

Western Sahara: Sahrawi President Ghali receives UNSG's Personal Envoy Staffan de Mistura

By **Hana Saada** - January 17, 2022

Shahid Al Hafed, 16 January 2022 (SPS) – President of the Sahrawi Republic, Secretary-General of the Polisario Front, Brahim Ghali, received, Sunday, the personal envoy of the UN Secretary-General for Western Sahara, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, in his office at the Presidency of the Republic.

The meeting took place in the presence of the representative of the Polisario at the United Nations, in charge of coordination with MINURSO, Dr. Sidi Mohamed Omar.

Mr. Staffan de Mistura, accompanied by a UN delegation, arrived Saturday in the Sahrawi refugee camps in Smara, as part of his first tour in the region since his appointment last November, where he received popular welcome in the wilaya of Smara.

He held meetings with members of the Consultative Council and the National Council, youth and women, and the head of the negotiating delegation.

He visited several Sahrawi establishments and institutions, including the visit of the school of the Shahid "Khalil Sid M'hamed" in the wilaya of Boudjdour, the National Museum of Resistance, the Digital Documentation Center, the Sahrawi Red Crescent and the Sahrawi Committee for Human Rights.

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres appointed Staffan de Mistura of Italy as his Personal Envoy for Western Sahara.

The new Personal Envoy succeeds Horst Köhler of Germany, who completed his assignment on 22 May 2019 and to whom the Secretary-General is grateful for his steadfast and intensive efforts which laid the foundation for a new momentum in the political process on Western Sahara.

Mr. de Mistura brings more than 40 years of experience in diplomacy and political affairs. During his career with the United Nations, he served as Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, providing good offices aimed at promoting a peaceful solution to the Syrian crisis. Prior appointments include Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and for Iraq, Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for Southern Lebanon and Director of the United Nations Information Centre in Rome. He also served the Organization in various posts in Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Viet Nam and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, among others.

In addition to his service with the United Nations, he was appointed Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs and thereafter Deputy Foreign Minister in Italy.

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