



AFRICA/MOROCCO-The King presents the new Constitution and promises to guarantee "freedom of religious worship"

Rabat (Fides Service) - The King of Morocco, King Mohammed VI, presented yesterday, June 17, the text of the new Constitution which will be submitted to popular approval with a referendum, to be held on July 1. The new Constitution provides greater powers to the Prime Minister. These, in particular, may dissolve the House of Representatives, while in the present Constitution it is the King who has the power to dissolve the two Houses, which form the Parliament. The Prime Minister will be appointed by the party that came first in the elections for the House of Representatives, while currently the Head of Government is appointed by the Sovereign. The king, whose person is "inviolable", remains "Head of believers and the Head of State" and will remain head of the armed forces. In his speech to the nation for the presentation of the new Constitution, Mohammed VI ensured that he will guarantee, as a "Leader of the Believers", "freedom of religious worship" in the country. Another important point concerns the the new official language of the country: in addition to Arabic, the language of the Amazigh (Berber), spoken by most people, becomes an official language. The "February 20 Movement", the movement of young people and human rights organizations that animates protests in Morocco, however, have criticized the new Constitution, as it believes that the proposed openings are not yet sufficient to ensure full democracy, and has called for tomorrow, Sunday, June 20, a series of demonstrations around the Country. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 06/19/2011)