

ALGERIA



الجزائر

Permanent Mission of Algeria
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بعثة الجزائر الدائمة
لدى الأمم المتحدة

Statement of

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**Regional Seminar on the implementation of the 3rd
International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism**

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Madam Chairperson,

Though I have already had the opportunity to congratulate you, let me again say how grateful we are to the Government and people of Grenada for their hospitality and generosity.

Next year, the international community will celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1514(XV) which solemnly affirmed the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

The adoption of this memorable resolution took place at a moment when many nations, including mine, were fighting a bloody war of liberation against their brutal colonial rulers who dispossessed them from their land and their most basic rights.

Many independent nations, including some setting around this table, owe definitely a great deal to this resolution which undeniably gave a new and decisive impetus to the emancipation movement which gained substantive ground and momentum all around the world, in particular in African countries

Yet, not all people have been enabled to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and, as a matter of fact, the very existence of this committee testifies to the fact that more efforts need definitely to be done to ensure that not a single nation is left behind.

Among the few nations that are still unable to freely enjoy their right to self-determination, the unbearable situation of the people of Western Sahara has been enduring for several decades deserves, certainly, the full attention and support of this august committee.

Occupied by Spain until 1975, Western Sahara, which has been on the list of non-self-governing territories since 1963, has lived under the Moroccan occupation for the last forty years or so.

The United Nations General Assembly, by its resolution 34/37, reaffirmed, as early as in 1979, the inalienable right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination and independence in accordance with the UN Charter and the objectives of the General Assembly resolution 1514(XV) and the legitimacy of their struggle to secure the enjoyment of that right. It also recognized that the Frente Polisario, as the representative of the people of Western Sahara, should participate fully in any search for a just lasting and definitive political solution. This solution has remained so far elusive and unattainable.

Heaven knows that the international community has spared no efforts to end the unbearable suffering the Sahrawi people has been through since its land was occupied in 1975 and to hold a free referendum in Western Sahara.

Let me, just for the record, recall before you three missed opportunities which could have allowed, a long time ago, for a just and definitive solution of the question of Western Sahara:

The first opportunity occurred in 1991 with the UN-OAU settlement plan, formally accepted by the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente Polisario and endorsed by the UN Security Council,

which provided for the organization by the United Nations of a referendum in Western Sahara free from all administrative and military constraints. Procrastination and deliberately created obstacles made it impossible for the UN to hold the referendum of Western Sahara as scheduled.

The second attempt was made in 1997 by the Personal Envoy of the Secretary General, James Baker, who had the parties, namely the Kingdom of Morocco and Frente Polisario, in the city of Houston Texas in September of that year, commit, at the highest level, to the organization of a free and fair referendum under the UN auspices. For the same reasons and because obstacles were again created, the referendum could not again be held.

The last attempt was made in 2003 by the same Personal Envoy in his peace plan for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara approved by the Security Council resolution 1495 (2003). Accepted by the Frente Polisario, but rejected by Morocco, the plan was finally put aside although the plan offered the opportunity to the Moroccan residents, along with the Sahrawi people, to take part to the second referendum related to the final status of the territory, the plan called for.

Since then, different Personal Envoys of the Secretary General organized meeting between the parties with the presence of the neighboring countries, in Manhasset and elsewhere, without success.

The resumption last year of talks after several years of deadlock between the parties with the presence of the two neighboring countries, under the authority of the new Personal Envoy, Horst Kohler, has created new hopes. The relatively successful two round tables held in Geneva have indeed opened new prospects for the just and definitive solution of the question of Western Sahara.

It is now important to build on what has been achieved and move forward. Time has come, as it has been strongly affirmed by the last UN Security Council resolution, for the two parties, the Kingdom of Morocco and Frente Polisario, to resume in good faith and without precondition their negotiations for a just lasting mutually acceptable political solution to the question of Western Sahara that provides for the self-determination of the People of Western Sahara.

It is important to remind some members of the Committee who seem too shy to mention that the solution should provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara that they should not be selective when they quote the UN Security Council resolutions and that our mandate is to enable the Non-self-governing territories peoples to exercise their right to self-determination.

Algeria, as far as it is concerned as a neighbor country, remains firmly committed in its support to the efforts of the UN Secretary General and its Personal Envoy to attain such a solution and to abide by whatever agreement reached by the two parties.

Thank you.