

Western Sahara: UNSC Renews MINURSO Mandate For One Year

The new resolution summarizes the numerous calls that Algeria's regime received to participate in the political process as a main party, not as an observer as it claims.

[Safaa Kasraoui](#) Oct. 29, 2021 2:57 p.m.



Algeria has long claimed itself as an observer, claiming that a solution to the conflict should only be made between Morocco and Algeria's proxy militia Polisario Front.

Rabat - The UN Security Council has adopted Resolution 2602, extending the mandate of the MINURSO, the UN mission operating in Western Sahara for another year.

MINURSO's previous one-year mandate was set to expire on October 31.

Most Security Council members voted for the resolution, with only Russia and Tunisia abstaining from voting.

Today's vote came after several days of delay prompted by an internal crisis inside the voting room due to an alleged protest from Russia against the resolution.

Russia is known for its diplomatic proximity to the Algerian regime, which has long refused to engage in the political process to find a political solution to the conflict over Western [Sahara](#).

Russia's alleged refusal is also due to its open tension with the US, the penholder of the resolution.

The resolution that the Security Council voted for today contains similar language to the document's draft, obtained by Morocco World News last week.

Resolution calls for Algeria's participation

It also retains the same language in resolutions adopted in recent years, deeming Algeria's presence and engagement in the political process as necessary and important to find a mutually acceptable and an agreed upon solution to the conflict over Western Sahara.

The resolution adopted by the UN Security Council today mentions Algeria five times, while Morocco is mentioned 7 times. The resolution continues the UNSC's repeated calls for a "realistic, practicable, enduring and mutually acceptable political solution." Furthermore the resolution emphasizes that such a solution ought to come through compromise.

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It became clear that such a demand is not in any way possible, as one of the first paragraphs of the resolution names all parties, emphasizing the need for resumption of consultation between Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania, and the separatist group of Polisario.

Paragraph 6 of the resolution's states that the Security Council encourages the resumption of "consultations between the Personal Envoy and Morocco, the Frente POLISARIO, Algeria and Mauritania in this regard to build on the progress achieved."

New political dialogue

The resolution established that the talks between the parties to the conflict should take the same format of roundtable discussions initiated by the former UNSG envoy for Western Sahara, Horst Kohler. The German diplomat [resigned](#) as the Secretary General's Western Sahara Envoy in May 2019 due to health issues.

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The position for an envoy remained vacant until recent months when the UN chief Antonio Guterres appointed Swedish-Italian Staffan de Mistura to replace him.

Paying tribute to Kohler, the Security Council welcomed the appointment of de Mistura, urging for the constructive resumption of the political process to build on the “progress of the former Personal Envoy.”

For the Security Council resolution, the roundtables held in 2018 and 2019 created momentum in the political process in

they won't take part in the round-tables, claiming that they were “obsolete.”

Importantly the resolution calls for negotiations “without preconditions,” a tenet the Polisario has already cast aside by demanding a full Moroccan withdrawal before talks could resume. Furthermore, the document asks for the involved parties to act “in good faith,” in order to achieve the desired “just, lasting, and mutually acceptable political solution.”