



Security Council

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Letter dated 4 October 2019 from the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex, a letter from Brahim Ghali, the Secretary-General of the Frente POLISARIO, to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Neville **Gertze**
Ambassador and Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 4 October 2019 from the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Four months have now passed since the former Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara, Horst Köhler, resigned. Little has been done in the ensuing period to advance the United Nations peace process on Western Sahara. The delay in appointing a new Personal Envoy has paralysed the political process. As a result, we now risk a return to “business as usual” on Western Sahara.

Political progress has stalled in spite of the tremendous concessions and sacrifices that the Frente POLISARIO has made explicitly to help the Personal Envoy succeed in his mission and to create an environment propitious for constructive negotiations. Despite attempts in some quarters to deviate from the United Nations-established parameters in relation to the question of Western Sahara, and despite Morocco’s intransigence and provocations, we have consistently exercised restraint and have remained positively engaged in the political process.

By contrast, Morocco, the occupying Power of Western Sahara, has intensified its destabilizing actions in the Territory, which seriously risk undermining the United Nations peace process and jeopardizing peace and stability in the whole region. Moreover, the unacceptable long-standing restrictions imposed by Morocco on the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) and the latter’s failure to carry out its mission in line with basic United Nations peacekeeping standards, have seriously undermined the functionality of MINURSO and its credibility in the eyes of our people. It is imperative that further time not be lost to re-establish momentum in the political process. Further delays will only aggravate tensions on the ground and diminish confidence in the diplomatic track.

We sincerely hope that the delay in appointing a new Personal Envoy has not been caused or exacerbated by the preconditions imposed by Morocco. Recent statements issued by Moroccan officials should leave no doubt as to Morocco’s intention, which is to obstruct and delay the political process so as to solidify its brutal and illegal occupation of parts of our Territory.

The Frente POLISARIO will not – and the United Nations must not – allow the United Nations-led peace process in Western Sahara to be held hostage to the preconditions and dictations imposed by Morocco, whose sole objective is to derail the decolonization of the Territory and to entrench its militarily imposed occupation of parts of our national Territory. We call upon you urgently to use your authority to ensure that the peace process resumes in earnest and that Morocco desists from its destabilizing actions, which have fuelled tension and aggravated the situation on the ground.

We are particularly concerned by Morocco’s illegal breach in the buffer strip in Guerguerat, which is a clear violation of the ceasefire and military agreement No. 1. The United Nations must address this issue seriously and effectively because it remains a hotbed of constant tension and may trigger war at any moment. The frequent incursions of Moroccan agents into the buffer strip also represent a clear and serious violation of the terms of military agreement No. 1. These actions run contrary to the spirit of the peace plan and they violate Security Council resolution [2468 \(2019\)](#), in which the Council reaffirmed the need for full respect of the military agreements reached with MINURSO with regard to the ceasefire and called upon the parties to refrain from any actions that could undermine United Nations-facilitated negotiations or further destabilize the situation in Western Sahara. Unless Morocco abstains from deploying its agents in the buffer strip, the situation in the area will escalate.

The consequences of a return to the status quo on Western Sahara must not be underestimated. Tensions are rising in the Sahrawi occupied territories, and Moroccan clampdowns are growing. The Frente POLISARIO has thus far exercised considerable restraint and we have remained invested both in the ceasefire and the United Nations-led peace process. It would be a mistake, however, to take our continued constructive engagement for granted in the absence of any tangible progress on the political track. It would likewise be a serious mistake for Morocco to further test the patience of our people, who are more determined than ever to defend their rights and legitimate national aspirations.

For over 40 years, our people have endured the dire consequences of Moroccan illegal occupation of our land. The fundamental right of our people to self-determination has been denied, and the basic human rights of our fellow women, men and children are being systematically violated in the Sahrawi occupied Territories. Our natural resources have been plundered. While we remain fully committed to our obligations under the ceasefire and related military agreements, we reserve our legitimate right to act in response to all hostile actions by Morocco, the occupying Power.

Over the coming days, the Security Council will consider the renewal of the mandate of MINURSO. The rising tension in the Territory due to Morocco's escalating and destabilizing actions requires a robust response from the United Nations. To move the peace process forward, a new, qualified Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General, who shares his or her predecessor's strong convictions, stature and resolve should be appointed. Time-bound pressure must also continue to be exerted by the Security Council to ensure that the next Personal Envoy has the tools that he or she requires to ensure constructive engagement in the political process.

In closing, I would like to reaffirm our support for all efforts to resume the United Nations-facilitated direct negotiations between the two parties to the conflict, with a view to achieving a peaceful and lasting solution that fully respects the inalienable right of our people to self-determination and independence.

I would be most grateful if you would reflect the content of the present letter in your forthcoming report to the Security Council.

(Signed) **Brahim Ghali**
Secretary-General of the Frente POLISARIO
