a month.

According to the health ministry, Morocco has fully vaccinated 11,980,285 of its 36.4 million population against Covid-19 since beginning its vaccination campaign at the end of January.¹⁸ At least 16,740,875 people have received a first dose. As of 17 August, Morocco had recorded a total of 772,394 cases, with 681,705 recoveries and 11,242 Covid-19-related deaths.¹⁹

IMF and Deloitte reports highlight Morocco's encouraging economic outlook...

Morocco has received recent acknowledgment of its effective response to the Covid-19 pandemic and positive economic prospects from several sources. Recent publications by the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)**, **United Kingdom**-headquartered data analytics and consulting company **GlobalData**, and international auditing and consulting firm **Deloitte** have all highlighted Morocco's encouraging economic outlook.

The IMF, in its update to the **World Economic Outlook**, published predictions on 27 July of economic growth in several regions, including Morocco. The IMF mentioned Morocco as among emerging markets and developing economies that are performing well.²⁰ IMF analysts say Morocco has enjoyed "*robust activity*" during 2021, offsetting trends seen in other regions globally.²¹ According to the IMF, recent developments in the automobile and energy industries continue to support the Moroccan economy. Morocco's automotive exports reached \$4.76 billion as of June, mainly due to the 47.1% increase in assembly sales and the 36% growth in wiring sales.²² This is a continuation of a positive growth trend in the local auto sector, a key revenue source for the kingdom. The IMF forecasts that real GDP in Morocco will increase by 4.5% in 2021, although consumer prices are only predicted to increase by 0.8%.²³ The inflation rate is forecast to increase slightly into 2022, but is likely to remain the lowest it has been in the past six years.²⁴ With global food prices expected to continue rising, Morocco's encouraging agricultural season will give it greater global economic leverage.²⁵

GlobalData similarly predicts encouraging growth for Morocco's economy, placing the country at the top of a list of five **African** countries expected to attain above 4% real GDP growth in 2021. In a report published on 9 August, GlobalData predicts Morocco, **Ghana**, **Kenya**, **South Africa** and **Egypt** to be Africa's fastest growing economies this year and the only economies on the continent expected to attain more than 4% real GDP growth.²⁶ GlobalData analysts expect Morocco to see GDP growth of 5.19% this year, saying the kingdom's economic strategies have

¹⁶ Garda, 3 Aug 2021

¹⁷ Morocco World News, 15 Jul 2021

¹⁸ Liqah Corona, 17 Aug 2021

¹⁹ Liqah Corona, 17 Aug 2021

²⁰ July World Economic Outlook, 27 Jul 2021

²¹ July World Economic Outlook, 27 Jul 2021

²² Morocco World News, 2 Jul 2021

²³ July World Economic Outlook, 27 Jul 2021

²⁴ Morocco World News, 2 Jul 2021

²⁵ Morocco World News, 2 Jul 2021

²⁶ GlobalData, 9 Aug 2021

enabled it to progress by “leaps and bounds”, noting its recent substantial agricultural yields as a factor in the forecasted growth.²⁷

Deloitte, too, has lauded Morocco for its “remarkable” response to the Covid-19 pandemic. In a 47-page report published on 5 July entitled “Morocco, from resilience to emergence?”, Deloitte cites the **World Bank**’s description of Morocco’s Covid-19 strategy as “swift and decisive”, and IMF praise of Morocco as “making the right choice for its citizens”.²⁸ Deloitte analysts noted Morocco’s strategy of “maximum precaution”, “external financing instruments” and “extensive social safety net” as factors that minimised the overall shock of Covid-19 on its citizens. Morocco has maintained the lowest Covid-19 infections in Africa, on par with many western countries.²⁹

Deloitte also lists Morocco’s national infrastructure development as one of the major achievements leading up to and during the pandemic.³⁰ Morocco’s upgrades to its roads, ports and railways have facilitated trade. Along with new trade deals Morocco has signed with the **European Union (EU), United States (US), Egypt, Turkey** and the **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)**, infrastructure improvement has given Morocco an “economic buffer” as economic activity slowed down for most of the world.³¹

Deloitte also highlighted Morocco’s commitment to sustainability and green energy as an achievement that demonstrates its dedication to fighting global issues such as climate change and pollution.³² Deloitte analysts noted that a significant part of Morocco’s progress started with the coronation of King **Mohammed VI** (1999-present) and the numerous reform initiatives implemented under his reign.³³

However, Deloitte’s report also listed socio-economic problems that Morocco needs to address. These include unequal access to resources, low female employment participation, and socio-economic polarisation between regions.³⁴ The reports notes that Morocco’s plans for “universalisation of social protections”, simplification of the State apparatus, and increased digitisation will strengthen Morocco as a key regional figure and pivot the country into the global economy.³⁵

Israel’s foreign minister makes first visit to Morocco since ties normalised...

Foreign minister **Nasser Bourita** received his **Israeli** counterpart, **Yair Lapid**, during an official visit on 11 August.³⁶ The visit has further solidified relations between the two countries since they agreed in December to resume diplomatic relations. Lapid is the first Israeli foreign minister to visit Morocco since 2003.³⁷

Morocco halted mid-level relations with Israel in 2000 in solidarity with **Palestine**, which launched an uprising against Israel that year. Together with three other **Arab** nations, namely **Sudan, Bahrain** and the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)**, Morocco normalised relations with Israel in 2020 under US-engineered accords.³⁸ As part of the agreement, **Washington** recognised Morocco’s sovereignty over the **Western Sahara**, a major diplomatic achievement for **Rabat**. The agreement amplified tensions between Morocco and **Algeria**, which supports

²⁷ GlobalData, 9 Aug 2021

²⁸ Deloitte Policy Paper, 5 Jul 2021

²⁹ Morocco World News, 5 Aug 2021

³⁰ Morocco World News, 5 Aug 2021

³¹ Morocco World News, 5 Aug 2021

³² Deloitte Policy Paper, 5 Jul 2021

³³ Morocco World News, 5 Aug 2021

³⁴ Deloitte Policy Paper, 5 Jul 2021

³⁵ Deloitte Policy Paper, 5 Jul 2021

³⁶ Morocco World News, 11 Aug 2021

³⁷ Reuters, 12 Aug 2021

³⁸ Aljazeera, 11 Aug 2021

separatism in the Western Sahara. The deal between the four Arab countries and Israel angered Palestine, which has long relied on Arab support in its pursuit of statehood in the Israeli-occupied **West Bank** and **Gaza**. Until 2020, only two Arab States, **Jordan** and **Egypt** had maintained full ties with Israel.

During his visit, Lapid said Morocco and Israel will intensify their restored diplomatic relations and upgrade their liaison offices to embassies within two months.³⁹ He also inaugurated Israel's liaison office in Rabat and visited a synagogue in Casablanca. Lapid indicated that the timing was not right for any major breakthroughs in peace efforts with Palestine, after talks with Palestine collapsed in 2014.⁴⁰

Morocco's rapprochement with Israel has not garnered universal approval in Morocco. A local source told ARC,

"While Morocco won a big victory in gaining US recognition for its sovereignty over the Western Sahara, many residents call Israel an apartheid state and feel Morocco betrayed the Muslim cause by re-establishing relations."⁴¹

Planner

8 Sep 2021 **(Morocco)** General elections

Oct 2021 **(Morocco)** Scheduled joint Morocco-**United Kingdom** military exercise

2021 **(Morocco)** Scheduled construction of five new dams;

2021 **Oued Zem (Morocco)** Scheduled opening of automotive testing centre;

Q4 2021 **Marrakech (Morocco)** 24th **General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)**

2022 **Marrakech (Morocco)** **International Monetary Fund** and **World Bank** annual meetings to take place in Morocco;

Chronology

16 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. In a meeting with foreign minister **Nasser Bourita**, **South Korea's** deputy foreign minister, **Choi Jong-Kun**, praises King **Mohammed VI's** leadership in Morocco's efficient handling of the **Covid-19** crisis;

16 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. **United States (US)** special envoy and ambassador to **Libya**, **Richard Norland**, in a meeting with Morocco's foreign affairs minister, **Nasser Bourita**, conveys US satisfaction with Morocco's mediation role in Libya;

14 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. The health ministry announces it will expand eligibility for vaccination to anyone above the age of 18 starting 16 August;

13 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Morocco's main port operator, **Marsa Maroc**, has reported a substantial increase in shipping activity throughout the country's ports;

13 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Reuters*. Morocco receives 600,000 doses of the **United States (US)**-manufactured **Pfizer** Covid-19 vaccine;

13 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. The health ministry is preparing to launch a vaccination campaign among the 12-15 age group;

³⁹ Reuters, 12 Aug 2021

⁴⁰ Reuters, 12 Aug 2021

⁴¹ ARC source, Moroccan resident

12 Aug 2021 **Dakhla (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. **Dakhla** is developing as a hotspot for tourists and tourism-related investment, promising to exceed 6,000-bed capacity by the end of 2023;

12 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Map News*. King **Mohammed VI** sends condolences and sympathy for the victims of the devastating wildfires in **Algeria**;

12 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *The Times of Israel*. **Israel's** President **Isaac Herzog** has invited Morocco's King **Mohammed VI** to a meeting in Israel as both countries' foreign ministers agree on opening embassies in two months;

11 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Aljazeera*. Morocco and **Israel** intensify cooperation through the signing of three accords;

11 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Africa News*. **Israel's** foreign minister, **Yair Lapid**, makes his first trip to Morocco following the re-establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries, becoming the first Israeli foreign minister to visit Morocco since 2000;

11 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *allAfrica*. King **Mohammed VI** instructs the government to express Morocco's readiness to assist **Algeria** in fighting against forest wildfires raging in the city of **Tizou** in Central Algeria;

10 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Africa News*. Government announces it has opened the first of many planned smart vaccination centres designed to increase the efficiency of the national vaccination campaign to curb the covid-19 crisis;

10 Aug 2021 **London (United Kingdom)** *Morocco World News*. The **Marrakech-Menara** airport ranks fifth in British consultancy group **Skytrax** 2021 "Best airports in **Africa**" report, with **Casablanca's Mohammed V** airport in sixth place and **South Africa's Cape Town International Airport** in first place;

10 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *INN Poland*. An economic mission from **Poland** will visit Morocco in September with the aim of expanding into "one of **Africa's** most interesting markets";

10 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Morocco's professional elections held on 6 August have culminated in surprising defeat for the ruling **Parti de la Justice et du Développement (PJD)**;

10 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Morocco celebrates the Islamic New Year;

9 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *GlobalData*. Morocco tops a list of five **African** countries expected to have above 4% real GDP growth in 2021 ;

9 Aug 2021 **Dakhla (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Moroccan construction companies **SGTM** and **SOMAGEC** are preparing to start construction on the new **Dakhla-Atlantic** port after winning an intensive international bidding process, dedicating over \$1.4 billion to the project;

9 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Government delegate in **Spanish** enclave of **Ceuta, Salvadora Mateos**, describes relations between **Spain** and Morocco as "very good" despite unsettled issues between the two countries;

9 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *APA News*. Minister of industry, trade, and green and digital economy **Moulay Hafid Elalamy** has embarked on a working visit to the **United States (US)** to promote the Moroccan aeronautics industry;

9 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *News.in-24*. **Algeria's** president **Abdelmadjid Tebboune** says he has "no answer" to King **Mohammed VI's** dialogue initiative to restore relations between Morocco and Algeria;

8 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Map News*. Morocco's ambassador to **Kenya, El Mokhtar**

Ghambou, calls on **Nairobi** to support the autonomy plan presented by Morocco to find a solution to the **Western Sahara** conflict;

7 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. The ministry of national education, vocational training, higher education and scientific research releases a press calling on students to get vaccinated;

7 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Africa Arbitration*. The **United Kingdom** and Morocco are aiming to vastly expand their existing trade relations and invest in developing new ties in education and green energy;

7 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. The ministry of health officially announces that anyone aged 20 or older is now eligible to receive vaccination against covid-19;

6 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *The Jerusalem Post*. Tourism minister **Nadia Fettah Alaoui** holds talks with her **Israeli** counterpart, **Yesh Atid MK Yoel**, to discuss opportunities for cooperation between the two countries;

6 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. National carrier **Royal Air Maroc** issues new instructions for Moroccans intending to travel abroad amid the Covid-19 resurgence;

6 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Bank Al-Maghrib*. **Bank Al-Maghrib** (central bank) reports the financial sector is showing “*impressive resilience*” in the face of the health crisis;

6 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Foreign minister **Nasser Bourita** says Covid vaccines need to be readily accessible to the public in order to end the Covid-19 crisis;

6 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. The health ministry has extended the national vaccination campaign to include various vulnerable groups, including pregnant women;

5 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Flight Global*. National carrier **Royal Air Maroc** will soon receive five new Airbus 321 airplanes as part of a long-term agreement with the **Latvia**-based wet-lease specialist **Smartlynx Airlines**;

5 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Ministère de l'industrie du commerce de l'économie verte et numérique*. **Renault Group** CEO **Luca De Meo** says Morocco is in the top five industrial countries for the company;

5 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Domestic carriers **Royal Air Maroc** and **Air Arabia** are set to launch flights connecting **Tel Aviv** in **Israel** with **Marrakech** and **Casablanca**;

5 Aug 2021 **Nouaceur (Morocco)** *News.in-24*. The health ministry launches Morocco's first smart vaccination centre in **Nouaceur** province;

5 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. **Spain's** recently appointed foreign minister, **Jose Manuel Albares**, calls for “*tranquility, time, and discretion*” to solidify diplomatic relations with Morocco;

4 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Bergaag*. **United Kingdom (UK)** ambassador to Morocco **Martin Simon** announces a joint Morocco-UK military exercise to be held in October;

4 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. The agriculture ministry reports good performance in terms of agriculture and maritime exports;

4 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Morocco files a lawsuit against **German** newspaper **Suddeutsche Zeitung** for promoting “*false*” allegations accusing **Rabat** of using the **Israeli Pegasus** spyware;

3 Aug 2021 **Agadir (Morocco)** *North Africa Post*. **British** Oil company **Europa Oil & Gas** announces its entrance into Morocco's lucrative oil industry with a new drill site located in the

Agadir basin, which could hold two billion barrels;

3 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Another shipment of one million doses of **China**-manufactured **Sinopharm** Covid-19 vaccine arrives in Morocco;

3 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Garda*. Government announces a series of restrictive measures in response to an increase in Covid-19 cases, as the tourism sector demands support amid the new restrictions;

3 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. The **United States (US)** adds Morocco to its Level 3 “high” risk list following a resurgence of Covid-19 infections in Morocco;

3 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Communicable diseases head **Adelkrim Meziane Bellefquih** says Morocco has entered community transmission phase for Covid-19 for an estimated five to six weeks and predicts the Covid-19 wave will peak in the next few days;

3 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Haut Commissariat au Plan*. The **Haut Commissariat au Plan (HCP)** (planning commission) reports an increase of 0.5% in the unemployment rate;

3 Aug 2021 **Brasilia (Brazil)** *Brazil-Arab News Agency*. The **Brazil Institute of Systems Engineering and Computers (INESC)** agrees to transfer important electric vehicle (EV) technology to Morocco’s **Green Energy Park (GEP)** research platform;

2 Aug 2021 **Moulay Bouselham (Morocco)** *Afrik21*. **United Kingdom**-based company **Biwater** has received a contract from the **Regie Autonome de Kenitra (RAK)** to plan and build a new wastewater treatment plant in **Moulay Bouselham (Kenitra province)**;

2 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Government announces a travel ban to and from the cities of **Casablanca, Marrakech** and **Agadir**, allowing those vaccinated with valid vaccination passports and urgent medical conditions to travel to the three cities, and extends curfew hours from 9pm to 5am, for those without vaccination passports;

2 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *North Africa Post*. **United States (US) Army** chief of staff general **James C. McConville** is leading a high-level delegation for an official work visit in Morocco;

1 Aug 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *APS Algeria*. **Polisario Front**’s minister of security and documentation, **Abdellah Lahbib Bilal**, passes away from Covid-19 complications;

31 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Diplomatie*. In a speech to the nation celebrating the 22nd anniversary of his ascension to the throne, King **Mohammed VI** says Morocco wants a shared and brotherly future with its “twin,” **Algeria**;

30 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. **African Union (AU)** commissioner for trade and industry **Albert Muchanga** praises Morocco’s extensive participation at the AU level;

30 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Daily Newslines*. Morocco’s automotive exports reached \$4.76 billion as of June, mainly due to the 47.1% increase in assembly sales and 36% growth in wiring sales;

30 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Atalayar*. Throne day festivities are cancelled due to the Covid-19 crisis;

30 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. **Maroc Telecom** has reported a 7.1% decrease in domestic revenues in the first half of 2021 compared to the same period last year;

30 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Government is deploying the military to support the national vaccination campaign amid a rapid increase in Covid-19 cases across the country;

30 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. **Spain**’s prime minister, **Pedro Sanchez**, calls for “discretion” to mend the diplomatic crisis between Morocco and Spain;

- 29 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *New.in-24. Agence Française de Développement (AFD)* (French development agency) signs a \$237m agreement with Morocco to tackle climate and social issues within the country;
- 29 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Remittances from the Moroccan diaspora totalled nearly \$5 billion as of June, a 48.1% increase compared to the same period last year;
- 29 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Natural Gas Watch*. **United Kingdom**-based and Morocco-focused natural gas production company **Sound Energy** has signed a 10-year partnership with Morocco's **Afriquia Gaz** concerning the sale of liquid natural gas (LNG);
- 29 Jul 2021 **Laayoune (Morocco)** *Diplomatie*. **Malawi** officially inaugurates its consulate general in **Laayoune**, having withdrawn recognition of the **Polisario Front's** self-proclaimed **Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)** in 2017, a decision that resulted in consolidated ties between **Rabat** and **Lilongwe**;
- 29 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. A forecast from the Export Institute in collaboration with the **Israeli** Ministry of Regional Cooperation predicts that annual exports from Israel to Morocco will reach \$250m, over 10 times the current figure of \$10m currently;
- 28 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Map News*. Foreign minister **Nasser Bourita** receives **United States** acting assistant secretary of state for near eastern affairs, **Joey Hood**, in **Rabat**;
- 28 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Renault Group*. Trade minister **Moulay Hafid Elalamy** meets with **Renault Group** CEO **Luca de Meo** to sign an agreement for the company to purchase over \$3.5 billion in cars and parts made in Morocco;
- 28 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Office National de l'Electricité et de l'Eau Potable*. Energy minister **Aziz Rabbah** reports that **l'Office National de l'Electricité et de l'Eau Potable (ONEE)** (national electricity and potable water office) registered net profit of over MAD 2 billion (\$225m) in 2020;
- 27 Jul 2021 **Washington (United Kingdom)** *International Monetary Fund*. **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** report predicts positive economic growth in several regions of the world, including Morocco;
- 27 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *GovCon Wire*. **United States (US)** defence contractor **Raytheon** to deliver \$212m worth of fighter jet engines to Morocco by 2025, consisting of **29 Pratt & Whitney** F100-229 fighter aircraft engines;
- 27 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Assahifa*. **Tunisia's** President **Kais Saied** receives Morocco's foreign affairs minister, **Nasser Bourita**, in Tunisian capital **Tunis**;
- 27 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Government announces decision to extend state of emergency until 10 September as part of efforts and campaign to combat Covid-19 and its variants;
- 26 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Government announces that residents can receive doses of the Covid-19 vaccine regardless of their location or address across Morocco;
- 26 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Office National Des Aéroports*. The **Office National Des Aéroports (ONDA)** (national airports office) reports an unprecedented and significant decline in traffic, despite slow return of normalcy to the country, with Moroccan airports experiencing volume of 2,473,988 commercial passengers in the first half of 2021, compared to 11,669,548 passengers during the same period in 2019, a 78.8% decline;
- 26 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Morocco to receive three million doses of **China**-manufactured **Sinopharm** Covid-19 vaccine before end of July bringing to 10 million the

Sinopharm doses it has received in July;

26 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Times of Israel*. **Algeria** denounces **African Union (AU)** decision to admit **Israel** as an observer in the organisation; Israel last held an observer role in the AU in 2002;

25 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. The **Office National Marocain Du Tourisme (ONMT)** (national tourism office) signs a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with **Israeli** flag carrier airline **El Al Airlines** following inaugural flight between Israel's **Ben Gurion Airport** and Marrakech's **Menara Airport**, aimed at bringing more Israeli tourists to Morocco;

25 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Financial Times*. Morocco's ambassador to **France**, **Chakib Benmoussa**, denies allegations of Morocco spying on France's President **Emmanuel Macron**, pointing to lack of evidence corroborating the claims and saying the **Pegasus** affair aims to destabilise Morocco;

25 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. **United States (US)** administration announces it will donate a \$1.5m field hospital to Morocco to help combat infectious disease outbreaks in Morocco, having invested over \$15m in Morocco's Covid-19 pandemic response;

24 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *United States Embassy in Morocco*. **United States (US)** administration donates over 300,000 **Johnson & Johnson** Covid-19 vaccines to Morocco amid a third wave of infections;

24 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Map News*. The **Direction Générale de la Météorologie (DGM)** (director general of meteorology) has acquired the new AMTAR supercomputer to improve weather forecasts, warnings and climate analysis, giving Morocco the lead in **Africa's** meteorological planning;

24 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Morocco is one of 11 countries listed as customers of **Israeli** spyware **Pegasus**, allegedly to spy on foreign dignitaries;

20 Jul 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Time*. **Marrakech** joins 99 world sites on **Time** magazine's "Top 100 Greatest Places of 2021".

About Africa Risk Consulting:

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ARC's core consulting services include integrity due diligence and corporate investigations, political advisory and country assessments, opportunity monitoring and reputation risk management. Most relevant to private equity firms is ARC's integrity due diligence and corporate investigations capability. Specifically, ARC offers pre-deal integrity checks to highlight red flags before negotiations start; full detailed multi-jurisdictional reputation due diligence; and supplier and senior hire vetting and repeat due diligence for compliance programmes. ARC is unique in that it offers a 10-day delivery for a routine integrity due diligence. ARC also offers a suite of corporate investigations services from immediate investigation, evidence gathering, e-discovery, forensic accounting and whistleblower support on one end to crisis media management and regular monitoring on the other.

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