

Policy Brief

N O V E M B E R 2 0 2 3

Security Council Resolution 2703: Same old, same old

By Mohammed Loulichki

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Adoption by UN Security Council on October 27, 2023 of resolution 2703 (2023) on the question of the Moroccan Sahara took place amidst a regional context of persistent tension between Morocco and Algeria, and repeated ceasefire violations by the Polisario, culminating in unprecedented escalation on the night of October 28-29, targeting the town of Smara, and leading to casualties. The new resolution was passed when international attention focused on the tragic events in Gaza, overshadowing the war in Ukraine. This twofold context prompted the Council to renew the same resolution, despite attempts by the Russia and Mozambique delegations to introduce amendments aimed at removing references to compromise, realism and pragmatism, and to include a human rights monitoring component in MINURSO's mandate. The new text thus confirms the pre-eminence of Morocco's autonomy proposal, the merits of a political settlement based on compromise, the importance of conducting a census of the population of Tindouf, and the value of round-table discussions in relaunching the negotiation process.



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Introduction

On October 27, 2023, the Security Council adopted resolution 2703 on the question of the Moroccan Sahara, with 13 votes in favor and 2 abstentions (Russian Federation and Mozambique), extending the mandate of MINURSO until October 31, 2024.

The resolution was adopted amidst a regional context of persistent tension between Morocco and Algeria, and continued ceasefire violations by the Polisario, acknowledged and denounced once again by the Secretary-General and the Security Council. These violations escalated to unprecedented levels on the night of October 28-29, dragging the region into a state of affairs that jeopardizes the peace and security of its peoples. Indeed, on the eve of the Council's adoption of the new resolution, the Polisario targeted the town of Smara with rockets for the first time, causing the death of one person and seriously injuring two others.

The new resolution was also adopted in an international environment absorbed by the tragic events in Gaza which in the space of a few days overshadowed the ongoing showdown between the West and Russia in Ukraine.

This twofold context prompted the Council to renew the previous resolution given the lack of any breakthrough in the political process, stemming from Morocco's determination that autonomy should be the sole and inescapable framework for negotiations to bring the issue to an international conclusion, and from both Algeria's and the Polisario's rejection of any solution that does not satisfy the right to self-determination.

The political process: persistent deadlock

Since the resignation of Mr. Horst Kohler as Personal Envoy - to whom we owe, the December 2018 and March 2019 round tables that brought together all four parties to this dispute for the first time since 2012 - the political process has been in a prolonged stalemate with no prospect of relaunch.

Former Personal Envoy Horst Kohler justified the recourse to roundtables by the need to encourage the four stakeholders to engage in relaunching the negotiation process after a six-year hiatus, without prejudice to the claims of Algeria and the Polisario as to their true status and responsibility in the final settlement of this dispute.

Yet on October 12, 2021, two years ago, Algeria notified the Security Council of its "formal and irreversible rejection of the round-table format, which has become counterproductive", accusing Morocco of "using this format to oppose the decolonization of the Sahara".

(Statement by Mr. Amar Belani, Algerian Special Envoy for Western Sahara and the Maghreb countries). This was followed, quite logically, on November 30, 2021, by the Polisario calling for direct and exclusive bilateral negotiations with Morocco under the aegis of the African Union, instead of this flexible framework.

Despite the solemn and categorical wording of these protests and refusals, they found no echo either in the Secretary-General's report of October 2 (Document S/2023/729) or in resolution 2073 of October 30, 2023. Nevertheless, Algeria's and the Polisario's refusal to return to these meetings forced the new Personal Envoy, Staffan De Mistura, to attempt separate talks and bilateral meetings in the capitals or in New York, to flesh out proposals for his report to the Security Council, and to build momentum for a resumption.

Thus, in application of resolution 2654 (2022), the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy initiated several forms of interaction with the parties in an attempt to relaunch the negotiation process, and sought to mobilize members of the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General for the Sahara along the same lines. Positions conveyed by the four parties to the Secretary-General and outlined in the latter's report to the Council do not bode well for a return to negotiations.

The Secretary-General's report: an admission of impotence

In his 2023 report, the Secretary-General implicitly confirmed the value and usefulness of round tables "by urging all parties concerned to broach the process facilitation by my Personal Envoy in a spirit of openness, and to refrain from setting preconditions for the political process. In guiding the present and future course of action, due account should be taken of precedents set by my former personal envoys under existing Security Council resolutions"(para.91).

He also denounced the tensions provoked by the Polisario along the defensive wall and "obstacles to the freedom of movement" of MINURSO, without going so far as to make it responsible for the unilateral breakdown of the ceasefire and the deterioration of the situation in the buffer zone.

With regard to tensions between Algeria and Morocco, the Secretary-General reiterated his "concern at their deterioration" and "encourages both countries to re-establish dialogue in order to repair ties and renew efforts towards regional cooperation, in particular to create an environment conducive to peace and security". In this regard, the Secretary-General "noted with relief assurances given by Algiers and Rabat, that there was no intention of military escalation"(para.93).

The report gave an account of the visit of the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy to the Sahara, on September 5-7. Staffan De Mistura toured a number of infrastructure projects, including the site of the Dakhla Atlantic port currently under construction, and held meetings with representatives of regional human rights commissions operating in Dakhla and Laâyoune and local elected officials, who expressed support for the Moroccan autonomy proposal and for UN efforts to end the suffering of families and loved ones in the Tindouf camps in Algeria. These concerns were echoed by the Security Council in Resolution 2703.

In short, a factual and descriptive report that avoids apportioning blame for the ceasefire breakdown, and which gives a balanced picture of the human rights situation of populations living on both sides of the wall, while insisting on "the need for independent, impartial, comprehensive and regular monitoring of the human rights situation to ensure the protection of all inhabitants of the Sahara". As for the situation of populations in the camps of Tindouf, the report still sidelines the census, failing to expose Algeria's refusal to authorize the High Commissioner for Refugees to determine the actual number of Saharawis.

Preparing and voting the resolution

On October 20, 2023, the US delegation usually responsible for preparing the draft resolution on the Sahara issue circulated a preliminary version and convened a first round of negotiations for the following October 24. The draft took up the essence of resolution 2654 (2022), adding factual and non-controversial elements designed to update the

resolution. However, while the majority of Council members supported the draft as it stood, Mozambique and Russia felt what the draft presented unbalanced, and jointly and separately submitted amendments to the U.S. drafter to:

- include a broader reference to all previous personal envoys' contributions, rather than singling out Mr. Horst Köhler, thus giving the impression of favoring the round-table format he promotes;
- distinguish clearly between Morocco and the Polisario Front, and the neighboring countries of Algeria and Mauritania;
- include new wording emphasizing the need to enable Saharawi people to exercise their right to self-determination by holding a referendum;
- confine itself to referring to the political solution as a negotiated and mutually acceptable solution, and to discarding references to compromise, realism and pragmatism, and
- include a human rights monitoring component to closely monitor human rights in the Sahara.

After two rounds of negotiations within the "Group of Friends" and with the rest of Council members, the US delegation, seeking to renew the same text as that of 2022, without making any substantial changes, chose to ignore the proposals of the two delegations and put the unchanged draft to a silent procedure on October 25, with the intention of putting it to a vote the following day. Despite Russia's breach of the silent procedure, the US delegation maintained its decision to put the draft to a vote without incorporating any of the submitted amendments.

Resolution 2703: a political solution with unalterable parameters

With the exception of paragraphs 5 and 12 of the Preamble, which are otherwise inconsequential, the resolution is an exact reproduction of the 2022 resolution. This is attributable not only to the lack of progress in Mr. De Mistura's efforts, but also to the fact that events in Gaza have absorbed the attention of the Council and the international community.

A closer look at the wording of the new resolution clearly confirms the identity of all parties involved, including Algeria, the purpose and framework of the political solution, and the path to achieve it. Algeria is directly and expressly called upon by the Security Council, which once again requests "greater participation in the political process and progress towards a political solution". The same resolution stresses the need for all parties to demonstrate political will to "achieve a realistic, pragmatic, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution to the question of Western Sahara, based on compromise". This reference is underlined repeatedly in resolution 2703, and is the outline for a solution that the Security Council considers most likely to "contribute to stability and security in the Sahel region, which would create jobs, growth and opportunities for all inhabitants of the region". In conclusion, the autonomy initiative retains pre-eminence and relevance as the only proposal that satisfies the parameters outlined by the Council for a compromise political solution.

With regard to the roundtables, the Council welcomed the momentum generated by the

two roundtable sessions in December 2018 and March 2019, and the fact that all four parties engaged, in a serious and respectful manner, in the UN-initiated political process to find common ground. It also recalled the significant contributions of the former Personal Envoy in leading the roundtable process, and also welcomed the convening, by the current Personal Envoy, of consultations with Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania and the Polisario, as well as Spain, the United States of America, the Russian Federation, France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland at UN headquarters on March 27-31, 2023. It also expressed "full support for Staffan De Mistura, the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy for Western Sahara, and his efforts to move the political process forward, building on progress made by the former Personal Envoy and in line with relevant precedents". With this reminder, the Council reaffirms the value of this form of interaction in creating momentum that benefits its mediation and helps the parties move towards a mutually acceptable political solution.

In this new resolution, the Council keeps the wording discreet on a key issue, that of the census of Tindouf "refugees". This conventional requirement, the fulfillment of which would at last shed light on the true size and identity of camp populations, is still impudently obstructed by Algeria, with the Council failing to address it voluntarily and consistently. By dealing with this issue in the Preamble without giving it an operational character through inclusion of a paragraph in the operative part, thereby giving it tangible effect and putting pressure on Algeria, the Council perpetuates an untenable status quo for the "refugees" and their families.

After being put to the vote on October 30, the resolution won 13 votes in favor, none against and two abstentions, from Russia and Mozambique. It should be recalled that the Sahara resolution has not been unanimous since 2018, but at no time has it been subject to a veto by one of the permanent members or a negative vote by a non-permanent member. Indeed, in the last six years, the resolution was systematically abstained from by the Russian Federation, and twice by China. As for non-permanent members, Bolivia (2018), Ethiopia (twice in 2018), South Africa (3 times in 2019-2020, the first year resulting in the adoption of two resolutions), Tunisia (2021), and Kenya (2022) have all abstained.

Voting on the resolution- explained:

France: Change through continuity

France's attitude and position was closely scrutinized, and public opinion and observers awaited a signal from Paris to confirm the beginning of a thaw in relations between the Kingdom and France, especially in light of recent trends in bilateral relations illustrated by the long-awaited accreditation of the two countries' ambassadors and the visit, on October 3, 2023, of a high-level French delegation, comprising French military attachés and diplomats, to Laâyoune, capital of the Sahara.

The French Ambassador recalled "France's historic, clear and constant support for the Moroccan autonomy plan. This plan is on the table since 2007. It is now time to move forward. With this in mind, France encourages all parties to commit to a pragmatic, realistic, lasting solution based on compromise, and supports the efforts of the Personal Envoy to resume the round tables.

It is a fact that France was among the first members of the Council to support the autonomy initiative as soon as it was presented, and this support was confirmed almost every year

since. France's call to move forward on this initiative is a small but significant step in the right direction, provided it is followed by action. The statement made to Radio 2M on November 13, 2023 by France's Ambassador to Morocco, Christophe Lecourtier, goes along the same lines. Referring to the Autonomy Plan, the French diplomat declared: "We agree with Morocco's approach; we will support Morocco as much as possible through constant dialogue, which is now back on track so that this plan may be shared as widely as possible internationally. This is a reaffirmation of our commitment to be a faithful, creative and dynamic ally of what Morocco is undertaking and pursuing."

France's actions and attitude over the coming weeks and months will prove whether these declarations are taken up by European institutions, and next year by the Security Council, which will count Algeria as a non-permanent member.

The United States: recognition both ways

The US Permanent Representative regretted that "the Council did not vote unanimously to renew the mandate", adding that "a political solution is essential to promote a peaceful and prosperous future for the people of the Sahara" and that "the United States continues to regard Morocco's autonomy plan as a serious, credible and realistic proposal, and an approach that would satisfy these aspirations".

Such a formulation of the US position at the Council debates in no way contradicts the 2020 recognition formalized by the Trump Administration, the content of which was unequivocally reiterated by the State Department spokesman on July 19, 2023. In fact, the two positions are two sides of the same coin, in that Washington has internally recognized the Moroccan nature of the Sahara and autonomy as the only framework for negotiation, while supporting UN efforts to find a political solution acceptable to all parties. This is not "doublespeak", but recognition of the fact that, notwithstanding the weight and impact of US recognition, the search for any solution to this dispute at international level requires consensus within the Council, under whose aegis the Secretary-General's good offices have been deployed since 1990.

Russia's intriguing abstention

Russia justified its abstention on the following grounds:

- the fact that "none of the principled and duly substantiated observations, including those relating to compromise, which we have passed on to the drafter for several years, have been taken into account." and the Russian delegation's reminder that
- "since 2018, resolutions extending MINURSO's mandate have been amended in a way that, in our view, undermines the impartial and non-partisan approach to the Western Sahara issue";
- vague formulations have emerged that raise questions, as have formulations that refer to parties directly involved in the Western Sahara settlement process;
- the multiple references to the round-table format, which is no longer relevant and limits the Personal Envoy's mediation work, are no longer relevant. In this respect, we would like to reaffirm our consistent position on the Western Sahara settlement process;

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- we advocate for a balanced and impartial position. We support the efforts of the Personal Envoy to hold direct negotiations between Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO.
 - The final settlement formula must be based on mutually acceptable solutions that facilitate a just political settlement of the Western Sahara situation that is acceptable to both Morocco and the Polisario Front, and that provides for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara under procedures consistent with United Nations Charter purposes and principles;
 - our position only reflects the unscrupulous work of the drafters of the resolution presented today. Once again, this raises serious doubts as to the impartiality of the work of the drafters in charge of specific dossiers relating to specific countries in the fulfilment of their obligations.

The United Arab Emirates: a testament on behalf of the Gulf States

Sitting for the last time on the Council and nearing the end of his mandate, the United Arab Emirates representative was keen to reiterate his country's position, which boils down to the following points, and is echoed in the position of other Gulf Cooperation Council members:

- the round-table format, with all parties participating, will help break the political deadlock;
- the autonomy initiative put forward by the Kingdom of Morocco, which Security Council resolutions since 2007 have qualified as serious and credible, is the only way to achieve a concerted, just, lasting and pragmatic political solution;
- tribute to the cooperation between the Kingdom of Morocco and MINURSO, and its commitment to the ceasefire. The Polisario must cooperate fully with MINURSO, lift all restrictions that might hinder MINURSO's activities, and reaffirm its commitment to the ceasefire.
- the United Arab Emirates reaffirm its strong support for the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Morocco over the whole of the Moroccan Sahara, and insist that its territorial integrity must not be compromised.

Gabon: change with continuity

The Gabonese representative reiterated "his country's support for the Moroccan autonomy initiative, offering credible and reassuring prospects not only for putting an end to the current impasse, but also for achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution". He encouraged the Kingdom of Morocco to continue efforts to preserve the ceasefire and strengthen cooperation with MINURSO, and "called on all other parties to do likewise, in the interests of security and stability throughout the region."

Mozambique: the voice of its master

South Africa's dominates southern Africa and has influence over neighboring countries that continue to support its militancy for Polisario, countries like Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Namibia espouse Pretoria's line and serve its agenda when sitting on the Security Council.

It is therefore predictable that the representative of Mozambique's position is out of step with current developments. He set his country's objective for involvement in the Council on the Sahara issue as "helping MINURSO return to its fundamental objectives, namely the organization of a referendum for the self-determination of the Saharan people, as provided for in resolution 690 (1991) (by which he meant the Settlement Plan buried by the UN itself) and which is "anchored in General Assembly resolution 1514 (1960)".

In his view, "the resolution adopted will not help bring parties to a just, lasting and mutually accepted political solution, as originally envisaged. On the contrary, it prefigures a gradual abandonment of the mandate and merely postpones consideration of fundamental issues that still need to be addressed".

China's position: in the wake of Russia, but not too far behind

In substance, the Chinese representative supported "a just and lasting solution, acceptable to all parties, the fruit of consultations between the parties on an equal footing". In terms of approach, he expressed the hope "that discussions in the Council on future resolutions on MINURSO's mandate will take account of recent developments, and that the drafter (the United States) will encourage in-depth consultations within the Council with a view to building a broader consensus".

Stakeholder reactions to Resolution 2703

While Morocco welcomed the adoption of the new resolution, Algeria, contrary to its usual practice, refrained from any official comment, while the Polisario limited itself to "expressing gratitude to all countries that support the right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination and the decolonization process."

In a statement issued on October 30, Morocco justified its support for the new resolution by:

1. Growing international support from close to a hundred countries for the Moroccan Autonomy Initiative, and the opening of over thirty consulates general in Laâyoune and Dakhla;
2. Clearly identifying the parties to the political process, who must assume their political, legal and moral responsibilities in the search for a definitive solution to the regional dispute over the Moroccan Sahara;
3. Algeria is mentioned six times, i.e. as many times as Morocco, confirming that Algeria is indeed a main party to this artificial dispute;
4. The new resolution enshrines the round tables as the sole framework for the political process, with the participation of Algeria as a directly challenged stakeholder;
5. The Council confirms that a definitive political solution can only be a "realistic, pragmatic, lasting political solution based on compromise". These parameters are once again coupled with the Security Council's support for the Moroccan Autonomy Initiative, described as "serious and credible";
6. Another reprimand to Polisario for violations and restrictions on MINURSO's freedom of movement;

7. Renewed appeal to Algeria to fulfill treaty obligations on the registration of populations in the Tindouf camps.

As for official Algeria, it maintained absolute silence, and its press confined itself to reporting on adoption of the resolution. The only Algerian to react to the resolution was the Comité national algérien de solidarité avec le peuple sahraoui (CNASPS), which said it was "convinced of the capacity of the African Union (AU) to take part in the decolonization of Western Sahara, according to its fundamental principles and laws, insisting on the right of the Saharawi people to resist by all legitimate means to put an end to their suffering.

How can we explain Algeria's silence, having previously expressed satisfaction, criticism or rejection of all previous resolutions? The answer may lie in Algeria's desire to present itself in a new light on the eve of commencing its term on the Council on January 1, 2024. For a country whose ambition is to "carry the voice of Arab and African countries and ensure the defense of common strategic interests on issues falling within the competence of the Security Council" (Communiqué issued by the Presidency of the Republic on June 6, 2023), to criticize a resolution drafted, carried and supported by the Council's main power would be to jeopardize the prospects for cooperation with this country, and jeopardize Algeria's chances of playing a role on issues close to its heart, such as Mali, the Sahel and the Palestinian question, over the next two years. This attitude could be part of a two-stage Algerian strategy consisting of calming things down with Morocco in terms of communication, in order to lend credibility to a coordinating African role at the Council on which Mozambique and Sierra Leone sit, and, in the second stage, attempting to maneuver when the Sahara question is discussed by allying itself with Mozambique and, possibly, Russia.

This attitude of caution and procrastination is also explained by the stir in Algerian public opinion following the diplomatic setback in the country's bid to join BRICS, and the subsequent necessity for Algerian authorities to re-establish relations with Spain without solicitation or quid pro quo on the Sahara issue.

Finally, the Polisario preferred not to criticize the resolution openly and head-on, and confined itself to "expressing gratitude to all countries that support the right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination and the decolonization process"; At the same time, it "denounced the continuing silence by the Security Council and some of its members on the serious consequences of the violation by Moroccan forces of the ceasefire in 2020, which hampers the political peace process and UN Secretary-General's Personal Envoy for the Sahara's efforts to establish peace and security throughout the region".

To what extent could this resolution stir up the quicksand of the dispute? What conclusions might Morocco and the Security Council draw from the unprecedented attack on Smara on October 28, and what leverage does Algeria have to influence the course of the political process in the Sahara? One thing is certain: Algeria will be directly exposed if it does not act as a responsible Council member by refusing, for instance, withholding participation from the round tables, refusing to become more involved in the negotiations, or refusing to comply with the census request. It will be up to Morocco to make Algeria face its responsibilities as a member of the Council representing the interests of Africa, and particularly North Africa, on whose quota it was elected.

Once on the Council, Algeria will try to assert its leadership over the other two African members under the guise of coordinating and transposing African Union priorities and

strategies into the Council's agenda. It will strive to leverage cooperation between the UN and the African Union, and particularly between the two bodies' security councils, to revitalize the role of the African Peace and Security Council in dealing with the Sahara question.

In the meantime, three days before the vote on resolution 2703, the Polisario carried out an unprecedented operation targeting the town of Smara, followed by rocket fire from the buffer zone, reportedly targeting a MINURSO site near Smara airport, without causing any casualties. The Polisario timed this second operation to coincide with Morocco's celebration of the 48th anniversary of the Green March.

The King's Public Prosecutor at the Laâyoune Court of Appeal announced on October 29 the launch of an investigation by the judicial police into these acts and to determine their nature and responsibility. That same day, a delegation led by the Inspector General of the Royal Armed Forces (FAR) travelled to Mauritania for the 4th meeting of the Moroccan-Mauritanian Joint Military Commission, the final communiqué of which "stresses the need to consolidate the sharing of experience and expertise between the two armed forces and thus contribute to security and stability in the region".

It is possible that this trip was used to gather information and indications for the Polisario rocket attacks. The fact that this trip was followed, two weeks later, by the arrival of an Algerian delegation in Nouakchott to "strengthen bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries" raises questions on the origin of these attacks and possible differences within Algerian military hierarchy as to Polisario's freedom of action in carrying them out.

Once the investigations are complete, Moroccan authorities will inevitably draw the requisite conclusions and inform the UN Secretary-General, his Personal Envoy and the members of the Security Council. Morocco's Foreign Minister already made it clear before Parliament on November 15 that "Morocco was not in the escalation business, but rather acted with wisdom and determination, and will determine when and how it responds to the terrorist attacks on the town of Smara".

The Polisario claimed responsibility for these acts through its representative in New York on October 30, its representative in Brussels, who on the same day referred to what he described as "collateral damage", and in "military communiqué 901", reporting attacks in the Mahbes, Es-Smara and Farsia sectors.

By targeting innocent civilians, the polisario committed a terrorist act which implicates not only its responsibility but also the State whose territory was used for the preparation and launch of this act directed against Moroccan territory and inhabitants. Calls for the Polisario to return to the ceasefire have so far proved ineffective, and it is now time for the Council to force it to do so, by making it a precondition for any process resumption.

Beyond these incidents, and notwithstanding the Council's steadfastness in upholding the parameters of a political solution, including the pre-eminence of Morocco's Autonomy Plan, the following questions arise: how long will the status quo be maintained, how long will Algeria continue to dupe the Council by shirking its responsibilities, and how long will the number of refugees - the key to this whole problem and its outcome - remain an unknown quantity?

At a time when the autonomy initiative gains increasing support and visibility, it might be worth launching a campaign to raise awareness of its scope, merits for Saharan society and

dual democratic and humanist dimension. At the same time, with Algeria's entry into the Council, bilateral and multilateral diplomatic insistence on the census could help neutralize that country's activism during its two-year term.

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Mohammed Loulichki is a Senior Fellow at the Policy Center for the New South and an Affiliate Professor at Mohammed VI Polytechnic University. He brings over 40 years of comprehensive experience in diplomacy, conflict resolution, and human rights. He has served in various roles including as a member and Deputy Head of the Moroccan delegation to the 3rd Conference on the Law of the Sea (1982-1990), Head of the Department of Legal Affairs and Treaties at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1988-1991), and General Director for Multilateral Affairs in the same ministry (2003-2006). He also acted as Morocco's Ambassador to Hungary, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Croatia (1995-1999), and was the Moroccan Government's Ambassador Coordinator with MINURSO (1999-2001). Furthermore, he served as Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva (2006-2008) and New York (2001-2003 and 2008-2014), including a term as President of the Security Council in December 2012.

Mr. Loulichki has held pivotal roles in international organizations. He was President of the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the Security Council (2013), President of the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations (2012), Vice-President of the Human Rights Council (2006), and Facilitator of the Universal Periodic Review for the said Council (2006 and 2010). He also presided over the National Committee overseeing nuclear matters (2003-2006).

Since 2021, he has led the editing and direction of the annual report 'The Atlantic Currents,' published by PCNS. A frequent contributor to PCNS research, he is also a recurring author in the HEC-PCNS Strategic Dialogues and the corresponding written works. He holds degrees from Ecole Nationale d'Administration in Rabat, Mohamed V University in Rabat, and the Sorbonne in Paris.

About the Policy Center for the New South

The Policy Center for the New South (PCNS) is a Moroccan think tank aiming to contribute to the improvement of economic and social public policies that challenge Morocco and the rest of Africa as integral parts of the global South.

The PCNS pleads for an open, accountable and enterprising "new South" that defines its own narratives and mental maps around the Mediterranean and South Atlantic basins, as part of a forward-looking relationship with the rest of the world. Through its analytical endeavours, the think tank aims to support the development of public policies in Africa and to give the floor to experts from the South. This stance is focused on dialogue and partnership, and aims to cultivate African expertise and excellence needed for the accurate analysis of African and global challenges and the suggestion of appropriate solutions.

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The views expressed in this publication are those of the author.

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