

# Secretary-General appoints Alexander Ivanko of the Russian Federation as his Special Representative for Western Sahara and Head of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara

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United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres today announced the appointment of Alexander Ivanko of the Russian Federation as his new Special Representative for Western Sahara and Head of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). He succeeds Colin Stewart of Canada, to whom the Secretary-General is grateful for his dedicated service and effective leadership of MINURSO.

Having served as Chief of Staff of MINURSO since 2009, Mr. Ivanko brings to the position more than 30 years of experience in international affairs, peacekeeping and journalism. He previously served as Director of Public Information for the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (2006-2009) and as the United Nations Spokesperson in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1994-1998).

Mr. Ivanko began his career in journalism, working as a correspondent in Afghanistan and the United States for a Russian newspaper. He was also Senior Adviser to the Representative on Freedom of the Media of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (1998-2005).

He holds a master's degree with honors in Journalism from the Moscow State University and is fluent in Russian and English. ...