

## **REFORM OF THE MILITARY JUSTICE SYSTEM IN THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO**

His Majesty King Mohammed VI approved on March 14, 2014, a sweeping legal reform that bars military tribunals from trying civilians. The bill also excludes the military from the jurisdiction of the military court in the event of common crimes.

This draft law aims to standardize national legislation on military justice with the provisions of the Moroccan Constitution and international principles in this field, put into practice Morocco's Constitutional and international commitments in terms of promoting the rule of law and human rights, and provide the necessary conditions and guarantees of a fair trial in all courts of the Kingdom.

This project also introduces major changes to the status of military justice from a Special Court to being one of the specialized judicial institutions that guarantee rights and freedoms, as far as competence, organization, procedures, and the composition of the Court are concerned.

In this context, the project provides for excluding civilians from the jurisdiction of the military court regardless of the crimes they might have committed. This places Morocco among the most developed democratic countries in this field.

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Advocates of human rights and NGOs welcomed the positive action of the government and felt it deepens the Moroccan democratic practice and implement in an effective manner the provisions of the Constitution, which aims to serve their citizens and their rights.

By this decision, the Kingdom, which began its three-year term as a member of UN Human Rights Council, following his election on November 12th, 2013 demonstrate once again its irreversible commitment to the consolidation of the rule of law, democratic governance and human rights.

In the past six months, the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco has undertaken several significant policy initiatives addressing Human Rights at the recommendation of National Council on Human Rights CNDH and the Moroccan civil society. Last September, Morocco has adopted a new migration policy that is regularizing up to 40,000 illegal migrants in the country, to ensure that they have access to healthcare, education, and other basic rights. In January, Parliament also overturned a controversial provision in a law that allowed rapists to avoid punishment in the event they marry their victims.