



PRESS RELEASE

THE AGGRESSION BY THE OCCUPYING STATE ON THE SAHRAWI LIBERATED TERRITORIES IS THE CAUSE OF THE BREAKDOWN OF THE CEASEFIRE

(New York, 2 February 2022) The Frente POLISARIO has taken note of the statement made recently by the Deputy Spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General, Mr Farhan Haq, during the daily press briefing regarding the current situation of the “ceasefire” and the operation of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) in the Territory.

There is no denying the fact that the 1991 ceasefire, which is an integral part of the UN-OAU Settlement Plan approved unanimously by the Security Council, was blatantly torpedoed by the occupying state of Morocco through its act of aggression on the Sahrawi Liberated Territories on 13 November 2020.

The Moroccan new act of aggression has not only ended the ceasefire and related military agreements but has also undermined the UN peace process in Western Sahara and plunged the region into another spiral of extreme tension and instability.

Both the UN Secretary-General and the Security Council have confirmed the breakdown of the 1991 ceasefire on 13 November 2020. In his report (S/2021/843; para 2) dated 1 October 2021, the UN Secretary-General acknowledged, among other things, “the resumption of hostilities” between the occupying state of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO. For its part, in its resolution 2602 (2021) adopted on 29 October 2021, the Security Council noted “with deep concern the breakdown of the ceasefire” (PP 14).

The acknowledgment by both the UN Secretary-General and the Security Council of the breakdown of the 1991 ceasefire and the realities on the ground render any attempt to deny or underplay the seriousness of the current situation in MINURSO’s area of operation unacceptable and even misleading at a time when the occupying state of Morocco continues its aggression on the Sahrawi Liberated Territories and its deliberate targeting and killing of civilians and destroying their properties.

There is, by the same token, no denying the fact that the forces of the occupying state of Morocco have been using all types of weapons, including unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), to continue their genocidal war against the Sahrawi people that began on 31 October 1975. As documented by MINURSO itself, Moroccan UAVs have been used to callously kill not only dozens of Sahrawi civilians but also civilians and nationals of neighbouring countries while in transit through the Sahrawi Liberated Territories.

In this regard, it is worth recalling that, despite the breakdown of the ceasefire, the Frente POLISARIO continues to ensure the safety and security of MINURSO Military Observers and to facilitate their operations to visit and document, with the help of UNMAS experts, every single site of the strikes carried out by Moroccan UAVs targeting civilians in the Sahrawi Liberated Territories.

As it has already expressed on several occasions, the Frente POLISARIO still finds it deplorable and totally unjustifiable that neither the UN Secretariat nor the Security Council has been willing to call a spade a spade and identify the occupying state of Morocco as the direct and only party responsible for breaching and torpedoing the 1991 ceasefire. This continued silence only encourages the occupying state to remain in its state of denial and prevents it from facing the reality of the war that it has again ignited.

For the sake of the credibility of the United Nations, the Secretariat and the Security Council should abandon once and for all their policy of “destructive ambiguity” when addressing the situation in Western Sahara. This entails that there should be no mincing of words with regard to the situation on the ground in the Territory and the continued crimes perpetrated by the occupying state of Morocco against the Sahrawi people.

The Sahrawi people, who have demonstrated genuine commitment to peace and have exercised maximum restraint, will never give up their sacred and non-negotiable rights and will continue to use all legitimate means to defend themselves and the sovereignty of their country.

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