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Agenda item 8

Follow-up and implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action

Written statement* submitted by Réseau Unité pour le Développement de Mauritanie, 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.

[29 January 2024]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Digital Crimes Made by the Armed Group Polisario

We express our deep concern about the widespread use of digital crimes, humiliation and spying to target human rights defenders in the Tinduf camps. These crimes include the hacking of email and social media accounts, the installation of malware on devices, and the use of surveillance cameras and other technologies to track and monitor activists by armed group Polisario in Tindouf Camps .

The perpetrators of these crimes often use the information they collect to blackmail and intimidate human rights defenders. They may also publish the information online or share it with the media to discredit and humiliate the activists .Such as the case of the human right defender Fadel Brika who family's intimate photos were publicly published by armed group polisario media after his phone being hacked.

These crimes have a negative and threatening effect on human rights work in the Tinduf camps. Activists are afraid to speak out or share information for fear of being targeted. This makes it difficult for them to document human rights abuses and advocate for the rights of the Sahrawi Refugees in these camps.

We urge all human rights family and your esteemed council to condemn the use of digital crimes, spying, and humiliation to target human rights defenders in the Tinduf camps. We also call on the Council to take the following steps:

- Call on the Polisario Front to immediately end the use of these crimes against human rights defenders.
- Urge all member states to provide support and protection to human rights defenders in the Tinduf camps.
- Reaffirm the right of human rights defenders to engage in their work without fear of reprisal.

We believe that these steps are essential to ensuring that human rights defenders in the Tinduf camps are able to carry out their work without fear of humiliation or reprisal.
