

Western Sahara: Reported Human Rights Violations

July 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015

Overview

In Western Sahara, violations to the rights to freedom of expression, assembly, and association; due process and freedom from arbitrary arrests; and life and dignity occur on a regular basis and in a broader context of occupation, social and cultural inequality, and illegal natural resource exploitation. However, reporting on human rights violations in Western Sahara is severely limited by severe constraints on movement, a highly restrictive media environment, as well as the Moroccan government's repression of Sahrawi human rights defenders, journalists, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In light of these factors and ongoing violations, there is a need for an independent human rights monitoring mechanism in Western Sahara.

Although the Moroccan National Council for Human Rights (CNDH)—a state-sponsored entity charged with monitoring the human rights situation in the country and reporting directly to the King of Morocco—has two regional offices in Western Sahara, it has not dedicated sufficient attention to the territory, and as an arm of the Moroccan government, it is seen as illegitimate in the eyes of many Sahrawis. Due to registration difficulties and harassment, civil society organizations in Western Sahara are limited in the scope of their human rights reporting. Moroccan law also severely restricts the ability of the media to discuss matters relating to Western Sahara; a culture of self-censorship has also taken hold and local media cannot be relied on to comprehensively disseminate news of human rights abuses. Moroccan authorities also restrict movement into and inside Western Sahara making it nearly impossible for foreign journalists to cover issues related to the Sahrawi people in depth.

Despite calls by Sahrawi civil society organizations, the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), the peacekeeping mission in the territory of Western Sahara, continues to lack a human rights monitoring and reporting mechanism.¹ Additionally, there were no reported activities conducted by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the territory of Western Sahara in this reporting period that would fulfill a human rights monitoring role. The report from OHCHR's last trip to Western Sahara and the refugee camps in mid-2015 has not yet been made public.

¹ MINURSO was established in 1991 under UNSC Resolution 690 as part of the Settlement Plan, which paved the way for a cease-fire in the conflict over Western Sahara between Morocco and the Polisario Front. MINURSO's mandate at the time included its responsibility to conduct a referendum regarding Western Sahara's political future; there is, however, currently no plan to hold the referendum. MINURSO is also the only UN peacekeeping mission established since 1978 to operate without a human rights monitoring capacity. Although UNSC Resolution 1979 recommends that one should be established, this has not yet happened due to pressure from Morocco and its allies on the UN Security Council.

In October 2015, the Fourth Committee of the United Nations heard testimony on human rights violations committed by Moroccan authorities in Western Sahara.² In November 2015, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon directed Personal Envoy Christopher Ross to intensify efforts to bring relevant stakeholders to a mutually acceptable solution.³ A trip of the United Nations Secretary-General to Western Sahara, originally intended to take place before the end of 2015,⁴ has not yet occurred. Amidst political stalemate, there continues to be no international mechanism dedicated to the monitoring of human rights in Western Sahara.

Trends

Reports and news coverage from the non-self-governing territory of Western Sahara during the reporting period of July 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015, suggest that Moroccan authorities continue to commit serious human rights violations against the Sahrawi people.

Sahrawis living in the territory of Western Sahara are subject to regular violations of their due process rights; Sahrawi human rights defenders are arbitrarily detained and subjected to procedurally unfair trials. In detention, Sahrawi prisoners are consistently subjected to torture and physical abuse and denied proper medical care. Police consistently prevent and violently disperse peaceful protests and organizational meetings. Moroccan officials often prevent foreign media and human rights activists from travelling to and within Western Sahara, thus restricting access to Sahrawi human rights defenders and their ability to cover developments throughout the territory.

From July 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015, the following violations were reported:

- 19 incidents of arbitrary arrests and/or due process violations;
- 10 incidents of abuse in detention and/or violations of prisoners' right to health;
- 7 incidents of unjustified restrictions of freedom of movement;
- 19 incidents of violations to the rights to freedom of expression, assembly, and/or association;
- 1 injury as a result of a landmine blast and;
- The discovery of three decades-old mass graves that include the remains of at least 70 Sahrawi persons.

Taken as a whole, the frequency and nature of these reported abuses paints a grim picture of the human rights situation in Western Sahara.

Methodology

Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights collects and publishes credible reports of incidents of human rights abuses on a bi-annual basis. Incidents are included in this report if the events (1) violate Morocco's international human rights obligations, and (2) occurred between July 1, 2015 and

² "As Fourth Committee Continues Hearings, Petitioners Warn that Disputed Western Sahara Could Become 'Safe Haven' for Terrorists," United Nations, October 12, 2015, <http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/gaspd582.doc.htm>.

³ "Statement on Western Sahara," UN News Centre, November 4, 2015, http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocus/sgspeeches/statments_full.asp?statID=2833#.VsNdlbOrI2w.

⁴ "Ban Ki-moon Convinced of Resumptions of Negotiations Between Sahrawis and Moroccans (UN Official)" All Africa, June 13, 2015, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201506151378.html>.

December 31, 2015. Ongoing human rights violations in Western Sahara that initially occurred before July 2015 – such as the continued detention of Sahrawi political prisoners or lack of accountability for disappearances – are not included in this report unless a new human rights development has occurred within the reporting period.

Incidents are gathered via reports issued by reputable non-governmental human rights organizations based in Western Sahara, credible Arabic and English traditional media sources, and substantiated social media accounts.

Reported Human Rights Violations: July 1, 2015 – December 1, 2015

Arbitrary Arrests & Due Process Violations

Having ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Morocco is prohibited from subjecting persons to arbitrary arrest under Article 9, and is bound to respect the due process rights of Sahrawis as per Articles 10 and 14, including the right to a fair trial. Numerous incidents of arbitrary arrests and due process violations in Western Sahara were reported.

July 5: Moroccan security forces detained 15-year-old Sahrawi Abed Abujihad near his family home in El-Aaiun. His family was not informed of the charges against him, nor were they notified of the arrest until hours after the incident. Abujihad was released two days later, pending a trial scheduled for October 1, 2015, only after his mother protested the charges against her son and his status as a minor and threatened an open-ended sit-in inside the courtroom. While in detention, he was subjected to beatings and insults, and he was forced to place his fingerprint on documents without reading them or learning of their contents.⁵ His mother expressed her suspicions that Abujihad was possibly detained due to her family's prior involvement in protests calling for self-determination in Western Sahara.⁶

July 22: Moroccan security forces arrested Sahrawi human rights defender Khaled Amimu in Dakhla after a search and arrest warrant were issued on May 2, 2015. He had previously been arrested by Moroccan authorities in October 2011 for partaking in peaceful protests in Dakhla.⁷ Five days after his most recent arrest, the Dakhla Court of First Instance heard Amimu's case in which he faced charges of insulting officials and drug use, all of which Amimu claimed to be false.⁸ Two and a half hours after the court session, Amimu received a suspended jail sentence of two months and a fine of 500 Moroccan dirhams (roughly US \$50).⁹

⁵ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015], *Available at Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights offices.*

⁶ "Motaba El-Tifl El-Sahrawi El-Qaser Abed Abujihad Fi Hala Sarah Moaqat Bad 43 Saa Min El-Ihtijaz" [Update on Sahrawi Minor Abed Abujihad After Temporary Release 43 Hours After Detention], Radio Maizirat, July 11, 2015, <http://radiomaizirat.net/?p=20382>.

⁷ "Moroccan Authorities Arrest Saharawi Human Rights Defender," Sahara Press Service, July 23, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/moroccan-authorities-arrest-saharawi-human-rights-defender>.

⁸ "Shahran Mawqoofa El-Tanfeez Did El-Motaqal El-Siyasee El-Sabeq Khaled Amimu Wel Ifraj El-Moaqat An 40 Shuban" [Two Months Suspended Sentence Against Former Political Prisoner Khaled Amimu and Release of 40 Youth], Radio Maizirat, July 28, 2015, <http://radiomaizirat.net/?p=20485>.

⁹ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

July 25: Moroccan forces detained Ahmed Yacoub, Mohamed Limam, Fateh Ahmedzain, Ahmed Graimish, Adnan Bouila, and Ahmedfal Brehma in a series of arrests in Dakhla. All of the young men are Sahrawi and were arrested due to their earlier participation in a protest calling for self-determination. When the men's parents arrived at the police headquarters the next day, Mohamed Limam and Ahmedfal Brehma were released; as of July 26, the other young men remained in detention pending an October 6 trial date.¹⁰

August 3: A police patrol stopped Sahrawi youth Elsheikh Lafqir in El-Aaiun. He was subjected to physical and verbal abuse and taken to the police station for questioning about his family's political involvement. Thereafter, he was released and not informed of the reasons for his temporary detention.¹¹

August 10: Security forces arbitrarily detained Sahrawi student Ali Salim Amedan in front of a store about 25 kilometers from El-Aaiun. The security forces beat him and threatened to charge him with false drug and weapons charges. Amedan's brother was previously a Sahrawi political prisoner. Amedan was released the next day. He submitted a complaint against the security forces who detained and abused him.¹²

September 8: Moroccan security forces assaulted pregnant Sahrawi resident Afneina Lakhdar and her son Elbusati Khalihenna in Smara; they were taken to the hospital thereafter.¹³

September 25: Moroccan authorities arrested 16 year old Sahrawi Ashraf Awlad Elsheikh and 13 year old Abdallah Ahmeen in Dakhla and subjected them to beatings. They were released pending trial¹⁴ and were set to appear before the Court of First Instance on October 8, 2015.¹⁵ Elsheikh is the son of a former prominent political prisoner named Elmahjoob Awlad Elsheikh.¹⁶

September 29: Moroccan authorities arrested a group of Sahrawi youth in Dakhla where a peaceful protest demanding self-determination had been organized.¹⁷ At least seven Sahrawi youth were detained: Abdulaziz Bray, Mohamed Lefdeel, Ahmed Ahmiyada, Ahmed Salem Ahl Ahmadiyyat, Sidi Hiba Snad, Yahthiya Elshalh, and

¹⁰ "Moroccan police arrests young Sahrawis," Sahara Press Service, July 26, 2015,

<http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/moroccan-police-arrests-young-sahrawis>.

¹¹ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

¹² CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

¹³ "Moroccan occupation authorities intervene violently against Sahrawi citizen and her son in the occupied Smara," Sahara Press Service, September 8, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/moroccan-occupation-authorities-intervene-violently-against-sahrawi-citizen-and-her-son-occu>.

¹⁴ "Itiqal Majmooa Min El-Shuban El-Sahrawiyyeen Bildakhla El-Mohtala" [Arrest of Sahrawi Youth in Occupied Dakhla], Futuro Sahara, September 30, 2015, <http://futurosahara.net/?p=11766>.

¹⁵ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

¹⁶ "Itiqal Qaser Sahrawi Bildakhla El-Mohtala" [Detention of Sahrawi Minor in Occupied Dakhla], Futuro Sahara, September 26, 2015, <http://futurosahara.net/?p=11683>.

¹⁷ "Moroccan occupation authorities arrest Sahrawi young in the occupied Dajla," Sahara Press Service, September 30, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/moroccan-occupation-authorities-arrest-sahrawi-young-occupied-dajla>.

Mohamed Yislam Eltaleb Omar. Abdulaziz Bray was subjected to torture while in detention, and [photos](#) confirming the incident surfaced one month after his arrest. On October 23, the Dakhla Court of Appeals sentenced the men to four months in prison.¹⁸

September 29: A police patrol stopped Sahrawi youth Ahmed Elshuayr in Dakhla and took him to the city's police station.¹⁹

September 29: A police patrol stopped 17-year-old Sahrawi Abdelfattah Ahmed Zein in the wake of ongoing protests in Dakhla. He was stopped with two other Sahrawi youth who were later released.²⁰ Zein was sentenced to one month of detention at the Agadir Rehabilitation and Discipline Center.²¹

September 30: The El-Aaiun Court of Appeals sentenced Sahrawi political activist and journalist Salah Lebsir to four years in prison after participating in self-determination protests in Smara.²² He had been arrested on June 6, 2015 and faced charges of forming a criminal group, provocation, participation in riots, vandalism, and throwing stones.²³ During the trial, his family members were prevented from attending at least one court session.²⁴

October 16: A Moroccan police patrol stopped and arrested two former political prisoners from Agadir—Mohamed Biza and Abdessalam Loumadi—after their participation in peaceful protests calling for self-determination.²⁵ Loumadi was detained for 48 hours before being released and was never informed of the reasons for his arrest. Biza was transferred to El-Aaiun Prison in light of a January 2013 search warrant that had been issued concerning him; he was released on October 22 pending trial on November 9, 2015.²⁶ As of that date, he faced charges of forming a criminal gang, blocking public roads, insulting government officials, and participating in an armed mob.²⁷

¹⁸ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

¹⁹ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

²⁰ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

²¹ "Ihala El-Tifl El-Sahrawi El-Qaser Abdelfattah Ahmed Zein Ala Markaz El-Islah Weltaheeb Biakadir" [Sahrawi Minor Abdelfattah Ahmed Zein Referred to Rehabilitation Center in Agadir], Sahara Now, October 3, 2015, <http://saharanow.com/news7273.html>.

²² European Parliament, "Parliamentary Questions: Salah Lebsir," <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2016-000573&format=XML&language=EN>.

²³ "Saharawi political prisoner sentenced to four years in prison," Sahara Press Service, October 1, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/saharawi-political-prisoner-sentenced-four-years-prison>.

²⁴ "Postponement of the trial of Saharawi activist and journalist," August 12, 2015, http://www.pravdareport.com/world/africa/12-08-2015/131628-saharawi_activist-0/#sthash.uayJrwTD.dpuf.

²⁵ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

²⁶ "Moroccan authorities arrest two former Saharawi political prisoners," Sahara Press Service, October 21, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/moroccan-authorities-arrest-two-former-saharawi-political-prisoners>.

²⁷ "Western Sahara – Upcoming trial of human rights defender Mohamed Baiza," Frontline Defenders, October 29, 2015, <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/node/30013>.

October 24: Moroccan authorities temporarily detained Morbih Elsaadi near his family home in El-Aaiun and subjected him to severe beatings and threats. He was released eight hours later without being informed of the reasons for his arrest.²⁸ Elsaadi has previously participated in a number of peaceful self-determination protests.²⁹

October 26: Moroccan police stopped and detained 32-year-old Sahrawi Ali Elsaadoni when he was with two others in El-Aaiun.³⁰ He arrived at the police station handcuffed and blindfolded. He was then beaten and forced to sign papers without knowing their contents. Two days after his arrest, he was released by the El-Aaiun Court of First Instance upon payment of a bail of 1,000 Moroccan dirhams (roughly US \$100).³¹

November 2: The Agadir Court of Appeals sentenced Sahrawi political prisoners Khaled Shkrad and Laryas Elsharqawi to four years in prison; the primary court had previously sentenced them to three years in prison.³² The men had been detained for their alleged participation in protests in Assa that were held to show solidarity with the Tizmi camp sit-ins in 2013. The men unequivocally denied their participation.³³

December 4: A Moroccan Court in Agadir sentenced Sahrawi political prisoner Embarek Daoudi to five years in prison on the charges of "possession of hunting cartridges" and "attempting to manufacture a firearm," both of which he denies.³⁴ He had been arrested on September 28, 2013 for his activities in support of the right to self-determination.³⁵ He had previously been sentenced in a different case on April 9, 2015 to six months in prison by the Agadir Court of Appeals for "possession of a military uniform." Daoudi is a Sahrawi human rights defender who served in the Moroccan army for more than 30 years. Upon retiring, he became involved in advocating for the right to self-determination. During the Gdeim Izik protests, Daoudi mobilized families and encouraged them to join the protest camp.³⁶

²⁸ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

²⁹ "Bilfidio: Tasreeh El-Monadel El-Sahrawi Morbih Elsaadi Baad El-Ifraj Anho Min Taraf Sultat El-Ihtilal" [Video: Comments of Sahrawi Defender Morbih Elsaadi After Release by Occupying Authorities], Sawte Eljamhir, October 25, 2015, <http://sawteljamahir.com/archives/5371>.

³⁰ "El-Ifraj An El-Shab El-Sahrawi Ali Elsaadoni Bikafala Maliya Qudraha 1000 Dirham Maghribiyya" [Release of Sahrawi Youth Ali Elsaadoni After 1000 Moroccan Dirham Bail], Radio Maizirat, October 29, 2015, <http://radiomaizirat.net/?p=24105>.

³¹ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

³² CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

³³ "El-Hokm Ala El-Motaqlien El-Siyasiyyeen El-Sahrawiyyeen Khaled Shkrad We Laryas Elsharqawi Bi 5 Sanawat Nafiza" [Sahrawi Political Prisoners Khaled Shkrad and Laryas Elsharqawi Sentenced to Five Years], Radio Maizirat, November 4, 2015, <http://radiomaizirat.net/?p=24386>.

³⁴ "Update: Western Sahara – Mbarek Daoudi sentenced to five years' imprisonment," Frontline Defenders, December 8, 2015, <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/node/30221>.

³⁵ "Moroccan court sentences Sahrawi political prisoner Embarek Dawdi to 5 years in prison," Sahara Press Service, December 4, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/moroccan-court-sentences-sahrawi-political-prisoner-embarek-dawdi-5-years-prison>.

³⁶ "Update: Western Sahara – Mbarek Daoudi sentenced to five years' imprisonment," Frontline Defenders, December 8, 2015, <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/node/30221>.

December 7: The Moroccan Criminal Division of the Court of Appeals in El-Aaiun sentenced Sahrawi political prisoner Hamza Gamihi to two years in prison. Gamihi was arrested on June 4, 2013 after his participation in a peaceful demonstration for self-determination, after which he was kept in pretrial detention for four months before being released on parole.³⁷

December 8: Moroccan authorities detained Sahrawi Mohamed Babeet of the Local Coordination of Unemployed Sahrawis in El-Aaiun for six hours after he participated in peaceful protests to demand employment opportunities. He was ultimately released and not charged.³⁸

December 17: Sahrawi student Adnan Elrahali was reported as “disappeared” from Agadir. His family last heard from him after he spoke to his brother on the phone on December 17 when he stated that he was near Ibn Zohr University and would be home soon.³⁹ His family has searched for him at hospitals and other sites;⁴⁰ as of January 11, 2016, Elrahali had remained missing.⁴¹

Abuses in Detention & Prisoners’ Right to Health

Having ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Convention Against Torture (CAT), Morocco must guarantee the dignity of detainees (Article 10 of the ICCPR) and freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment (CAT and Article 7 of the ICCPR). The following incidents were reported involving abusive detention conditions, accounts of what may amount to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, and violations of the right to health.

August 3: Prison authorities subjected pretrial detainee Elhusein Abali to physical abuses, verbal insults, and threats of solitary confinement inside the Sale Prison in Morocco.⁴² Abali has stated that he suspects that the treatment he underwent is due to his identity as a Sahrawi. He reports that Sahrawi detainees have previously been referred to as “animals” by the prison authorities in question and that they have been subjected to violent abuses in detention.⁴³

³⁷ “Saharawi political prisoner Hamza Gamihi sentenced to two years in prison,” Sahara Press Service, December 7, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/saharawi-political-prisoner-hamza-gamihi-sentenced-two-years-prison>.

³⁸ CODESA, “Aham El-Intihakat Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015” [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

³⁹ “Ikhtifa El-Taleb El-Sahrawi Adnan Elrahali Bimadeenat Akadeer El-Maghreb” [Disappearance of Sahrawi Student Adnan Elrahali in Agadir, Morocco], Sawtel Jamahir, December 29, 2015, <http://sawteljamahir.com/archives/6640>.

⁴⁰ CODESA, “Aham El-Intihakat Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015” [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁴¹ “Istimrar Ikhtifa El-Taleb El-Sahrawi Adnan Elrahali We Ailatoh Totrah Kol El-Fareedat” [Sahrawi Student Adnan Elrahali Remains Missing, Family Poses All Possibilities], Radio Maizirat, January 11, 2016, <http://radiomaizirat.net/?p=27246>.

⁴² CODESA, “Aham El-Intihakat Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015” [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁴³ “Motaqal Sahrawi Yataarad Liitiadat Jasadiyya We Lafziyya Bilmaktab El-Khas Liraees El-Motaqal El-Sijn El-Mahallee Bisale” [Sahrawi Prisoner Subjected to Physical and Verbal Assaults at Office of Sale Prison Head], Sahara Now, August 10, 2015, <http://saharanow.com/news6870.html>.

August 5: Sahrawi political prisoner Dadeich Eldafi suffered a severe fainting incident due to high blood sugar after he got angry at the Sale Prison authorities for being late in delivering his medicine. He suffers from a number of chronic diseases, including diabetes. He has reported being tortured, beaten, and mistreated while in detention.⁴⁴

August 7: Sahrawi political prisoner Bareeka Elomari died in detention while he was serving a two year prison sentence on criminal charges at the Ait Melloul Prison.⁴⁵ His mother, who had visited him a day prior to his death, said that he was suffering due to severe medical mistreatment and that he had been unable to stand or speak; she was not informed of his passing until two days after the death occurred. His mother demanded an investigation into the death.⁴⁶

September 10: Prison authorities in Ait Melloul subjected Sahrawi political prisoner Ibrahim Mowhati to physical and verbal abuse.⁴⁷ He was arrested in March 2015 for his position in favor of self-determination.⁴⁸ He had announced an open-ended hunger strike on July 15, 2015.⁴⁹

September 26: Political prisoner Abdeljalil Sidi Laarosi fainted in his cell in Sale Prison due to a deterioration in health. His family has expressed concern that he is reportedly not receiving adequate medical care.⁵⁰ He is serving a life sentence⁵¹ for his participation in the 2010 Gdeim Izik protests.⁵²

September 27: Boubakr Arkoun, a 40 year old Sahrawi detainee, died after fainting in his cell in Tiznit Prison. Prison authorities were delayed in transferring him to the hospital for at least a few hours due to the unavailability of the ambulance. Arkoun had been sentenced to 20 years in prison and had served 14 of those years; he was expecting an early release date of January 11, 2016.⁵³

September 29: About 150 prison employees conducted searches on the items belonging to prisoners at the Sale Prison. At least three Sahrawi prisoners (Elarabi

⁴⁴ "Saharawi political prisoner transferred to hospital in critical condition," Sahara Press Service, August 5, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/saharawi-political-prisoner-transferred-hospital-critical-condition>.

⁴⁵ Lakome, August 13, 2015, <http://lakome2.com/mobile/societe/3326.html>.

⁴⁶ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁴⁷ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁴⁸ "Moroccan Forces Repress Sahrawi Political Prisoner Ibrahim El Buhiti," Sahara Press Service, September 10, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/moroccan-forces-repress-sahrawi-political-prisoner-ibrahim-el-buhiti>.

⁴⁹ "Saharawi political prisoner goes on open hunger strike," Sahara Press Service, July 15, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/saharawi-political-prisoner-goes-open-hunger-strike>.

⁵⁰ "Health state of political prisoner Sidi Abdeljalil is 'regrettable'," Sahara Press Service, September 28, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/health-state-political-prisoner-sidi-abdeljalil-regrettable>.

⁵¹ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁵² "Abdeljalil Sidi Laarosi El-Motaqal Ala Khalfiya Ahdath Akdeem Izeek Yataarad Liighma Fe Sijn Sale" [Abdeljalil Sidi Laarosi, Detained in Gdeim Iziki Events, Faints in Sale Prison], Radi News, September 28, 2015, <http://radinews.ma/6394>.

⁵³ "Wafat Sijeen El-Haq El-Am Boubakr Arkoun Bilsijn El-Mahallee Bitizneit El-Maghreb" [Death of Prisoner Boubakr Arkoun In Tiznit Prison in Morocco], Sawt El-Jamahir, September 28, 2015, <http://sawteljamahir.com/archives/4175>.

Elbekai, Mohamed Eltahleel, and Eldeich Eldafi) were injured by prison authorities who beat prisoners during the search.⁵⁴

October 21: Moroccan authorities put Sahrawi political prisoner Sidi Bouamid into solitary confinement at the Taroudant Agricultural Prison, depriving him of appropriate health care and recreational time. His family has reported deterioration in his health due to this solitary confinement and in light of his participation in hunger strikes.⁵⁵ He had been sentenced to a four year prison term months after he was detained in 2012 after participating in self-determination protests and accused of “forming a criminal group,” “provocation and participation in riots,” “vandalism,” and “throwing stones and incendiary charges”; he denied all the charges.⁵⁶

October 29: Moroccan authorities transferred Sahrawi political prisoner Mohamed Yislam Eltaleb Omar to a mental hospital in Inezgane after a severe deterioration in his health. The Torta prison authorities in Dakhla refused to communicate with Omar’s family about the state of his health.⁵⁷

December 30: After 13 days of fainting and hunger strikes, Sahrawi political prisoner and journalist Mohamed Banbari was transferred to the hospital from his prison in El-Aaiun.⁵⁸

Freedom of Movement

Bound by its ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, specifically Articles 12 and 13, Morocco has a duty to respect freedom of movement and comply with strict human rights safeguards in the expulsion of any aliens from its territory. However, Moroccan authorities have reportedly subjected Sahrawi citizens as well as non-Sahrawi lawyers, human rights activists, and journalists to a number of unlawful expulsions and severely restricted the rights of these persons to freedom of movement.

July 12: Moroccan authorities surrounded the home of Sahrawi activist Ahmed Tanji because Tanji had previously hosted Al-Jazeera English television correspondent Karlos Zurutuza. Moroccan police also threatened and insulted Tanji for hosting Zurutuza. Police had constantly followed and monitored the activities of Zurutuza while he was in El-Aaiun.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ CODESA, “Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015” [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁵⁵ CODESA, “Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015” [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁵⁶ “El-Sijeen El-Siyasee El-Sahrawi Sidi Bouamid Yoany Min So El-Moamala We Min El-Sijn El-Infiradee” [Sahrawi Political Prisoner Sidi Bouamid Suffers From Poor Treatment and Solitary Confinement], Sawte Chaabe, November 14, 2015, <http://sawtechaabe.com/?p=18354>.

⁵⁷ CODESA, “Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015” [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁵⁸ “Transfer of a Saharawi political prisoner to the hospital after 13 days of hunger strike,” Sahara Press Service, December 30, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/transfer-saharawi-political-prisoner-hospital-after-13-days-hunger-strike>.

⁵⁹ “Moroccan authorities threaten director of Media Team for hosting Al Jazeera English TV correspondent,” Sahara Press Service, July 12, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/moroccan-authorities-threaten-director-media-team-hosting-al-jazeera-english-tv-correspondent>.

August 16: Moroccan security forces forced Italian student and researcher Basilio Maritano Sailer to leave El-Aaiun and go to Agadir after it was found out that he had been meeting with Sahrawis and conducting research on immigration.⁶⁰

August 20: Moroccan police subjected Sahrawi activist Leila Lili to a physical assault, harassment, and an invasive inspection upon her arrival at the Casablanca Airport.⁶¹ She had been partaking in the 6th annual Summer University of the Polisario Front and SADR (Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic) cadres in Algiers.⁶²

September 7: Moroccan authorities detained Spanish lawyer and human rights activist Luis Magrané at the Casablanca Airport; they informed him that he was banned from traveling to Western Sahara.⁶³ He had planned to travel to El-Aaiun.⁶⁴

October 22: Moroccan authorities forcibly expelled Hamdeen Mohamed Sidi Eldeif, Fatma Mohamed Elsalek Abdelsamad, and Sidi Ibrahim Hamdeen who were visiting family members in Western Sahara. The three Sahrawis live outside of the territory and do not have Moroccan citizenship.⁶⁵

November 5: Moroccan authorities prevented Spanish journalist Nicolas Castellano Flores from visiting El-Aaiun and forced him to return to the Canary Islands. Castellano had previously visited El-Aaiun and conducted interviews with various Sahrawi human rights defenders.⁶⁶

December 29: Moroccan authorities surrounded the home of Sahrawi citizen Elmahfouza Elfaqeer in El-Aaiun and forcibly prevented her from exiting. Family members who attempted to visit her were not allowed to enter her home during the police action. When other Sahrawi citizens attempted to show solidarity with her, they were physically assaulted.⁶⁷ Elfaqeer has previously participated in peaceful referendum protests.

⁶⁰ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁶¹ "Leila Lili Tatarad Lil Darb El-Aneef Min Taraf El-Shorta El-Maghribiyya" [Leila Lili Subjected to Violent Beatings By Moroccan Police], Futuro Sahara, August 20, 2015, <http://futurosahara.net/?p=10826>.

⁶² "Saharawi activist tortured by Moroccan police at Casablanca airport," Sahara Press Service, August 20, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/saharawi-activist-tortured-moroccan-police-casablanca-airport>.

⁶³ "Moroccan occupation authorities prevent Spanish lawyer from entering the Sahrawi occupied territories," Sahara Press Service, September 10, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/moroccan-occupation-authorities-prevent-spanish-lawyer-entering-sahrawi-occupied-territories>.

⁶⁴ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁶⁵ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁶⁶ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁶⁷ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

Freedom of Expression, Assembly, and Association

Morocco is bound by its international obligations to respect the right to freedom of expression under Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the right to freedom of peaceful assembly under Article 21, and the right to freedom of association under Article 22. Despite this, Moroccan authorities reportedly continue to violently disperse peaceful protests in Western Sahara, injure peaceful protesters, and prevent civil society from holding meetings.

July 12: Moroccan security forces violently dispersed a peaceful sit-in organized by the Local Coordination of Unemployed Sahrawi Graduates in El-Aaiun.⁶⁸

July 31: Moroccan plainclothes police surrounded and later dispersed a peaceful protest in El-Aaiun by unemployed Sahrawis. During the dispersal, Moroccan police beat protesters, injuring at least four.⁶⁹

August 1: Moroccan authorities dispersed a peaceful protest organized by the Local Coordination of Unemployed Sahrawi in El-Aaiun, injuring and insulting participants in the process.⁷⁰

August 24: Police officers surrounded the home of Sahrawi activist Dah, where members of the Coordination of Sahrawi Human Rights Groups were meeting to conduct a meeting with Spanish and French activists. Thereafter, authorities forced the activists to depart El-Aaiun.⁷¹

September 13: Moroccan gendarmerie stopped and searched the car of Sahrawi media activist Mohamed Mayara of Equipe Media when he was with his family in El-Tantan. The forces also insulted and cursed at him without reason.⁷²

October 17: Moroccan police prevented Sahrawis from participating in peaceful protests on the International Day to End Poverty. Police dispersed protests in El-Aaiun, Smara, and El-Tantan and directed physical violence and verbal abuse at the protesters, leading to various injuries.⁷³

⁶⁸ "Moroccan security forces "violently" disperse peaceful protest of unemployed Sahrawi graduates," Sahara Press Service, July 12, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/moroccan-security-forces-%E2%80%9Cviolently%E2%80%9D-disperse-peaceful-protest-unemployed-sahrawi-graduates>.

⁶⁹ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁷⁰ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁷¹ "European human rights activists expelled from occupied El Aiun," Sahara Press Service, August 24, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/european-human-rights-activists-expelled-occupied-el-aiun>.

⁷² "Sahrawi Media activist Mohamed Mayara exposed to harassment and provocation," Sahara Press Service, September 13, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/sahrawi-media-activist-mohamed-mayara-exposed-harassment-and-provocation>.

⁷³ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

October 20: Moroccan security forces violently dispersed a peaceful protest in El-Aaiun that was calling for the holding of a referendum on self-determination and the release of political prisoners, injuring at least eight protesters.⁷⁴

October 23: Moroccan authorities dispersed a peaceful protest of unemployed Sahrawis in Smara, injuring at least six protesters.⁷⁵

October 27: Moroccan plainclothes and uniformed police dispersed a peaceful protest by the Local Coordination of Unemployed Sahrawis in El-Aaiun, injuring at least six protesters.⁷⁶

October 30: Moroccan authorities violently dispersed peaceful protests in Smara and El-Aaiun. In Smara, protesters were calling for their political and social rights; the police dispersal injured 12 protesters, two of whom suffered serious injuries. The El-Aaiun police dispersal injured two protesters.⁷⁷

November 1: Moroccan plainclothes and uniformed police dispersed a peaceful sit-in in Smara, injuring at least nine protesters.⁷⁸ The participants were protesting against the presence of Moroccan authorities and the marginalization of the Sahrawi people.⁷⁹

December 8: Moroccan authorities violently dispersed a peaceful protest organized by unemployed persons in Smara, injuring at least six protesters. Demonstrators carried copies of their diplomas to protest the lack of opportunities for university graduates.⁸⁰

December 10: Moroccan authorities violently dispersed protests organized in El-Tantan and El-Aaiun on the occasion of the International Day for Human Rights, injuring various protesters in the process.⁸¹

December 11: Moroccan authorities dispersed a sit-in of unemployed Sahrawis in El-Aaiun, detained Mohamed El-Ghilani for a few hours, and injured over 25 sit-in participants.⁸²

⁷⁴ "Moroccan security forces crack down peaceful demonstration in occupied El Aaiun," Sahara Press Service, October 20, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/moroccan-security-forces-crack-down-peaceful-demonstration-occupied-el-aaiun>.

⁷⁵ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁷⁶ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁷⁷ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁷⁸ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁷⁹ "Brutal intervention against peaceful sit-in Smara occupied city," Sahara Press Service, November 1, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/brutal-intervention-against-peaceful-sit-smara-occupied-city>.

⁸⁰ "Occupation authorities violently disperse Saharawi unemployed demonstration," Sahara Press Service, December 8, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/occupation-authorities-violently-disperse-saharawi-unemployed-demonstration>.

⁸¹ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁸² CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

December 12: Moroccan authorities dispersed a peaceful sit-in of unemployed people in El-Aaiun, injuring around 30 protesters. When uninjured protesters went to the hospital to check on those who had been injured, Moroccan plainclothes and uniformed police prevented many of them from entering the hospital.⁸³

December 25: Moroccan plainclothes police prevented a group of Sahrawi mothers whose sons had been disappeared since 2005 from peacefully protesting outside of the El-Aaiun Court of Appeals.⁸⁴

December 27: Moroccan authorities prevented the Local Coordination of Unemployed Sahrawis from holding the press conference that they had arranged in El-Aaiun by surrounding the building and preventing people from entering.⁸⁵ The press conference had been titled: "Exclusion from Employment and Gross Violations of Human Rights."⁸⁶

December 30: Moroccan plainclothes and uniformed police surrounded and violently dispersed a peaceful sit-in of unemployed Sahrawis in El-Aaiun, injuring at least 20 protesters.⁸⁷

December 30: Moroccan authorities dispersed a peaceful sit-in of unemployed Sahrawis in El-Tantan, injuring at least four protesters.⁸⁸

Landmines

While not a signatory to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, Morocco has a responsibility to protect its citizens and ensure their right to life under Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the country's failure to take proactive measures to remove landmines from Western Sahara has resulted in a number of reported serious injuries and casualties. While conservative estimates suggest that 100,000 landmines have been left unattended in Western Sahara, other estimates suggest that there may be as many as 7 million landmines.⁸⁹ According to the UN Security Council, as of March 2015, there were 57 cluster strike areas and 41 minefields to be addressed, most of which are located in areas where civilian activities have recently increased.⁹⁰

⁸³ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁸⁴ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁸⁵ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁸⁶ "Moroccan authorities prevent a press conference of unemployed gradual Saharawis," Sahara Press Service, December 29, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/moroccan-authorities-prevent-press-conference-unemployed-gradual-saharawis>.

⁸⁷ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁸⁸ CODESA, "Aham El-Intihakak Fi El-Fatra El-Momtadda Min Tareekh 29 May/Ayar Ila 31 December/ Kanoun Awal 2015" [Report of the Most Prominent Human Rights Violations between May 29 and December 31, 2015].

⁸⁹ REMMSO, "Red de estudios sobre efectos de minas terrestres y muros en el Sahara occidental, Land mines and wall in Western Sahara," <http://www.remmsso.org/english/>.

⁹⁰ UN Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara," April 10, 2015, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2015/246.

August 16: A landmine detonated in the Lemsaid region, 70 kilometers east of El-Tantan, injuring Sahrawi minor Amin Haiba. Haiba was taken to the regional hospital in El-Tantan, and later transferred to a hospital in Guelmim as some fragments could not be removed from his left leg.⁹¹

Mass Graves

In the mid-1970's, Moroccan authorities reportedly committed a number of serious human rights violations against Sahrawis in the context of the struggle between the Polisario Front and the Moroccan government over the territory of Western Sahara. During this period, hundreds of Sahrawis⁹² were reportedly disappeared⁹³ in violation of Morocco's duty to respect the right to life under Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the right to be free from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment under Article 7, the right to liberty under Article 9, and the right to dignity under Article 10. In the time since, multiple mass graves of Sahrawi persons have been discovered.

December 18: Three new mass graves uncovering violations by Moroccan authorities against Sahrawi persons in 1975 were discovered by Spanish experts in Western Sahara.⁹⁴ A spokesperson for AFRAPREDESA, the non-governmental organization that announced the discovery, stated that the process of bone exhumation was at the first stage, that at least 10 Sahrawis were identified in the first grave, and that the largest grave so far seems to include the remains of at least 60 Sahrawis who were burned alive.⁹⁵

Recommendations

In light of the extent of reported human rights violations in Western Sahara, the absence of an independent human rights monitoring mechanism, and the limited capacity of local media and non-governmental organizations in substantiating and documenting violations, Robert F. Kennedy recommends that:

- (1) United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon be allowed to conduct a free and unrestricted visit to Western Sahara in early 2016, and that the Secretary-General meet with all relevant stakeholders, including Sahrawi human rights defenders, during his visit;

⁹¹ "Land mine explosion injures Sahrawi minor," Sahara Press Service, August 16, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/land-mine-explosion-injures-sahrawi-minor>.

⁹² "Western Sahara: Country Reports on Human Rights Practices," U.S. Department of State, Feb. 25, 2014, <http://m.state.gov/md27941.htm>.

⁹³ "Western Sahara: The United Nations Operation in the Western Sahara," Human Rights Watch, Oct. 1995, <https://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/Wsahara.htm>.

⁹⁴ "Iktishaf Thalath Maqabir Jamaaiya Bilaradee El-Sahrawiyya Tadam Azeed Min 70 Rifat" [Discovery of Three Mass Graves In Sahrawi Lands With More Than 70 Remains of Bodies], Sahara Press League, December 19, 2015, <http://goo.gl/VjPjJ>.

⁹⁵ "Crimes committed by Morocco: Three new mass graves discovered in Sahrawi territories," Sahara Press Service, December 18, 2015, <http://www.spsrasd.info/en/content/crimes-committed-morocco-three-new-mass-graves-discovered-sahrawi-territories>.

- (2) The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) publish its report from its mid-2015 visit to Moroccan-controlled Western Sahara and the Sahrawi refugee camps;
- (3) The United Nations facilitate an OHCHR follow-up mission to Moroccan-controlled Western Sahara and the Sahrawi refugee camps with unrestricted access to all stakeholders in order to pave way for an independent and impartial understanding of the human rights situation and assist in the creation of an appropriate environment for peaceful negotiations in the future; and
- (4) A permanent human rights monitoring and reporting mandate be added to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), which may also receive individual complaints and investigate human rights violations.

Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights will report on human rights in Western Sahara every six months. The next report will cover the time period between January 1, 2016 and June 30, 2016, and will be published in July 2016.