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# Western Sahara: Brahim Ghali reappointed head of the Polisario Front

The XVIth congress of the Polisario Front which has been held in southern Algeria since January 13 and which should end on Sunday, re-elected, Friday January 20, Brahim Ghali as secretary general of the movement. Several specialists mention the existence of internal divisions within the Polisario.

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Brahim Ghali, 73, was re-elected on January 20, 2023, secretary general of the Polisario Front, during a congress which opened on January 13 in the Dakhla refugee camp, located approximately 170 km south-east of the Algerian town of Tindouf. AFP - RYAD KRAMDI

By : **RFI** Follow

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In office since 2016, Brahim Ghali, 73, is greatly weakened by illness. He was reappointed for a new three-year term and obtained 69% of the votes against 31% for his rival, Béchir Mustapha, his opponent. 1,870 Polisario delegates participated in the vote, according to the official Sahrawi press agency, SPS.

A not so easy re-election for Brahim Ghali. Indeed, the favorite of Algiers is no longer unanimous. The Polisario congress was extended twice before being able to elect its secretary general.

According to several observers, the independence movement is at a turning point in its history, in a context of extreme tension between Algiers and Rabat. The Polisario is currently hit by internal divisions which are weakening it.

There is, on the one hand, a current which favors war as the only solution to the independence of Western Sahara and on the other, those who prefer dialogue with Morocco, a minority current active especially in the refugee camps. and which accuses the Polisario political and military elite of corruption and abuses.

They are the ones who voted for El Béchir Mustapha, unsuccessful candidate and Minister of Territories in the self-proclaimed Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR). Being the brother of the founder of the Polisario, from the Reguibat tribe whose members are the majority

in the camps, young Sahrawis, born after the conflict, believe that he could have defended their cause better.

However, Brahim Ghali - who enjoys the indispensable support of Algiers - was once again imposed at the head of the Polisario.