

Western Sahara: Omar Hilale Calls on Algeria to Stop Making Children 'Potential Terrorists'

Moroccan officials have consistently decried the long-running forced recruitment of child soldiers in Tindouf, calling it a violation of children's rights.

[Issam Toutate](#) Nov. 06, 2021 1:22 p.m.



Morocco's Permanent Representative to the [United Nations](#), Omar Hilale, emphasized in a recent speech the need for the UN to prevent Algeria and the separatist Polisario Front from turning the youth of the Polisario-run Tindouf camps into "potential terrorists."

The Moroccan diplomat stressed the need to hinder Algeria and Polisario from turning "today's children into potential terrorists, as they did with [Abu Adnan Al Sahrawi](#)," the leader of ISIS-linked terrorist group in the Sahel region.

Al Sahrawi was recently killed in a French strike after eluding French and US counterterrorism operations in the Sahel for years.

Hilale made his comments before the UN General Assembly's 4th Committee.

In his speech, the Moroccan official notified the UN body of the "violations of the most basic rights that the people imprisoned in the Tindouf camps" have endured over the years.

He drew attention to the prevalence of child recruitment in the camps, saying that many underage and helpless children in the [Polisario-controlled](#) camps "are forcibly conscripted by the Polisario's armed militias." Morocco remains concerned about Algeria's devolution of power in the Tindouf camps to the Polisario military organization, and Moroccan officials have consistently brought to the attention of the international community the Polisario leadership's well-documented and long-standing violations of children's rights.

The forced conscription of children contradicts Algeria's international commitments, especially the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, Hilale explained.

Referencing the "right to education" clause mentioned in the latest UN Security Council resolution on the Sahara Conflict, the Moroccan diplomat ended his speech with a spirited call on the international community to urge Algeria to stop condoning Polisario's policy of sending children to join military [training camps](#).

The camp's children should instead be sent to schools that UNICEF and international NGOs have built in the region, he concluded.