

Strategic Development of Morocco towards a Multi-Domain Defense Concept

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Abstract

Historically, military power in North Africa was measured by the accrued conventional power: tanks, fighter planes and standing forces. But in 2026, Morocco is gradually destroying this paradigm. Rabat is shifting to a more conventional procurement-intensive model to the development of the sovereign defense ecosystem which is based on technological indigenization, autonomy in industry and multi-domain deterrence. In this paper, legislative, industrial, and geopolitical bases of defense transition in Morocco will be considered, and the role it plays in the stability of the region will be discussed.

The Move of Procurement to Production.

The main point of this paradigm shift is the defense budget of Morocco 73 billion dirhams or 7.3 billion dollars. Although the fiscal volume is important, its strategic distribution is more decisive. The Kingdom legalised the transition towards foreign procurement to local production through Law 10-20 (Policy Center for the New South, 2021). It is this legislative framework that forms the triggering point of a localized defense industry intended to ensure the country becomes resilient in the long run.

The fact that the Industrial Acceleration Zones were recently set up specifically to focus on military production, reflects the need of Rabat to scale the ladder of value chain. Morocco wants to decrease the reliance on outside suppliers becoming a manufacturer and in the process, enhance the national security through industrial sovereignty (North Africa Post, 2025).

Multi-Domain Operations and Technological Integration (MDO).

This represents a broader movement in the world: the contemporary deterrence is increasingly grounded in a technologic combination, rather than in barbaric kinetic arsenal. Another notable demonstration of the Royal Armed Forces (FAR) doctrine was significantly evident in one of the biggest multinational exercises in the continent in the shape of the African Lion 2026. The moves marked a shift towards artificial intelligence (AI) and autonomy (Hespress, 2026).

These tendencies are aligned with the idea of Multi-Domain Operations (MDO) that includes the capabilities of the land, air, sea, space, and cyberspace. The determinants of the contemporary engagement that surpass the attrition-oriented models of the 20 th century are the priorities of this framework, information superiority and situational awareness.

Deterrence Architecture and Defensive Realism.

A policy of deterrence by denial is also noted with an investment in high end missile defence systems such as the Barak MX by Morocco. Rabat defends itself to make aggression against regional enemies more expensive, which is beneficial by guarding the most important infrastructure and ensuring a balance in the unstable Mediterranean and Sahel routes (Loudiyi, 2025).

In terms of International Relations theory, it can be stated that Morocco is moving towards defensive realism. The capability building of the Kingdom is not a tool of revisionist expansionism but a logical survival response, agility of the institution in a multipolar environment that is becoming more and more multipolar.

Integrity and Partnerships.

The transformation of Morocco is not a solitary affair. Instead, it is driven by a model of embedded autonomy - it uses strategic alliances with the United States, Israel, India, and other world actors to promote the transfer of technology (Ministry of External Affairs, 2020). This diversified portfolio enables Morocco to achieve its national independence and still be very much integrated into

the global security architecture. Security in a world of intricate interdependence is becoming more and more a networked resource, as opposed to a geared-up arsenal.

Conclusion

The Moroccan case offers an attractive example to middle powers emerging. It shows how innovation, with strategic alliances, can enable a state to adapt to the challenges of a new world order. Rabat is no longer just learning the tools of defense; it is rewriting the architecture of security in the whole region.

Literature

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