



HB 730/3p

CONFIDENTIEL

Genève, le 22 mars 2013

Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères  
et de la Coopération

**Destinataire principal : Cabinet/MD/SG/DG8/1.**

**Objet : Contribution du HCR au rapport du SG de l'ONU sur le Sahara.**

**Refer : Mon fax 700 du 25 février 2013.**

Comme suite à mon fax cité en référence, j'ai l'honneur de vous faire parvenir, ci-joint, le texte final de la contribution du HCR au rapport du SG de l'ONU au Conseil de Sécurité, sur le Sahara marocain, tel qu'amendé par le DPA, à New York.

Comme vous pouvez le constater, ce texte a été purgé de plusieurs points favorables au Maroc :

- le nombre des personnes ayant décidé de rester au Maroc, suite à leur participation au programme d'échange des visites familiales, dans le cadre des CBM.

- l'effort consenti par le Maroc pour prendre en charge un participant des camps de Tindouf aux visites familiales, victime d'un accident de circulation sur la route Laâyoune-Smara, en novembre dernier, suite à quoi il a décidé de rester définitivement au Maroc.

- le changement de "réfugiés des camps de Tindouf en Algérie", par "Camps des réfugiés du Sahara Occidental, près de Tindouf".

D'après notre source, le DPA aurait expliqué au HCR que ces amendements ont été introduits à la demande expresse de Ross et Wolfgang. Ces derniers auraient avancé les arguments suivants:

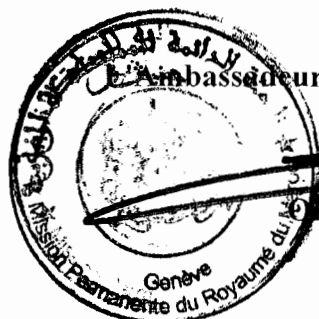
- la contribution du HCR est emprunte de sympathie pour le Maroc.

- la référence aux statistiques des personnes en provenance des camps, ayant choisi de rester définitivement au Maroc, est une première dans les rapports du SG de l'ONU.

- La présentation du nombre des personnes ayant décidé de rester au Maroc est de nature à politiser les CBM.

Notre source m'a confié que ces observations sont bizarrement identiques à celles, formulées, la semaine dernière, depuis Stockholm, par Khaddad, au Responsable des CBM au HCR. Ce qui confirme la duplicité de M. Ross.

Très haute considération



Ambassadeur, Représentant Permanent

Amr HILALE

11. From 2 to 6 July 2012 and 2 to 8 February 2013, UNHCR organized two seminars in the Azores and Faro, Portugal, respectively on the role of women in the Sahrawi culture and the concept of the tent (al-khaima) in the Sahrawi culture respectively. The seminars were each attended by 33 and 33 participants respectively, from the Territory and from the refugee camps near Tindouf in Algeria.

12. Following engagement with the parties, UNHCR chaired two meetings to review the CBM programme in 2012 in Geneva. Participants included representatives of the two parties, Morocco and Frente POLISARIO and the two neighbouring states, Algeria and Mauritania. The participants reaffirmed the importance of the CBM programme and the need to find ways and means to maximize the links between families who have been divided for 37 years because of the conflict. The parties expressed their commitment to cooperate fully with UNHCR in implementing confidence-building activities in accordance with its mandate and principles and to preserve the humanitarian character of the CBM programme. They also made a commitment to ensuring UNHCR's full and unhindered access to the refugee camps near Tindouf and to beneficiaries in the Territory. The parties and the two neighbouring states acknowledged the positive outcome of the cultural seminars and agreed that another cultural seminar should be held in Portugal, in agreement with its Government. At the September meeting, the participants agreed that UNHCR would conduct an evaluation of the entire range of CBMs including family visits, communications, seminars and others. UNHCR will field a mission for this purpose during the second quarter of 2013. The next meeting with the parties and the neighbouring states is proposed for the first week of July in Geneva. Add reference to the PESG activities in this regard.

13. With regard to the programme of family visits, the twice-monthly exchange visits remain the most appreciated way of keeping families connected. To increase the number of persons benefiting from the programme and as agreed at the January 2012 review meeting, UNHCR leased a larger airplane, which tripled the number of beneficiaries and increased the number of locations for the visits. MINURSO's contribution is mainly delivered by the Mission's UN police component, whose members accompany UNHCR colleagues who checks each visitor and each host family before the visits take place. UN police provide an impartial presence at the location of the visit during its duration. With this increase in operations, the Mission requires six additional UNPOLs, preferably female, the majority of beneficiaries are women and children, thus the need to have female UNPOLs to support the CBM programme.

14. In November 2012, one of the visitors from the camps to the territory was a victim of a traffic accident on the road leading from Laayoune to Smara. The severity of his case required an immediate hospitalization at Laayoune hospital. In coordination with UNHCR, the Moroccan authorities evacuated him from Laayoune hospital to

Marrakech where he received intensive care and subsequently recovered.

#### Recommendations:

15. With regard to the CBM programme, the exchange visits remain the most appreciated way of keeping families connected. The expansion of the family-visit programme to triple the number of beneficiaries was particularly welcome. To cope with the increased volume and activities, the Mission still requires six additional UNPOLs, preferably female, as indicated in my previous report, which I intend to deploy at the earliest. I also note the successful inter-Saharan cultural seminars, and the parties' commitment to continue constructive cooperation with UNHCR in the effort to alleviate the divisive effects of the conflict. In view of the vital importance of the programme for the beneficiaries and my efforts to find a political solution, I strongly urge the donor community to contribute generously to this programme. I would also like to thank Algeria and Mauritania for their support of the CBM humanitarian programme.

1. Since late 2012, a Saving Lives Together security enhancement initiative by MINURSO and UNDSS, funded by ECHO and AECID respectively through the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), has sought to foster a culture of security among the participating non-governmental organizations operating in the refugee camps near Tindouf through the implementation of a broad program that encompasses improved physical security, risk assessment and emergency response capacities. This will permit humanitarian organizations to better manage their own security in the midst of increased regional risks and thus ensure their continued ability to implement their programs on the ground.

## **F. Assistance and protection to Western Saharan refugees**

2. UNHCR enhanced its protection presence and monitoring in the Western Sahara refugee camps near Tindouf, through direct interaction with the refugees and their communities, constructing new field offices in all the camps to bring services closer to them. UNHCR, the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) continued to provide material assistance to refugees in the camps, working in close coordination with the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECID) and Development and several international and local non-governmental organizations. UNICEF also strengthened its operational capacity, adding two staff permanently deployed in Tindouf, allowing for closer monitoring, improved coordination with other UN entities and enhanced participation in joint assessments of HIV/AIDS, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and other programs.

3. During the reporting period, the main areas of support comprised protection, community services, education, water supply, sanitation and hygiene, health, food and nutrition, shelter, energy, transport and logistics. Pending registration, WFP continued to provide 90,000 general food rations and 35,000 supplementary general food rations to the most vulnerable refugees each month, while UNHCR added complementary food. The two agencies also conducted 455 general food basket distribution visits to different food distribution points in the camps each month.

4. UNHCR and WFP, through their implementing partner, the Algerian Red Crescent, conducted a supplementary feeding programme to moderately malnourished children less than 5 years of age, and to pregnant and lactating women in all camps, distributing two new food products, the introduction of which was preceded and accompanied by education campaigns to ensure their acceptance and effective use. UNHCR funded the training of 113 refugee health and nutritional personnel on nutritional programme management, monitoring, evaluation and better reporting.

5. UNHCR also provided support to the nursing school, conducting training courses for nurses and midwives and supplying products and teaching aids. 13 students graduated in 2012 bringing the total of graduates to 84 since 1992. UNICEF reinforced its Expanded Programme on Immunization, with the introduction of a new vaccine, including capacity-building for health personnel and midwives and cold chain maintenance.

6. UNHCR continued to provide support to a number of vocational centres for women, youth and persons with disabilities during the reporting period. UNHCR provided school supplies to schools in the camps, rehabilitated one school in Samara camp and trained teachers in curriculum development and pedagogy. Since 2008, 38 students have received UNHCR scholarships. UNICEF also provided school supplies for the education sector.

7. UNHCR expanded water systems through hydraulic and electrical connection to existing wells and constructed two additional boreholes, bringing the total number of boreholes in the camps to six. Solidaridad International, a Spanish non-governmental organization, installed water systems in all the camps with funding from the European Community Humanitarian Office and UNHCR.

8. Pursuant to the recommendation contained in my report of 5 April 2012 (S/2012/197, para. 63) requesting UNHCR to maintain its consideration of a refugee registration in the refugee camps, in line with its mandate and principles, UNHCR continued its dialogue with the host country (Algeria), as stipulated in the security council resolution (S/RES/2044 of 24 April 2012).

## **G. Confidence building measures**

9. With the cooperation of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO, UNHCR continued to implement the confidence-building measures (CBM) programme to facilitate contact and communication between Western Saharan refugees in the camps near Tindouf and their families in the Territory. MINURSO supported the programme by providing medical staff and police officers to facilitate preparations and serve as escorts. Family visits and cultural seminars remain the two fundamental components of the updated plan of action for the CBMs, as agreed with the parties in February 2013.

10. Between 2004 and the end of 2011, the total number of persons registered for the family visit programme in the camps near Tindouf and in the Territory was 48,252. Of this number, 16,889 persons (58% females and 42% males) have benefited from the family visit programme.