Launch by H.M King Mohammed VI of the construction of the high speed rail line Kénitra-Marrakech: a strategic vision for sustainable, inclusive and competitive mobility, driven by a continental ambition and looking to the future.

Under His Majesty King Mohammed VI's impetus, rail infrastructure is being strengthened with the launch of a MAD 96 billion structuring program. Extension of the high-speed rail line to Marrakech, modernization of the national fleet, development of public transport networks in 3 conurbations and emergence of an industrial ecosystem: a strategic vision for sustainable, inclusive and competitive mobility, driven by a future-oriented continental ambition.

His Majesty King Mohammed VI, may God assist Him, launched, on Thursday at the Rabat-Agdal train station, the 430-kilometer Kenitra-Marrakech High-Speed Rail Line.

The Kenitra-Marrakech High Speed Rail Line project reflects the Sovereign's enlightened Vision of improving the national rail service, and is in line with the Kingdom's strategic orientations, under the impetus of His Majesty the King, in terms of sustainable development, particularly promoting low carbon footprint collective mobility solutions.

It also illustrates Morocco's firm determination to carry on the development of the national rail network, so that it can fully play its role as the backbone of a sustainable and inclusive transport system.

This structuring project, with a budget of MAD 53 billion (excluding rolling stock), is part of an ambitious program mobilizing an overall investment of MAD 96 billion, which also includes the acquisition of 168 trains at a cost of MAD 29 billion, intended to renew the existing fleet of the Moroccan National Railways Office (ONCF) and support development projects, as well as maintaining performance for MAD 14 billion, enabling in particular the development of 3 metropolitan transport networks in the Casablanca, Rabat and Marrakech conurbations.

The Kenitra-Marrakech High Speed Rail Line project provides for creating a high-speed rail link between the cities of Rabat, Casablanca and Marrakech, serving the airports of Rabat and Casablanca.

With this new project, travel times will be 1h between Tangier and Rabat, 1h40

between Tangier and Casablanca and 2h40 between Tangier and Marrakech (saving over 2 hours). The project will also link Rabat to Casablanca’s Mohammed V International Airport in 35 minutes, while serving the new Benslimane stadium. A high-speed service is also planned between Fez and Marrakech, with a journey time of 3h40 (with high-speed trains running on the classic line from Fez to the north of Kenitra before continuing on the new high-speed line to Marrakech).

The Kenitra – Marrakech High Speed Rail Line project notably includes the design and construction of a new line between Kenitra and Marrakech, designed for a speed of 350 km/h, and improvements to the terminals of Rabat, Casablanca and Marrakech (works on operating tracks), railway equipment, the construction of new high-speed stations, local train stations and the refurbishment of existing stations, as well as the construction of a maintenance center for trains in Marrakech.

The Kenitra-Marrakech High Speed Rail Line extension will free up capacity on the conventional network, enabling the development of a major local metropolitan train service to meet part of the public transport needs of the inhabitants of the Rabat, Casablanca and Marrakech conurbations. This new service is a genuine response to the challenges of urban mobility in these three metropolitan areas, and offers a number of advantages in terms of punctuality, service quality and sustainability.

To coincide with the launch of the new Kenitra-Marrakech High Speed Line project, ONCF is launching an unprecedented program to acquire 168 new trains, with the aim of reinforcing and rejuvenating the entire fleet of passenger rolling stock.

Mobilizing an investment of MAD 29 billion, this acquisition program will help to achieve gains in operational performance, strengthen regional services, and meet the increase in traffic expected by 2030. This acquisition covers 18 high-speed trains for extension projects, 40 trains for line services, 60 fast shuttle trains and 50 for the public transport network in the three conurbations.

This ambitious rolling stock acquisition program will also enable the emergence of an industrial rail ecosystem. With a local integration rate of over 40%, the program reflects a strong commitment to Moroccan business and skills, and will certainly have positive implications in terms of supporting the national economy, reducing transport costs and promoting sustainable development.

The program has two main components: the first industrial component provides for setting up and starting-up an industrial train manufacturing unit and developing an

ecosystem of suppliers and subcontractors. The second component involves the creation of a joint venture between the manufacturers and ONCF to provide routine and industrial maintenance of trains, while keeping costs under control.

Over a 10-year period, this program will train specialized human resources and create several thousand direct and indirect jobs.

With the new modernization project, the entire Moroccan rail network is undergoing a real renaissance, involving not only the extension of the high-speed network to Marrakech, but also the modernization, reinforcement and rejuvenation of the ONCF train fleet, as well as the creation of a rail-based mass transit network and a promising new industrial ecosystem.

This significant investment and modernization project for the railway network was executed with the expertise of renowned international companies, including the French company Alstom for high-speed rolling stock, the Spanish company CAF for inter-city trains (200 km/h), and the South Korean company Hyundai Rotem for local metropolitan trains, all secured under preferential financing conditions.