

## A Compelling Value Proposition

An Interview with H.E. Youssef Amrani, Ambassador of Morocco to the United States

**EDITORS' NOTE** A native of Tangier, Ambassador Youssef Amrani's distinguished diplomatic career spans over 44 years. Before assuming his current role as His Majesty the King of Morocco's Ambassador to the United States, he held a series of distinguished positions both domestically and internationally. He served, most recently, as the Ambassador of His Majesty the King of Morocco to South Africa, with non-resident accreditation to Eswatini, Botswana, and Malawi.



H.E. Youssef Amrani

Prior to this assignment, he served in various other roles, including *Chargé de Mission* in the Royal Cabinet, *Minister Delegate for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation*, and *Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean*. Throughout his tenure as Ambassador, he has represented Morocco in Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Belize, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, and Panama. Within the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Amrani has undertaken pivotal responsibilities, serving as *Secretary General and Director General of Bilateral Affairs*. He is fluent in Arabic, his native language, and also has mastered English, Spanish, Italian, and French. Ambassador Amrani holds a bachelor's degree in economics from Mohammed V University of Rabat and a degree in Management from the Boston University School of Management.

### Will you highlight your career journey and what led to your role as Ambassador?

I don't think that the word "career" reflects the true meaning of being a diplomat. It has nothing to do with status, but rather commitment and genuine love for the nation you represent. I have been doing this for almost 45 years now, and I still feel the same excitement as on day one. Being an ambassador is a tremendous honor, but it doesn't mean you have figured out everything in diplomacy. I have been a former minister delegate for foreign affairs, secretary general of UMF, member of His Majesty's Cabinet and Ambassador several times before my tenure in Washington. Every single part of this journey was nothing but a lesson, a learning opportunity, and a tremendous honor to represent my country in different contexts and different continents.

Morocco is a vibrant and evolving nation, one that has chosen progress and modernity while always preserving its rich history, unique traditions, and culture. In this sense, Moroccan diplomats are a reflection of our nation's path and choices. We are bridge builders, messengers of trust and solidarity, mediums of cooperation, and, I would like to believe, agents of peace and stability in this world.

Those parameters, as enshrined in His Majesty King Mohammed VI's Vision, have been at the forefront of my actions in Africa, Europe, and the Americas. We live in an ever-changing world, but diplomacy is an anchor that provides stability in the most turbulent times. Every nation plays a significant role in maintaining global equilibrium. Morocco and the United States are definitely instrumental as they share this responsibility. I just happen to be part of this unique story we build together.

### What do you see as the strengths of Morocco for foreign investment?

The experiences on the ground speak louder than words. Foreign investors are coming to Morocco not because we are convincing them to do so; they are coming for a simple reason: all records and analyses point out that investing your capital in the Kingdom is a safe, lucrative, and convenient way to take full advantage of both a vibrant national market and even greater growth opportunities across the continent of Africa and neighboring Europe.

Morocco offers a compelling value proposition for foreign investors, combining strategic location, political stability, and economic dynamism. Our Kingdom isn't just a market of 37 million; it's a gateway to over 2.3 billion consumers across Africa, Europe, and beyond. Between 2021 and 2024, the Moroccan Government signed over 170 investment agreements totaling approximately \$21 billion, expected to create more than 115,000 jobs.

Morocco capitalized on its strategic position by developing world-class infrastructure, including Africa's largest port in Tangier and the upcoming Dakhla Atlantic port, which will facilitate trade between Sahel countries and the Atlantic Ocean. Our political stability provides a secure environment for long-term investments, complemented by ongoing economic reforms and business-friendly policies that have earned recognition from international financial institutions.

### What message would you want executives to know about the business opportunities that Morocco offers?

I think that we have passed the stage of presenting our business opportunities. We are today competing in some domains with so-called heavyweight countries, specifically in niche and highly technical domains of expertise. From aerospace to automotive, we've developed specialized industrial ecosystems supporting global supply chains. These clusters offer investors plug-and-play solutions with established suppliers and logistics. Morocco thus presents a unique platform that combines African and European dynamism and standards, creating an ideal launchpad for international expansion. Also, and very importantly, Morocco's highly skilled, multilingual workforce conjugates youthful energy with international expertise. Our education system, focused on technical skills and languages, produces talent tailored to global business needs. Our automotive sector is a shining example of this progress. We currently produce 700,000 vehicles annually and aim to reach one million units by 2025.

The country offers competitive corporate tax rates, as low as zero percent in specific free zones, creating a favorable environment for businesses. Casablanca Finance City, Africa's leading financial hub, provides sophisticated services and acts as a gateway for investment across the continent. Not to forget that with \$50 billion invested in infrastructure since 2010, Morocco boasts world-class facilities. We position ourselves strategically in a series of crucial and sensitive domains. We think for the long run; as a matter of fact, Morocco is emerging as a leader in renewable energy, demonstrated by the Noor Ouarzazate complex, the world's largest concentrated solar power plant. This commitment to sustainable energy aligns with global priorities and provides investors with lucrative opportunities in green energy projects. Additionally, the upcoming Nigeria-Morocco gas pipeline positions Morocco as a central player in the Atlantic energy landscape, further enhancing its strategic importance in the global energy sector.

I could mention so many more examples, but rather leave it to everyone who is interested to make up their own mind about the opportunities and discover what Morocco is all about. More often than not, people tend to fall in love with the country and invest in the Kingdom after making this first step.



*Ambassador Yousef Amrani addressing the United Nations*

### **How critical is Morocco's role in the global economy?**

Morocco's role in the global economy is multifaceted and rapidly expanding. As a nexus between Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, Morocco has cultivated a unique position that extends far beyond geography. Our status as Africa's second-largest continental investor underscores our commitment to driving South-South cooperation. From banking to telecommunications, we actively shape Africa's economic landscape, fostering development and creating new markets.

Morocco's stability amid regional challenges makes us an indispensable partner for global economic security. Our proactive approach to counter-terrorism and migration management contributes to a secure business environment, crucial for international trade and investment. In key industrial sectors like automotive, aerospace, and food security, Morocco has become an integral part of global supply chains. The Tangier Med port serves as a vital logistics hub connecting Europe, Africa, and the Americas.

Morocco's progressive policies and strategic investments ensure that we remain a key player in the global economy, driving innovation and sustainable growth while fostering international collaboration and security.

### **Will you discuss the importance of a strong relationship between the United States and Morocco?**

The U.S.-Morocco alliance, rooted in our Treaty of Peace and Friendship from 1787,

stands as a testament to enduring diplomatic ties. This historic relationship has evolved into a multifaceted strategic partnership that is crucial for both nations in the 21st century. In today's geopolitical landscape, Morocco serves as a vital anchor of stability in North Africa and the Middle East. Today, Morocco is a strategic ally in combating terrorism, managing migration, and promoting regional security and stability.

Economically, our Free Trade Agreement has fostered robust commercial ties. Morocco offers U.S. companies a gateway to emerging African markets, leveraging our strategic location and extensive continental networks. Sectors like renewable energy, aerospace, and automotive present particularly promising opportunities for U.S. investment. Our military cooperation, exemplified by joint exercises like African Lion, enhances regional security and interoperability. Morocco's non-NATO ally status further cements our defense and security partnership, which is crucial for addressing transnational threats. In the realm of cultural and educational exchange, numerous programs strengthen people-to-people ties, fostering mutual understanding and long-term relationships between our nations. Morocco's progressive stance on issues like interfaith dialogue and women's rights aligns with U.S. values, making us natural partners in promoting stability and moderation in the Islamic world.

As Africa gains global significance, Morocco's role as a gateway to the continent becomes

increasingly valuable to U.S. strategic interests, both diplomatically and economically. Our partnership in addressing global challenges like climate change through initiatives in renewable energy and sustainable development highlights the forward-looking nature of our relationship.

The Atlantic Initiative of His Majesty King Mohammed VI reflects Morocco's unwavering commitment to providing concrete solutions focused on impactful results for African populations, highlighting the significance of connectivity projects. For American policymakers and businesses, Morocco represents not just a friendly nation, but a strategic hub offering stability, growth opportunities, and a shared vision for regional and global progress. Our enduring relationship serves as a model of international cooperation, more relevant than ever in navigating the complexities of our interconnected world.

### **What do you tell young people in Morocco about the importance of public service?**

Public service is undoubtedly a rewarding but also very intense and demanding professional path. Committing your time and life to the best interests of your country requires a certain degree of selflessness. With the honor of serving a nation often comes the great responsibility of making the right choices and sometimes the necessary sacrifices. Our youth in Morocco has undoubtedly displayed very strong and unique commitments in shaping our nation's future. I have always been so proud to see how skillful, smart, and brilliant our Moroccans are across a wide range of strategic competencies and domains. Of course, being a public servant is not the only way to contribute to the development of one's country. But since your question is phrased that way, I want to emphasize that public service is not about dusty bureaucracies. It's about innovative solutions, pioneering digital governance, and crafting policies that uplift millions of lives. It's about representing your country on the world stage. It is also about embracing new technologies, artificial intelligence strategies, leading the green energy revolution, or spearheading diplomatic initiatives that bring peace to troubled regions. These aren't just jobs; they're callings that demand your creativity, resilience, and unwavering commitment to progress.

The public domain requires fresh perspectives. Your generation, native to technology and global in outlook, is uniquely positioned to tackle these issues. And let me tell you that there is nothing more fulfilling than seeing your efforts transform communities, foster international cooperation, and drive national progress – it's an unparalleled reward.

The key is your commitment to the greater good. As you stand at the threshold of your careers, I challenge you to think big, at least as much as your country does. ●

*For more information regarding Morocco and business opportunities, please contact the Embassy of Morocco – <https://us.diplomatie.ma>*