



MARINE CORPS INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITY

Military Culture Study

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Military Cultural Study: Morocco

History

Morocco's military traditions are closely linked with the country's history and are influenced by its extensive political and cultural heritage. Morocco's history, and thus its military history, began in the Medieval Islamic period, 12 centuries before the end of the French and Spanish protectorate in 1956, which is often represented as the year Morocco became independent. Moroccans, however, consider 1956 the year the country regained its independence after 44 years of foreign rule. Although foreign rule profoundly transformed Morocco's economy and infrastructure, Moroccans view the post-protectorate period as a reversion to independent rule by the reigning Alawi or Filali dynasties, which had held power in the country since 1660. Mohamed V presided over this independent rule and military modernization for 34 years (1927–1961). Moroccans inherited a modernized state, albeit with surviving traditional institutions, from their former European rulers, and the dynastic continuity under the protectorate ensured the prominent re-emergence of indigenous influence in many areas, including the military.

Perceptions of Military History

Moroccans perceive their history as officially beginning in 788 when the country's first independent Muslim dynasty was established under the Idrissids, who ruled through the early 10th century. Although the Idrissid state eventually fragmented and fell to foreign invaders, the descendants of the dynastic founders flourished in the region and today represent one of the four major Chorfa (Sherifian) lineages in Morocco, their prestige due to their descent from The Prophet.

The Idrissids established Morocco's first military forces. They used these forces to establish control over most of what is now northern Morocco and even extended their military power east to the Tlemcen area of Algeria and south to the Western Sahara region. This first Moroccan army comprised mostly Berber tribesmen, and its ranks filled because the country's inhabitants were loyal to the Idrissids as descendants of the Prophet.¹

The Idrissids were eventually supplanted by two empires founded by indigenous Berber groups in what is now Morocco. These empires were ruled by the Almoravids (1073–1147) and the Almohads (1130–1269). Both ruled large parts of northwest Africa as well as southern Spain, and each was founded and consolidated by powerful military rulers. Both dynasties had a more complex military structure than the Idrissids, consisting of a central army, tribal auxiliaries, and a naval branch.²

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Morocco's Military Chronology	
788	Morocco founded as an independent state by the Idrissid Dynasty; first Moroccan military forces extend control throughout much of what is now Morocco
1073-1147	Almoravid dynasty rules Morocco and southern Spain. Conquers from the Sahara to Spain.
1130-1269	Almohad dynasty rules Morocco and southern Spain.
1212	Almohads defeated at Las Navas de Tolosa; beginning of Muslim military decline in Spain.
1215-1430	Merenid dynasty in Morocco. Repeated unsuccessful invasions of Spain.
1509-1659	Saadian dynasty in Morocco. Defeat of the Portuguese and Spanish military threats.
1591	Battle of Tondibi (Mali); Morocco extends its power to the central Sahara.
1660-present	Alawi or Filali dynasty in Morocco. Military conquest of Morocco by this dynasty-based in the Tafilalt region.
1665-1727	Reign of Moulay Ismail; Moroccan military victories over European and Ottoman foes.
1787	Mohamed III signs a Treat of Peace and Friendship with the new United States.
1844	French forces defeat the Moroccan army at Isly near the Algerian border.
1860	War between Spain and Morocco; the latter is defeated; temporary occupation of northern Morocco by Spain.
1912	Beginning of the French Protectorate in Morocco.
1914-1918	Moroccan troops fight in World War I.
1921-1926	Rif War between Spain and northern Moroccan guerrillas.
1936	Final defeat of tribal resistance by the French, allowing the latter complete control of Morocco.
1942	Operation TORCH: Allied troops land at Safi, Casablanca, and Port Lyautey (Kenitra) in Morocco (Western Task Force).
1943-1945	Moroccan troops fight on the Allied side in World War II.
1956	End of the Protectorate. Morocco recovers its independence from France. Establishment of the FAR, with King Mohamed V as its first Commander-in-Chief.
1960-1961	Moroccan forces support the UN operations in Congo.
1960	U.S. military forces assist the FAR in earthquake relief after the Agadir earthquake.
1963-1964	Border conflict with Algeria.
1971	Attempted coup against Hassan II at Skhirat near Rabat by junior military.
1972	Second coup attempt against Hassan II by Air Force personnel.
1975	Morocco occupies the Western Sahara. Beginning of the conflict with the POLISARIO Front.
1977-1978	Shaba I and Shaba II: Moroccan military support to the Mobutu regime in Zaire after rebels invade Shaba province.
1979	Construction on defensive berms in the Western Sahara begins, completed in 1987.
1979	Morocco provides military support to the new regime in Equatorial Guinea.
1991	Ceasefire between Morocco and the POLISARIO Front; deployment of MINURSO in Western Sahara.
1995-1996	Moroccan military support to IFOR (Bosnia)
1996-2004	Moroccan military support to SFOR (Bosnia)
1999	Succession of Mohamed VI as king.
2003	Casablanca bombings.

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In 1212, a coalition of Spanish kings defeated the Almohads, and the dynasty was replaced by another Moroccan-Berber dynasty, that of the Bani Merin, or Merenids (1215–1420). Originally Berber tribesmen from what is now eastern Morocco, the Merenids developed a military apparatus to fight wars not only in Africa but also in Spain. They emphasized armament, becoming the first dynasty to use gunpowder artillery. Under the Merenids, some basic political and cultural institutions and traits emerged that continue to shape contemporary Moroccan society. The most significant of these is the *makhzen*, or royal domain. The *makhzen*, through its autonomous status and its clientage systems throughout the state and society, remains the power base of the Moroccan monarchy.³

The Saadian dynasty (1509-1659), founded in what is now southern Morocco by Arab Chorfa, established its rule over Morocco and expanded its political and economic control across the Saharan region. The Saadian sultans maintained a formidable military to meet major challenges to the Moroccan state, including that posed by Spain and Portugal, which assailed Morocco by sea and land. Another major military challenge was the Ottoman Empire to the east, which had conquered North Africa from Egypt to Algeria by the mid-16th century. The Saadians checked the Ottoman Empire's further westward expansion, using a combination of diplomacy and military means.⁴

The Saadians also maintained a large fleet, which operated primarily in the Atlantic to protect Moroccan merchant activity. When Spain's government expelled its remaining Muslim population in the 16th century, many of these Muslims relocated to Morocco and the Atlantic port of Sale (opposite Rabat). Many Muslim refugees joined the "Salee Rovers," corsairs who operated through the end of the 18th century. The corsairs, as well as the regular Moroccan fleet, were armed with state-of-the-art cannons. Military technology, particularly in artillery, was a hallmark of the Saadians.⁵

After 1610, the Saadian dynasty declined and was eventually succeeded by another southern Arab-Chorfa dynasty, that of the Filali, or Alawis, whose rule continues to the present. The Alawi rulers, in order to take power, had to develop and maintain a military capable of conquering and holding the former Saadian territory, fend off rival domestic aspirants to the Moroccan throne, and deal with attempted encroachments by the Ottomans. Through a decades-long series of wars that ended in 1665, the Alawi rulers, using a mainly cavalry force, finally gained control of the Moroccan state from the Atlantic and Mediterranean to the Saharan desert region.⁶

The Alawi dynasty is the longest-ruling and most successful dynasty in the country's history. Despite periods of internal turmoil, foreign wars and invasions, and the French-Spanish protectorate of 1912–1956, the Alawi state has survived challenges to its rule, strengthened the power of the monarchy, and unified and modernized the country. Part of this effort involved modernizing the monarchy while preserving its control of the military and the government and ensuring it had progressive control over the *ulama*, the group of Islamic clerics responsible for guiding the administration and application of Sunni Islam in Morocco. The king retains the ancient titles of "commander of the faithful" and "commander of the Muslims." In addition, the monarchy, as a Sherifian institution, is patron of all of Morocco's Chorfa, a sizeable and influential portion of Morocco's population.⁷

Pre-colonial Period Military Traditions

Founded by an Arab Chorfa family in the southeastern Tafilalt region of Morocco, the Alawi dynasty began to bid for power in the anarchic period following the decline of the Saadian state in the early decades of the 1600s. The Alawi's third ruler, Sultan Moulay Ismail, reigned for 62 years (1665–1727); he centralized power in the sultanate and developed a substantial military force. The military drove the English and Spanish from Tangier and Morocco's Atlantic ports, brought Western Sahara under dynastic control, and won wars against

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the Ottoman Empire to the east. At great human loss and financial cost, Moulay Ismail built an imperial city at his new capital, Meknes. In foreign relations, Moulay Ismail kept Morocco out of European conflicts, maintaining diplomatic relations with all parties concerned but refraining from problematic alliances.⁸

Moulay Ismail developed a large military structure to defend the Moroccan state from foreign foes, particularly the Ottoman Turks, and maintained internal order and control against the Berber tribes of the Atlas region as well as the Arab-Moor tribes of Western Sahara. To accomplish this, Moulay Ismail developed a massive military apparatus based on a standing force of Arab Moroccans, Berber tribal levies, and West African black slaves. European captives and mercenaries staffed an artillery force that supplemented his mostly cavalry force of 250,000-plus troops. Moulay Ismail's imperial guard comprised black African slaves who received freedom in return for military service. Moulay Ismail's force, renowned throughout the region, was primarily land-based. Apart from the corsair fleet, the navy was not significant during Moulay Ismail's reign.⁹

Following Moulay Ismail's death, a period of anarchy set in, from which the central government emerged weaker in the latter half of the 18th century. Of note at this time was the effort by Sultan Mohamed III (1757–1790) to re-establish and expand trade with Western countries. He was the first foreign ruler to recognize the new government of the United States in the Marrakech Treaty of Peace and Friendship (1787), which has remained unbroken and has been the basis of more than two centuries of diplomatic relations between the two countries.¹⁰

Throughout the 19th century, France and Spain threatened Morocco's military and political position. France, in its conquest and occupation of neighboring Algeria, defeated Moroccan forces at Isly, and Morocco lost part of its border region with Algeria and was unable to intervene in support of anti-French resistance there. Spain defeated Morocco in the Morocco-Spanish War of 1860, occupying parts of the north and causing severe economic crisis in Morocco.¹¹

Hassan I (1873–1894) attempted through military force and diplomacy to re-impose central rule in rebellious parts of the country and ward off foreign advance. His sudden death in 1893 was a major blow to modernization efforts he had started, including a major overhaul of the military. His successors were unable to effectively consolidate their power and prevent France's growing influence in Morocco's internal affairs. Internal conflict peaked in 1911, when France and Spain occupied parts of northern Morocco. The following year, the Treaty of Fes and subsequent agreements established a joint French-Spanish protectorate.¹²

The Protectorate (1912-1956)

From 1912 to 1956,¹³ the Kingdom of Morocco, although ruled by a sultan (later king), was a protectorate administered by France and Spain, each of which controlled separate geographical zones of the country. Part of the protectorate administration in both French and Spanish areas included the recruitment and training of indigenous personnel in the security forces. Although pre-protectorate Morocco had military forces, they were lacking in uniform standards of unit structure, training, and equipment. Under the protectorate, however, rapid advances were made to implement uniform military standard, particularly by the French. Moroccan tribal units, or *goumiers*, attached as auxiliaries to the French Armed Forces, fought for the allies in Europe in World War II. In addition, regular units that included Moroccan troops fought as part of the French military in both world wars in the European theater. In the Spanish zone, locally recruited Moroccan troops helped the protectorate re-establish control after the Rif rebellion from 1921–1926 and were instrumental the following decade in enabling General Francisco Franco to defeat the communist and leftist forces in the Spanish Civil War and take power.¹⁴

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France extended its civil and military rule over Morocco between 1912 and 1936, controlling most of the country by the end of the 1920s. In tribal areas, France disarmed the populace to the extent that inter-tribal warfare was no longer practical, and implemented administrative oversight of these areas. From about 1929 to 1936, major military campaigns in the Grand Atlas region and the Jebel Saghro region resulted in France having control of all of Morocco. A major target of the last French push was the Ait Atta confederacy, one of the largest Berber groups in southern Morocco, which was finally forced to submit to French rule after the Battle of Bou Gaffer. Nationalist historians often portray the Ait Attas' resistance against French rule as a heroic act, constituting resistance against hopeless odds.¹⁵

Following World War II, Moroccan nationalism gradually came to dominate domestic politics as well as gain a considerable international following. Sultan, later king, Mohamed V (1927–1961) was able to bring the newly emergent Moroccan nationalism to bear against the continued rule of the protectorate. France attempted to curb Morocco's aspirations for independence by exiling Mohamed V to Madagascar. However, the Moroccan populace was outraged over the exile of their king and religious leader, and there were at least two assassination attempts against Mohamed ben Arafa, whom the French administration put in Mohamed V's place. This, combined with international pressure as well as France's government's concerns over the security situation in connection with the spread of an anti-colonial insurgency in Algeria, eventually prompted France to end the protectorate and recognize Mohamed V as the ruler of an independent Morocco in 1956.¹⁶

One of Mohamed V's pressing tasks after Morocco gained independence was forming a professional, capable, and loyal military. As king, he was also commander-in-chief of the military. Before gaining its independence, Morocco had a core of trained professional soldiers recruited from the general population, many of whom had combat experience in World War II. In addition, the post-protectorate Moroccan state could draw on manpower from the insurgent forces that had arisen after France exiled Mohamed V to Madagascar, including the *Armée de Liberation* and related units fighting colonial occupation in Spanish Sahara. Integrating the *Armée de Liberation* with the newly formed Ministry of Defense and service commands was a necessary and critical first step toward forming Morocco's military, the *Forces Armées Royales* (FAR). In many cases, the king had to resolve intra-government debates over the structure and funding of the new force. Because he resolved such political obstacles and provided continual oversight and guidance in developing Morocco's military establishment, Mohamed V is viewed by the Morocco's military as its founder. Despite his relatively short rule (1956–1961), he left his son Hassan II an effective, functional military force under royal control that had clearly defined military and civil (public works) missions.¹⁷

Morocco's Military since 1956

King Mohamed V and the Establishment of the Morocco's Military

Mohamed V,¹⁸ in a decree on 25 June 1956, created Morocco's military, establishing an organization and structure that changed very little through 1972. While the king was the supreme chief of the FAR, he appointed his son, Crown Prince Moulay Hassan (later Hassan II), as the chief of the FAR General Staff. The king also appointed a Ministry of National Defense (*Ministère de la Défense Nationale*, MDN) by decree on 8 November 1956; from its inception, this organization was responsible for managing national defense affairs and procuring weapons and other materiel. Also, on 9 November 1959, Mohamed V created a High Council for National Defense (*Conseil Supérieur de la Défense Nationale*, CSDN) to provide high-level oversight of defense and security affairs.¹⁹

Mohamed V's major accomplishments with regard to the newly established FAR included developing a training command and establishing military schools; organizing FAR units and establishing a rank struc-

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ture, along with a standardized system of recruitment, retention, and promotion; creating the MDN and the CSDN; and establishing a military justice and courts system.²⁰

The early years of Mohamed V's reign were beset by discontent and armed unrest among many nationalist groups who were unwilling to replace the constraints of French colonial rule with an independent monarchy. Political efforts by the then-ruling Istiqlal Party to marginalize two key Berber rural leaders of the People's Movement (Harakat Shaabia), Dr. Abdulkrim Khatib and Mahjoubi Aherdane caused an inter-party dispute that escalated into full-scale rebellion in the northern Rif region and part of the Middle Atlas and ultimately required FAR intervention. The FAR suppressed the Rif revolt by mid-February 1959, with considerable losses to the rebels. The severity of the government's measures against the insurgents created an enmity with the monarchy that lasted to the end of King Hassan II's reign.²¹

Early Post-independence Foreign Military Relations and International Military Activities

Mohamed V had good relations with the United States as well as with Morocco's former European rulers. In this respect, the FAR benefitted in terms of military training and equipment provided by Western powers. Morocco strongly supported both the UN and the recently formed Organization for African Unity (OAU). The first international deployment of Moroccan troops under UN auspices to the Congo took place during Mohamed V's final year of rule. In addition, Morocco supported the OAU's first efforts to develop a peace-keeping force in Africa.²²

Moroccan forces were part of the UN force deployed to the Democratic Republic of the Congo from July 1960 through March 1961. Moroccan troops were deployed to the interior of the country, particularly to Katanga Province, to disarm rebel forces. Part of the force provided security in areas where critical infrastructure, including the Inga Dam and the ports of Matadi and Boma, was being built or improved. Some elements of the FAR assisted in police training in areas of the Congo to which they were deployed.²³

Morocco's Military under Hassan II (1961–1999)

King Hassan II's reign²⁴ was militarily significant in several ways. First, Morocco's military continued its external engagement throughout Africa and elsewhere, and became involved in Cold War politics. Second, Morocco's government and military began (or, by some accounts, revived) its strategic rivalry with Algeria that started with the 1963–1964 border war. Third, attempts to overthrow King Hassan in the 1970s resulted in extensive changes in the FAR and Ministry of Defense. Lastly, the military underwent further organizational and doctrinal change due to King Hassan II's occupation of former Spanish Sahara and the subsequent desert war there with the POLISARIO Front (*Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro*, FP).

Under Hassan II, many senior FAR officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) gained combat experience in the Western Sahara conflict. Serving in the conflict provided a common experience for FAR personnel stationed in the Sahara between 1975 and 1991. More recently, deploying to support international peacekeeping operations in the Balkans, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, and elsewhere has provided FAR personnel operational experience and career advancement.²⁶

The 1963–1964 border conflict between Morocco and Algeria resulted in few territorial gains for either side. Nevertheless, it was a major military operation for the new FAR, which did well in defending Moroccan territory. Although the countries agreed to a ceasefire, efforts to address differences regarding ownership of the disputed area between the two countries were unsuccessful.²⁷

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Perhaps the biggest domestic security challenge Hassan II faced was the Western Sahara. His claim to the territory after Spain evacuated, and the hostility of the FP, which sought independence, led to a regional conflict from 1975–1991, which also involved Algeria and Mauritania. Morocco's losses were initially heavy and its forces were outmaneuvered through 1979; after this date, Morocco constructed a defensive berm that limited the FP's ability to occupy Moroccan-controlled territory or attack defensive installations. This led to a ceasefire that has lasted since October 1991. Despite the end to armed hostilities, however, Morocco retains a robust troop presence in former Spanish Sahara.²⁸

King Hassan was the target of two coup attempts in 1971 and 1972. His defense minister, General Mohamed Oufkir, was evidently involved in the latter coup and likely in the first one as well. As a result of these two unsuccessful coup attempts, the king completely restructured the FAR and replaced most of the senior officers in the force. The new FAR structure allowed the king to have much greater oversight of military affairs but also ensured that loyalty rather than ability determined which officers received and retained key assignments. Observers have noted that a main change in senior ranks was that many officers of Berber origin were replaced with Arab or Arabophone officers.²⁹

In the last decade of King Hassan's rule, the post-Cold War environment saw significant changes in the regional geostrategic environment. In Western Sahara, the FP agreed to a UN-monitored ceasefire in 1991, pending a referendum. The referendum ended in a stalemate in the 1990s over a disagreement about the terms of the intended vote and remains to be resolved. Algeria, once Morocco's Cold War rival, underwent a troubled period of political liberalization (1988–1992), followed by a descent into civil war as radical armed Islamists fought the regime through the remainder of the 1990s. The 1990s also saw Morocco's involvement in international peacekeeping in Bosnia, a major point of pride for the FAR. Through this period, the king's efforts at political and economic reforms slowed, and his health gradually deteriorated. Nevertheless, through the 1990s, the challenges of the future became gradually apparent, namely increasing ties between Morocco and Europe, as well as the increasing challenge presented by radical Islam.

Morocco's Military under Mohamed VI (1999-Present)

King Hassan II died at the end of July 1999 and was succeeded without incident by his intended heir, Sidi Mohamed, who took the throne as Mohamed VI. The new king, called *al-malik al-karim*, or “the merciful king,” or, less formally, “M-6,” immediately began to make a number of long-needed changes. These included replacing many top officials in the Interior Ministry and initiating major economic programs for depressed areas of the country. Over the next several years, Mohamed VI busied himself with efforts to make the government more representative and responsive, to modernize Morocco's economy and society, and to remedy long-standing neglect of many parts of the country.

The new king soon encountered challenges to his agenda. Although corrupt and inefficient officials were replaced, the long-standing bureaucratic culture proved more difficult to change. Expectations by the Moroccan public, which were high in the first years of the new king's reign, have changed with the slowdown in reforms. Regardless, significant progress was made in modernizing Morocco's economy and society, particularly in the north (Tangier, Tetouan, and the Rif region), an area long-neglected under Mohamed VI's predecessor. The king oversaw projects to provide new industry and employment opportunities to this region, which had under Hassan II become one of the world's major hashish producers and exporters. Economic development and stimulus programs were undertaken in other areas of the kingdom as well, including the High and Middle Atlas, some of Morocco's poorest regions were also marked by high unemployment. Reforms have been popularly acclaimed and welcomed. The reforms so far have been significant in some areas, but Moroccans' general impression is that more should be done, and soon.

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The 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States were widely reported and viewed on Moroccan radio and television. Mohamed VI has been a strong supporter of the worldwide effort to fight terrorism and has ensured that Morocco supports U.S. regional counterterrorism initiatives. Morocco has also been targeted by radical Islamic terrorists, who bombed sites in Casablanca (May 2003), and the radical Islamist presence in Morocco has grown significantly.

Mohamed VI has so far made relatively few major changes to the structure of the FAR, although he has been steadily naming new officers to replace long-time loyalists of his father upon their retirement. Rather than major, potentially disruptive changes, the king continues to focus on incremental changes that are likely to have a long-term, cumulative impact. Thus, military culture will evolve as his tenure in power lengthens and the king's appointees implement new policies. Efforts continue to improve the quality of training, support, and administrative accountability for the military. In terms of foreign military policy, Mohamed VI continues, and has improved where possible, military relations with African, Middle Eastern, and Western nations. The FAR has continued to support international peacekeeping in Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.³⁰

Threat Environment

Morocco's military has not seen conventional combat since the 1991 ceasefire ended the long conflict in Western Sahara. Since that time, the bulk of Morocco's forces have remained in Western Sahara, deployed on the berm. However, some FAR units have gained operational experience through their deployment to the Balkans or Africa in support of peacekeeping missions.³¹

External Threat Perceptions

Algeria

Morocco has long viewed Algeria as a regional rival and has expressed concern about Algeria's military modernization programs. Military tensions with Algeria began with the border conflict in 1963–1964 and increased over the next decade because of Cold War politics. Algeria's open support of the FP in the Western Sahara conflict resulted in clashes between the two countries' military units in 1976. Algeria subsequently provided refuge to elements of the Western Saharan populace who fled to Tindouf Oasis and established a government in the refugee camps there beyond the reach of the Morocco military. Despite the end of the Cold War and the ceasefire in Western Sahara, Algeria continued to provide the FP refuge in Tindouf. Although Algeria tries to downplay its support to the FP, this remains a major block to improved bilateral relations as well as efforts at regional cooperation.³²

Through the 1990s, Morocco did not consider Algeria a conventional threat because of the Islamic insurgency that beset its eastern neighbor. Morocco's government was able to maintain Morocco's borders and prevent any spillover of the conflict. However, when the Algeria government's counterinsurgency efforts eroded insurgent capabilities in the late 1990s, Morocco began to express concern about a military buildup by Algiers. Algeria's efforts to purchase major weapon systems remain a significant concern for Morocco's government.³³

Since the late 1990s, Morocco has begun to shift some forces from the Western Sahara region to the Morocco-Algeria border region further east. The government claims this shift is being made to counter smuggling and extremist activity in the post-9/11 international environment.³⁴

Spain

Morocco's relations with Spain are complex. Muslim and Jewish communities expelled from Spain at the end of the Medieval period relocated to northern Morocco and contributed to the cultural enrichment of the region. However, Spain is responsible for a number of enduring territorial issues between it and Morocco. Since 1472, Spain has retained possession of five enclaves and islands along the Mediterranean coast of Morocco. Since gaining independence, Morocco has claimed these territories, including the two enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, and has made their recovery a matter of national pride. Although Morocco expresses these claims against Spain through diplomatic channels, despite periodic government statements relating to Moroccan territorial integrity, some incidents have occurred. One of the most prominent incidents was in 2002, when Moroccan personnel who took possession of the Island of Perejil, west of the enclave of Ceuta off the Moroccan coast, were evicted by Spanish forces.³⁵

In Morocco's view, 19th-century Spain took advantage of the state's weakness to force commercial and security concessions and occupy Morocco's territory. The 1859–1860 war between the two countries resulted in Spanish forces defeating Morocco and briefly occupying part of northern Morocco pending the payment of a large indemnity. This was followed in the 1880s by Spain's occupation of part of the Atlantic coast in an action that eventually resulted in the creation of Spanish Sahara. Spain subsequently cooperated with France in the 1912–1956 protectorate.³⁶

Spain's occupation of the Western Sahara coast in the late 19th century resulted in the creation of Spanish Sahara. Spain's control of the Western Sahara ended in 1975 and was followed by the 16-year conflict between Morocco and the FP, which Morocco's government regarded as separatists. Spain's sympathy for the FP, particularly from non-governmental organizations and other private interests, continues to be a frequent source of tension between the two countries. However, despite such issues, relations on the whole between Morocco and Spain have remained good, including the personal relationships between the Moroccan and Spanish monarchs. King Hassan II and Mohamed VI both maintained friendly relations with King Juan Carlos of Spain. Spain continues to provide military training and equipment to Morocco.³⁷

The Moroccan expatriate community in Spain is probably the country's largest expatriate community and includes a large number of illegal immigrants working in the agricultural and service sectors. Moroccans in Spain provide significant repatriation from their wages to their home communities but are viewed as a threat by both countries' governments. This is in large part due to the existence of Islamist extremists who use Spain as a base for terrorist operations. The March 2004 bombings in Madrid were executed by networks based in the Moroccan expatriate community in Spain. Morocco's security cooperation with Spain over counterterrorism issues remains strong. Clandestine immigration from Morocco to Europe goes mostly through Spain and is in large part controlled by cannabis smugglers, adding another issue to Morocco's and Spain's security concerns.³⁸

Internal Threat Perceptions

Western Sahara

Perhaps the single greatest domestic threat to Morocco, from the government's perspective, is that posed by the FP, which seeks independence for the former Spanish Sahara. The FAR has been engaged in this territory since 1975 and remains deployed there. FAR units deployed in Western Sahara are under the administrative control of the FAR Southern Zone, headquartered in Inezgane near Agadir, and are primarily responsible for security. However, in areas of the former Spanish Sahara controlled by Morocco's govern-

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ment, civilian security forces have been progressively deployed since 1991, as part of an effort to ensure public order.³⁹

Morocco regards the FP as a secessionist organization that threatens the territorial integrity of the country. However, the FP has stated that its aspirations for an independent state are restricted solely to the former Spanish Sahara. Morocco has tried to offer a regional autonomy plan for the Western Sahara territory's inhabitants, as well as to the FP. In such a scenario, the king's offer would nevertheless prevail and mean that the FAR would continue to have a presence there, as no separate military or security forces for an autonomous Sahara region would likely be permitted.⁴⁰

Islamist Threat

Although the FAR does not have a primary responsibility to counter the internal threat posed by Islamist extremists, it has a mission to support the civil authorities, including the police and the internal security agencies. The military keeps a close watch on its personnel to detect any Islamist sympathies or activism.⁴¹ In addition, senior FAR personnel are potential targets for Islamist extremists.⁴²

A major concern for Moroccan authorities is the large expatriate population in Europe and its frequent travel, particularly during summer vacation periods, back to Morocco. Some two million people transit the Strait of Gibraltar during August, representing a potential security threat in light of Islamist activity in Moroccan expatriate communities in Europe.⁴³

Civil Unrest

Since Morocco became independent, its military forces have not been deployed to curb internal unrest. The Ministry of Interior services and forces perform internal security operations, although Morocco's military forces can serve in a support role.⁴⁴

Organizational Culture

Morocco's Military in State and Society

Moroccans view military service in a positive light, not only because of the benefits it provides to FAR members and their families, but for the status given those in military service. Military service is also seen as one of the highest expressions of patriotism, providing the means to serve both king and country.⁴⁵

"God, King, Country"

Morocco's national motto, "God, King, Country," appears on the FAR badges and signifies service to Islam, the monarchy, and the country. The word for the latter is the Arabic *watan* (nation) rather than the term *dawla* (state). Throughout Morocco's history, and particularly that of the Alawi dynasty, the military served the king completely and unquestioningly. In the 19th century, the king, on campaign in the country, camped at night in a tent surrounded by armed soldiers standing shoulder to shoulder, facing outward. This is similarly reflected today by a screen of armed Garde Royale personnel around the Royal Palace in Rabat. The patriotism of most FAR members, officers and enlisted alike, is generally beyond question. Dissidents and anti-monarchists are viewed as unpatriotic, and FAR personnel characterized as such are scorned by their comrades and are frequently persecuted or removed from the military.⁴⁶

The Military and the Makhzen

The FAR falls under the *makhzen*, which is the part of Morocco's monarchy-controlled political, economic, and social sphere (including institutions). The monarchy exercises this control directly (through royal control or ownership of various institutions) and indirectly (through influence in government, society, religion, and business). Although the FAR is at the apex of the security structure that keeps the state in power, it will nevertheless remain the monarchy's last resort for domestic security, as the state has at its disposal civilian and paramilitary security services to address civil unrest and fight terrorism and subversion in the public sphere. Morocco's military is frequently used for other civil missions, such as disaster relief and public infrastructure projects. These activities receive high visibility through the domestic media.^{47 48}

External Organizational Relationships

Middle Eastern and North African Nations

Morocco has a range of political and cultural ties with other Arab-speaking countries in the Middle East and the Maghreb. Military relationships form a major part of these ties. Relations with the Gulf states are strong, in large part because, like Morocco, most of the countries there are ruled by hereditary monarchs. In the past, these nations have provided military and security support to Morocco. Morocco has contributed troops to assist other Arab nations in the Middle East against Israel but has also worked behind the scenes to advance a range of peace proposals. Morocco remains a member of the Arab League and the Arab Maghreb Union, both of which promote security coordination and cooperation among their member states. Arab League ministers of defense, foreign affairs, interior, and other government cabinet offices normally meet annually regarding pressing issues and attempt to develop common policies. The Arab dimension in Morocco's foreign relations has been and continues to be very pronounced.⁴⁹

Morocco has had varied relations with the North African states. Its regional rival has been Algeria since the latter gained its independence in the 1960s. Until the early 1980s, Libya supported the FP as it sought to make Western Sahara an independent state. This issue was finally resolved through King Hassan II's diplomacy and engagement with the Qadhafi regime. Morocco's relations with both Tunisia and Egypt have been good; however, there has been relatively little military cooperation between Morocco and either Tunisia or Egypt outside the formal frameworks of the Arab League.⁵⁰

Morocco currently engages other Maghreb countries (Mauritania, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya) as well as Egypt on security issues, particularly antiterrorism. However, Morocco's ability to coordinate with these countries may be hampered by the fact that it is not a member of the African Union (AU), to which the states noted above belong.⁵¹

Sub-Saharan African Nations

Morocco is the only African nation that is not part of the AU. Morocco pulled out of the AU's predecessor, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), following Algeria's maneuvering to get the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR, the political arm of the FP) admitted as a member in 1976. When the AU was formed, similar behind-the-scenes maneuvering by Algeria and its allies in the AU ensured continued SADR membership, and Morocco remained absent from the body. To date, efforts by some AU member states to address this situation have not been successful, as both Morocco and Algeria remain intransigent on the issue.⁵²

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Morocco's relations with Sub-Saharan African countries are complex and focus on regions as well as countries. In many cases, these relations were established in the 1960s and continued through the Cold War. Often, Morocco's interests remain tied to personal relations between the king and Sub-Saharan heads of state, particularly in Central Africa. Morocco has a strong interest in West Africa because of its proximity to Moroccan territory and issues connected with Saharan security. In this respect, Morocco has cultivated relations with nations in the Sahel that supplement the traditional historic relations. In addition, Morocco has contributed troops to international peacekeeping efforts in Sub-Saharan Africa, a substantial contribution to efforts in the Democratic Republic of Congo.⁵³

Mohamed V and King Hassan II viewed Mauritania's independence as an affront to Morocco's historical territorial integrity. The two countries did not establish diplomatic relations until 1973, two years before the end of Spain's rule in its Saharan territories. Mauritania's subsequent cooperation with Morocco in the occupation of the former Spanish Sahara and its withdrawal from the territory began a difficult period of relations that did, however, gradually recover during the tenure of Mauritanian President Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya (1984–2005). Morocco has taken great care to maintain good relations with its southern neighbor since Taya's ouster in July 2005.⁵⁴

Senegal is a long-time ally of Morocco. Under Mohamed VI, who has visited Senegal a number of times, converging security interests have reinforced long-standing good relations established since Mohamed V's rule. The two countries, according to some accounts, view themselves as the stable lynchpins of a security axis that spans the western coast of the Sahara/Sahel region. Additionally, through their participation in the Operation ENDURING FREEDOM Trans Sahara program, both countries cooperate with the United States to contain transnational terrorist activity. The influence of Moroccan Islam and Moroccan Sufi orders in Senegal remain strong. Morocco also has a prominent expatriate business community in Senegal.⁵⁵

In Central Africa, Morocco has strong diplomatic and business relations with regimes such as Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and the Republic of Congo (Congo-Brazzaville), with military cooperation extending back to World War II. In 1979, King Hassan II sent a contingent of Moroccan troops to Equatorial Guinea to support the new regime; this troop presence continued through the 1990s.⁵⁶

France

Of all European countries, France remains the central focus of Morocco's foreign policy. It was the dominant occupying power during the protectorate period, and its activities between 1912 and 1956 left an indelible impression on Morocco's politics, economy, and society. Upon regaining its independence in 1956, Morocco inherited a government bureaucracy as well as police and military structures that had been either transformed or overtly established by France. French remains the second national language, after Arabic, and is the language Moroccans use outside the Arab world for diplomacy and business communication.⁵⁷

Despite continued close ties between France and Morocco, the latter continues to harbor mixed feelings about not only French rule but also the circumstances under which the protectorate came to an end. Morocco's nationalist movement, which gained adherents and popular support after World War II, was repeatedly suppressed or restricted in efforts to marginalize it. French security services, as well as French residents of Morocco, supported French interests and are blamed for numerous criminal acts against the Moroccan nationalists and their leadership.⁵⁸

Since 1956, however, France has accommodated independent Morocco, and France remained the dominant European influence in Morocco through the Cold War. France provided training to the FAR and supplied a range of armaments to Morocco during this period. France's economic presence in Morocco remained

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strong through the Cold War, and France remained a key trading partner for Morocco. During the Cold War, Morocco supported France's policy against East Bloc influence in Africa and supplied contingents to assist French troops backing regimes in Zaire and elsewhere. In return, France supported Morocco in Western Sahara and continues to support Morocco's proposals to end the conflict there.⁵⁹

Mohamed VI, who received his graduate education in France, has maintained good relations with France. He has continued the engagement with the European Union under the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, a process heavily (but not exclusively) driven by France's economic and security interests. More recently, the North African population in France, where immigrants and descendants of immigrants from Morocco number almost as many as those from Algeria, has become a significant bilateral issue. Morocco's government has used support from its expatriate communities in France for political gain in Western Sahara. However, North African communities in Europe also remain key finance and communication bases for transnational terrorist activity, with many terrorist suspects having connections to France and other European countries.⁶⁰

Other Western Nations

Morocco's security relations with other Western nations include those with the United States as well as with the European Union. Morocco is proud of its long-standing relationship with the United States, which both military and other historians generally view favorably. Following World War II, the United States maintained air force (Strategic Air Command) bases in Morocco. In the early years after Morocco gained independence, strong nationalist sentiment forced the government to ask foreign military forces, including those of the United States, to close their bases. Nevertheless, through the Cold War, the United States-Morocco military relationship remained close. Morocco received training and equipment from the United States, and King Hassan II strove to maintain cordial relations with U.S. leaders. King Mohamed VI has continued to strive for cordial relations with the United States.⁶¹

The European Union's concerns over developments in North Africa and the Mediterranean prompted the 1995 Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, (originally known as the Barcelona Process, now known as the Union for the Mediterranean). Morocco has been one of the most eligible countries for the partnership process under this agreement. However, Morocco, like other North African countries, has recently questioned its status as one of the EU's intended end state for future partners. Another significant issue between Morocco and the EU and its member states is emigration. Morocco wants EU assistance in controlling the migration of Africans to Europe. Many non-Moroccan North Africans and Sub-Saharan Africans transit Moroccan territory as they attempt to illegally enter European Union countries, and this has become a major concern for Morocco and nearby European nations.⁶²

Foreign Influences

Arab Heritage and Influence

In the 1960s and 1970s, the FAR sent personnel to the Levant to support Arab countries in their conflict with Israel. In terms of common military practice, the FAR reflects Morocco's Arab heritage through its use of bilingual French-Arab terminology for military ranks and other terminology.⁶³

European (Former Colonial) Heritage and Influence

The FAR is firmly rooted in France and Spain's military heritage. Practically all officers communicate in French with other, particularly non-Arab, French-speaking militaries. Many aspects of Morocco's military reflect French origins or influence, including the rank structure, which uses French names and hierarchical concepts for ranks, units, staff elements, and other organizational features of the FAR. Many enlisted personnel speak French as well as Arabic, and in northern Morocco some FAR personnel also speak Spanish. In many ways, the attitudes and practices of the FAR reflect popular Moroccan ones with regard to the lasting impact of the major changes in Moroccan society and culture that took place under the protectorate. Although Moroccans generally regard the imposition of the protectorate as a great injustice, the FAR and its historical traditions also reflect, and often emphasize, the service of Moroccan military personnel between 1912 and 1956 as a necessary preparatory stage for the formation of the post-protectorate military.⁶⁴

The FAR is one of the oldest African militaries. Its activity in Africa's affairs began soon after Morocco became independent in 1956, when Morocco was one of a small number of independent African states and a founding member of the OAU. Morocco's representatives to the OAU were involved from the start in proposals for an African force to assist in promoting stability on the continent.⁶⁵

Arab Countries

Morocco joined the Arab League in 1956. In contrast to the limited African arena, the Arab circle was much larger, and the country's political elite, including King Mohamed V, already had a history of nationalist activity. Under Hassan II, Morocco received military assistance and other support from Middle Eastern Arab countries in the Western Sahara conflict. Morocco has supported Israel's Arab neighbors in Middle East conflicts, including dispatching military personnel who volunteered to serve there. Currently, Morocco retains good relations with most Middle Eastern Arab countries, particularly those of the Gulf Region, whose rulers are Mohamed VI's friends.

North Africa

The FAR has a checkered history of military relations with other Maghreb states. It has close ties with Tunisia, reflecting the two countries' generally shared regional interests. Though Morocco long resisted diplomatic and military ties with Mauritania, since these ties were established, there has been a gradual convergence of regional interest between the two countries. Military relations with Libya and Algeria have been more problematic, however. Libya supported the FP until 1984, but since then relations have improved, particularly since the end of the 1990s. Algeria has remained Morocco's main strategic adversary since the border war in 1963–1964.

The United States and NATO

Morocco's relations with the United States and other NATO countries increased during the Cold War, with Morocco receiving substantial military assistance as an ally of the West. Such aid supported a strong regional posture for the FAR and enabled Morocco to contribute to peacekeeping operations in Africa. In December 1995, Morocco deployed 1,300 FAR personnel to Bosnia to support the Implementation Force effort, with NATO oversight. This presence continued under the Stabilization Force. Currently, Morocco regards its military ties with the United States as close, and it has similar relations with France and Spain, despite the ongoing dispute over the status of Spain's enclaves in northern Morocco.⁶⁶

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International Peacekeeping Operations (United Nations)

Morocco’s participation in international peacekeeping operations, which began with its deployment of troops to the Congo in the 1960s, has increased since the end of the Cold War. Moroccan troops have been deployed not only to Africa but also to Europe (the Balkans) and the Americas (Haiti). Moroccan contingents deployed in peacekeeping exercises tend to have medical and social service elements supporting the combat units. Moroccan units are autonomous, having their own maneuver assets, weaponry, logistics, and other support. They nevertheless coordinate closely not only with the UN contingent they support but also with the host country. Service in international peacekeeping operations provides valuable experience to FAR personnel and is an important career step for FAR officers.^{67 68}

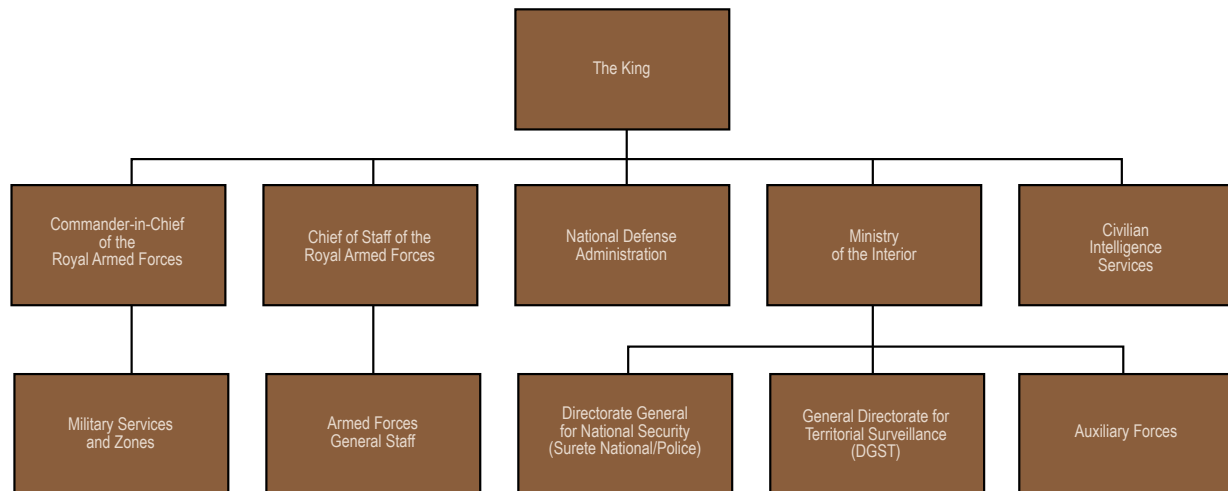
Moroccan Participation in International Peacekeeping Operations (2007-2010)

Country	Operation	Number of Personnel	Military Observers	Total
Bosnia	EUFOR-Althea	135	0	135
Kosovo	KFOR	220	0	220
Haiti	MINUSTAH	130	0	130
Congo-RDC	MONUC	809	4	813
Cote d’Ivoire	ONUCI	735	1	736
	Total	1892	5	1897

Internal Relationships

The King, the Makhzen, and the Military

The king is the supreme commander and chief of staff of the FAR, as well as the minister of defense. While Mohamed V had the title of supreme commander of the FAR and relegated defense affairs to subordinates, Hassan II assumed the duties of FAR chief of staff and minister of defense after the 1971 and 1972 coup attempts as a means to micromanage the military and deter further coup plotting. Hassan II’s son Mohamed VI has retained this bureaucratic control. Day-to-day FAR staff responsibilities are charged to the inspector-



Morocco’s Security Structure



Map of FAR zones

general of the armed forces, while a minister-delegate for defense manages routine defense affairs. Nevertheless, security remains a major concern for the monarchy, and the measures instituted by Hassan II and maintained by Mohamed VI are designed to ensure that the FAR remains a part of the *makhzen*.

After the coup attempts against Hassan II in 1971 and 1972, military and security decision making were concentrated in the hands of the king, who reserved for himself the posts of minister of defense and FAR chief of staff. Coordination among the services is thus managed at the highest levels, as is coordination with

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civilian security and police agencies. This system of top-down military-police-security oversight, developed by Hassan II, has continued under Mohamed VI.

Internal security requirements have frequently involved Moroccan military personnel being deployed to support checkpoints and patrols, for which other organizations—police, gendarmes, customs, etc.—also supply an individual member of their service.

The FAR has worked extensively with civil authorities in Morocco since its founding, providing significant support to public works and other community projects. One of the FAR's first major civil missions was disaster relief in the aftermath of the 1960 Agadir earthquake. The FAR provided disaster relief in the aftermath of the 26 February 2004 earthquake near the northern city of al-Hoceima.⁶⁹

Loyalty

Following the coup attempts against Hassan II, the monarchy focused on loyalty above all else from the senior officers it appointed to run the FAR and the security services. The coup attempts molded Hassan II's security outlook for the remainder of his reign. He remained surrounded by his trusted inner circle, carefully selected to ensure that another coup attempt would never take place. When Mohamed VI came to power in 1999, he was widely expected to make significant changes in the military and security services to reflect a reduced threat. However, the rise of Islamist movements since the late 1990s and particularly after 9/11 and the 2003 Casablanca bombings heightened concern about mixed loyalties among FAR personnel, resulting in increased personnel vetting and security screening.

Regional and Ethnic Factors

No units in the FAR are formally composed of, or dominated by, personnel from a given region or ethnic group. Military personnel entering service swear an oath binding FAR members into a common entity dedicated to serving the king and the nation. However, military personnel are generally not usually deployed in or near their home areas in order to ensure that any ties FAR members may have are unlikely to affect the mission and its execution. Although Berbers were heavily recruited during the protectorate period for the French and Spanish forces, this was mostly due to economic factors rather than to any deliberate political motive on the part of the military authorities. Although Berbers were much less prominent in the officer corps after the coup attempts in the 1970s, there appears to have been no change in the composition of the rest of the military. The decline in the senior officer corps' heavily Berber composition was due primarily to the king's desire to ensure that senior officers were loyal, trusted officers from Arab communities that traditionally supported the monarchy. Many of the officers appointed after the coup attempts had previously been placed in administrative posts that Hassan II had created during the period of government growth in the 1960s.⁷⁰

Customs and Courtesies

Protocol

Protocol in Morocco's military centers on rank, seniority (age and/or time in service), the social divisions between officers and enlisted, and the special status and/or role of some officers and units. FAR members are conscious of seniority and rank, and senior personnel often have considerable power and influence far beyond their nominal rank. The officers see themselves as a separate—and superior—class, militarily and socially, and their interaction with NCOs and other enlisted personnel is often formal and impersonal.

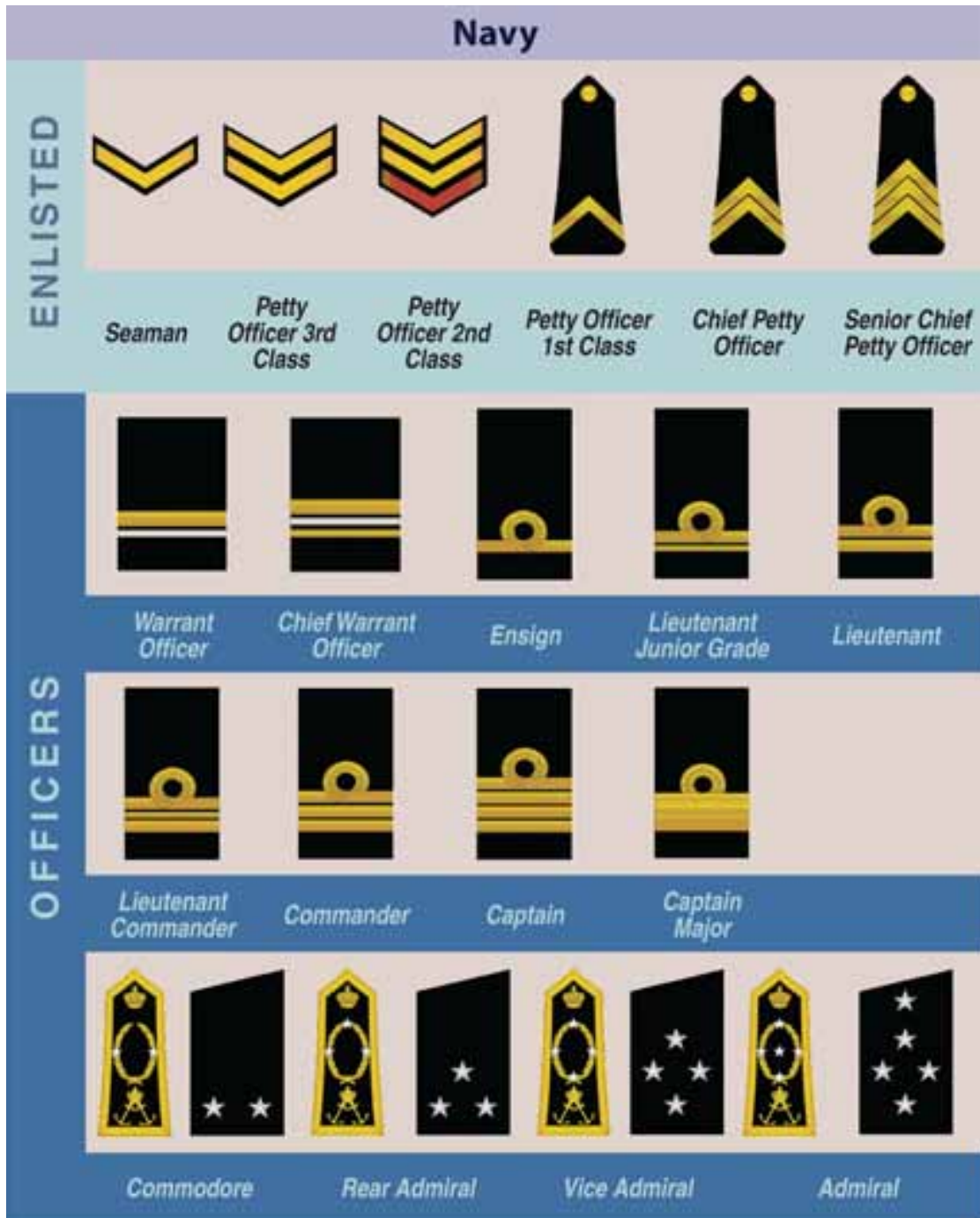
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Uniforms, Rank, and Insignia

FAR uniforms have evolved since Morocco gained independence, as French styles have gradually given way to a distinctively Moroccan coloring, cut, and insignia display for office and ceremonial attire. Combat and work uniforms continue to evolve, with elite units sporting French-style battle dress uniforms (regular and desert camouflage). Most troops still wear olive drab work uniforms, however.

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Rank is depicted on FAR's officer and enlisted uniforms in French and Arabic. The FAR, unlike other military services, has a rank of colonel-major, which falls between that of full colonel and brigadier-general.

The FAR's rank insignia reflect not only Morocco's particular military heritage and symbology but also the contributions by the French and some Middle Eastern/North African military systems. Each military specialty, or corps, has distinctive insignia traditionally worn on formal occasions and/or in office settings.

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FAR Ranks			
Army Rank	U.S. Equivalent	Navy Rank	U.S. Navy Equivalent
Marechal	General of the Army		
General d'Armee	General	<i>Amiral</i>	Admiral
General de Corps d'Armee	Lieutenant General	<i>Amiral d'escadre</i>	Vice Admiral
General de Division	Major General	<i>Vice amiral</i>	Rear Admiral
General de Brigade	Brigadier General	<i>Contre-amiral</i>	Commodore
Colonel-Major	(No US equivalent)	<i>Capitaine de vaisseau-major</i>	(No U.S. equivalent)
Colonel	Colonel	<i>Capitaine de vaisseau</i>	Captain
Lieutenant Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel	<i>Capitaine de Fregate</i>	Commander
Commandant	Major	<i>Capitaine de Corvette</i>	Lieutenant Commander
Capitaine	Captain	<i>Lieutenant de vaisseau</i>	Lieutenant
Lieutenant	1 st Lieutenant	<i>Enseigne de vaisseau 1ere classe</i>	Lieutenant JG
Sous-Lieutenant	2 nd Lieutenant	<i>Enseigne de vaisseau 2eme classe</i>	Ensign
Adjudant-Chef	Chief Warrant Officer	<i>Maitre Principal</i>	Chief Warrant Officer
Adjudant	Warrant Officer	<i>Maitre Premier</i>	Warrant Officer
Sergent-Major	Sergeant Major	<i>Maitre</i>	Senior Chief Petty Officer
Sergent	Sergeant	<i>Second maitre de 1ere classe</i>	Chief Petty Officer
Caporal-Chef	Master-Corporal	<i>Second maitre de 2eme classe</i>	Petty Officer First Class
Caporal	Corporal	<i>Quartier maitre de 1ere classe</i>	Petty Officer Second Class
Soldat	Private	<i>Matelot</i>	Seaman

Note: Moroccan Air Force Ranks are similar to those of the Army

Personnel

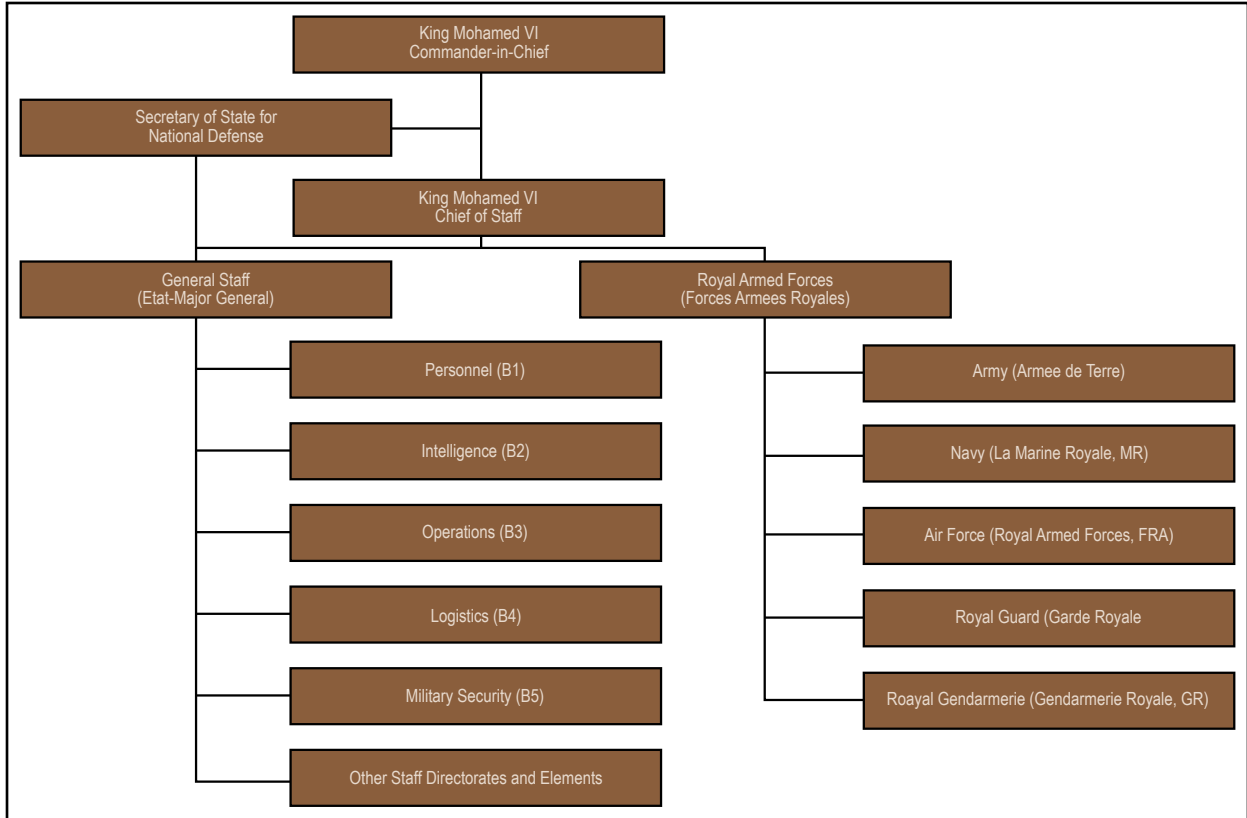
Force Size and Composition

The FAR has approximately 200,000 personnel total for all services. The army (*armée de terre* or “ground army”) is the largest service, with approximately 175,000 personnel, followed by the air force (*armée de l'air*), with about 13,500 personnel, and the navy (*la marine*), with about 10,000 personnel. Since the mid-to-late 1970s, the bulk of the FAR, particularly the army, has been deployed to Western Sahara.⁷¹

Recruiting Standards

Morocco ended conscription as of 31 August 2006. Prior to this date, 18 months of military service were obligatory for all men meeting age and fitness standards. Enforcement was strict during the 1980s, when military manpower was needed to support the heavy FAR buildup in Western Sahara. Conscription was never obligatory for women.⁷²

Military recruits must meet physical fitness and health standards, and the end of conscription provided the FAR greater leeway in selecting personnel with an overall higher educational level. Aptitude tests and other forms of



Moroccan military organization

screening common to many Western militaries may not be given in Morocco. Medical screening, however, is apparently given to all recruits to determine fitness for service and to check for contagious diseases and other serious medical conditions.⁷³ Potential recruits are also subjected to a background check to determine whether they have been involved with criminal activity or, most importantly, linked to radical Islamist activity.

Military Demographics

Morocco has at least 8 million men and a roughly equal number of women of military age (ages 18–49). Of these, approximately 6.5 million men and 6.7 women are fit for military service. More than 350,000 men and 340,000 women reach military age annually.⁷⁴

The country has a large pool of physically fit, literate men of military age to recruit from. Unemployment and underemployment remain significant problems throughout the country, and military service thus remains an attractive alternative for young men who meet the recruitment standards set by the services. Recruiting is conducted through the local *place d’armes* (military headquarters), and inductees are initially processed there before being sent to centers for basic training throughout the country.

Economic conditions and demography are likely to ensure that the country will have no lack of potential recruits. This is particularly the case in rural areas, where unemployment rates are high and poverty is widespread. Military service will remain an attractive option in these areas, such as the northern Rif region and the Grand and Middle Atlas, for young men who have graduated from high school.⁷⁵

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Economic and social divisions in Moroccan society are reflected in the FAR. Officers are selected from the ruling elite and the middle class, and at the least they attend domestic training institutions. Prestige is attached to training abroad and is sought among the FAR officer class. Enlisted training is more basic and generally conducted in-country. NCOs have fewer opportunities for foreign training than officers do.

Women in the FAR

The FAR recruited its first women in 1963. Since then, the number of women in the FAR has increased, and their presence, particularly in some military specialties, has become commonplace. Significant numbers of women FAR personnel serve in the social and medical services and may dominate the former. In the FAR medical service, women serve in a range of sub-specialties including nursing and hospital work, medical administration, and pharmacology. Women FAR officers serve as doctors and other medical specialists. More recently, women have been recruited in other military specialty areas, including engineering and police. The Royal Air Force has also accelerated in recruiting and promoting women. Although other specialty areas of the FAR are open to both sexes, most women continue to serve in the previously mentioned occupations.⁷⁶

FAR Professional Conduct

FAR personnel, particularly in units stationed near or at major urban centers, generally refrain from behavior that could cause problems with civil authorities. Military personnel who have to find off-base housing for their families frequently spend much off-duty time off base. Because of this, unit commanders attempt to maintain the best possible relations with local communities. When incidents do occur, commanders frequently intercede on behalf of their personnel, particularly fellow officers. This is often the case when infractions are minor and responsibility for an incident is shared with aggrieved parties.

Military conduct remains strongly governed by the military's hierarchical system. Senior officers are rewarded for long service and loyalty to the monarchy with impressive privileges beyond those available to junior officers. However, officers in general live a comfortable life by national standards. The enlisted ranks have fewer benefits and lower pay than officers do, but nevertheless, a military career provides a steady and reliable income through retirement. Under these circumstances, military personnel perceive that they have much to lose should they fail to conform to prevailing standards of conduct. Historically, this has often meant ignoring, or even participating in, behavior sanctioned by their superiors that would, in other circumstances, be deemed either questionable or even criminal. Critics of the FAR have blamed such attitudes for the continued prevalence of corruption and abuse of authority in the military.

Most FAR personnel believe that reforms are necessary and welcome changes. Nevertheless, expectations have apparently waned, particularly after the perceived slowness of significant reforms following the accession of Mohamed VI in 1999. According to some press accounts, personnel believe that the military system remains negligent and inefficient because corrupt senior officers resist attempts to implement reforms.

In the FAR, formalities with regard to introductions are quite rigid. Officers expect to be addressed by their titles when meeting members of other militaries for the first time and will reciprocate this behavior. The same applies to senior enlisted personnel. Junior enlisted personnel are frequently addressed only by rank as they are given orders. In the press, FAR personnel are normally referred to by their rank and last name.

Military Conduct among Troops Deployed for International Peacekeeping

Few conduct-related incidents have been reported for FAR personnel deployed in international peacekeeping operations. However, in July 2007, reports surfaced accusing FAR personnel deployed with the UN operation in Cote d'Ivoire of sexually exploiting minors. The unit involved, based at Bouaké, was immediately suspended from operations and restricted to its base pending an investigation.⁷⁷ Earlier, in 2005, official UN action against charges of sexual improprieties by members of the FAR contingent deployed in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo had been reported, however, in April 2008, investigators determined that FAR personnel had not been involved.⁷⁸

Chorfa Status and Military Conduct

Because of the Arab and *Chorfa* (Sherifian) descent of the ruling dynasty, FAR personnel descended from the Prophet Mohamed share this noble status with the king and other members of the royal family. About one-tenth of the Moroccan population, a significant segment of society, is *Chorfa*. They are obligated to obey orders only from other *Chorfa*, although they can address orders to both *Chorfa* and non-*Chorfa* personnel.

Relations in the Officer Corps

Mohamed VI inherited a cadre of senior officers whose careers depended foremost on loyalty to the monarchy. The new king hoped for a large-scale retirement of senior officers, but this did not occur, though there has been a slow but steady stream of retirements as Mohamed VI advances his own trusted nominees into more senior positions. Many of Mohamed VI's nominees attended the Royal College or other schools with him. The king appears to be advancing his nominees using the existing system tempered by merit-based selections, easing them into key positions wherever and whenever possible.⁷⁹

Officer-Enlisted Relations

Relations between officers and enlisted personnel are highly formalized, both by military regulations and social practice. Enlisted personnel are expected to obey an officer's command or direction without question. Those who disobey orders or exhibit what is perceived as "problem behavior" are subject to disciplinary action, confinement, or removal from the force. Often, such discipline is non-judicial and harsh. For their part, most junior officers work to ensure the welfare of their personnel, if only to ensure that by doing so they qualify for advancement in the service. Senior officers view the enlisted and their welfare in more abstract terms; they realize the necessity of providing adequate subsistence and training, but often place little priority on this need. Although the enlisted resent impersonal treatment by officers that usually renders them all but invisible, they accept this demeaning and often difficult aspect of officer-enlisted relations as a necessary evil attached to their military career.

Civil-Military Relations

The military is highly respected in Morocco society, not only because it is the country's armed force but also because it is part of the *makhzen* and thus removed from the civil administration, which Moroccans tend to view less favorably. The public is continually exposed to media discussions of the military that normally portray it in a positive light. The media reports military accomplishments in peacekeeping operations and exercises. In some parts of the country, the military, used in civil projects, is well appreciated for the services it provides. Joint exercises with the United States and other foreign countries often have a medical

or other civil aspect that benefits the population.

Moroccan civil authorities view stationing a military unit in or near a city or town as a major economic benefit. Most major cities have at least one key military unit of battalion size or larger based nearby. FAR personnel are often used in civic projects, benefiting the local economy. Many localities benefit economically from FAR personnel spending money on goods and services in the areas where they are stationed.

The current favorable status of the FAR has had complex roots. Because the military was used during the protectorate for quelling unrest, city dwellers regarded the military with suspicion for a long time after Morocco gained independence. This contrasted with the attitudes of the rural population, for whom military service was almost always a means of economic and social improvement. At present, however, there seems to be little residual difference between the attitudes of rural and urban populations toward the military.⁸⁰

One facet of the public esteem for the military is the frequent naming of streets and other localities after the FAR. *Avenue des Forces Armees Royales* is a common street name in Moroccan cities, exceeded only by streets and localities named after Mohamed VI or other Moroccan monarchs.

Military Pay and Benefits

FAR members receive a monthly salary plus allowances. These are determined by rank, time in rank, and other factors. FAR members receive additional pay for educational or professional credentials, as well for being married. Married personnel receive additional allowances depending on the number of children they have. Since the accession of King Mohamed VI, there has been a major effort to improve housing for FAR members, including higher allowances for housing, as well as the provision of on-base military housing.

Although pay and benefits for FAR members compare favorably with those in civil society at large, this has been the result of a long evolution since the establishment of the service in 1956. Major milestones in the process include parity with the civil service pay scales in 1971 and substantial combat pay for service in Western Sahara since 1976. The FAR also provides free medical service for its serving and retired members and has a pension system. These additional benefits, as well as the security of the employment itself, make military service much sought after in many sectors of Moroccan society.⁸¹

Health and Welfare Conditions

Military personnel receive a range of social and health benefits that increase with rank and time in service. Benefits available to FAR members include housing, rations, education for dependents, health services for members and their families, retirement benefits, and training for military-to-civilian transition. These benefits continue to make military service attractive for Moroccans.⁸²

As noted previously, senior officers enjoy a range of privileges to reward long years of loyal service. Such perks are an incentive for less-senior personnel to remain in the force and adhere to its corporate standards. Although retired military personnel receive benefits many seek employment to supplement their pensions.

The Morocco military provides housing for married soldiers, as well as educational, medical, and social services. However, this is sometimes limited by resource availability. In general, forces supporting international peacekeeping missions are reasonably well-provided for, but remote-garrison personnel often face shortages of basic necessities. Base housing, for instance, is generally limited at garrisons, often forcing soldiers with families to rent quarters off base. FAR personnel are entitled to a range of medical services, from clinics for individual units to military hospital facilities at the national level; however, limitations such

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as proximity (much of the FAR's health infrastructure is in or near major urban centers) can impede access.

The FAR also provides social services for personnel deployed abroad for peacekeeping operations. Such services are heavily weighted toward medical requirements but also include sports and recreation, education, and leisure activities.⁸³

Health and welfare conditions are sometimes challenging for personnel assigned to remote areas of the country, such as Western Sahara. Deployments along the berm entail service in areas far from major medical or other services, which are available in Laayoune, Dakhla, and Goulimine.⁸⁴

King Mohamed VI has promulgated the construction of additional housing throughout Morocco to accommodate military personnel.⁸⁵ In addition, the king has encouraged the creation of the Hassan II Foundation (Fondation Hassan II) to address the needs of retired FAR veterans.⁸⁶

The Military Medical System

Per legislation in 1984 and subsequent amendments, the Morocco military has a nationwide hospital system to serve FAR members. The country has three major hospitals, in Marrakech, Casablanca, and Meknes, as well as regional hospitals and surgical centers in the south. Dispensaries supplement these at more local levels. FAR health services are available to active duty members and their families, retired military and their families, and members of the auxiliary forces. However, as previously noted, accessibility can be an issue for personnel in need of medical services or treatment, often because of the long distances to be travelled. Medical benefits are a major reason military service is attractive to many Moroccans.⁸⁷

Moroccan Military Hospitals

Location	Facility	Remarks
Marrakech	<i>Hôpital militaire Avicenna</i>	Major military medical center
Rabat	<i>Hôpital l d'instruction militaire Mohamed V</i>	Major military medical center
Meknes	<i>Hôpital militaire Moulay Ismail</i>	Major military medical center
Laayoune	<i>3ème Hôpital Militaire</i>	Regional mil. hospital
Dakhla	<i>4ème Hôpital Militaire</i>	Regional mil. hospital
Goulmime	<i>5ème Hôpital Militaire</i>	Regional mil. hospital
Bouizakarne	<i>1er Hôpital Chirurgical Avancé (HCA)</i>	"Forward Surgical Hospital"
Smara	<i>2ème Hôpital Chirurgical Avancé (HCA)</i>	"Forward Surgical Hospital"
Boujdour	<i>3ème Hôpital Chirurgical avancé (HCA)</i>	"Forward Surgical Hospital"
Bunia (DRC)	<i>9ème Hôpital Militaire</i>	Supports the FAR peacekeeping contingent under the UN mission in the DRC (MONUC).

The FAR also has the capability to deploy field hospitals, as required, to various sites throughout Morocco.⁸⁸

Career Progression, Retention, and Retirement

Senior enlisted FAR personnel retire when their tour of duty is complete. This contrasts with FAR officers, whose advancement system has been complicated by the retention of many senior officers past retirement age. This is viewed as a heritage of King Hassan II, who prized loyalty among his senior officers. The practi-

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cal result was to create a backlog in the promotion system, requiring an incumbent to retire in order to open up a senior command-and-staff position or assignment. For this reason, relatively small numbers of promotions and assignments occur; those that do are usually announced at major national holidays that also have military significance, such as the FAR Anniversary (15 May) and Throne Day (30 July).

Length and terms of service are clearly laid out by FAR regulations approved by the king. Enlisted personnel are required to retire at age 48. Officers, however, particularly those of senior rank, must receive permission from the king to retire, despite their retirement officially being required by age 65. In cases of ill health or other circumstances that prevent or discourage their continuance in office, officers are required to request permission to retire. Whereas requesting permission is a formality for junior personnel, senior officers with special responsibilities or skills often wait a long time to receive permission to retire.⁸⁹

Military Training

The FAR has a large and diversified military training establishment geared toward filling most basic and intermediate training needs for service personnel. The bulk of the schools support the ground forces, but there are also special schools for the air force, navy, and royal gendarmerie. Many of the schools offer not only a basic certificate but also course credits that can be applied at other educational institutions.

The Royal Military Academy in Meknes (Dar al-Beida) is the principal training institution for the FAR officer corps. It was founded by the French protectorate administration in 1918 to train the local force, but since 1956 its curriculum has been augmented to train the new FAR leadership. Since 1965, officers have been required to complete 3 years of training. The program is geared to turn out about 350 new trainees per year. Navy and air force officers continue from Dar al-Beida to their specialty schools.⁹⁰

Most foreign military training for the FAR is conducted in France or the United States, with most of those selected sent to staff colleges in those countries. The FAR has its own staff college at Kenitra, to which the bulk of officer staff trainees are sent. Completion of staff school, either foreign or domestic, is required for advancement to senior field or staff rank.⁹¹

For those attending medical and technical schools, curriculum requirements depend on the nature of the military occupation specialty chosen by the candidate. The FAR requires at least 5 years' service after graduation from such schools, but most officers remain in the military until retirement.⁹²

Most enlisted training is done at the battalion/brigade/regiment level, with 3 months' initial training for inductees. Subsequent training and specialized instruction is done at the training institutions mentioned above.⁹³

Moroccan Military Education and Training Institutions

Institution	Acronym	Location	Specialty
<i>Ecole Royale du Service de Santé Militaire*</i>	ERSSM	Rabat	Military Medicine
<i>Centre d'Instruction Service Social des FAR*</i>	CISSE	Rabat	Social Services
<i>Ecole Royale Militaire Lalla Meriem *</i>	ERMIN	Rabat	General Military Training
<i>Centre d'Instruction de Formation des Transports (*)</i>	CIFT	Casablanca	Transport and Logistics
<i>Ecole Royale Navale (*)</i>	ERN	Casablanca	Naval Academy
<i>Centre d'Instruction Marine Royale (*)</i>	CIMR	Casablanca	Naval Training

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Institution	Acronym	Location	Specialty
<i>Centre d'Instruction d'Artillerie des Forces Armées Royales</i>	CIART	Fes	Artillery
<i>Académie Royale Militaire (*)</i>	ARM	Me-knés	Royal Military Academy (Officer Training)
<i>Ecole Royale de Cavalerie (*)</i>	ERC	Agadir	Mechanized
<i>Centre Royal de Formation Munitionnaire (*)</i>	CRFM	Agadir	Ordnance
<i>Centre de Formation des Cadres des Forces Auxiliaires (*)</i>	CFCFA	Agadir	Intl. Security and Support to Law Enforcement Training
<i>Centre de Formation du Service Matériel des Forces Armées (*)</i>	CFTSM	Agadir	Equipment Maintenance and Repair
<i>Ecole Royale d'Infanterie</i>	ERI	Agadir	Infantry
<i>Ecole de Formation et Qualification de la Gendarmerie Royale</i>	EFQGR	Marrakech	Law Enforcement Training
<i>Ecole Royale de l'Air (*)</i>	ERA	Marrakech	Air Force Academy
<i>Centre d'Instruction de Genie des Forces Armées Royales (*)</i>	CIG	Kénitra	Engineer
<i>Centre d'Instruction des Transmissions des FAR (*)</i>	CIT	Kénitra	Communications
<i>Centre d'Instruction des Troupes Aéroportées</i>	CI/TAP	Salé	Airborne Instruction Center
Note: An asterisk (*) indicates an academic degree program or course credit program.⁹⁴			

Effect of Culture on Military Operations

Officers and enlisted personnel reflect, to some extent, differing socio-cultural roots in their execution of tasks and general attitudes toward military status. There are also patent differences in the general outlook and world view among many FAR members due to regional and, to some degree, ethnic background. However, FAR military culture tends to override, if not minimize, these differences.

Experience is highly valued in Moroccan society in general, and this is reflected also in the military. The military system expects that more senior officers or NCOs should have more experience. This often results in excessive deference to seniority in addition to rank, whether or not the incumbent has been able to make effective use of any service experience in a given specialty or area of competence. Nevertheless, guidance and instructions given by NCOs to junior soldiers are normally expected to be obeyed, without question, as are commands given by officers.

The FAR employs Western military doctrines. Military doctrine and training based on the French perspective historically have been the most influential. Other important sources of FAR doctrine include that by Spain and the United States, with some contributions by Arab nations. Training in combat arms skills, as well as combat support and combat service support, parallels that of most European and other Western militaries. Arabic is the usual operational language, although French is frequently used as well, particularly when dealing with foreign militaries. Most official documents are available in both Arabic and French.

Moroccan military manuals and military trainers provide detailed guidance for personnel in the proper employment of combat assets or combat support assets. Training in military specializations, both in the classroom and through exercises, parallels that conducted by other North African militaries.

Cultural Style of Warfare

Moroccan military personnel take their oath of office to God, the king, and the Moroccan nation seriously and are reminded of this message throughout their career. Loyalty and valor in combat have been recognized as the key values among soldiers, and as such have been well-documented in pre-protectorate times, the two world wars, and the post-independence period. In situations where loyalty is required from personnel, regardless of other factors, soldiers are recognized for their valor and bravery wherever possible. The FAR also recognizes sacrifices made by soldiers and their families. A prominent example is the treatment that FAR personnel held prisoner by the FP received in the Moroccan press, which also publicized the plight of their families. When the FP began to release the Moroccan soldiers, their return, often after almost 3 decades of imprisonment, was widely publicized in the domestic press, and the FAR itself provided high-profile compensation and recognition.

King Hassan II deliberately limited the separate services' ability to act in concert without his direction and oversight. The military's inability to act in a joint environment contrasts with that of the United States and most European forces, as well as that of Morocco's rival, Algeria, where the concept of joint operations is a major facet of the counterinsurgency doctrine. Tactical proficiency is generally limited to performance within the separate military services. Although the FAR recognizes this shortcoming, overcoming this unfamiliarity with joint doctrine and practice remains a significant hurdle for Morocco's military.

The FAR's ability to work with foreign military forces in peacekeeping missions or with foreign troops on joint exercises, however, frequently depends on the motivation of the units involved as much as any training or collective skills. In general, foreign military commanders and their units find Moroccan counterparts eager and willing to participate in any way they can.

The Moroccan public in general has high respect for the FAR and its personnel and the military profession in general. Family members support military personnel, as a service career represents long-term secure employment with a reliable and predictable income. These benefits of a military career have high appeal in a country marked by a general scarcity of well-paying, steady employment, particularly outside urban areas. Garrison towns consider themselves fortunate to have units stationed nearby, as the economy benefits significantly. In pre-protectorate times, the Morocco military had few constraints regarding behavior in the field, besides loyalty to the king and obedience to the commands of his officers. The French government implemented standards of conduct, including international laws of war, in its recruitment of Moroccan personnel in the World Wars and in colonial missions. The FAR has upheld these standards since Morocco gained independence. Nevertheless, conduct issues have been reported regarding situations in which military personnel acted with relative impunity. In general, Moroccan forces serving with international peacekeeping missions have worked hard to conform to standards set by the UN and similar organizations. Nevertheless, allegations of sexual improprieties involving FAR personnel and local nationals have arisen during Moroccan forces' deployment on peacekeeping missions in Cote d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Such issues have been addressed quickly and definitively by the FAR, however, in coordination with the UN.

Cultural Factors and U.S. Military Engagement

Moroccans, particularly those with access to foreign, mainly Western, media, are familiar in varying degrees with the United States and its culture. U.S. culture remains popular with Moroccan elites and many young Moroccans, despite attempts since the early 1990s by foreign and domestic Islamists to influence Moroccan culture. Impressions of the United States and its culture are reflected in Moroccans' attitudes toward the United States and its citizens, including official military and civilian visitors to the country.

Key Enabling Legislation Pertaining to the Forces Armées Royales

Dahir n° 1-58-138 du 16 kaada 1375 (25 juin 1956) portant création des Forces armées royales)

- Establishes the Moroccan military (Forces Armées Royales)

Dahir n° 1-56-270 du 6 Rebia II 1376 (10.11.56), formant code de justice militaire

- Establishes the FAR military justice system

Dahir n° 1-57-015 du 13 Joumada II 1376 (15.01.57), fixant le traitement des personnels militaires à solde mensuelle des F.A.R. modifié et complété notamment par le décret n° 2.89.45 du 18 Joumada II 1409 (21.01.89)

- Sets terms for the medical treatment of FAR personnel

Dahir n° 1-58-116 du 15 moharrem 1378 (1er août 1958) instituant un régime de pension en faveur des officiers des Forces Armées Royales

- Establishes a pension system for FAR officers

Dahir n° 1-57-160 du 19 Chaoual 1378 (28.04.59) les limites d'âge des officiers des Forces armées royales

- Establishes age limits for FAR personnel

Dahir n° 1-58-117 du 15 moharrem 1378 (1er août 1958) sur les pensions militaires au titre d'invalidité, tel qu'il a été modifié ou complété, notamment par la loi n° 014-71

- Adjusts the military pension system

Dahir n° 1-63-347 du 24 Joumada II 1383 (12.11.1963) fixant les limites d'âge des sous-officiers et des hommes de troupe des Forces armées royales

- Establishes age-limits for FAR NCOs

Loi. n° 013.71 du 12 Kaada 1391 (30.12.71) instituant un régime de pensions Militaires; amended per loi 07.89, 21.02.02

- Adjusts the military pension system

Loi. n° 015.71 du 12 Kaada 1391 (30.12.71) fixant les limites d'âges des officiers des Forces Armées Royales, affiliés au régime des pensions militaires

- Establishes age limits for FAR officers

Décret n° 2-73-657 du 16 safar 1394 (11 mars 1974) relatif à l'organisation et au fonctionnement des formations hospitalières des Forces armées royales

- Establishes the FAR hospital system within the Medical service

Dahir portant loi n° 1-74-92 du 3 Chaabane 1395 (12.08.75) portant affiliation des personnels d'encadrement et de rang des Forces Auxiliaires au régime des pensions militaires

- Adds Auxiliary Forcer personnel to the FAR pension scheme

Dahir portant loi n° 1-75-73 du 12 rebia II 1396 (12 avril 1976) relatif à l'organisation générale des Forces auxiliaires

- Reorganizes the Auxiliary Forces

Décret n° 2.82.673 du 28 Rabia I 1403 (13.1.83) à l'organisation de l'administration de la défense nationale

- Reorganizes the Defense Ministry

Décret n° 2.86.19 du 14 Rabia II 1407 (17.12.86) complétant le décret n° 2-73-687 du 16 safar 1391 (11.3.84) relatif à l'organisation des formations hospitalières des Forces armées royales

- Reorganizes the FAR hospital system within the Medical service

Dahir n° 1.98.43 du 2 moharem 1419 (29 avril 1998) portant délégation de pouvoir en matière d'administration de la défense nationale B.O .4584 (du 7/5/98)

- Extends national defense control over materiel

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ment's Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Habous (Muslim endowments) and traditionally by the *ulama*, the kingdom's officially recognized body of learned Islamic clerics, derives ultimately from the Moroccan monarch himself. The latter is both *Amir al-mu'minin* (Commander of the Faithful) and *Amir al-Muslimin* (Commander of the Muslims [of Morocco]). These titles were first claimed by rulers in the 12th and 13th centuries and have been retained ever since. The ultimate arbiter of religious issues in Morocco is thus the king or his designated representative, and the FAR is bound to uphold the royal authority in matters pertaining to Islam. The king's decisions either have the force of law or are promulgated as law. This system is useful for resolving disputes among Muslim clerics and preventing the near anarchy that prevails in some Sunni Muslim countries. This system is a key guiding principle behind royal oversight in appointing members of the *ulama* responsible for overseeing Muslim affairs in the military.

Members of the FAR, like most Moroccans, remain tolerant of visitors who practice other religions, as long as they refrain from offending Islam or proselytizing. Most Moroccans are confident in their religious beliefs, both at the personal and the community level, and do not feel threatened in the exercise of their beliefs. The injunction to respect and protect foreign visitors is normally applied by Moroccans to both Muslims and non-Muslims. Many educated Moroccans are willing to discuss religion and religious affairs with visitors. However, many members of the military generally do not discuss their religion or raise the subject, likely because of the security forces' strict surveillance of the activities of military personnel. Some FAR members, however, do discuss religion but only with a long-time friend or trusted acquaintance.

The religious practices of FAR members that could affect joint exercises with members of non-Muslim foreign forces include *halal* dietary restrictions and observance of prayer times. In such matters, FAR policy takes a practical approach, with any religious obligations being balanced against mission requirements. In addition, many FAR members are accommodating in their approach to such issues, reflecting flexibility but also confidence in their beliefs.

More than 99.9 percent of Moroccans are Sunni Muslims of the Maliki school. The actual practice of religion varies considerably throughout society. While non-Muslim status has not been known to affect qualification for military service, affiliation with radical Islamist organizations, or radical Islamist tendencies, remains an issue of concern. The senior FAR leadership and the Moroccan defense establishment in general have taken steps to counter any risk from radical Islamist activists' attempts to recruit military personnel.⁹⁵ To this end, the 5th Bureau—the Military Counterintelligence Directorate—has been tasked to rigorously pursue Islamist recruiters and sympathizers within FAR ranks.⁹⁶ Some critics of the FAR have claimed that major discrepancies in pay between officer and enlisted ranks could contribute to alienation of junior personnel, rendering them susceptible to Islamist recruiting.⁹⁷

Ethnic Issues

Most Moroccans are genetically Berber, although at present the population is roughly equally divided between those who see themselves as ethnic Berbers and those who perceive themselves as Arabs or Arabized Berbers. However, this perception is culturally and linguistically based, reinforced by the fact that most large urban centers in Morocco are in Arab-speaking areas while most ethnic Berbers or speakers of Berber dialects live in predominantly rural regions. Arabic, however, is widely spoken in most households. A recent survey claimed that approximately 90 percent of households spoke Arabic at home.⁹⁸

Arab-speaking members of the FAR, like other Moroccans, tend to be familiar with wider Arab political and cultural issues to which they are exposed through Arab-language media readily available via TV and journalism. They often, however, tend to ignore or dismiss ethnic Berber issues, frequently dismissing members of the ethnic group as poor "country cousins" who contribute much less to the nation's society or

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economy than the more prosperous Arab people of Morocco do.

FAR members from Morocco's Berber regions, by contrast, are generally well-versed in and frequently vocal on social and economic issues that involve what is, in their eyes, the neglected half of the country and its people. Some Moroccan Berbers are not native Arabic speakers, and the second language for many is French rather than Arabic. However, all FAR members, particularly FAR officers, must master not only French but also Modern Standard Arabic—the official military languages of communication—to advance in the force.

The ethnic and racial diversity of some foreign militaries, including that of the United States, is unlikely to be considered a problem by the FAR. Morocco's population is itself diverse in terms of racial background, ethnic origin, and regional culture. In addition, the FAR has its roots in colonial forces (French and Spanish) that were themselves often diverse.

Economic Issues

Most FAR officers are recruited from Morocco's elite and are carefully screened before being admitted to the military. A degree of homogeneity with regard to social and economic background thus results. While similar rigorous screening and standards exist for enlisted FAR members, the latter are drawn from low- and middle-class recruits. The enlisted members receive much less in the way of perks compared with the officers, but the pay and benefits are a steady source of income that allows FAR NCOs, and their families, social and economic status.

Patriotism and concern about losing their military status, which many Moroccan military personnel are proud of, are likely to keep military personnel from discussing anything negative about the FAR's pay and benefits system. Despite reports of corruption in senior ranks and the acknowledged gap between the salaries of officers and enlisted personnel, military members are unlikely to openly discuss such issues and may even discourage attempts to privately engage them in discussions about these issues.

Disparities between the salaries and benefits for officers and enlisted personnel do not appear to affect performance. FAR training is intended to condition enlisted personnel to obey orders from officers and senior NCOs without question.

Morale

Most FAR members keep quiet about morale issues because the military culture not only frowns upon but also punishes whistleblowers. The prospect of expulsion from service and thus the loss of economic security is another disincentive for FAR personnel to comment openly on the subject. However, many Moroccans have heard about morale issues in the military from family members and friends of FAR personnel. Some military members engaging with U.S. and other foreign personnel may believe that the same problems exist in other militaries to the same degree as in the FAR. FAR personnel appear to be conditioned to refrain from discussing even the minor day-to-day issues common among the junior enlisted of most militaries.

The challenges for FAR personnel who seek to expose corruption and mismanagement in the military are reflected in several recent cases. One case is that of Air Force Captain Moustapha Adib, who was arrested and imprisoned in 1999 for protesting abuses in military administration to the then-heir apparent, now King Mohamed VI. His sentence was confirmed in October 2000, and not only was he expelled from the FAR, but his prison term was lengthened as well. However, Adib was subsequently released from prison in May 2002 after international human rights groups held a lengthy campaign that embarrassed the government.

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The close scrutiny and pressure by both international and domestic human rights lobbies and the press coverage of the Adib affair are viewed by many journalists as an indication of significant change in public perceptions and expectations of the military.⁹⁹ Another prominent case is that of a former FAR officer, Mah-joub Tobji, who published a book in 2006 recounting his career in the military and exposing corruption and willful misconduct among senior officers, focusing on those who served under Hassan II.¹⁰⁰ Tobji and his book have received prominent coverage in reviews in the Moroccan press, but because of his unprecedented coverage of taboo topic, Tobji remains in self-imposed exile in France.¹⁰¹

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⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 280-281.

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⁸⁰ Nelson, Harold D., ed., *Morocco, a Country Study*, pp. 339-340 (previously referenced).

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