

*The Permanent Mission
of the Kingdom of Morocco
to the United Nations
New York*



البعثة الدائمة للمملكة المغربية
لدى الأمم المتحدة
نيويورك

OR

N°: L/8/15

New York, 19 January 2015

Dear Mr. Executive Director,

I am writing you with reference to your letters dated 14 November and 5 December 2014 addressed to H.E. Mr. Mahjoub El Haiba, Interministerial Delegate for Human Rights, as a response to the latter's letter to you following the publication by Human Rights Watch of a press communiqué entitled "Morocco: Human rights gatherings blocked".

In this regard, you will find attached a letter addressed to you by Mr. El Haiba, containing the response of the Moroccan authorities to the above mentioned letters.

Please accept, Mr. Executif Director, the assurances of my highest consideration.

The Ambassador and Permanent Representative



**Mr. Kenneth Roth
Executive Director
Human Rights Watch
350 5th Avenue, 34th Floor
New York, NY 10118-3299**

Second, concerning the provisions of Moroccan law governing public gatherings:

- 4- Under Moroccan Law, demonstrations are organized by virtue of Royal decree N° 1.58.377 governing public gatherings, as modified and completed by virtue of Law n° 1.73.284 of 10 April 1973, and Royal Decree n° 1.02.200 of 23 July 2002 implementing Law n° 76.00.

The first article of this Law stipulates that public gatherings are free and defines such gatherings as "every temporary gathering, open to the public and dedicated to the discussion of issues included in a pre-established agenda". The Law also stipulates that public gatherings can be held without pre-authorization when certain conditions are met (article 2), notably submitting a notification including the location of the gathering to the local administrative authorities, either personally in return of a receipt, or through registered mail.

The Law requires these gatherings be held no sooner than 24 hours after the deliverance of the receipt or 48 hours after sending the letter (article 3), and stipulates that they cannot be held in public roads, or until after midnight or the closing hour of the public space indicated in the notification (article 4). Additionally, the law requires that each public gathering has an office made of at least a president and two advisers among the signatories of the notification (article 5). The office is charged with maintaining order, overseeing respect for the law and forbidding any speech that undermines public order or ethics, or which incites to crime (article 6).

- 5- The public authorities have noted with satisfaction that, unlike what was stated in the press release published by your Organization, civil society organizations are able to exercise their activities freely. Indeed, 1.159.540 activities have been organized by 115.954 associations, including 4800 activities organized by human rights associations, in the first 10 months of 2014. The ban decisions concern no more than 20 activities which did not respect the relevant legal provisions.