

REF. NO. AB/e/sc/3/7/11/2010

His Excellency Sir Mark Lyall Grant
President of the Security Council
Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain
and Northern Ireland to the United Nations

7 November 2010

Mr President,

Further to my letter to the President of the Security Council on 18 October in which I highlighted growing tensions in Western Sahara due to a mass exodus of thousands of Saharawi civilians to a tented camp in the desert area outside of El Aaiun, I wish to draw to the urgent attention of the Security Council the imminent threat of a further escalation of the situation, which could result in an unnecessary humanitarian tragedy and needless bloodshed.

Since 9 October, more than 20,000 Saharawi civilians have travelled in an exodus from the major towns in the occupied territory to join improvised camps to protest peacefully against the ongoing discrimination and acute deterioration in the socio-economic conditions of the Saharawi population in Western Sahara. As reported by numerous international human rights organizations, the camps are under a tight military siege instituted by the Moroccan regime. Deliveries of food, water and medicine are heavily restricted, and on 24 October, Moroccan forces brutally murdered 14-year-old Nayem el-Gareh, a tragedy to which the Security Council has thus far turned a blind eye.

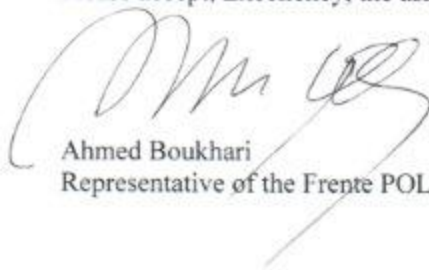
The Frente POLISARIO is now deeply concerned about the most recent reports indicating direct threats by Moroccan authorities to use force to disperse and dismantle the camps in the next 24 hours. We urge the members of the Security Council to use all available means to avert such an escalation by Morocco, which would only produce a further spiral of

violence, thereby undermining efforts by the UN, and the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy, Christopher Ross, to find a peaceful solution to the question of Western Sahara.

This unfortunate and desperate situation once again calls into question the ability of the UN to fulfil its duty to protect the Saharawi population in Western Sahara, and highlights the Security Council's failure to establish a UN human rights monitoring capacity within MINURSO, something it has done for every other UN peacekeeping mission established since 1978. This is nothing short of a disgrace.

I would be most grateful if you would bring this letter to the urgent attention of the Members of the Security Council for their immediate response.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Ahmed Boukhari
Representative of the Frente POLISARIO