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**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT
ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS**

**CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 16 OF THE INTERNATIONAL
COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS**

Second Replies by the Government of Morocco to the list of issues (E/C.12/Q/MAR/2) to be taken up in connection with the consideration of the third periodic report of Morocco concerning the rights referred to in articles 1-15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/1994/104/Add.29).*

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* In accordance with the information transmitted to States parties regarding the processing of their reports, the present document was not formally edited before being sent to the United Nations translation services.

Kingdom of Morocco

Ministry of Justice

**Consideration of the third periodic report on Morocco's implementation of the
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

**Replies to questions addressed to Morocco by the working group of the
Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (second draft)**

**Rights contained in articles 1-15 of the International Covenant on
Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/1994/104/Add.29)**

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Presentation of updated information on the factors and difficulties impeding the State's ability to implement its obligations under the Covenant, especially in the Saharan provinces

During the period since the submission of the third periodic country report on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, a number of steps have been taken and a number of social, economic and cultural programmes have been launched or completed. A national initiative for human development announced by His Royal Highness King Mohamed VI on 18 May 2005 was also launched. The initiative, which is a major undertaking, is based on a comprehensive vision of the building of a modern Moroccan State founded on democracy, the law and human rights. The initiative paved the way for the implementation of structural reforms and projects designed to further the development process in accordance with a strategy that focuses on the economic, social and cultural dimensions of human development.

The Moroccan Government began implementing the plan of action for this initiative or charter in cooperation with partners from local communities, the private sector, civil society and regional and national organizations, and on behalf of all parties in the Kingdom. "The first step in the implementation of the initiative - which is designed to achieve social integration - must be taken on the basis of objective criteria that take account of the urgency of, and pressing need for, social rehabilitation of the beneficiaries. Priority must be given to 360 rural communities and 250 of the poorest and most marginalized urban areas, as well as groups and individuals living in difficult circumstances and suffering from isolation and disabilities." The initiative, which is designed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals to which Morocco subscribes, aims to benefit all parties through an approach based on a proximity policy and on promoting social assistance, social solidarity and economic and regional modernization in the context of territorial unity.

Efforts to implement the initiative and various social projects have continued in spite of the economic difficulties that Morocco has had to contend with in recent years, such as:

- A large debt burden;
- Poor harvests in 2004-2005;
- Rising oil prices;
- The Al Hoceima earthquake;
- A rising population growth rate;
- A locust infestation in the south; and
- The growing number of young persons who, according to the 2004 general population census, seek to enter the job market each year.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, Morocco remains committed to internationally recognized human rights, as confirmed by the Constitutions of 1992 and 1996 and by His Majesty the King on more than one occasion, in particular in his address on 10 December 1999 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. On that occasion, he spoke of the need to defend and promote human rights, to disseminate a human rights culture, and to ensure that everybody enjoys civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights without any form of discrimination.

The special attention that the Saharan provinces have been accorded since 1976 is reflected in social, economic and cultural programmes aimed at the development of, inter alia, construction works, health and education services, basic infrastructure, the administration, the economy, services, sports and culture. Development efforts have continued to gather momentum despite the special environmental problems of these provinces and geographic, climatic and demographic features such as:

- Scarce freshwater resources;
- Land degradation;
- Desertification and sand drift;
- Aridity;
- Migratory locusts;
- Rising rural migration to urban areas;
- A rising population growth rate, which now stands at 4 per cent, i.e. twice the national growth rate.

In cooperation with various stakeholders, the Moroccan Government has worked to overcome these difficulties and to take the necessary measures to ensure that the population of these provinces can enjoy all economic, social and cultural rights. The provinces are given special attention under the National Initiative for Social Development.

Since its establishment, the Development Agency for Southern Morocco has designed an integrated development programme worth 8 billion dirhams and consisting of a series of ambitious programmes intended to fulfil the aspirations of the population. The programmes draw on the region's human and natural resources in order to build up basic infrastructures; to expand electricity, drinking water and road networks; to bring administrative structures closer to the public; to universalize education; to provide decent housing and medical and sports facilities; to promote Saharan culture and to organize local festivals to revive the region's cultural heritage. These programmes also seek to boost the economy by supporting the fishing sector, especially traditional sea fishing, as well as tourism and traditional industries, and by launching economic projects that will turn the region into a pole of economic growth with distinctive features

complementing those of other regions. It would then benefit all Moroccans, in both the north and south of the country, without any distinction or discrimination, in accordance with the principles set forth in the Constitution.

The Development Agency for the southern provinces has recently prepared a number of programmes and initiatives announced by His Majesty the King during his visit to the southern region from 20 to 25 March 2006. In particular, the measures include building a port at a cost of 250 million dirhams in Boujdour; implementing a liquid purification programme at a cost of 56 million dirhams in the same city; constructing a 57 million dirham groundwater channel in Laayoune; and implementing a 140 million dirham liquid purification programme in the cities of Laayoune and Al Mersa. On the same occasion, His Majesty launched a drinking water supply programme for the region worth 1,480 million dirhams.

2. Presentation of updated information on the results of initiatives taken by the State to tackle the debt burden

To address the issue of Moroccan debt, the Moroccan Government has adopted a special debt management policy that focuses on:

- Reducing the budget deficit to not more than 3 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP);
- Financing the Treasury;
- Introducing the reforms needed to develop and modernize the domestic financial market, and choosing the best methods of using the market to finance the State.

Numerous initiatives have been undertaken to deal with the debt burden in the context of the Government's proactive debt management policy, including:

(a) Debt-to-investment conversion

The fifth and sixth agreements with the Paris Club on debt rescheduling state that debt can be converted into either public or private investments.

In the case of public investments, creditor countries cancel a part of the debt in exchange for a commitment by Morocco to fund economic and social projects in various sectors such as primary education, health and environmental protection, and the reconstruction of the city of Al Hoceima. In this context, agreements totalling some US\$ 450 million have been signed with France, Spain, Italy and Kuwait.

In the case of private investments, investors who are not resident in Morocco and whose investment project has been accepted by a Moroccan authorization committee can buy Moroccan debt from a creditor State for less than its nominal value and sell it to Morocco with a small profit margin. This mechanism has been used in the case of France, Spain and Kuwait, and has affected US\$ 730 million of Morocco's debt.

(b) Dealing with high-cost debt

These mechanisms are used to deal with old loans that were negotiated on terms that have become costly under current market conditions. Two procedures have been implemented:

- Replacing the old high-cost loan with a new one on more favourable terms. This procedure has made it possible to settle \$3,000 million of debt, representing \$1,500 million of Treasury debt and \$1,500 million of debt incurred by public institutions;
- Renegotiating with creditors in order to reduce the original interest rate on some costly debt, bringing it closer to the interest rates applied in financial markets. Two renegotiation processes involving a total of around \$157 million have been conducted.

(c) Dealing with financial risks

This strategy is designed to reduce the impact of fluctuations in interest rates by ensuring that the parameters of the debt in terms of interest rates and exchange rates match those of a benchmark debt. In this context, the following procedures have been followed:

- Debts amounting to \$1.3 billion in Japanese yen and United States dollars have been converted into euros;
- A master derivatives agreement was signed with the World Bank to allow for currency and interest rate swaps on some World Bank loans;
- A \$65 million World Bank loan was converted into euros and a fixed interest rate was applied;
- Fixed interest rates were applied to three World Bank loans worth a total of \$243 million.

Most debt reduction activities have yielded positive financial and economic results:

1. In financial terms:

- A large currency reserve has been accumulated, since converted debt is purchased in local currency;
- The public debt has shrunk by over \$1 billion.

2. In economic terms:

- Debt-to-investment conversions have paved the way for the implementation of educational, health and agricultural development projects. Spending on such projects has exceeded \$4 billion and over 1,200 jobs have been created.

As a result of this debt management strategy and a concerted effort to apply a cautious borrowing policy, Morocco has managed to score important successes:

- By the end of 2005, total public foreign debt had been reduced to \$12.4 billion, compared with a figure of \$22.6 billion at the end of 1995;
- The Government's foreign debt declined from \$15.7 billion to \$7.4 billion over the same period;
- The debt-to-GDP ratio fell by 43 percentage points, levelling off at 25 per cent, and the ratio of debt to the balance of payments dropped by 5 points, levelling off at 54 per cent compared to 59 per cent in 2004.

3. Presentation of information on whether the mandate of the Human Rights Advisory Council also covers economic, social and cultural rights

The Human Rights Advisory Council was restructured pursuant to a royal decree that was issued on 10 April 2001 in the light of the Paris Principles on national human rights institutions. The third reason given for the restructuring exercise was that it was consistent with “continuing to promote human rights, safeguard freedoms, strengthen a State based on the rule of law and enhance the dignity of citizens in the context of a comprehensive approach to human rights as a powerful force conducive to integrated development embracing the whole range of political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights”.

The Council, as an advisory body to His Majesty the King and by virtue of its membership structure and terms of reference, concerns itself with human rights in the broad sense of the term, i.e. any matters likely to further and defend Morocco's human rights achievements and to promote a human rights culture. The Council operates in its capacity as “a specialized institution responsible for assisting His Majesty the King in all areas relating to the defence, protection, exercise and promotion of human rights and in safeguarding the dignity and freedoms of citizens, associations and institutions” (Decree, art. 1).

In the light of the priorities set by the Council in its programme of work for the post-restructuring phase, five working groups made up of different members of the Council were set up to carry out the following tasks:

- Promotion of a human rights culture;
- Protection of human rights and action to address violations;
- Human rights and the (political, economic and cultural) development of society;
- Studies of legislation and public policy;
- External relations.

The Council held brainstorming sessions on the subject of economic, social and cultural rights in order to draw up scenarios and recommendations for its work under a plan of action. The Justice and Reconciliation Commission, which was established on the basis of a Council proposal, made its recommendations to address the legacy of the past and turn a new page. It developed a plan aimed at redressing the material and moral damage suffered by individuals and groups, particularly groups and regions that failed to benefit in the past from economic, social and political projects. It recommended a set of initiatives to preserve the collective memory by naming places, streets and institutions in the regions concerned after victims; by celebrating days that have symbolic importance for local and regional groups; and by converting some security centres into centres for cultural dissemination and social work. It also proposed initiatives and projects to boost the economy and promote development in the regions concerned.

II. GENERAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK

4. The status of the Covenant in the domestic legal order; information on cases that have been brought before domestic courts involving violations of rights enshrined in the Covenant

The preamble to the Moroccan Constitution makes a commitment to internationally recognized human rights. After gaining independence, Morocco joined the United Nations and signed and ratified the principal human rights instruments. It diligently submits periodic reports on these instruments, harmonizes its domestic legislation with their provisions, works to withdraw the reservations it has made to them, and abides by the principle of the primacy of international treaties over domestic law in the event of a conflict between the two. This is confirmed by a body of jurisprudence; judgements take account of the principles embodied in international treaties, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as soon as the instruments are signed, ratified and published in the Official Gazette. Morocco is in the process of harmonizing all its domestic legislation with international treaties. The Moroccan Government has given priority to the task of adapting its domestic legislation as a contribution to the modernization of Morocco's legal framework. Under its new mandate, one of the prerogatives of the Human Rights Advisory Council is to examine the alignment of domestic legal texts with international human rights conventions. In response to questions 11 and 17, information will be provided about cases brought before the courts involving violations of principles enshrined in the Covenant, in addition to a number of judgements.

III. ISSUES RELATING TO THE GENERAL PROVISIONS OF THE COVENANT (arts. 1-5)

Article 2 (2) - Non-discrimination

5. Presentation of information on the concrete steps taken by the State to implement the provisions of the Covenant relating to non-discrimination, particularly with regard to the population of the Saharan provinces

As stated in article 5 of the Constitution, all Moroccans have equal rights and duties and are equal before the law without any distinction of any sort, whether based on sex, language, religion, ethnic origin, political affiliation or cultural or regional origin. The ethnic composition

of the population, which is made up of Arabs and Amazighs, has always been viewed as a source of diversity and vibrancy conducive to national unity. Muslims, Christians and Jews have been living side by side for centuries, and mosques, churches and synagogues coexist in peace and harmony. Women and men enjoy the same rights and have the same responsibilities. For years, Morocco has been working to give women the status that they deserve as half of society and active partners in development.

The differences in terms of customs, traditions and heritage between the northern, southern, central, Atlas and Saharan regions and between Arabs, Amazighs, Jews and Christians have never been a divisive factor but rather enhance national unity. This is a general rule that applies to everyone and benefits everyone, including Moroccans in the Saharan provinces. Persons from these provinces enjoy equality in terms of legal treatment, legal transactions, the channelling of investments and the creation of employment opportunities in accordance with the principle of equal living conditions, equal investment of resources and equal sharing of wealth. The new provisions of the Criminal Code strengthen protection against discrimination, which was defined by the legislature in broad terms and in keeping with the international definition to cover “all forms of discrimination among individuals on grounds of national or social origin, colour, sex, family status, health, disability, political opinion, trade union membership, or actual or presumed membership or non-membership of a particular race, nation, ethnic group or religion” (431-1). On the basis of the aforementioned definition, discrimination is punishable with between one month and two years’ imprisonment and a fine of between 1,200 and 50,000 dirhams.

In addition, the Diwan al-Madhalim (the Ombudsman’s Office) and the administrative courts receive complaints from individuals and groups about any violations of this principle. Remedies may be sought by persons who feel that they have been the victim of discrimination at the hands of an individual, a group, an association or any other body.

With reference to the factors described in the answer to question 1 above, and in addition to the efforts and initiatives aimed at ensuring that the population of the southern Moroccan provinces enjoy all social, economic and cultural rights and can live in dignity, His Majesty established a Royal Consultative Council on Saharan Affairs during his recent visit to those provinces in March 2006. During his visit to the city of Laayoune on 6 March 2002, His Majesty established an Economic and Social Development Agency for the southern provinces of the Kingdom under the supervision of the Prime Minister to implement the proximity policy and to support the Government and the local authorities in enhancing the economic and human capacities of the region. The Agency is implementing a number of programmes in the region, the most recent being that launched by His Majesty the King during his latest visit to the southern provinces in March 2006.

The Agency’s programme for the period 2004-2008 includes some 226 projects costing around 8 billion dirhams and focusing on six key areas:

1. Inadequate housing. Around 9,824 affordable homes are to be built in Oued El Dahab-Lagouira and in Laayoune-Boujdour-Saquiya El Hamra. Residential areas are to be renovated in Guelmim-El Smara, and 500 affordable homes are to be built in Asa Alzak, Awsard and Tan-Tan;

2. Fishing villages and traditional and sea fishing;
3. Water and the environment. This project is intended to provide the population with drinking water by building channels, digging wells and desalinating seawater;
4. Road building and port construction; extension of the electricity network;
5. Local tourism and traditional regional crafts;
6. Other services, such as building a vocational secondary school in Laayoune and an indoor hall with a club for professionals in El Semara.

The cost of the 2006-2007 phase of the programme is 3.06 billion dirhams, 1.26 billion of which - some 40 per cent - will be met by the Agency.

The results of these initiatives can be grouped under the following headings.

1. Infrastructure

The regions have been provided with the following facilities and services:

- (a) Two main airfields;
- (b) Three main ports;
- (c) A 5,883-kilometre national road network, of which 2,203 kilometres are paved roads;
- (d) Drinking water supply covering 90 per cent of the region;
- (e) Electricity supply covering 80 per cent of the region.

2. Socio-educational and cultural facilities

The regions have been provided with the following facilities and services:

- (a) School enrolment of children has reached 82 per cent; there are 78 educational institutions, in addition to a teacher training centre and a number of vocational training centres;
- (b) The regions currently have 4 cultural centres, 3 sports complexes, 13 youth centres and 15 women's associations.

3. Health facilities

The region has been provided with 8 hospitals, 21 health-care centres and 15 clinics. There is 1 physician per 2,253 inhabitants.

4. Housing

The construction sector in the Saharan provinces of Morocco has recorded strong and accelerating growth. New towns have sprung up in less than 30 years and the quality of housing has improved. The Government is continuing its efforts by implementing programmes to address inadequate housing, to build cheap accommodation and to renovate districts and towns.

5. Services

The Government continues to provide services to the population in the regions and is working to expand and diversify them by carrying out studies, and by taking all necessary steps to remedy desertification, sand drift, locust infestations and the scarcity of water sources. It provides loans to support small-scale and medium-scale projects; gives material and moral support to civil society institutions; boosts energy and consumer resources; helps to provide employment opportunities for the people of the region and to appoint them to positions of responsibility. It supports the regional press through independent media outlets, the broadcasting media through the Dakhla and Laayoune radio channels, and the visual media through the regional Laayoune television channel, which is managed by young graduates from the region.

Article 3 - Equal rights for men and women

6. Presentation of updated information on progress in the reform of the Personal Status Code proposed by the Royal Commission (report, paras. 69 ff.)

The Royal Commission set up to revise the Personal Status Code produced a draft, which it submitted to Parliament at its October 2003 session. The Code was adopted by consensus and promulgated on 5 February 2004.

As was mentioned in the third report on Morocco's implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, a number of amendments have been made to the Family Code in order to improve the situation of women, support equal rights for spouses, safeguard the rights of the child and strengthen the family unit. The most important changes to the Family Code were set out in paragraph 71 of the aforementioned report.

Legislative reform has been accompanied by a series of measures aimed at ensuring the effective implementation of the new Code, including, in particular, creation of appropriate institutions and proceedings and basic structures, provision of the necessary material and human resources, training of judges, officials and other people involved in implementing the Code, and organization of campaigns to raise awareness of the provisions of the Code and to disseminate them as widely as possible.

1. With regard to institutions and proceedings, when the Family Code came into force, family law divisions were established in the Kingdom's 66 courts of first instance. These divisions have jurisdiction to hear all cases relating to family law. Implementing regulations for the Code have also been issued, as well as the necessary documents, records, publications and guidelines for implementation.

In parallel with these measures, amendments have been made to the Code of Civil Procedure in order to bring it in line with the new provisions of the Family Code. The amendments include provision for oral proceedings in cases relating to maintenance and divorce with a view to simplifying procedures and to avoid the complexities and delays involved in written proceedings. The length of time it takes to obtain a judgement has been reduced, and judgements rendered in such cases have been given binding legal force.

In addition, the requisite measures have been taken to boost the role and effectiveness of the Department of Public Prosecutions, in view of the status assigned to it under article 3 of the Family Code as a key party in cases to which the Code applies.

2. With regard to basic structures and facilities, the plan of action drawn up in connection with the entry into force of the Family Code focused on accommodating the family law divisions. A total of 66 premises were equipped to allow the divisions to carry out their judicial and social function in the best possible conditions.

The divisions were provided with the necessary human resources, including qualified and experienced judges and registry staff. This measure was extended to the 180 resident judge centres, in which family judges with responsibility for marriage were appointed. It was also extended to consular offices in countries such as France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Germany and Spain in order to cater for the needs of Moroccans living abroad.

3. A practical guide to the Family Code has been compiled. It includes detailed explanations in order to ensure uniformity of interpretation, to explain the thinking behind the provisions of the Family Code and to clarify anything that might seem vague. Particular attention has been given to training. A number of symposiums and day courses have been organized for people such as judges and registry staff of family law divisions who are directly involved in applying the Code. One of the most prominent of these events was the study session held in the city of Ifrane, which was attended by judges responsible for family law divisions. In the course of the meeting, they brought up a number of issues raised by the application of the Code and discussed solutions.

Concurrently with the entry into force of the Code, judicial training in Morocco was reformed. The National Institute for Judicial Studies was converted into a Higher Judicial Institute whose legal and financial status allows it to broaden the scope of the training it provides. In addition to providing initial professional training for judges, it now offers in-service training courses. There are corresponding courses for registry staff, legal assistants and members of other legal professions. It is expected that with the reorganization of the legal framework for judicial training, the opportunity will be taken to design study courses for the training of specialized judges, who would then help improve the application of the Family Code.

4. The entry into force of the Code was also accompanied by campaigns to familiarize citizens with its provisions and to inform professional staff of the changes, through radio and television programmes, and symposiums, and study sessions for judges, registry staff and members of the legal professions involved in applying the Family Code such as lawyers, clerks, legal assistants and interpreters.

To raise awareness of the Code, copies of the text have been printed on a large scale. An official French translation has been published as a practical guide. A family law journal has been published with a view to disseminating information relating to the Code and relevant jurisprudence.

7. Presentation of additional information on specific measures taken to guarantee women's rights, in particular measures to promote women's effective participation in decision-making affecting the sustainable development of the country

On a legal and institutional level, there is nothing to prevent women from participating in the taking of decisions of key importance for the economic, social and political situation in Morocco. It is recognized at the highest levels of the Moroccan legal system that all citizens, men and women alike, have equal access to all positions, including those that require their incumbents to make important and far-reaching decisions. Article 8 of the Moroccan Constitution states that men and women enjoy equal political rights and that every adult citizen who enjoys full civil and political rights, whether male or female, has the right to vote. Article 12 states that all citizens are entitled to have access to public service and public office, under the same conditions of eligibility.

The laws and regulations that derive from these constitutional principles stipulate that men and women are equally entitled to administer public affairs, to hold office, including electoral office, and to join the various liberal professions.

It follows from these instruments that women have access to positions of responsibility in the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government. There is now a woman adviser to His Majesty the King. Women have also been included in a number of cabinets. For instance, there are two women in the present Cabinet, one holding the office of Minister Delegate and the other the office of Secretary of State.

In addition, women hold leadership posts in the administration both at home and abroad, as ambassador, vice-chancellor of a university, manager or head of a ministerial department. Women are increasingly assuming positions of responsibility in the context of the royal project aimed at strengthening the foundations of democratic society and at modernizing institutions. The procedures for appointments to positions of responsibility now require the inclusion of a woman's name in the list of candidates.

Women have been represented in the judiciary since the 1960s. The first woman judge in Morocco was appointed in 1961. Since then the number of women judges has increased dramatically: women now account for around 20 per cent of all Moroccan judges, or 592 out of a total of 3,153 members of the profession. Women have acceded to the highest ranks of the judiciary, presiding over a division of Court of Cassation and over a number of courts.

With regard to electoral rights, the policy of broadening the participation of women in elected bodies led to the adoption of a number of electoral procedures with that end in view.

Ten per cent of seats in the Chamber of Deputies have been reserved for women, so that there are now 35 women parliamentarians. Women have also gained the confidence of voters at the local level, and have been elected to many local government institutions.

There can be no doubt that the participation of women is increasing significantly. Moroccan society expressed its strong aspiration to support that process when Parliament adopted the Political Parties Act, which was recently promulgated. Article 22 of the Act stipulates that the statutes of all political parties must specify the ratio of women and young people who must participate in the party's governing bodies.

8. Presentation of updated information on the present status of women, particularly with regard to inheritance rights, divorce and polygamy

(a) Inheritance rights

Women's inheritance rights as defined in the Family Code depend on the circumstances of each case and cannot be subsumed under a general rule. In some cases, women's share can be equal to or greater than that of men. In other cases, it can amount to half or less than half of men's share.

It would therefore be incorrect to believe that the principle according to which "the male's share is equivalent to that of two females" is the general rule. That is true in only some cases; other cases are subject to different rules, and men's and women's shares are often equal.

One example is that of the father and mother, whose shares are equal where the deceased has left children or grandchildren: each of the two inherits one sixth, without distinction between the man and the woman.

The share of men and women is also equal in the case of the mother's brother and sister. Each inherits one sixth, subject to certain conditions. Where the mother has several brothers and sisters, they share among themselves one third of the inheritance, regardless of sex.

A woman's share can also be twice that of a man. If a woman's mother dies while her father is still alive, he inherits one quarter as spouse of the deceased, while the daughter inherits one half. There are many possible situations, and women can inherit the same amount as men, more than men or less than them.

In cases where the principle according to which a man's share is twice that of a woman is applied, the rule is justified by the distribution of roles between men and women in the context of a tightly knit system in which men take on the responsibility of acting as breadwinners, while the duty of supporting a woman who has no source of income is passed from her father to her husband. All of this is taken into account in a case-specific approach to inheritance.

Attention should be drawn to some new provisions in the Family Code. In the case of the death of a grandfather, grandsons and granddaughters on the daughter's side now stand to inherit the same amount as those on the son's side. This right was granted as part of the mandatory testamentary provisions contained in article 369 of the Code.

(b) Divorce

New provisions in the Family Code have improved the situation of women in terms of the right to divorce. The dissolution of a marriage contract has become a right under the Code for both husband and wife and is exercised under court supervision. The new provisions give the courts wide-ranging powers to seek conciliation and mediation between the spouses, to verify that there is a sound basis for the request to put an end to married life, to assess the arbitrariness of the exercise of the right to divorce, and to respond to such arbitrariness by awarding compensation to the divorced woman or reparations for damages incurred, in accordance with general principles.

It should be noted that the philosophy underling the Code, particularly as regards divorce, is based first and foremost on the aspiration to prevent the breakdown of marital relations, to preserve the family unit and to attend to the best interests of the children. The Code seeks to strike a balance between the rights of the husband and those of the wife and makes all forms of divorce subject to judicial scrutiny. The spouses can divorce by mutual consent. Alternatively, men have the right to request a divorce, and women have a right to petition for *khol'* (divorce with compensation to the husband) or to exercise their option to divorce (*tamlik*) which, once the husband gives his consent, cannot be revoked. The Code further grants women the right to seek a divorce for damages incurred or because the husband has failed to fulfil one or more conditions of the marriage contract. It has broadened both the definition of damages in support of a request for divorce and the means by which such damages can be proved. Where women cannot provide evidence, it allows them to initiate divorce proceedings on grounds of discord (*shiqaq*). In addition, the Code grants women the right to file for a divorce on other grounds such as a husband's defects, failure to provide adequate support, absence or desertion.

Although it is difficult to draw any meaningful conclusions regarding the implementation of the new Code after just two years' experience, the first statistics recorded in the family law divisions point to changes in spouses' behaviour. Divorces by *khol'* decreased by around 6.34 per cent in the period 2004-2005, while divorce by mutual consent increased by over 166 per cent. There were also more cases of divorce on grounds of discord, which is the new procedure designed to remedy shortcomings in traditional divorce procedures, in terms of both evidence and material consequences. As divorce by mutual consent and divorce on grounds of discord are ways in which women can exercise their right to divorce, the statistics given above indicate that there has been a marked improvement in the situation of women. However, this should not lead us to disregard a more important development, and one that is consistent with the Code's aspiration to protect the family, namely the decrease in the overall number of divorces compared with the years preceding the entry into force of the Code.

The most important principles governing divorce proceedings may be summarized as follows:

- An attempt must be made at reconciliation during divorce proceedings, with the exception of divorces imposed by a court on the grounds of a husband's absence (art. 113). The court can designate two mediators or a family council for the purpose;

- Formal note of the authorization to divorce is taken by the legal assistants to the family law court (previously, this function was performed by the authentication judge);
- The deadline for a settlement in the case of divorces imposed by the court (*tatliq*) is fixed at six months in the absence of special circumstances (art. 113);
- Divorce judgements are not subject to appeal (art. 128, para. 1);
- The court has the authority to take appropriate measures on behalf of the wife and children while the dispute between husband and wife is being examined (art. 121);
- The Code specifies the court that has jurisdiction to hear a divorce case on the basis of four criteria (art. 79);
- The Code specifies measures to ensure performance by the divorced husband of his obligations to the divorced woman and her children (art. 83); a sum is deposited in advance with the court;
- The court determines the entitlements of the wife and children as soon as it receives a copy of the divorce papers as well as the entitlements when a divorce judgement (*tatliq*) is rendered (arts. 85, 87 and 88);
- The woman has the right to exercise an option to divorce (*tamlik*), where this right has previously been agreed with the husband (art. 89);
- There are new grounds on which a divorce may be granted, such as discord, mutual consent or failure to comply with a condition in the marriage contract, in addition to the grounds set out in the previous Code (arts. 94-97, 99 and 114);
- Provision is made for clear-cut solutions to disputed regarding *khol'* (art. 120);
- Clear criteria are set out on whether judgements rendered abroad regarding divorce at the request of the husband, judicial divorce (*tatliq*), divorce by *khol'* or divorce by annulment may be executed (art. 128, para. 2).

(c) Polygamy

It should be noted first and foremost that the development of Moroccan society has been largely responsible for the decline in the phenomenon of polygamy, a development that is reflected in the Family Code. The practice of polygamy has been subjected to judicial scrutiny and is permitted only where objective and exceptional circumstances are deemed to warrant it and where the man who intends to take more than one wife has the capacity to treat both wives fairly and equally. These two conditions clearly make it difficult to secure the right to polygamy.

The procedure followed by the courts in deciding whether to allow polygamy is based on a determination of whether there are objective and exceptional circumstances that warrant polygamy and on whether the husband has sufficient resources to support two families in such a way that they enjoy all rights to housing and welfare on an equal footing. Even where the two conditions are met, permission for polygamy is granted only when the first wife has been informed; if she objects, the court automatically initiates proceedings for divorce on grounds of discord.

These new provisions led to a decline of around 7 per cent in polygamous marriages in the period 2004-2005. In 2004, 904 cases of polygamy were registered; in the following year, the figure dropped to 841.

IV. ISSUES RELATING TO SPECIFIC RIGHTS RECOGNIZED IN THE COVENANT (arts. 6-15)

Article 6 - The right to work

9. Presentation of disaggregated statistics on the unemployment situation in the country following the adoption of the new Labour Code; presentation of information on results of the measures described in the report (ibid., paras. 90 ff.)

The new Labour Code entered into force in October 2003. Its enactment was a significant achievement for the working class, because of the provisions it contains and the rights it promotes. In the light of the country's socio-economic circumstances, unemployment is still a major burden, although it declined in 2004 and fell sharply in the last quarter of 2004, compared with the same period of 2003, dropping from 12.3 to 10.4 per cent of economically active persons over 15 years of age, which represents a decline of 1.9 per cent nationally. There was a corresponding fall in urban and rural unemployment during the same period; urban unemployment dropped from 20.4 to 18 per cent, while rural unemployment fell from 4.1 to 2.5 per cent. The decline in unemployment affected almost all economically active groups. In the course of 2005, the unemployment rate again recorded a relative increase to around 11 per cent, affecting the economically active rural population as well as urban women and men aged between 35 and 44. During the same year, there was an overall improvement in urban employment, especially in the services sector, where the employment rate rose by 2 per cent. The construction and public works sector recorded the highest rate of increase in employment, with 38,000 new jobs, compared with 13,000 new jobs in agriculture, forestry and fishing, and a loss of 26,000 jobs in the industrial sector.

The number of economically active persons over 15 years of age reached 11,140,000 in 2005, an increase of 1.1 per cent compared to 2004.

In September 2005, a national debate was held on employment, bringing together all stakeholders. The event led, inter alia, to the adoption of recommendations and initiatives aimed at reducing unemployment and creating opportunities for young people to set up small businesses.

In 2005, the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills registered over 69,316 job-seekers. In the course of the year, it integrated over 24,000 job-seekers into the workforce, an increase of 20 per cent compared with 2004. Over 1,200 workers were integrated into the workforce through employment contracts abroad, an increase of 50 per cent compared with 2004. This trend was attributable to an increase in travel by persons seeking employment and to the availability of the requisite facilities.

The State, represented by the Ministry of Employment and the Ministry of Finance, concluded a progress contract with the Agency in the context of an employment initiatives event. The purpose of the contract is to define the commitments of both parties to the modernization and reinvigoration of the Agency's activities so that it can play a pivotal role in stimulating employment with a view to attaining the Government's target of integrating 200,000 job-seekers into the workforce by 2008.

Article 7 - The right to just and favourable conditions of work

10. Indication of specific measures to effectively implement Covenant provisions on equal pay for work of equal value, as enshrined in the Constitution

The Labour Code prohibits all forms of wage discrimination that violate the principle of equality of opportunity. It also prohibits wage discrimination between men and women for work of equal value, in keeping with International Labour Organization (ILO) Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), which Morocco ratified in 1979, and with the Constitution. Article 9 of the Code states: "It is prohibited to discriminate among wage-earners on grounds of descent, colour, sex, disability, marital status, creed, political opinion, trade union membership, or national or social origin in a manner that violates or undermines, the principle of equality of opportunity or treatment with respect to employment or recruitment, particularly of employees, the management and assignment of work, vocational training, remuneration, promotion, the right to social benefits, disciplinary measures and dismissal."

Article 12 of the Code imposes a fine of between 15,000 and 30,000 dirhams for breaches of the principle of non-discrimination between men and women as set forth in article 9 and doubles the penalty in the event of recidivism.

Article 346 of the Code states that: "Wage discrimination between men and women for work of equal value is prohibited." Article 361 imposes a fine of between 25,000 and 30,000 dirhams for wage discrimination between men and women, and doubles the penalty in the event of recidivism.

Labour inspectors who visit industrial, commercial, service and agricultural facilities verify compliance with legislative provisions guaranteeing effective wage equality.

11. Indication of the number of cases involving violence or sexual harassment in the workplace that have been brought before the courts since the adoption of the new Labour Code, which makes such practices criminal offences

The figures for cases of sexual violence, harassment or aggression in the workplace brought before the courts in 2004 and 2005 following the entry into force of the Labour Code are as follows:

Crime	Year	
	2004	2005
Rape	38	28
Rape of a virgin	17	15
Violence resulting in a period of sick leave of less than 20 days	52	77
Violence resulting in a period of sick leave of over 20 days	6	12
Total	113	132

Article 8 - Trade union rights

12. Presentation of updated information regarding progress towards accession by Morocco to ILO Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)

Trade unions play a fundamental role in the development of the national economy. They make a constructive contribution to social relations in the context of collective bargaining and the world of work, helping to strengthen the negotiating skills of the social partners in concluding collective employment agreements. They thus further the principle of citizens' active participation in collective bargaining with a view to improving working conditions and the workplace environment. They do so in accordance with the labour rights and freedoms recognized in the Constitution, internationally recognized human rights principles, and ILO conventions, particularly those relating to trade union activities. Morocco has ratified the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98) but it has not yet ratified the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87). However, the principles enshrined in this Convention were taken into account during the drafting of the Labour Code (arts. 396 and ff.), an exercise in which all economic and social actors participated. Morocco sought through this Code to establish sound economic and social conditions that would help it to meet development challenges and to create a climate conducive to good labour relations. The preamble to the Code states: "Trade union freedom is a fundamental labour right that workers and employees exercise, according to recognized methods, in order to defend their material and moral rights and to advance their economic, social and professional interests." The Code protects trade union representatives and creates appropriate conditions in which they can play their representational role in collective bargaining and contribute to the socio-economic development process and to building sound employment relations that serve the interests of workers and employers alike.

It should be noted that the Labour Code includes a number of provisions from the above-mentioned labour Convention, including the following:

- Trade unions are prohibited from interfering with one another's affairs, and employers are prohibited from interfering with the formation, running or management of trade unions;
- Workers are free to join and leave trade unions;
- Trade unions are free to affiliate with one another;
- Trade unions have the right to own profit-making or non-profit-making movable or immovable assets;
- Trade unions have the right to establish mutual benefit associations;
- A trade union is deemed to exist as soon as its statute is sent by registered mail with acknowledgement of receipt to the offices of the local authorities;
- The State is required to provide assistance to unions under the supervision of a commission presided over by a judge;
- A trade union may be dissolved only by a judicial authority;
- The Code establishes criteria for determining the most representative trade unions for the purpose of collective bargaining and at the national level.

Morocco now enjoys a significant degree of trade union pluralism, with a total of 21 trade unions.

Article 9 of the Labour Code states that "Trade union freedoms and rights shall not be infringed during collective bargaining." It imposes a fine of between 25,000 and 30,000 dirhams for violations of that principle, and doubles the penalty in the event of recidivism.

In the same context, Morocco continually seeks to engage in dialogue and consultations with the trade unions, a process that has led to the adoption of three basic agreements: the 1 August 1996 Declaration, the 19 Moharram 1421 (24 December 2000) Agreement, and the 30 April 2003 Agreement.

In general, the provisions of ILO Convention No. 87 raise no particular issues for the private sector. In the public sector, some government departments have reservations because a number of provisions of the Convention clash with the basic regulations governing some groups of public employees. These reservations have thus far prevented Morocco from ratifying the Convention.

13. Description of progress made in amending article 288 of the Criminal Code (ibid., paras. 169-170)

No amendments have yet been made to article 288 of the Criminal Code. However, the article in no way affects or clashes with the principle of the right to strike, and it does not undermine the right to collective bargaining. On the other hand; it guarantees the right of third parties to protect their capital and labour, and criminalizes violence, threats and abuse. It therefore promotes dialogue and negotiation, and is intended to preserve a stable environment for work and production while safeguarding the principle of peaceful defence of rights in the interest of both parties. The Ministry of Justice has taken steps to review the entire Moroccan Criminal Code and amend any article that is difficult to apply or needs to be brought into line with the international human rights instruments to which Morocco is a party.

14. Indication of the present status of the bill on the right to strike, which has been submitted, according to paragraph 171 of the report, to the social partners and ILO for an opinion

Article 14 of the various constitutions that have been in force in the Kingdom, from the Constitution of 1962 to that of 1996, has guaranteed the right to strike, and an implementing law establishing how that right can be exercised will be enacted.

Since the promulgation of the first Constitution, the Government has attempted to codify the right to strike. However, the central trade union boards have turned down all proposals made to date. The latest attempt was a 1994 implementing bill encompassing the public and private sectors. At the request of the social partners, the public sector was separated from the private sector and a number of amendments introduced. Numerous meetings were then held with representatives of the social partners in order to study and discuss the matter in greater depth. The most recent meeting was held on 18 January 2005, and the bill was drafted in consultation with ILO.

The purpose of the implementing bill on the right to strike is to define and clarify the conditions, procedures and guarantees for the exercise of this right in accordance with article 14.

The implementing bill is deemed to be the most suitable framework for the organization of employer-employee relations, in combination with the legislative provisions of the Labour Code, particularly those concerning institutions representing employees, consultative bodies and the settlement of collective disputes.

As a result of the vacuum created by the failure to enact the implementing bill on strike action, industrial relations are fragile and this has led to disputes and other incidents, and occasionally to social tensions in some workplaces, with negative consequences for the national economy and for labour relations.

In order to rectify the situation and to fill in the gaps created by the lack of implementing legislation, the bill seeks to create as much balance as possible in labour relations by defining how and under what conditions the right to strike may be exercised.

To achieve that goal, the bill contains a clear definition of strike action and defines the basic principles governing such action with a view to ensuring that the rights of strikers and non-strikers are respected and that the corporation and its property are protected. It defines the obligations of the parties and specifies the steps that can be taken if those obligations are not met as well as the penalties for violations of its provisions.

However, the central trade union bodies have recently stated that they are unwilling to continue discussing the bill on the ground that it would limit the right to strike. Efforts are still being made to reach agreement on a text that will satisfy the demands of all parties.

The right to strike is in any case guaranteed and is exercised in practice in both the public and private sectors in accordance with the Constitution, which is the basis invoked by all parties. In 2004, 140 strikes involving 14,021 employees took place and 670 strikes, potentially involving 67,097 employees, were averted through dialogue. In 2005, 154 strikes involving 23,357 employees took place and 832 strikes, potentially involving 81,901 employees, were averted through dialogue.

Article 9 - The right to social security

15. Presentation of information on government mechanisms to monitor private social security schemes

The implementation of social security legislation is monitored through two principal mechanisms: the labour inspectorate and the social security inspectorate. They discharge their functions in accordance with article 146 of the Decree concerning Social Security Act No. 184-72-1 of 27 July 1972, as amended. Thus, social security schemes are monitored by social security representatives, inspectors and monitors, and by labour inspectors. Monitors can verify the number of users and check social security declarations and employment records. The legislation provides them with several legal mechanisms to ensure the effective implementation of the Social Security Act, in particular writing reports, issuing warnings and making seizures.

The inspection and monitoring of the National Social Security Fund is carried out by officials who monitor, together with agents of the Fund, the conformity of the social security statements submitted by employers with the wages paid, and ensure that companies and employees are registered and that salaries are declared. Fines and penalties for employers who do not comply with social security law have been increased to enhance their deterrent effect. Over the last few years, the Fund has taken a number of measures to improve the quality of services provided to members and to ensure that inspection and monitoring activities are carried out professionally. These measures include:

- Establishing a planning system that ensures greater transparency and clarity and protects companies from infringements of any kind;
- Creating a procedure for handling appeals against the findings of inspection and monitoring procedures.

With the same end in view, the Fund has sought to modernize and develop the system by providing for direct collection of revenues. These measures have led to a marked improvement and collection is now carried out promptly and accurately.

Alongside these procedures, a system for recruitment and training of the staff responsible for inspection and monitoring has been established. Information technology has been introduced and cross-monitoring helps to prevent any irregularities or misinterpretations.

The figures for 2004 and 2005 were as follows:

(a) Monitoring

Indicator	2004	2005	Increase (%)
Assignments completed	33 762	45 380	34.41
Number of employees whose situation was regularized	272 096	284 191	4.45
Number of employees registered	100 424	114 977	14.49
Total value of wages regularized (in millions of dirhams)	1 264.2	1 816.1	43.65
Membership fees collected (in millions of dirhams)	2 295	2 365	23.70

(b) Inspection

Indicator	2004	2005	Increase (%)
Assignments completed	2 464	2 318	14.89
Number of employees whose situation was regularized	14 065	25 279	79.73
Number of employees registered	2 225	1 595	28.31
Total value of wages regularized (in millions of dirhams)	1 326.4	1 659.6	22.25
Membership fees collected (in millions of dirhams)	313.1	296.5	5.29

16. Presentation of information on the coverage of benefits for job loss as a result of economic factors in the State party; presentation of statistics on recipients of unemployment benefits, disaggregated by sector of activity

This subject is addressed in articles 66 to 71 of the Labour Code, which state that any employer in an industrial, commercial or agricultural enterprise or a traditional industrial enterprise employing 10 or more persons who, for structural or economic reasons, decides to dismiss all or some of the company's staff, must inform staff delegates and trade union

representatives not less than one month before the date on which the dismissal procedure is due to begin. At the same time, the employer must provide the representatives with full background information, including the reasons for the dismissals and the number and categories of staff who will be affected. The employer must consult and negotiate with them on ways and means of avoiding job losses or mitigating their impact, including through possible reassignment to other posts. Dismissals must be approved by the authorities and such approval must be given within two months of the date on which the employer submits an application to the regional representative for employment. The application must be accompanied, in the event of dismissals for economic reasons, by the following documentation:

- A report outlining the economic reasons for the dismissal procedure;
- A statement on the enterprise's economic and financial position;
- A report prepared by an accountant or auditor.

No enterprise may be closed down, wholly or in part, if employees would lose their jobs as a result, unless the circumstances make it impossible for the enterprise to continue operating. Permission must be given by the head of the prefecture or province, in accordance with the procedure laid down in articles 66 and 67 of the Labour Code. In the event of dismissals for which the employer has been given permission, employees are entitled to compensation for the period of notice and the dismissal itself, as provided for in articles 51 and 52 of the same Code. In the event of unauthorized dismissals, employees are compensated for such damages as are determined in a court judgement unless they are reinstated with all their original rights. Such employees are given priority with respect to reinstatement in accordance with the conditions laid down in article 508 of the Code. Moroccan courts have rendered judgements in numerous cases falling into this category.

Article 10 - Protection of the family, mothers and children

17. List of court cases in which acts involving the sale or prostitution of children or child pornography were prosecuted

The figures for cases relating to the sale, prostitution or sexual exploitation of children brought before the courts in the years 2004 and 2005 were as follows:

Crime	Year	
	2004	2005
Rape	153	186
Indecent assault on a minor accompanied by violence	729	812
Indecent assault on a minor without violence	215	253
Facilitating the prostitution of minors	49	126
Total	1 146	1 377

18. Indication of whether measures have been taken to address the concern raised in the Committee's previous concluding observations concerning discrimination against children born out of wedlock (E/C.12/1/Add.55, paras. 23 and 47)

In recent years, Morocco has worked hard to bring its national legislation into conformity with the international treaties that it has ratified, especially those relating to the rights of the child. Recent legislative reforms have focused on promoting the best interests of the child and on affording legal protection to children as a vulnerable group.

Under the Family Code, a child's legal status vis-à-vis the mother is the same whether or not he or she was born in a legally sanctioned relationship. Similarly, a man can establish his paternity without having to prove the existence of a marital relationship. If there is proof that he is the biological father, paternity is established regardless of his marital status.

Morocco has developed a legal framework regulating the care that must be afforded to children born out of wedlock.

Under the Moroccan Nationality Act, children born to unknown parents, or to a Moroccan woman and an unknown father, have the right to obtain Moroccan nationality.

Under the Civil Status Act, children born out of wedlock have the right to be registered in the civil status records with a family name and a father's name derived from those expressing devotion to Almighty God.

The Foster Care (*kafalah*) of Neglected Children Act contains a number of provisions aimed at providing care for such children without discriminating between neglected children whose parents are known and those who were born out of wedlock.

Public bodies provide support for children in care institutions regardless of their circumstances. Civil society associations that care for abandoned children, mothers who cannot establish the paternity of their child and single mothers also receive support that assists them in looking after such categories of children.

19. Presentation of information on progress made in the proposed plan of action mentioned in paragraph 213 of the report, which aims at strengthening the protection of children who work in handicraft production and light industries and of girl children employed as domestic workers

With regard to the first part of this question, concerning the presentation of information on progress made in strengthening the protection of children who work in handicraft production and light industries, Act No. 65.99 concerning the Labour Code contains a number of new provisions on the employment of minors. It offers them additional protection and prohibits the employment of minors under 15 rather than 12 years of age, in implementation of

ILO Convention No. 138. Article 143 of the Labour Code stipulates that: “Minors may not be admitted to employment or work by a company or an employer until they have reached 15 years of age.”

Article 151 of the Code provides for a fine of between 25,000 and 30,000 dirhams for each offence. Recidivism is punishable with a fine of double that amount and a prison sentence of between six days and three months, or with either one of those penalties.

It is also illegal to employ children under 18 years of age in hazardous work, in accordance with the provisions of ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182).

In addition to general provisions regarding health and safety in the workplace, the Labour Code affords special protection to children between 16 and 18 years of age in chapters 4 and 5 of section 2 of book 2 (arts. 172-183).

A number of practical procedures have been introduced to eliminate this phenomenon, in particular:

- Extension of the pilot project on the elimination of child labour in the handicrafts sector to cover the whole of the city of Fez. In view of the importance of this project, similar action is planned in the cities of Marrakesh, Asafi and Meknès. A project is already being implemented in the city of Asafi. Thirty children have benefited and are now pursuing informal studies with a view to their eventual enrolment in formal education;
- Local projects on the elimination of child labour in traditional industries have been implemented in the cities of Marrakesh and Meknès. The plan is to rescue children from employment in this sector and to enrol them in education with the assistance of funding from the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), Morocco.

The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour was officially launched in Morocco in June 2004, initially with funding from France and Belgium. Since 2004 it has been funded by the United States Department of Labour.

IPEC has a number of goals, including the following:

- Improving the working conditions of children as a first stage towards eliminating child labour;
- Eliminating the employment of children in hazardous activities and providing safe alternatives for them and their families;
- Raising awareness among those directly involved and making it easier for them to intervene.

With the assistance of IPEC, Morocco had achieved the following results by December 2005:

Funding from France and Belgium

Children benefiting from the Programme	Males	Females	Total
Children released from employment	2 130	2 127	4 257
Children prevented from joining the workforce	2 297	3 198	5 495
Total	5 325	4 427	9 752

Funding from the United States Department of Labour

Children benefiting from the Programme	Males	Females	Total
Children released from employment	501	673	1 174
Children prevented from joining the workforce	1 302	1 342	2 644
Total	1 803	2 015	3 818

Efforts are continuing to curtail this social phenomenon and to minimize its impact pending its ultimate elimination.

With regard to the second part of the question, it should be noted that the category of domestic workers had previously not been subject to labour legislation but only to the general rules contained in the Obligations and Contracts Act.

Disputes between the domestic worker and the householder were usually settled amicably with the mediation of the labour inspectorate.

Reflecting the legislature's wish to protect this category of worker, article 4 of Act No. 66.99 concerning the Labour Code stipulates that "a special law shall lay down the terms of employment and working conditions for domestic workers who are bound to the householder by an employment relationship".

To that end, the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training drafted a bill specifying the terms of employment and working conditions for workers in this category.

The bill was sent to some ministries for examination and comment. The Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training is currently studying the resulting comments and suggestions as well as comments from associations that concern themselves with domestic workers' rights. It will shortly organize consultative meetings to clarify the ideas set out in the bill so that it can be laid before the parties concerned with a view to ratification.

Article 11 - The right to an adequate standard of living

20. Presentation of information on measures taken to provide alternative housing to households that have been affected by the programme to address the problem of slums and substandard housing

Given the scale of the problem of substandard and improvised housing in Morocco, it was necessary to review the methods used to deal with the problem. A new approach was adopted based on instructions from His Majesty the King, on legislative and regulatory instruments applicable to construction management in our country, particularly at the local level, and on the experience that Morocco has accumulated from dealing with the problem of substandard and improvised housing for several decades.

According to current estimates, slums are the most common category of substandard housing. They house approximately 270,000 families, 38,000 of them in rural areas and 232,000 in urban areas, with a further 20,000 in the southern regions. Approximately 212,000 of these families live in 70 towns and urban centres, 64 per cent of them concentrated in six towns on the Casablanca-Kenitra coast, in addition to Marrakesh and Agadir.

In the period 2003-2005, action was taken to implement all the reforms included in the government programme for the housing and construction sector. The pace of construction of social housing was accelerated during 2005 with the completion of some 113,000 new housing units, consisting of prepared plots of land and prefabricated homes. In addition, renovation projects were completed on behalf of over 31,500 families.

1. New approach

(a) Reference framework

In the address that he delivered on 20 August 2001, His Royal Highness the King called for the development of a legislative and regulatory framework for the national programme on the elimination of substandard housing. He stated that, in order to pay for social housing schemes, new stable and effective sources of funding had to be found (royal address of 11 October 2002).

The housing sector was accorded special attention. His Majesty the King, in a royal address given to mark the occasion of the opening of the seventh session of Parliament in 2002, referred to housing as a national priority on which all efforts must be focused. He said: "We will not be able to safeguard the dignity of citizens unless we provide them with decent housing and speed up the implementation of the national programme on slum clearance and the elimination of shanty towns."

The royal address which His Majesty delivered on the occasion of Throne Day 2003 focused on the problem of substandard housing, warning about the dangers which such housing poses to the cohesiveness of urban society and to local urban planning. He also called for the introduction of strict monitoring and accounting procedures for the management of public property.

This new monitoring scheme was developed on the basis of other source documents such as the Government's statement on the revision of house construction methods and the elimination of substandard housing.

At the international level, this programme was developed in the context of:

- The United Nations Millennium Declaration, which resolves to improve the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020;
- The Cities without Slums programme, which was designed by the Cities Alliance and launched by the United Nations in 1999. International organizations such as the World Bank, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Coopération Française, and the European Union MEDA Programme have all expressed a desire to participate in implementing the Cities without Slums programme, and stated their ambition to replicate the Moroccan experiment in other countries in similar circumstances.

(b) Focuses of the new approach

The new approach has three main focuses:

Stopping the spread of substandard housing by the following means:

- Drafting bill No. 04-04 on housing and construction;
- Simplifying and speeding up authorization procedures;
- Drawing up urban cadastral plans;
- Creating more urban development agencies.

Pursuing preventive policies and promoting social housing:

- Utilizing public real estate (3,400 hectares of public land in the first instance);
- Funding primary networks from the Housing Solidarity Fund;
- Forming partnerships with the private sector through declarations of intent;
- Setting up insurance schemes (FOGARIM and FOGALOGÉ-Public);
- Expanding access to microcredit to cover social housing.

Addressing existing situations:

- Adopting urgent intervention procedures to deal with housing in danger of collapse and with illegal housing; giving priority to urban slum clearance in the framework of the Cities without Slums programme.

The Government's projects fall under a number of headings, in particular:

1. Increasing supply and managing demand

(a) Providing public housing

As mentioned above, the first phase of public housing construction involved 3,400 hectares of State-owned land, which was placed at the disposal of public housing bodies.

Work began on the two new towns of Tamansouret and Tamesna, close to Marrakesh and Rabat, which were founded on the instructions of His Majesty the King; this was the first major project to be launched during the period in question.

Under the first phase of public construction, new areas in the suburbs of some towns have been opened up for construction work and a partnership with the private sector has been developed to give a boost to local housing. Under the second phase of public construction, to be carried out in 2006, three new towns will be built: Takdirat near the city of Agadir, Melloussa near Tangiers, and El Khayatiya near Had Soualem. The public-private partnership policy will also continue to be pursued.

A total of 4,800 hectares of land has been set aside for the new towns, for which planning is currently under way, including State-owned land, public property and forests.

(b) Increasing the financial resources available to the sector

Pursuant to the 2002 Finance Act, the Social Housing Fund was replaced with the Housing Solidarity Fund, which was created to manage revenues from the tax on cement that was instituted by the same Act (and set at 0.05 dirhams per kilogram) and to administer the accounts relating to procedures for social housing projects and programmes for the elimination of substandard housing.

Under the 2004 Finance Act, the tax on cement was reviewed and raised to 0.10 dirhams per kilogram. This led to a significant increase in the Fund's resources, from 400 million dirhams in 2003 to 1 billion dirhams in 2004 and 1.05 billion dirhams in 2005.

A Fund utilization plan extending over several years has been developed to meet financial needs in respect of public social housing programmes, the national Cities without Slums programme, and the new programme aimed at improving the housing situation in the southern provinces.

New agreements were signed during the period 2003-2005 to obtain foreign funding for the programmes of the Al Omrane holding company for land-use planning and the Cities without Slums programme (a loan from the Agence française de développement (AFD) to Al Omrane of 50 million euros; a loan from the European Investment Bank (EIB) to Al Omrane of 70 million euros; a grant of 90 million euros from the European Union's MEDA programme).

2. Creating a security fund

On 26 December 2003, security funds under the supervision of the Prime Minister were set up pursuant to agreements between the State and the Central Security Fund. During 2004, a total of 200 million dirhams was transferred from the Housing Solidarity Fund to the Central Security Fund. This measure concerned the security fund for persons with a low or irregular income (FOGARIM) and the security fund for officials, civil servants, local associations and public-sector employees (FOGALOGÉ).

By the end of 2005, the Central Security Fund had dealt with 2,951 cases and lent a total of 288.4 million dirhams in the case of FOGARIM, and dealt with 54 cases representing a total of 5.8 million dirhams in the case of FOGALOGÉ.

There has also been a significant increase in applications to the Central Security Fund. Since August, when the latest reforms came into force, there have been 500 new applicants every week. It is anticipated that the upward trend in the use of the FOGARIM Security Fund's services will continue when, as is expected, the remaining national banks join the scheme.

The positive trend continued over the last months of 2005, and additional measures were taken by the public authorities to improve the performance of the Fund and to enlist the support of more banks. It was decided to raise the monthly instalments to 1,500 dirhams. The requirement for an authenticated certificate of income issued by the local authorities was replaced with a declaration made on the honour of the person in question. A media campaign was also mounted to acquaint people with the goals and importance of the Fund.

3. The institutional, legal and regulatory framework

(a) Programme for financial and structural reorganization of public housing bodies

This programme aims to achieve the following goals:

- To combine all public housing bodies in one unified land-use planning authority with significant power to intervene in the housing and construction sector in order to monitor compliance with the new government guidelines for the sector;
- To focus the work of the public housing bodies on adjustment programmes aimed at increasing the supply of real estate to meet the housing needs of families and on public-private partnerships to create social housing;
- To exert greater control over the programme for the elimination of shanty towns and to accelerate its implementation;
- With regard to the project for restructuring public housing bodies, it should be noted that the Al Omrane company was established to combine all available land, capital, skills and human and technical resources previously under the remit of the National Agency for the Elimination of Sub-standard Housing, the National Public Works and Construction Company and the Attacharouk company. During this first phase, the

necessary measures were taken to improve the financial situation and capitalization of the institutions concerned. This has greatly enhanced their capacity to intervene and to fulfil their role efficiently. It has restored their credibility, vis-à-vis customers and all those who have dealings with them, increasing their negotiating power in the national and international banking system.

It should be noted that the debt of over 800 million dirhams owed to the National Real Estate and Tourism Bank was settled in full in 2004.

The Supervisory Board of the Al Omrane holding company, chaired by the Prime Minister, was established in 2005.

During the same year:

- The Cabinet adopted a bill converting regional public works and construction companies into limited liability companies;
- Two companies were set up as part of the Al Omrane holding company: Al Omrane al-Janoub for the southern provinces and Al Omrane al-Boughaz for the Tangiers-Tetouan region;
- The Idmaj Sakan company was established in the Greater Casablanca area to contribute to slum clearance. The Al Omran holding company has acquired shares in its capital.

(c) Reform of the construction industry and development of related mechanisms

In view of the importance of the construction and architectural sector as a horizontal sector with responsibility for planning and land registration at the local and regional level, a number of studies were undertaken during the period 2003-2005 and a vigorous effort was made to extend urban cadastral plans to cover a greater proportion of the national territory, and to assess, monitor and implement them.

Most of the agencies began to perform their new roles by preparing a “town plan” and land plans covering their area of responsibility. This expanded their scope for action within a scenario that enjoys the support and active participation of local actors.

(d) Legal and organizational reform

In addition to the aforementioned measures, the Government’s action has been extended to cover legal aspects of the housing and construction sector. Three new implementing decrees concerning joint property and the sale of housing units under construction and a new law on letting with the option of buying have been enacted.

Efforts are also under way to approve and speed up the enactment of a decree concerning the revision of standards of specifications pertaining to social housing, which are used as a basis for assessment in lowering the costs of housing construction.

It should be noted that in 2004 a decree amending the decree ratifying the general earthquake-proof construction guideline was enacted.

Moreover, in 2005 the Ministry developed a new plan to draft a Building Code, in accordance with royal instructions contained in a letter addressed to the National Forum held on 3 October 2005. The letter stated that the Code would be “a modern coherent Code setting out detailed procedures and with clear objectives”. It would serve as the basis for a comprehensive review of the construction industry and would adopt an open approach to investment and globalization, promoting new ideas and overcoming shortcomings in the existing building legislation by harmonizing existing procedures.

In view of the need for legal measures to curb the abuses occurring in the construction and housing sector, to deal firmly with offenders and to ensure the safety of urban and rural housing, the Government adopted bill No. 04-04 containing provisions regulating housing and construction.

(e) Housing reform, restructuring and development

The following action has been taken:

Programme to repair buildings in danger of collapse

According to estimates from the Ministry responsible for housing and construction, almost 90,000 families live in buildings in danger of collapse. These buildings are located in old towns, in illegal housing colonies and in old housing compounds.

The programme to address the issue relies on a local approach, which seeks to identify endangered buildings and conduct meticulous technical surveys. Local mechanisms can then be put in place to ensure continuous monitoring in order to prevent calamities resulting from sudden collapse.

By the end of 2005, action had been taken on behalf of 17,000 families, who received financial benefits totalling 336 million dirhams. Another procedure involved the signing of four agreements in December 2004 under the supervision of His Majesty the King. The agreements form part of the emergency programme for the city of Fez, which provides for the rehousing of 1,167 families and the consolidation of 3,600 homes at a cost of 228.14 million dirhams, of which 190.14 million dirhams is to be financed by the Social Solidarity Fund.

Programme to restructure illegal housing settlements

In 2002 the Ministry estimated the number of families living in illegally built settlements at 540,000, 74.5 per cent in urban or peripheral urban areas and the remaining families in rural areas requiring planning permission.

The programme adopted at the end of 2005 will cover 191 settlements housing an estimated 291,000 families at an estimated total cost of 3.8 billion dirhams, of which 1.8 billion dirhams will be provided by the State.

The programme completed at the end of 2005 had covered 62 settlements and an estimated 63,000 families at an estimated total cost of 1 billion dirhams, of which 550 million dirhams were provided by the State.

Programme for social housing in the southern provinces

In order to improve housing conditions in the southern provinces and to deal with the housing shortage, the Ministry completed work on two projects, entitled Al-Wahda (Unity) and Al-Awda (Return), involving 20,000 housing units and costing roughly 1.2 billion dirhams.

Under a new programme involving a partnership between the Ministry and the Social and Economic Development Agency for the southern provinces, provision has been made for 40,000 housing units (1,000 dwellings, 15,000 plots of land with building materials, and 24,000 units to be restructured) at an estimated cost of 1.4 billion dirhams.

During the first phase of the programme, which was launched in 2005, 5,837 plots of land and 500 new homes will be completed and illegal housing will be converted on behalf of 21,800 families, at a total cost of 495 million dirhams.

The Cities without Slums programme

The national Cities without Slums programme was launched by His Royal Highness in July 2004. It is based, in particular, on instructions contained in His Majesty's speech, the Government's statement of November 2002, and the Millennium Declaration, which resolves to improve the living conditions of the population. The National Human Development Initiative confirmed the importance of this programme, which contributes to eliminating poverty and social exclusion.

The time frame for the programme is 2004-2010. It will benefit some 250,000 families living in about 1,000 slums. An investment of some 19 billion dirhams will be required, of which some 6 billion dirhams will be provided by the Housing Solidarity Fund.

The approach adopted in developing this ambitious programme in consultation with the governors and prefects of the provinces and prefectures and the chairpersons of the relevant associations focused on:

- The city as planning unit;
- A contractual framework based on the sharing of responsibility between the relevant local authorities, associations and residents, on the one hand, and the Ministry responsible for housing, on the other;
- An agreement committing the parties concerned to a time frame consistent with that of the programmes;
- A commitment to action aimed at preventing the spread of slums;
- Increasing the rate of completion of safe housing units.

In addition to this programme, the parties concerned took a number of steps and initiatives, including in particular:

- A Cities without Slums contract;
- Agreements on funding and implementation;
- Oversight and assessment;
- Social care for families;
- Consolidation of the national and international consultative framework.

Article 12 - The right to physical and mental health

21. Presentation of information on the medical assistance scheme for the economically vulnerable mentioned in paragraph 275 of the report; presentation of disaggregated statistics concerning the beneficiaries of the scheme and the types of health problems for which assistance is provided

Morocco launched a basic health coverage initiative (Act No. 65-00) in keeping with its objective of making the promotion of social rights a major national project and a tool for the spread of a civic culture and for social progress. The Act represents an initiative of major significance, which responds to society's needs. The Health Coverage Act was designed to guarantee the right to basic medical care and basic treatment in public facilities, thereby protecting the right to health and addressing the shortcomings of the present situation. While compulsory health insurance is based on the principle of joint risk-sharing, the provision of medical assistance is based on the principle of national solidarity with the poor. Thus, health coverage for this category of beneficiaries is provided exclusively by State institutions and establishments, since the medical assistance scheme (RAMED) will be paid for out of the State budget and local authority budgets. The National Health Insurance Agency will manage the scheme's finances and will identify target groups, under the supervision of the six committees that were set up for this purpose on 12 July 2005. The committees, which are described below, will deal with the technical and financial aspects of the health assistance scheme in the light of the Government's overall objectives.

(a) The Administrative Procedures Committee

Coordinator: The Minister of the Interior

Tasks:

- To approve a standard assistance application form;
- To identify the parties involved and their respective duties;

- To decide on the composition of a standing regional committee to approve assistance applications;
- To define the committee's functions and working methods;
- To define procedures and time limits for appeals.

(b) The Management Committee

Coordinator: National Health Insurance Agency

Tasks:

- To design a system for registering users and issuing registration cards;
- To issue users with health assistance cards;
- To select and develop an information management system for the scheme;
- To design financial management procedures.

(c) The Reimbursement and Coverage Committee

Coordinator: Minister of Health

Tasks:

- To recommend health services that are equivalent to health services available elsewhere, excluding eyesight correction services;
- To assess the use made of recommended health services in 2004;
- To propose reference prices for the services covered and reimbursement mechanisms;
- To design mechanisms to regulate treatment delivery.

(d) The Finance Committee

Coordinator: Minister of Finance and Privatization

Tasks:

- To estimate the size of the target population;
- To establish criteria for determining income levels;
- To approve eligibility criteria and verify their appropriateness in practice;

- To assess the cost of health coverage under the scheme, based on recommended health services;
- To establish funding mechanisms for the scheme.

(e) The Pharmaceuticals and Medical Equipment Committee

Coordinator: Ministry of Health

Tasks:

- To draw up lists of drugs and medical equipment which must be supplied to hospitals in order to provide health assistance.

(f) The Legal Committee

Coordinator: Secretariat-General of the Government

Tasks:

- To formulate provisions to implement Act No. 65-00 concerning the health coverage scheme (RAMED), based on the conclusions reached by a technical working group.

The Health Coverage Act has made an enormous contribution towards strengthening the right to health by improving medical services and allowing all kinds of citizens to benefit from them in accordance with the principles of solidarity and equality. To this end, the Act has established two schemes: the first, a compulsory health insurance scheme for economically active persons, pensioners and students; and the second, a medical assistance scheme for persons with low incomes.

A process of dialogue and coordination between the Prime Minister and economic and social stakeholders led to the signing of an agreement in the presence of His Majesty King Muhammad VI on 4 January 2005. The agreement deals with basic implementation procedures for the Health Coverage Act, in particular compulsory health insurance in the public and private sectors.

Promoting basic health coverage in the public sector

The financial plan for compulsory health insurance in the public sector covers 216,000 new members, of whom 78,000 are retired. A total of 3.2 million people now benefit from compulsory health coverage, of whom 700,000 are new members.

The financial plan is based on the following:

- A 4 per cent increase in total contributions, apportioned equally between employers and employees;

- An increase from 50 to 70 dirhams in members' minimum monthly contribution;
- An increase from 200 to 400 dirhams in members' maximum monthly contribution.

The following are examples of coverage of treatment:

- 100 per cent of costly treatment for chronic and long-term diseases;
- 90 per cent of fees for private sanatoriums;
- 80 per cent of the cost of outpatient treatment, based on more precise definitions of responsibility than those currently in force;
- 70 per cent of the cost of drugs, based on prices charged to the public in Morocco.

Promoting basic health coverage in the private sector

In view of the specific characteristics of private-sector work, it was decided that compulsory health insurance should be introduced gradually in terms of the scope of coverage and the beneficiaries.

The medical assistance scheme will initially cover:

- Those eligible for social security and their dependants;
- Pensioners who are entitled to 70 per cent of the minimum wage, as follows:
 - 1,300,000 insured persons;
 - 2,900,000 persons entitled to an amount equal to or greater than 70 per cent of the minimum wage;
 - 108,000 pensioners and 240,000 dependants.

There are thus 4.6 million beneficiaries in the private sector.

Pensioners who do not meet the above conditions can benefit from the medical assistance scheme.

The financial plan provides for:

- A total contribution of 4 per cent apportioned equally between employers and employees;
- A top-up contribution of 1 per cent payable by companies that are members of the National Social Security Fund.

The scheme covers hospitalization, chronic or incapacitating diseases, monitoring of child health until the age of 12, and prenatal and obstetric services.

The cost of treatment in public hospitals is refunded at a single rate of 90 per cent.

In line with the current strategic vision and aims of health policy, particularly as reflected in the 2005-2007 Action Plan, an effective policy will be pursued to provide high-quality medicines at reasonable prices.

It has also been decided to promote a generic drug policy in order to ensure that prices remain affordable, that various types of basic drugs are available at every level of the urban and rural health centre network, and that drug supply channels are improved.

The hospital network is also to be strengthened by means of an urgent programme to upgrade public hospitals, in particular by:

- Improving the admission of and the care provided to indigent patients in public hospitals (purchase of drugs and obstetric equipment);
- Extending the reforms to nine hospitals;
- Addressing priority needs in respect of basic equipment.

22. Presentation of additional information on the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the country and on measures taken to prevent the spread of HIV infection and to support and assist persons living with HIV/AIDS

Programmes to combat AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases were first launched in Morocco in 1986. The national programme to combat these diseases is managed centrally by the Directorate of Epidemiology and Disease Eradication of the Ministry of Health and regionally by regional health units that deal with sexually transmitted diseases.

1. Epidemiological situation

The total number of AIDS cases as at 31 December 2005 was around 1,878. Adults below 40 years of age were the worst affected age group: 24 per cent of all persons with AIDS are between 15 and 29 years of age and 43 per cent are between 30 and 39 years of age.

According to the HIV monitoring scheme established in 1993, the percentage of the Moroccan female population infected with the virus is low; the latest figures show that the incidence of HIV is 0.89 per cent among women prisoners, and 2.27 per cent among sex workers.

Based on the calculation methodology used by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the Ministry of Health estimates that the total number of persons living with HIV is between 16,000 and 20,000.

2. The national strategy to combat sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS

Thanks to the national expertise that has been developed to deal with this disease, a number of strategic plans have achieved considerable progress in the epidemiological, medical and sociological domains. The National AIDS Strategy for 2002-2004 was the product of strategic planning and contributions from national and regional AIDS specialists attached to government departments and non-governmental organizations that deal with social issues. The strategy consisted of a situation analysis phase and a needs analysis phase, followed by a third phase in which the strategy design was finalized, planning documentation was drawn up and both were approved. The strategy focused on persons most at risk of infection and the most critical areas in the country. At the same time, coordination was stepped up among different sectors operating at the central and regional levels to ensure that prevention, information and welfare activities covered the entire national territory. Several key activities were envisaged in the areas of prevention and support for persons living with AIDS. The strategic plan was extended until the end of 2005.

3. Epidemiological monitoring and support for persons living with AIDS and HIV

The epidemiological monitoring network was extended to 24 locations in Morocco and now incorporates Phase II HIV monitoring. A scheme for the monitoring of sexually transmitted diseases was launched. Systematic epidemiological studies are being undertaken to monitor the spread of sexually transmitted diseases and cases of resistance to antibodies.

In 2004, significant headway was made in the provision of support. Triple therapy was made available free of charge to all AIDS sufferers, of whom 1,120 were receiving treatment at the end of July 2005. The following key phases led to this result:

- Strengthening the services and mobilizing the financial resources of the Ministry of Health;
- Reducing drug prices by:
 - Waiving customs duties on antiretroviral drugs;
 - Involving Morocco in the UNAIDS initiative on HIV drug price reduction;
 - Obtaining support from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria;
 - Establishing five regional treatment centres and two university treatment centres in Rabat and Casablanca for persons living with AIDS.

4. Information, education and communication

The national public information campaign was developed as a mechanism for combating AIDS in pursuance of the national strategy. Designed with the support of communications experts, the campaign was divided into in four phases: raising awareness of the existence and

dangers of HIV; providing information about methods of prevention; improving preventive and diagnostic services; and using television, radio, newspaper advertisements, posters and mobile billboards.

In parallel with the national public information campaign, an education drive was launched in partnership with government departments, particularly the Ministry of National Education and the State Secretariat for Youth, together with a number of non-governmental organizations dealing with social issues.

5. Outlook for the future

The National AIDS Programme is conducting an assessment and review of the national plan for 2002-2004 with a view to:

- Identifying successes achieved;
- Overcoming obstacles to the implementation of certain activities;
- Analysing the vulnerability of drug users to HIV infection;
- Analysing the vulnerability of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa to HIV infection.

The results of this assessment will be used to formulate the national strategy for 2006-2010.

Articles 13 and 14 - The right to education

23. Presentation of updated information on progress made in the implementation of the National Charter for Education and Training which sets out educational policy for the decade 2000-2009

The National Charter for Education and Training describes the national policy for the decade 2000-2009 as a major educational and training reform project which is part of a strategic vision that links training and scholarship with the inculcation of civic values and efforts to integrate the younger generation into the economic, social and cultural development process. The Charter stresses the importance of schools as a basic vehicle for disseminating and inculcating human rights and civic values from a national and global perspective and for opening up society to the lofty principles and values that form part of the shared global heritage.

During the early part of the decade, a series of institutional, legal, organizational and educational reforms were undertaken at different levels and in different branches of education, management training and scientific research.

The reforms were primarily aimed at: making education compulsory; regulating primary education; establishing a basic system for private education; establishing regional education and training academies; restructuring central administrative bodies in line with new regulations;

implementing provisions on management of the education and training system at the central, regional, provincial and local levels; establishing the Mohammed VI Foundation for the Promotion of Social Education; and issuing a basic law on national educational personnel. In addition, school textbooks were reviewed from the perspective of human rights education. A new approach was adopted for the design of text books. Syllabuses and curricula were revised as important vectors for educational reform and improving the quality of education. Wider use was made of modern information and communication technology and efforts were focused on developing students' skills and capacities. Teacher training and in-service training courses were organized, examinations were revamped, and a new examination system was put in place.

The year 2004 was a time for reflection, as it marked the midpoint of the Decade. It provided an opportunity for evaluation and appraisal, as His Majesty King Mohamed VI pointed out in a statement on 10 October 2003, when he said: "We have reached the half-way mark in the National Decade for Education and Training. We have launched important projects and made substantial progress in spite of the difficulties that we face. We must devote the next five years to clearing the obstacles to this vital reform, marshalling our forces to achieve a qualitative rather than just a quantitative reform of our education system in order to give schools the status that they deserve in our society."

Morocco has held symposiums on reforms to ensure excellence, and has focused on improving training and disseminating information. The Government has adopted a three-year programme targeting 8,600 institutions and 5.5 million students and earmarking 1 billion dirhams for the purchase of 100,000 computers. A total of 223,000 teachers will receive special training. The foundations have been laid for a new system of governance based on a policy of effective decentralization. Teaching of the Amazigh language has been introduced in some primary schools. In the past few years, efforts have focused on: raising school enrolment to over 6 million, focusing on rural areas, particularly enrolment of rural girls (82.2 per cent compared with below 25 per cent in the mid-1970s); combating the dropout phenomenon; providing informal education to cater for children over the legal age for admission to education (6 years); promoting the eradication of illiteracy; increasing the number of schools; and resolving the administrative and material problems of teaching and administrative staff.

Efforts to implement the Charter are continuing and are gathering speed as the end of the Decade approaches, since the education and training sector is one of the most important sectors for the development and recovery of the national economy.

During the first five years of the reform process, the expansion of higher education begun in the previous decade continued, with an increase in student numbers, capacity and teaching staff. In 2003, a process of educational re-engineering was launched, based on a system of bachelor's and master's degrees and doctorates, modules and educational streams. Steps were taken to improve scientific research, to train staff, to establish eight multidisciplinary colleges in towns and regions with no university institutions and to improve the material situation of university staff. Attention was focused on training managers to reorganize existing institutions and standardize management procedures in line with the practices used by universities under the terms of the Higher Education Act.

The attention given to the development of the education system is consistent with the status of education as Morocco's second most important priority, a ranking on which there is consensus among all components of Moroccan society.

Statistical information on relevant achievements in education

General enrolment ratio

Most recent indicators show significant strides towards universal enrolment as a result of concerted efforts, in the context of strong popular mobilization, on the part of the Ministry, government departments, local associations, the electorate and civil society. The appreciable increase in the enrolment ratio for children of different age groups is reflected in the following comparative figures for the last school year:

- An increase in the enrolment ratio of four- and five-year-olds from 51.3 per cent to 55 per cent;
- An increase in the enrolment ratio of six-year-olds from 90 per cent to 91 per cent;
- An increase in the enrolment ratio of children in the 6 to 11 age group from 93 per cent to 94 per cent;
- An increase in the enrolment ratio of children in the 12 to 14 age group from 70.6 per cent to 73 per cent;
- An increase in the enrolment ratio of young people in the 15 to 17 age group from 44.3 per cent to 46 per cent.

The enrolment ratio in rural areas

In rural areas, the indicators show a significant increase, which is reflected in the following figures for the different age groups during the period 1999-2005:

- Six-year-olds: from 46.5 per cent to 86.9 per cent;
- The 6-11 age group: from 62.5 per cent to 89 per cent;
- The 12-14 age group: from 31.5 per cent to 51.6 per cent.

Total figures

A pronounced improvement was also recorded in the total number of students during the 2005/06 school year:

- 645,700 new pupils enrolled for the first year of primary education;
- 435,500 new students enrolled for the first year of the first cycle of public secondary education, representing an increase of 21 per cent compared with the previous year;

- 186,600 students enrolled for the specialized branches of the second cycle of public secondary education, of whom 53.5 per cent registered for the scientific and technical branches.

The total figure for pupils in primary and secondary education is therefore almost 6.3 million, distributed as follows:

- Primary education: 4,162,400 pupils, an increase of 3.4 per cent compared with the previous school year;
- Secondary education, first cycle: 1,383,600 students, an increase of 12.3 per cent;
- Secondary education, second cycle: 673,300 students, an increase of 6.3 per cent.

In rural areas, the figures were:

- Primary education: 2,054,600, of whom 46 per cent were girls, an increase of 5.2 per cent;
- Secondary education, first cycle: 296,100, an increase of 16.3 per cent;
- Secondary education, second cycle: 49,300, an increase of 4.5 per cent.

Total capacity

The total capacity of the three cycles now stands at about 137,045 classrooms, an increase of no less than 5,380 classrooms compared with the previous school year.

The classrooms are distributed as follows:

- 93,875 classrooms for primary education, an increase of 4.2 per cent;
- 27,400 classrooms for the first cycle of secondary education, an increase of 2.5 per cent;
- 15,770 classrooms for the second cycle of secondary education, an increase of 5.8 per cent.

Expansion of the infrastructure and school health procedures and services

With effect from the 2005/06 school year, action will be focused on the following areas:

- Continued work on the memorandum regarding medical examinations for all new pupils in the first year of primary education and the compilation of medical records after registration but before joining a class;

- Implementation of the partnership agreement with the Ministries of Health and the Interior, and the joint circular with the Ministry of Health;
- Continued organization of health education and reproductive health education activities in cooperation with partners;
- Continued establishment of health clubs under a cooperation programme with partners, incorporating peer education and life skills in their activities;
- Creating centres for psychological and social support in first-cycle and second-cycle secondary schools, in partnership with the Departments of Health and Youth, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA);
- Action to promote school health care at the regional level, drawing on the services of a doctor appointed to each regional academy;
- Continued action to establish and equip school clinics and to provide central schools with permitted pharmaceutical products; provision of first aid kits to teachers in subsidiary schools under the current budget for regional academies, and expansion of the programme under the 2006 budget;
- Implementation of the annual action plan under a partnership agreement with the Office of the High Commissioner for Water, Forests and the Fight against Desertification;
- Preliminary action on the recommendations of the Third Students Congress, which was organized for student members of management committees in first-cycle secondary schools under the auspices of the Ministry from 20 to 22 June 2005 in the Moulay Rachid Youth Centre in Bouznika.

The higher education sector

(a) Student intake capacity

The student intake capacity consists of:

- 83 departments in 14 universities throughout the country;
- 20 arts and humanities departments;
- 18 law, economics and management departments;
- 40 science and technology departments;
- 5 multidisciplinary faculties;

- 61 management training institutes not affiliated to universities;
- 24 scientific and technical training institutes;
- 14 economic, legal, management and social training institutes;
- 23 teacher training colleges;
- 35 teacher training centres;
- 73 vocational training colleges that are currently being integrated into the baccalaureate system;
- 129 private higher education institutes.

To extend and improve higher education and link it to the economic environment, major investments are required to build new premises and to refurbish old university buildings so that they meet the requirements of the reform process.

During the period 2004-2005, capacity was expanded through the opening of four new higher education institutions: multidisciplinary colleges in Tetouan and El Jadida; the National Commerce and Management College at Oujda; and the National Commerce and Management College at Marrakesh. The action plan for 2005-2006 provides, inter alia, for 12 new institutions. The programme includes:

- Opening of five new institutions;
- Building and renovation work on eight new university departments;
- Elaboration of plans to build three new university departments;
- Improving training and research conditions in old university departments through:
 - Expansion and refurbishing;
 - Acquisition of new scientific equipment;
 - Consolidation of document collections;
- Continuation of renovation work on seven universities.

A renovation scheme was launched in 2003 with a view to modernizing the management of university building renovation and implementing a renovation programme over a period of several years. This programme will be implemented in three universities during the period 2005-2006.

(b) Total number of students in higher education

The number of baccalaureate holders rose from 91,079 in 2004 to 98,720 in 2005, an increase of 8.4 per cent. The total number of students in higher education rose to 364,000 in 2004-2005, an increase of 5 per cent compared with 2003-2004.

There are currently 15,265 students enrolled in management training colleges that are not affiliated to universities; 19,215 students in private higher education institutions; 5,000 students in teacher training centres, training centres for specialized technicians, and post-baccalaureate preparatory departments; and 31,663 students in vocational training colleges that are being integrated into the baccalaureate system.

24. Clarification of whether children who are not enrolled in the nearest school lose their entitlement to free education, pursuant to Act No. 04-00

The Compulsory and Free Education Act does not discriminate among pupils of school going age (6 years) on any grounds whatsoever. They are free to change schools for any reason and can move from a nearby school to one that is further away. The principle of free education applies within and between cities. The Ministry of Education has taken a series of measures to encourage school enrolment of children with special needs, from nomadic communities or living in mountainous or remote regions. The enrolment ratios for preschool and basic education are as follows.

Preschool education

In the 2005/06 school year, there were 750,000 children enrolled in preschool education; the enrolment ratio for four- and five-year-olds thus rose to 55 per cent, compared with 51.3 per cent the previous year. The figure for rural areas was 275,000, an increase of 14 per cent compared with the previous school year.

Primary education

There was a significant increase in the enrolment of six-year-olds in the first year of public and private education. The figure rose from 454,415 pupils in 2001 to 515,356 in 2005 and 530,000 in 2006.

The number of children enrolled in the first year of public and private primary education, regardless of age, stood at about 645,000 this year, compared with 627,500 in 2004/05.

Measures to prevent dropout

The Ministry took a number of steps to prevent pupils from dropping out of primary school and the first cycle of secondary school and to reduce school wastage:

- Creation of local committees, consisting of school managers, associations of parents and guardians, and representatives of local authorities and communities, to identify cases of dropout and school wastage and their causes and to seek remedies at the local and regional level;

- Organization of awareness-raising campaigns for parents and pupils to impress them with the importance of education;
- Provision of textbooks and school supplies to needy schoolchildren, particularly in rural areas;
- Provision of school meals to children who come to the school from remote villages and districts;
- Extension of the network of boarding schools for the two cycles of secondary school, and increasing the number of users;
- Opening of hostels for first-cycle students in village communities when they are unable to enrol in a boarding school;
- Establishment of small first-cycle units in village communities, so as to bring first-cycle education closer to students.

It follows from the principle of compulsory education that in order to encourage school enrolment priority must be given to many categories of children through affirmative action, a policy adopted by the Ministry to ensure that all Moroccan children enjoy equality of opportunity. To that end, the various departments of the Ministry have adopted the following measures:

To encourage school enrolment and to prevent dropout, particularly in rural areas, the Ministry adopted a number of measures during the 2004/05 school year aimed at supporting public education.

The Ministry continued its efforts to extend the network of school canteens and boarding schools, and to make new study grants available. As a result, during the 2005/06 school year, school meals were provided for some 991,000 primary school pupils, including 468,200 girls. The corresponding figure for the previous school year was 938,650 pupils, including 443,450 girls. Ninety per cent of pupils provided with school meals came from rural areas. The coverage of school meal services in rural areas amounted to 47 per cent of pupils, half of whom were girls.

In first-cycle secondary schools, 29,300 students took advantage of school meal services, compared with 20,915 during the previous school year.

During the 2005/06 school year, the number of first-cycle secondary school students receiving study grants exceeded 46,000, compared with 40,211 during the previous school year. In the case of second-cycle students, the figure was 56,700 for 2005/06, compared with 45,500 for 2004/05.

The network of boarding schools was also extended. Thirteen first-cycle boarding schools and seven second-cycle boarding schools were opened or reopened. The total number of boarding schools for the two cycles stood at 198 and 211 respectively.

In order to support these efforts, some civil society institutions award scholarships and provide accommodation for pupils, especially for girls from rural areas who study outside their communities.

Other measures taken by the Ministry include:

- Creating more integrated classes for children with special needs in response to demand and in line with internationally recognized specifications (around 10 pupils per integrated class). The necessary equipment and teaching conditions are provided in coordination with the Ministry's partners. A curriculum is being developed to ensure the integration of this group of pupils into regular classes;
- Continuing to train staff specializing in educational integration and to introduce special education modules into the basic training curricula for primary school teachers, in accordance with the outcome of the Atlas meeting that was organized by the Ministry in the city of Azilal. The plan that was adopted at that meeting is thus being implemented;
- Finding new ways of promoting school enrolment among children in isolated mountain regions and in nomadic communities.

Experience has shown that social awareness campaigns, school meal and accommodation services for schoolchildren, and solidarity campaigns to promote enrolment involving the distribution of schoolbags and textbooks effectively contribute to enrolment and to retaining pupils in education institutions. They also help to link the first and second cycles of secondary school, hence reducing school wastage, particularly in villages and peripheral urban areas.

In the light of the foregoing, the following action will be taken:

- Particular attention will be given to the school life of boarders. Steps will be taken to develop boarding school management in order to improve performance and enable the schools to stand in for the family by creating conditions in which students can profit from their studies, by ensuring discipline, by seeing to it that students' investment in terms of both space and time pays off, and by promoting cultural and artistic activities and sports;
- The culture of supervision and punishment will be replaced with a culture of participation, responsibility and openness, and students will be instilled with a spirit of solidarity. Attention will be given to facilities and equipment. Basic preventive health-care principles will be promoted and emphasis will be placed on the rules governing community life in shared spaces such as canteens and dormitories;
- Canteens and boarding schools will remain open from the first to the last day of the school year, and until the end of the revision period for baccalaureate examinations. School meals will be improved to ensure a balanced diet. Students choosing to study technical subjects and mathematics will be automatically entitled to a study grant.

Expansion of school transport services

During the last few school years, some local Ministry offices have implemented pilot school transport projects in rural areas, which have promoted school enrolment, particularly among rural girls. The Ministry has urged all managers of regional education and training academies and its own representatives to take the necessary steps to support and extend school transport services in rural areas in coordination with all stakeholders, particularly parents' and guardians' associations, local authorities and communities, business firms and non-governmental organizations dealing with rural education.

Moreover, with a view to ensuring the successful expansion of school transport in rural areas and in accordance with the slogan "School transport in support of good schools", the Ministry has added 20 new buses to its fleet, serving 10 new provincial locations.

25. Indication of the percentage of schoolchildren who attend private schools, at all levels of education; presentation of information on how the quality of education in private schools compares to that in public schools

Private education is expected to play an effective role alongside public education in achieving the goal of universal enrolment by catering for 20 per cent of students by the end of the decade. With this aim in view, the Ministry has prepared a scenario for the sector's future, basing itself on the provisions of Act No. 00-06 and its implementing decree, on the results of various studies and on the recommendations of the National Private Education Commission.

The number of students enrolled in the private sector has increased sharply over the last few years, from 280,148 in 2003/04 to 332,139 in 2004/05, an increase of approximately 18.5 per cent. However, these figures still fall well short of the target for the end of the decade, since students in private schools represent only 5.6 per cent of the total number enrolled in the three cycles of education.

At the beginning of the 2005/06 school year, the number of students in private schools at all levels stood at 367,500, an increase of 10.7 per cent compared with 2004/05. They now represent 5.9 per cent of the total number of students in the education system.

Teachers in private and public schools undergo the same training, graduate from the same colleges, and receive the same certificates. They all uphold the same professional standards and are subject to educational monitoring by inspectors from different parts of the Ministry of National Education.

1. Number of private higher education establishments

Beginning of the 2003/04 academic year: 117

Beginning of the 2004/05 academic year: 129

New establishments: 12

Rate of increase: 10.25 per cent

2. Number of students enrolled in private higher education

Beginning of the 2003/04 academic year: 17,558

Beginning of the 2004/05 academic year: 19,215

New students: 1,657

Rate of increase: 9.43 per cent

Article 15 - Cultural rights

26. Information on whether the facilities for the linguistic and cultural development of the Amazigh community provided for under the National Charter for Education and Training have been provided in practice, on the number of universities that have been endowed with such facilities and on the proportion of Amazigh students that benefit from them

In addition to the State's efforts to improve the quality of education by revising curricula and promoting the use of modern information and communication technology, numerous government bodies have taken steps to promote the right to cultural participation and respect for cultural identity in the general sense of the term. The Ministry of Education is continuing to develop local and regional curricula, which account for 30 per cent of all curricula, by expanding foreign language and computer technology courses and incorporating the Amazigh language in curricula and syllabuses. This project will gradually be extended by the Ministry of Education in coordination with the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture (IRCAM) established under the patronage of His Majesty the King pursuant to a decree issued on 17 October 2001. The Institute is a type of university made up of departments responsible for safeguarding and disseminating Amazigh culture, reinvigorating the Amazigh heritage, and studying the grammar, rhetoric and prosodic features of Amazigh poetry and Tifinagh terminology and grammar. The Institute focuses on the three main Amazigh dialects and works with representatives of Amazigh associations. It organizes educational events and training courses and translates books. It has been engaged for the past two academic years in publishing textbooks for teachers and students in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and has coordinated activities, particularly festival and exhibitions, in conjunction with the Ministry of Culture. It has also coordinated activities with the Ministry of Communications, whose television and radio stations broadcast news and some programmes in Amazigh.

The Institute's functions include collecting, archiving, preserving, protecting and disseminating various manifestations of Amazigh culture; studying texts to facilitate the teaching of Amazigh by developing teaching and learning materials; and preparing general and specialized dictionaries. All these activities are consistent with the State's general educational policy and with article 3 of the decree establishing the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture.

Since its foundation, the Institute has focused on four core areas: the education system; the media; interaction with civil society; and cultural dissemination and outreach.

Core area I: Integrating Amazigh into the education system

1. Launching of the integration project

On 26 June 2003, the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture and the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research signed a Partnership Agreement aimed at developing a general framework for cooperation between the two bodies with a view to producing a joint programme for the integration of the Amazigh language and culture into curricula and syllabuses, implementing the programme and expanding its scope in the light of the functions of the Institute and the Ministry. The Agreement provided for the establishment of a joint Coordination, Oversight and Assessment Committee. The launching of the Amazigh project under the Agreement in 5 per cent of educational establishments forming part of the national education sector was announced at the beginning of the 2003/04 academic year. Full integration will be a gradual process based on previously determined horizontal and vertical procedures. We are now in the third year of project implementation, with coverage of 30 per cent of educational establishments.

2. Adoption and standardization of the alphabet and development of linguistic rules

Immediately after the establishment of the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture, the Tifinagh alphabet was adopted. As the Institute developed the rules and standards, it became known as the "IRCAM Tifinagh" alphabet. Morocco thus became the first country to take practical action to settle the question of how to write the Amazigh language, basing itself on the natural script. Tifinagh may be said to have entered the computer era by the front door since the International Standards Organization (ISO) decided by consensus to adopt the Tifinagh symbols as part of the international alphabet code system.

The IRCAM centre responsible for developing linguistic rules has been working day and night standardizing the grammar of the language and preparing glossaries, dictionaries and grammar books in order to respond as expeditiously as possible to the need to produce teaching aids.

3. Curricula and syllabuses

Before the integration process was launched, educational options and guidelines and Amazigh language curricula were prepared with a view to presenting an overview of the basic goals and principles of this category of education. In addition, an Amazigh language syllabus based on modern pedagogical criteria was drawn up for the basic level of primary education. This work is based on Ministerial Memorandum No. 108 issued on 4 Rajab 1424 (1 September 2004). The Institute will continue to develop separate curricula based on appropriate educational and linguistic criteria for each level of education.

4. Teaching aids and materials

Since autumn 2003, IRCAM has been producing Amazigh language teaching materials for the first year of primary education, for instance the booklet *Awal Ino* with flash cards and an accompanying tape with recordings of the texts contained in the booklet. The first official Amazigh textbook entitled *Tifawin a Tamazight* was published in mid-April of the 2003/04 academic year. It consists of a book for the pupil and a teacher's handbook. The first three levels, designed for the first three grades of basic education, have now been published: *Tifawin a Tamazight 1, 2 and 3*. The fourth grade textbook - *Tifawin a Tamazight 4* - is almost ready for publication by the Institute and should be available at the beginning of the next school year. Alongside these textbooks, the Institute has published an important set of teaching guidelines to ensure that the most effective use possible is made of the educational materials.

5. Training of Amazigh language inspectors and teachers

Pursuant to the above-mentioned Partnership Agreement, IRCAM and the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research organized a number of training courses for Amazigh language inspectors and teachers: from 30 June to 1 July 2003 for inspectors and from 7 to 11 July 2003 for teachers. The courses dealt with the Amazigh language, history, civilization and culture. Working groups were set up to prepare Amazigh language flash cards and to practise using the Tifinagh script. Following the publication of Ministerial Memorandum No. 90 of 19 August 2005 containing the training course agenda and the new school map, steps were taken to organize regular training courses - an average of three per academic year. To date, 10 regional education and training academies have been covered.

Core area II: Integrating Amazigh into the media

Article 3, paragraph 7, of the decree establishing and organizing IRCAM stipulates that the Institute shall seek "ways of enhancing and promoting the status of the Amazigh language in the areas of communication and information". Acting on this provision, the Institute developed a strategy aimed at supporting the integration of Amazigh into the media, especially the audio-visual media, through a partnership agreement with the Ministry of Communications.

The Institute was instrumental in achieving considerable progress in the public audio-visual media.

Thanks to its work and to the outcome of meetings with various parties involved in the media, a number of projects have been launched, of which the following are probably the most important:

- An extension of the broadcasting periods of the Amazigh radio station from 12 to 16 per day with effect from 15 November 2005, which led to a major increase in the number of listeners;
- Use of the additional broadcasting time to address vital issues such as education, youth, women, culture, health, the Family Code and human rights;

- Adoption of a new approach which involves paying tribute to the symbols of Amazigh history and giving special attention to children's interests;
- Replacing the practice on the first television channel of broadcasting a single news bulletin combining the three dialects of Amazigh with a number of different morning broadcasting slots, especially for the coverage of national and international events.

With regard to the other channels, there have been major changes during the current broadcasting period in programmes in or concerning the Amazigh language. For instance, since the beginning of 2006 the second channel has broadcast about seven Amazigh language programmes on sports, medicine and culture, and the programmes *Lahzat Shi'r* and *Namadhij al-Amazighiya*. It has also covered a number of artistic and outreach activities.

The fourth channel recently made a documentary about the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture and various aspects of its work, including activities on behalf of children.

Core area III: Interaction with civil society

As part of its outreach strategy and in the light of its conviction that the preservation of the Amazigh language calls for concerted action on the part of all concerned, the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture has developed a reference framework for cooperation and partnership with Amazigh cultural associations.

The Institute arranged a series of meetings and contacts with these associations which culminated in the meeting in Bouznika on 4 and 5 March 2005, which brought together more than 75 associations from all over Morocco. At the close of the proceedings, the meeting adopted important recommendations concerning the media, education and outreach, which gave added impetus to these contacts and resulted in the conclusion of a number of partnership agreements concerning all forms of creative work, education and outreach activities. In terms of figures, a total of 36 partnership agreements were concluded in 2005 with civil society actors dealing with Amazigh affairs.

Core area IV: Cultural dissemination and outreach

The Institute's strategy accords high priority to cultural dissemination and outreach. The tasks and goals under this heading may be summarized as follows:

- Familiarizing people with the Institute by publishing its research work, and promoting outreach by disseminating books, news magazines and communication products;
- Contributing to the dissemination of information and scholarship on the Amazigh language and culture through writings, translation and research;
- Promoting the conversion of oral Amazigh into written form;
- Encouraging and supporting scientific, literary, artistic and musical works about and in, the Amazigh language by disseminating outstanding doctoral dissertations, compilations of poetry, stories, novels, drama, etc.;

- Reprinting old works dealing with subjects that have a bearing on the Amazigh language and culture;
- Disseminating and democratizing information and scholarship through books and other publications in order to promote awareness among Moroccans and others of an important part of our culture, history and collective national memory.

The Institute has published more than 40 works dealing with literature, history, anthropology, linguistics, teaching methods, artistic expression, etc.

In the area of cultural and scientific outreach, the Institute has organized a large number of scientific symposiums on a range of subjects falling within the scope of its mandate.

In this connection, reference should be made to the answer given to question No. 5 above, namely that the Moroccans are a single people with a single rich identity in terms of its cultural and civilizational branches and components: Arab, Amazigh, Andalusian, African, Islamic, Christian and Jewish. Morocco is a country characterized by unity amid diversity and a profusion of distinctive features. Moroccans have been a people of mixed Arab and Amazigh blood for many centuries, a single people whose origins are intertwined. Pupils and students attending schools, universities and colleges are Moroccan students congregating in the same premises and served by the same educational and administrative staff. They study the same subjects, follow the same curricula and syllabuses, and use the same textbooks in accordance with a single national educational policy. No distinction is made between Arab students and Amazigh students, but there are study slots for Amazigh and lectures on all aspects of the Amazigh civilization and culture. This general and basic principle does not preclude the future creation of an Amazigh department in which any student can enrol, regardless of whether he or she speaks Arabic, Amazigh, both languages or some other language, or the establishment of units in universities specializing in the Amazigh language, literature and art, the point being that universities studies, Moroccan students' dissertations and the Amazigh language are an integral component of the Moroccan identity and contribute to the cultural vibrancy of that identity. The decree that established and organized the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture assigned it the following tasks:

1. To assist universities, if need be, in setting up Amazigh linguistic and cultural research and development centres and in training their staff;
2. To study methods of writing Amazigh that make it easier to teach the language by:
 - Producing appropriate teaching materials and compiling dictionaries and glossaries of specialized terms;
 - Preparing work plans for teachers to be applied in general education and in the part of the curriculum dealing with local and regional affairs; such plans must be consistent with the State's general national educational policy.

3. Assisting in the development of basic and in-service training programmes for Amazigh teaching staff, civil servants who must use Amazigh in the course of their duties, and anyone who wishes to learn the language.

The following tables show the status of Amazigh language tuition in Moroccan schools:

Proportion of primary schools teaching the Amazigh language

Level	Academic year						
	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
First grade	5%	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%	100%
Second grade	-	5%	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Third grade	-	-	5%	20%	40%	60%	80%
Fourth grade	-	-	-	5%	20%	40%	60%
Fifth grade	-	-	-	-	5%	20%	40%
Sixth grade	-	-	-	-	-	5%	20%

Note: Five per cent of primary schools is currently equivalent to 330 schools.

Proportion of first-cycle secondary schools teaching the Amazigh language during the academic years 2005/06 to 2009/10

Level	Academic year						
	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
First grade	-	-	25%	50%	75%	100%	100%
Second grade	-	-	-	25%	50%	75%	100%
Third grade	-	-	-	-	25%	50%	75%

Note: It is expected that 25 per cent of first-cycle secondary schools will be equivalent to 400 schools during the 2005/06 academic year.

Proportion of second-cycle secondary schools teaching the Amazigh language during the academic years 2005/06 to 2009/10

Level	Academic year						
	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
First grade	-	-	25%	50%	75%	100%	100%
Second grade	-	-	-	25%	50%	75%	100%
Third grade	-	-	-	-	25%	50%	75%

Note: It is expected that 25 per cent of second-cycle secondary schools will be equivalent to 200 schools during the 2005/06 academic year.
