

Distr. RESTRICTED

PRS/2022/CRP.19

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

FORTH INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

Pacific regional seminar on the implementation of the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: advancement of the Non-Self-Governing Territories through the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and beyond

Castries, Saint Lucia

11 to 13 May 2022

**STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE
OF SIERRA LEONE**

**DRAFT: STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E. ALHAJI FANDAY-
AMBASSADOR/PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE-POLITICAL AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF SIERRA LEONE AT THE C24 CARIBBEAN REGIONAL SEMINAR HELD IN SAINT
LUCIA “ON THE QUESTION OF WESTERN SAHARA” 11-13 MAY 2022**

Madam Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me start by commending you madam Chair, for the excellent way you have been facilitating the seminar so far and accept my sincere appreciation for giving me the floor to deliver the following statement on the “Question of Western Sahara”.

At the outset, I may wish to extend my delegation’s commendation to the Secretary General’s support to the ongoing political process, that is being executed within the framework of the Security Council’s recommendations since 2007, which aims at a realistic, practicable, enduring and mutually acceptable political solution to the regional dispute over the Western Sahara. My delegation further express support for the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to resume the negotiation process aimed at achieving lasting solution to the Western Sahara question, with the hope that the roundtable process will build on the progress made by the former Personal envoy in accordance with security council resolution 2602 of October 2021. To this end, we welcome the appointment of Mr. Staffan de Mistura as the new Personal Envoy of the Secretary General and the holding of his first regional visit from January 12 to 19 2022.

The delegation of Sierra Leone shares the view that the momentum built during the two Geneva roundtable meetings which witnessed the participation of Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania and the *Frente Polisario* should be maintained in the same format and in accordance with the security council resolution 2602 of October 2021.

It must be noted that, the Security Council resolution 2602 of October 2021 further calls on Morocco, the Frente POLISARIO, Algeria and Mauritania to cooperate more fully with each other, including through building additional trust, and as well as to strengthen their involvement in the political process and to achieve progress towards a political solution. The resolution also reiterates that enhanced cooperation between member States of the Arab Maghreb Union will go a long way in trying to achieve a peaceful settlement of this long-standing dispute and it will contribute to the stability and security in the region. We commend this proposal and hope the stakeholders will work towards cooperation in the interest of peace.

My Delegation supports the Moroccan autonomy initiative—which is in compliance with applicable international laws especially the devolution of authority to the local population. In this regard, it should be recalled that the Security Council, in all its successive resolutions since 2007, including 2602, welcomed the serious and credible efforts of Morocco to move the process forward towards resolution.

We commend Morocco’s efforts and achievements in the fight against the covid-19 pandemic in the Western Sahara, including the vaccination campaign that allowed free access to covid-19 vaccines.

Mme. Chair,

Sierra Leone commends Morocco’s human rights action as noted in the various Security Council resolutions including resolution 2602, bringing out clearly the role of the National Council on Human Rights Commissions in the cities of Laayoune and Dakhla as well as its cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) since 2011. We also welcome the efforts of Morocco towards socio-economic and infrastructural development in the region.

We commend Morocco’s respect of the ceasefire in the Western Sahara and call on the other parties to return to the ceasefire for the sake of peace and stability in the entire region. My delegation subscribes to the need to improve

the human right situation in the Tindouf refugee camps. We therefore appeal for the proper registration of all refugees in conformity with International Law and the mandate of the UNHCR and the recommendations of the Secretary General as well as Security Council resolutions since 2011 and to the most recent resolution 2602.

In conclusion, my delegation stresses the urgent need to find a practicable solution to this long-standing dispute. With the efforts made by all the stakeholders and in conformity with the various resolutions of the Security Council, my delegation remains hopeful that with the continued support of the international community, a viable solution will be reached.

I thank you **Madam Chair**.