



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
27 August 2019

English only

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## Human Rights Council

Forty-second session

9–27 September 2019

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

### **Written statement\* submitted by Il Cenacolo, a non- governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[21 August 2019]

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\* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.

GE.19-14560(E)



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## Extrajudicial executions against Sahrawi Refugees in Algeria

Extrajudicial executions, including politically motivated killings of Sahrawi refugees in south-west Algeria by state security forces have been a longstanding issue. In addition to a large range of persistent violations of human rights in Tindouf camps, we remain highly concerned by extrajudicial killings perpetrated with the knowledge and direct participation of Algerian authorities against Sahrawi refugees. Our findings regarding many cases of extrajudicial killings against Sahrawis reflect broader problems of law enforcement and the dysfunctional UNHCR protection mandate in Algeria. The many arbitrary executions indicate the systematic character of these violations committed mainly by the Algerian army. There has been an uptick the last few years in attacks on Sahrawi young refugees, noting that the number of killings has increased dramatically and they continue largely with impunity.

Here below we give details of some worrying incidences of extrajudicial killings perpetrated by Algerian security forces in and around Tindouf Refugee camps. No investigations had been performed about this tragic cases.

- Yesslem Ahmedouha Khandoud was shot dead by the Algerian army on August 01st at the south of Dakhla camp, and buried at an unknown location in the desert without the consent of his family.
- Larabas Abderrahman Yehdih was killed by the Algerian army forces near the city of Tindouf on June 23, 2018, while he was with his friends in a search for meteorites and precious stones.
- Brahim Salek Breika, an activist of the March 5 Movement and the Youth of Change in the Camps, was killed on June 03, 2018 following torture in the horrible Dheibiya prison, in the heart of Tindouf refugee camps.
- Hafdallah Abdou Ahmed Beibout was shot dead at Wednesday night, May 04, 2017, near the southern entrance to the Smara Sahrawi refugee camp while he was transporting supplies to herdsmen outside the camps on his car.
- Mohamed Ould Khatri Ould El Ouali, who was shot dead in early March 2017 by Algerian soldiers near the Tindouf camps, while he was grazing his cattle.
- Bara Mohamed Brahim, a young Sahrawi man who died of wounds of his abdomen, after being shot by members of the Algerian army on February 28, 2017.
- Khatri Hamadha Khandoud was shot dead by the Algerian army on his way to Mauritania in January 2014 for some commercial activities.
- Mohamed Aliene Beih was shot dead by the Algerian Army in January 2014, while heading to Mauritania for some commercial activities.

These young Sahrawi refugees fell victims of these extrajudicial executions while looking for new circuits of survival and alternative economic responses to the critical humanitarian situation inside the camps resulting from the diversion of humanitarian aids by Polisario and the besieging imposed on the camps by the Algerian army.

While we are gravely concerned of the Algerian authorities' apparent unwillingness to put a halt to the system of impunity that accompany human rights violations against Sahrawi refugees, these unlawful killings have continued to surface, and they go always investigated. We are also concerned by reports that Algerian security forces are committing violations of human rights, notably by carrying out extrajudicial killings, as part of operations ostensibly designed to improve security in the region. Ensuring the rule of law and combating crime must be conducted in line with domestic and international law. By violating human rights and the law, Algerian authorities increase insecurity and ensure a climate of impunity. This is taken as pretext to impose a blockage on Sahrawi refugees, and besiege them inside the Tindouf camps, deprived of their right to freedom of movement and of the rights to access to justice, employment, and other fundamental freedoms enshrined in international human rights treaties.

We welcome your efforts towards the unveiling of truth about cases of extrajudicial, summary and arbitrary executions in different parts of the world. In accordance with the

principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the provisions contained in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, all states are entitled to the protection of the right to life without distinction or discrimination of any kind, and all persons shall be guaranteed equal and effective access to remedies for the violation of this right.

### **Recommendations**

In light of all these international provisions:

- The government of Algeria should halt all extrajudicial killings; investigate all alleged killings; protect witnesses and victims' family-members, thereby enabling effective prosecutions of perpetrators; and immediately invite the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial killings to conduct a country visit.
- We call on the Human Rights Council and its Special Procedures to pay particular attention to Algeria's performance in this regard.
- The Human Rights Council should hold the government of Algeria accountable for its international responsibilities to protect all individuals on its territory.
- The UNHCR should effectuate its mandated protection by ensuring the investigation of all cases of extrajudicial killings against Sahrawi refugees, and the adoption of measures to support and protect witnesses, victims and their family members.
- The UNHCR should take necessary measures to disclose the burial places and details of every individual case of the above mentioned killings, and to hand over the corpse to the bereaved families for mourning.

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LSDDH (La ligue du Sahara pour la démocratie et les droits de l'homme NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.