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Pacific regional seminar on the implementation of the Third International Decade for  
the Eradication of Colonialism: accelerating action

Denarau, Nadi, Fiji  
21 to 23 May 2014

STATEMENT BY

THE REPRESENTATIVE OF MOROCCO



**PACIFIC REGIONAL SEMINAR**

**Of the C24**

**Statement by**  
**His Excellency, Mr Mohamed MAEL-AININ**  
**Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco**

**Nadi, Fidji 21-23 May 2014**

**M. President,**

First of all, allow me to convey my delegation's gratitude to the Government and the people of Fiji for their warm welcome and hospitality. I would also like to congratulate you, Mr Chairman, and the members of the Bureau for your election as a chair of the Special Committee.

The Kingdom of Morocco has the pleasure to take part to this seminar in order to present its position regarding the regional dispute over the Moroccan Sahara and share with the members of the Committee the recent developments related to this issue within the United Nations.

**Mr. Chairman,**

In 1912 the Moroccan territory was effectively split up into several zones of occupations. After its independence in 1956, the Kingdom of Morocco recovered through negotiations with Spain certain areas located *in the south of the Kingdom, namely Tarfaya in 1958, Sidi Ifni in 1969 and the Saquiet al Hamra and Oued Eddahab in February 1976.*

Since there, the responsibility of Algeria in this dispute is obvious. It created the polisario and a so called "SADR" in 1976 on the Algerian territory, a fictitious entity that does not possess any of the attributes of a State without any consultation of its population or any respect of the international law and reglementations. Algeria mobilised huge resources to diplomatically and militarily support the polisario, with the sole objective to threaten the territorial integrity of its neighbour, Morocco.

For almost four decades, this regional dispute has been maintained due to the hostile attitude of Algeria, and its insistence on countering the inalienable right of Morocco in its territorial integrity

and national unity. This reckless and irresponsible attitude by Algeria puts the whole Maghreb and Sahel regions at a great risk of the proliferation of terrorist and criminal groups and activities.

**Mr. Chairman,**

In order for the Committee to have a clear understanding of the evolution and the reasons of the deadlock in this regional dispute, allow me to underline these facts.

Following the United Nations conclusion as the inapplicability of the settlement plan, confirmed in a number of Secretary General's reports, in particular S/2000/131 dated 23/02/2000, and the lack of agreement among the parties regarding the implementation of the Baker Plans I (2001) and II (2003), the Security Council has, since 2004, called upon the parties to **"put an end to the impasse and to make progress towards a negotiated and mutually acceptable political solution"**.

It is worth recalling that on 2 November 2001, in Houston, Algeria submitted to the then Special Envoy, Mr James Baker, a proposal for the partition of the territory and its population, which was immediately rejected by Morocco. This clearly shows that Algeria, which pretends to dearly defend the right to self determination, uses it only as a pretext for geopolitical manoeuvres aiming at threatening Morocco's legitimate and historical rights over its Sahara.

Based on the mandate of the Security Council, the United Nations Secretary General and his Personal Envoys continued to pursue their good offices to assist the Parties to this regional dispute over the Moroccan Sahara, to make progress towards a negotiated political solution in conformity with the principle of negotiation as a peaceful means to solve international disputes in such a manner

that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered. (Article 3 of the Charter of UN)

A breakthrough has been realised, in 2007. Indeed, in response to the calls made by the Security Council, the Kingdom of Morocco has undertaken an important effort supported nationally and internationally, that led to the submission to the United Nations, in April 2007, of an Autonomy Initiative, as a framework for a political, negotiated and final settlement.

Based on compromise, this Initiative is in accordance with the international legality as well as with the most advanced and democratic principles and standards for the devolution of authority. In fact, the Sahara region's autonomy statute will be subject to negotiations and submitted to the population for a free and fair consultation.

This initiative is the result of a large consultation process at local, and national levels, bringing together political parties, all representatives of the politicians, the Royal Advisory Council for Saharan Affairs and other NGOs, to gather their views and opinions, to gather their views on the draft implementation of autonomy to the Sahara region and to open dialogues at regional and international levels in order to gather the views of the countries concerned and interested in this regional dispute.

Through this initiative, the Kingdom of Morocco guarantees to the populations of the region, their position and role, without discrimination or exclusion, in its bodies and institutions. Thus, the population of the Sahara can democratically manage its affairs, through legislative, executive and judicial exclusive powers. It will have the financial resources to develop the region in all areas and to participate actively in the economic, social and cultural development of the nation.

It's worth mentioning that this proposal is considered as "serious and credible" by both the UN Secretary General and the Security Council. It has generated a dynamic and was a turning point in the search for a political solution, since it is the sole basis of the current political process, held under the auspices of the Secretary General and his Personal Envoy.

Building on the dynamism created by the Moroccan Initiative, the UN Security Council has adopted nine (9) resolutions which, abandoned all previous unfruitful plans and called upon all the concerned parties to enter into negotiations with a view to achieving a lasting and mutually acceptable political solution. These resolutions clearly and unambiguously defined the parameters for a final political settlement by:

- Confirming the pre-eminence of the autonomy initiative presented by Morocco;
- Welcoming the efforts made by Morocco since 2006 qualified as serious and credible;
- Calling upon neighbouring States to invest, in a constructive manner, in the quest of a political solution to this regional dispute, in order to end the present deadlock and move forward to a final political solution;
- Underlining the importance of the realism and spirit of compromise as prerequisite for the success of the negotiations;
- Recognizing the negotiation as the only mean to progress towards the resolution of this regional dispute;
- Confirming the regional nature of this dispute by recognizing explicitly that the settlement of the Sahara issue, combined with cooperation between the Union Maghreb Arab member-States, will contribute to stability and security in the Sahel region, which is under threat of terrorism because of the confirmed implication of Polisario in this dangerous activity.

**Mr. Chairman**

Unfortunately, despite the positive momentum triggered by the submission of the Moroccan Autonomy Plan, the other parties engaged in a delictuous strategy of manipulation of the human rights issue so as to deflect the international community's attention from the strategic goal which is finding a realistic and final political solution and to undermine the dynamic launched by the autonomy proposal.

These attempts take place while Morocco, years ago, has embarked on ambitious reform process, in particular in the fields of democracy, good governance, human rights, gender equality, human development, transitional justice and the effective enjoyment of political, economic, social and cultural rights by Moroccan citizens in the whole country. Far reaching reforms have been launched aimed at consolidating its multi-cultural identity and preserving human dignity.

The adoption of a new constitution in 2011, the democratization process, on which Morocco has embarked in the last decade, is unprecedented in the region, and the great progress it has made in this field is recognized by the whole international community, which consolidate our model of democracy and development.

It is worth to note that Morocco has also accorded the utmost importance and devoted enormous financial means for the development of the Sahara region. The infrastructure and the socio-economic projects that are flourishing in the Sahara bear witness to Morocco's efforts for the promotion of the economic and social rights of the population of the region.

## Mr. Chairman

The Security Council in its recent resolution 2152 unanimously adopted last April, confirmed the centrality of the political process as the only way to solve the Sahara issue, and reaffirmed the fundamental parameters that must guide this current process by calling upon the parties to continue negotiations on the basis of realism and a spirit of compromise. (Paragraph 4, Resolution 2152)

The resolution also reaffirmed the regional dimension of the dispute by calling, once again, the neighbouring states to become more involved and make a constructive contribution to the negotiation process and by establishing a clear link between the Sahara issue, the Maghreb Arab Union and the Sahel region.

Regarding the human dimension, the Security Council recognized the pertinence of the Moroccan approach aiming at the consolidation of the promotion and the protection of Human Rights at the national level, including the Sahara provinces. The Security Council, and through it, the international community, have once again welcomed recent efforts and achievements by Morocco to promote and protect Human Rights and reaffirmed their full confidence in Moroccan national institutions to promote and protect these rights throughout the national territory, including the Moroccan western Sahara.

The Security Council also welcomed Morocco's cooperation with international mechanisms. In this regard, Morocco remains committed to his cooperation with UN human rights mechanisms and has fully demonstrated it by receiving and interacting with a large number of mandate holders including within the framework of the implementation of the recommendations of their visits, and receiving, very soon, the High Commissioner for Human rights.



It is important to highlight at the humanitarian dimension, that the Security Council has, once again, reaffirmed its call for a census and registration of the population in the Tindouf camps, and holds Algeria responsible for the situation in those camps.

Thus, the UNHCR, based on the Security Council resolution, is urged to take the necessary steps with the Algerian authorities to implement, without any further delay, an action plan to conduct a census and register these populations.

**Mr. Chairman**

Given the security threats currently prevailing in the Sahara region, Morocco strongly believes that time is ripe now, to look for a political settlement to this regional dispute that will allow both the return of the Tindouf Camps population to its motherland Morocco, and ensure the prosperity and the stability of the whole Maghreb region.

Morocco reiterates its readiness to continue its cooperation with the UN to achieve a political, final and negotiated solution, within the framework set by the Security Council. And calls the Committee to play a major role and encourage vigorously the quest of the United Nations for a political negotiated solution to this longstanding regional conflict.

The Kingdom of Morocco calls upon the other parties to be animated by the same desire to end this dispute and to combine efforts to build a prosperous and democratic Maghreb – an active actor of the African solidarity and a credible negotiator of the various Partners of the Region.

Thank you.

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