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MINURSO

Last Friday, 30 October, the UN Security Council extended the MINURSO mandate until 31 October 2021.

The last Sahara Analysis quoted from a letter of 26 June 2020 from Brahim Ghali Secretary-General of Frente POLISARIO to the UNSC. "The failure of the United Nations Secretariat and the Security Council (UNSC) to act firmly in the face of Morocco's annexationist actions whose aim is to impose a fait accompli by force in the occupied Western Sahara has seriously undermined the credibility of the United Nations and . . .

Read the letter [here](#).

The mandate was renewed for another year without any substantial change. A failure to take firm action and apply pressure to both "parties to resume negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General without preconditions and in good faith, taking into account the efforts made since 2006 and subsequent developments with a view to achieving a just, lasting, and mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in the context of arrangements consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations".

Extending the mandate of MINURSO for a year without any change of substance is not a neutral act. The experience of recent years has shown that in the absence of pressure Morocco is able to use the time to intensify its occupation creating more facts on the ground and exploiting the resources that belong to the people of Western Sahara in contravention of international law. Read the resolution [here](#).

Frente Polisario issued a Press release commenting on the adoption by the UN Security Council of a new resolution on Western Sahara Today, stressing that the Front will intensify national liberation struggle in face of the UN inaction to ensure MINURSO implementation of its mandate consisted in the organization of a self-determination referendum.

Bir Lehlou (Saharawi Republic) 30 October 2020 (SPS)

PRESS RELEASE EXTRACT

The Security Council has just adopted its resolution 2548 (2020) on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). The Frente POLISARIO regrets that the resolution does not contain any concrete actions to enable MINURSO to implement the mandate for which it was established in 1991, namely the holding of the referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara.

By adopting a new resolution that lacks any practical measures to advance the stalled peace process and empower MINURSO to fully implement its mandate, the Security Council has once again chosen inaction despite growing tensions across Western Sahara. The ongoing peaceful, spontaneous mass demonstrations throughout the Territory, including the peaceful protest currently taking place at the Moroccan illegal breach in Guerguerat, are a clear indication that the patience of the Sahrawi people is running out with the United Nations' inaction and failure to ensure that MINURSO fully implements the mission for which it was established almost three decades ago.

The absence of any actions to compel the Moroccan occupying state to end its illegal occupation of parts of Western Sahara has also left us with no option but to intensify our national liberation struggle and to use all legitimate means to enable our people to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence.

.
In this regard, we reaffirm that the ongoing ceasefire is an integral part of an integrated package deal, namely the UN-OAU Settlement Plan, which was accepted officially by both parties, the Frente POLISARIO and Morocco, and approved by the Security Council in its relevant resolutions.

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WESTERN SAHARA CAMPAIGN UK

The Western Sahara Campaign works in solidarity with the Saharawi people to generate political support in order to advance their right to self-determination and to promote their human rights. Our role is to lobby the UK Government and the EU. You can help us to ensure the UK does not ignore the voice of the Saharawi people.



Follow the news about EU's illegal fisheries in Western Sahara



The EU pays Morocco to fish in occupied Western Sahara.

The ceasefire, therefore, is not a separate arrangement from the Settlement Plan or an end in itself. It is only a means to create the necessary security conditions for the holding of a free and fair referendum whereby the people of Western Sahara can exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence.

Read the press release [here](#).

The Peaceful and Spontaneous Protest by Saharawi Civilians in Guerguerat Debunks the Claims of the Occupying State

In a statement to the media after the Security Council adopted its new resolution on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), Dr. Sidi Mohamed Omar, Representative of the Frente POLISARIO at the United Nations, stressed that "the peaceful and spontaneous character of the protest by Saharawi civilians in Guerguerat has debunked the claims of the Moroccan occupying state, which continues its frenzied campaign in an attempt to mislead international public opinion about the reality of what is happening on the ground in that area."

The Saharawi diplomat added that "after more than a week of mass demonstrations at the illegal breach in Guerguerat in south-western Western Sahara, it has become clear to the entire world that what is happening there is an act of peaceful and spontaneous protest by Saharawi civilians of all ages and with legitimate demands, which is similar to other recent peaceful protests that took place throughout the Saharawi Liberated Territories."

.....
The peaceful demonstrations are also "a strong reaction to the terrorising and repressive practices pursued by the Moroccan occupying state against Saharawi civilians in occupied Western Sahara and the relentless plunder of the resources of the Territory. They are also a response to the continuing farce of opening already bankrupt "diplomatic kiosks" in collusion with some governments that have sold their souls to more than one devil at a time when the United Nations remains completely silent."

.....
He added, however, that "no one should expect from the Frente POLISARIO to prevent Saharawi citizens from exercising their legitimate rights to demonstrate peacefully and to oppose the Moroccan occupation, be it in occupied Western Sahara or anywhere else in the Territory." (SPS)

Read the article [here](#).

South Africa Calls on the Security Council to conduct a Visit to Occupied Territories of Western Sahara

South Africa called on the UN Security Council, in its explanation of its vote on the new resolution on Western Sahara, to conduct a visit to the occupied territories of Western Sahara, in order to break the current impasse in the conflict.

"South Africa once again proposes a Security Council visit to the occupied territory, as it did in 1995, to assess the situation on the ground in an effort to resuscitate the current political impasse amongst the parties," the text reads.

.....
In this regard, South Africa "also proposes that in the same way that the UN Security Council engages with the African Union on other issues on the Council's agenda, that there is more formal coordination with the African Union on Western Sahara."

South Africa abstained from voting on this new resolution because it considered it was unbalanced and unfair and consists of elements that betray an attempt by members of the so-called "group of friends of Western Sahara" to impose the law of "might makes rights". The South African explanation of its vote considered that "the current text as it stands does not reflect the current realities on the ground, which were clearly outlined by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in his briefing to the Council on developments pertaining to the human rights, humanitarian, security and political situation in Western Sahara."

.....
"South Africa fully supports the efforts of the Secretary-General to find a suitable candidate. However, the current text does not adequately reflect the urgency of the UN to find a Personal Envoy to resume the stalled UN-led political process."

"Given the growing sentiments and calls by one of the parties, Frente POLISARIO, to disengage from the UN process due to the perceptions that the UN is not doing enough, South Africa advocated for a more balanced text which would send a positive signal to the parties that one party is not favoured over another,"

"Our conviction remains that a resolution of the Western Sahara matter lies with upholding international legality and that the parties should conduct themselves within the confines of adopted Security Council resolutions and international norms. This Council should never permit international legality to be overturned by political reality. Doing so would undermine the very foundation of the rules based international system that the United Nations is built upon."

"It has been disconcerting to South Africa that the Security Council working methods on the Western Sahara file has been uniquely biased and non-transparent. This is a disturbing trend given that it is the duty of the Security Council to objectively assist the parties to move towards a mutually acceptable, negotiated settlement and treat the interests and concerns of both parties in a balanced and equal manner."

Read more [here](#).

Russia Criticises the Security Council's "biased and partial" approach on Western Sahara

New York (United Nations) 31 October 2020 (SPS)- The Russian Federation stressed in its explanation of vote Thursday in participation to the discussion of a new resolution by the Security Council on Western Sahara, that Russia abstained from voting Friday labelling the text as biased and partial.

It further explained that "the Russian Federation abstained during the vote on the draft resolution on renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), put forward by the United States. This is due to the fact that

the process of elaboration and endorsement of this decision was neither transparent nor consultative.”

The text pointed out that “none of our principled and well-substantiated considerations, including those of a compromise nature, that we repeatedly brought to attention of the US side, was taken into account. A whole range of practical proposals articulated by other Council members was also left unanswered.”

As a result, Russia stressed, “the text remains unbalanced. All this adds to doubts regarding arrangements on informal penholdership of country files at the Security Council”.

In this regards, the text adds, “substitution of fundamental principles of Western Saharan settlement by general remarks about the need to stick to realistic approaches and seek compromise produces ambiguity, undermines trust in our work, and obscures prospects for resuming political process.:

It also estimated that “the attempt to boost the peace process by using language that blurs previously agreed parameters of Western Saharan settlement would rather bring the opposite result. We had not agreed to this amendment before, and we were not able to support it today.”

Read more [here](#).

The Polisario Front has called on Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to respect the legal status of the non-self-governing territory of Western Sahara, and in particular to refrain from supporting any activity of the so-called Moroccan National Council for Human Rights in the occupied territories of Western Sahara.

Read the article [here](#).

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