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OPEMAM Analysis

PRE-ELECTION ANALYSIS:

MOROCCO/ Constituencies made to measure?

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With only five weeks to go, the map of the constituencies that will be used in Morocco's legislative elections is still yet to be published officially. Nonetheless, the press has circulated an all but definitive map, made up of 91 constituencies divided among 16 regions, in which 305 representatives will be elected using a proportional list system and seats allocated using a highest remainder method. Each constituency will have between two and six members of parliament. 21 constituencies will have just two members per list, making them practically the same as single-member districts.

The map itself is very similar to the 2007 one with, in the majority of cases, the province or prefecture as the basis of the constituencies, although some predominantly urban prefectures or provinces such as Rabat, Salé, Fez or Kenitra, or rural ones such as Khemisset, Taroudant, Taunat or Azilal have been divided into two districts. Marrakech has been divided into three. The criteria behind this division is primarily demographic, as has also been true in the exceptional case of Casablanca, divided into eight constituencies - each coinciding with the *arrondissements* of the city.

As well as the 305 seats elected at constituency level, 90 additional seats will be elected via two national lists, one reserved for 60 female candidates (to increase the percentage of women in the future parliament) and another reserved for 30 candidates below the age of 35 (a nod to the 20th February Movement and meant to lower the average age of the political class).

But the new map, if it is indeed as newspapers such as *Libération* (14 October) or *L'Économiste* (18 October) have presented it, does include some significant changes with respect to the 2007 legislative elections - changes that may have certain political motives. Indeed, the Islamist PJD (Party of Justice and Development) has criticized what it labels tailored gerrymandering (*découpage à mesure*) in favour of some parties and at the expense of others, notably the PJD itself. Some of the Moroccan press has deemed the PJD's criticism "a strategy of victimization to palliate its loss of momentum and to justify a failure in the coming elections" (*L'Économiste*, *op. cit.*)

However, an analysis of the changes and especially those that effect provinces which in 2007 had more than one constituency and in 2011 just one, reveals that the Islamist party's fears could indeed be well-founded.

Errachidia, Beni Mellal, Meknes, El Jadida, and Khouribga are all provinces where the PJD won seats in 2007. In the first, where the party won two MPs, the number of seats has been reduced from 6 to 5, which could prevent the PJD from winning two seats again. In Tiznit, the number of seats has gone down from 3 to 2, which could leave the PJD out of a seat, given that in the 2007 elections it came third. In Beni Mellal, by creating one constituency that dilutes the urban area into its rural surroundings, this moves the PJD (again following the 2007 results) into seventh place, with difficulties to win one of the 6 seats available. In Meknes, the second seat the party won there in 2007 is at risk for the same reason, just as it is Khouribga, where the party's excellent results in 2007 will be watered down following the unification of the constituencies.

Naturally this is only speculation and reasons can be found to argue against it. The reduction of seats in Tiznit could be explained by the creation of the new province of Sidi Ifni (2 seats), split off from Tiznit. It could even be argued that some of the changes could favour the PJD, such as the case of Skhirat-Témara or Inezgane where the number of seats is set to rise from 3 to 4, Ain Chock and Ben M'sik in Casablanca where they are to rise from 2 to 3, or Taza, Tangier and Tétouan where they will rise from 3 to 4. In all of these cases, the increase in the number of MPs not only maintains the PJD's chances of retaining those seats it

won in 2007, but also allows the party the prospect of winning a second seat there, given the favourable position it starts from.

**Legislative elections 2011
Distribution of constituencies 2011 – 2007**

Casablanca	2011	2007	Sus-Massa-Draa	2011	2007
CASABLANCA ANFA	4	4	AGADIR IDA UT.	4	4
HAY HASSANI	3	3	INEZGAN-AIT MELLUL	4	3
AIN CHOK	3	3	CHTUKA-AIT BAHA	3	3
HAY MOHAMMADI	3	3	TARUDANT AL JANOUBIA	4	4
BEN MSIK	3	3	TARUDANT ACHAMALIA	3	2
M.RACHID	3	3	TIZNIT	2	3
AL FIDA MERS SULTAN	3	3	IFNI	2	
SIDI BERNUSSI	3	3	UARZAZAT	3	5
NOUASSER	3	3	TINGHIR	3	
MEDIOUNA	2	2	ZAGORA	3	3
MOHAMMEDIA	3	3			
Rabat-Salé-Zemmur-Zaer			Garb-Chrarda-Bni Hssen		
RABAT-ALMOHIT	4	4	SIDI SLIMAN	3	3
RABAT-CHELLAH	3	3	KENITRA	4	4
SALE MEDINA	4	4	EL GARB	3	3
SALE EL JADIDA	3	3	SIDI KACEM-MECHRA-DAR K	5	3
SJIRAT-TEMARA	4	3	OUZZAN-HAD K.	3	4
TIFLET-ROMMANI	3	3			
JEMISSET-OULM.	3	3	Chauia-Urdiga		
Dukkala-Abda			SETTAT	6	3+3
EL YADIDA	6	3+3	BERRECHID	4	3
SIDI BENNOUR-O.FREJ	4	4	BENSLIMAN	3	3
SAFI	6	4+4	JURIBGA	6	3+3
YUSSUFIYA	2				
Tadla-Azilal			Marrakech-Tensift-Hauz		
BENIMELLAL	6	3+3	EL KELAA SERRAGNA	4	4
AZILAL-DEMNET	3	3	RHAMNA	3	3
AZILAL-OUAOUIZERT	3	3	ESSAUIRA	4	4
FKIH BENSALAH	4	4	MARRAKECH 1	3	3
Mekinez-Tafilalet			MARRAKECH 2	3	3
MEKNES	6	3+3	MARRAKECH 3	3	3
EL HAYEB	2	2	CHICHAUA	4	4
IFRAN	2	2	AL HAUZ	4	4
MIDELT-KBAB	3	3			
JENIFRA	3	3	Oriental		
ERRACHIDIA	5	3+3	UXDA ANGAD	4	4
Fez-Bulman			BERKANE	3	3
FEZ CHAMALIYA	4	4	YERADA	2	2
FEZ YANUBIYA	4	4	TAURIRT	2	2
ZUAGA-MULAY YAQUB	2	2	FIGUIG	3	3
SEFRU	3	3	NADOR	4	4
BOULMANE	3	3	DRIOUCH	3	3
Taza-Alhucemas-Taunat					
ALHUCEMAS	4	4	Guelmim-Esmara		
TAUNAT-TISSA	3	3	GUELMIM	2	2
KARIA-GAFSAI	3	3	ASSA-ZAG	2	2
TAZA	5	4	ESMARA	2	2
GUERCIF	2	3	TAN-TAN	2	2
			TATA	2	2
Tánger-Tetuán			Uadi Eddahab-Lagüira		
TETUAN	5	4	UED EDDAHAB	2	2
M'DIQ-FNIDEQ	2	2	AOUSSSERD	2	2
			El Aaiún-Bojador-Sakia El Hamra		
LARACHE	4	4	EL AAIUN	3	3
CHAUEN	4	4	TARFAYA	2	
TANGER-ARCILA	5	4	BOUJDOUR	2	2
FAHS-ANJRA	2	2			

