



To
His Majesty the King, Mohammed VI
Bureau de Sa Majesté le Roi
Palais Royal
Rabat
Maroc / Morocco

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A member of ENIASA

Copenhagen, October 27th, 2009

Your Excellency,

On October 8th, 2009, seven human rights defenders from Western Sahara were arrested from the Mohamed V Airport in Casablanca, Morocco, allegedly by Moroccan Security Authorities.

The group of arrested defenders include Ali Salem Tamek, first Vice-President of the Saharawi Collective of Human Rights Defenders (CODESA); Brahim Dahane, President of the Sahrawi Association of Victims of Grave Violations of Human Rights (ASVDH); Ahmad Anasiri, General Secretary of the Saharawi Committee for the Defence of Human Rights in Smara; Yahdih Ettarrouzi; Saleh Lebayhi, President of the Forum for the Protection of Saharawi Children; Dagja Lachgar, and Rachid Sghayar. The seven defenders work for various human rights organisations in Western Sahara, including CODESA, ASVDH, the Moroccan Association for Human Rights (AMDH), the Forum for the Protection of Saharawi Children, the Action Committee Against Torture in Dakhla/Western Sahara, and the Saharawi Committee for the Defence of Human Rights in Smara. They had been travelling from Houari Boumedien Airport in Algeria. They are now under military arrest.

At about 02.00pm on October 8th, 2009, the aforementioned human rights defenders, travelling from Algeria on flight number AT561, were arrested immediately after their plane had landed in Mohamed V Airport. They were reportedly taken from the main door of the plane by Moroccan Security Authorities and taken by car to an unknown location. Another group of human rights defenders reported a high police presence at the airport as they waited for several hours for their colleagues without success. It is thought that the arrest of the seven human rights defenders may be linked to the visits they had made to Saharawi refugee camps in south-west Algeria during their stay abroad.

We believe that the arrest of the seven human rights defenders is directly related to their work in the defence of human rights, particularly in Moroccan-occupied Western Sahara. We are seriously concerned for their physical and psychological integrity.

We urge the authorities in Morocco to:

Afrika Kontakt arbejder i solidaritet med folkelige bevægelser i Afrika og støtter disse bevægelser mobilisering og kamp for at sikre sig økonomiske, demokratiske og sociale rettigheder.

Afrika Kontakt arbejder for en ændring af politiske magtforhold og fordeling af samfundets ressourcer, for derved at bidrage til en ny og mere retfærdig global udvikling, der gavner Afrikas befolkninger.

1. Immediately and unconditionally release of Ali Salem Tamek, Brahim Dahane, Ahmad Anasiri, Saleh Lebayhi, Dagja Lachgar, Rachid Sghayar and Yahdih Ettarrouzi as we believe that they are being held solely as a result of their legitimate and peaceful work in the defence of human rights;
2. Take all necessary measures to guarantee their physical and psychological integrity;
3. Guarantee, in all circumstances, that human rights defenders in Western Sahara and in Morocco are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.
4. to release all the Saharawi human rights activists in the Moroccan prisons.

Yours Sincerely,



Morten Nielsen
Africa Contact – Denmark

For the following organisations:

1. **FOA - Fag og Arbejde**, Denmark
2. **Enhedslisten (Red-Green Alliance)**, Denmark
3. **Internationalt Forum**, Denmark
4. **Afrika Kontakt**, Denmark
5. **Western Sahara Support Committee**, Denmark
6. **Horlemann Verlag**, Germany
7. **Kritische Ökologie/ifak e.V.** (Critical Ecology/Institute for Applied Cultural Research), Germany
8. **Solidariteitsgroep Westelijke Sahara** (Solidarity Group for Western Sahara), Belgium
9. **Free Western Sahara Network**, international
10. **Bundesausschuss Friedensratschlag** (Federal Committee Peace Counsel), Germany
11. **The Swedish Western Sahara Committee**, Sweden
12. **Zentrum für Europäische und Orientalische Kultur e.V. (ZEOK)**, Germany
13. **Solidarity Movement for the Independence of Western Sahara**, Nigeria chapter
14. **SJJA** (Sahara Japan Journalist Association), Japan
15. **CODESA** (Organization of the defenders Sahrawi human rights), Western Sahara
16. **APSO** (Amis du Peuple du Sahara Occidental, et réseau sud), France
17. **Socialistisk Ungdomsfronts Internationale Gruppe**, Denmark
18. **ARSO** (Association pour un référendum libre et régulier au Sahara Occidental), Switzerland
19. **UPES** (The Saharawi Union of Journalists and Writers), Western Sahara
20. **UJS** (Union of the Saharawi Jurists), Western Sahara
21. **GEZA** (Gemeinnützige Entwicklungszusammenarbeit GmbH), Austria
22. **Western Sahara Campaign UK**, England
23. **Asociación do Pequeno Comercio da Pobra do Caramiñal**, Spain

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24. **Centre Sahraoui pour la Conservation de la Memoire Collective**, Western Sahara
25. **Comité Sahraoui pour la Defense aux Droits de l'Homme à Smara**, Western Sahara
26. **Le Comité contre la torture Dakhla**, Western Sahara
27. **PSPC** (Saharawi Forum for protecting the children in Western Sahara), Western Sahara
28. **ASVDH** (Association Sahraouie des Victimes des Violations Graves des Droits Humains Commises par l'Etat Marocain), Western Sahara
29. **Verein Freunde des Sahrauischen Volkes Basel**, Germany
- 30: **The Committee for the Sahrawis whose documents are confiscated and banned from travel**, Western Sahara
31. **Comité suisse de soutien au peuple Sahraoui**, Switzerland
32. **Liberal Women**, Sweden
33. **ELDH** (European Association of Lawyers for Democracy and World Human Rights), Germany
34. **BUPL** (The Danish National Federation of Early Childhood Teachers and Youth Educators), Denmark
35. **SAIH** (The Norwegian Students' and Academics' International Assistance Fund), Norway
36. **Asociación de veciños S. Roque da Pobra do Caramiñal**, Spain
37. **Norwegian Support Committee for Western Sahara**, Norway

Individual signatories:

Helena Bargholtz, member of Parliament, Liberal People's Party, Sweden

Holger Gustafsson, member of Parliament, Christian Democrats, Sweden

cc. w

Mr. Ban-Ki Moon, UN Secretary-General

Mr. Christopher Ross, special envoy of the UN Secretary-General

Morocco embassy to the UN

Morocco embassy to the United States

Morocco embassy to Denmark

Mr. Per Stig Møller, Danish minister of foreign affairs

Danish Parliament's foreign affairs committee

Danish media

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