

## **Delegation from the Kingdom of Morocco Position Paper for the United Nations General Assembly**

The following topics are before the General Assembly: increasing renewable energy and its link to sustainable development, building economic growth by increasing sustainable tourism, and creating sustainable housing. The Kingdom of Morocco views these issues as being priorities to all members of the global community and looks forward to addressing and discussing them at the upcoming United Nations General Assembly conference regarding climate change and the mitigation of its various effects.

### **I. Increasing Renewable Energy and its Link to Sustainable Development**

Sustainable development and the increased use of renewable energy sources has become a common global theme for countries trying to reduce the harmful effects of global warming. Renewable resources act as a source of energy that replenishes itself over time and helps to create sustainable cities and communities. According to the International Renewable Energy Agency, there has been a global increase of 6.1% in renewable generation as of July 2020 compared to 2017. While this increase is promising, the effects of climate change are so pervasive that they require collective action to see lasting results. If not, Morocco believes that countries that are situated in geographically vulnerable areas, such as coastal countries or countries with higher climates, will suffer.

Morocco has been actively involved with the *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC) through their creation of *Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions* (NAMA) in accordance with the *Paris Agreement*. Morocco's "Green Habitat" strategy places an emphasis on energy efficient and renewable energy sources through sustainable production of argan oil, energy-efficient housing, residential waste management, and a climate change online knowledge platform. Morocco also supported the *Kyoto Protocol* to reduce their greenhouse gases (GHG) and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions in the atmosphere. In 2009, Morocco presented a *National Plan against Global Warming* (PNRC) in addition to their *Green Morocco Plan for Agriculture*, entailing their approach to mitigation, adaptation, and intersecting measures while specifically focusing on agriculture, coastal areas, and water scarcity. The two major pillars of Morocco's efforts thus far have been their implementation of low carbon policies and the ongoing evaluation of vulnerability and adaptation to climate change in relation to their efforts. In doing so, Morocco has effectively addressed Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) such as SDG 7, "affordable and clean energy", SDG 12, "sustainable consumption and production", SDG 13, "climate action", and SDG 15, "life on land", through their commitment to combating climate change.

Morocco recommends the adoption of a unified view of climate change. The vulnerability and adaptability each country has to climate change differs and developing, coastal, and high temperature countries are more susceptible to the harmful effects of global warming. Morocco recommends, in alignment with the UNFCCC, that developed countries provide financial assistance to countries less endowed for the purpose of reducing their greenhouse gases and carbon dioxide emissions. Furthermore, Morocco invites Member States to implement the use of more effective data collection and evaluation of their current and future efforts in relation to climate change. Morocco strongly supports these initiatives in order to lead to more sustainable development and mitigation of the harmful effects of climate change.

### **II. Building Economic Growth by Increasing Sustainable Tourism**

Tourists attracted to the coastal contexts are one of the main contributions to Morocco's economy. The tourism sector has 7% of Morocco's GDP, with 5% of national employment and 25% of foreign exchange reserves. The current and predicted environmental factors caused by climate change will negatively impact this industry, if not intervened. Rising in sea levels is especially detrimental to the economy as it can result in coastal erosion and flooding. Attractions like low lying rocky shores, sandy beaches and agricultural land which is another economic sector, are highly impacted.

Article 4 of the *Paris Agreement* urges developing countries to enhance mitigation efforts while gradually reducing economy-wide emission. One of the *Millennium Development Goals* of Morocco is to ensure environmental sustainability. Morocco has responded by aiming to increase sustainable tourism as presented in the *Vision 2020* document with commitments to limit tourist's impacts on the environment, promote effective uses of water resources and encourage eco-friendly models of transport. The *Green Key* is an environmental label awarded to companies which comply with the environmentally friendly requirements. As of 2017, 84 Moroccan companies achieved the *Green Key* which included beach resorts and hotels, who implemented environmental education through staff training and efficient waste management. Morocco has also increased initiatives nationally and globally by partnering with the *United Nations World Tourism Organization* and adopting the *Moroccan Charter of Sustainable Tourism* in 2016 which gained positive recognition internationally. This also led to the first *African Charter on Sustainable and Responsible Tourism* which establishes guidelines to promote sustainable tourism.

Morocco recommends the continuing work through the *Moroccan Charter of Sustainable Tourism* with further global partnerships to advance in sustainable tourism. The regulations at tourist attractions should be regularly imposed while working to be efficient in waste management. Recognitions like the *Green Key* should be aimed to be earned by every company as they comply with eco-friendly restrictions. The tourism sector which provides many employment opportunities should continue to grow and prosper, while ensuring the sustainability of the Moroccan environment.

### **III. Creating More Sustainable Housing**

While Morocco continues to place its efforts on climate change initiatives, another issue tying back to climate change is sustainable housing. Housing continues to be a global issue. According to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 11, the number urban residents living in slums rose to 24% in 2018. Moreover, housing costs are based on supply and demand. SDG 11 focuses on combating housing needs. For example, by 2030, SDG 11 wants to ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgraded slums.

The current population of Morocco is approximately 36 million. According to the Centre for Affordable Housing Finance in Africa, Morocco currently has a poverty rate of 15.5 percent and an estimated housing deficit of 400,000. There is a supply shortage of social housing causing barriers for individuals having the means to afford a house. As a result, a gap is created between what is being provided and what households can afford. To create more accessible housing, Morocco's government created several social and middle-class housing services and set in motion other major projects, such as an Eco-city in Casablanca.

According to Morocco World News, in 2004, the government of Morocco developed an aspiring program named *Villes sans Bidonvilles* (Cities without Slums) to make home ownership affordable for the urban poor. The government received tremendous support from many donors, such as the World Bank, the EU, AFD and USAID. Through this program, slums were obliterated in 59 cities and provided 277,000 households. This initiative has led to revolutions in the field of housing finance, and also served as globally transferable lessons. Recent news shows that the Moroccan government announced its plan to build 800,000 housing units by 2022, in order to meet an increasing demand pushed by demographic growth and expanding urbanization. Morocco urges other member states to implement strategic housing plans to lower the amount of people living in slums, essentially aiming towards eliminating the number of slums as well.