

MOROCCO

Date of Elections: June 3, 1977

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the popularly chosen members of Parliament provided for under the Constitution of 1972 *. Previous general elections had taken place in 1970.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Morocco, the Chamber of Representatives, comprises 264 members elected for 4 years. Two-thirds (176) of these members are elected by direct universal suffrage, and one-third (88) by electoral colleges composed of the country's communal councillors (who elect 48 Representatives), elected members of the professional Chambers (Chambers of Agriculture (15), Commerce and Industry (10) and Handicrafts (7)), and representatives of employees' organizations (8)).

Electoral System

All Moroccan citizens who are at least 21 years of age and registered on the annually-revised electoral rolls are entitled to vote for directly elected Representatives. To designate the Representatives chosen by indirect ballot, electors must belong to one of the bodies which make up the colleges mentioned above.

Qualified electors not less than 25 years of age on the polling date may be candidates for one of the seats filled by direct ballot. Members of the respective electoral colleges, also not less than 25 years of age, may be candidates for any of the seats filled by indirect ballot.

Moroccan citizens by naturalization and persons restricted by court order, as well as magistrates, members of the public authorities, heads of military areas, heads of the regional divisions of the Department of National Security and police commissioners may not be elected to the Chamber of Representatives. The parliamentary mandate is moreover incompatible with all non-elective public posts (except governmental ones) at the national or local level, or work for public undertakings.

* See *Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections VI* (1971-1972), p. 6.

Candidatures for directly elected seats must be submitted at least 14 days prior to the polling day, and eight days in advance as regards indirectly elected seats. A monetary deposit of 2,000 *dirhams* (approximately US\$ 443) per candidate is also required and is reimbursed if the candidate, or list of candidates, obtains at least 5 % of the votes cast in his constituency.

The 176 Representatives chosen by direct ballot are elected in single-member constituencies by simple plurality of vote. Representatives selected by indirect ballot are elected by the majority-list simple plurality system, without vote-splitting or preferential voting; the election is by simple plurality vote where the respective electoral college has only one seat to fill.

A by-election is held within six months for any seat in the Chamber of Representatives which becomes vacant between general elections.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

Subsequent to the general elections of August 1970, Parliament was dissolved in March 1972 and a new Constitution promulgated the same month. The elections foreseen for May 1972 — and the return to a parliamentary system — were then indefinitely postponed.

In preparation for the June 1977 general elections, elections were held on November 12, 1976, for communal and municipal councillors; on January 25, 1977, for the provincial assemblies; and on March 11 and 18, 1977, for the country's professional Chambers.

The parliamentary elections were twice postponed (from April 1 and May 27) while new voters' registers were being drawn up. The June polling date was announced on May 9, the same day that a new Electoral Law fixing the total number of deputies was promulgated. *

During the two-week campaign which opened on May 21, 1,022 candidates (including eight women) contested the 176 general seats. Of these, 456 ran as independents, most of them monarchist in their views, supporters of the policies of King Hassan II. Candidates belonged to seven political parties, among which figured prominently the conservative *Istiqlal* (161 candidates), the leftist *Union socialiste des forces populaires* (141 candidates) and the *Mouvement populaire*.

As at the communal elections, the independents were elected in large numbers. As a result of the indirect elections held on June 21 for the remaining 88 seats, the absolute majority of deputies were independents. *Istiqlal* emerged as the largest party represented in Parliament. Mr. Ahmed Osman, brother-in-law of the King, remained Prime Minister.

* See section *Parliamentary Developments*, p. 9.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats
in the Chamber of Representatives

Number of registered voters.	6,519,301
Voters.	5,369,431 (82.36 %)
Blank or void ballot papers.	324,068
Valid votes.	5,045,363

Political Group	Votes obtained *		Seats gained in direct elections	Seats gained in indirect elections	Total number of Seats
Independents	2,254,297	44.68	SI	60	141
	1,090,960	21.62	Hi	5	51
<i>Mouvement populaire</i>	625,786	12.40	29	16	44
<i>Union socialiste des forces populaires</i>	738,541	14.64	15	—	15
<i>Mouvement populaire constitutionnel et democratique</i>	102,358	2.03	2	1	3
<i>Parti du progres et du socialisms.</i>	116,470	2.31	1	—	i
<i>Parti de V'action</i>	90,840	1.80	2	—	i*
<i>Union marocaine du</i>	—	—	—	7	7
			176	88	264

* Figures apply to direct elections.