



## Press Release

**Marrakech, 16 December 2019**

### Closing of the Atlantic Dialogues International Conference

#### « The South in the Time of Turmoil »

Under the High Patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, the Policy Center for the New South organized the Eighth Edition of its “Atlantic Dialogues” Annual Conference from the 12 to the 14 December, in Marrakech, with the participation of 486 guests from 61 nationalities. Under the title: « *The South in the Time of Turmoil* », the theme of this year’s conference has come to continue and supplement last year’s topic which had focused on « Atlantic Dynamics: Overcoming the Choke Points ».

The Atlantic coastline of Africa faces common challenges such as coastal urban growth, energy access issues and lack of infrastructure. In this regard, the Policy Center for the New South has considered it necessary to **build bridges over this space, and stimulate thought and dialogue**. The Atlantic basin represents a unique potential where experiences from the North and the South get together, as a traditional partnership that needs to be strengthened, and a South-South relationship to be reinvented.

During this 8th edition, the Atlantic Currents Report has highlighted a turnaround in the outlook, with analyses of the world as it is perceived from the perspective of the South. The spirit of an Africa, free from its complexes, that nurtures its own excellence and fosters its expertise, has clearly prevailed.

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The diagnosis of the challenges faced by developing countries, as well as the formulation of solutions and the support of public policies, should all originate from those first concerned. **The South is therefore envisioned from the South and for the South.**

Finally, it was important for the Policy Center to have **diversity, as a value, be at the heart of these meetings, as well as openness and straightforwardness**, and that a proper balance between countries, regions and sectors of activity be deliberately sought after.

Several high-level panels have been moderated by prominent personalities, namely former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, who made a presentation on « *Living in Uncertain Times* ». According to him, « the world used to seek peace, stability, development, growth and progress. Most of **these objectives have been achieved with the exception of equity, justice and democracy, as well as multilateralism** ».

Other political, economic or society-specific themes have been discussed, such as the rise of populism, the crisis of democracy, the question of refugees, not to mention climate and energy, « technology, well-being and inequalities », the « next international financial crisis » or the « chances of survival » of the regulated system of international trade, all of which raised great interest among the participants.

As every year, the conference ended with a panel discussion on Latin America in the presence of former Heads of States, as well as a session that paid tribute to the conference's 50 Emerging Leaders. In his closing remarks, Karim El Aynaoui, President of the Policy Center for the New South said: « The Atlantic Dialogues were a wonderful experience, reflecting our values, which include **passionate debate, agreeing to disagree, fact-based analysis and works, openness to dialogue, being tolerant of difference... We see ourselves as the creators of a space**, more than anything else. We and the policy makers should listen more to you. »

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#### **About Policy Center for the New South**

Launched in 2014 in Rabat with 39 associate researchers from the South as well as the North, the Policy Center offers a southern perspective on the issues of developing countries. It aims to facilitate strategic decisions and public policies in its four main programs: agriculture, environment and food safety; economics and social development; raw materials et finances; geopolitics and international relations. [www.policycenter.ma](http://www.policycenter.ma)

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