



**International Convention on
the Elimination
of all Forms of
Racial Discrimination**

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COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION
OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

**CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 9 OF THE CONVENTION**

Sixteenth periodic reports of States parties due in 2002

Addendum

MOROCCO*

[3 January 2003]

* This document contains the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth periodic reports of Morocco, submitted as a single document, which were due on 17 January 1998, 2000 and 2002, respectively. For the twelfth and thirteenth periodic reports of Morocco, submitted as a single document, and the summary records of the meetings at which the Committee considered those reports, see documents CERD/C/298/Add.4 and CERD/C/SR.1282 and 1283.

The information submitted by Morocco in accordance with the consolidated guidelines for the initial part of the reports of States parties is contained in the core document HRI/CORE/1/Add.23/Rev.1 and Corr.1.

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Introduction

1. The Kingdom of Morocco hereby submits to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination the following additional information.

I. CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND DIWAN AL MADHALIM (GRIEVANCES BOARD)

2. Being aware of the need to strengthen existing institutions, on 10 December 2002, to mark Human Rights Day, King Mohammed VI presided at the appointment and investiture ceremony of the new members of the Consultative Council on Human Rights (CCDH) and Diwan Al Madhalim (Grievances Board).

3. The Consultative Council, an institution dedicated to the protection of citizens' rights and dignity, is one component of a structure set up at the urging of the late King Hassan II and his successor, King Mohammed VI, to provide Morocco with fail-safe mechanisms capable of protecting citizens against any encroachment, from any source, on their legitimate rights.

4. Initially, the Consultative Council concentrated chiefly on dealing with outstanding human rights questions. Nowadays its varied membership (in essence the Consultative Council comprises representatives of civil society and politicians who meet the established requirements, and functions as a deliberative body) guarantees its independence and enables it to help expand the scope of dialogue among the various parties involved. Its resolute mission is to entrench human rights. It brings together eminent personalities proposed and selected on the basis of their impartiality, moral probity, intellectual abilities, sincere devotion to human rights and visible contribution to the consolidation of those rights.

5. Morocco's commitments to protect human rights, backed up by the pluralism within the Consultative Council, the expansion of the Council's powers and terms of reference, the strengthening of its independence and administrative and financial autonomy, the rationalization of its management and operation and the bestowal of advisory-member status on representatives of the Executive, make the Council the guarantor of the inviolability of human rights in the country.

6. The Consultative Council is required to produce an annual report on the human rights situation, furnish an annual account of its activities, set targets for the following year and offer an opinion on the annual report produced by the Diwan Al Madhalim. It is also expected to consider cases of human rights violations submitted to it, make the appropriate proposals and recommendations to the competent authorities, and study and give an opinion on draft legislation and regulations put before it.

7. The creation of an annual human rights prize to be awarded, on the Consultative Council's recommendation, to the most deserving Moroccan or foreign personality or organization, is an illustration of the Royal will to encourage initiative and noble action in this field.

8. As regards the Diwan Al Madhalim, on the same occasion the King announced the appointment of a *wali* (prefect) to head it. This non-judicial body will receive complaints relating to situations inconsistent with the requirement of fairness and detrimental to the users of public services. It will consider all grievances fairly and give substance to Morocco's desire to increase the synergy between the authorities and the citizenry while fully respecting the rules guaranteeing the primacy of the law and equity.

II. PUBLIC LIBERTIES AND THE PRESS CODE

9. To entrench the rule of law, King Mohammed VI has given just as much priority to expanding the scope of liberties, as can be seen from the reform and updating of the Code of Public Liberties as regards the establishment of associations, public gatherings and the press.

10. Hence Act No. 76-00, amending *dahir* No. 1-58-377 of 3 Joumada 1378 (15 November 1958) on public gatherings, is designed in particular to bolster the freedoms of association, assembly and expression, simplify administrative procedures and abolish or reduce custodial sentences in favour of fines. It also seeks to establish new rules guaranteeing transparency, honesty and legality in the diversification of financial resources, both domestic and foreign, and of associative partners, strengthening the power of the judiciary to monitor the legality of legally prompted administrative decisions while preserving the sanctity of national constants and at the same time ensuring that the authorities act in accordance with international human rights agreements to banish racism, hatred, violence, religious or ethnic discrimination and encroachments on the liberties of others.

III. VOTING AGE

11. On 10 December 2002, believing that Moroccan youth will boost responsible citizenship and bring new blood to the practice of democracy, and to give concrete form to his hope to see Moroccan youth heavily engaged in the shaping of a modern, democratic society, the King announced his intention to reduce the voting age to 18 years (instead of 20) and invited the Government to make the necessary arrangements.

IV. THE ELECTORAL CODE

12. On 2 January 2003, the Cabinet approved the wording of amendments to the electoral laws which are to serve as the legal basis for commune-level elections in June 2003. The amendments include a number of new features, among them changes to the Organization Act governing the Chamber of Representatives such as the use of a single ballot paper and the replacement of colour (which has been cancelled) by symbols.

13. The number of communes will not change (1,547 - 249 in cities and towns, 1,298 in the countryside). The formula adopted will apply polling by electoral list in urban communes and single-candidate constituencies in rural communities. Communities will be distinguished by population size. Communes with fewer than 25,000 inhabitants will vote for single candidates; those with more than 25,000 will vote by list with proportional representation.

V. HUMAN RIGHTS CULTURE

14. The principle of non-discrimination is laid down in the Constitution, and a human rights culture is spreading rapidly through Morocco.

15. To help promote human rights and entrench the rule of law, on 15 April 2000 the Ministry of Human Rights, in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Development Programme, set up a human rights documentation, information and training centre.

16. The main purpose of the Centre is to follow up on the human rights reforms currently under way in various sectors of Moroccan society. It arranges for exchanges and cooperation with human rights bodies and institutions at the national, regional and international level. It has laid on a number of training sessions and seminars for a wide audience (State officials, prison administration staff, legal experts, representatives of civil society etc.).

17. The training sessions and seminars laid on by the Centre have included:

- A training session in collaboration with the prison administration on “new Moroccan prison legislation and international standards on the treatment of detainees” (for prison staff and officials) in Rabat, from 22 to 24 January 2001;
- A training session on the “audiovisual media and human rights” arranged in cooperation with the British Council in Marrakesh, from 2 to 4 April 2001;
- A seminar on “international conventions and domestic law: readings in Moroccan case law”, in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice in Rabat, from 19 to 21 October 2001;
- A training session on “international mechanisms for the protection of human rights” in Casablanca, from 1 to 3 November 2001;
- A training session on the “the media and human rights” arranged in cooperation with the Arab Institute of Human Rights in Casablanca, from 8 to 14 November 2001;
- A training session on the “the principal techniques for mediating in and settling social conflicts” arranged in cooperation with Search for Common Ground (an international organization) in Rabat, from 18 to 20 January 2002;
- A training session on “documentation and information on human rights” arranged in cooperation with the Arab Institute of Human Rights in Rabat, from 11 to 13 February 2002;
- A seminar on “prison medicine and human rights” arranged in cooperation with Amnesty International in Rabat on 6 April 2002;

- A training session on “the Arab countries and international mechanisms for the protection of human rights” organized in cooperation with the Arab Institute of Human Rights in June 2002;
- A seminar on “the role of Parliament in protecting human rights” in July 2002;
- A study day on “forensic medicine and human rights” in October 2002; and
- A seminar on the “the magistracy and the media” in December 2002.

18. The Human Rights Documentation, Information and Training Centre also serves to circulate information to civil society. Reference may be made in this connection to the following publications:

- International standards governing the treatment of detainees (December 2000);
- Morocco and international human rights agreements (December 2000);
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (pamphlet);
- The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (pamphlet awaiting publication).

19. The Kingdom of Morocco has stepped up its efforts to promote a culture of human rights. Schools have proved to be the appropriate means of embedding the rudiments and values of human rights in the fabric of society, conveying the appropriate standards and making them a part of daily life.

20. To this end, the Ministry of Human Rights has, in cooperation with the Ministry of National Education, introduced human rights into the school syllabus through a national human rights education programme which was devised and introduced in several stages:

First, over 120 schoolbooks were revised: ideas, strategies and clichés inimical to human rights were purged, and ideas designed to strengthen the human rights culture were introduced.

Training was an important aspect of the programme. Between 1999 and 2002 a mixed commission comprising members of the Ministry of Human Rights and Ministry of National Education held over 100 training sessions with backing from the United Nations Centre for Human Rights.

Initially these training sessions covered four academies, before gradually spreading to cover all 16 academies in the Kingdom.

The national programme was tested on a representative sample of school establishments throughout the country during the academic year 2001/2002. It began to be applied generally as of the academic year 2002/2003 following the signature of a Convention between the Ministry of Human Rights and the Ministry of National Education on 10 December 2001, to mark Human Rights Day.

For that purpose, teaching files were produced on the five main subjects, namely history, geography, Arabic and French, Islamic thought and civics.

21. Regarding education as the best way of spreading the culture of human rights more widely, in April 1996, in collaboration with the Ministry of Higher Education and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Ministry of Human Rights established a UNESCO chair in human rights at Mohammed VI University in Rabat and a chair in peace studies at Mohammed I University in Oujda. A partnership agreement was also signed between the Ministry of Human Rights and the UNESCO chair in women and women's rights co-managed by the Souissi Faculty of Legal, Economic and Social Sciences in Rabat and the Ibn-Tofail Faculty of Literature and Human Science in Kénitra.
22. Morocco's efforts to entrench the rule of law have been favourably received abroad and in numerous international circles. Amnesty International's decision to hold its international conference in Morocco and the staging, in cooperation with UNESCO and UNDP, of the regional conference in human rights education in Arab countries sent very strong signals.
23. These intensive efforts in human rights education have been backed up by the conclusion and signature of a variety of partnership agreements with non-governmental organizations and foreign centres active in the field of human rights.
24. These include a partnership agreement between the Ministry of Human Rights and the Democratic Association of Moroccan Women, one with Amnesty International on human rights education, and one with the Arab Institute of Human Rights (Tunisia).
25. All the above activities support the efforts that Morocco has been making to spread a culture of human rights since the early 1990s. The latter include instruction in human rights in law-enforcement staff colleges such as the National Institute of Judicial Studies, the Ministry of the Interior's Advanced Training College, the Royal Gendarmerie Advanced Training College, the Royal Military Academy and the Royal Police Institute.
26. As part of the follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, Morocco, determined to combat all forms of discrimination, has established a Centre for Migrant Rights, in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration, at the initiative of the Ministry of Human Rights.
27. The purposes of this Centre are:
 - To entrench respect for migrants' rights irrespective of sex, ethnic origin, social origin or any other circumstances;

- To strengthen the Government's institutional capacity for dealing with migrants' rights;
- To support training for experts in migrants' rights;
- To provide legal aid to migrants;
- To make migrants and the general public aware of the various issues attendant on migration;
- To encourage research and studies to identify problems and obstacles to better integration of migrants, and identify the various forms of migrants' rights;
- To take part in national, regional and international colloquiums, seminars and other migration-related activities;
- To develop partnerships and cooperation with national, regional and international institutions operating in the field of migration.

28. By way of conclusion, it is emphasized that Morocco has an Arabic- and Berber-speaking population united in a shared Muslim faith and national identity that transcend all other considerations.
