



PRESS RELEASE

POLISARIO WELCOMES EFFORTS OF GENEVA SUPPORT GROUP FOR WESTERN SAHARA AT UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL, STRESSES NEED FOR INCREASED RIGHTS MONITORING

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GENEVA, 27 March 2017 – The Frente POLISARIO welcomes the efforts of the Geneva Support Group for Western Sahara during the 34th regular session of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC). The support group's work to shine a light on human rights violations perpetrated by Morocco in the occupied Territory of Western Sahara is an important step towards greater monitoring of human rights abuses of the Human Rights Council. Despite ongoing and rampant abuses, Western Sahara has not been on the agenda of the Human Rights Council since 2006.

During the inaugural meeting, members of the group firmly expressed their support for the Saharawi people and their right to self-determination. The Kingdom of Morocco has instituted a 'police state' in the occupied Territory of Western Sahara, where authorities habitually violate the basic human rights of the Saharawi people. Moroccan security forces have created a climate of fear and suffering, in which disappearances, torture, intimidation, arrests, arbitrary detention, abuse in captivity, and the denial of fair trials are commonplace.

In recalling that Western Sahara is the only Non Self-Governing Territory under foreign occupation, that has not an internationally recognized Administering Power, the Frente POLISARIO hopes that the UN will assume its responsibility to monitor and protect the human rights of the Saharawi people. The UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) lacks a mandate to monitor human rights due to obstruction at the UN Security Council by the Kingdom of Morocco and its allies.

The Frente POLISARIO looks forward to working closely with the Geneva Support Group for Western Sahara. It is our hope that this coalition can spur the Human Rights Council into greater action. The Frente POLISARIO expects to see strong signals from the Human Rights Council, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and all other relevant bodies of the UN, that they take seriously the need to protect the Saharawi people from the egregious human rights abuses that they have suffered for years and they continue to suffer daily under Moroccan occupation.”

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