

# King Mohammed VI's Historic 2013 Visit to Washington

- In November 2013, King Mohammed VI made a historic visit to Washington to meet President Barack Obama for the first time, highlight the long-standing friendship between the United States and Morocco, and strengthen the strategic partnership between the two countries. During the meeting, King Mohammed VI and President Obama discussed a range of issues of mutual interest. The visit offered an opportunity for the US and Morocco to increase cooperation on “addressing regional challenges, including countering violent extremism, supporting democratic transitions, and promoting economic development in the Middle East and Africa.”  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/11/07/statement-press-secretary-visit-king-mohammed-vi-morocco>
- In a Joint Statement issued following their meeting, King Mohammed VI and President Obama “reaffirmed the strong and mutually beneficial partnership and strategic alliance between the United States and the Kingdom of Morocco, stressed that this important visit provides an opportunity to map out a new and ambitious plan for the strategic partnership, and pledged to advance our shared priorities of a secure, stable, and prosperous Maghreb, Africa, and Middle East. The two leaders also emphasized our shared values, mutual trust, common interests, and strong friendship, as reflected throughout our partnership.”  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/11/22/joint-statement-united-states-america-and-kingdom-morocco>
- The Joint Statement outlined a wide range of policies and programs the US and Morocco pledged to undertake as part of their advanced strategic partnership. Key issues include:
  - **Support for Democratic and Economic Reforms**
    - A commitment to work together to realize the promise of Morocco’s 2011 constitution, particularly in the areas of institutions, civil society, and inclusive governance
    - A commitment to deepen the ongoing US-Morocco dialogue on human rights
  - **Economic and Security Cooperation**
    - The new USAID development strategy designed to enhance youth employment, increase civil participation in governance, and improve educational attainment in primary schools
    - The Trade Facilitation Agreement to further the US-Morocco FTA
  - **Educational and Cultural Cooperation**
    - A pledge to enhance the Moroccan American Commission for Educational and Cultural Exchange
    - A \$5 million donation from Morocco to the J. Christopher Stevens Virtual Exchange Initiative to connect youth from all different age groups in the Middle East and North Africa with youth in the US
  - **The Issue of Western Sahara**
    - A reiteration of US policy on the Western Sahara to support a solution based on autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty and a restatement of its position that “Morocco’s autonomy plan is serious, realistic, and credible and that it represents a potential approach that could satisfy the aspirations of the people in the Western Sahara to run their own affairs in peace and dignity.”
  - **Regional Security and Counterterrorism Cooperation**
    - A reaffirmation to deepen civilian and military cooperation in the areas of non-proliferation and counter-terrorism

- The intent to continue cooperation to bolster democratic criminal justice institutions and counter the threat of violence extremism in the region
  - **Africa**
    - A commitment to explore joint initiatives to promote human development and stability in Africa through food security, access to energy, and the promotion of trade based on the existing Free Trade Agreement
- <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/11/22/joint-statement-united-states-america-and-kingdom-morocco>
- In the Joint Statement, President Obama also offered wide praise and support for Morocco's reforms and initiatives to promote security and stability in the region. Highlights include:
  - Commendation for the action and leadership of the King in deepening democracy and promoting economic progress and human development during the past decade
  - Support for Morocco's initiative to reform its asylum and immigration system
  - Recognition of the importance of Morocco as a trade and investment platform for North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa
  - Acknowledgement of the important US-Morocco partnership on the UN Security Council over the past two years for the advancement of international peace and security, including in Mali, the Sahel, Syria, Libya, and the Middle East
  - Praise for King Mohammed VI's leadership in Africa, notable in the domains of peacekeeping, conflict prevention, human development, and the preservation of cultural and religious identity
  - Acknowledgement of King Mohammed's contribution, as Chairman of the Al Quds Committee, to efforts aiming to achieve a two state solution

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/11/22/joint-statement-united-states-america-and-kingdom-morocco>
- The King's meeting with President Obama was preceded earlier in the week by a meeting with US Secretary of State, John Kerry, and US Secretary of Defense, Chuck Hagel. The meeting focused on strengthening the longstanding relations and fruitful cooperation between the two countries, and consultation on bilateral, regional, and international issues of common interest.
 

<http://moroccoonthemove.com/2013/11/21/king-mohammed-vi-meets-sec-state-john-kerry-sec-defense-chuck-hagel-map/#sthash.FFoVydkr.dpbs>
- King Mohammed VI was accompanied on his visit by a high-level delegation of Moroccan officials, who met with their counterparts in the US government as well as with think tanks, NGOs, and other organizations to broaden and deepen the dialogue between the two nations.
- The visit builds on a longstanding relationship between the two partners, begun in 1777 when Morocco became the first country to formally recognize the United States. It also marked the third such visit for King Mohammed VI, who has met previously with former Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush in Washington.
 

<http://www.embassyofmorocco.us/USMoroccoRelationship.htm>

For more information, visit <http://www.moroccoonthemove.com/> - Follow on Twitter [@MorocOnTheMove](https://twitter.com/MorocOnTheMove)