

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

Morocco Monthly Briefing October 2025

Morocco Summary 30 October 2025

GenZ212 resumes its nationwide rolling protests calling for reforms in healthcare, education, jobs and an end to corruption. As in 2011, King Mohamed VI (1999-present) and government are seeking to meet protesters demands. A draft 2026 draft increases spending on health and education to equal 10% of GDP. The budget is set at \$83 billion and is predicted on GDP growth of 4.8% in 2025 and 4.6% in 2026. Protesters' use of social media highlights the operational risk of sudden and dramatic political change and its vulnerability to manipulation by external powers and players. International relations re-align around Western Sahara.

GenZ protests raise risks of uncontrolled change

Morocco's GenZ212 demonstrators on 18 October relaunched their rolling nationwide protests, expected to intermittently disrupt business in **Rabat, Casablanca, Marrakech, Agadir** and **Tangiers** – in the weeks ahead.

Generation Z (GenZ), those aged between 15 and 30, are the first generation that were born after Internet and that are highly proficient with communications technology. They use digital technology to organise and to hide that organisation– crucial in countries like Morocco where the authorities are likely to respond with autocratic crackdowns.

The protests are reminiscent of the **February 20 Movement** of 2011 – Morocco's version of the **Arab Spring** - which prompted fundamental political and economic reform. The social motivation for the protests is similar; the deaths of eight pregnant women in Agadir after routine caesarean sections – blamed on underinvestment in healthcare – sparked the protests. Demonstrators have criticised the government for the high-cost of **2030 FIFA World Cup**, while leaving public services underfunded, and are calling for reforms in healthcare, education, job access, the sacking of the prime minister and an end to corruption and nepotism.

According to one ARC source, the gendarmerie's actions were typically heavy handed and resulted in the deaths of three protesters. **United States (US)**-headquartered **Human Rights Watch (HRW)** criticised the government and gendarmerie's response, which included banning protests, forcibly dispersing protesters and using legal force that killed three and injured hundreds. HRW has called on the authorities to investigate. Although initially security forces arrested 1,000 protesters, most were released. However, **AP** reported on 29 October that police had charged some 2,400 protesters.

Morocco has [allocated](#) \$6 billion to co-hosting the FIFA World Cup tournament with **Spain** and **Portugal** and is spending an additional \$4.2 billion to upgrade airports – an investment expected to boost GDP by \$1.2 billion, or 1%. The government has pointed to public investment as drawing in international investment and creating jobs, but internal investments have barely moved the dial on one of the core issues driving discontent, unemployment, especially youth unemployment. In 2011, youth unemployment sat at 25%; by August 20205 it had risen to 37%. HRW also highlighted that spending on healthcare was 2.3 % of GDP in 2022, less than half the international benchmark. Over half the population has no formal healthcare with similar shortfalls in spending in [education](#).

Unlike, **Madagascar** and elsewhere where official response was to clamp down in an authoritarian manner and increase the temperature, Morocco's political establishment has moved to calm the situation, with prime minister **Aziz Akhannouch** (2021-present) re-affirming the protesters' rights to protest and calling for dialogue. **King Mohamed VI** (1999-present) in a speech at the opening of

parliament on 10 October said that creating jobs for young people, and the concrete improvement of the education and health sectors was a government priority.

The king and government's pragmatic approach mirrors the official response in 2011, when reforms helped stabilise Morocco and turned the country into a regional political and economic powerhouse. Reforms then were far reaching and shifted the country from an absolute monarchy with a parliament to a parliamentary monarchy, where elected officials and the king share power. Under this new regime, the king must appoint a prime minister from the majority party in parliament and has lost his 'sacred' status, along with a prerogative to appoint administrative and diplomatic positions, now the role of the prime minister, who is also president of the council of government, which drafts government policy. The new constitution granted women civic and social equality with men, and guaranteed freedom of thought, ideas, and artistic expression and creation for all citizens. However, the king has retained complete control of the armed forces, foreign policy and religious matters.

Draft budget appears to increase social spending

The ministerial council - which the king chairs - has sought to respond to the social dissatisfaction in its 2026 draft budget, presented on 20 October. The budget posts a total revenue and expenditure of \$83 billion. In a bid to address protesters concerns directly, the budget sees a substantial increase in spending on health and education by 16%, up to \$15 billion, equal to 10% of GDP.

The council has forecast that the economy will grow 4.8% this year, up from 3.8% in 2024, thanks to domestic demand and the performance of the non-farming sector. Growth is forecast at 4.6% in 2026. The draft budget also allocates more funds to reduce regional inequalities – another direct response to protesters demands. At the same time, a substantial increase in spending (12%) on ports, infrastructure, airports and rail is likely to draw criticism from GenZ212.

Separately, the council adopted two draft laws ahead of the next general elections, including measures to promote women and youth participation and to prevent corruption - like barring candidates who are convicted of a crime or violation from running. Under the proposals, candidates under 35 years old would face simplified candidacy rules and receive financial support covering 75% of their campaign costs. However, the government moves are likely to fall short of the protesters demands at this stage. Protesters are looking for systemic change, greater accountability – and for a release of all detainees.

Social media pose new operational risks

The GenZ protests have also raised the risk of dramatic, sudden political change. Adding to the power of GenZ protests and their sustainability is their use of social media. However, their dependency on social media as an organising tool also exposes them to the abuse of social media, which is becoming more [apparent](#) across Africa.

The risk is that is that external forces flood social media to inflame genuine political protest and seek to influence political outcomes leading to unprecedented or unpredictable outcomes – outcomes as in Madagascar, **Mali**, **Burkina Faso** and **Niger** where the democratic protest leads to military intervention. Rolling youth protests organised over social media in mid-October in Madagascar, prompted the president, **Andry Rajoelina** (2019-2025), to flee the country allowing the military to step in and take control.

Similarly, the **Alliance of Sahelian States** - Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger – whose military coups were also heavily influenced by social media propaganda - have led to a sharp degradation in political, economic and operating conditions. Military intervention has led to suppression of protest and spiralling security conditions and remove protesters from their ability to influence social and economic outcomes.

Western Sahara issue comes to the fore again

Political unrest in Morocco emerges at a critical moment as the king and government are seeking to present themselves as the pivotal US-aligned nation in **North Africa**, and as the **United Nations**

Security Council is due to renew its **United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO)** mandate. Morocco, reportedly with US support, has put forward a draft motion that cements its proposal to grant Western Sahara autonomy but under Moroccan sovereignty. Both Western Sahara's political opposition, **Polisario** and the **Algerian** government, have rejected the draft proposal, stating it undermines the UN proposal for a framework on Western Sahara's self-determination. They continue to call for a referendum that includes independence from Morocco as an option.

US support for Morocco strengthens its position, and its diplomacy across Africa has reduced the opposition of several African countries. Morocco rejoined the **African Union (AU)** in January 2017 and although its position remains a delicate one – not least since the **Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)** is also a full AU member - Morocco has in recent years established some 35 diplomatic missions across the continent to support its diplomatic position.

Planner

21 Dec 2025 – 18 Jan 2026 (**Morocco**) Morocco to host 2025 **Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON)**
2025/2026 (**Morocco**) King **Mohammed VI** expected to make a state visit to **France**;
2026 (**Morocco**) General election

Chronology

27 Oct 2025 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Engineering News*. X-headquartered **RMB** launches its **Where to Invest in Africa (WTIA)** 2025/26 edition, ranking Morocco in the top-five countries with the best investment prospects;

23 Oct 2025 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Foreign minister **Nasser Bourita** urges **Belgian** investors to explore opportunities in **Western Sahara**, highlighting the region's potential in renewable energy, infrastructure, industry, and green hydrogen;

22 Oct 2025 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Africa Confidential*. Morocco is positioning itself as a key **United States (US)** ally in **North Africa**, leveraging its recognition of **Israel** and security ties to gain support for arms supplies and pipeline financing, aiming to surpass its regional rival **Algeria**;

20 Oct 2025 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Finance ministry submits the 2026 draft budget, totalling \$83 billion, a 5.5% increase from its 2025 budget, forecasting growth of 4.6% in 2026 compared to 4.8% this year;

19 Oct 2025 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Le Monde*. Government announces a set of measures aimed at encouraging young people to engage in politics and pledging social reforms amid youth-led protests;

16 Oct 2025 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Secretary of state for foreign trade, **Omar Hejira**, says Morocco is positioning itself as **Turkey's** gateway to **African** markets, leveraging its strategic location, modernised ports, and trade agreements to facilitate cooperation and \$5 billion in trade;

15 Oct 2025 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. **United States (US)**-headquartered **Human Rights Watch (HRW)** calls on authorities to conduct a transparent investigation into security services "use of force" during youth-led protests that have been ongoing since 27 September;

14 Oct 2025 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Prime minister **Aziz Akhannouch** meets with a delegation of **China's** ruling **Communist Party of China**, pledging to deepen economic ties;

13 Oct 2025 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. **Spain's** agriculture minister, **Luis Planas**, expresses optimism about reaching a new **European Union (EU)**-Morocco fishing agreement, emphasising its strategic importance for both European fleets and EU-Morocco relations;

11 Oct 2025 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. **GenZ212** movement pauses weekend protests to regroup and organise future demonstrations, while reaffirming demands for the release of detained protesters, prosecution of corrupt officials, and structural reforms in education, healthcare, employment and governance;

9 Oct 2025 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. **General Confederation of Enterprises (CGEM)** welcomes the new Morocco–**European Union (EU)** trade agreement covering farming products, calling it a major diplomatic and economic milestone that strengthens cooperation and boosts exports;

8 Oct 2025 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. **World Bank** raises Morocco’s 2025 growth forecast to 4.4%, up from 3.3%, citing strong agricultural performance, tourism recovery, and renewed construction activity;

7 Oct 2025 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. Morocco’s **GenZ212** movement enters its second week of nationwide protests, with young people rallying across cities such as Rabat, **Casablanca, Marrakech, Agadir** and **Tangier** to demand reforms in healthcare, education, job access and an end to corruption and nepotism;

5 Oct 2025 **Rabat (Morocco)** *France24*. Demonstrations continue for a 9th consecutive night, with protestors demanding an end to corruption and a change of government;

1 Oct 2025 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Reuters*. Local authorities report security forces killed at least two people and injured an unknown number in self-defence as widespread youth-led protests demanding education and healthcare reforms continue;

30 Sep 2025 **Rabat (Morocco)** *Morocco World News*. **Ghana’s** chief of defence staff, **William Agyapong** visits Morocco to strengthen military cooperation;

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.

www.africariskconsulting.com

About ARC Briefing:

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.

ARC Briefing is an information service keeping you:

- Up to date with Country Chronologies of business-critical events
- In the know via Country Briefings on political, economic, business and operating trends. Written in-country, ARC experts analyse and comment

- Ahead with Country Planner which details future elections, budgets, regulatory changes etc.

www.africariskconsulting.com

Getting in touch

Please contact us by email info@africariskconsulting.com

Africa Risk Consulting (ARC) Pty Ltd expressly forbids the collection of information and content from ARC Briefing as data to train generative artificial intelligence models.

© Africa Risk Consulting (ARC)