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**Agricultural Mechanics: Cooperation Increasing between Morocco and Italy**

***The meeting entitled “Agrilevante: technologies and training for Mediterranean agriculture”, sponsored by ICE Casablanca in collaboration with FederUnacoma, took place in Meknès as part of the SIAM International Agricultural Fair. Morocco's agriculture has great potential, but - like other countries in the Mediterranean area - it has to deal with challenges related to climate change, lack of water resources and the availability of fertile lands. The Agrilevante expo is a platform for selecting technologies to enable a successful relaunch of agriculture, increase yields and reduce environmental impact.***

Cooperation in the agricultural field between Morocco and Italy is solid and promises further developments. The two countries are linked by a lengthy history of economic and commercial relations and have the opportunity to intensify their relations in the agricultural machinery sector, considered strategic for the growth of productivity and the rational use of natural resources. This was the take away from the meeting on the topic “Agrilevante: technologies and training for Mediterranean agriculture”, sponsored by ICE Casablanca and FederUnacoma that was held this afternoon in Meknès as part of the SIAM International Agricultural Exhibition. Agricultural mechanics is one of the sectors of excellence in Italian industry – said Francesco Pagnini, Director of ICE/Italian Agency for Foreign Trade in Casablanca at the opening – and is characterized by the wide range of vehicles produced, and by all the types that respond to the specific needs of Moroccan agriculture. To date (data for 2024) Italy exports EUR 29.8 million of machinery to Morocco, placing it in first place among suppliers of mechanical vehicles – said Pagnini – and it is estimated that the Italian market share could increase in the coming years given the overall growth in imports of agricultural technologies estimated by Export Planning at 6% per year in the three years from 2026 to 2028. Technology is the only way to address the great challenges posed by modern agriculture. This is what Danilo Monarca, Full Professor of Agricultural Mechanics at the University of Tuscia (Viterbo – Italy) and President of the Club of Bologna, the association of the world's leading experts in agricultural mechanics, spoke about. The association conducts surveys on the demand for technologies in different areas of the world and offers strategic advice on the priorities and programming criteria for agricultural policies at a global level. Climate change, lack of water resources, decreased soil fertility and the expansion of metropolises are factors that threaten agricultural activities in North Africa and Morocco - explained Monarca - and that can only be addressed thanks to new generation technologies, such as those for the management of water resources and the reduction of chemical inputs, and the increasingly widespread use of digital systems and Artificial Intelligence, capable of scientifically managing every phase of agricultural work. The technological leap, however, cannot occur automatically but must be stimulated and accompanied by specific education and professional training projects. These aspects were the focus of the speech by Mariateresa Cardarelli, Associate Professor at the Department of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences DAFNE of the University of Tuscia, who described the initiatives currently underway, such as the agronomy courses in French offered at the University and designed specifically for students from North African countries, and the training facilities that can be opened in Morocco also thanks to the financial support of the Mattei Plan, the investment program in Africa launched by the Italian government now in its implementation phase. Technologies, commercial activities and training initiatives are therefore the pillars of Italian-Moroccan cooperation, which will gain further impetus during the Agrilevante international exhibition, which specializes in agricultural mechanics, to be held at the Bari trade fair from 9 to 12 October this year. “Directly managed by the Italian manufacturers' association FederUnacoma since 2009 - explained the head of the Communication and Corporate Culture Office of FederUnacoma, Girolamo Rossi - the event takes place every two years and has seen constant growth in terms of exhibitors (350 in the last edition), visitors (around 100,000 in 2023) and the quality of technologies. Along with traditional divisions, this year the exhibition includes an area dedicated to robots and highly automated systems, and an area dedicated to the care of gardens and green spaces, and offers an extensive schedule of conferences on topics of specific interest to Mediterranean agriculture. The presence of the Italian Trade Agency (ICE) is fundamental, as it will organize the usual delegations of selected economic operators, this year coming from 38 countries, with an official delegation from Morocco.

**Meknes, April 23, 2025**