

# Investment Opportunities in Morocco Economic Symposium 2006 Under the patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI

The Geneva based Swiss Morocco Foundation for Sustainable Development ([www.FSMD.ch](http://www.FSMD.ch)) opened the first round of meetings for the promotion of economic exchanges with Morocco on September 8, 2006 at the Palace Hilton Hotel in Geneva.

This edition on Investment Opportunities in Morocco was a huge success. More than 150 well-known figures of the industrial and banking world, of NGOs as well as of Swiss and European official organisations were present. The local and Moroccan media also showed a keen interest in this event.

## The Chance of a New View of Morocco

The Economic Symposium 2006 was opened by the customary welcoming words from Mr. Nabil BENABDALLAH, President of SMFD, Minister of Communication and Spokesman of the Government of Morocco, and Mr. Mike FANI, Vice-President of SMFD, the initiator of this event.

As the main focus of the Event was on investment, the Moroccan delegation came with a significant representation from the financial and business world. The Vice-President of the Representation of Moroccan Employers, Mr. Mohammed CHAÏBI and Gérard SALZMANN, the President of the Swiss Chamber of Commerce in Morocco, as well as several eminent public figures shared their experiences and successes. They could count on the continual support of Mr. Mohammed GUEDIRA all along the



S.E. Mr. Mohammed GUEDIRA, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco in Switzerland and SMFD's member



Mr. Mike FANI, Vice-President of the Foundation



Mr. Nabil BENABDALLAH, President of the Foundation, Minister of Communication and Spokesman for the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco

Symposium, the Ambassador of His Majesty King Mohammed VI in Switzerland and member of SMFD.

The Symposium was animated by the talent of Mr. Thami GHORFI, CEO of Marocaine de Radio et de Broadcast, who made a lively and exchange oriented forum possible with question sessions following each main theme.

## Four Themes to Get to Know Morocco and its Potential

The event was organised around the presentation of the four principal aspects and in the spirit of providing practical business guidelines.

The description of the Moroccan legislative, fiscal and financial structure was presented by leading Moroccan figures who were able to seduce their audience with the quality and the relevance of their talk and by skilful answers given to the participants.

Mr. Hassan BERNOUSSI, CEO of Direction des Investissements, has highlighted the opportunities and the infrastructure that has allowed many international and Small and Medium businesses from Europe to take advantage of such opportunities.

Mr. Mohammed HDID, managing partner of Saaidi Hdid Consultants, was successful in making the Moroccan fiscal system seem more accessible and convincingly showed its modernity and its efforts oriented towards the same concerns as the models of industrialised countries.

The image of a Morocco keeping up with the times we live in was perfectly illustrated by Mr. Bachir RACHDI, President of the



Mr. Adil DOUIRI, Minister of Tourism, Craft Industry and Social Issues

Federation of Information Technology, Telecommunication and Offshoring, who skilfully exemplified how Morocco has well-established its place in the world's technological tendencies. Less than 3 hours away from the major European capitals and disposing of quality human resources, the Moroccan State has set up in partnership with the federation a contract aimed at development and establishing attractive market opportunities in the current spirit of delocalisation of services.

Mr. Ali IBEN MANSOUR, President of Actual Finances in Casablanca, addressed the financial aspects of the free movement of capitals.

### The choice of Strategic Sectors for Investment: Underlining the Advantages of Tourism and Strengthening Freedom of Expression.

The Government of Morocco was represented by two Ministers to



Mr. Thami GHORFI, CEO of Marocaine de Radio et de Broadcast and Mr. Carlo Emanuele OTTAVIANI, Vice President of STMicroelectronics and President of STMicroelectronics Foundation

expose the main advantages of a Morocco in construction moving forward with big steps.

Mr. Adil DOUIRI, Minister of Tourism, Craft Industry and Social Issues, presented the Moroccan business plan for the tourist sector, a strategy that bears a name that speaks for itself: "Vision 2010".

The objective: welcome 10 million tourists in 2010. Infrastructures are being put up: 6 newly built tourist cities will flourish and welcome tourists on the coasts of Morocco. Mr. DOUIRI makes no secret of the biggest names that are investing in the sector with the support of the Moroccan Government. He encourages Swiss investors to take part in and benefit from these valuable investment opportunities.

Mr. Nabil BENABDALLAH, Minister of Communication and Spokesman for the Government of Morocco has presented the evolving policy for the liberalisation of radio and television waves in the country. Ten new radio licences and one television broadcasting licence has been attributed in these past few months making it possible for private operators to make their way into the sector.

Mr. Nabil BENABDELLAH forecasts a significant development for publicity investments in Morocco in the next few years. This is not only known as a sector that follows economical development, but also as a showcase of the consolidation of democratic reforms in Morocco.

### Encouraging Testimonials

The political and business leaders were backed by the testimonials of managers of multinational companies who shared their Moroccan experiences all through the Symposium.

Mr. Nasser KETTANI, CEO of Microsoft North Africa, Mr. Carlo Emanuele OTTAVIANI, Vice President of STMicroelectronics and President of STMicroelectronics Foundation, and Mr. Dominique DROUET, President of the Board of HOLCIM Morocco Group all took the stand and gave specific illustrations of their involvement in the Moroccan and regional economy.

### Emerging Markets and New Technologies

The future of the Moroccan economy was presented by Mr. Karim TAGHIL, Cabinet Chief of the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Economic Development, and by Mr. Mohammed LAHLOU, President of the Commission for Enterprise Competitiveness.

Ms. Anne-Lyse Blin, attorney of banking and financial law at the bar of Paris (Reinhart Marville Torre, Paris) gave an overview of the legal aspects of setting up a business in Morocco.



Mr. Nasser KETTANI, CEO of Microsoft North Africa



## Human Development in the Heart of Sustainable Development

The last part of the Symposium was devoted to strategic approach to human development, an essential factor of economical development.

Mr. Soulaïman ELHAJAM, Deputy Director, in charge of National Initiative for Human Development at the Moroccan Ministry of Interior, presented the strategy drawn up by the country for harmonious social development.

Mr. Beat BÜRGENMEIER, Director of the University Centre of Human Ecology and Environmental Sciences at the University of Geneva presented the main trends of sustainable economical development in the world.

The encounter, a first of its kind in Geneva, came to a close in a festive atmosphere with the awarding of prizes to exceptional businesses or initiatives.

The business lunch and the cocktail-dinner gave excellent opportunities for the participating parties of the 1st Economic Symposium to take part in an exchange, to establish contacts and to set up partnerships in the fields of economy and humanitarian action.

This first Symposium met all expectations. In order to answer the participants' recurring needs for more information on valuable creation opportunities that are available for investors in both countries, the organisers declare: "this first edition has given full satisfaction and we are planning to make this get-together a regular annual event with the help of SMFD's partners".

## Awards for Initiatives Supporting Sustainable Development in Morocco

Prizes of Excellence were given away to Moroccan and international companies for their contribution to human sustainable development and to environmental protection.

Awarded by the Swiss Morocco Foundation for Sustainable Development (SMFD) and by the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), the Prizes went to the Fondation BMCE for its action in the field of education through its project Medersat.com which benefits 60 community schools and 7'300 pupils of the rural world, and STMicronics Foundation for its work in reducing the digital gap in Morocco and for its role in the development of efficient human resources in the Kingdom.

The Centre Marocain de Production Propre (CMPP) was award for its campaign to encourage businesses to respect the environment and Hightech Payment Systems (HPS) received the Innovation Prize for its creativity in the domain of electronic banking.



Mr. Hassan BERNOUSSI, CEO of Direction des Investissements

The SMFD was awarded the prize offered by WIPO for its actions in favour of sustainable development.

In the light of the huge success of this first encounter, the Swiss Morocco Foundation for Sustainable Development invites all interested Swiss and Moroccan entities to get in touch with it concerning any steps and measures that they may undertake in favour of bringing the two countries closer and of a mutual better understanding.

The documents and the talks given during the 2006 edition of the Symposium can be found on the Foundation's website [www.fsmd.ch](http://www.fsmd.ch), along with the agenda of up-coming conferences.



Mr. Nabil BENABDALLAH, President of the Foundation, Minister of Communication and Spokesman for the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco and Mrs. Leila Mezian Benjelloun, President of the BMCE Bank Foundation



The winners from left to right : Mr. Mike FANI (SMFD) with Mr. Nabil BENABDALLAH (SMFD), Mrs. Leila Mezian Benjelloun (BMCE Bank Foundation), Mr. Samir LAMRISSI (HPS), Mr. Carlo Emanuele OTTAVIANI (STMicronics Foundation) and Mr. Mohammed CHAÏBI (CMPP)



Mr. Mike FANI, Vice-President of the Foundation and S.E. M. Mohammed GUEDIRA, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco in Switzerland and SMFD's member