

Moroccan FM: Algeria Is Blocking UN-Led Political Process on Western Sahara

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Safaa Kasraoui Feb. 16, 2022 1:51 p.m.



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Rabat - Morocco’s Foreign Affairs Minister Nasser Bourita has reaffirmed the Moroccan firm position regarding the country’s sovereignty over Western Sahara, lamenting the ongoing stagnation in the UN-led political process to find a compromise-based and lasting solution to the conflict.

Bourita commented on recent developments in the [Western Sahara](#) dossier in a recent interview with [Africa24](#).

The FM recalled King Mohammed VI’s Green March speech of November 2021, emphasizing Morocco’s [attachment](#) to its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The “Sahara is Moroccan by history, by law and by the will of its people,” Bourita recalled the King as emphasizing in his speech, adding that recent developments have consolidated Morocco’s sovereignty over its southern provinces.

In particular, Bourita cited the diplomatic gains Morocco has recently secured in the Sahara dossier through international recognition and support of its [Autonomy Plan](#), bilateral agreements, and the opening of consulates in Morocco’s southern provinces of Laayoune and Dakhla.

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“Today we have 25 consulates which are open in the cities of Laayoune and Dakhla. Agreements have been signed that include the Sahara, and countries from the Gulf, Europe, Africa, have confirmed the Moroccanness of the Sahara,” he said.

Bourita also reiterated Morocco’s commitment to the UN-led political process, noting that Morocco’s Autonomy Plan initiative has been hailed as a serious and credible route to a sustainable resolution.

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However, he regretted the blockage of the UN-led political process due to Algeria's reluctance to shoulder its responsibility in the conflict as a main party.

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Although Algeria shelters, arms, finances, and trains the Polisario Front -- a separatist group claiming independence in Western Sahara, it remains reluctant to bear responsibility, claiming that it is an observer party rather than a main party to the conflict.

Algeria also claims that a solution to the conflict should be between Morocco and Polisario, which it insists are the two main parties to the territorial dispute.

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Bourita mentioned Algeria's rejection of the latest UN Security Council Resolution on the Sahara conflict, arguing that Algiers' frustration with the Security Council's adoption of compromise and realism signaled its readiness to block efforts aiming to reach a solution to the conflict.

The Moroccan FM also warned against interference in the UN-led political process, emphasizing that the international organization is the only body legitimate to search for a solution to the Sahara dispute.

“At the African level, at the level of this [Europe-Africa 2022] summit, I think that the African countries were unanimous. It should be emphasized that the question of Sahara must not be exploited as it has been in the past to divide the African countries within the organization,” he said.

Amid the growing perception that a self-determination referendum is no longer considered as a viable route to a lasting resolution in Western Sahara, Algeria and Polisario supporters within the AU have been attempting to make the pan-African organization interfere in the UN process to revive the self-determination alternative.

“The question of the Sahara is dealt with at the level of the United Nations. Decision 693 of Nouakchott is the reference for the action of the African Union which is an accompanying action, a support action, but never an action of initiative or action on this file,” Bourita concluded.

Adopted in July 2018, [AU Decision 693](#) entails restrictions limiting the continental body's role in the Western Sahara peace process to accompanying and supporting the UN-led political process.

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