

**Letter of Frente POLISARIO Representative at the United Nations  
and Coordinator with MINURSO to the Secretary-General of the United Nations**

**H.E. Mr António Guterres  
Secretary-General of the United Nations  
United Nations, New York**

New York, 19 November 2023

Your Excellency,

Upon instructions from my Authorities, I would like to bring to your attention and that of the Security Council the most recent aerial attack carried out by the forces of the occupying state of Morocco against Sahrawi civilians.

On 17 November 2023, the forces of the occupying state of Morocco, using unmanned aerial vehicles, launched aerial strikes on a group of Sahrawi civilians in Zagula in the Liberated Sahrawi Territories causing three civilians to sustain injuries of varying severity who were evacuated the Sahrawi Authorities for treatment. Two civilian vehicles were also hit in the attack. Today, members of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) visited the site of the attack.

The Frente POLISARIO strongly condemns this new criminal attack on Sahrawi civilians, which constitutes a clear instance of the systematic State terrorism carried out by the occupying state of Morocco as part of its genocidal war against the Sahrawi people, which has intensified following the Moroccan violation and torpedoing of the 1991 ceasefire on 13 November 2020.

Since day one of its illegal military occupation of Western Sahara in late 1975, the occupying state of Morocco has used the most dreadful methods of mass murder, burying people alive and throwing them off helicopters in addition to its documented bombing of civilians with internationally banned weapons including napalm and white phosphorus munitions.

The Moroccan occupying authorities have also been engaged in a large-scale scorched-earth policy, which involves destruction of houses and livelihoods belonging to Sahrawis, the destruction of their properties, and the killing of their livestock with the declared objective of uprooting them from their homes and lands and settling more Moroccan settlers in the Territory as part of colonial settlement plans.

In the letter (S/2023/794) addressed to you on 16 October 2023 by Mr Brahim Ghali, President of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) and Secretary-General of the Frente POLISARIO, which was circulated as a document of the Security Council, the Frente POLISARIO once again warned that the Moroccan occupying forces continued to use all types of weapons, including unmanned aerial vehicles, to callously kill, not only dozens of Sahrawi civilians, but also civilians from neighbouring countries in transit through the Liberated Sahrawi Territories.

As he did in his reports concerning the situation in Western Sahara since 2021, in his latest report (S/2023/729) dated 3 October 2023, the Secretary-General listed several aerial strikes carried out by the forces of the occupying state of Morocco against Sahrawi civilians and others from neighbouring countries. The latest Moroccan aerial strike in Zagula is therefore part of a repeated pattern of criminal actions carried out by the occupying state of Morocco and designed to target, terrorise, and deliberately kill Sahrawi civilians.

The Frente POLISARIO emphasises once again that the deliberate targeting of civilians and civilian objects constitutes a war crime in line with the Statute of the International Criminal Court and is a violation of the rules of international humanitarian law applicable in international armed conflicts. The United Nations should hold the occupying state of Morocco accountable for its continued war crimes in Western Sahara and its illegal use of sophisticated lethal weapons against Sahrawi civilians and others.

As we have underscored on several occasions, the occupying state of Morocco would not have dared to persist in its criminal practices and continue to violate international law and international humanitarian law in Occupied Western Sahara, had it not been for the silence and inaction by the United Nations and the international community at large.

Once again, we urgently call upon you, Mr Secretary-General, to operationalise the legal and moral responsibility of the United Nations towards the Sahrawi people especially Sahrawi civilians in Occupied Western Sahara. This entails establishing an independent and permanent UN mechanism for the protection and regular reporting on the human rights situation in the Territory where the UN Mission, MINURSO, continues to operate without any human rights monitoring capacity.

In concluding, as we have warned time and again, the persistence by the occupying state of Morocco in its war of aggression as well as its heinous crimes and blatant human rights violations against Sahrawi civilians, without being held accountable or punished for that, seriously undermines the prospects of the already stalled UN peace process, and fuels tensions that could further threaten peace and security in the entire region.

I would be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

**Dr Sidi M. Omar**  
**Ambassador**  
**Representative of the Frente POLISARIO at the United Nations**  
**Coordinator with MINURSO**