

Distr. RESTRICTED  
PRS/2008/CRP.13

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SECOND INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

Pacific Regional Seminar on the implementation of the Second  
International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism:  
priorities for the remainder of the Decade

Bandung, Indonesia  
14 to 16 May 2008

STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF MOROCCO

*Royaume du Maroc*

*Conseil Royal Consultatif*

*des Affaires Sahariennes*

*Rabat*



المملكة المغربية  
الجلس الملكي الاستشاري  
للشؤون الصحراوية  
الرباط

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Kingdom of Morocco has undergone remarkable stages, whether in history or in decolonization process, in comparison with the majority of colonized countries.

In 1912, the Moroccan territory has been subdivided in different colonized zones. After more than forty years of colonization, the Kingdom of Morocco started getting back gradually, and through international agreements negotiated with different colonial powers, its territorial integrity.

After its independence in 1956, the Kingdom started negotiations with Spain. These negotiations have allowed to gradually get back territories occupied by Spain, in 1957 the North of the Kingdom, in 1958 Tarfaya and Tan-Tan in the South, Sidi Ifni in 1969 and the region of Saguia El Hamra and Oued Eddahab known under the name of Western Sahara since 1975, and this, after the Madrid Agreement which was achieved with the knowledge of the United Nations, at that time.

This agreement is similar to the majority of cases of non-autonomous territories, it has been operated through negotiations between administrative powers and local institutions recognized as credible negotiating partners representing the popular will.

The Moroccan monarchy is distinguished by the designation of the King in his religious position as Emir of the Faithful. It is based on the legal (Beyâa), a pact of allegiance and loyalty to the King and to the throne.

The above mentioned Beyâa is considered, by the Muslim public law and by the Sunni and Maleki doctrines followed in the Kingdom of Morocco, as the base for the power legitimacy and a kind of self-determination according to which the people has confidence in the Emir of the Faithful to govern following the canonical Muslim law and the constitution.

Thus, the King assumes the protection of the national unity and the territorial integrity of the country and the protection of the nation's affairs. Within this context, the inhabitants of the Moroccan Sahara have sworn, along history,

obedience and loyalty to the sultans and kings of Morocco, obeying, this way, their supreme authority.

The International Court of Justice confirmed this fact, when it gave its advisory opinion in 1975, when the Kingdom of Morocco asked for it, based on which the Late King His Majesty the King Hassan II, may God rest his soul, has prepared for the organization of the peaceful green march to get back the Sahara.

On the other part, the Beyâa to the King, Emir of the Faithful, has been renewed by the "Shiouxhs" of the "Sahrawi Jamaâ" (heads of Sahrawi community), an assembly presided at that time by Mr. Khatri Ould Said Jumani, and the whole tribes and regions of the Moroccan Sahara. All this happened at the time of the Late King Hassan II, but also under the reign of His heir, His Majesty the King Mohammed VI.

Because of geopolitics reasons related to the cold war, Algeria has always been against the achievement of the territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Morocco. Thus, it has become implicated in a deliberate policy shown through its systematic denial of the legitimate rights of the Kingdom of Morocco over this part of the territory, through a group of young people, at that time, dissatisfied of the context and living in Tan-Tan, in the South of the Kingdom recovered in 1958, they were, in their majority, students at Mohammed V University in Rabat.

Among these students were Mr. El Ouali Mustapha Sied, First Secretary General of the Polisario Front, and the present Secretary General Mohammed Abdelaziz, who were joined by other nonconformists Sahrawis under the Spanish colonization.

Algeria has sponsored since 1976 the creation of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic on the Algerian territory. While taking advantage of the particular context of the cold war, it has been mobilized to urge certain countries to recognize this false entity while it does not have any attribute of the sovereign state.

Since then, many countries have withdrawn their recognition of this entity referring to the international law.

The war started afterwards. Algerian soldiers have participated in this war. A hundred among them were imprisoned in Amgala and then released later on by the Kingdom of Morocco.

In this war, was used sophisticated weaponry which very few third world countries possess. This war lasted from 1976 to 1991, date at which ceasing fire was declared by the Organization of the United Nations.

This war, like any war, did not, unfortunately, bring about anything positive, neither for us, the Sahrawi people, nor for the Kingdom of Morocco, nor for Algeria, or for the international community. On the opposite, it has caused many victims, families' separations, orphans, consistent ecological disasters, and did not allow the citizens' dream in the Arab Maghreb, that is the Arab Maghreb Union, to be achieved.

The complicated and sensitive character of the identification process related to the referendum, to which I have personally participated as observer in many points inside and outside the territory, represents a first in the history of the United Nations Organization. It has been confirmed to be very delicate to make such kind of identification without determining exactly the target population to be identified, whether they are the Sahrawis in the South of Morocco, or those in the Spanish Western Sahara, or those in the South of Algeria or the Sahrawis in the North of Mauritania and the North of Mali.

In fact, the members of the same tribe live in all these territories and it is difficult for any foreigner in the region to make allowances. This has finally led the Secretary General of the United Nations to the conclusion mentioned in this report dated 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2000, where he stated that after nine years, it was not possible to apply entirely, the main provisions of the settlement plan, except for the fire ceasing, because of the difference in points of view between the parties regarding the meaning given to the main provisions of the plan.

In view of what was said before, the Security Council and the Secretary General of the United Nations Organization have recommended searching for the political solution called "third way" with no winner and no loser, to get this disagreement out of this deadlock.

In front of this state of lethargy, the Kingdom of Morocco, in response to the call made by the Security Council, has taken the initiative to propose a status of large autonomy which is viable, credible and definitive for us the Sahrawis in the territory of Saguia El Hamra and Oued Eddahab, allowing us to manage our own political, social and economic affairs within the sovereignty, the national unity and the territorial integrity of Morocco.

With this end in view, there has been a large consultation with all the political national parties, within a democratic, participating, inclusive and transparent

implementation, that would, thus, guarantee the adhesion of the whole to the concept of autonomy.

It is an unprecedented experience in the region of the Maghreb, in Africa and in the Arab Muslim world, an initiative which has required lots of courage from a young King who wants to change the country for the well being of all its citizens.

Within the frame of the Royal Advisory Council for Saharan Affairs (CORCAS), a representative body of all the tribal components and of the different political and socio-economic sensitivities of the population in the region of the Sahara, we have fully elaborated this autonomy project after having visited some countries who have made great progress as regard to autonomy such as Spain from which we have been inspired while keeping our special nature.

This initiative is keeping up with the frame of the construction of a democratic and modern society, founded on law and individual and collective freedom as well as economic and social development. This initiative bearing a promise for a better future for the populations in the region, puts an end to separation and exile and encourages reconciliation.

This autonomy project has been qualified by the large majority of countries, by the Secretary General of the United Nations Organization and the Security Council, as a serious and credible project, and so talked of it the personal envoy of the United Nations Organization's Secretary General Mr. Peter Van Walsum in his report to the Security Council dated 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2008, as the unique possible way, stating that the Sahara independence is not a realistic solution.

Thanks to this autonomy, the Kingdom of Morocco guarantees to all the Sahrawis, whether outside or inside the territory, their full rights without discrimination or exclusion, whether at the level of institutions and bodies in the region or at the national level.

The Moroccan initiative, conceived within an open spirit, proposes to create the conditions for a dialog process and negotiations leading to a political solution mutually acceptable.

The status of autonomy, resulting from negotiations, would be submitted to another consultation of the concerned populations, through a referendum in

conformity with the principles of self-determination and the provisions of the United Nations' charter.

From this point of view, the Kingdom of Morocco is asking the other parties to take this opportunity to start a new chapter in the history of the region, showing its willingness to carry on seriously the negotiations in a constructive way based on what is considered to be the spirit of autonomy, while being in conformity with self-determination, and which constitutes the unique realistic basis for negotiations and would contribute to the establishment of an atmosphere of confidence as it has done before in the four previous negotiations rounds in Manhasset.

Thus, the Kingdom of Morocco remains entirely at the disposal of the United Nations Organization's Secretary General and his personal envoy, and of all the good willing to solve this problem from which, we, Sahrawis, have been suffering for more than 33 years, taking into consideration the fact that the Polisario Front is not the unique representative of the Sahrawis out of whom 70% are living in the real territory and not in Tindouf camps in the South of Algeria. Should I remind you that the concept of the unique people's representativeness does not exist any more since the fall of the Berlin wall.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Polisario Front expressed its desire for self-determination while it has self declared a republic on the Algerian territory without taking into consideration the point of view of the majority of native Sahrawis in the ex-Spanish Western Sahara, represented, in its majority, within the Royal Advisory Council for Saharan Affairs.

The Polisario and Algeria should raise the blockade to which are submitted our brothers in the Tindouf camps in the South of Algeria in order to allow us to be reunified to enjoy a large autonomy with all its institutions, within the Kingdom of Morocco, as it was declared, in December 2008, by the conference participants in "Gjjimat", near Tifariti, outside the security wall. All of these participants are ex-Polisario civil and military executives, among whom those who returned to the motherland and are presently living in the (real) city of Laâyoune. Other Sahrawis in the Tindouf camps are waiting for the opportunity to come back also.

The further extension of the present situation can do nothing but increase the suffering of our brothers in Tindouf camps in Algeria. Our families can not remain indefinitely separated. We do not have the right to let a new generation of desperate persons grow up in this region, in the South of Algeria, in the North of Mauritania and in the North of Mali. As you know all of you, the consequences are disastrous and dangerous: arms traffic, drugs traffic, human beings traffic, tobacco traffic, creation of a home for terrorists as it was the case recently, in the South of Algeria where one Qaida entity was constituted. It concerns, finally, the risk of instability in the Maghreb and in the South of the Mediterranean, if Algeria maintains its position of blocking any political solution for the Sahara.

Thank you.