



## EUROPEAN UNION DEMOCRACY PROMOTION IN THE SOUTH OF THE MEDITERRANEAN: CASE OF MOROCCO

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### Abstract

*Prior to the political waves that hit North Africa, for many decades, Morocco has been facing numbers of external pressures over the questions of peace and political transition, human rights, and transparency. Additionally, the historical linkages and relationships of the kingdom of Morocco with the western world including United States of America serve an outstanding remark towards transforming the country into her current political dynamism. It is a big task, and of course, could not be that easy for country such as Morocco to abruptly surrender the oldest package of an absolute hereditary system of sultanate to embrace a new system other than the original version of her own in an overnight manner. Instead of total recast of the ruling style in the country, an abnormal circumstance might impose some oddity changes time to time, but perhaps not at once. The relationships and bulky foreign aids that Morocco normally receives from international donors, such as the European Union and other individual states once have gone down due to many reasons including human rights abuses, forced disappearances, tortures, illegal operation in Western Saharan territorial bondage, etc.*

**Keywords:** *Democracy a Natural Being of EU, EU and Democracy promotion in the Maghreb sub-region, EU-Morocco: Partnership and Neighbourhood, EU-Morocco 'Action Plan', The 'Advanced Status' in promoting Moroccan Democratization.*

### INTRODUCTION

End of the Cold War and the fall of Berlin Wall remain among other pressuring forces toward the dawn of new age of democratic transition to take place in the kingdom of Morocco. This marked a new entry of democratic gesture in many parts of the world too. Moroccan authorities launched what could be seen as a sketch map; lying down strategic outlines for democratization. The strongly centralized hierarchic style has steadily started taking a new direction. It started becoming a parliamentary system in evolvable and systematic motion. Hence, the palace found its efforts dormant without maintaining the stable political atmosphere. Therefore, paying more attention to the political groups with mutual understanding has been among the most important agendas while attaining sustainable transition for bright future of Morocco.

At the same time, the monarch believed in 'divide and rule' tactics. It was a wave of change; it was the time when most of the people become more conscious and aware of what surround them not only in Morocco but in many parts of the world. Many countries in Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and elsewhere adopted a democratic system give up old version of their systems, which could not fulfilled basic necessity of the peoples' rights. In 1980s, Morocco has once tried to acquire

European Membership, which was turned down by the Commission because of the reason of not being European country. Morocco is a big trading partner of the EU, France and United States. The 2011 region-wide pro-democracy demonstrations seem to be the biggest threat that serves warning notice for the latent democratization process of Morocco.

Contemporarily, the European Union is one of the most powerfully strong and reliable regional organizations in terms of democracy promotion especially in the third world countries. The Union is regionally intergovernmental body that stands on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, which has been developed and consolidated in the framework of the Union's external relations. However, this Union carries the slogan of succeeding in favouring fast democratization in three countries during 1970s and 1980s: Greece, Spain and Portugal, and recently the Central Eastern European Countries (CEECs) through its main central instrument of conditionality and incentive for membership. Nowadays, the Union continues applying the strategy of incentive for membership towards the candidature of Turkey and Croatia (Baracani, 2005).

## DEMOCRACY A NATURAL BEING OF EU

membership of the European Union is granted to countries satisfied the basic principles of the “Copenhagen Criterion”, which are: stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities; existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the union and the ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union (EU, 2011).

The European Union is, from the strategic point of view, a group of partner countries who ratified agreement that the function of the Union shall be founded on well-meaning democratic representation. In the Article 10 of the “Treaty of Lisbon”, Member States are represented in the European Council by their heads of state or government and in the Council by their governments, themselves democratically accountable either to their national parliament, or to their citizens. Every citizen has the right to participate in the democratic life of the Union. Decisions are taken as openly and as closely as possible to the citizens (Treaty on European Union, 2007). In the course of climate change in international politics with the end of Cold War, the EU place promotion of democracy, human rights issue and rule of law a prominent agenda of its new foreign policy. This mission was legally enshrined in the treaty of Maastricht of 1992/93 (Hüllen, 2009).

After the catastrophic incident of the Second World War, Western European leaders engaged in shaping their commitments for the long-term peace and stability in Europe. However, in response to the severe economic damages caused by the War, the leaders strove to secure a favourable environment for sustainable economic growth. In 1952, six countries namely: Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, and Netherlands, established the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). In 1957, five years later, the six countries signed two new treaties in Rome. This treaty established the European Economic Community (EEC) aimed at developing common economic policies and merge the separate national markets into single market in which goods, people, capital, and service could move freely.

While in the second treaty the six countries established European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) to ensure the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. These treaties came into force in 1958 and known as “Treaties of Rome”. In 1967, the ECSC, EEC and EURATOM have collectively become the European Community (EC). The United Kingdom, Ireland, and Denmark were the first countries to join the Community in 1973 after the six co-founder states, Greece in 1981, followed by Spain and Portugal in 1986 and on January 1995 other three countries: Austria, Finland and Sweden joined. These new memberships

transformed the Community to the body of 15 member-states (Kristin, 2012).

Since then the Community has been admitting additional countries and granting them full membership across the continent. As for 2007, Bulgaria and Romania were the last countries added to the EU regional body. This turned the member-countries into 27 memberships with other five on the status of candidature. These include Iceland, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey; three potential candidates: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Croatia with status of ascendancy.

## ENLARGEMENT POLICY, THE VISION FOR DEMOCRATIZATION

Throughout its mission of enlargement policy, EU put democratization as priority and primary agenda to the bidding nations. It is also working with the former communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe to revive their political systems setting and reform economies in order to be considered for the European Union membership. This enlargement serves in fulfilling a historic pledge to extend integration of the continent through peaceful means, and end decades of artificial division, and help make Europe whole and free (Kristin, 2012).

For the last fifty five years since the first move of the Union, the EU continues to influence and attract the countries in the region without membership. Perhaps, this is a buoyant opportunity to impose its conditionality over the membership bidding-countries. It is simultaneously, the right time to use its financial aid packages to sponsor multiple programs in Neighbouring and Mediterranean countries including Morocco, which aimed at promoting well-being condition of democracy in such countries most of whom are Arabs. EU normally uses two channels for the mission of democracy promotion assistance in the Mediterranean. First, the external cooperation programs for the region, *measures d’accompagnement* (MEDA), and second channel is MEDA’s successor, the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). These two channels finance large-scale projects that are subject to financing agreements with the target country’s government (Van Hüllen, 2011).

## EU AND DEMOCRACY PROMOTION IN THE MAGHREB SUB-REGION

The EU’s relations with South of the Mediterranean third world nations built on several regional policy frameworks developed since early 1990s. A decade earlier, EU developed the idea of democracy promotion as one of her foreign policy objectives including Mediterranean states in a broader range of development policy which sparse beyond African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries.

This commitment has been seen through since 1990s (Van Hüllen, 2009). During the Barcelona Process, the EU attempted to address its democracy enhancement in the Maghreb area of North Africa.

EU treats the region as a whole, which has to contend with some certain realities. For example, the colonial legacy, the role of Islam, oil and gas linkages, pressure of migration and the nature and linkages between Maghreb Diaspora in Europe and their home countries. That distinguishes the Maghreb from other large regions like *Mashreq* (East) or Sub-Saharan Africa, where colonialism left a different legacy. But the fact remains that for all the features these regions demonstrated none of the North African regimes showed commitments to democratization as understood by Europe. Morocco is the only country whose authorities come to make positive statements on democracy and human rights. Morocco has also gone furthest down the road of expanding political pluralism (Gillespie and Whitehead, 2002).

Throughout the Maghreb region, Morocco is the only country run by monarchy, and one of the most moderate Arab countries with tangible improvement in democracy. There is a joint commitment to human rights and democracy enshrined in the Barcelona Declaration (1995) and the bilateral Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements (EMAA). EU has developed a set of instruments to promote democracy vis-à-vis its Mediterranean partners. These instruments primarily aim at persuading, socializing, and capacity-building. EU and Morocco have longstanding bilateral relations that date back to the 1960s.

Considering Maghreb sub-region in the Euro-Mediterranean relations, Morocco is one of the first countries to negotiate EMAA with EU. Compared to the remaining regional countries in contrast, Morocco has actively showed her commitments to engage EU democracy promotion efforts from the very beginning, heading to a full process of cooperation in which the implementation of political dialogue, democracy assistance, and conditionality is strongly linked to the domestic reform agenda (Van Hüllen, 2011). Recently, in post-Arab protests, EU increased the bulk of its financial package to Morocco to total amount of 112 million Euros in two areas to cover forest management and protection; and public administration and management of the government's finances. According to the EU enlargement Commissioner, these allocations are aimed at reflecting the priorities of the EU-Morocco partnership in the new neighbourhood policy, for more effective government and closer touch with the people of Morocco, Moroccan regional development with balanced use of the country's natural resources (EU, 2012).

In her 2011 Joint Communication to the European Council, European Parliament, European Economic and Social Committee on partnership for democracy and shared prosperity with Southern Mediterranean; following the North Africa's political bombardments, EU responded and stated that a partnership for democracy

and shared prosperity with Southern Mediterranean should be built under some three key elements:

- a) Democratic transformation and institution-building, with a particular focus on fundamental freedoms, constitutional, constitutional reforms, reforms of the judiciary and fighting against corruption;
- b) A stronger partnership with the people, with specific emphasis on support to civil society and on enhanced opportunities for exchanges and people-to-people contacts with a particular focus on the young;
- c) Sustainable and inclusive growth and economic development especially support to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), vocational and educational training, improving health and education systems and development of the poorest regions (European Commission, 2011).

During such meeting, the Union has nevertheless, fragmented its immediate response to the profound transformation in North Africa into eight action agendas. These actions include:

- i) Immediate Response with humanitarian aid of 30 million Euros to tackle the most humanitarian needs in Libya and of displaced persons at the Tunisian and Egyptian borders;
- ii) Adaptation of the European Union approach, which composes reviewing and adjusting EU Neighbourhood Policy, moving towards advanced status in Association Agreements and enhancing political dialogue;
- iii) Democracy and Institution Building through expanding support to civil society, establishing a Civil Society Neighbourhood Facility and Support Social Dialogue Forum;
- iv) Tackling the Challenges of Mobility such as reinforcing local Schengen cooperation, make full use of improvements in EU Visa Code and concluding mobility partnership;
- v) Promoting inclusive economic development, which means promoting Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs) and job creation, seeking agreement of Member States to increase European Investment Bank (EIB) lending by 1 billion Euro, and working with other shareholders to extend the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) mandate to countries of the region;
- vi) Ensuring Maximum Impact of Trade and Investment that aimed at adopting Pan-Mediterranean preferential rules of origin, approving rapidly agreement on agricultural and fisheries products, speeding up negotiations on trade in services and deep Free Trade Areas;
- vii) Enhancing sectoral co-operation by establishing an EU-South Mediterranean Energy Community, launching agricultural and rural development support programme, increasing participation in education programme and developing Internet and other communication facilities; and finally
- viii) EU-Financial Assistance in which bilateral programme of the European Neighbourhood Partnership

Instrument and provision of additional fund will be focused (European Commission, 2011: 04-12).

In this case, in terms of post-revolts support, there was no single agenda designed to target Morocco in particular with specific emphasis as the events were not so worst whereupon compared to the rest of the remaining countries in the region. For example, the catastrophic consequences that the uprisings left behind in Libya and Tunisia or even Egypt were very much dangerous than those in Morocco.

## **EU-MOROCCO: PARTNERSHIP AND NEIGHBOURHOOD**

Greater support for political, economic, social and regulatory reforms within EU's neighbouring countries, and gradual participation in the internal market and in certain European programs make EU to propose a new framework for relations named "European Neighbourhood Policy" (ENP). In 2004 Morocco was among the invited countries to join the new launched program, which aims at peace, prosperity and stability through which EU intends to remote division between her and neighbouring states on the matters of security, political, economic, social and cultural fields (Granada Summit, 2010: 04). This new invented policy mainly aims to boost and broadening the scope of relations with neighbouring states with no prospect of membership. Still it's for EU to work harder in order to create a space of prosperity and shared values, based on free exchange, gradual economic integration, closer political and cultural relations, consolidated cross-border cooperation, responsibility sharing in matters related to prevention and conflict resolution. Contextually, the European Neighbourhood Policy can transcend the purely commercial dimension highlighted in the Barcelona Process. To this effect the ENP has to be a driving force for the reform processes initiated by the partners in the face of broader opening up policy. On the other hand Morocco has of course, welcomed upon the Policy and has drawn up an action plan with EU (Government of Morocco, 2009: 04).

These concerns have been identified by the EU Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, Stefan Füle during his official visit to Morocco for the first time after parliamentary elections held in November 2011. Füle pronounced while holding talks with Moroccan officials that he came to Rabat with a clear message that the Commission stands firmly behind the Moroccan reform efforts and expect these efforts to be continued. Füle continued expressing his satisfaction with the several important changes, which have occurred in Morocco: new constitution was approved in the July referendum, free and fair elections were held and now the new government is taking the reform agenda forward. Hence, EU will extend its support and increase cooperation which reflects the needs and ambitions of its partners not only Morocco.

For wider progress in democratic and economic reforms there will be more EU assistance. Once more, the partnership on the Moroccan side expressed willingness to increase bilateral cooperation and dialogue on a wide range of issues, underlining that Morocco would be a strong and reliable partner for EU (EU, 2012).

## **EU-MOROCCO AREAS OF CONCENTRATION**

In November 1995, European Mediterranean Partners (EMP) or Barcelona Process was launched with the aim of establishing a common area of peace, stability, shared prosperity, develop human resources and promote understanding between cultures and exchanges between civil societies among the EU members and partner countries of Mediterranean under three main diverse areas: political and security, economic and financial, and social and cultural. Apart from the above cooperation, EU yet committed to financial aid to supporting good governance in Morocco through the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements MEDA. Notwithstanding closest relations between the two parties, in 1992 there broke a crisis over the issue of human rights, the very reason on which the European Parliament decided to stop the financial protocol to Morocco based on what Morocco-in retaliation-threatened to cancel its fisheries agreements with EU. In the same year talks between the EU and Morocco aiming at establishing a free trade agreement and enhancing political cooperation between them was initiated. By the end of the year, 1992, the aid package was reinstated for Morocco and fisheries agreement had also been renewed (Bremberg, 2011).

The overall budget for the bilateral EU assistance to Morocco in the framework of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) will amount to € 580.5 million for 2011-2013. The sum amount is used to tackle up instability within the five priority areas: development of social policies, economic modernization, Institutional support, good governance and human rights, and environmental protection. These key areas especially in rural development, health and housing are an essential target of the EU intervention (ENPI, 2011). In a report released by the Moroccan Ministry of Economic and Finance (2007), it is clearly mentioned that the National Indicative Program (NIP) was set up in form of what could be called 'negotiation' between Morocco and EU, nevertheless, the program was framed within the circle of Neighbourhood and Partnership Instruments (ENPI) to identify the operations to be financed in accordance with the granted budget of 654 million Euro to Morocco for the stipulated period of three years 2007-2010. Meanwhile, the aimed at specific and crucial sectors deal with economic and social development of the country.

The implementation of these programs according to the report, impinges on different instruments, among which is the recourse to a sector-based taxation

adjustment consisting of a direct budgetary aid but subject to a rigorous management of public finance. This NIP will however be assessed half way through the programme. Again, according to the European Commission, the said assessment was due to take place one year after the program was launched i.e. 2008. That would be an opportunity to see whether if it would appropriately be able to introduce new programs with possibility to relocate a budget within the NIP (Department of Studies and Financial Forecast, Ministry of Economic and Finance, Kingdom of Morocco, 2007: 07). The selected areas that fall under financial consideration are: social sector; governance and human rights sector; institutional support sector; economic and environmental sector. 45.3 percent of the budget (654 million Euros) was dedicated to social sector, while economic sector was given 36.7%, governance and human Rights sector got 4.3 percent, institutional support sector got 6.1 percent and the remaining 7.6 percent went to environmental sector.

### EU-MOROCCO 'ACTION PLAN'

Getting her application rejected on the ground of missing some natural characteristics and/or qualifications halted Morocco to continue bidding for the membership in the European regional body. Proximity, geographical demarcation and historical tales together with other qualities make Morocco one of the top and largest European partners in the southern Mediterranean Sea. EU decided to enlarge its functions across South of the Mediterranean. This proposal became reality on first May 2004. Thus the action has profoundly brought about changes in its political, geographical, social and economic conditions. Palpably, this decision has caused provision of deepening ties with its neighbours probably from East and South of the Mediterranean countries, and goes far beyond the association.

These neighbouring states could perhaps enjoy economic integration through collaboration with the EU internal market. Over the last two decades or so, the bilateral ties between EU and Morocco supported by many mechanisms and institutions under Association Council and Association Committee those have been organized at the ministerial and top executive levels respectively. Other sub-committees that cover areas such as internal market, industry, commerce of goods and services, transport, environment and energy, research and innovation, agriculture and fisheries, justice and security, human right issues, democratization and governance were also initiated for handling the cooperation and keeping them concreted (Document of the Ministry of Economy and Finance, government of Morocco, 2007: 3). Through the intermediate of the action plan, EU commits to offering technical support to the reforms undertaken by the Moroccan administration. Even though the support seems thing that has strong relation with EU's norms while assessing a membership

candidate, this is a set of conditionality and principles that the 'case-country' should satisfy then only 'Action Plan' could be applied justifiably.

### ACTION PLAN'S PRIOR COUNTRIES AND ITS IMPACTS ON MOROCCAN REFORMATIONS

Morocco plus Moldova, Ukraine, Tunisia, Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian Territories are among the first countries set up the 'action plan' with EU (Ministry of Economy, Morocco, 2007:5). The plan has been adopted by EU in July 2005 and was also subjected to a mid-term evaluation, which also concluded that Morocco had made significant progress in accelerating institutional reforms and economic modernization. Regarding Morocco-EU action plan in particular has some major six axes. Each of these axes makes up a number of actions of two terms: short and medium terms. In the first term, which is short, some aspects relating to the exchange of experience and expertise as well as capacity building in regulatory and normative domain are covered. While the second term or medium, covers more structuring aspects pertaining to the implementation of different reforms in the economic and institutional field, as well as the alignment with European standards and norms.

Morocco and European Union determined to utilize this chance and bilaterally promote security, stability, and prosperity based on common values and interests. Again, for Morocco, agreement with EU might represent fundamental foreign policy choice through the conclusion of reciprocal undertaking and promoting regional and sub-regional dimension particularly in the context of Euro-Mediterranean process. The 25 May 2004 Agadir Free Trade Agreement is among the paradigm of model of economic integration in the region. These kinds of commitments are practical responses that could chance Morocco to progress towards advanced status in its relationship with the European Union (EU, 2006).

As for the EU, the scope's priorities of the EU-Morocco Association Agreement of the Action Plan, which also simultaneously reflects the Morocco's priorities include:

- a) Pursuing legislative reform and installation the provisions of the International Human Rights' provisions;
- b) Advancement of political dialogue based on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the European Union and, European Spatial for Development Perspective (ESDP) criterion, and enhancing cooperation on the war against terrorism;
- c) Negotiating agreement on liberalizing trade services;
- d) Developing conducive climate for foreign direct investment, growth and sustainable development;
- e) Cooperation on social policy aiming at reducing poverty and creating jobs;
- f) Support for education and training system, scientific research and information technologies which are crucial factors in the country' economic development;

g) Development in the energy sector focusing on interconnections and infrastructure under optimal safety, competitiveness, and quality conditions. These interconnections will however, include margin of electricity markets between Morocco and European Union, which also could subsequently lead in curbing of Memorandum of Understanding based on the gradual integration of the entire Maghreb region's electricity markets into the European Union's one.

The EU's released report of 2012, indicate that both EU and Morocco will jointly review the content of the plan base on which they will decide upon any adaptations and updates required for the satisfaction of the agreement. Meanwhile, the immediate outcomes of the applied test may drive both EU and Morocco (after the first three years) to think over next step for deepening up bilateral relations, who could possibly bring about new contractual links (EU, 2012).

### THE 'ADVANCED STATUS' IN PROMOTING MOROCCAN DEMOCRATIZATION

So far, the European Union has reached conclusion on several ratified agreements with the government of Morocco; these very agreements are seen to strengthen Morocco to emerge and/or maintain the status of becoming the first partner of the European Union in the region. The Barcelona Process or Barcelona Declaration of 1995 played a significant role to empower those agreements toward implementing economic cooperation between the two sides and exploit the natural resources in exchange of financial compensation (Balboni, 2008: 2). After all, approval of the Morocco's application to the Union for the granting of 'Advanced Status' and the Union's accreditation towards Moroccan plea is a signal showing how much both sides are comfortable with the updated status quo. Nevertheless, that may also allow potential for gradual integration between Moroccan economic and trade branches, and move forward focusing on democratic consolidation in the country.

If not more than that, at least Morocco ideally shakes hand with integral economy, political stability and enriched security and other related issues, which coincidentally are going shoulder to shoulder with strong collaborations it has with other external actors. As per 2008 the most recent step in the process of institutionalizing EU-Morocco relations was 'Advance Status' with EU upon following the Action Plan. According to him, the first meeting of the ad-hoc working group to explore the modalities of deepening bilateral ties between EU and Morocco was held in January 2008, and subsequent meetings were held in May, July and September in the same year. This working group included representatives from three different boards of concern i.e. the Commission, EU member states and Morocco (Bremberg, 2011).

One and a half years from the inception of the Advanced Status or *Statut Avancé* in its French acronym,

a regrettable episode was narrated in 2010. It indicated that in late 2009 one of the Saharawi activists, Aminatou Haidar was illegally expelled by Moroccan authorities from Western Sahara and eventually spent 32 days on hunger strike on Spanish territory before Morocco allowed her to return back following the massive international pressure on the kingdom. That incident caused doubt in mind of the Europe to ask whether Morocco deserved an upgrading of its ties with EU (Kausch, 2010: 1). An 'Advanced Status' might stands for a cemented relations between EU and second party, but in EU-Morocco case perhaps, there is slighter difference. This is highlighted in the statement released by European Commission's Directorate General Relex during interview that the Moroccans consider something concrete, while the commission's members call it 'deepening relation' between the two parties (Bremberg, 2011).

### MOROCCO-EU STANCES IN THE POST-'ADVANCED STATUS' PERIOD

Ten years after Morocco started fashionable reforms through modernization, liberalization and relative democratization, the European Union (EU) granted her "Advanced Status". The paradoxical phrase sponsored many questions: does EU give Morocco a full membership status? Answer to this particular question is direct no. Rather, Morocco is a test for the EU to examine its influential strength and strategies as well as a platform to illustrate its democratizing effect. Every step of Morocco towards democracy and human rights is a credit for the EU since the EU directly backs up the Moroccan reforms (Dincaslan, 2011).

According to the EU, Advanced Status does not mean the end of the process either, instead they see it as a continuing process of deepening relationship through many areas where there are needs to go further. One author argues that the drawn lines on the road map for the 'Advanced Status' accordingly reflects the wish to create a common economic space characterized by a greater integration of the Moroccan economy into the EU market. This goal is to be realized through the development of joint actions in four key crosscutting areas: the alignment of Morocco's legal system with the EU *acquis*, the conclusion of the comprehensive and deeper free trade agreement, cooperation in economic and social development, and participation by Morocco in Trans-European Networks and sector-specific cooperation schemes (Jiadi, 2009).

This 'Advanced Status' is seemingly seen to be the mere means of extending cooperation to the EU's southern and eastern Mediterranean neighbours not only Morocco. Nevertheless, for Morocco, the evolution towards an advanced status with Europe is an alternative way to take up further step toward integration its economy into the EU market, which experts consider as a process that could open door to deepen its regional

integration, taking into account the expected effects in terms of creating new flows of trade and investments. Addition to the access to participate in EU different programs, 'Advanced Status' is seen through three dimensions, first, politically, Morocco has the opportunity to adhere to the conventions and structures of the Council of Europe. Second, economically, it could gradually integrate its economy into the EU internal market, and have greater connection to the Trans-European Networks, i.e. energy, transportation, etc. Third, socially; it will promote mutual cooperation in training and research and the development of technology platforms including businesses (Boutaina, 2011).

The recently agricultural agreement signed between two parties: EU and Morocco on 17 February 2012 is yet 'grist to the mill' for the 2008 concluded 'Action Plan'. In a press release by the European Commission, it indicated that the new agricultural agreement will give substance to the Advance Status; it will nonetheless create investment opportunities for EU companies and help to provide jobs in Morocco, therefore reducing the temptation to find better living opportunities abroad. Moreover, in terms of the vision of the gradual economic integration of the neighbours, including Morocco, in the EU's internal market, the Commissioner Füle asserted that the agreement with Morocco is a building block of this exercise and its adoption will probably send a very positive signal to the entire EU's partners in East and South. Likewise, Commissioner Ciolos admitted that the agreement is very much important in various aspects including economic and political ones. It is however a kind of balancing agreement which opens new opportunities for the EU's producers in Europe. Meanwhile, it also paves the way for a real reinforcement of EU-Morocco relations, including the opening of negotiations for a future bilateral agreement of geographical indications, which at the time of writing this thesis is ready to for discussion.

## CONCLUSION

European Union's commitments to democracy in South of the Mediterranean and in the Maghreb sub-region specifically in Morocco are seeing very much effective. The conditionality uses by EU toward the countries intended to join the group and for the pledges receiving nations in the Mediterranean Neighbourhood has strong influences in promoting democracy in those areas. As far as Morocco is concerned, prior to the Arab springs, the country has already capitulated to the obligatory desire of the EU. Many organizations and committees addition to the programs sponsored directly by the EU, focus on promoting the condition of human rights in Morocco. In previous days, the record of human rights in Morocco was very much poor. It therefore, convinced EU to thwart her financial support to Morocco resumed only after Moroccan regime agreed to revive various sectors:

social, economic and political one including human rights, and active political participation of citizenry.

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**APPENDIX 1: COMPONENTS OF MOROCCO-EU ACTION PLAN**

<b>Actions</b>			<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Components</b>
1.	Political reforms	dialogue and	Deepening democratic principles and the rule of law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Democracy</li> <li>- Human Rights</li> <li>- Social rights and core labour standards</li> <li>- Consolidation of macroeconomic fundamentals.</li> <li>- Structural reforms and transition towards a market economy.</li> <li>- Reform of the agricultural sector.</li> <li>- Cooperation in terms of employment and social policy.</li> </ul>
2.	Economic reform	and social	Modernization and economic upgrading to better prepare Morocco for free exchange and consolidate capacity to absorb exogenous shocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regional and local development</li> <li>- Trade liberalization, modernization of customs exercise normalization of technical regulation, sanitary and phytosanitary issues.</li> <li>- Right of establishment, right of firms and services</li> <li>- Movement of capital current payment flow.</li> <li>- Circulation of people</li> <li>- Other domains (taxation, competition, state subsidies, consumer rights, property rights, public procurement, management and control of public finance, environment of the enterprise</li> </ul>
3.	Commerce, market regulatory reforms	and	Liberalization of exchange and investment flow as well as the standardization of regulations related to workers' movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Management of migratory flow</li> <li>- Border management</li> <li>- Fight against organized crime</li> <li>- Fight against drug trafficking and money laundering</li> <li>- Implementation of national policies and consolidation of regional cooperation in the domain of transport.</li> <li>- Consolidation of the Moroccan policy on energy and of regional cooperation in the field</li> <li>- Information Technology (regulation of electronic communications) deepening of cooperation on environment related issues</li> </ul>
4.	Cooperation home affairs	justice and	Standardization of legislation in matters related to immigration, consolidation of cooperation in the domain of trans-border security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion of Research and Development</li> <li>- Education, training, youth and sport.</li> <li>- Cultural cooperation, civil society and health</li> </ul>
5.	Transport, energy, IT environment, science, technology, Research and Development		Modernisation and consolidation of transport and energy infrastructures, as well as assistance to technological development	
6.	Contacts between the people		Cultural rapprochement	

Source: Ministry of Economy and Finance (web site) Government of Morocco: 2007