

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 16 January 2020 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission 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, Secretary-General of the Frente POLISARIO, to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, concerning recent developments related to Western Sahara, issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Julia **Imene-Chanduru**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.



**Annex to the letter dated 16 January 2020 from the
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Namibia to the
United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

The Frente POLISARIO noted, with surprise and dissatisfaction, the statement attributable to the Spokesman for the Secretary-General on Western Sahara dated 11 January 2020 and the statement given by the Spokesman for the Secretary-General during his daily press briefing on 13 January 2020 regarding the unlawful passing of the so-called “Africa Eco Race” through occupied Western Sahara.

It is astonishing and utterly unacceptable that the United Nations has so far remained silent in the face of the continued escalation and provocations by Morocco, the occupying Power in Western Sahara, which are jeopardizing peace and security in the whole region. Nonetheless, instead of holding Morocco accountable for its recent aggressive and destabilizing actions, the United Nations Secretariat has simply chosen to call for “exercising maximum restraint” so that the so-called “Africa Eco Race” could pass “peacefully” through the Moroccan-built illegal breach in the buffer strip in Guerguerat in southern Western Sahara.

The statements issued recently by the United Nations Secretariat have regrettably reinforced the impression amid our people that the so-called “regular civilian and commercial traffic” through the Moroccan-built illegal breach in the buffer strip in Guerguerat is much more important than ensuring full adherence to the terms of the ceasefire and Military Agreement No. 1. Furthermore, by accepting the existence of the Moroccan illegal breach, the United Nations has unfortunately contributed to the creation of a de facto lawless area within the buffer strip that serves as a point of passage for all kinds of goods, including illicit ones such as Moroccan-made drugs. What is even worse is that the United Nations remains a bystander to these unlawful activities that pose a serious threat to the security of the whole area.

The position of the Frente POLISARIO regarding the illegal breach in the buffer strip in Guerguerat is very clear and unequivocal. As we have made clear on numerous occasions, the breach that Morocco opened in Guerguerat across the Moroccan military wall did not exist at the time of the entry into force of the ceasefire on 6 September 1991. Neither did it exist when Military Agreement No. 1 was signed between MINURSO and the Frente POLISARIO on 24 December 1997 and between MINURSO and Morocco on 22 January 1998. None of these agreements included any provisions authorizing the creation of breaches or crossing points for “civilian and commercial traffic” or other activities along the Moroccan military wall. The Moroccan breach, which represents an illegal, unilateral change of the status quo in the buffer strip, was negotiated neither between the two parties nor between the two parties and the United Nations.

The existence of the Moroccan illegal breach therefore undermines the very concept and rationale of the buffer strip and represents a persistent violation of Military Agreement No. 1 and the spirit of the peace plan. As we have warned on previous occasions, the Moroccan illegal breach remains a hotbed of constant tension and may trigger war at any time. We therefore urge you and the Security Council to assume your respective responsibilities to close this illegal and provocative breach, which is jeopardizing not only the situation in the buffer strip but also the very basis that sustains the ceasefire and related military agreements that have been agreed by both parties and endorsed by the Security Council.

The recent popular protests in Guerguerat were the practical embodiment of the widespread dissatisfaction and resentment felt by the Sahrawi people at the failure of the United Nations and MINURSO to take any action in the face of Morocco’s unlawful actions in occupied Western Sahara. Morocco’s desperate attempts to

involve foreign entities, to open so-called “consulates” and hold sporting events in the occupied territories of Western Sahara are just a few recent cases in point. These provocative and hostile actions constitute a violation of international law and a serious breach of the international legal status of Western Sahara as a Non-Self-Governing Territory, under the responsibility of the United Nations. However, despite the illegality of these actions and their possible dire consequences on the fragile United Nations peace process, the United Nations has unfortunately chosen to look the other way.

The Frente POLISARIO and the Sahrawi people can never accept that Morocco persists in its annexationist actions, aimed at forcibly entrenching its illegal occupation and imposing a fait accompli in the occupied territories of Western Sahara while the United Nations remains silent and looks the other way. Morocco is playing with fire and it would be making a serious mistake if it persisted in testing the patience of the Sahrawi people, who are now more determined than ever to defend, with all legitimate means, their sacrosanct rights and legitimate national aspirations for freedom and independence.

Brahim Ghali
Secretary-General of the Frente POLISARIO
