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WSC Newsletter October 2017



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British NGO Calls For MINURSO To Include Human Rights Monitoring (from the Sahara Press Service)

British non-governmental organisation for solidarity with Western Sahara, "Western Sahara Campaign," reiterated its call for the mandate of the United Nation Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) to be extended to include human rights monitoring in the occupied territories. The NGO, in a statement, condemned "the brutality of Moroccan occupation authorities against Saharawi citizen because of their participation in peaceful protests, expressing solidarity with the Saharawi political prisoners of Gdeim Izik and calling for their immediate and unconditional release."

It also urged the UN Security Council to assume its duties, making it possible for Western Sahara people to exert their right to self-determination. "Abuses against Saharawi people's rights by Moroccan occupation authorities will continue until the UN implements the international law," the British NGO stressed, calling for Western Sahara people's right to self-determination.

The UN is about to re-launch mediation efforts, early November, to resume talks between the Polisario Front and Morocco. (SPS)
Read the article [here](#).

Say No To EU Trade Talks With Morocco

The EU should negotiate any Western Sahara trade arrangement with the Saharawi not with Morocco.

Add Your Voice To Theirs **SIGN THIS PETITION!**

Western Sahara: 133 Years Without Peace

On 21 September each year, the world celebrates the International Day of Peace since the General Assembly declared this day as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples.

The Saharawi people have been under occupation and foreign domination for 133 years without ever knowing a lasting peace. Since 1963 the UN has been reaffirming the inalienable right of the Saharawi people to self-determination and independence in accordance with resolution 1514.

In September 1991, the UN installed the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). 26 years have since passed without MINURSO succeeding because of the obstacles and misrepresentations of Morocco. Meanwhile, the Saharawi people have become hostage to an impotent international community before the actions of genocide, massive violations of human rights and the plundering of their natural resources by the Moroccan colonial power.

This year the UN campaign is titled "Together for peace: Respect, security and dignity for all". The Saharawi people deserve respect for their commitment to peace and their unequalled patience, waiting for a simple REFERENDUM. The Saharawi people deserve safety and protection in their separate territory and distinct from the Kingdom of Morocco, in accordance with the current international legality. The worthy Saharawi people deserve the International Community to mobilize to end so many years of suffering and injustice.

Read the blog [here](#).

Saharawi Organisations Slam EU Over Trade Talks With Morocco

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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.

"Seeking to circumvent the ECJ's ruling, directly challenges the credibility of the EU, and significantly damages the potential for progress through the UN-led negotiation process", Saharawi groups qualify the EU's talks with Morocco regarding Western Sahara trade, in their letter to the EU's Foreign Affairs Chief.

In December 2016, the highest Court of the EU ruled that no EU trade or association agreement with Morocco could be applied to Western Sahara, and that the people of the territory have to consent to any arrangement affecting them. But the Union wishes to continue importing products from Western Sahara and has now resorted to talks with Morocco – thereby completely ignoring the very essence of the Court ruling ; Western Sahara is "a distinct and separate territory".

Saharawi organisations from the occupied territory and from the Algerian-based refugee camps have now written a letter to the EU's Member States Foreign Affairs Ministers, and EU Foreign Affairs Representative Federica Mogherini, asking the EU to "cease its attempts to circumvent the ECJ ruling, and instead focus on actions that will support Saharawi people in our legitimate aim of self-determination and democracy".
Read the Letter to the EU Minister [here](#).

Stop The Rogue EU Trade Talks With Morocco Over Western Sahara

EU Commission contravening ECJ ruling and breaching principles of international law, warn Green MEPs

The December 2016 ruling by the European Court of Justice reaffirmed that Morocco had no sovereignty over Western Sahara and put an end to 16 years of (illegal) application of the EU-Morocco trade agreements in relation to that territory. The Commission and the Member States have been at pains to find a solution that would conform with the ruling, yet placate their Moroccan partner. In other terms, the EU has embarked on an illusory attempt to square the circle of upholding European law while continuing to support the decades-long violation of international law that constitutes Morocco's occupation of Western Sahara.

The Court's ruling was followed by months of confused mumbblings from the Commission, increasingly inquisitive Members of the European Parliament (mainly from the Greens/EFA group) and nervous signals from the Moroccan government. Finally the Council decided to simply ignore the highest judicial European authority and renegotiate with the Kingdom of Morocco a mere addendum to the existing EU-Moroccan Agreement that would extend to Western Sahara.

Seemingly, the grand plan, concocted by the Commission and endorsed by all the 28 Member States in the form of a (secret) negotiation mandate adopted on 29 May 2017, would consist in turning the past de facto practice of assimilating (plundered) products from Western Sahara with Moroccan ones - the practice which was struck down by the Court - into a de jure one. If confirmed, this would basically mean full contempt of court and (dirty) EU business-as-usual in Western Sahara.

In contrast with the ongoing talks that are hidden from public scrutiny, the injunction from the Court on this matter is very clear and public: Western Sahara is "separate and distinct" from the Kingdom of Morocco and it must be considered as a third party in the relations between the EU and Morocco. In practical terms, this means that the consent of the people of Western Sahara is needed for any economic activity concerning their territory and their natural resources, and that no Moroccan entity has the sovereign capacity to express that consent.

Read the full item [here](#).

Former President-Rapporteur, United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, expresses deep concern after observing the court case against 24 human rights activists from the occupied parts of Western Sahara. 19 of the 24 Saharawis remain in jail.

Professor Mads Andenæs, former head of the UN Committee on Arbitrary detention, observed the Gdeim Izik trial on July 18th and 19th.

A new report documents the Kafkaesque legal process against a group of political activists from Western Sahara, known as the Gdeim Izik Group. On July 19th the men were condemned to harsh sentences in the absence of material evidence. The report concludes that the 19 detainees are, and have for almost seven years, been imprisoned on arbitrary detention.

"The breach of the international law on the right to a fair trial in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of Morocco's other international obligations renders the deprivation of liberty of the 19 detainees arbitrary. The 19 detainees were subjected to abductions or arrest involving torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Their unlawful treatment has continued during their detention. The group has been detained for some seven years. Their conviction was not based on sufficient criminal material evidence," Andenæs writes.

Download the report [here](#).

Sweden is known for paying lip-service to Saharawi self-determination, but is it putting its money where its mouth is?

Read WSRW's newly published report on Sweden's involvement in the taking of natural resources from occupied Western Sahara.

Download the report [here](#).

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