



> Casablanca -
Nour-Eddine Saoudi /Najib Khalifa

Mohamed Boukhiyam:

“The craft industry is a major factor in promoting tourism”

Mr. Mohamed Boukhiyam is a craftsman who learned the tailoring craft from his ancestors. He has been recently elected president of the Chamber of Traditional Crafts in Casablanca. He talked to Islamic Tourism about the role of the craft industry in the promotion of tourism.

What is the role of the Chamber in supporting tourism?

Everyone is aware that the craft industry is a product which attracts foreign tourists as well as natives. That is in addition to the beauty of the landscapes and the moderate climate of the country. Thus, tourism is closely related to the craft industry. All the efforts made by the Chamber in order to develop the craft industry, in terms of quality, completion, diversity and competitive prices, serves the interests of the Moroccan tourism sector as a whole.

How do you explain the fact that the craft industry does not occupy the place which it deserves?

For several years, the representatives of the craft industry have not ceased calling, on various levels, for strong links between tourism and the crafts industry. We were very pleased when Mr. Adil Douir was appointed Minister for Tourism and the Craft Industry, a

department connecting the two sectors. We were also pleased because we are convinced the craft industry can benefit from modern technologies which the tourist sector uses in marketing. We also believe that the craft industry is a major support for Moroccan tourism. Unfortunately, the tourist sector continued its rate of growth, recording various achievements and performances with this minister, whereas the craft industry remained in the shade, trailing its problems, its concerns and its obstacles, owing to the fact that the multiple ministers who had been in charge of this department had never been able to carry out their programs. As soon as they worked out their vision and their strategy to develop the sector, they were changed; a new minister will try and so on.

What relationship does your office have with the Ministry Of Tourism?

Our relationship with the Ministry of

Tourism and tourism institutes is very good, because tourism and the craft industry are joined together in the same ministry. We wish to profit from the mechanisms, techniques, establishments and institutes of the tourism sector. We also hope to integrate the complexities of the craft industry of Casablanca into tourist tours programmed by the guides and agencies. The establishments of tourism training can obviously benefit from the techniques and competence of the craftsmen to promote the artistic, traditional and architectural landscape of the country.

What do you request from the Ministry Of Tourism?

We would like the relationship between the craft industry and tourism to be generous so the poor profit before the rich. And tourism should not forget that the craft industry is the best promoter of tourism. ■

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