



Security Council

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Letter dated 26 April 2019 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex, a letter from the Secretary-General of the Frente POLISARIO, Brahim Ghali, issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Jerry Matthews **Matjila**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 26 April 2019 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On the eve of the Security Council consultations on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), it is my responsibility to draw your attention to Morocco's escalating violations of the ceasefire and the urgent need for the Security Council to move swiftly to condemn such actions, or risk undermining progress on the political track.

As described in the report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara, dated 1 April 2019 (S/2019/282), Morocco has recently embarked on a series of bad faith gestures that have destabilized the situation on the ground and exacerbated tensions in the Territory. At a time when both parties have been urged to demonstrate good faith and to refrain from actions that could undermine United Nations-facilitated negotiations, Morocco has done precisely the opposite. The report of the Secretary-General details significant and persistent violations by Morocco, including:

- (a) The building and operationalization of 110 km of new sand wall parallel to the existing military wall, in direct violation of military agreement No. 1;
- (b) The establishment of dozens of new observation posts in the restricted area, in direct violation of military agreement No. 1;
- (c) Restrictions on the rights of the people of Western Sahara to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association;
- (d) Well-documented violations of human rights in the occupied territories of Western Sahara and denial of access to the Territory for independent human rights observers and the media;
- (e) Long-standing restrictions on MINURSO, which drastically hinder the Mission's ability to access local interlocutors in the Territory and inhibit its operation.

It is time for the Security Council to stop Morocco's intransigence. To this end, we urge the Security Council to call upon Morocco to end its destabilizing actions and to immediately dismantle all of its illegal military installations. Failure to condemn such intransigence in the strongest terms sends a dangerous signal, indicating that further violations will be met with impunity.

We, the Frente POLISARIO, have constructively engaged in the political process and have taken commendable steps with respect to confidence-building measures. As acknowledged in the report of the Secretary-General, we have destroyed our last remaining stockpiles of landmines as a gesture of good faith, with a view to creating the propitious climate necessary to achieve progress on the political track. We have repeatedly conveyed our willingness to embark on other measures of good faith. Our constructive engagement stands in stark contrast to the other party, Morocco, whose destabilizing actions represent a serious challenge to the authority and credibility of the Security Council and an increasing threat to peace, security and stability in the region.

While we, the Frente POLISARIO, remain willing to engage constructively in the United Nations peace process, it is imperative that the Security Council move ahead urgently to reinforce the work of the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara and to ensure that the next stages deliver tangible outcomes for our people. It is also crucial that the members of the Council strongly call upon Morocco to engage in the political process without preconditions and in good faith. Morocco should also be pressed to release the Sahrawi political prisoners, including

the Gdeim Izik group, and to allow international human rights observers and media to access the Territory.

In closing, I would like to reaffirm our sincere and constructive cooperation with the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, his Personal Envoy, Horst Köhler, and his Special Representative, Colin Stewart. We remain ready to engage constructively in the United Nations-facilitated direct negotiations between the two parties to the conflict with a view to enabling our people to exercise freely and democratically their inalienable right to self-determination and independence.

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

(Signed) Brahim **Ghali**
Secretary-General of the Frente POLISARIO
