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2018 Report on International Religious Freedom: Morocco

Executive Summary

According to the Moroccan constitution, Islam is the religion of the state, and the state guarantees freedom of thought, expression, and assembly. The constitution also says the state guarantees to everyone the freedom to “practice his religious affairs.” The constitution states the king holds the Islamic title “Commander of the Faithful,” and he is the protector of Islam and the guarantor of the freedom to practice religious affairs in the country. It also prohibits political parties founded on religion and political parties, parliamentarians, and constitutional amendments that denigrate or infringe on Islam. Moroccan law penalizes the use of enticements to convert a Muslim to another religion and prohibits criticism of Islam. According to the 2017-2018 Moroccan Association of Human Rights Report, the only non-Muslim citizens who could freely practice their religion were Jews. Local Christian and Shia leaders reported the government detained and questioned some Christian and Shia citizens about their beliefs and contacts with other Christians and Shias. Christian and Shia Muslim citizens also stated their fear of government and societal harassment led to their decision to practice their faiths discreetly. According to press reports, in April police in Rabat detained a Christian citizen for 24 hours after finding Christian literature in his backpack. On April 3, a group calling itself the Moroccan Christian Coordinating Group met with the National Council of Human Rights (CNDH) to submit a petition calling for the government to recognize rights for Christian citizens such as freedom to worship, celebrate civil marriages, establish and operate cemeteries, use biblical names for children, and the right of children to decline Islamic classes at school. In May human rights organizations and media reported local authorities denied two citizens who had converted to Christianity the necessary documents to register to marry because of their religious beliefs. Foreign clergy, because of fear of being criminally charged with proselytism, said they discouraged the country’s Christian citizens from attending their churches. Although the law allows registration of religious groups as associations, some minority religious groups reported the government rejected their registration requests. The authorities continued to introduce new religious textbooks during the school year following a review they said was aimed at removing extremist or intolerant references. The Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs (MEIA) continued to guide and monitor the content of sermons in mosques, Islamic religious education, and the dissemination of Islamic religious material by broadcast media, actions it said were intended to combat violent extremism. According to media reports, in September the government requested regional MEIA representatives identify and monitor imams (*morchidines*) and

female Muslim spiritual guides (*morchidates*) who have accounts on social media to ensure only official religious positions were conveyed through these personal accounts. The government restricted the distribution of non-Islamic religious materials, as well as Islamic materials it deemed inconsistent with the Maliki-Ashari school of Sunni Islam. On June 14, Minister of State for Human Rights Mustafa Ramid stated in an interview that “freedom of belief does not pose a short-term threat to the state but is certainly a long-term danger” to national cohesion. On June 19, Minister of Justice Mohamed Aujjar denied the existence of Christian, Baha’i, and Ahmadi citizens on national television, but he said throughout history, Morocco has allowed Jewish citizens and visiting Christians from Europe and Africa to practice their religious affairs freely. In May the Archives of Morocco signed a cooperation agreement with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM). The government hosted the second International Conference on Intercultural and Interfaith Dialogue in Fez from September 10 to 12, where King Mohammed VI delivered remarks underscoring the tradition of coexistence in Morocco between Muslims and Jews and openness to other religions.

According to the *Assabah* newspaper, in July Christian citizens in the city of Nador received death threats, which the government investigated and reported were unfounded allegations. According to media reports, activists, community leaders, and Christian converts, Christian citizens face pressure from non-Christian family and friends to convert to Islam or renounce their Christian faith. They also reported the government did not respond to complaints about frequent societal harassment. Members of the Baha’i Faith said they were open about their faith with family, friends, and neighbors, but feared extremist elements in society would try to do them harm. According to an interview with *TelQuel* magazine, however, Baha’i citizens reported they did not feel they were treated differently from the average Moroccan. Shia Muslims said in some areas, particularly in large cities in the north, they did not hide their faith from family, friends, or neighbors, but many avoided disclosing their religious affiliation in areas where their numbers were smaller.

The Charge d’Affaires, other embassy and consulate general officials, and other U.S. government officials promoted religious freedom and tolerance in visits with key government officials, members of religious minority and majority communities, religious leaders, activists, and civil society groups, where they highlighted on a regular basis the importance of protection of religious minorities and interfaith dialogue.

Section I. Religious Demography

The U.S. government estimates the total population at 34.3 million (July 2018 estimate) and more than 99 percent of the population is Sunni Muslim. Less than 0.1 percent of the population is Shia Muslim, according to U.S. government estimates. Groups together constituting less than 1 percent of the population include Christians, Jews, and Baha’is.

According to Jewish community leaders, there are an estimated 3,000 to 3,500 Jews, approximately 2,500 of whom reside in Casablanca. Some Christian community leaders estimate there are between 2,000 and 6,000 Christian citizens distributed throughout

the country; however, the 2017-2018 Moroccan Association of Human Rights Report estimates there are 25,000 Christian citizens. Moroccan Shia Muslim leaders estimate there are several thousand Shia citizens, with the largest proportion in the north. In addition, there are an estimated 1,000 to 2,000 foreign-resident Shia from Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq. Leaders of the Ahmadi Muslim community estimate their numbers at 600. Leaders of the Baha'i community estimate there are 350-400 members throughout the country.

Foreign-resident Christian leaders estimate the foreign-resident Christian population numbers at least 30,000 Roman Catholics and several thousand Protestants, many of whom are recent migrants from sub-Saharan Africa or lifelong residents of the country whose families have resided and worked there for generations but do not hold Moroccan citizenship. There are small foreign-resident Anglican communities in Casablanca and Tangier. There are an estimated 3000 foreign-residents who identify as Russian and Greek Orthodox, including a small foreign-resident Russian Orthodox community in Rabat and a small foreign-resident Greek Orthodox community in Casablanca. Most foreign-resident Christians live in the Casablanca, Tangier, and Rabat urban areas, but small numbers of foreign Christians are present throughout the country, including many who are migrants from sub-Saharan Africa.

Section II. Status of Government Respect for Religious Freedom

Legal Framework

According to the constitution, the country is a Muslim state, with full sovereignty, and Islam is the religion of the state. The constitution guarantees freedom of thought, expression, and assembly, and says the state guarantees every individual the freedom to practice his religious affairs. The constitution states the king holds the Islamic title “Commander of the Faithful,” and he is the protector of Islam and the guarantor of the freedom to practice religious affairs in the country. The constitution prohibits the enactment of laws or constitutional amendments infringing upon its provisions relating to Islam, and also recognizes the Jewish community as an integral component of society. According to the constitution, political parties may not be founded on religion and may not denigrate or infringe on Islam.

The constitution and the law governing media prohibit any individual, including members of parliament normally immune from arrest, from criticizing Islam on public platforms, such as print or online media, or in public speeches. Such expressions are punishable by imprisonment for two years and a fine of 200,000 dirhams (\$21,000).

The law penalizes anyone who “employs enticements to undermine the faith” or convert a Muslim to another faith, and provides punishments of six months to three years’ imprisonment and a fine of 200 to 500 dirhams (\$21 to \$52). It also provides the right to a court trial for anyone accused of such an offense. Voluntary conversion is not a crime under the law. The law permits the government to expel summarily any noncitizen resident it determines to be “a threat to public order,” and the government has used this clause on occasion to expel foreigners suspected of proselytizing.

By law, impeding or preventing one or more persons from worshipping or from attending worship services of any religion is punishable by six months to three years' imprisonment and a fine of 200 to 500 dirhams (\$21 to \$52). The penal code states any person known to be Muslim who breaks the fast in public during the month of Ramadan without an exception granted by religious authorities is liable to punishment of six months in prison and a fine of 200 to 500 dirhams (\$21 to \$52). Owners have discretion to keep their restaurants open during Ramadan.

The High Authority for Audiovisual Communications established by the constitution requires all eight public television stations to dedicate five percent of their airtime to Islamic religious content and to broadcast the Islamic call to prayer five times daily.

Sunni Muslims and Jews are the only religious groups recognized in the constitution as native to the country. A separate set of laws and special courts govern personal status matters for Jews, including functions such as marriage, inheritance, and other personal status matters. Rabbinical authorities, who are also court officials, administer Jewish family courts. Muslim judges trained in the country's Maliki-Ashari Sunni interpretation of the relevant aspects of sharia administer the courts for personal status matters for all other religious groups. According to the law, a Muslim man may marry a Christian or Jewish woman; a Muslim woman may not marry a man of another religion unless he converts to Islam. Non-Muslims must formally convert to Islam and be permanent residents before they can become guardians of abandoned or orphaned children. Guardianship entails the caretaking of a child, which may last until the child reaches 18, but it does not allow changing the child's name or inheritance rights, and requires maintaining the child's birth religion, according to orphanage directors.

Legal provisions outlined in the general tax code provide tax benefits, land and building grants, subsidies, and customs exemptions for imports necessary for the religious activities of recognized religious groups (Sunni Muslims and Jews) and religious groups registered as associations (some foreign Christian churches). The law does not require religious groups to register to worship privately, but a nonrecognized religious group must register as an association to conduct business on behalf of the group or to hold public gatherings. Associations must register with local Ministry of Interior (MOI) officials in the jurisdiction of the association's headquarters in order to conduct financial transactions, hold bank accounts, rent property, and address the government in the name of the group. An individual representative of a religious group neither recognized nor registered as an association may be held liable for any of the group's public gatherings, transactions, bank accounts, property rentals, and/or petitions to the government. The registration application must contain the name and purpose of the association; the name, nationality, age, profession, and residential address of each founder; and the address of the association's headquarters. The constitution guarantees civil society associations and nongovernmental organizations the right to organize themselves and exercise their activities freely within the scope of the constitution. The law on associations prohibits organizations that pursue activities the government regards as "illegal, contrary to good morals, or aimed at undermining the Islamic religion, the integrity of the national territory, or the monarchical regime, or which call for discrimination."

Many foreign-resident Christian churches are registered as associations. The Roman Catholic, Russian Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, Protestant, and Anglican Churches maintain different forms of official status. The Russian Orthodox and Anglican Churches are registered as branches of international associations through the embassies of Russia and the United Kingdom, respectively. The Protestant and Catholic Churches, whose existence as foreign-resident churches predates the country's independence in 1956, as well as the Russian and Greek Orthodox Churches, maintain a special status recognized by the government.

By law, all publicly funded educational institutions must teach Sunni Islam in accordance with the teachings and traditions of the Maliki-Ashari school of Islamic jurisprudence. Foreign-run and privately funded schools have the choice of teaching Sunni Islam or of not including religious instruction within the school's curriculum. Private Jewish schools may teach Judaism.

According to the constitution, only the High Council of Ulema, a group headed and appointed by the king with representatives from all regions of the country, is authorized to issue fatwas, which become legally binding only through the king's endorsement in a royal decree and subsequent confirmation by parliamentary legislation. If the king or parliament decline to ratify a decision of the Ulema, the decision remains nonbinding and unenforced.

The country is a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

Government Practices

The government at times reportedly detained and questioned Moroccan Christian and Shia citizens about their beliefs. According to press reports, in April police in Rabat detained a Christian citizen for 24 hours after finding Christian literature in his backpack. In May and June human rights organizations and media reported local authorities denied two Christian converts the necessary documentation to register to marry because of their religious beliefs. The couple hosted a small symbolic wedding ceremony in a human rights organization's headquarters in Rabat in June, but the couple stated they feared being accused of fornication, which is punishable under the penal code, because they did not have a government-issued marriage certificate. According to activists and members of the religious minority community, authorities also detained and questioned several Shia Muslims for hours about their religious beliefs and about members of their religious community. According to activists, during these instances, police did not document the detention and, according to media reports, denied such events transpired.

According to press reports, a group called the Moroccan Christian Coordinating Group met with the CNDH on April 3 to submit a petition calling for the government to recognize a series of rights for Christian citizens including freedom of worship, celebration of civil marriages, establishment and operation of cemeteries, being able to use biblical names for children, and the right of children to decline Islamic classes at

school, as well as the legal normalization of Christian churches. CNDH informed the group that CNDH welcomed official complaints where violations of human rights occurred. CNDH was not aware of a government response to the petition.

Press also reported that on November 22, the Court of Appeals in Taza upheld a Court of First Instance ruling in favor of a defendant who was acquitted of “shaking the faith of a Muslim,” a crime under the penal code, after he reportedly handed a book explaining the Bible to another individual. The appeals court ruling mentioned the ICCPR, which guarantees “the freedom to manifest one’s religion or beliefs.”

Nonregistered religious groups reported receiving varying treatment by authorities; however, during the year, there were no reports of authorities prohibiting these groups from practicing their religion in private. A number of religious groups reported they cooperated with authorities and occasionally informed them of planned large gatherings, for which authorities sometimes provided security.

According to religious leaders and legal scholars, the government’s refusal in past years to allow Shia Muslim groups to register as associations continued to prevent these groups from gathering legally for public religious ceremonies. There were no known Shia mosques. Shia representatives reported they had not attempted to register during the year.

According to representatives of the Moroccan Association for Religious Rights and Freedoms, on May 3 government authorities refused to accept the application for registration of their association under the determination the association aimed to undermine Islam.

A Christian group applied to register as an association in December 2018; it was awaiting a response from MOI at year’s end.

The government allowed the operation of registered foreign-resident Christian churches. Church officials reported Christian citizens rarely attended their churches, and they did not encourage them to do so to avoid official accusations of proselytizing. According to some reports from activists, authorities at times pressured Christian converts to renounce their faith by informing the converts’ friends, relatives, and employers of the individuals’ conversion. According to community leaders, Christian citizens said authorities made phone or house calls to demonstrate they monitored Christian activities. Foreigners attended religious services without restriction at places of worship belonging to officially recognized churches.

According to media reports, on June 20, the Collective for Democracy and Liberties cancelled a long-planned seminar on individual rights, including “sexual rights” and religious freedom, immediately before it was scheduled to begin. A statement from the Ministry of Justice explained the Ministry of Interior had informed the seminar organizers they lacked the appropriate registration to hold the event. *Assabah* reported the Head of Government Saadeddin El Othmani, Minister of State for Human Rights Ramid, Minister of Justice Mohamed Aujjar, and Secretary-General of the Party of Progress and Socialism Mohamed Nabil Benabdallah withdrew from participating in the

seminar after cabinet and party members were reportedly ordered not to participate in any meetings encouraging sectarianism. According to a *Telquel* article, Minister Aujjar said that after reviewing the agenda for the seminar, he cancelled his participation because “speaking about individual liberties does not bother [him], but it is a difficult question to assume politically.”

In an interview on June 14, Minister Ramid stated “freedom of belief does not pose a short-term threat to the state but is certainly a long-term danger” to national cohesion. On June 19, Minister Aujjar denied the existence of Christian, Baha’i, and Ahmadi citizens, but said throughout history Morocco had allowed Jewish citizens and visiting Christians from Europe and Africa to practice their religions freely. The Moroccan Christians Coordinating Group issued statements rejecting Minister Aujjar’s denial that they, whose numbers they maintained exceed those of Morocco’s recognized Jewish population, exist.

According to a human rights association, on November 26, it hosted a conference in Rabat on the situation of the country’s religious minorities. During the event, leaders of human rights organizations said they were beginning to follow the issue more closely; however, limited information was available and official data on Moroccan religious minorities was not available.

The ban on the import, production, and sale of the burqa imposed in 2017 remained in effect. The MOI cited security concerns as justification for the ban. The ban did not prevent individuals from wearing burqas or making them at home for individual use. Authorities, however, continued not to allow police and army personnel in uniform to wear a hijab.

The MEIA remained the principal government institution responsible for shaping the country’s religious sphere and promoting its interpretation of Sunni Islam. It employed 1852 *morchidines* and 804 *morchidates* in mosques or religious institutions throughout the country. The *morchidates* taught religious subjects and provided counsel on a variety of matters, including women’s legal rights and family planning. It continued to provide government-required, one-year training to imams, training an average of 150 *morchidines* and 100 *morchidates* a year. It also continued to train foreign imams, predominantly from sub-Saharan Africa. The training sessions fulfilled the requirement for religious leaders to acquire a certificate issued by the High Council of Ulema to operate in the country. The High Council of Ulema also continued to host continuing training sessions and capacity-building exercises for the religious leaders.

According to the government, the MEIA did not interfere with the topics the religious leaders chose to address during sermons; however, religious leaders were required to abide by the guidelines outlined in the MEIA-issued *Guide of the Imam, Khatib, and the Preacher* when they operated in the country.

The MEIA monitored Quranic schools to prevent what the ministry considered inflammatory or extremist rhetoric and ensure teaching followed approved doctrine. The government required mosques to close to the public shortly after daily prayer times

to prevent use of the premises for what it termed “unauthorized activity,” including gatherings intended to promote extremism. Construction of new mosques, including those constructed using private funds, required authorization from the MEIA.

The MEIA continued to guide and monitor the content of sermons in mosques, Islamic religious education, and the dissemination of Islamic religious material by broadcast media, actions it said were intended to combat violent extremism.

The government continued to restrict the distribution of non-Islamic religious materials, as well as some Islamic materials it deemed inconsistent with the Maliki-Ashari school of Sunni Islam. Its policy remained to control the sale of all books, videotapes, and DVDs it considered extremist. According to media reports, in September the government requested regional MEIA representatives identify *morchidines* and *morchidates* with accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Google Plus social media to monitor and ensure only official religious positions were conveyed through these personal accounts.

MOI and MEIA authorization continued to be a requirement for the renovation or construction of churches. In October the St. John’s Anglican Church in Casablanca began the construction of a community center with approval from government authorities. The government also gave the Anglican Church approval to renovate and expand the church upon completion of its community center.

The government permitted the display and sale of bibles in French, English, and Spanish. A limited number of Arabic translations of the Bible were available for sale in a few bookshops for use in university religion courses. Authorities confiscated bibles they believed were intended for use in proselytizing.

During the year, the government organized four national and regional training sessions on instruction based on “values” and “respect for religious principles.” The government also introduced 13 new textbooks on the subjects of religion and legal sciences at the primary, junior and high school levels following a review by the MEIA and the Ministry of Education to remove extremist or intolerant references and promote moderation and tolerance. As of year’s end, the government was also drafting an educational charter mandating traditional education be based on “values” and the “respect for religious and legal studies.” Modifications to textbooks continued through the end of the year.

Jewish and Christian citizens stated elementary and high school curricula did not include mention of the historical legacy and current presence of their groups in the country. The government continued to fund the study of Jewish culture and heritage at state-run universities.

The government continued to disseminate information about Islam over dedicated state-funded television and radio channels. Television channel Assadissa (Sixth) programming was strictly religious, consisting primarily of Quran and *hadith* (authoritative sayings and deeds ascribed to the Prophet Muhammad) readings and exegesis, highlighting the government’s interpretation of Islam.

According to observers, the government tolerated social and charitable activities consistent with Sunni Islam. For example, the Unity and Reform Movement, the country's largest registered Islamic social organization, continued its close relationship with the Party of Justice and Development, the largest party in the governing coalition, and continued to operate without restriction, according to media reports. The Justice and Charity Organization (JCO), a Sunni Islamist social movement that rejects the king's spiritual authority, remained banned but largely tolerated. It remained the largest social movement in the country despite being unregistered. The JCO continued to release press statements, hold conferences, manage internet sites, and participate in political demonstrations. The government occasionally prevented the organization from meeting and restricted public distribution of JCO's published materials.

The monarchy continued to support the restoration of synagogues and Jewish cemeteries throughout the country, efforts it stated were necessary to preserve the country's religious and cultural heritage and to serve as a symbol of tolerance. Since 2012, an estimated 170 Jewish cemeteries across 40 provinces have been restored. According to the government, the MEIA did not interfere in the operations or the practices in synagogues.

The Prison Administration (DGAPR) said it authorized religious observances and services provided by religious leaders for all prisoners, including religious minorities.

Two *adoul* (notaries), typically religious men, are needed to perform marriages. In January the School of Islamic Thought and Testimonies convinced the Supreme Scientific Council to amend the law so the king could permit women to become *adoul*.

During the annual commemoration of the anniversary of the king's reign, the king bestowed honors on the heads of the Protestant, Greek Orthodox, and other Christian churches in recognition of their contributions to religious tolerance in Moroccan society.

In May the Archives of Morocco signed a cooperation agreement with the USHMM, to facilitate the sharing of documentation on Jewish history in Morocco. The delegation met with country's leaders to discuss continuing collaboration between the museum and the country's National Archives to promote religious tolerance and awareness.

On September 10-12, the government hosted the second International Conference on Intercultural and Interfaith Dialogue in Fez in collaboration with the International Organization of La Francophonie. According to media reports, at the conference King Mohammed VI delivered remarks describing the tradition of coexistence in the country between Muslims and Jews and openness to other religions.

On September 26, Head of Government El Othmani delivered a message from the king at a UN roundtable table on “The Power of Education in Preventing Racism and Discrimination: The Case of Anti-Semitism” in New York on the margins of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly. The message highlighted the country's preservation of its synagogues and noted the importance of “shedding light not only on

humanity's glorious moments, but also its darkest hours.” It stated, “Anti-Semitism is the antithesis of freedom of expression. It implies a denial of the other and is an admission of failure, inadequacy and an inability to coexist.”

In November the Ministry of Culture, in partnership with the Essaouira-Mogador Association, opened the Bayt Al Dakyra (House of Memory), a research center built from the remains of an old synagogue in Essaouira. On December 11-12, UNESCO and the Aladdin Project in partnership with Mohammed V University, a public university in Rabat, hosted an international conference in Marrakech titled, “The Importance of History Teaching in Education: The Case of the Holocaust and Great Tragedies of History and 75 Years after the Holocaust, Honoring the Righteous in the Muslim World.” The organizers paid tribute to the “Muslim Righteous” from Morocco and other countries that helped Jews during the Second World War and discussed the importance of education for highlighting the different phases and experiences of coexistence in the region. Public officials from Mohammed V University, the Ministry of Education, the Archives of Morocco, and other public institutions participated in the conference.

Section III. Status of Societal Respect for Religious Freedom

Some activists in minority religious communities reported the government did not respond to complaints about societal harassment. According to a report in *Assabah*, in July Christian citizens in the city of Nador reported facing intimidation, including one death threat. The MOI investigated the claims and reported they were unfounded.

Representatives of minority religious groups, especially Christian, Shia Muslim, and Baha'i citizens, said fear of societal harassment, including ostracism by converts' families, social ridicule, employment discrimination, and potential violence against them by “extremists,” were the main reasons leading them to practice their faiths discreetly. According to the 2017-2018 Moroccan Association of Human Rights Report, the only non-Muslim citizens who could freely practice their religious rituals were Jews.

There were reports from the media, activists, community leaders, and Christian converts that Christian citizens faced social pressure to convert to Islam or renounce their Christian faith from non-Christian family and friends. Young Christians who still lived with their Muslim families did not reveal their faith because they believed they might be expelled from their homes unless they renounced Christianity.

Members of the Baha'i Faith said they were open about their faith with family, friends, and neighbors, but they feared extremist elements in society would try to do them harm. According to an interview with *TelQuel*, however, some Baha'i citizens did not feel they were treated differently from the average Moroccan.

Shia Muslims said in some areas, particularly in large cities in the north, they did not hide their faith from family, friends, or neighbors, but that many avoided disclosing their religious affiliation in areas where their numbers were smaller.

Jewish citizens said they lived and attended services at synagogues in safety. They said they were able to visit religious sites regularly and to hold annual commemorations. On November 13-18, the Moroccan Community Abroad Council and the Israelite Community of Morocco Council cohosted a conference on Moroccan Judaism. The public conference convened primarily Moroccan-born Jews residing in Canada, France, and Israel, with the leadership of the local Jewish community and Moroccan civil society groups.

Media continued to report women had difficulty finding employment in some private businesses, as well as with the army and police, if they wore a hijab or other head covering. When women who wore a hijab did obtain employment with the police, army, and in some private businesses, they reported employers either encouraged or required them to remove their headscarves during working hours.

In December interfaith academics and an unregistered religious freedom organization coordinated a seminar on religious minorities and interfaith dialogue between Islamic schools of thought in Marrakech.

Muslim citizens continued to study at private Christian and Jewish schools, reportedly because these schools maintained a reputation for offering superior education. According to school administrators, Muslim students continued to constitute a significant portion of the students at Jewish schools in Casablanca.

Section IV. U.S. Government Policy and Engagement

The U.S. Charge d’Affaires, other embassy and consulate general officials, and visiting U.S. government officials met with government officials, including from MOI and MEIA, to promote religious freedom and tolerance, including the rights of minority communities. Embassy and consulate general officials met members of religious minority and majority communities throughout the country. The embassy also fostered and supported programs designed to highlight religious tolerance.

In October embassy officials attended one of a series of public seminars on the Holocaust and of the historical legacy of Moroccan Jews, hosted at a university in Rabat. The USHMM and Mimouna, its local Islamic NGO partner, developed the curriculum they presented at the seminar. In November embassy officials also attended the conference on Moroccan Judaism cohosted by the Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad and the Council of the Israelite Communities of Morocco. On November 26, an embassy official attended a conference in Rabat on the situation of the country’s religious minorities. On December 14, the Charge d’Affaires hosted a lunch for representatives of the Jewish community to discuss recent developments related to religious freedom and the preservation of the country’s Jewish history.

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