



Morocco: Empowering Local Communities

(NAPSA)—For over 200 years, the U.S. has experienced the benefits of decentralized government. Such an approach keeps control over many local matters in the hands of locally elected officials.

The country of Morocco also recognizes the value and wisdom of such a system. In fact, decentralization is an important element of the many democratic reforms that Morocco has been undertaking under the direction of King Mohammed VI.

One of his first actions after becoming King in 1999 was to move forward with a program to transfer some decision-making power out of Morocco's capital in Rabat and into the hands of the country's provincial governors.



Dakhla, in Morocco's Southern Provinces, has become a thriving tourist destination under the policy of increasing regionalization.

Responding To Local Needs

In a November 2008 speech, the King stated that the aim of decentralization is to respond more closely to the citizens' needs and boost development.

This theme was echoed in 2011 in an effort to reform the constitution that called for "regionalization." This meant empowering local elected officials with the responsibilities for managing local budgets, hiring, taxation and various municipal functions.



A hearing of Morocco's Economic, Social, and Environmental Council (CESE).

Working to implement regionalization, the Economic, Social, and Environmental Council (CESE) has heard testimony from thousands of Moroccans from all walks of life about a wide range of issues—from the environment to gender equality and the role of state agencies in human and social development.

This testimony—correlated with research studies—generated candid report cards and an ambitious final report, which CESE just issued. It recommends a new development model for Morocco's Southern Provinces—with concrete actions to increase public and private-sector investment, provide citizens and local elected officials more governance powers, and launch innovative projects to create a new commercial, cultural and communications hub for the region.

The final report now goes to Morocco's parliamentary process, for creating legislation to carry out these recommendations.

This process will set a direction for the future of Morocco—a direction set for Moroccans, by Moroccans.

This information is provided by Beckerman on behalf of the government of Morocco. Further information is available at the U.S. Department of Justice.