

# Security Council should handle Western Sahara issue with responsibility

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**Algiers**, 23 October 2021 (SPS) - The risk of escalation in the conflict between the Moroccan regime and the Polisario Front is serious, and the UN Security Council should more than ever handle Western Sahara issue with clarity and responsibility, as what is at stake is peace and stability in the sub-region, Ambassador Amar Belani, the special envoy for Western Sahara issue and Maghreb countries, said Friday.

In an exclusive statement to APS, Amar Belani said that with "the brutal break-up of the ceasefire, by the Moroccan occupation forces, and the illegal annexation of the buffer zone in Guerguerat in a flagrant violation of military agreements, we are facing a war situation and we must recognize that the risks of escalation are serious."

"That is why, more than ever, the Security Council must address the issue of Western Sahara with clarity and responsibility, because peace and stability are at stake in the sub-region."

Otherwise, he said, "it would be entirely legitimate to question the relevance, if not the usefulness, of the revival of a disembodied political process that would not be in line with the new realities on the ground, and which would legitimize the colonial fait accompli, including in a buffer zone that is supposed to be demilitarized in accordance with binding agreements signed by both parties and endorsed by the UN Security Council."

"It is legitimate to question the execution of the mandate of MINURSO (United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara) in this new context, since there are no longer ceasefires to be observed since 13 November 2020, given Morocco's stubborn refusal to return to the status quo ante despite UN Secretary-General's calls and the fact that the holding of a referendum on self-determination, which is the raison d'être of the mission, has been pending for some thirty years."

"For all these objective reasons relating to a situation that has deteriorated dramatically, a balanced, transparent and impartial approach is expected from the Security Council, taking into account the new realities on the ground and the legitimate expectations of Western Sahara people in accordance with the settlement plan," Belani stressed.

Otherwise, "the new resolution, the first version of which is profoundly unbalanced, will only prolong the stalemate of the political process and lead to an anticipated failure of the efforts of the new personal envoy even before taking up duty, on November 1st."

"As for the format of the round tables, which we have already publicly rejected, Algeria has never committed itself to be part of them in the future because we believe that this format is far from the ideal solution and that, on the contrary, it has become counterproductive since Morocco has decided, irresponsibly and dishonestly, to use it to try pitifully to avoid the decolonization nature of Western Sahara issue in favour of an alleged regional and artificial conflict to which Algeria would be a party," the diplomat said.

"For these reasons, we confirm our formal and irreversible rejection of this so-called round table format and have

instructed our permanent representative in New York to notify this position of the Algerian government to the chairman of the Security Council, asking him to circulate the note verbale in question to all members of the Council."