



Morocco: Promoting Cooperation And Stability

(NAPSA)—Development programs that promote a better life for the people in the region continue to be one of the most effective ways to combat extremism.

That was one of the key themes expressed by Morocco's King Mohammed VI this past February and March when he took his message of cooperation, prosperity and security, and Morocco's expertise, on an official visit to neighboring countries in West Africa—Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, and Gabon.

In his keynote speech at the first-ever Moroccan-Ivorian Economic Forum in Côte d'Ivoire's capital, Abidjan, King Mohammed urged Africa to "take its destiny in its own hands" and said that "Africa should learn to trust Africa." He vowed that "a vibrant, developed Africa is not merely a dream for tomorrow; it can be a reality today, provided we take action."

Cooperation Agreements

The many bilateral cooperation agreements, covering a broad range of sectors, signed between Morocco and each of the four countries clearly show that the King meant what he said. More than 80 agreements resulted from the trip—17 in Mali, 26 in Côte d'Ivoire, 21 in Guinea, and 24 in Gabon. Morocco committed with each of the countries to work together on everything from agriculture, manufacturing and finance to housing, education, religion, food security, and health.

There will be joint ventures on fertilizer plants, a flour mill and hospitals; tax-law changes to spur increased trade; construction of affordable housing; and more scholarships for vocational and



Morocco's King Mohammed VI greets crowd with new President of Mali.

higher education in Morocco for African students.

Promoting Stability

Varied as they are, the agreements have the same goal: to improve the quality of life of citizens and promote stability and economic success. As Ambassador Michael Battle, U.S. Department of State, put it, "Morocco is setting the pace by showing how African countries which are prosperous can be responsive to African countries which are in the process of becoming prosperous."

Morocco, led by King Mohammed VI and the country's government, financial and civil society leaders, continues to demonstrate that Africans working with Africans to improve people's lives is one of the best ways to ensure stability and stop the spread of extremism and violence in the region, which is in everybody's best interest. Policies such as this are what continue to make Morocco a good partner, to African nations and to the U.S., in both words and in deeds.

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