

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

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Morocco Summary 14 December 2021

The government suspends all direct flights to and from Morocco as a precautionary measure against a potential outbreak of Omicron, the new variant of the Covid-19 virus. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) expects Morocco's economy to grow 6.3% in the remaining weeks of 2021, one of the highest rates in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The Office des Changes (exchange office) reports that Morocco's trade deficit reached MAD 164.17 billion (\$17.7 billion) in October, an annual increase of 26.6%. The acceleration of the trade deficit is primarily related to rising prices of energy products and capital goods. The Agence Nationale de Réglementation des Télécommunications (ANRT) (national telecommunications regulation agency) reports that internet penetration in Morocco reached 93% in the third quarter of 2021.

Morocco suspends air travel indefinitely

Morocco's government announced on 28 November that it had decided to suspend all direct flights to and from Morocco for two weeks as a precautionary measure against a potential outbreak of **Omicron**, the most recent variant of the **Covid-19** virus, citing "alarming reports" surrounding Omicron in **Southern Africa** and **Europe**.¹ The government extended the suspension of air flights on 9 December until further notice.² The **United Kingdom (UK)**, **United States (US)**, **European Union (EU)** and several other countries imposed travel bans on several Southern African nations in response to the announcement of the discovery of the Omicron variant in **Botswana** on 25 November.³ While denying the identification of cases of the Omicron variant in Morocco, government spokesperson **Mustapha Baitas** said on 2 December that "the lack of information about the new variant is creating serious confusion worldwide".⁴ National carrier **Royal Air Maroc (RAM)** announced in a **Tweet** that its flights would be cancelled until 31 December.⁵

The health ministry called on the public to be more vigilant amid lack of credible information on the new Covid-19 strain. Health minister **Khalid Ait Taleb** said in a press conference on 9 December that "they are lying if they say they know something about the new variant, known as Omicron".⁶ Moroccan health professionals have called for more restrictions, warning that the country cannot allow the new variant to enter its territory.

According to the health ministry's update on 8 December, it has fully vaccinated 22,702,725 of Morocco's 36.4 million citizens against Covid-19 since beginning its vaccination campaign at the end of January.⁷ At least 24,449,866 people have received a first dose and 1,896,565 have received a third or booster dose. As of 13 December, Morocco has 1,388 active cases of Covid-19.⁸ There were 62 new cases on 13 December, and the seven-day average as of the same date is

¹ Morocco World News, 3 Dec 2021

² MAP News, 9 Dec 2021

³ Mmegi, 3 Dec 2021

⁴ Morocco World News, 3 Dec 2021

⁵ Royal Air Maroc, 9 Dec 2021

⁶ Ministère de la Santé, 9 Dec 2021

⁷ Liqah Corona, 9 Dec 2021

⁸ Worldometers, 14 Dec 2021

124 daily cases.⁹ As of 14 December, Morocco had recorded a total of 951,544 cases, with 935,358 recoveries and 14,798 Covid-19-related deaths.¹⁰

The government has extended its health state of emergency through 31 December.¹¹ However, night curfew was lifted on 9 November due to the improving epidemiological situation and the successful national Covid-19 vaccination campaign.¹² There are no restrictions on interstate or intercity travel in effect as of early December.¹³ However, several domestic restrictions remain in place nationwide. Vaccination certificates are required to enter most public and private spaces, including hotels, restaurants, cafes, gyms, public baths, grocery stores, and public transport.¹⁴ Cafes, public baths, public swimming pools, gyms, sports facilities and stores can operate with up to 50% capacity.¹⁵ Public and private gatherings are limited to 50 people. Domestic flights and public transport, including bus and rail service, are in operation but international travel is suspended until further notice. Wearing a facemask is mandatory in public spaces. Failure to adhere to Covid-19-related domestic restrictions may result in a fine. Authorities could reimpose, extend, further ease, or otherwise amend any restrictions with little to no notice depending on disease activity over the coming weeks.

IMF predicts 6.3% economic growth for Morocco in 2021..

The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** expects Morocco's economy to grow 6.3% in the remaining weeks of 2021, one of the highest rates in the **Middle East and North Africa (MENA)** region.¹⁶ The positive projection underlines the resilience of the local economy despite challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.¹⁷ The IMF released its report on 10 December following a 3 December virtual meeting held by the **Confédération Générale des Entreprises Du Maroc (CGEM)** (general confederation of Moroccan enterprises) and a delegation from the IMF to discuss the prospects of economic recovery in Morocco. IMF mission chief in Morocco **Roberto Cardarelli** chaired the IMF's delegation. Cardarelli noted:

*"Recent inflationary pressures have remained manageable and are expected to wane in the medium term, as cost pressures from global supply disruptions are reabsorbed."*¹⁸

Cardarelli highlighted that growth is due to Morocco's "successful vaccination campaign" in addition to "continued fiscal and monetary stimulus, the rebound of exports, buoyant remittances, and the exceptional harvest after two years of drought".¹⁹

... as trade deficit increases by 26.6%

The **Office des Changes** (exchange office) reports that Morocco's trade deficit reached MAD 164.17 billion (\$17.7 billion) in October, an annual increase of 26.6%.²⁰ The significant spike was due to increased imports at MAD 424.32 billion (\$46 billion), up by 22%, and disproportionately higher than exports, which rose by only 20.7% to MAD 260.15 billion (\$28.2 billion).²¹ The acceleration of Morocco's trade deficit is primarily related to rising prices of energy products and capital goods. Global chain disruptions induced by the Covid-19 pandemic

⁹ Johns Hopkins University Center for Systems Science and Engineering, 14 Dec 2021

¹⁰ Worldometers, 14 Dec 2021

¹¹ Morocco World News, 24 Nov 2021

¹² Garda, 2 Dec 2021

¹³ Garda, 2 Dec 2021

¹⁴ Garda, 2 Dec 2021

¹⁵ Garda, 2 Dec 2021

¹⁶ International Monetary Fund, 11 Dec 2021

¹⁷ Morocco World News, 11 Dec 2021

¹⁸ Morocco World News, 11 Dec 2021

¹⁹ Morocco World News, 11 Dec 2021

²⁰ Office des Changes, 31 Oct 2021

²¹ Office des Changes, 31 Oct 2021

caused energy products' price to increase rapidly amidst unequal economic recovery and labour shortages in key regions, coupled with limited supply.²² Morocco's trade deficit was also driven by rising demand for consumer commodities that saw an increase of MAD 24.43 (\$2.6 billion), and a MAD 17.74 (\$1.9 billion) increase in energy products.²³

The Office des Changes noted that prior to the economic fallout from the pandemic, Morocco's exports recorded a 9.4% rise in October 2019, dwarfing the 3.3% rise in imports.²⁴ Morocco's leading export sectors are textiles and phosphates, followed by electric components, chemicals, transistors and agricultural products.

The **Bank Al-Maghrib (BAM)** (central bank) announced on 8 December that Morocco's reserves assets rose by 10.5% in November in comparison to the same period last year, reaching MAD 322.3 billion (\$39.79 billion) on 26 November.²⁵ A key factor in the country's economic resilience has been the increase in remittances from Moroccans living abroad despite the global health crisis and its socio-economic fallout. According to the latest monthly report by the Office des Changes, remittances sent by Moroccans living abroad reached nearly MAD 80 billion (\$8.6 billion) as of October 2021.²⁶

Internet penetration reaches 93%...

According to the latest report of **L'Agence Nationale de Réglementation des Télécommunications (ANRT)** (National telecommunications regulation agency) published on 2 December, the number of internet users in Morocco reached 93% of the population in the third quarter of 2021.²⁷ Improving accessibility and quality of broadband internet in the country is a priority for government, especially during Covid-19 confinement and amid the rise of online businesses domestically.²⁸ The number of internet users in the country reached nearly 34 million, representing a penetration rate of 93% and an increase of more than 17% from last year.²⁹

While mobile internet remains dominant in Morocco with 31 million subscribers, fiber optic connections saw the highest increase of nearly 82% to 330,185 users.³⁰ Mobile internet also experienced an 18% growth in the number of subscribers and ADSL connections stabilised at 1.6 million users at the end of September, with at least 43% of users having access speeds of 10Mbps or higher. The ANRT reported that 2.46 million Moroccans are subscribed to a fixed telephone service, a 6.94% rise from 2020.³¹

Regarding internet traffic, the ANRT revealed that more than 14 billion minutes of mobile telephonic calls were recorded during the third quarter, a low 0.65% increase in comparison to the third quarter of last year.³² SMS traffic increased by 6.89% to reach 762 million messages and the average monthly mobile usage decreased by 6.68% to 93 minutes, compared to 100 minutes in 2020.³³ The country's top level domain (.ma) saw nearly 103,000 new websites established by the end of September, an increase of more than 14%.³⁴

²² Morocco World News, 8 Dec 2021

²³ Office des Changes, 31 Oct 2021

²⁴ Morocco World News, 8 Dec 2021

²⁵ Bank Al-Maghrib, 8 Dec 2021

²⁶ Office des Changes, 31 Oct 2021

²⁷ L'Agence Nationale de Réglementation des Télécommunications, 2 Dec 2021

²⁸ Morocco World News, 5 Dec 2021

²⁹ L'Agence Nationale de Réglementation des Télécommunications, 2 Dec 2021

³⁰ Morocco World News, 5 Dec 2021

³¹ L'Agence Nationale de Réglementation des Télécommunications, 2 Dec 2021

³² Morocco World News, 5 Dec 2021

³³ Morocco World News, 5 Dec 2021

³⁴ L'Agence Nationale de Réglementation des Télécommunications, 2 Dec 2021

The ARNT said many people attributed their increase in personal usage of internet and digital services to the Covid-19 confinement.³⁵ Distance learning and education, as well as e-commerce, have experienced significant growth since the start of pandemic-related confinement measures.³⁶ Morocco ranked 84th in the “**Digital Quality of Life**” index released by cybersecurity firm **Surfshark** in October, dropping 14 places from last year.³⁷

2021 highlights and key issues for 2022...

Despite the year ending with regional frustration over fresh Covid-related travel bans, Morocco will look back on 2021 as a successful year concluding on a strong economic note. US-based credit rating agency **Standard and Poor’s (S&P)** downgraded Morocco’s local and foreign currency rating to “*junk*” status from BB+ to BBB- on 2 April, citing the country’s economic contraction and growing budget deficit. However, financial publication **Forbes Middle East** on 24 May projected Morocco to emerge as the fifth largest economy in **Africa** in 2021, predicting its GDP will reach MAD 1.1 trillion (\$124 billion) in 2021, seeing real GDP grow by 4.5%, compared to a contraction of 7% in 2020. Nevertheless, unemployment remains a concern. Morocco’s unemployment rate increased to 12.8% in Q2 2021, a 0.5% increase compared to the second quarter of 2020 and the highest unemployment rate since 2001, according to the **Haut Commissariat au Plan (HCP)** (planning commission). Perceived corruption in Morocco also worsened, according to the **Germany-based NGO Transparency International (TI)**’s **2020 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)**, released on 28 January.

Morocco’s delegation to the **United Nations (UN) Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26)** summit in **Glasgow (United Kingdom)** on 4 November signed onto a global commitment with about 49 other countries to ease the use of coal and transition to clean power.

Morocco’s general elections on 8 September delivered a stunning upset to the political status quo. The **Parti de la Justice et du Développement (PJD)**, in power since 2010, secured only 13 of the 395 seats in parliament, while the **Rassemblement National des Indépendants (RNI)** won 102 seats. King **Mohammed VI** (1999-present) instructed RNI secretary-general **Aziz Akhannouch** on 10 September to form a new government in accordance with the constitution. Akhannouch became Morocco’s new prime minister on 11 September. King Mohammed VI chaired the inauguration ceremony on 7 October of Morocco’s newly formed government, led by Akhannouch, and launched the legislative year of parliament on 8 October.

Morocco has seen mixed results in its international relations. The government received high-level affirmation of its policy on the disputed area of **Western Sahara** on 9 March when the **African Union (AU)** rejected a proposal challenging the UN-led compromise-based political solution on Western Sahara. In a boost for Morocco’s claim to Western Sahara, the administration of US President **Joseph Biden** (2021-present) announced on 30 April that it would not reverse former president **Donald Trump**’s (2017-2021) decision to recognise Morocco’s sovereignty over the Western Sahara. The **United Nations Security Council (UNSC)** on 13 October renewed the mandate of the **United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO)**, the UN’s peacekeeping operation in the region.

Diplomatic relations between Morocco and **Spain** have seen a marked deterioration in 2021. Spanish authorities accused Morocco of easing its border controls in retaliation for **Madrid**’s decision to allow Western Sahara independence movement **Polisario** leader **Brahim Ghali** to be treated for Covid-19 in Spain. The **European Parliament (EP)** adopted **Resolution 2021/2747** on the human rights situation at the Moroccan-Spanish border in **Ceuta** on 10 June.

³⁵ L’Agence Nationale de Réglementation des Télécommunications, 2 Dec 2021

³⁶ Morocco World News, 5 Dec 2021

³⁷ Morocco World News, 5 Dec 2021

Morocco's relations with **Algeria** also took a turn for the worse in 2021. Algeria announced on 24 August its decision to sever all diplomatic ties with Morocco, accusing **Rabat** of committing "hostile acts" and colluding with "terrorist groups" to undermine Algerian interests. The Algerian presidency announced on 31 October the termination of commercial relations between state-run energy company **Sonatrach** and Morocco's **Office National de l'Electricité et de l'Eau Potable (ONEE)** (national electricity and drinking water office), effectively ending the Algeria-Morocco-Spain pipeline agreement known as the **Maghreb-Europe** pipeline.

As a member of the **Arab League**, Morocco on 11 May shared serious concerns about **Israel's** "violation" of **Palestine** and Palestinians in **Jerusalem** (Israel), particularly in the **Sheikh Jarrah** neighbourhood where Israeli forces attacked and arbitrarily arrested Palestinians in the **al-Aqsa** mosque, one of Islam's holiest sites. Despite Morocco's concerns, **Yair Lapid**, on 11 August became the first Israeli foreign minister to visit Morocco since 2003.

Morocco's **Forces Armées Royales (FAR)** (royal Moroccan armed forces) participated in the US-led **African Lion 2021** joint military exercise across Morocco from 7-18 June. The African Lion is the largest annual military exercise organised by the US **Africa Command**.

Morocco became Africa's first country to launch a national Covid-19 inoculation programme when it began its vaccination campaign on 29 January. Morocco became the first country in the **Arab** world to launch a vaccine passport on 7 June following a trend of declining Covid-19 cases. Hundreds of Moroccans staged protests on 24 and 31 October in several cities across the country to oppose government's decision to introduce a mandatory vaccine pass. King Mohammed VI presided over a launching ceremony at the royal palace of **Fez** on 5 July, where he signed several memoranda that will allow Morocco to manufacture Covid-19 vaccines and other serums. Authorities announced on 9 December that the Moroccan-manufactured Chinese **Sinopharm** Covid-19 vaccine will be available on the market "very soon". The government launched its campaign on 4 October to administer third dose "booster shots" of Covid-19 vaccines to citizens and residents and is on track to vaccinate 80% of its adult population by 31 December – 25 million of its 36.5 million inhabitants.

US-based financial magazine **Global Finance** ranked Morocco 24th in its "World's Safest Countries 2021" list published on 6 July.

Going into 2022, some of the key issues government will focus on include starting manufacturing Covid-19 vaccines; containing and managing the Omicron Covid-19 variant; bringing unemployment under control; directing the conflict in Western Sahara; and hosting the IMF and **World Bank** annual meetings.

Planner

Dec 2021 (**Morocco**) Scheduled start date for **Sothema** laboratory to begin manufacturing the **Sinopharm** Covid-19 vaccines;

31 Dec 2021 (**Morocco**) Deadline set by government to fully vaccinate 80% of the population;

13 Dec 2021-10 Feb 2022 (**Morocco**) Mandatory military service census;

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

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

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

11-13 May 2022 **Tangier (Morocco) Worldwide Network of Port Cities (WNPC)** 17th World Conference on Cities and Ports;

24-26 Oct 2022 **Marrakech (Morocco) Airports Council International (ACI)** conference

Chronology

14 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco) Bank Al-Maghrib. Bank Al-Maghrib (BAM)** (central bank) announces that Morocco's official reserve assets increased by 10% in the past month, reaching MAD 322.4 billion (\$34.8 billion) on 3 December;

12 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco) Morocco World News. Trésorerie Générale du Royaume (TGR)** (Treasury) reports that net customs revenue amounted to over MAD 63.29 billion (\$6.8 billion) between January and November 2021, an increase of 24.1% compared to the same period a year earlier;

10 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco) Morocco World News.** Foreign minister **Nasser Bourita** and his **United States (US)** and **Israeli** counterparts, **Antony Blinken** and **Yair Lapid**, will celebrate the first anniversary of the Joint Declaration on 22 December;

9 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco) International Monetary Fund.** The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** expects Morocco's economy to grow 6.3% in the remaining weeks of 2021, one of the highest rates in the **Middle East and North Africa (MENA)** region;

9 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco) Map News.** Government decides to suspend direct passenger flights from and to Morocco until a further notice as part of Morocco's preventive measures against Covid-19;

9 Dec 2021 **Washington (United States) North Africa Post.** **Morocco** and **Israel** celebrate the first anniversary of re-establishing ties in a joint event held at the **Watergate** hotel in **Washington**;

9 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco) Morocco World News.** The **Long-term Europe-Africa Partnership on Renewable Energy (LEP-RE)** programme has selected 13 Moroccan projects to receive funds on renewable energies;

9 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco) News Beezer.** **India**-headquartered mining and innovation-oriented company **Samta Group** announces plans to invest MAD 922m (\$100m) in Morocco over the next five years;

9 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Ministère de la Santé*. Health minister **Khalid Ait Taleb** says the government is studying ways to repatriate Moroccans stranded abroad;

9 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Sothema Laboratory*. Moroccan-manufactured **Chinese Sinopharm** Covid-19 vaccine will be available on the market “very soon”;

9 Dec 2021 **Fez (Morocco)** *Shfanews*. **Palestinian** news network **Shfanews** reports that **Algeria’s** President **Abdelmajid Tebboune** has requested that **Palestinian National Authority** president **Mahmoud Abbas Abu Mazen** mediate a “gradual” normalisation of ties with **Israel**;

8 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Industry and trade minister **Ryad Mezzour** describes the signed **Morocco-UK Association Agreement** as a “win-win” partnership;

8 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Jeune Afrique*. **Algerian** politician and former secretary-general of Algeria’s **National Liberation Front (FLN)** **Amar Saadani** is under “high protection” by Morocco’s security services in **Rabat**;

8 Dec 2021 **London (United Kingdom)** *Morocco World News*. Foreign affairs minister **Nasser Bourita** meets in London with **United Kingdom** state secretary for foreign affairs **Liz Truss** as part of the third session of the **UK-Morocco Strategic Dialogue**;

8 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Map News*. Government says it will not extend the recently announced air and maritime travel suspension beyond 13 December;

8 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. The **German** embassy shrugs off reports of diplomatic tensions between Morocco and Germany, claiming there is no significant bilateral rift and says **Berlin** remains open to deepening essential cooperation with **Rabat**;

8 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Bank Al-Maghrib*. **Bank Al-Maghrib (BAM)** (central bank) announces that Morocco’s official reserve assets increased by 10% in the past month, reaching MAD 322.3 billion (\$39.79 billion) on 26 November, demonstrating economic resilience in the wake of the **Covid-19** crisis;

8 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. State-owned phosphate firm **OCP Group** says it is scaling up its investments in sustainable solutions to meet its own water needs and contribute to water security in Morocco amid growing fears of an imminent global shortage of water;

8 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Office des Changes*. Morocco’s trade deficit in 2021 reached MAD 164.17 billion (\$17.7 billion) in October, a year-on-year increase of 26.6%;

7 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. The **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** and **European** officials in Rabat praise Morocco’s commitment to enhancing access to public services for refugees and asylum seekers;

7 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *New.in-24*. **Russia’s** foreign minister **Sergey Lavrov** to visit Morocco ahead of the **Arab-Russia Forum**;

7 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Morocco’s **Ombudsman Institution** and the Office of the **High Commissioner for Human Rights of the Russian Federation** sign a memorandum of understanding to foster their cooperation on human rights-related matters;

7 Dec 2021 **Budapest (Hungary)** *Diplomatie*. The **Visegrad Group (V4)** and Morocco are discussing ways to strengthen cooperation in their first meeting in **Budapest**;

7 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *OCP Group*. State-owned phosphate firm **OCP Group** reports that its 2018 **Al Moutmir initiative** has helped 50,000 farmers across Morocco to increase their productivity, in addition to conducting over 50,000 soil fertility analyses;

6 Dec 2021 **Budapest (Hungary)** *Morocco World News*. Foreign minister **Nasser Bourita** visits **Hungary**;

6 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Atalayar*. The three parties of Morocco's coalition government, **Al Istiqlal Party, Parti Authenticité et Modernité (PAM)**, and **Rassemblement National des Indépendants (RNI)**, meet to conclude a majority pact that prime minister **Azziz Akhannouch** described as "a governmental alliance of trust, mutual respect and harmonious collective actions";

6 Dec 2021 **Casablanca (Morocco)** *New.in-24*. Dairy company **Central Danone** leaves the **Casablanca** stock exchange citing low share liquidity values;

6 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Morocco's **Jamal Eddine El Aloua** secures a seat as president of the **Executive Council of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (ICESCO)**;

6 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Foreign affairs minister **Nasser Bourita** says Morocco's relations with **Germany** should be based on "clarity and reciprocity";

5 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco Latest News*. The **World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)** ratifies Morocco's bid to host its first **African** office at the 24th session of the organisation's general assembly;

5 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Bank Al Maghrib*. **Bank Al Maghrib (BAM)** (central bank) reports that the exchange rate of the Moroccan dirham against the **United States (US)** dollar increased by 0.38% between 25 November and 1 December;

5 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Office des Changes*. **Moroccan Exchange Office** reports that funds transferred by Moroccans living abroad to Morocco reached nearly MAD 80 billion (\$8.6 billion) as of October 2021;

4 Dec 2021 **Meknes (Algeria)** *Morocco World News*. **Polisario Front** leader **Brahim Ghali** says his movement is unwilling to take part in the **United Nations (UN)**-led political process on **Western Sahara**, promising that the separatist front would not commit to any peacemaking efforts that do not guarantee "Sahrawi self-determination";

4 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Newly elected **Parti de la Justice et du Développement (PJD)** leader **Abdelilah Benkirane** says Morocco will never treat homosexuals "as if we were in Europe", saying homosexuality is un-Moroccan and un-Islamic;

3 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. The **Confédération Générale des Entreprises Du Maroc (CGEM)** (General Confederation of Moroccan Enterprises) and a delegation from the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** hold a virtual meeting on the prospects of economic recovery in Morocco;

2 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco Latest News*. Morocco's mandatory military service census to begin on 13 December and end on 10 February 2022, affecting young people reaching the ages of 19 to 25 by May 2022 who meet the conditions required by law to perform their military service;

2 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *New.in-24*. **British** state-owned broadcaster **BBC** report highlights Morocco's growing assertiveness in **Africa**, arguing that the country has "all the cards in hand" to become a key player on the continent and that it has invested more than

\$4.3 billion in **sub-Saharan Africa** to position itself as the second largest intra-African investor;

2 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *L'Agence Nationale de Réglementation des Télécommunications*. **L'Agence Nationale de Réglementation des Télécommunications (ANRT)** (Moroccan national telecommunications regulation agency) reports the number of internet users reached 93% of the population in the third quarter of 2021;

2 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Ryan Air*. Low-cost **Irish** carrier **Ryanair** cancels all its flights to Morocco until 1 February 2022;

2 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Morocco's investment committee has approved a budget of MAD 3.96 billion (\$434m) for five agreements and amendments to investment projects in renewable energy and transportation;

1 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco Latest News*. Education minister **Chakib Benmoussa** says starting in September 2022, Morocco will adopt a new method to regulate the teaching profession;

1 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Amid fears of the **Omicron Covid-19** variant, the government reduces the number of participants in funerals to a maximum of 10 people;

1 Dec 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *OCP Group*. State-owned phosphate firm **OCP Group** reports net revenue of MAD 57.6 billion (\$6.45 billion) in the first three quarters of 2021, an increase of 38% from the same period in 2020;

30 Nov 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Haaretz*. **Israeli** news outlet **Haaretz** says Morocco has ordered a batch of Israeli **Harop** drones from the **Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI)**;

30 Nov 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. **United Kingdom**-based company **Sound Energy** announces it has entered into a binding gas sales and purchase agreement with Morocco's **Electricity and Water Office (ONEE)** to revive the **Maghreb-Europe** gas pipeline, in terms of which it will supply the pipeline with gas from the **Tendrara** gas concession in eastern Morocco for a period of ten years;

30 Nov 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Diplomatie*. foreign affairs minister **Nasser Bourita** calls on the member states of **Global 77 (G77)** and **China** to make the health crisis an opportunity to consolidate multilateral solidarity and ensure universal access to vaccines;

29 Nov 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Prime minister **Aziz Akhannouch** says the government is committed to refunding the Value-Added Tax (VAT) it has collected for the fiscal year 2021, paying MAD 13 billion (\$1.4 billion) in tax to Very Small, Small, and Medium-Size Businesses (SMEs) by April 2022;

29 Nov 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. **Libya's** foreign minister, **Najla Mangoush**, has informed Morocco's government that her country is renouncing its membership bid for the **African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council** membership to support Morocco's candidacy;

28 Nov 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Royal Air Maroc*. National carrier **Royal Air Maroc (RAM)** announces it will suspend all its flights from and to Morocco, starting 29 November, until 13 December;

28 Nov 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *New.in-24*. Government suspends maritime transport of passengers to and from **France** from 28 November as part of measures to contain the **Covid-19** pandemic;

27 Nov 2021 **Algeciras (Spain)** *Euro Weekly*. Spain's far-right party **Vox** holds a protest in front of the **Moroccan** consulate in **Algeciras** to protest against "insecurity" within the city;

27 Nov 2021 **Madrid (Spain)** *Map News*. Morocco is elected president of the **Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP)** during the 143rd Assembly of the **Inter-Parliamentary Union (UIP)** in **Madrid**;

27 Nov 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. The **Worldwide Network of Port Cities (WNPC)** announces that the city of **Tangier** will host the 17th World Conference on Cities and Ports from 11-13 May 2022;

26 Nov 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Xinhua*. Government adds additional countries to its list of destinations from which passengers are not allowed in its territory amid concerns regarding the appearance of the new **Omicron** Covid-19 strain, including **South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, Eswatini, Mozambique** and **Zimbabwe**;

26 Nov 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. **Agence Marocaine de Développement des Investissement et de l'Export (AMDIE)** (agency for investment and export development) is organising a roadshow from 26 November to 1 December to promote its "Morocco Now" investment and export brand in **New Delhi, Mumbai** and **Bangalore (India)**;

26 Nov 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Ministère de la Santé*. Health ministry initiates nationwide effort to combat seasonal flu;

25 Nov 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Morocco cancels direct flights from France until 28 November;

25 Nov 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Map News*. **Marrakech** will host the next annual conference of the **Airports Council International (ACI)** from 24-26 October 2022;

24 Nov 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Government is expected to extend the state of emergency for another month to 31 December;

24 Nov 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Econostrum*. Morocco receives €114.03m (\$129m) loan from **African Development Bank (AfDB)** to boost small-scale agriculture to improve productivity and living conditions in rural areas;

24 Nov 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Axios*. **Israel's** defence minister, **Benny Gantz**, arrives in Rabat to sign military agreements to strengthen security cooperation with Morocco;

15 Nov 2021 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Morocco has improved eight positions to 91st in the **Legatum Prosperity Index** in the past decade, performing well in the pillars of infrastructure and market access, and safety and security pillars, but weak in the social capital pillar.

About Africa Risk Consulting:

Africa Risk Consulting (ARC) is a pan-African consulting company that provides timely, relevant information and advice that enables its clients to take informed investment decisions and to safeguard their reputations.

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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ARC Briefing is ARC's essential business information service.

Companies at any stage in their Africa expansion, whether building or communicating an Africa strategy, investing directly, expanding current operations, financing other investors, doing the legal leg-work or researching the Africa growth trend, need ARC Briefing.

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Getting in touch

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