

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

AD HOC DELEGATION TO THE WESTERN SAHARA

**Report from the chairman of the ad hoc delegation to the Western Sahara,
Mrs Catherine Lalumière, Vice-President of the European Parliament**

Table of contents

1.	Introduction.....	3
2.	Evolution of the situation in the Western Sahara.....	3
2.1	Historical background.....	3
2.2	The role of the UN.....	4
3.	Visits	6
3.1	Algiers and Tindouf (28 October - 2 November 2001)	6
3.1.1	Political discussions with the members of the Algerian Government and the Chair and members of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Algerian Parliament.....	7
3.1.2	Political discussions with representatives of the Polisario Front and MINURSO in Tindouf	9
3.2	El-Aaiun and Rabat (11-15 February 2002)	11
3.2.1	Political discussions with the authorities and local government representatives in El-Aaiun and with NGOs	11
3.2.2	Political discussions in Rabat with the Prime Minister, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister of the Interior, the Minister for Human Rights, the President of the Chamber of Counsellors and members of the Chamber of Representatives	13
4.	The delegation's conclusions.....	14
4.1	Origins of the conflict.....	14
4.2	Possible solutions.....	15
4.3	What is to be done?.....	19

Annex 1: Programme - visit to Algiers and Tindouf: list of speakers and participants

Annex 2: Programme - visit to El-Aaiun and Rabat: list of participants

1. INTRODUCTION

The European Parliament has on various occasions expressed its concern at the situation in the Western Sahara region, and has adopted resolutions stating that peace, stability and the prospects for integration and economic development in the Maghreb depend to a large extent on a swift and fair solution being found to the Western Sahara conflict¹.

In its most recent resolution on the subject, the EP decided to send a delegation to the Western Sahara in order to 'assess developments in the situation on the ground'.

At its meeting of 25 March 2001 the Conference of Presidents authorised the sending of an ad hoc delegation consisting of twelve MEPs to Algeria, Morocco and the Western Sahara.

At the constituent meeting, held on 11 July 2001, Mrs Catherine Lalumière, Vice-President of Parliament, was elected chair of the ad hoc delegation, and it was decided that the delegation would visit Tindouf and El-Aaiun between 26 October and 2 November 2001.

2. EVOLUTION OF THE SITUATION IN THE WESTERN SAHARA

2.1. Historical background

After the Berlin Conference at which the African continent was divided up among the European powers, the Spanish established themselves on the Western Sahara coast, setting up a protectorate in 1884. In 1963, the Spanish Sahara was included in the list of non-self-governing territories drawn up under Chapter XI of the UN Charter. From 1962 on, Spain, as the administering power, forwarded statistical and technical information on the territory pursuant to Article 73(e) of the Charter.

From 1956 on, Morocco claimed sovereignty over the territory on the basis of historic rights. After being divided under colonial rule, Morocco wished to recreate a national entity under the banner of 'Greater Morocco', bringing together all the territories that had been under Moroccan rule in the past. It also wished to consolidate its position on the world phosphates market by gaining control over the Bou Craa mine that had been discovered in the Western Sahara.

From its side, Mauritania, invoking arguments based on geographical, ethnic and cultural continuity, began on independence to formulate claims to the territories occupied by Spain.

Algeria, which had no territorial claims to make, could not remain indifferent to the fate of the Sahara. Its position was to defend the principle of respect for the colonial frontiers and, above all, for its own Saharan frontiers with Morocco.

The Polisario Front was created in 1973 by Saharans who believed that a Saharan people exists and should be able to exercise its right to self-determination. On the basis of this national sentiment, the Front called for the independence of the Western Sahara and proclaimed a 'Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic' in February 1976. This republic was recognised by 72 countries, and was admitted to the OAU in 1982. (At present, 54 countries recognise the SADR;

¹ Resolutions of 16 March 1995 (OJ C 89, 10.4.1995, p. 159) and 13 July 1995 (OJ C 299, 25.9.1995, p. 159); Council recommendation of 10 March 1998 (OJ C 104, 6.4.1998, p. 29); resolutions of 14 January 1999 (OJ C 104, 14.4.1999, p. 112) and 16 March 2000 (OJ C 377, 29.12.2000, p. 354).

a number of countries have broken off diplomatic relations or frozen them pending the referendum)

On 14 November 1975, a declaration of principle on the Western Sahara (the Madrid agreement) was signed in Madrid by Spain, Morocco and Mauritania. Under this declaration, the powers and responsibilities previously exercised by Spain as the territory's administrative power were transferred to a temporary tripartite administration. The evacuation of the Sahara by the Spanish left the field free for the Moroccans, who, following the 'marcha verde' ('green march'), occupied the territory.

On 26 February 1976, Spain informed the Secretary-General of its decision, as of that day, to put an end to its presence in the Western Sahara and its responsibilities for the territory. This gave Morocco and Mauritania the cue to take over the de facto administration of the territory in the respective zones placed under the control of each. Mauritania withdrew from the territory in 1979, following the conclusion of an agreement with the Saharans on 19 August 1979. Since that date, the Western Sahara has been administered by Morocco alone.

2.2. The role of the UN

The first resolutions of the UN General Assembly on the subject dating back to 1965 and 1966 called for the decolonisation of the territory and for self-determination for its inhabitants by means of a referendum.

In an opinion of 16 October 1975, the International Court of Justice ruled on the nature of the legal ties linking the Western Sahara to the Kingdom of Morocco and Mauritania previously to the Spanish colonisation, and laid down the principle of self-determination.

In 1981, King Hassan II announced his acceptance of a referendum in the Western Sahara. After three years of talks, Morocco and the Polisario Front accepted the proposals of the UN Secretary-General, submitted in 1990 with the aim of obtaining a peaceful settlement. This settlement would bring about a ceasefire and, subsequently, the organisation of a referendum in which the peoples of the Western Sahara would be asked to choose between integration into Morocco and independence.

The UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), set up by Security Council Resolution 690 of 27 June 1990, was mandated to monitor the preparations for and conduct of the referendum for the self-determination of the people of the Western Sahara.

The UN's initial voter identification effort was completed in December 1995. However, in 1996 the Security Council officially suspended the identification procedure on the grounds that the two sides were refusing to cooperate. The matter was, it is true, of major importance to both parties, and each was tempted to register those who appeared to be certain voters for their own position. Problems also arose in determining who among the Saharans was entitled to take part in the referendum, in view of the characteristics of the Saharan population, notably its nomadic and its tribal social structure.

In March 1997, Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General, appointed the former US Secretary of State James Baker as special envoy, with the brief of examining the possible approaches with a view to a peaceful settlement. In September of that year negotiations resumed, and the representatives of the two sides met in the US, where they signed the Houston agreements. In

August 1998, MINURSO completed the process of voter identification for all the 'non-contested' tribal groups. However, unresolved divergences remained as regards identification in the case of three 'contested' tribal groups.

The framework agreement

On 8 May 2001, Mr Baker proposed a draft framework agreement on the status of the Western Sahara', setting up a regime based on local autonomy. The people of the Western Sahara would, through its executive, legislative and judiciary, have full powers in the following fields: local government administration, the budget and local taxes, law and order, internal security, social welfare, culture, education, trade, transport, agriculture, mines, fisheries and industry, environmental policy, housing and urban development, water and electricity, and roads and other basic infrastructures.

Executive powers in the Western Sahara would be held by an executive elected for a four-year term by the persons identified as eligible to vote by the MINURSO identification commission.

Legislative powers would be invested in an assembly, whose members would be directly elected for a four-year term. Judicial powers would be in the hands of the courts, whose judges would have to have been born in the Western Sahara and would be chosen from among the members of the National Institute of Legal Studies.

The Kingdom of Morocco would have exclusive powers in the following fields: external relations, national security, defence, all matters related to the production, sale, ownership or use of weapons or explosives, and the preservation of territorial integrity against all attempts at secession, whether from inside or outside. The Western Sahara would use the Moroccan flag, currency, customs services and postal and telecommunications systems. Under this framework agreement, a referendum on the status of the Western Sahara would be held within five years of the first acts implementing the terms of the agreement.

Reactions

Morocco accepted this draft 'as a framework and basis for future negotiations'. The Polisario Front, however, stated its total opposition to a project which, it believed, would bury the self-determination referendum. Algeria criticised the project on the grounds that it 'validated the illegal occupation of the Saharan territory'.

The initiatives of 19 February 2002

In a report of 19 February 2002, the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, stressed the currently rather thin prospects for peace in the Western Sahara. He believed that the Security Council should examine four options, as follows:

- Option 1: the UN could make one further attempt to implement the settlement plan, but without requiring the assent of the two sides. The MINURSO identification commission would be given a larger staff and a larger operation would be carried out. On this scenario, however, the UN would encounter most of the problems and obstacles which it had come up against over the previous ten years, and might finally not be in a position to organise a free and fair referendum whose outcome would be accepted by both sides.

- Option 2: James Baker, the Secretary-General's personal envoy, could agree to revise the draft framework agreement, taking account of the two sides' concerns but without seeking to obtain their assent. The revised framework agreement would be submitted to the Security Council, which would then put it to the two sides on a non-negotiable basis. On this scenario, MINURSO's staff could be further reduced.

- Option 3: The Security Council could ask the special envoy to ask the two sides, for the last and final time, if they were willing to consider the possibility of partition. Should they be willing to, the special envoy would be asked to submit a proposal for partition to the two parties and to the Security Council, which would then put it to the two sides on a non-negotiable basis. On this scenario, MINURSO could either keep its existing staffing level or reduce it further.

- Option 4: The Security Council could decide to wind up MINURSO's activities, thus recognising that the UN will not be able to resolve the problem of the Western Sahara unless the two sides are willing to make concessions which they have, as things stand, ruled out.

Prospecting for mineral resources

In a letter of 13 November 2001, the President of the UN Security Council asked Mr Hans Corell, UN Legal Counsel, for his opinion on the legality in international law of the decisions of the Moroccan authorities concerning the tendering and signature of contracts for the prospection of mineral resources in the Western Sahara in partnership with foreign companies. In his reply of 29 January 2002, Mr Corell said that examination of the relevant provisions of international law suggested that the contracts concerned by the Security Council's request were in fact legal, as they related solely to prospection and evaluation activities concerning oil deposits off the shores of the Western Sahara; they would, however, be illegal if they referred to the exploitation or physical extraction of mineral resources.

3. VISITS

The delegation had originally intended to include both Tindouf and El-Aaiun in a single visit, but, in view of the Algerian authorities' refusal to authorise it to use the services offered by MINURSO (notably the flight across the border from Tindouf to El-Aaiun), it decided to divide the mission into two parts.

3.1. Algiers and Tindouf (28 October – 2 November 2001)

The first part of the mission took place between 28 October and 2 November. In view of the serious international situation and in order to obtain as complete a picture of the problem as possible, the delegation decided to organise meetings with members of the Algerian parliament and executive in Algiers. From there, it proceeded to Tindouf, where it met with members of the Polisario executive, civil society representatives, and representatives of European, Algerian and local NGOs.

3.1.1. Political discussions with the members of the Algerian Government and the Chair and members of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Algerian Parliament

The Algerian position on the Western Sahara:

All agreed that the present situation could not be tolerated for much longer. The conditions in the refugee camps, which have existed for 26 years, were deteriorating and despite repeated attempts by the UN special envoy, James Baker, to find a solution, the situation remained blocked. The delegation was informed that the letter addressed by President Bouteflika to Kofi Annan dated 22 May 2001 concerning the proposed Framework Agreement on the Western Sahara and the memorandum, which accompanied it, clearly explained the Algerian position

To summarise, this is that by its resolution 1084 of 27 November 1996 the Security Council reaffirmed the need for 'a free, fair and impartial referendum for the self determination for the people of the Western Sahara' in conformity with the settlement plan. Furthermore, in 1997 both parties declared their firm opposition to any alternative solution to the settlement plan and their firm attachment to its implementation. The Algerian memorandum underlined the fact that the proposed framework agreement moves substantially away from the approach that has so far been endorsed by the two parties and the international community. The proposal ignores the basic principles that have formed the foundation of actions in the field of decolonisation in general and in particular the right of the Saharan people to self-determination.

The delegation was informed that, while the problem of the Western Sahara primarily concerned the people of the Western Sahara and its representatives the Polisario and the Kingdom of Morocco, Algeria was also concerned by the conflict, for, putting aside the assistance it has afforded the Polisario for the past quarter of a century, the stability of Morocco was of prime importance to the stability of the whole region. It was clear to all that a solution that would cater for the needs of both parties still had to be found. This could not be found at the expense of the Saharan people, nor could it permit the destabilisation of Morocco. In the face of the inconsistencies of the proposed framework agreement and its rejection by the Polisario, the Algerian position remained tied to the implementation of the original peace plan and the holding of the promised referendum. However, the need to ensure that the Moroccan monarchy remained stable was now recognised by the Algerian authorities. The EP delegation welcomed this perceived opening in the Algerian approach, but was unable to obtain concrete proposals from the Algerian authorities as to how the present deadlock could be broken. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Abdelaziz Belkhadem, stressed the fact that it was not Algeria that was blocking the peace process. The blockage had been caused by the introduction of 120 000 appeals by Moroccan citizens. The MINURSO list of approximately 85 000 potential electors was clearly valid, but Morocco feared that if only these people were allowed to take part in the vote it would lose the referendum. The EP delegation reminded its Algerian counterparts that Parliament had adopted a number of resolutions which supported the peace plan, the right of self-determination, the referendum proposed for the Saharan people, and respect for UN resolutions and the rule of law. It also recalled that the UN mandate for MINURSO was due to expire on 30 November 2001. The Algerians expressed the opinion that if the UN did end the mandate the situation could become volatile and dangerous; however, they were also of the opinion that this would not happen.

All agreed that the continuation of this conflict had severely handicapped the development of the Arab Maghreb Union, which was of prime importance to regional development. The European Parliament delegation pointed out on a number of occasions that the opening-up of markets and the development of free trade between the countries of the Maghreb was a

sine qua non of the overall development plan. It was not and could not be sufficient to have bilateral agreements between individual countries and the EU. Furthermore it was pointed out that while the initial engine for the development of the European Union had been economics, the Union itself had been born out of a desire to create a mechanism to avoid conflict and ensure peace. The development of an integrated Arab Maghreb Union would have similar results should the political will exist. In reply, the Algerian interlocutors stressed the fact that, after a prolonged period of non-action, ministerial meetings had recently resumed. For the first time since 1992 the Consultative Bureau of the AMU had met, on 5-6 September 2001 in Morocco. The construction of the AMU was a strategic choice for Algeria, the delegation was informed.

The serious international situation - the events of 11 September 2001 and the international fight against terrorism

In response to questions posed by the EP delegation, the Algerian authorities underlined their commitment to the fight against terrorism. Algeria had suffered and was still suffering from terrorism. The delegation was reminded that Algeria had repeatedly called for international cooperation to combat terrorism. It was however important that Europe and the US used every possible occasion to underline the fact that terrorism effected all countries and that the present actions were not aimed specifically at Muslim countries. The Algerian authorities expressed the hope that international cooperation in the police and judicial fields would increase. The idea that terrorism was a legitimate form of opposition that had been defended in certain western circles was clearly seen to be wrong and unacceptable. It was unfortunate that the western countries had had to receive the shock of the World Trade Centre catastrophe to realise this. The effects of the events of 11 September on the world economy and consequently on the Algerian economy were already being felt.

Economic discussions with the members of the Algerian Government and the Chair and members of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Algerian Parliament

General economic situation

In discussions with the Algerian Minister of Finance, the delegation learnt that the Algerian economy was in a relatively good position. Inflation was down and the economic indicators were generally positive. However, on the downside, housing and water needs had been sorely neglected for years and unemployment remained high. There was social pressure to solve these problems. The government had therefore drawn up a three-year plan to complement the annual budget of US\$ 7 bn. It was hoped that by the end of the year there would be noticeable results. To deal with the social problems that plague Algeria, it was necessary to ensure better financial management, transparency, and fair competition. These ambitions were based on real programmes, which were receiving EU assistance and cooperation. The implementation of MEDA 1 projects had encountered difficulties; however, it was hoped that the EUR 250 m available would now be utilised. The Finance Minister informed the delegation that the second part of the restructuring assistance offered by the EU could be paid now that the liberalisation of external trade had been accomplished. This amounted to a total of EUR 65 m. The delegation was informed that, while Algeria welcomed the progress that was being made in the negotiations on the EU-Algeria Association agreement, Algerian industry feared European competition; 65% of enterprises had now been privatised.

Revitalisation of the Arab Maghreb Union

On several occasions the EP delegation underlined the importance of taking concrete measures to build the Arab Maghreb Union. It pointed out that in the global economy nationalism and independence had to be replaced by interdependence. The example of the European Union - its success in avoiding conflict, building prosperity and recognising and promoting cultural differences within the Union - was often invoked. The Algerian minister responsible for economic reform stressed the interest his country had in building the AMU. The situation in the Maghreb was somewhat different from that in Europe, but there was a clear need to build a union which would provide a much stronger partner for the EU. The minister pointed out that President Bouteflika has promised to put forward constitutional reforms which would permit recognition of national and cultural differences. Crossborder investment was now possible, and the economic reforms were beginning to have an effect; consequently, the private sector could play a significant part in the construction of the AMU. Despite the recent reawakening of the AMU, there remained substantial differences with Morocco. Algerian citizens still required visas to travel to Morocco, and the frontiers remained effectively closed. These circumstances had serious effects on the Moroccan economy, for in the past 3 m Algerians had visited Morocco each year, and the Moroccan government wanted to ease the situation. Consequently ministerial meetings aimed at addressing these problems were taking place, and the Western Sahara question was not to be allowed to hinder progress.

3.1.2. Political discussions with representatives of the Polisario Front and MINURSO in Tindouf

On arrival in Tindouf, the delegation met with the permanent representative of the UN mission (MINURSO), who explained the situation as it was at ground level. It was clear, he pointed out, that the MINURSO had successfully and accurately completed its task in identifying the persons eligible to vote in the proposed referendum. The list included the names of around 85 000 electors. However, the introduction of 120 000 appeals presented by Moroccan citizens was obviously a blocking mechanism to delay the holding of the referendum indefinitely. The fact that King Mohamed VI was visiting El-Aaiun that same week, and the circumstance that the Moroccan administration had signed agreements with French and US oil companies to prospect in the region despite having no mandate or authority to do so, were clear indications of the de facto sovereignty that Morocco was exercising in the Western Sahara with flagrant disregard for international law. The representative expressed the opinion that MINURSO's mandate would be extended beyond the 30 November 2001 deadline, as to do otherwise would exacerbate an already volatile situation. However, staff levels, which had already been reduced, would not be increased.

The clear rejection of the framework agreement proposed by Mr Baker was expressed by every political speaker, as well as by every inhabitant of the refugee camps encountered. The Saharans uniformly backed the hardline position of their political leaders. There would be no acceptance of the framework agreement. It was necessary to hold the promised referendum without further unjustified delay. In their discussions with the political leaders of the Saharan people, the EP delegation attempted to provoke discussion on possible solutions that would allow the situation to thaw. All agreed that if a solution was to be found it would have to be acceptable to both parties. In particular it would be necessary to ensure that the Moroccan monarchy was not destabilised and was not humiliated should the referendum result in a call for full independence. The Saharan political leaders underlined the fact that they understood this problem, and pointed out that even if they obtained independence good relations with Morocco would be a necessary

condition of economic and political development of any Saharan state. Along these lines and in the hope of supplying the Saharan leaders food for thought, the EP delegation fielded a number of ideas, ranging from support for a modified version of the proposed framework agreement that would allow real autonomy for the Western Sahara to the idea of a constitutional monarchical regime under the Moroccan crown, along the lines of the British monarchy which, while encompassing Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and other states, allowed those countries to be fully independent.

All agreed that continuation of the status quo was unacceptable, and the Chair of the EP delegation underlined on many occasions the need to ensure a future for Saharan youth. A whole generation, the Europeans pointed out, had been sacrificed over the last 26 years. The idea that sacrifice was better than capitulation was shared by all members of Saharan society and nurtured by the political leadership. In discussions with the highest members of the executive, both the US and France were strongly criticised for permitting state or private oil companies to sign contracts with the Moroccan authorities, in flagrant breach of international law.

Discussions on economic and social matters with the Saharan leaders and people

During its stay in the refugee camps, the EP delegation had the opportunity to see how, despite a total lack of resources, the Saharan people had organised themselves. The main responsibility for the management of the camps, the distribution of food, the setting up of schools and hospitals and the running of committees and associations was assumed by Saharan women, who played an important organisational role in Saharan society. Despite the lack of even the most basic necessities, the enthusiasm and energy that unpaid Saharan teachers, doctors and nurses put into their work impressed the EP delegation. The educational results obtained, at secondary and university level, were equally impressive.

In view of the situation in the camps and the lack of fresh water, the Saharan economy is to all intents and purposes non-existent. Attempts have been made to develop smallholdings to produce tomatoes or other vegetables, but with varying degrees of success. Such production is far from meeting needs. The refugee camps therefore survive on humanitarian aid. Discussion with the European and Algerian NGOs working in the camps underlined the fact that food aid from the World Food Programme has been progressively reduced. This is because donor countries consider that the refugee situation in the Western Sahara has been going on for too long. The attention of the delegation was also drawn to the fact that Morocco sits on the management board of the World Food Programme and thus may well influence decisions concerning aid given to the Saharan people. Many of the speakers representing the NGOs shared the fear expressed by the Saharan political representatives, that the reduction in aid was a form of political pressure on the Saharan people to accept the compromise framework agreement. They pointed out, however, that this was unlikely to achieve the desired result. As a result of the reduction in assistance granted by the World Food Programme, the European Commission's ECHO programme has had to increase its aid. Indeed, the delegation noted that without ECHO assistance the situation in the refugee camps would be untenable.

As mentioned above, women play an important part in organising Saharan society. Furthermore, no difference is made between girls and boys insofar as access to education is concerned. More than 65% of the population are educated to at least secondary school level. However, the delegation was unable to meet with any women occupying significant political positions in the Saharan government or the Polisario.

3.2. El-Aaiun and Rabat (11-15 February 2002)

3.2.1. Political discussions with the authorities and local government representatives in El-Aaiun and with NGOs

The Moroccan position on the Western Sahara

Sovereignty, law and custom

Mr Hamid Chabar, the Governor responsible for coordination with MINURSO, reminded the members of the delegation of the historical background: in the past, the Western Sahara, birthplace of the Alawi dynasty, had belonged to and held allegiance to Morocco. According to the Moroccan representatives, the principles of international law had been disregarded and manipulated following decolonisation. At the time, the UN had recognised Morocco's sovereignty.

At ground level

The MINURSO representatives insisted on the notion of an 'open' future for the territory. On the two sides of the 'berm', a kind of 'great wall of China' in the middle of the desert between Morocco and Algeria, the two armies were staring at each other like china dogs: a large-scale military operation seemed unimaginable. The rules on overflying the territory were clearly defined under the recent military agreements.

Registration and identification

The present deadlock was primarily the result of the problems experienced in identifying the electorate prior to the planned referendum. Le Morocco said that it did not wish to block the identification process, and, sharply criticising the pressure exerted on individuals by the Polisario, deplored the numerous abuses which had occurred in the context of the 'concordant witness' procedure. It was felt that the 1974 census, which had been used as the starting-point, was highly misleading, as it had been limited to the urban areas and to certain population categories. Apart from the approximate nature of the statistical methods used, the census had been undertaken following a period of drought which had impelled many Saharans to migrate north.

According to the official registration figures produced by MINURSO, 243 625 potential voters had been identified (in the Western Sahara, in Morocco, in Algeria and in Mauritania), on the basis of five criteria. 198 469 of these had been formally identified, and 86 383 had been declared eligible to stand for election. 130 000 people (90% of them from Morocco) had appealed. MINURSO's role was not a purely documentary one; its mission also had a civic aspect, insofar as it was responsible for aiding and protecting the offices of the identification commission, in order to ensure the safety and confidentiality of the people who addressed themselves to it. MINURSO's mandate did not, however, extend to the protection of human rights.

The action of the Moroccan authorities in the Western Sahara

Housing and infrastructure

The members of the delegation referred to the contrast between the old and overcrowded buildings in the city centre and the new but empty housing blocks on the edge of town. The local representatives explained that the latter had been built in anticipation of the return of the Saharans now in exile in the camps in Tindouf (Algeria). Stress was also laid on Morocco's considerable investment in the region in the fields of infrastructure and housing. The Wali said that the Sahara had a higher level of water and electricity connections than the national average. A full-scale programme of social and economic development had been embarked on.

Certain NGOs heard by the delegation claimed that Morocco was unacceptably slow in developing the region in the interests of its Saharan inhabitants. Saharan workers were being systematically excluded from wealth-producing industries and activities such as the fisheries and phosphate sectors.

Prisons

The Moroccan authorities admitted that there was a problem of prison overcrowding at El-Aaiun, but stressed that this only affected common criminals.

Human rights

The delegation met with a number of 'non-authorised' Saharan NGOs: the Forum for Truth and Justice, the Coordination Committee against Arbitrary Arrest and Forced Disappearance; the Committee of Relatives of the Disappeared; and the Fos-Bucraa Former Employees' Movement. These NGOs stated that human rights violations by the local authorities are frequent and recurrent. Their representatives deplored the persecution of people for their opinions, the complete absence of freedom of expression, and abusive and violence treatment of individuals by the police (offering photographs and cassettes as evidence). They said that the situation in the Sahara was similar to what had existed in the past South America or South Africa. Before the arrival of the EP delegation, the police patrols which were normally in evidence had been moved off the streets of El-Aaiun. The Moroccan authorities were accused of having deprived a number of Saharans of their passports with no justification. The NGO members were unable to conceal their considerable anxiety as to the possible consequences of their meeting with the MEPs. They also accused MINURSO of doing nothing for human rights beyond simply enforcing the ceasefire.

The local government representatives and the Wali (prefect) insisted that security prevailed in El-Aaiun, while individual freedom was respected. They claimed that the numerous TV dishes were proof of this.

Plans for the Western Sahara

Internal autonomy: a 'third way'?

The Baker plan elicited diverse reactions. The OAU ambassador to MINURSO, calling for a peaceful settlement of the conflict, said that a majority of the members of his organisation were against the Baker plan, since it failed to respect the principle, dear to the hearts of Africans, of the self-determination of peoples. The OAU believed it should remain impartial; it was convinced that a European contribution to the resolution of the conflict would be beneficial.

The Saharan NGOs believed that the territory belonged to the Saharan people by right and that the solution was self-determination by means of a referendum under UN auspices. The representatives present said that Saharan society was a society distinct from those of Algeria, Morocco or Mauritania, but present circumstances did not allow it to exist in freedom. They did not believe Morocco could offer adequate guarantees in the case of a 'third-way' solution based on internal autonomy.

The Moroccan character of the Sahara

Other NGOs (the Association of Victims and Prisoners of the Polisario and their Relatives; the Association for the Reuniting of Saharan Families; the Association for Women's Renewal; the New Consciousness and Development Organisation) strongly defended a Moroccan presence in the Western Sahara. Several former victims of the Polisario denounced the pressures and abuses practised in the Polisario camps, speaking of torture, murder and lack of individual freedom (they produced photographs in support of their claims). The representatives of these NGOs, while recognising that human rights abuses occur in Morocco, stressed the political and social progress now characterising that country. They believed that too many families had been divided for too long. They claimed that the majority of Saharans had in the past lived in Morocco with no desire to leave, and that the Saharans' interests lay with Morocco. The speakers rejected the idea of a referendum, and called for the conflict to be resolved 'with the head and not with the heart'. They advocated a 'third-way' solution, within the Moroccan state and taking account of the particular cultural features of the Sahara.

3.2.2. Political discussions in Rabat with the Prime Minister, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister of the Interior, the Minister for Human Rights, the President of the Chamber of Counsellors and members of the Chamber of Representatives

Democratic progress in Morocco

The partners met by the delegation in Rabat all insisted on Morocco's commitment to transparency and democracy. The Moroccan authorities said that they wished to share and apply democratic values and to respect human rights, despite certain periods of disturbance and unfortunate errors. Political prisoners had been released, and the principle of political alternation had been put into practice. Compensation had been paid to victims.

The Western Sahara was not somewhere where exceptional circumstances ruled. The political climate there was the same as in Rabat. The ministers argued that the humanitarian crisis had its origins in a problem between Morocco and Algeria. Algeria's position was highly ambiguous; the Moroccan parliamentarians urged their European counterparts to ensure that Algeria respects

the international conventions and releases its Moroccan prisoners immediately. Morocco wanted to see a rapid agreement, as the Sahara problem was a significant handicap at international level. EU mediation could be beneficial, and Morocco was open to the idea of dialogue with Algeria.

Morocco continues to insist on the Sahara's Moroccan identity

A genuine real institutional revolution was under way: the kingdom was in process of being regionalised, with the transfer of numerous central government powers to the sixteen regions. Further decentralisation measures would follow. The walis had 45 days to set up the new regional structures.

All the speakers reaffirmed the position that the Sahara is historically part of Morocco. It was a question of national cohesion; the matter was sacrosanct, in the context of a properly understood notion of national consensus at political level. Morocco would not budge on this subject. All accepted the principle of a political solution in the framework of the UN, and believed that the peoples of the various regions should run their own internal affairs and that regionalisation was therefore necessary.

4. THE DELEGATION'S CONCLUSIONS¹

The Saharan problem has existed without resolution for almost 27 years now. It cannot be understood or resolved unless it is situated in time and the long-term nature of the conflict is taken into account.

It was in 1975 that the agreement between Spain, Morocco and Mauritania put an end to the Spanish presence and divided the territory between Morocco and Mauritania. In October 1975, the court in the Hague ruled that the principle of self-determination must be applied in the Sahara. Accordingly, in February 1976 the Polisario Front, supported by Algeria, rejected that agreement and proclaimed the 'Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic'.

4.1. Origins of the conflict

This conflict is an independence struggle of the type which characterised the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. These struggles were considered means of achieving liberation from colonial and/or dictatorial structures. Africa provides numerous examples, as do other continents.

The situation of the Western Sahara has evolved in a 'classical' fashion, which can be outlined as follows:

- Foreign domination (the Spanish colonial presence in Rio de Oro);
- Saharans, especially students influenced by ideas of independence, create the Polisario Front to combat Spanish occupation;
- Spain withdraws;
- Morocco takes over on the grounds of its historic links with the Western Sahara, and as a result of the Green March, occupies the territory of the Western Sahara;
- Morocco, whose regime at the time can scarcely be called democratic, refuses all negotiation with the Saharans, and applies methods of pressure and repression;

¹ The Delegation's Conclusions were adopted with two abstentions and one vote against. Mrs Eriksson (GUE/NGL) could not support the Conclusions and has drawn up her own report.

- After an armed confrontation lasting more than 10 years, which has now given way to a ceasefire, the Polisario Front and an estimated 170 000 Saharans decide to cross the border and occupy the refugee camps in Tindouf (Algeria), with Algeria's support;
- Since 1965, the UN has made interventions aimed at securing a political solution. Its first resolutions, dating from 1965 and 1966, called for decolonisation and for a referendum. In 1981 Morocco accepted the idea of a referendum. A settlement proposal submitted in 1990 by the UN Secretary-General was followed by the decision to the dispatch MINURSO. However, the years passed and the obstacles standing in the way of holding a referendum piled up. It now seemed (see below) that the new Secretary-General and his special envoy James Baker had despaired of any possibility of a referendum, and were seeking to adopt a new course of action involving the establishment of autonomy for the Sahara under Moroccan sovereignty, an approach which is rejected by the Polisario Front and Algeria. As a consequence, the possibility has also been put forward recently of dividing Saharan territory between Morocco and the Polisario Front, an option which has been rejected by the Moroccan Government.

Since then, little has changed in the camps, and the conflict has stayed in a state of stagnation. The international political developments which have occurred in the meantime (e.g. the fall of the Berlin wall, the collapse of the USSR and communism, the completion of decolonisation in Africa) and the internal changes in Algeria and Morocco seem to have had no effects on this continuing conflict, which now appears to be an anachronistic and unresolved relic of colonialism.

The conflict has been all but forgotten by the international community, which has sought to find a political solution through the UN, so far without success. The main concrete action in support of the Saharans is the humanitarian aid provided by the WFP, the ECHO programme and the NGOs active in this area. However, it is clear that the provision of this humanitarian aid is becoming more and more unreliable (the last few months saw delays in WFP food deliveries), and as a result the Saharans' living conditions risk becoming even more precarious.

The main victim of a long conflict which seems almost to have got bogged down in the sand is, obviously, the Saharan people.

4.2 Possible solutions

Solutions have been put forward on several occasions, but without success. To simplify the picture, one may refer to the most recent statement by the UN Secretary-General, dated 19 February 2002, following the report of his personal envoy James Baker, which summarises the various options which have been successively proposed.

It is not the job of this delegation to express a preference for one or the other solution, and there is no doubt that only the United Nations has the necessary legitimacy to put an end to such a long-lasting conflict by facilitating negotiation among the parties in the light of the principles of international law. What our delegation can do, however, is to study the possible options for negotiation, which may either refer to the solutions proposed by the United Nations, or envisage others.

These options are as follows:

4.2.1. The referendum

Option 1: a referendum would be held to allow the Saharans to choose their future. This option has the obvious merit of being in line with the basic principle of public international law, the right of peoples to choose their own destiny. It is supported by all those who have fought for the self-determination and independence of all the peoples of the world. The referendum option was officially accepted in the 1990 peace plan. The UN was asked to organise the referendum, but encountered insurmountable obstacles. The UN has been trying to draw up the electoral rolls for over ten years. Technically, it has done the work: in January 2000 it presented a provisional roll of 86 383 voters. But almost 133 000 appeals have been submitted, 90% of them from Morocco.

James Baker and Secretary-General Kofi Annan seem to have concluded that the referendum would be extremely difficult to hold in present conditions. This can only be a bitter disappointment for the Saharans and for all those who believe in the principle of self-determination.

Our delegation believes that the referendum must not be abandoned. In the circumstances, however, we fear that it cannot be organised in a void and on the simple alternative of 'independence or annexation', but only after the negotiation and acceptance of a political agreement by the leaders of all the parties. The voters must be asked for their verdict on the text of this prior political agreement, by accepting or rejecting it. The final result should then be submitted to a referendum among the population affected, on the basis of electoral rolls drawn up by MINURSO.

4.2.2. The draft framework agreement

Option 2: this was proposed by James Baker in his document of 20 June 2001, and was confirmed in the report of the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on 19 February 2002. The draft framework agreement would combine the recognition of Morocco's territorial integrity with a large measure of home rule for the Saharans.

The main points of this draft framework agreement are as follows:

- The Saharans would obtain autonomy in the areas of the budget, local taxation, internal security, culture, education, trade, transport, agriculture, mines, fisheries, etc;
- Morocco would be competent in the areas of foreign policy, defence, monetary policy, customs, etc;
- Executive power would reside in an executive council having a four-year term of office, whose members would be chosen by the persons included on the UN list of 30 December 1999;
- After five years a referendum would be held on the status of the Western Sahara, with voting open to those having had their habitual residence in the Western Sahara for at least a year before the date of the referendum.

This draft framework agreement has been welcomed by Morocco, but rejected by the Polisario Front and Algeria.

We believe that this draft framework agreement must be given due consideration, and that it may offer one basis for genuine negotiations between the parties. But it cannot be the sole basis

for the negotiations. Account must be taken of other elements too. One such element is the development of the population living in Western Sahara. Over the past two decades a Moroccan population has settled in the Lâayoune region and now forms a very large majority vis-à-vis the Saharan population. Furthermore, the Polisario Front will not be in a position to become a political force in the context of possible Saharan autonomy without changes to the Moroccan Constitution, which currently requires parties to operate on a national (Moroccan) scale.

If one is working towards a lasting settlement which will not lead to destabilisation and suffering, all the parties involved must be heard and accept the solution, in the full knowledge that everybody will have to make certain sacrifices. It would be illusory to reach an 'unbalanced' solution which favoured one of the sides. Such an imbalance would inevitably give rise to subsequent conflicts. And it is by no means clear that a simple regionalisation formula would make harmonious cohabitation possible between the Moroccan and the Saharan population on the territory of Western Sahara.

Likewise, restoring a climate of trust that can reverse the impact of Morocco's repressive measures during the 'dark period' would require real guarantees stating clearly that the past is dead and buried and that all sides will make a conscious effort to ensure that the page is turned for good.

4.2.3. Partition of the Western Sahara

This is one of the options mentioned in the Baker report. The territory would be partitioned into two parts.

This might appear a straightforward option. In reality, however, it would entail numerous difficulties.

Dividing the Western Sahara into two could create major problems. In any event, it is up to the United Nations Security Council to bear this option in mind if other options prove impossible owing to a lack of consensus.

4.2.4. Disengagement of the UN and maintenance of the status quo

The Secretary-General's report of 19 February envisages a fourth option: in a spirit of disappointment and mindful that this conflict has already cost a total of US\$ 500 m, he would, under this option, propose withdrawing the UN presence and, notably, MINURSO.

Underlying this option, even though Kofi Annan does not spell it out, is the notion of keeping the status quo. Should things be left as they are? This conflict has already lasted 26 years.

Although some observers might be surprised, the status quo may indeed appear a tempting option:

- This long-standing conflict is not perceived as a thorn in the flesh by the international community, which has more pressing concerns elsewhere (Palestine, the Balkans, Afghanistan, etc). Simply to send humanitarian aid is not a great effort, and to keep things as they are will rock no boats.
- Morocco can wait. Time is on Morocco's side, for it has had (and taken) the opportunity to consolidate its presence in the Western Sahara over all these years.

- Algeria has every reason to believe that the persistence of this conflict can give it a means of exerting pressure on its Moroccan neighbour, while continuing to play the apparently benevolent role of the defender of the Saharans' right to self-determination. Recently, following a visit to the Tindouf camp, President Bouteflika stated once again that 'the struggle of the Saharan people will be crowned with victory', and that 'Algeria cannot accept a fait accompli, whatever its nature and wherever it comes from'.
- In the Saharan camps themselves, habits have no doubt been created which encourage acceptance of the status quo, which avoids the need to act and choose.
- The status quo allows all parties to affirm the principles they have defended from the beginning without having to compromise - on the one side, the fundamental principle of the right of peoples to choose their destiny; on the other, and affirmed with just as much conviction, the principles of territorial integrity and historic ties. Each sides defends grand and noble principles, and insists on its entrenched positions. However, standing on principles alone is likely to lead to an impasse. The last 26 years are the proof of this. The impasse represented by the status quo is, we believe, a temptation which we have to reject, on the following grounds:
 - Humanitarian factors come into play here. Life is very hard for the Saharans in the Tindouf camps. They have certainly demonstrated the most admirable courage and dignity, but their poverty is evident (their diet is inadequate and ill-balanced, and the medical care provided is not sufficient). Their water, all their food and all their medicines are the gifts of international aid. Nothing can be produced directly by them: the result is a state of dependence which, when it lasts too long, can only become demoralising and unhealthy.
 - One cannot ignore the drama of divided families. The camps are inhabited by Saharans who are separated from the rest of their relatives who have stayed in Western Sahara or Morocco - and not necessarily in the south, but also in the north, in Rabat and elsewhere. These circumstances of separation have had damaging effects, and will continue to cause family dramas. It would therefore be necessary to adopt measures to promote contacts and stable relations between these currently divided groups.
 - Also not to be forgotten are the prisoners who, without any explanation being given, have remained in jail thanks to the never-ending nature of the conflict:
 - 1362 Moroccan prisoners of war are still being held in the Tindouf camps;
 - There have been arrests on the Moroccan side. Some political prisoners would now seem to have been released, but the memories remain. Incidents still occur today, as when demonstrators were arrested when King Mohammed VI visited Smara in November 2001.
- On the political level, the continuation of the conflict creates serious problems:
 - This conflict is both a consequence and a cause of the poor state of relations between Morocco and Algeria, which has led to a freeze in the Arab Maghreb Union's activities in recent years. It is essential for both countries that these relations should improve.

- Good relations between Algeria and Morocco are a necessary precondition for the development of genuine cooperation between the EU and the Maghreb. This subject is very much of present interest, and we are convinced that, in the long term, prosperity and freedom in the region can only be ensured if its component countries join together and promote regional integration (cf., among other texts, the EP report by Mr Morillon and Mr Cohn-Bendit, and the conclusions of the Barcelona European Council of 15 and 16 March 2002).

Our delegation, while aware that the status quo may seem a tempting option, believes that a political solution to the conflict is urgently needed.

Such a political solution can only take the form of a compromise, starting out from the proposals contained in the February 2002 Report of the United Nations Secretary-General. However, such a compromise would have to be agreed by all the parties concerned, which means that it would have to take account of elements not addressed in the Secretary-General's report, such as the weight of the past and the present fears and suspicions, while also making provision for the necessary means to create a climate of genuine trust. It follows that the process leading up to a solution is at least as important as the solution itself.

4.3 What is to be done?

This question has to be put to the European Parliament, but also to the European Union as a whole (to the Council and its High Representative, and to the Commission).

Obviously, any action by the EU must be taken within the framework of the efforts of the UN, which has been entrusted with the task of managing this conflict.

However, the UN does now seem to have become discouraged to the point of contemplating withdrawal. As a result, several times during our mission we received requests addressed to the EU or its Member States. The question is now to ascertain what initiatives we might take on our part to help overcome the impasse.

It is essential to launch or relaunch dialogue first of all. This dialogue will have to be followed by negotiations between the parties, the Polisario Front, Morocco and Algeria.

The role of Europe could be to encourage and facilitate the dialogue and the negotiations. This is a role of 'facilitator' or 'mediator', requiring familiarity with the historical background, a fair appreciation of the positions of the different parties, a clear notion of the goal to be achieved, and, above all, a proper sense of the psychological condition of thousands of peoples who have lived through years of suffering but are aware that they are fighting for noble and fundamental principles.

Firstly, the European Parliament calls on the Council (in the person of its High Representative) and the Commission, in the context of their respective competences in the field of foreign affairs and security and whilst respecting the prerogatives of the UN, to play a more active part and shoulder their responsibilities in this long-running conflict.

The EP itself could organise meetings with the representatives of the parties - bilateral but also multilateral - in order to encourage dialogue between them.

To facilitate this task, Parliament could entrust the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Delegation for relations with the Maghreb countries and the Arab Maghreb Union with the task of organising those meetings, providing a full range of information, and even of exerting pressure on the parties to the conflict.

In the context of this follow-up activity, the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Maghreb delegation would have to work in close liaison with the High Representative of the Council and the Commissioner for External Relations, as well as with the UN Secretary-General and his special envoy or envoys, and would also have to make the necessary contacts with the Member States so as to ensure a coherent policy on the part of Europe.

Finally, the European Union should use the means available to it to continue providing humanitarian aid - which remains absolutely necessary - and to contribute to the development of the countries of the region, especially the Western Sahara.

o

o

o

The conflict in the Western Sahara is now more than 26 years old. Our reaction to it is divided between horror at the accumulated suffering, admiration at such remarkable determination, amazement that the conflict has lasted so long, and the temptation to abandon hope.

The temptation to discouragement and, therefore, to advocate the status quo, is all the stronger since it may appear the only means of remaining faithful to such basic principles as the right of peoples to control their own destiny or, alternatively, territorial integrity and the principle of sovereignty.

To avoid having to compromise, the solution would then be to leave things as they are.

Our delegation, in all conscience, believes that, in this case, to do nothing would be an error. We feel that we must act and concentrate our efforts to secure a balanced compromise that can be accepted by the parties. Such a compromise must enable all those who have given 26 years of their lives to a cause to find a solution worthy of their aspirations, which will also make it possible to build a true community of nations in the Maghreb.

**Visite Algérie [Alger et Tindouf]
- du 28 octobre au 2 novembre 2001 -**

PROGRAMME

Samedi, 27 octobre

- 15.00 Réunion du Secrétariat de la delegation avec le Secrétariat du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères algérien
- 16.30 Réunion du Secrétariat de la delegation du Parlement européen avec le chef de la delegation de la Commission
Delegation de la Commission européenne
15, chemin Poirson, El-Biar
Tel. +213-21-923640
Fax. +213-12-923681

Dimanche, 28 octobre

- Arrivées individuelles des membres de la delegation à Alger et transfert à *l'hôtel El-Djazair (ex St George)*
24, Avenue Souidani Boudjemaa
Tel. +213-21-591000 – 601000
Fax. +213-21-66113 à 66115
- 20.30 Dîner offert par Mme Lalumière, Présidente de la Delegation Western Sahara avec la participation des Ambassadeurs de l'Union européenne et du Chef de la delegation de la Commission européenne
l'hôtel El-Djazair
Salon des Ambassadeurs

Lundi, 29 octobre

- 09.45 Départ
- 10.00 Audience avec le Ministre de la participation et de la coordination des réformes, M. Noureddine Boukrouh
- 11.00 Visite du Monument des Martyres
- 12.30 Retour à l'hôtel
Déjeuner libre
- 14.00 Départ pour l'Assemblée Nationale

- 14.30 L'Assemblée Populaire Nationale et la Commission des Affaires Etrangères
- 16.00 Rencontre avec le Président Conseil Nation M. Mohamed Cherif Messadia
- 17.00 Départ pour le Ministère des Affaires Etrangères
- 17.30 Audience avec le Ministre d'Etat, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, M Abdelaziz Belkhadem
- 18.30 Audience avec le Ministre de la Justice M Ahmed Ouyahi
- 20.15 Départ
- 20.30 Dîner offert par le Président de la Commission des Affaires Etrangères de l'Assemblée Nationale Si Afif Abdelhamid
Restaurant Moncada
Parc zoologique

Mardi, 30 octobre

- 08.30 Départ
- 08.45 Audience avec le Ministre des finances, M Mourad Medeleci
- 09.45 Visite du Palais Bastion 23 (Ancien palais de l'époque Ottomane)
- 11.00 Président de l'Assemblée Populaire Nationale, M Abdelkader Bensalah
- 12.00 Retour à l'hôtel
- 13.00 Départ pour l'aéroport
- 15.00 Départ d'Alger vers Tindouf (vol AH 6148 - Air Algérie)
- 17.30 Arrivée à Tindouf
- 18.00 Briefing avec MINURSO
- 20.30 Dîner avec le Premier Ministre Sahraoui, M. Bucharaya Beyun et discussions politiques
- Hébergement assuré par les autorités sahraouies

Mercredi, 31 octobre

- 08.00 Départ
- 08.30 Visite du musée militaire
- 09.00 Rencontre avec le Président du Croissant Rouge sahraoui
- 10.30 Accueil populaire à la Wilaya Smara avec participation massive de groupes organisés (femmes, jeunes et enfants brandissant les couleurs nationales)
- 12.00 Rencontre avec les Notables Saharans
- 13.00 Déjeuner avec le Président du Parlement et son Bureau Permanent
- 15.00 Rencontre avec la société civile, Association des familles des prisonniers et disparus Saharans Discussion sur l'expérience de la gestion administrative, l'organisation des camps Saharans, la distribution alimentaire, etc
Union Nationale de la femme sahraouie (AFAPREDESA)
Union des Juristes Saharans (UJS)
Union des Journalistes Saharans (UPS)
- 17.00 Visite du projet agricole régional
Centre des handicapés
Hôpital régional
Ecole régionale
- 19.00 Rencontre avec des ONG
- 21.00 Arrivée à la Wilaya del Aaiun et Rencontre avec le coordinateur sahraoui et la MINURSO
- 22.00 Dîner et veillée folklorique

Nuit dans la wilaya (5 tentes)

Jeudi, 1 novembre

- 08.00 Départ pour la Wilaya d'Auserd
- 09.00 Ouverture officielle de la session d'Automne du Parlement Sahraoui
- 11.30 Accueil de M. le Président Mohamed Abdelziz et déjeuner
- 14.20 Départ de Tindouf vers Alger (vol K6 316 – Khalifa airways)
- 17.55 Arrivée à Alger et transfert à
l'hôtel El-Djazair (ex St George)
24, Avenue Souidani Boudjemaa
Tel. +213-2-591000 – 601000
Fax. +213-2-66113 à 66115

Vendredi, 2 novembre

- 08.30 Petit-déjeuner de presse
- Retour en Europe de la Delegation du PE

Liste des ministres et des personnalités politiques de premier plan qui ont reçu la délégation à Alger

M. Nouredine BOUKROUH, ministre chargé de la coordination des réformes
M. Abdelaziz BELKHADEM, ministre d'État et ministre des Affaires étrangères
M. Ahmed OUYAHIA, ministre de la Justice
M. Mourda MEDELICI, ministre des Finances
M. Mohamed Cherif MESADIA, président du Conseil de la Nation
M. Abdelkader BENSALAH, président de l'Assemblée nationale populaire
M. Abdelhamid SI AFIF, président de la commission des affaires étrangères

La délégation a rencontré les personnes suivantes, représentative le pouvoir exécutif et la société civile à Tindouf

M. Mohamed Abdelaziz, Secretary-General du Polisario Front et président de la RASD,
M. Bouchraya Beyroun, Premier ministre,
M. Abdelkader Taleb Omar, président du Conseil national,
M. M'Hamed Khaddad, coordinateur sahraoui avec la MINURSO,
M. Mohamed Sidatai, ministre conseiller à la Présidence,
M. Sid El Bechir Wali de Ausserd,
M. Salem Lebsir, président du Croissant rouge sahraoui,
M^{me} Mamma Abdelahi, Secretary-Generale de l'Union nationale des femmes sahraouies,
M. Mohamed Fadel Mohamed Mouloud, Secretary-General de l'Union nationale de la jeunesse sahraouie,
M. Cheibani Abass, Secretary-General de l'Union générale des travailleurs Saharans.

Liste des participants:

Membres du PE

		Nom	Groupe politique	Pays
Mme	Catherine	LALUMIERE, Présidente	PSE	France
M.	Carlos	BAUTISTA OJEDA	V/ALE	Espagne
Mme	Marianne	ERIKSSON	GUE/NGL	Suède
M.	Jorge S.	HERNÁNDEZ MOLLAR	PPE-DE	Espagne
M.	Philippe	MORILLON	PPE-DE	France
Mme	Pasqualina	NAPOLETANO	PSE	Italie
M.	Raimon	OBIOLS i GERMÀ	PSE	Espagne
Mme	Tokia	SAIFI	PPE-DE	France
M.	Isidoro	SÁNCHEZ GARCÍA	ELDR	Espagne

Abréviations des groupes politiques

PPE-DE: Groupe du Parti Populaire Européen (Démocrates-Chrétiens) et Démocrates Européens

PSE: Groupe du Parti des Socialistes européens

ELDR: Groupe du Parti européen des libéraux, démocrates et réformateurs

Verts/ALE: Groupe des Verts/Alliance Libre européenne

GUE/NGL: Groupe confédéral de la Gauche unitaire européenne/Gauche verte nordique

Liste des participants:

Fonctionnaires

Secrétariat des Delegations Interparlementaires

M	Christian	CHOPIN	Administrateur principal
Mme	Claudia	SCHWENDENWEIN	Assistant administrative

Groupes politiques

Mme	Beatrice	SCARASCIA MUGNOZZA	PPE-DE	Conseiller politique
Mme	Teresa	MOLERES	PSE	Conseiller politique

Interprètes

Mme	Maria-Aranzazu	ERRO ERRANDONEA	Cabine espagnole, chef d'équipe
M.	Matteo	TIJSKENS	Cabine française
Mme	Tina	LUNDBERG	Cabine suédoise
Mme	Enan	BADAOUI	Cabine arabe

**Visite à El-Aaiun et Rabat
- du 11 au 15 février 2002 -**

PROGRAMME

Dimanche, 10 février

23.25 Arrivée du Secrétariat

Lundi, 11 février

20.10 Arrivée individuelle des membres de la delegation à El-Aaiun; accueil par les autorités Marocains à l'aéroport de El-Aaiun et transfert à
*L'Hôtel Parador
Rue Okba Ibn Nafia
70000 El-Aaiun
Tél: 212 48 89 28 14
Fax: 212 48 89 09 62*

Mardi, 12 février

09.00 Départ de l'Hôtel

09.15 Réunion avec M. Hamid CHABAR, Gouverneur chargé de la coordination avec la Minurso
Lieu

10.30 Réunion avec S.E. M. William Lacy SWING, Representative spécial du Secretary-General des Nations Unies (SRSG), et éventuellement avec d'autres representatives de la Minurso
Lieu

11.45-12.15 Réunion avec S.E. M. l'Ambassadeur Ylma TADESSE, Representative de l'Organisation de l'Unité Africaine (OUA) à El-Aaiun
Lieu

12.30 Déjeuner offert par le Conseiller Municipal

14.00 Rencontre avec diverses ONG

19.00 Réunion avec les élus locaux

20.00 Dîner offert par les Parlementaires de la région

Mercredi, 13 février

- 08.45 Départ de l'Hôtel
- 09.00 Réunion avec les associations de ralliés
Lieu
- 10.30 Réunion avec M. Abdellatif GUERRAOUI, Wali de El-Aaiun
Lieu
- 12.00 Retour à l'Hôtel Parador
- 12.45 Départ de l'Hôtel pour l'aéroport
- 14.00 Départ de El-Aaiun avec vol AT 992 (Air Morocco)
- 15.30 Arrivée à Casablanca
- 15.45 Départ de Casablanca en bus
- 17.00 Arrivée à Rabat et transfert à
L'Hôtel Méridien Tour Hassan
26, rue Chellah
Tel: +212 37 23 90 00
Fax: +212 37 73 18 66
- 17.50 Départ de l'Hôtel
- 18.00 Réunion avec M. Abdelouahed RADI, Président de la Chambre des
Representatives
- 20.00 Dîner offert par le Président de la Chambre des Representatives, M. RADI

Jeudi, 14 février

- 08.15 Départ de l'Hôtel pour le Ministère des Droits de l'Homme
- 08.30 Réunion avec M. Mohamed AUJJAR, Ministre des Droits de l'Homme
Ministère Chargé des Droits de l'Homme
47, av. Ibn Sina, Agdal
- 09.30 Réunion avec les membres du groupe de contact avec le Parlement
européen
La Chambre des Représentatives
- 11.15 Réunion avec M. Mustapha OUKACHA, Président de la Chambre des
Conseillers
- 12.15 Départ pour
- 12.30 Déjeuner offert par la Présidence de l'Union Européenne, S.E. M. Arias
Solgado, Ambassadeur d'Espagne
Résidence de l'Ambassadeur
- 14.30 Départ pour l'Hôtel
- 15.45 Départ de l'Hôtel
- 16.00 Rencontre avec M. Abderrahmane YOUSSEFI, Premier Ministre
Cabinet du Premier Ministre
Primature, Méchouar
Palais Royal
- 17.00 Rencontre avec M. Mohamed BENAÏSSA, Ministre des Affaires
Étrangères et de la Coopération
Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et de la Coopération
Quartier Administratif
- 18.00 Rencontre avec M. Driss JETTOU, Ministre de l'Intérieur
Ministère de l'Intérieur
Ancien Quartier Administratif
- 19.00 Retour à l'Hôtel
- 20.30 Dîner offert par Mme Lalumière, Présidente de la Delegation ad hoc
Western Sahara et Vice-Présidente du Parlement européen, avec la
participation des Ambassadeurs de l'Union européenne et du Chef de la
delegation de la Commission européenne
Hôtel Méridien Tour Hassan

Vendredi, 15 février

- 08.45-10.00 Rencontre avec les representatives de la Société civile:
- OMDH (Organisation Moroccan des Droits de l'Homme)
- AMDH (Association Moroccan des Droits de l'Homme)
- Forum Justice et Vérité
Hôtel Méridien Tour Hassan
- 10.00-11.00 Conférence de presse
Hôtel Méridien Tour Hassan
- 11.00 Départ de l'Hôtel pour l'aéroport
- 12.30 Départ de Rabat vers l'Europe via Paris

Liste des participants:

Membres du PE

		Nom	Groupe politique	Pays
Mme	Catherine	LALUMIERE, Présidente	PSE	France
Mme	Marianne	ERIKSSON	GUE/NGL	Suède
M.	Vitaliano	GEMELLI	PPE	Italie
M.	Jorge S.	HERNANDEZ MOLLAR	PPE	Espagne
M.	Jean-Charles	MARCHIANI	UEN	France
Mme	Pasqualina	NAPOLETANO	PSE	Italie
M.	Raimon	OBIOLS I GERMA	PSE	Espagne

Abréviations des groupes politiques

PPE-DE: Groupe du Parti Populaire Européen (Démocrates-Chrétiens) et Démocrates Européens

PSE: Groupe du Parti des Socialistes européens

UEN Groupe Union pour l'Europe des nations

GUE/NGL: Groupe confédéral de la Gauche unitaire européenne/Gauche verte nordique

Liste des participants:

Fonctionnaires

Secrétariat des Delegations Interparlementaires

M	Hans-Hermann	KRAUS	Administrateur principal
Mme	Claudia	SCHWENDENWEIN	Assistante administrative

Groupes politiques

Mme	Beatrice	SCARASCIA MUGNOZZA	PPE-DE	Conseiller politique
Mme	Teresa	MOLERES	PSE	Conseiller politique

Interprètes

M.	Francisco Javier	ALVAREZ WIESE	Cabine espagnole, chef d'équipe
M.	Matteo	TIJSKENS	Cabine française
Mme	Tina	LUNDBERG	Cabine suédoise
M.	Melpomeni	KONSTANTINIDI	Cabine arabe

Presse

M	Alexandre	STUTZMANN	DG III, Information
---	-----------	------------------	---------------------

Commission Européenne

M	Michail	ROKAS	DG RELEX
---	---------	--------------	----------