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MOROCCO AS MODEL COUNTERTERROISM PARTNER

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October 2018 – U.S. National Strategy for Counterterrorism (NSCT) emphasizes international partnerships

Long-term success requires affordable, sustainable strategy—sharing the burden with global partners who can act independently

Morocco is an exemplar for its CT and CVE programs, successful policies can be exported
Outline

- Morocco Background
- Three Pillars of Moroccan CT Policy
- Criticisms
- U.S. Policy Recommendations
Background (1 of 2)

- Parliamentary Constitutional Monarchy
- Reforms ("upgraded authoritarianism") following 2011 Arab Uprising
- King Mohammed VI
  - Near-exclusive power over the military, foreign affairs, and religion
  - Lineage to Prophet Muhammad
  - "Commander of the Faithful"
- 99% Sunni Muslim (Maliki, Ash’ari, Sufi)
- Key gateway to Europe, the Middle East, and Africa
- Positive international relations with Europe and the U.S.
Background (2 of 2)

- Steady economic growth and modernization
- Significant youth unemployment and inequality
- Rif Protests
- Terrorist Attacks
  - 2003 – Casablanca Suicide Bombings
  - 2007 – Casablanca Suicide Bombings
  - 2011 – Marrakech Café Bombing
  - 2018 – Beheading of Two Scandinavians
Three Pillars of Moroccan CT Policy

I. Enhancing Security Governance and CT Legislation

II. Fighting Social Inequality and Promoting Human Development

III. Reforming the Religious Field
Pillar 1: Security Governance and CT Legislation (1 of 4)

UPGRADING CT LEGISLATION

► 2003 Law to Combat Terror (Bill 03.03)
  - Minimum 10-year sentence for terror activity
  - Selective wiretapping, seizure of property
  - 12-day preventive detention

► 2015 Amended Law
  - Addresses Foreign Fighters
  - Criminalizes joining foreign terrorist group (recruitment, training)
  - Prosecution of foreign national terrorists on Moroccan soil
Pillar 1: Security Governance and CT Legislation (2 of 4)

PROFESSIONALIZE THE MILITARY

- Military Modernization (F-16 Fighter Jets, M1A1 Tanks, Helicopters)
- Member of Defeat-ISIS Coalition (Syria & Yemen)
- Peacekeeping Missions (Field Hospital in Jordan, Central African Republic)
- Partnership activities with Sub-Saharan African countries
- Host to USAFRICOM’s Largest Exercise – AFRICAN LION
- “Africa’s Premier Security Exporter”
Pillar 1: Security Governance and CT Legislation (3 of 4)

PROFESSIONALIZE LAW ENFORCEMENT

- 2013 – Central Bureau of Judicial Investigations (BCIJ)
  - “Moroccan FBI”
  - Interdicted 183 terror cells since 2002*
  - Prevented 361 terrorist attacks*
  - Arrested 3,129 terrorists*
- Can conduct wiretapping, surveillance with Court of Appeals approval
- General Directorate of National Security – Border Security
  - U.S. Customs & Border Patrol Training
  - Lacks biometric screening at Ports

*BCIJ Data
Pillar 1: Security Governance and CT Legislation (4 of 4)

**PROFESSIONALIZE JUDICIARY**

- U.S. State Department INL working to move from confession-based to evidence-based prosecutions
- Combating prison radicalization
- Working with Moroccan Prison Administration to modernize prison management, keep terrorists segregated from general population, enhance security
- 31 new modern prisons
- Facilitating reintegration for rehabilitated detainees
- Human rights criticisms – preventive detention, forced confessions, torture
Pillar 2: Fight Social Inequality, Promote Human Development (1 of 2)

POVERTY REDUCTION

- Economic reasons principal reason for joining terror networks
- National Initiative for Human Development (2005)
  - Over $6B in first 10 years
  - Served 7M people with 34,000 projects targeting youth and women
  - Provides affordable housing and loans
- Compulsory Military Service
- USAID programs
Pillar 2: Fight Social Inequality, Promote Human Development (2 of 2)

EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT

- Of 1,600 Moroccans who joined ISIS, majority did not have more than primary education
- Only 18% of first graders graduate from high school
- 55% literacy rate – among lowest in region
- USAID working to enhance reading instruction
- Millennium Challenge Corporation Grant for $450M to increase access to secondary education
Pillar 3: Reform the Religious Field

PROMOTION OF MODERATE ISLAM

- Satellite TV stations promoting Moroccan Islam (counter Wahhabist Persian Gulf stations)
- Mohammed VI Institute for Training Imams
  - Training Morocco’s 50,000 Imams
  - Attracting Imams from Europe, Africa, Asia
- Mohammedan League of Ulema
  - Promotes research in moderate Islam
  - Ensures conformity in school curricula
  - Youth outreach
- Single religious authority for fatwas
- Monitor mosques and sermons
- Third Pole of Global Islamic influence
Criticisms

- Morocco is a major exporter of terrorism
- Reported human rights abuses among security services (mass arrests, beatings, torture)
- Continued unrest (Rif protests)
- Lack of transparency/patronage in NIHD
- “Big Brother” aspect to religious surveillance
U.S. Policy Recommendations

- Showcase Morocco as Africa’s premier exporter of security; promote Moroccan leadership in multinational partnership building activities.
- Improve security through provision of biometric screening at ports of entry.
- Support modernization and reforms of prisons.
- Support programs that ameliorate social inequality and youth unemployment.
- Help Morocco eradicate torture and inhumane treatment by increasing compliance monitoring and verification.
- Support Moroccan efforts to propagate its peaceful and moderate version of Islam by embracing and spotlighting modern and moderate Islamic voices.
Conclusion

- Three pillars of Morocco’s CT/CVE program have proven effective, limiting attacks on Moroccan soil and attracting others in the region who want to learn from Morocco’s success.
- With some improvements, Morocco’s policies should be exported to other potential partners.
- Enabling our partners will share the burden of CT/CVE—a affordable and sustainable.
- Diminishes the global threat of terrorism; promotes prosperity of America and the World.

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References


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Questions?

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