

On 21 and 22 October 2019, I represented ES in the 2nd Marrakech International Justice Conference on “Justice and investment: challenges and stakes”, organized by the Moroccan Ministry of Justice in collaboration with the Presidency of the public prosecution and the Supreme council of the Judicial Power.

More than 50 countries from around the world were represented. The conference was attended by ministers, judges of supreme court, parliamentarians, lawyers and experts working at national, regional and international levels.

The role of the justice in supporting the establishment of a conducive business environment attractive for investments and businesses was at the center of all discussions. During four parallel workshops, participants discussed the following areas: Modernization of the business legal systems, the role of justice in the business climate, the use of Information technology, role of regional groupings.

Main highlights from the conference in my view:

- The intricate link between a performant justice system and a conducive business environment. The participants confirmed that a fair, transparent and rule-based justice system is a key driver of foreign investments and business development that would generate economic growth and prosperity.
- The digitalization driven by the universal use of Information Technologies requires new skills and competencies to be acquired by the personnel of the justice system at all levels. It also requires adaptation of legal texts to ensure good use of data and information collected the many systems being used while ensuring respect of privacy and confidentiality.
- The regional groupings bring a new dimension to the justice and business climate and need to be fully taken on board.

The workshop was concluded with the declaration of Marrakech which calls for the modernization of the justice system supporting business climate at national, regional and international, to ensure that it fits the needs and exigencies of a very complex and sophisticated environment to ensure it continues to attract investments and protect enterprises.

The declaration encourages the integration of the justice systems at global level to ensure more transparency and more fluidity in dealing with irregularities and frauds and promoting a fair and transparent system of justice. Information technology plays a central role to facilitate availability and access to information. Judiciary systems need to be upgraded to effectively use IT and digitalization to have the capacity to deal with the fast evolving global economic environment.

Our organization has certainly a key role to play in this area as it clearly appeared that a good justice system is the backbone of an effective business environment, and will be the key driver of operationalizing the AfCFTA.