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Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

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.

[27 January 2022]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only. The views expressed in the present document do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations or its officials.



Algeria Should Fulfil its Commitments And Responsibilities For Crimes Committed on its Soil against Saharawi Refugees.

We, a group of associations working in the field of human rights in Western Sahara, have the honor to congratulate you and your council for the Women's Day, which we can't fully celebrate since a considerable Women of our compatriots -who represents 20percent of us – are suffering hard circumstances of living in Tindouf camps on Algerian soil.

So as the world is celebrating this day we decided to write to you out of our concern and duty to draw your attention and the international human rights family to the true state of the human rights situation in the Western Sahara, especially since some experts and special rapporteurs seem to be misled when extracting information from biased and politicized parties regarding human rights situation under the conflict in the Western Sahara which reflects vividly in their communications and recommendations of the special rapporteur on human rights defenders for instance .

Regarding the situation of human rights in Tindouf camps, we note with deep concern the deterioration of the economic and social conditions in which the Sahrawi living in Tindouf camps due to administrative corruption and diversion of humanitarian aids, which are used to silence the voices that criticize the leadership -who monopolizes the political discourse in the camps.

Freedom of speech and freedom to associations are main concerns in Tindouf camps, no activists can openly express his or her political opinion they will automatically be accused by betrayal and therefore may taken to jail like the blogger Mohamed Zaiden in2019, who were released and obliged to change his conviction under pressure. Al Fadel braika another blogger victim of Polisario harassments and he has been jailed before he managed to escape “the hell of Tindouf camps” as he described it.

Only associations who works for the Polisario leaders are permitted to exist in the camps and they enjoy all forms of financial aid from Algeria and Polisario leaders.

Regarding the situation of women, they are the most vulnerable in Tindouf camps women in the camps are victims is sexual violence and rape; especially wives of simple soldiers- who are in many cases obliged to sexually surrender to Polisario leaders. Their husbands can't complain against their superiors. there is a case against the number one leader Ibrahim Ghali who is still accused by raping the young girl khadijatou Mahmoud. the case is still opened in front of Spanish courts.

Most worrying is extrajudicial executions where in most cases, the Algerian military prefers to use extreme violence against the Sahrawis, who are caught in violation and do not expose them to any types of trial, and the Polisario does not provide any kind of protection for those victims. Among the most serious crimes committed by the army against the Sahrawis, especially secret gold miners we mention the cases of Mohamed ould Hamdi ould sueilem and Ali Idrissi who were killed in cold blood by an Algerian army patrol on the 19th of October 2020 near dakhla camps south the Algerian city of Ouinette Belagraa (1700KM s/w the capital).

Besides Mr. Abba Said Mohamed Salem Rguibi ,24 years old a Sahrawi miner who was shot dead by Algerian forces on the 4th of May 2021 near Dakhla camps

Whereas his friend ould Mbarek ould Al Makki was injured in the same operation. we mention here that years ago others Sahrawis were tortured and shot dead in the desert which strongly shows that this behavior is systematic.

As far as soldering children is another crime that polisario leader started a large campaign od taking children to military training camps in Algeria after they decision to break cease fire agreement with UN in November 2020.

It is important to make clear that the sympathy of some experts and international mechanisms with the issue of some activists loyal to Algeria and the Polisario, who are active in Western Sahara, is exploited by Algeria and the Polisario in order to escalate the situation in the cities

of Western Sahara we assure that these activists has the rights to freedom of expression but order and law should be respected and give the ideal image of a human rights defender which doesn't reflect in sultana's case.

A human rights defender doesn't refuse healthcare offered by different mediators including human rights institutions in the region to look after his or her family .Sultanas does that just to prove they are oppressed if their situation gets worse and use that to mislead the public opinion.

On a political level Algeria should fulfil its commitments and responsibilities for the crimes committed on its soil against our compatriots by its army and Polisario leaders as The UN Human Rights Committee, in its concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Algeria, has expressed its deep concerns over Algeria's "de facto devolution of authority to the Frente Polisario, especially jurisdictional authority", which is considered as inconsistent with the State party's obligation to respect and guarantee all rights for all persons within its territory (CCPR/C/DZA/CO/4, para. 9).

Our Network calls upon Human rights council to Urge Algeria:

- To Recognize the rights of Refugees in Tindouf Camps and their Rights for free movement .
- To fully implement the United Nations resolution 2602 and let The HCR make credible census of the population of Tindouf Camps .
- To ensure appropriate and widespread information among The Saharawi refugees in the camps regarding the future solution for the conflict over Western Sahara.
- We condemn the use of minors and women in the political conflict.
- We urge your mechanisms and experts to extract information from neutral sources and apply the ideal practices you insist on in order to approach the situation of human rights in Western Sahara in a just and credible manner
- We urge Honorable special rapporteur on migrants to reveal the outcomes of his communication to the Algerian authorities registered under the reference AL DZA7/2020 about extrajudicial executions of two Sahrawi by the Algerian security forces in a mining site in the south of Auinat Balakraa.