



Statement

Before the UN Security Council's debate on Western Sahara:

The Moroccan occupying power carries out further illegal acts of blockade, violence and harassment of Saharawi human rights defenders

The Moroccan occupying power has recently committed a series of grave human rights violations that affects the fundamental rights of the Saharawi civilians in the occupied territories of Western Sahara, a territory considered occupied awaiting decolonisation where international humanitarian law applies and should be respected. The major violations can be summarised as follows:

1 Al-Aaiun / occupied Western Sahara

Enforced allegiance:

On 30 September 2020, the Moroccan occupying power cut the monthly income of the Saharawi human rights defender **Sukaina Hamdi Nafaa** (known as Sukaina Yaya). Sukaina, was employed by the Moroccan occupier since 1988 among a group of Saharawis who were at that time forced to leave Western Sahara to Morocco.

This retaliatory action came as an immediate reaction to Sukaina's participation in the founding congress of the Collective of Saharawi Human Rights Defenders (CODESA) that was held on 25th September 2020, where she was elected as member of the administrative committee of the organisation. This action taken by the Moroccan occupying power comes as an attempt to enforce her allegiance in violation of article 45 of the Hague regulation that prohibits such acts.

Siege and threats of arrest against a group of Saharawi human rights defenders:

The Moroccan occupying power have launched a campaign of systematic repression against a group of Saharawi human rights defenders in response to their participation in the founding congress of "the Saharawi organisation against the Moroccan occupation" on 20 September 2020 in the occupied city of Al-Aaiun in Western Sahara.

In this regards, the Collective of Saharawi Human rights defenders – CODESA has documented:

- the siege and monitoring of houses that belong to the Saharawi human rights defenders who belong to the newly founded organization, and the deprivation of their freedom of movement: **Aminattu Ali Haidar**, **El-Ghalia Abdullah Djimi**, **Amina Hamdi Aimar Abbaali**, **Zaynaha Abdulhadi**, **Sidi Mohammad Daddach**, and **Aziza Beiza**.
- The Saharawi human rights defenders **Lahsan Mohammad Mbarek Daleel**, **Ahmad Mohammad Lameen Nasiri**, **Maalouma Abdullah Beih** and **Ruqayya Nouddine Saleh Hawassi**, were prevented from visiting the house of the Saharawi Human Rights Defender **Amina Hamdi Aimar Abbaali**.





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- the physical attack against the Saharawi HRD **Amina Hamdi Aimar Abbaali**, accompanied by verbal insult. This occurred during operations to prevent her from visiting the house of her colleague **El-Ghalia Abdullah Djimi**.
- The House of the Saharawi HRD **Ali Salem Mohamad Salem Tamek**, was under continuous monitoring and put under siege by the Moroccan occupying forces during the founding congress of CODESA on 25th September 2020, and during the second meeting of the executive office on 28th September 2020.
- The house of the Saharawi political prisoner **Mohamad Hasanna Bouryal**, where Gdeim Izik coordination was seeking to gather in solidarity with Saharawi political prisoners who are also under siege and constant monitoring by the Moroccan occupying forces.
- A group of Saharawi bloggers and journalists, members of the Saharawi media group "Equipe Media" were stopped by the Moroccan occupying forces for hours at a check point before entering Al-Aaiun. The Saharawi journalists **Ahmad Ettanji** and **Saeed Bachir Amaidane** were among the group.

2 Boujdour / occupied Western Sahara

On 2nd October 2020, the Saharawi Human Rights Defender **Hasanna Duihi** was denied access to the city of Al-Aaiun (where his wife and children are living) while he was trying to leave Boujdour city.

3 Samara / occupied Western Sahara

On 1st October 2020, a group of Saharawi civilians were prevented from visiting the Saharawi Human Rights defender **Sukaina Jeddahlu**. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Ay0LPwSp7Y>

4 The City of Glaimim

On 25th September 2020, a group of unemployed Saharawis were suppressed and mistreated in public in reaction to their peaceful protest. As a consequence, the young unemployed Saharawi **Fatima Aswab** suffered from a fracture on her left leg, while numerous wounds of varying severity were reported concerning a group of unemployed Saharawis including **Um Lfadla Boulglayea**, **Salka Sayddah Abdullah**, **Lahsan Sidi Shmad Mohamed Kmach**, **Jamal Hasan Brahim Aharouch**, **Khadija Ahmad Mohamed Lameen Bousoufa**, **Jamal Bachir Ali Mouloud Essari**.





5 Moroccan prisons

The Saharawi political prisoners who are illegally imprisoned in Moroccan prisons are suffering severe, dangerous and inhuman conditions due the following:

1. Inaction of the Red Cross – the ICRC as an international mechanism under International Humanitarian Law has not visited Western Sahara nor questioned the Moroccan occupying power about the situation of the Saharawi political prisoners since 2001.
2. Unfair trials held according to the Moroccan law which is not applicable to the occupied Western Sahara, and the long prison sentences that the Saharawi political prisoners serve in Moroccan jails outside Western Sahara are in violation of articles 64, 66 and 67 of the 4th Geneva convention and the principles of international law.
3. The Moroccan occupying power continues to mistreat the Saharawi political prisoners, and subject them to punitive and discriminating policies.
4. The spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in the overcrowded Moroccan prisons with a lack of sufficient and adequate protective measures.

Based on the above, the CODESA has taken note of the following:

- The Saharawi political prisoners **Bachi Al-Aabd Khadda**, **Mohamad Lameen Haddi** and **Abdullah Ahmad Sidi Ali Abhah** who are imprisoned in the local prison of Tiffelt (North of the Moroccan capital Rabat), are denied their very basic rights granted by the international humanitarian law and the fourth Geneva Convention. In addition, they are not allowed to receive the packages sent to them nor are they able to use the prison phones to communicate with their families.
- The Saharawi political prisoners **Mohamad Hasanna Bouryal** and **Khatri Faraji Dadda** who are placed in an overcrowded cell in the local prison of Ait-Melloul in Morocco, are also prevented from using the prison phone to communicate with their families.

All these grave violations of human rights occur against the backdrop of a defamation campaign led by Moroccan media and political parties against Saharawi activists, in response to the founding of “the Saharawi organisation against the Moroccan occupation”. These violations are a continuation of previous similar campaigns where the Moroccan media played a major role, e.g the media campaign upon the first public visit to the Saharawi refugee camps in Algeria by a group of Saharawi Human Rights Defenders, in September 2009. The Moroccan king stated then in a public speech on 6th November 2009 that “there is no middle ground, whether to be Moroccan or to be a traitor” referring to the Saharawi civilians who defends the Saharawi people’s right to self-determination and the independence of Western Sahara.

On that basis, the executive office of the Collective of Saharawi Human Rights Defenders – CODESA :





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- Lauds all its members for taking responsibility and for their serious will to struggle, as reflected during the founding congress of CODESA. In the meantime, salutes all groups and individuals who have shown solidarity and support to the organisation.
- Strongly condemns the illegal measures taken against its member [Sukaina Hamdi Nafaa with a view](#) to attempting to force her into allegiance with the Moroccan occupying power, including through income losses.
- Condemns the distorting campaign carried out by the majority of the Moroccan media, part of the Moroccan civil society and Moroccan political parties against Sahrawi human rights defenders, with chauvinistic content to impose the values of hate and to legitimize the violence and extremism against the Saharawi people. The same campaigns are used to impose the provisions of Moroccan law with retaliatory goals against Sahrawi human rights defenders in occupied Western Sahara, where Moroccan law is not applicable according to international humanitarian law and the relevant articles listed in Section Three of the Fourth Geneva Convention.
- Affirms its unconditional solidarity with the “Sahrawi organisation against the Moroccan Occupation” and its right to assembly as one of the basic and inalienable freedoms.
- Condemns the punishment of Sahrawi political prisoners in solitary cells, by ill-treatment, medical negligence, and by preventing contacts with the outside world, and calls for the immediate transfer of all Sahrawi political and non-political prisoners to Western Sahara, as stipulated in Article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.
- Affirms its solidarity with the unemployed Sahrawis “The group of the Martyr Sikka” in the city of Glimim, who were subjected to aggressive repression for demanding their basic rights that are guaranteed under international humanitarian law, and for stressing the need to respect the sovereignty of the Sahrawi people over their natural resources.
- Urges the international community to assume its responsibility to protect Sahrawi civilians and human rights defenders, and to pressure the Moroccan occupying power to release all Sahrawi political prisoners and to reveal the fate of the disappeared Saharawis and Sahrawi prisoners of war.

Al-Aaiun / Occupied Western Sahara :4th October 2020

The Executive office of the Collective of Saharawi Human Rights Defenders

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