

October 2014

# SAHARA ANALYSIS

No: 84

Western Sahara Campaign UK

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Manora, Cwmystwyth, Aberystwyth, SY23 4A

**WSC AGM**  
**28<sup>th</sup> October 6-7.30 pm**  
Institute of Education, University of London

For further details and/or if you wish to attend please email: [coordinator@wsahara.org.uk](mailto:coordinator@wsahara.org.uk). The agenda and motions will be circulated to members.

## **Waiting for Disruption: The Stalemate**

*Jacob Mundy*

The Western Sahara conflict is fast approaching its 40th anniversary with no end in sight. A web of geopolitical interests keeps the conflict in a permanent state of limbo. At the heart of this web is the U.N. Security Council, which has managed the conflict since the late 1980s. The council has been historically reticent to take dramatic action to resolve the dispute and remains so today. . . . The status quo thus seems indefinitely sustainable. Unless the conflict takes a sudden turn for the worse, it is unlikely that the

international community will make the tough choices necessary to achieve a lasting solution. Therein lies the paradox of the Western Sahara peace process: The peace process now exists to contain the conflict, but only a crisis will save Western Sahara.

[To read the full article](#)

## **Time Running Out - Take Action Now**

With drilling for oil due to commence in the next few weeks we need to apply pressure on Cairn Energy, registered in Edinburgh, which has a 20% interest in the oil exploration and exploitation.

Write to Simon Thompson, the CEO asking that Cairn withdraws from this illegal exploration. For a draft letter and background information see the attached document, 'Cairn Energy Action', or go to the WSC website.

## **Time Running Out**

“The more resources are found in Western Sahara and its maritime zone, the less will be the incentive for Morocco to fulfil the UN resolutions and international law”.

Dr Corell, Financial Times, 17 Sept 2014.

The Atwood Achiever, the oil rig commissioned by Kosmos Energy to drill for oil in occupied Western Sahara, is currently at anchor in Singapore.

In a few weeks time, the rig may permanently damage the Saharawi people's aspirations to freedom and independence, as it commences unethical and illegal oil drilling in Africa's last colony.

The Saharawi people, split between occupied Western Sahara and the refugee camps, fear that if oil is found in their occupied homeland, Morocco will never abandon its occupation of their country.

In January 2002, Dr Hans Corell, at the request of the UN Security Council published a Legal Opinion on oil

exploration and exploitation in Western Sahara. His Opinion concluded that the wishes and interests of the Saharawi people, as the sole and original people of the territory, are the two legal requirements for any such activity to take place.

[To read more](#)

Speakers:

Ebbaba Hameida Hafed (Saharawi refugee student)

Jeremy Corbyn MP (Chair of Liberation)

John Gurr (Western Sahara Campaign)

## **Hunger Strike Against Torture**

Seven Saharawi men went on hunger strike after being severely beaten on 17 September in El Aaiun Local Prison, Western Sahara.

The seven men were reportedly subjected to torture and other ill-treatment from around 4.30 to 11pm on 17 September 2014 by staff at El Aaiun Local Prison where they are detained, according to local sources. They were handcuffed, severely beaten in the prison courtyard in front of other detainees, and verbally abused.

The men ended their hunger on 22 September 2014, after the Prison authorities pledged to improve their detention conditions. This came after relatives of the detainees lodged a series of complaints about torture and other ill-treatment, including beatings. The authorities are not known to have ordered any medical examination or investigation.

### **Dutch Vessel Fishes in Western Sahara**

The m.v. *Franziska*, a 6,900 tonne capacity stern trawler, has been spotted fishing southwest off Dakhla since mid September. The vessel is owned and operated by the Dutch company [W. van der Zwan & Zn B.V.](#), which in turn is part of the Pelagic Freezer-trawler Association (PFA).

The *Franziska* is the first EU flagged vessel in almost three years to fish in the waters off Western Sahara, a territory that is largely occupied by Morocco since 1975.

[To read more](#)

### **By mid September the Moroccan government had issued 65 licenses to EU vessels eager to fish in Moroccan and Western Saharan waters.**

Western Sahara Resource Watch understands, that these 65 licences have been distributed as follows: 56 to Spain, 1 to France, 3 to Lithuania, 2 to Latvia, 1 to the Netherlands and 2 to Portugal.

A limited number of the remaining EU Member States, notable Germany, Ireland, Poland, UK and Italy, can also apply for licences in the future.

[To read more](#)

### **Kosmos "by joining hands with Morocco, you are consolidating its sovereignty over Western Sahara"**

### **Saharawi journalists ask Kosmos Energy not to drill in occupied waters.**

The Saharawi Center for Media and Communication (SCMC), based in El Aaiun, occupied Western Sahara, has asked Kosmos Energy to reconsider its plans to commence oil drilling off the coast of their occupied homeland later this year. Kosmos' plans could destroy the Saharawi people's future beyond repair. Read SCMC's letter to the company here.

[To read more](#)

### **MINURSO cannot become occupation supporter body, says Ould Salek**

Saharawi Foreign Minister Mohamed Salem Ould Salek said Sunday, in Algiers, that it is "inconceivable that the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) becomes a body backing occupation instead of a peace mission."

"The credibility of the United Nations is put to the test with this issue, as the very essence of UN existence is at stake, namely people's right to self-determination," the Saharawi official told a news conference.

Ould Salek said his country "strongly condemns Security Council's acting in complicity with Moroccan occupation, and especially the group of the five friends of the secretary general (four of the five permanent member countries, except china, plus Spain, a non-permanent member).

Such complicity has led Morocco to "flout international legality and to adopt a policy of intransigence, suppression and intimidation with the full knowledge of the international community and world public opinion," he stressed.

[To read the full article](#)