

Is King Mohammed 6 Of Morocco An Absolute Monarch? Morocco Newsline

By Morocco Newsline

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Nine years have passed already, and the tenth is in keeping with the same general ethos, that of a Morocco which has resolutely written itself into a forward movement both irresistible and irreversible.

This is the Morocco of Mohammed VI whose influence is evident at every level in the life of the nation.

Barely a few months after the accession to the throne of His Majesty Mohammed VI after the death of his father, the late Hassan II, on 23 July 1999, there was a realisation that the country had undergone a change in speed and the nature of government, even of era. For here is a sovereign who has chosen to exercise his kingship outside his palace boundaries. He has preferred to put himself about effectively on the ground, making contact with his subjects at all the four corners of his kingdom.

Priorities

Almost continuously H. M. Mohammed VI takes to the road with his royal caravanserai to visit a region where there are things to do and areas where intervention needs to be encouraged. As for the regions involved, they can vary from the far south of the country, on the border with the Sahara, to the far north, only a few cables' length from Europe. As for the areas of activity to be rekindled, there is a very wide range of them.

Without prioritizing, we can cite higgledy-piggledy basic infrastructure such as the building of roads to facilitate communication or grant access to otherwise closed communities; supplying electricity and water fit to drink; galvanising the local economy or social sectors of prime importance like public health; creating drop-in centres for girls designed to encourage going to school in rural areas or sport and leisure centres. And this is only a part of the overall picture. A part no less responsive for that to the needs and expectations of the Moroccan people.

Proximity

In each region he visits the sovereign stays for a fixed length of time. He launches new projects, makes sure that those already embarked on are progressing satisfactorily and inaugurates what has been achieved. His is what has been termed, justifiably, a reign of proximity. It has also been said that Mohammed VI is a peripatetic king. Even diplomacy and international relations have had to follow in the wake of these wanderings. So it is that the King of Morocco welcomes his illustrious guests wherever he happens to find himself, as, quite recently, he welcomed José Luis Zapatero at Oujda and Nicolas Sarkozy at Tangiers, among others. Both of them, if only to cite these two examples, were present as observers at, in the case of the former, the lightning transformation of a frontier town, an economy and a collective life-style of necessity special.

The latter bore witness to one of the most ambitious projects undertaken by an independent Morocco, Tangiers-Med, a great port of the Mediterranean basin doubling up as a duty-free zone with an incentive to industrialize and establish further links with its hinterland. Three developments over two periods of time thus sending out strong messages to Morocco's European partners and its neighbours in the Maghreb.

The involvement of the sovereign is not just at the level of affairs of state, but also concerns itself with the preoccupations of his fellow citizens.

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