



Integrated Country Strategy

MOROCCO

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Table of Contents

1. Chief of Mission Priorities	1
2. Mission Strategic Framework	3
3. Mission Goals and Objectives	4
4. Management Objectives	17

1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Given the depth and breadth of U.S.-Morocco ties, the Mission will advance America's national security priorities by building on past gains to expand our engagement in an ever-growing range of contemporary issues in which Morocco is, or soon will be, a leader. Our common interests and long history of cooperation in regional peace and security and shared prosperity give us much on which to build.

Our efforts fall into four broad categories: security, economic, governance, and technological, and our country strategy is organized accordingly. In each, Morocco is a partner while also being, or having the near-term potential to be, a regional leader and exporter of knowledge and best practices. The U.S. approach is, therefore, to build up Moroccan capabilities and, given our shared priorities and values, help it to exercise leadership in North Africa and the Sahel, and beyond. The breadth of our engagement explains the steady growth of the Mission in recent years, with an increasing number of USG agencies and offices present at our two posts, increasingly with a focus on regional activities. Progress on the objectives laid out in the Integrated Country Strategy will be reviewed annually, and the Mission's activities will be adjusted as we work to achieve mission goals.

On the *security* front, Morocco and the U.S. have long been aligned in promoting regional stability, countering terrorism, and combating transnational challenges such as trafficking in persons. Over the years U.S. assistance has played a significant role in strengthening Morocco's capacity in these areas, and U.S. interests are served by sustaining and expanding our cooperation. The results are clear: the Government of Morocco (GOM) invests in its military and is a noteworthy buyer of U.S. defense products; annually hosts African Lion, Africa Command's largest such exercise on the continent; and has agreed on a 10-year Roadmap for Defense Cooperation that lays out a path for ever-deeper cooperation through 2030. Effective counterterrorism operations and enhanced border security serve to protect Morocco's people and American tourists and businesses while taking on the transnational terrorist networks that, if left unchecked, threaten our homeland. The benefits go well beyond the bilateral sphere as the GOM leverages its capacity and strong ties on the continent via its participation in UN peacekeeping operations and by passing on its expertise by training foreign militaries and law enforcement.

The GOM's "New Development Model" (NDM) envisions a productive and diversified *economy*, with a focus on value-added production, quality jobs, and enhanced human capital to position the country for success by 2030. Moroccan progress on these axes is important to the United States because it will allow more of Morocco's citizens to achieve their aspirations, enhancing internal stability and reducing migratory pressures. One notable deficit the NDM seeks to address is the low workforce participation rate for women. U.S. economic and development assistance addresses this and other challenges highlighted in the NDM, as our second Millennium Challenge Corporation compact closes in 2023, USAID sustains its targeted

programming, and our policy team seeks to help Morocco pursue the reforms necessary for the level of economic growth to which the NDM aspires. Meanwhile we seek to capitalize on growing trade and investment ties; bilateral trade with Morocco has increased over 300% since our Free Trade Agreement went into force in 2006, bringing jobs and opportunity to both our peoples. In the coming years we will expand market access and use financing tools to grow bilateral trade and investment, with a particular eye to leveraging Morocco's privileged geo-economic position to help American businesses access more African markets.

On *governance*, the Mission will continue to advocate for sustained progress on civil and political rights in Morocco. The United States interest is informed both by American values and by the desire to see an important friend and ally flourish in a volatile region in which many other countries have been shaken by outpourings of citizen dissatisfaction. In doing so we will be advancing not just stability but also Morocco's own aspirations, such as commitments made in its 2011 constitution, and as a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The Mission will advocate on behalf of fundamental human rights and key democratic values such as freedom of speech and equal treatment under the law for all Moroccans, and will support civil society organizations to serve and advocate for all.

In this Integrated Country Strategic we have a newfound focus on *technology* issues as we jointly face the new challenges of this century. Morocco is a global leader in green energy, setting ambitious goals – and frequently exceeding them. Scientific and technological capacity more broadly is rapidly improving in Morocco, which appears poised to become a regional leader in this area as well. In the coming years we will support Moroccan efforts to reduce emissions and institute climate change adaptation strategies. We will also help Morocco pursue a modern telecommunications infrastructure that offers the highest levels of security and respect for Morocco's sovereignty.

As we pursue our goals in these four baskets, we will face cross-cutting challenges. Morocco's robust international ties – including with U.S. competitors – and numerous donor partners oblige us to think multilaterally with regards to our own assistance priorities and programs. Tension in the Western Sahara, where a UN peacekeeping mission monitors a fragile 1991 ceasefire, holds the potential to threaten regional stability and hinder cooperation on a range of issues especially as Morocco's role and influence on the African continent grows. Our outspokenness on fundamental freedoms – such as respect for freedom of speech or LGBTQI+ rights – will remain a source of friction bilaterally. And, from a management perspective, the continuing growth and regionalization of our Mission will go to the next level with the opening of Casablanca's New Consulate Compound in 2024. The need to hire additional personnel to meet the demands of our growing presence links well with the Department-wide effort to reform our talent management and embrace a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible culture. We will use this opportunity to look for innovative approaches to attract a diverse pool of qualified candidates at all levels of the Mission.

Continuously strengthening U.S.-Morocco ties will be a linchpin for our regional and global goals of security, prosperity, good governance, and addressing the climate crisis. Over two centuries of warm relations undergird a vast slate of joint initiatives operating from what will soon be among the most modern USG platforms globally. The challenges are real but will not prevent us from seizing the opportunities presented by this historic friendship, one based on shared values and interests.

2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: Protect U.S. Citizens and U.S. Security Interests

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Enhanced Moroccan Capability to Support Coalition Operations, Promote Regional Stability, Participate in UN Peacekeeping Operations, Counter Terrorism, Interoperate with U.S. Forces, and Cooperate to Respond to Emergent Threats to U.S. Citizens in Morocco.
- **Mission Objective 1.2:** Morocco's Policies, Capabilities, and Best Practices in Addressing Transnational Security Threats Improved and Exported to other Regional Partners through Information Sharing and U.S.-funded Training and Equipment.
- **Mission Objective 1.3:** UN-led Efforts to Resolve the Western Sahara Conflict Advanced through U.S. Advocacy.

Mission Goal 2: Boost Inclusive Economic Growth in Morocco

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Economic Growth, Employment Opportunities, Educational Outcomes, and Entrepreneurial Environment Enhanced through U.S. Engagement and Funding.
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Bilateral Trade and Investment Increased through Trade Promotion and Engagement on Investment Barriers
- **Mission Objective 2.3:** Enhanced Inclusive Socio-economic Development for Target Populations (Incorporates USAID's CDCS Development Objective).

Mission Goal 3: Increase Legal Protections and Support for Democratic Values and Good Governance

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Improved Legal Protections for and Public Engagement on Human Rights, Fundamental Freedoms, Civil Liberties, Women's Rights, LGBTQIA+ Populations, and Civil Liberties.
- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Rule of Law, Government Transparency, and Democratic Practices Strengthened through Continued Professionalization of the Security Services, Justice System Reforms, and Civic Engagement.

Mission Goal 4: Partner with Morocco to Confront Global Scientific and Technological Challenges and Opportunities

- **Mission Objective 4.1:** Prevention, Adaptation, and Mitigation Responses to Climate Change and Pandemic Preparedness and Response in Morocco and the Region Enhanced through Economic and Scientific Cooperation.
- **Mission Objective 4.2:** Increased Resilience against Threats to Cybersecurity and the Information Communications Technology Sector

Management Objective 1: Mission Goals and Other U.S. interests in Morocco and the Region Supported by Enhancing the Current Platform

Management Objective 2: An Efficient, Diverse, Inclusive, and Equitable Mission Culture Built and Maintained through Thoughtful Leadership and Management

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1 | Protect U.S. Citizens and U.S. Security Interests

Description | The U.S. Mission to Morocco cooperates with the Moroccan military, law enforcement agencies, the judicial system, and civil society organizations on a range of initiatives that advance U.S. security interests and the safety of the American people. One set of efforts seeks to bolster the capacity of the Moroccan government to directly protect U.S. citizens in Morocco and beyond. A second set tackles transborder and international security challenges in which Morocco’s regional leadership and position as exporter of good security practices make it a valuable partner. Cooperation in these areas supports regional stability, combats transnational security challenges – such as violent extremism – and protects U.S. citizens at home by preventing illegitimate travel to the United States. This Mission Goal also addresses the U.S. interest in supporting the UN-led effort to resolve the Western Sahara conflict; the Mission will encourage Moroccan engagement and promote progress on this issue.

Objective 1.1 | Enhanced Moroccan Capability to Support Coalition Operations, Promote Regional Stability, Participate in UN Peacekeeping Operations, Counter Terrorism, Interoperate with U.S. Forces, and Cooperate to Respond to Emergent Threats to U.S. Citizens.

- **Justification** | The United States and the Kingdom of Morocco are committed to a strategic security partnership to manage threats and decisively act to address shared challenges. This partnership is reflected in the Roadmap for Defense Cooperation 2020-2030, which outlines shared objectives at the operational and tactical levels across five lines of effort: military interoperability, modernization, and force readiness across air, ground, and maritime domains. The Mission will empower Morocco's positive contribution to regional security and stability by strengthening its defense capabilities and joint interoperability. As a major Non-NATO Ally, Morocco is a reliable and critical partner in advancing U.S. interests in Africa and exporting security to the region. Morocco is an enthusiastic recipient of U.S. military training and a willing participant in peacekeeping. Morocco has deployed 9,710 members to UNPKO from 2018 to 2021, making it the 12th largest troop contributor out of 122 countries.

The GOM has been a reliable partner in protecting U.S. citizens in its territory. Prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, tens of thousands of U.S. tourists and businesspeople traveled to Morocco annually, and some 150 U.S. businesses have permanent offices in the country. Moroccan cooperation was critical in assisting thousands of U.S. citizens to return home during the pandemic's early stages. Through this objective the Mission will maintain and strengthen cooperation of key ministries and partners in the Moroccan government in order to protect Americans in Morocco, whether from pandemics, natural disasters, or violent extremism.

- **Linkages** | This Mission Objective links to the Interim National Security Strategy (NSS) released in March 2021. The NSS underlines the importance of working with regional partners to deter threats to sovereignty and territorial integrity, disrupt Al-Qaeda and related terrorist networks, and resolve complex conflicts that threaten regional stability. The Department of State and USAID's Joint Security Plan (JSP) Goal 1 emphasizes the importance of renewing U.S. leadership and mobilizing coalitions to address global changes that impact Americans' security. The State/Near East Affairs (NEA) and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)/Middle East (ME) Joint Regional Strategy (JRS) Bureau Goal 1 likewise calls for revitalizing U.S. alliances to resolve conflicts, counter terrorism, and address regional security challenges.
- **Risks** | Several risks could broadly impact the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives. COVID-19 could further depress the global economy, negatively impacting Morocco's stability, economic growth, the education sector, and/or society at large. Locally, Morocco could experience a significant drought, damaging the agriculture industry, impeding economic growth, and fueling instability. Likewise, an act(s) of Moroccan domestic terrorism could occur, affecting the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives and potentially forcing it to change focus. Increased protests could undermine Morocco's stability and opportunities for economic growth. A risk specific to this objective is a swing in Moroccan popular opinion. As compared to other areas,

security cooperation is more susceptible to a public backlash in the event of renewed confrontation in Israel-Palestine or other areas associated with U.S. policy in the Middle East, which in turn could affect the GoM's willingness to maintain such close cooperation.

Objective 1.2 | Morocco's Policies, Capabilities, and Best Practices in Addressing Transnational Security Threats Improved and Exported to other Regional Partners through Information Sharing and U.S.-funded Training and Equipment.

- **Justification |** Through this objective the Mission will assist Moroccan military and civilian personnel to detect and deter criminal and terrorist activity, modernize their equipment and methodologies, and conduct multi-discipline intelligence operations. The Mission will encourage Morocco's leadership role in promoting regional security and training foreign military, police, judges, prosecutors, and customs and aviation security officials. The successful implementation by Morocco of its Strategic Trade Control Law on Dual-Use Goods consistent with UNSCR 1540 to prevent the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and related materials would make Morocco a model for North Africa with respect to non-proliferation. The Mission will continue to assist Morocco's efforts to strengthen its strategic trade controls, enhance customs capabilities at ports of entry, and bolster border security to counter illegitimate travel to the United States and cross-border flows of weapons, foreign terrorist fighters, and proliferation sensitive items, to include chemical and biological threats.
- **Linkages |** The NSS highlights challenges that transcend national borders, calling them some of the biggest threats America faces. Under this objective the Mission will pursue key priorities referenced in the NSS such as countering violent extremism, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and modernizing the architecture of international cooperation. The Joint Regional Strategy likewise highlights the need to modernize and revitalize U.S. alliances and partnerships to prevent conflicts, counter terrorism, and confront regional security challenges (Bureau Goal 1).
- **Risks |** Several risks could broadly impact the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives. COVID-19 could further depress the global economy, negatively impacting Morocco's stability, economic growth, the education sector, and/or society at large. Locally, Morocco could experience a significant drought, damaging the agriculture industry, impeding economic growth, and fueling instability. Likewise, an act(s) of Moroccan domestic terrorism could occur, affecting the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives and potentially forcing it to change focus. Increased protests could undermine Morocco's stability and opportunities for economic growth. A risk specific to this objective is a swing in Moroccan popular opinion. As compared to other areas, security cooperation is more susceptible to a public backlash in the event of renewed confrontation in Israel-Palestine or other areas associated with U.S. policy in the Middle

East, which in turn could affect the GoM's willingness to maintain such close cooperation.

Objective 1.3 | UN-led Efforts to Resolve the Western Sahara Conflict Advanced through U.S. Advocacy.

- **Justification |** The Mission will encourage Morocco's constructive engagement with the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) and support future MINURSO mandate renewals on terms that advance political dialogue and regional stability. Mission leadership will support Moroccan engagement that reflects U.S. interests in counterterrorism, regional security, development, and human rights.
- **Linkages |** This Mission Objective links to the Interim National Security Strategy (NSS) released in March 2021. The NSS underlines the importance of working with regional partners to resolve complex conflicts that threaten regional stability. It also links to JRS Bureau Objective 1.2, which calls for locally led solutions to resolve conflict and promote reconciliation.
- **Risks |** Several risks could broadly impact the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives. COVID-19 could further depress the global economy, negatively impacting Morocco's stability, economic growth, the education sector, and/or society at large. Locally, Morocco could experience a significant drought, damaging the agriculture industry, impeding economic growth, and fueling instability. Likewise, an act(s) of Moroccan domestic terrorism could occur, affecting the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives and potentially forcing it to change focus. Increased protests could undermine Morocco's stability and opportunities for economic growth. A risk specific to this objective the possibility of an escalation of violence at the border, which risks destabilizing a simmering conflict that nonetheless has seen only limited violence over the years. Additionally, tense relations between Morocco and Algeria increase the chance of a miscalculation by either side. An increase in violence could deepen hostility between the various parties and make a negotiated resolution of the conflict significantly more difficult.

Mission Goal 2 | Boost Inclusive Economic Growth in Morocco

Description | Enhanced and sustained inclusive economic growth in Morocco is critical to the well-being of the state and its citizens. The Mission will work closely with the GOM to support these aspirations, based on our shared view that a prosperous Morocco is best realized by expanding economic opportunities, particularly for traditionally marginalized populations. The Mission's work under this goal aligns to the Government of Morocco's New Development Model, which envisions a productive and diversified economy that generates quality jobs and enhances human capital to better prepare Moroccans for the future. This vision targets significant progress on overall economic growth, via avenues such as increased workforce skill competency, reduced informal employment rates, a more vibrant trade and investment environment, and a focus on the participation rate of women in the labor market.

Through a wide variety of USG programming, the Mission will continue to foster partnerships among citizens, civil society, the private sector, and government institutions to generate shared solutions that promote prosperity. The Mission will support the continuing transition towards a more skilled workforce that meets private sector needs and an economic environment that allows for dynamic trade and investment opportunities between the US and Morocco. The Mission will manage development assistance to: boost educational attainment and enhance youth employability; foster entrepreneurship and increase employment opportunities; and strengthen civil society and government institutions to advance participatory governance for all Moroccans.

Objective 2.1 | Economic Growth, Employment Opportunities, Educational Service Delivery and Outcomes, and Entrepreneurial Environment Enhanced through U.S. Engagement and Funding.

- **Justification |** Morocco's substantial progress in strengthening growth over the past decade has contributed to a solid macroeconomic performance and reduced poverty. Entering the second year of the global COVID pandemic, the IMF notes that "economic activity has recovered most of the ground lost during the severe global recession of 2020... After shrinking 6.3 percent in 2020, GDP growth for 2021 was forecasted at 6.3 percent, among the highest in the Middle East and North Africa region. The economic recovery is expected to continue over the next few years, although the pandemic will leave some scars. GDP growth is projected at around 3 percent in 2022, as agriculture output returns to average levels and non-agricultural activity continues to recover."

Despite the impacts of COVID and the projected economic recovery, the national unemployment rate of 12 percent masks significant disparities among women and youth, as well as employment challenges in urban geographic areas. Representing 44 percent of the working population, Moroccan youth have largely been excluded from the country's recent economic growth. Morocco also has one of the world's lowest

women's labor market participation rates (despite high and equitable educational achievement rates), which limits future economic development.

In addition, the Government of Morocco is looking to stimulate private sector investment and job creation in industrial development, clean energy and other growing sectors of the economy to promote more robust economic growth and poverty reduction, particularly amongst youth and marginalized populations. The Mission's development assistance will therefore focus on collaborating with the Government on addressing key economic constraints to the economy, including through investment in land productivity, energy, and environmental sectors, promoting entrepreneurship, and in addressing educational quality, youth employability and participatory government.

- **Linkages** | This objective links to the NSS, which underlines development and economic statecraft as the leading instruments of American foreign policy, through which we can create space for people throughout the Middle East and Africa to realize their aspirations. The objective links to the JSP Goal 2, promoting global prosperity. It also links to JRS, which calls for strengthening inclusive economic growth to achieve stable and prosperous societies.
- **Risks** | Several risks could impact Mission operations generally. COVID-19 could further depress the global economy, negatively impacting Morocco's stability, economic growth, the education sector, and/or society at large. Locally, Morocco could experience a significant drought, damaging the agriculture industry, impeding economic growth, and fueling instability. Likewise, an act(s) of Moroccan domestic terrorism could occur, affecting the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives and potentially forcing it to change focus. Increased protests could undermine Morocco's stability and opportunities for economic growth. Risks specific to this objective include competition from global rivals and an increase in protectionist tendencies by the GoM.

Objective 2.2 | Bilateral Trade and Investment Increased through Trade Promotion and Engagement on Investment Barriers.

- **Justification** | Since the entry into force of the U.S.-Morocco Free Trade Agreement in 2006, bilateral trade with Morocco has increased 300%. The United States is now Morocco's third largest trading partner in terms of total trade but there remains much room for growth in our trade relationship. As one of the few stable and diversified economies in North Africa, and with aspirations to serve as a hub for Africa, Morocco's strategic economic importance is rising. As a result, U.S. companies are facing increased competition from Morocco's foreign trading partners, both new and old. Moreover, Morocco's drive towards domestic industrialization in order to fuel job creation has unearthed some protectionist tendencies that could negatively affect U.S. businesses. The job creation imperative also provides incentives to embrace partners and policies which may offer short-term benefits while creating long-term economic and

strategic vulnerabilities. In this environment, U.S. companies require Mission support to win tenders, access markets, and reap the benefits of Morocco's strategic location, open economy, and stable political environment. The provision of timely and accurate information on the business environment, tax code, and regulatory system is essential for U.S. businesses' continued success and the resulting economic development.

Mission Morocco will promote U.S. strategic economic interests in Morocco by pressing for Moroccan reforms designed to liberalize commerce, increase private sector employment opportunities, and foster an environment that encourages and rewards entrepreneurship. Citing the benefits of a strong business environment, the Mission will highlight the importance of eliminating barriers—especially customs delays and sanitary and phytosanitary barriers—that impede commercial activity and the investment necessary to fuel domestic growth and development. In an effort to increase U.S. exports to Morocco, the Mission will take every opportunity to advocate for U.S. businesses and continue its outreach to U.S. firms and industries not yet present in the market. The Mission will support and organize trade missions to help connect U.S. corporate leaders with emerging business opportunities. In so doing, we will leverage the voices of the U.S. business community to reinforce core messages regarding the importance of economic reform and liberalization to improve the Moroccan business environment.

- **Linkages** | This objective links to the NSS, which emphasizes trade policy which is fair, which benefits all Americans, and which ensures that American companies can compete successfully abroad. It furthers the Department of State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) goals of utilizing development and economic statecraft as the leading instruments of American foreign policy, through which we can create space for people throughout the Middle East and Africa to realize their aspirations. Finally, it links to the State/Near East Affairs (NEA) and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)/Middle East (ME) Joint Regional Strategy (JRS), which calls for strengthening expanded trade and investment.
- **Risks** | Several risks could broadly impact the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives. COVID-19 could further depress the global economy, negatively impacting Morocco's stability, economic growth, the education sector, and/or society at large. Locally, Morocco could experience a significant drought, damaging the agriculture industry, impeding economic growth, and fueling instability. Likewise, an act(s) of Moroccan domestic terrorism could occur, affecting the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives and potentially forcing it to change focus. Increased protests could undermine Morocco's stability and opportunities for economic growth. Risks specific to this objective include competition from global rivals and an increase in protectionist tendencies by the GoM.

Objective 2.3 | Enhanced Inclusive Socio-economic Development for Target Populations
(Incorporates USAID's Country Development Cooperation Strategy Development Objective).

- **Justification |** While Morocco has made significant strides in social and economic development, not all Moroccans have felt these gains. Many Moroccans, particularly those living outside of the large cities, do not feel that they have benefitted from this development, and the Moroccan government is working to direct those programs to marginalized groups to counter violent extremism. To them, Morocco's development has had a clear geographic bias – favoring major urban centers, particularly along the Atlantic Coast – resulting in unequal access to services, and many areas still in need of the most basic infrastructure and access to socioeconomic opportunities for citizens. The exclusion of certain areas of the country from benefiting from growth and development creates a culture of frustration and societal division, which can lead to instability.

USAID aims to address trends of social, economic, and political exclusion by implementing a series of activities that are designed to foster stability and counter violent extremism by focusing on the following principles:

- *Relevance to Countering Violent Extremism:* Recognizing that the threat of violent extremism is acute, a top priority for both the Moroccan and U.S. government, and exclusion plays a key role in creating an enabling environment for violent extremism, all activities under this project will have an explicit and preventative countering violent extremism focus.
 - *Comprehensive approach in key marginalized regions:* Because of the geographic element of exclusion, activities will target a small number of regions of the country that fall outside major economic and political centers.
 - *Key excluded populations:* Activities ensure interventions benefit the most excluded populations in those target regions.
 - *Citizen-centric activities:* Activities will focus on citizen-centric activities that address the priority issues in target communes
 - *Focus on learning and developing scalable models:* USAID/Morocco's strong partnerships and a relatively more permissive environment make it an ideal place to pilot
- **Linkages |** This objective is directly linked to USAID's CDCS for Morocco.

- **Risks** | Several risks could impact this objective. COVID-19 could further depress the global economy, negatively impacting Morocco's stability, economic growth, the education sector, and/or society at large. Locally, Morocco could experience a significant drought, damaging the agriculture industry, impeding economic growth, and fueling instability. Likewise, an act(s) of Moroccan domestic terrorism could occur, affecting the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives and potentially forcing it to change focus. Increased protests could undermine Morocco's stability and opportunities for economic growth. **Mission Goal 3 | Increase Legal Protections and Support for Democratic Values and Good Governance**

Description | Sustained progress on civil and political rights is critical to the stability and social cohesion of Morocco, and this progress will be grounded in commitments and aspirations articulated at the national level – e.g., in the 2011 constitution – and beyond, e.g., in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Morocco is a signatory. The United States' interest in expanding political and civic rights is informed both by American values and by the desire to see an important friend and ally flourish. The Mission will advocate for and aid Moroccan institutions and civil society to: increase judicial independence; promote legal aid and alternative sentencing; increase civic participation in governance; promote women's rights and gender equity; and enhance protection under the law for LGBTQIA+ individuals and other marginalized communities.

Improvements in freedom of expression and association throughout Morocco, including for residents of the Western Sahara, will also contribute to a political climate conducive to progress in resolving that dispute.

Objective 3.1 | Improved Legal Protections for and Public Engagement on Human Rights, Fundamental Freedoms, Civil Liberties, Women's Rights, LGBTQIA+ Populations, and Civil Liberties.

- **Justification** | The Moroccan criminal code dates to 1962, and some provisions are inconsistent with Morocco's 2011 constitution and/or its international legal commitments. The Mission will work with the Government of Morocco, parliament, and civil society to support a broad review of the criminal code to allow for a freer and more tolerant society, and in particular as it relates to freedom of expression and freedom of association. Although the 2016 press code protects journalists from criminal charges related to their work, the Government of Morocco narrowly defines who constitutes a journalist, refusing to accredit online journalists, bloggers, and commenters as well as organizations that challenge the government on red line issues like the monarchy, Islam, or the Western Sahara.

The Mission will work to build a culture of tolerance and coexistence by promoting equal citizen rights for all women, men, cultural and religious minorities, accepting and

allowing religious minorities to practice their faiths openly, and encouraging a tolerant and open world view through reforms to the education system.

- **Linkages** | This objective links to the NSS, which commits to advancing gender equality, LGBTQI+ rights, and women's empowerment at home and abroad. This goal furthers the JSP's Goal 3, which calls for strengthening democratic institutions, upholding universal values, and promoting human dignity. Finally, it links to JRS Bureau Objective 1.2, advancing inclusive, democratic governance and human rights.
- **Risks** | Several risks could broadly impact the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives. COVID-19 could further depress the global economy, negatively impacting Morocco's stability, economic growth, the education sector, and/or society at large. Locally, Morocco could experience a significant drought, damaging the agriculture industry, impeding economic growth, and fueling instability. Likewise, an act(s) of Moroccan domestic terrorism could occur, affecting the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives and potentially forcing it to change focus. Protests and other types of domestic instability are a particular risk for this objective. The GoM's pursuit of political reforms is directly related to its perception that it can make progress on these issues while maintaining control. Large protests or widespread domestic instability could tempt the GoM to reverse course on its political reforms. Separately, an increase in Salafism could reduce popular support for women's rights.

Objective 3.2 | Rule of Law, Government Transparency, and Democratic Practices Strengthened through Continued Professionalization of the Security Services, Justice System Reforms, and Civic Engagement.

- **Justification** | Although Morocco has begun reforming its judicial system, including separating the judiciary from the Ministry of Justice and giving prosecutors de jure independence, the criminal justice system continues to rely heavily on forced confessions and to use pre-trial detention in the absence of any supervisory release system, which contributes to inmate insecurity and prison overcrowding. Mission Morocco will work with the Government of Morocco to continue the reforms it started in 2011, including building the capacity of the criminal justice system to focus on standards of evidence (including forensics), significantly restrict the use of confessions, promote access to competent legal representation (particularly for young offenders and vulnerable adults), and create a system of supervisory release for non-violent offenders and juveniles awaiting trial."

Morocco has also passed an access to information law and is in the process of implementing many of its Open Government Partnership (OGP) commitments, but implementation has stalled, and it is difficult for individuals and organizations to access information in practice. Although citizens have the right to petition their government, the government rarely responds to petitions in a timely or adequate fashion, limiting the

ability of the population to seek redress or government assistance and building resentment and apathy.

- **Linkages** | The NSS calls for the United States to take special aim at confronting corruption, which rots democracy from the inside. Goal 3 of the Department of State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) calls for strengthening democratic institutions, limits on executive authority, and transparent and accountable governance. Finally, Bureau Goal 4 of the State/Near East Affairs (NEA) and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)/Middle East (ME) Joint Regional Strategy (JRS) is to enable more transparent and accountable governance systems and to strengthen the rule of law.

- **Risks** | Several risks could broadly impact the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives. COVID-19 could further depress the global economy, negatively impacting Morocco's stability, economic growth, the education sector, and/or society at large. Locally, Morocco could experience a significant drought, damaging the agriculture industry, impeding economic growth, and fueling instability. Likewise, an act(s) of Moroccan domestic terrorism could occur, affecting the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives and potentially forcing it to change focus. Protests and other types of domestic instability are a particular risk for this objective. The GoM's pursuit of political reforms is directly related to its perception that it can make progress on these issues while maintaining control. Large protests or widespread domestic instability could tempt the GoM to reverse course on its political reforms. Finally, as is the case everywhere, anti-corruption efforts often require the cooperation of elites who are themselves beneficiaries, directly or indirectly, of the existing system.

Mission Goal 4 | Partner with Morocco to Confront Global Scientific and Technological Challenges and Opportunities

Description | The Kingdom of Morocco is a global leader in climate policy and action. In the past decade the country's scientific and technical capacity has steadily increased, attracting increasing investment in aerospace, auto manufacturing, and computer science (including artificial intelligence). Morocco will be a vital partner for the U.S. and Europe over the next decade in addressing the challenges of climate, health systems and pandemic readiness, and breakneck technological development. The Moroccan government has also clearly demonstrated that the country has the capacity to lead the policy development curve for these issues on the African continent. Working with the government and regional thought leaders can therefore offer an opportunity to expand U.S. influence on these issues on a massive scale.

Objective 4.1 | Prevention, Adaptation, and Mitigation Responses to Climate Change and Pandemic Preparedness and Response in Morocco and the Region Enhanced through Economic and Scientific Cooperation.

- **Justification** | U.S. climate policy following the Glasgow COP26 conference is heavily focused on twin objectives: (1) reducing emissions quickly enough to keep a 1.5-degree Celsius limit on global warming within reach and (2) substantially scaling up progress on adapting to the impacts of climate change. This language is intended to capture both concepts. As Morocco has already agreed to ambitious climate targets under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and other international fora, the principal focus for these sub-objectives is implementation.

- **Linkages** | The NSS commits the United States to helping African nations combat the threats posed by climate change and helping partners around the world mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. Goal 1 of the JSP urges joint action on climate change and on combating the COVID-19 pandemic. Bureau Goal 5 of the JRS calls for accelerated actions to address the climate crisis.
- **Risks** | Several risks could broadly impact the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives. COVID-19 could further depress the global economy, negatively impacting Morocco's stability, economic growth, the education sector, and/or society at large. Locally, Morocco could experience a significant drought, damaging the agriculture industry, impeding economic growth, and fueling instability. Likewise, an act(s) of Moroccan domestic terrorism could occur, affecting the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives and potentially forcing it to change focus.

Objective 4.2 | Increased Resilience against Threats to Cybersecurity and the Information Communications Technology Sector.

- **Justification** | While Morocco's ICT and cybersecurity infrastructure quickly gain sophistication, the country faces a steep climb to reach its stated goals. The 2018 International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Cybersecurity Index ranked Morocco 97 out of 197 countries for cybersecurity maturity based on the country's legal structure, technological capacity, and governance structure. Without added investment and new partnerships, Morocco's nascent cybersecurity infrastructure could become a major constraint on the country's growth and security given Morocco's simultaneous push to rapidly develop sophisticated ICT infrastructure and digitize all civil and government processes (which include several smart cities at major global trade junctures). To gain cyber experience and know-how, Morocco continues to expand upon existing partnerships with European, Chinese, and American companies and governments, while seeking relationships with new Middle Eastern, European, and Israeli public and private-sector entities.
- **Linkages** | The NSS makes cybersecurity a top priority and renews the U.S. commitment to international engagement on cyber issues. The JSP's Strategic Objective 1.4 calls for addressing emerging security threats such as malign cyber activities, while JRS highlights cyber threats several times.
- **Risks** | Several risks could broadly impact the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives. COVID-19 could further depress the global economy, negatively impacting Morocco's stability, economic growth, the education sector, and/or society at large. Locally, Morocco could experience a significant drought, damaging the agriculture industry, impeding economic growth, and fueling instability. Likewise, an act(s) of Moroccan domestic terrorism could occur, affecting the Mission's ability to pursue its objectives and potentially forcing it to change focus. Though the Moroccan Government has traditionally eschewed support from untrustworthy ICT and

cybersecurity actors in Russia, without continued support, the Moroccan government may turn to untrusted vendors due to deceptively attractive pricing or to fill their current knowledge gap.

4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1 | Mission Goals and Other U.S. interests in Morocco and the Region Supported by Enhancing the Current Platform.

- **Justification** | The Mission Goals discussed in some detail how U.S. interests in Morocco encompass the strong and growing bilateral relationship itself as well as the leadership role Morocco plays regionally. Along similar lines, Mission Morocco is an attractive location for bureaus and agencies with equities in Morocco and the region. With a modern chancery completed in 2014, a New Consulate Compound (NCC) coming online in Casablanca in the coming years, and a friendly and stable host country to live in, many USG entities are opening or expanding their presence here. This objective seeks to plan for this growth and implement the processes and innovations necessary to make the best use of the considerable diplomatic potential of the U.S. presence in Morocco.
- **Linkages** | This objective ties to Goal 4 of the JSP, which calls for revitalizing the diplomatic and development workforce and infrastructure. The JSP highlights the importance of recruiting, rebuilding, and retaining a diverse and inclusive workforce with the broad set of knowledge and experience necessary to solve the pressing problems of today. In the JRS, the Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Goal 1 is to strengthen the ability of State and USAID to recruit, hire, develop, promote, and retain diverse talent.
- **Risks** | Several risks could impact the Mission's management objectives. While telework capabilities are tremendously improved since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, having staff out sick as well as extended periods of maximum telework does affect productivity, and could lead the Mission to prioritize short term requirements over long term investments. COVID-related travel restrictions affect the Mission's ability to travel for work when necessary and also inhibit job applicants' ability to travel to the embassy for interviews. The Department's perennial technology challenges require frequent troubleshooting which is more easily done in person, while global supply chain shortages cause orders for new computers to go unfulfilled for over a year.

Management Objective 2 | An Efficient, Diverse, Inclusive, and Equitable Mission Culture Built and Maintained through Thoughtful Leadership and Management.

- **Justification** | As the Mission grows it will come with increased hiring, across the sections and agencies as well as in the management sections that support the Mission's diplomatic activities. This is an opportunity to attract a large, diverse pool of candidates and to find innovative solutions so that the Mission can successfully select the most qualified and capable candidates.
- **Linkages:** The NSS affirms that American ideals democracy, equality, and diversity are a fundamental and enduring advantage for the United States. This objective ties to Goal 4 of the JSP, which calls for revitalizing the diplomatic and development workforce and infrastructure. The JSP highlights the importance of recruiting, rebuilding, and retaining a diverse and inclusive workforce with the broad set of knowledge and experience necessary to solve the pressing problems of today. In the JRS, the Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Goal 1 is to strengthen the ability of State and USAID to recruit, hire, develop, promote, and retain diverse talent and remove barriers to equal opportunity for historically underserved communities.
- **Risks** | Several risks could impact the Mission's management objectives. While telework capabilities are tremendously improved since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, having staff out sick as well as extended periods of maximum telework does affect productivity, and could lead the Mission to prioritize short term requirements over long term investments. COVID-related travel restrictions affect the Mission's ability to travel for work when necessary and also inhibit job applicants' ability to travel to the embassy for interviews. Job candidates living outside of Morocco's major cities are also those least likely to have the high-speed, stable internet connections which help them put their best foot forward during the interview process.