



WORKING FOR JUSTICE FOR THE SAHARAWI PEOPLE

October 2015

SAHARA ANALYSIS

No: 88

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What Were You Doing on 7 November 1975?

"Some of you hadn't been born yet. Others may have been watching the Wombles on kids TV. Others wearing flares and listening to Glam Rock. Others may have been celebrating Angolan independence.

You probably weren't in the Spanish Colony of Western Sahara listening anxiously to the news that thousands of Moroccans were gathering to march into your country and claim it for the king of Morocco. Following the military invasion, on 6th November he had called for a Green March to be organised and although the thousands of Moroccans who answered his call never crossed the border in significant numbers it must have been a frightening prospect.

The Spanish colonialists offered no resistance to the military invasion. General Franco's Government had done a secret deal - in return for a slice of the profits from the phosphate mines he gave the colony (that was not his to give) to Morocco and Mauritania. The Polisario Front, the liberation movement that had been set up to fight the Spanish colonialists, fought bravely against Moroccan forces and provided protection for the

Saharawi as they fled into exile in the desert under bombing from the air.

The international community stood by and did nothing. And they have done so for the following 40 years.

The Saharawi still wait to express their inalienable right for self determination. Moroccan authorities still brutally repress any questioning of their illegal occupation inside Western Sahara. Over 150,000 Saharawi refugees still live in camps in the desert. Camps that have recently been devastated by torrential rain and flash flooding.

On Saturday 7th November 2015 supporters of the Saharawi right to self determination will gather outside the Moroccan embassy to draw attention of the failure of the international community to act.

Please join us at 49 Queens Gate, London, SW7 5NE at 2pm.

We must continue to show that this injustice is not forgotten."

Flooding Causes Havoc

Recent torrential rains have caused serious flooding in the Saharawi refugee camps, leaving some 25,000 people completely destitute: their homes have been destroyed and their food supplies ruined.



[To support the international appeal by the Saharawi Red Crescent](#)

Fadel Mohamed, 38, Saharawi refugee, father of two young children:

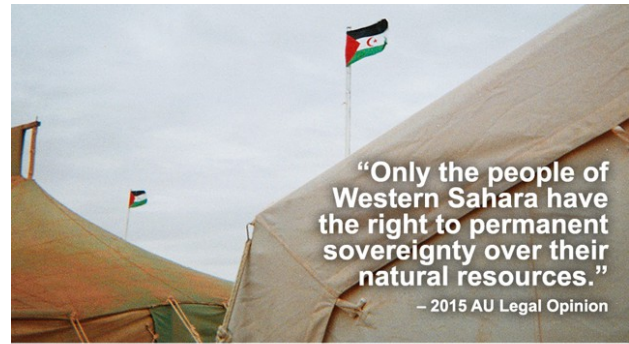
"My house has totally collapsed and our tent is flooded. We have taken refuge in a car where I have been sleeping since with my wife and my two children. All my neighbours' homes have also been destroyed."

Benefit Concert with Luzmira Zerpa & Family Atlantica Quartet, Sara McGuinness & Grupo Lokito, Pia de Keyser and Sam Berkson

Sat **Nov 7**, 7.30pm

The WSC works in solidarity with the Saharawi people to generate political support in order to advance their right to self-determination and promote their human rights

African Union Legal Opinion



A view from the refugee camps of Western Sahara

The African Union has published its Legal Opinion on Western Sahara plunder. It finds the ongoing exploration and exploitation of the territory's resources in violation of international law.

"Morocco has no legal right under the UN charter and international law to occupy or govern the Territory of Western Sahara", says the Opinion. Morocco is an "occupying power", not an administering power in accordance with the UN Charter. The Opinion goes on to state that "Only the people of Western Sahara have the right to permanent sovereignty over their natural resources."

"Accordingly, the people of Western Sahara and their legitimate representatives must not only be consulted but they must consent and effectively participate in reaching any agreement that involves the exploitation of natural resources in the Territory of Western Sahara", the opinion concludes.

[To read the legal opinion](#)

[To read more](#)

Morocco "denounces and rejects" UN recommendations

In its report the UN Committee for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights called on Morocco to find a solution for the Western Sahara conflict that respects the Saharawi people's right to self-determination, and stressed the right of the Saharawi to dispose of their resources

[In a ten page document](#) the Moroccan government rejects "the askew and partial approach adopted in drafting the observations and recommendations of the Committee".

[To read more](#)

Morocco Dumps Fish in Western Sahara



Fish dumped in the desert near of Dakhla to hide over-fishing.

Local sources state that "hundreds of tons" are being discarded "because of unregulated fishing by the Moroccan fleet, which brings more than its cargo, and here are discarding".

Through the fishing industry, Morocco manages to settle many of its own nationals into the territory, thus hampering a solution to the conflict. The International Court of Justice has rejected Morocco's claims to the land in 1975. Nearly half of the Western Sahara people live as refugees in Algerian desert camps where, in periods, one in five children suffer from severe malnutrition. A striking contrast with the abundant fish being dumped in their occupied homeland.

[To read more](#)

Land Confiscated



WSRW has received pictures of Saharawi protesting in front of digging machines, supposedly owned by the Moroccan state owned phosphate company OCP. The Saharawi claim that Morocco is confiscating their land to allow more foreign investments in the occupied territory

[To read more](#)

Morocco Suppresses Peaceful Demonstrations

On 29th September occupied Dakhla witnessed clashes between young Saharawi protesters and Moroccan occupation forces. The demonstrators had been chanting slogans, demanding self-determination for the Saharawi people, which was promised to them by the UN in 1966 and again in 1991, and remembering Maichan Mohamed Lamin and Hassanna Elwali, two Saharawi who have been assassinated by the Moroccan government.

Adala UK members who were at the scene confirmed that the police, auxiliary forces as well as army units attacked the demonstrators, including those who tried to flee and minors.

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WSAF and WSRW Submission to the UN General Assembly Special Political and Decolonisation Committee

Mr Chairman, distinguished delegates, ladies, and gentlemen,

On January 31st this year, a young man was walking past a furniture store in Laayoune in Western Sahara. While sitting outside the store, a group of men shouted insults at the passer by because he was Sahrawi. The young man reacted, prompting the owner of the store to throw a rock at him, knocking him to the ground. The storeowner and his four friends then assaulted him and one of the attackers stabbed the Sahrawi man in the neck. The young man's name was Mohamed Lamine Haidala and, following several days of staggering neglect by local authorities, he died.

His death could have been avoided if such wanton violence had higher costs. But the United Nations does not monitor human rights in Western Sahara, and if it wasn't for the work of the RFK Human Rights Center, the United Nations would not even know about the murder of Mohamed Lamine Haidala.

The United Nations is not to blame for his death but it can do something about such incidences.

[To read the full submission](#)

High Court judgment rules West Sahara trade dispute should go to the European Court of Justice

The High Court has ruled that a legal claim being brought by the Western Sahara Campaign UK (WSCUK) against DEFRA and HMRC regarding trade agreements with Morocco should be heard in the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU).

Full details of the ruling are on our website. www.wsahara.org.uk