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Letter Brahim Ghali to Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations Category: News



Letter from H.E. Brahim Ghali, President of the Sahrawi Republic and Secretary-General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro (Frente POLISARIO), addressed to H.E. Mr. Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations

(UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION)

Mr. Secretary-General,

It is with great concern that I write to you again in order to urgently draw your attention and that of the members of the Security Council to the increasingly dangerous situation in the Occupied Sahrawi Territories due to the escalation of your genocidal war by the occupying State of Morocco. waged against the Sahrawi people since their illegal military occupation of Western Sahara on 31 October 1975, which has intensified since the occupying state violated and torpedoed the 1991 ceasefire on 13 November 2020.

The latest reports from the Occupied Sahrawi Territories indicate that, since the beginning of last week, Moroccan repressive forces, including the gendarmerie, police and auxiliary forces, have been demolishing and burning many Sahrawi cottages and huts in the area. coast of the occupied city of Laayoune, as shown in the accompanying photographs. At the same time, the Moroccan occupation authorities continue to confiscate vast lands owned by Sahrawis and hand them over to Moroccan settlers and foreign investors in order to impose the Moroccan colonial fait accompli.

The Frente POLISARIO strongly condemns the new wave of escalation against the Sahrawis in the Occupied Sahrawi Territories, which is yet another episode of systematic State terrorism and the atrocious scorched earth policy pursued by the occupying State of Morocco through the confiscation of land, the demolition of the homes of the Sahrawis, the burning of their tents, the destruction of their livelihoods and property, the slaughter of their livestock and their conversion into refugees and displaced persons in their own land.

The Frente POLISARIO also reaffirms that, due to the violation and torpedoing by the occupying State of Morocco of the ceasefire since 13 November 2020, the entire Territory of the Sahrawi Republic, including its land, sea and air space, remains an open war zone. The Frente POLISARIO once again warns all countries of the world and their nationals of the dangers of carrying out any activity of any kind in the Saharan national territory and holds them responsible for the consequences that may arise from their actions. The recent wave of escalation against the Sahrawis is also another form of a clear and selective policy of ethnic cleansing carried out in flagrant violation of international law and international humanitarian law. Since the beginning of their illegal military occupation of Western Sahara in October 1975, the Moroccan occupation forces have used the most horrific methods of mass killing, burying people alive in mass graves and dropping them from helicopters, in addition to their documented bombing of civilians with internationally banned weapons, including napalm munitions and white phosphorus.

The occupying State of Morocco has not only flooded the Occupied Sahrawi Territories with thousands of Moroccan settlers in flagrant violation of international humanitarian

law, but has also pursued a genocidal policy aimed at forcibly uprooting the Sahrawis from their lands, forcibly displacing them and settling more Moroccan settlers in the Territory with the stated aim of annihilating the Sahrawi people. confiscate their land, suppress their right to exist and forcibly impose a Moroccan colonial fait accompli on occupied Western Sahara.

Along with the continued settlement policy and the total control of Moroccan settlers over all aspects of life in the Occupied Sahrawi Territories, the occupying State has persisted and even increased its heinous crimes against Sahrawi civilians, including killings, torture, arbitrary arrests and detentions. , extrajudicial killings, forced deportations and displacement, as well as destruction, looting, theft and confiscation of private property, as well as military attacks on civilians.

These practices constitute grave violations of international humanitarian law and a full-blown crime of ethnic cleansing, despite the attempt by the occupying State of Morocco to conceal its heinous crimes from the world by imposing a military siege and a total media blockade on occupied Western Sahara and preventing access to the Territory by United Nations bodies. rapporteurs, NGOs, international media and observers.

The Moroccan occupation authorities also continue to pursue policies of impoverishment and starvation, as well as terrorist and retaliatory practices and acts of unspeakable cruelty against Saharan civilians and human rights activists who are dismissed from their jobs, deprived of their freedom of movement and forcibly deported from the Territory. for its peaceful defence of its people's right to self-determination and independence.

In this regard, we draw your attention and that of the members of the Security Council to the critical situation of Sahrawi political prisoners due to the deplorable conditions in which they are held in the prisons of the occupying State of Morocco and to the degrading and punitive practices to which they are subjected by the Moroccan prison administration.

We once again urge you to act urgently to end the suffering of all Saharawi political prisoners, including the Gdeim Izik Group, and to ensure their immediate and unconditional release so that they can return to their homeland and be reunited with their families.

As repeatedly reaffirmed by the United Nations General Assembly, the United Nations and its relevant bodies have a special responsibility towards the people of Western Sahara as a Territory subject to a decolonization process that has not yet been completed. We urgently call on you once again to operationalize the legal and moral responsibility of the United Nations towards the Sahrawi people, including through the establishment of an

independent United Nations mechanism for the protection of human rights in the Territory where the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) continues to operate without any human rights monitoring capacity.

The persistence of the occupying State of Morocco in its heinous crimes against Saharan civilians, without being held accountable or punished, while the United Nations and the international community remain silent, seriously undermines the prospects of the already stalled peace process and closes the door to the desired peaceful solution.

The recent campaign of repression against the Saharans in occupied Western Sahara indicated the intention of the occupying State of Morocco to intensify its policy of ethnic cleansing by overthrowing the demographic structure of the Territory, displacing the Saharans and forcing them to live as a minority in their own country, in ghetto-like neighborhoods that the world has seen in similar situations of settlement and colonies. However, the main stated objective remains the annihilation of the Saharawi people and the weakening of the legal and international status of the question of Western Sahara.

The Frente POLISARIO holds the occupying State of Morocco fully responsible for the consequences of its policies of forced annexation in occupied Western Sahara, as well as for its ongoing war of aggression against the Saharan people, which, if left unchecked, would plunge the entire region into further violence and instability.

I should be grateful if you would bring this letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

I beg you, Mr. Secretary-General, to accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

(signed) Brahim Ghali

President of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic Secretary-General of the Frente POLISARIO

H.E. Mr. António Guterres

Secretary-General of the United Nations United Nations, New York

Copies to:

H.E. Mr. Staffan de Mistura. Personal Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for Western Sahara

H.E. Ambassador Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett Permanent Representative of Guyana to the United Nations

President of the Security Council

Bir Lehlu, February 19, 2024