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Are you ready to embrace the NOW?

A willingness to explore ideas and to be a pioneer is a hallmark of Morocco, however many investors in the United Kingdom have yet to fully explore the opportunities the country can offer them. Here Mr Youssef El Bari, Director General of the Moroccan Investment and Export Agency (AMDIE) explains how the recent official launch of Morocco Now - the investment and export promotion brand of Morocco - at the Design Museum in London, and its B2B roadshow aim to showcase how the UK-Morocco business relationship can deepen, and what not to miss out on.

What does your recent visit to the UK signify for Morocco?

In a word - opportunities. While there is an 800-year history of relations between our countries, we know there are more business and investment synergies to explore. It's time to highlight what a stable and economically attractive country Morocco is. Besides our successful brand launch at the prestigious Design Museum, Morocco Now's two days of meetings with potential investors and trade partners were fruitful in helping us identify and explore key areas with UK entities who are looking to invest in Morocco. We are taking steps now to make our relations more productive in the near future.

How would you characterise the assets that Morocco has to offer?

Under the visionary leadership of His Majesty the King Mohammed VI the past 20 years have seen Morocco build a competitive low carbon production and sourcing platform that offers access to 1.3bn consumers in Europe, the US, Africa and the Middle East thanks to Free Trade Agreements with more than 50 countries. Having a steady and consistent approach towards creating a sustainable industry that is performing well and is open to the world, means Morocco is now perfectly positioned to help cushion global shocks and provide solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges, which are pushing the world to reshape value chains. We have invested heavily in creating top class infrastructure and what we are achieving is impressive. As Lloyds List puts it, "In less than two decades, Tanger Med has gone from being an empty, isolated beach to become the largest port in the Mediterranean." It now ranks 25th worldwide according to Lloyds List One Hundred Ports 2021. It knocked Piraeus in Greece off the top spot and is far ahead of Algeciras and Valencia in Spain. Tanger Med is by far No1 in Africa too, reaching 7.17m TEU in 2021 as reported by Tanger Med's official data. We also have the first high-speed train in Africa. Our diversified, future proof industrial platform is not well known to all the investors in the UK, and we must change that. Most people do not know that Morocco is the top country in Africa for both passenger car manufacturing and aeronautics, for example.

> **Morocco is now perfectly positioned to provide solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges**

In what ways is Morocco creating a future proof industrial platform?

The climate emergency requires a prompt switch to low carbon impact production and transportation in order for companies to reduce their environmental footprints. Our pioneering renewable energy mandate means that we have decarbonised production - some down to zero emissions such as the Renault plant. Our £4.5bn-investment in renewable energies provided an installed capacity of 4GW in 2021. Harnessing the power of nature is one of the ways we are creating a future proof industry.

> **Morocco has a truly great future in the years and decades ahead and I don't want the UK to be missing out**
>
> Dr Andrew Murrison
> **UK PM's Trade Envoy**

What are the key markers of Morocco's success?

Statistics, ratings and rankings are helpful in highlighting our progress, but they cannot capture the spirit of the people of Morocco who make all of that happen. We have a well proven track record in delivering mega infrastructures and competitive industrial clusters in the past 10 years, thanks to our young, dynamic, competitive, and qualified workforce. Our willingness and readiness to embrace challenges and change are what make us successful as well as agile and flexible to global needs. We echo what Dr Andrew Murrison, the UK PM's Trade Envoy to Morocco said during his keynote speech at the Morocco Now launch event in London, "I have a message for UK investors: You had better get on this particular bandwagon folks, because it is going places. Morocco has a truly great future in the years and decades ahead and I don't want the UK to be missing out."

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