



Security Council

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Letter dated 19 June 2019 addressed to the President of the Security Council by the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations

On instructions from my Government, I regret to inform you that “polisario” has continued its unacceptable violations of the military agreements and Security Council resolutions, particularly resolutions [2414 \(2018\)](#), [2440 \(2018\)](#) and [2468 \(2019\)](#), which are threatening the ceasefire and regional peace and stability.

In that regard, I should like to convey to you the following:

- On 1 June 2019, two military combat jeeps belonging to “polisario” made an incursion into the buffer zone, an area in which, in accordance with military agreement No. 1, all activity is prohibited up to a distance of 3 to 4 kilometres from the line of defence of the 50th sector infantry battalion of the Royal Armed Forces, deployed in subsector Oum Dreyga.
- One of the two jeeps hit a landmine, probably an anti-tank mine. The following day, 2 June, and then again on 3 June, another military jeep and truck belonging to “polisario”, army green in colour, also arrived on the scene and removed the damaged vehicle.
- MINURSO elements, on either side of the line of defence, witnessed this clear violation of military agreement No. 1 and even took part in the airlifting of the wounded.
- The persons who were on board the jeep that hit the mine were three armed elements of “polisario” stationed at Mijek, east of the line of defence in Moroccan Sahara, in breach of the ceasefire, military agreements and Security Council resolutions. One of them was declared dead and the other two were reportedly injured.
- This is the fourth extremely serious violation of the ceasefire committed by “polisario” in less than a month in the buffer zone. Morocco has strongly protested against these violations to the Force Commander of MINURSO, which include repeated firing of shots by armed elements of “polisario” against Royal Armed Forces units.

The Kingdom of Morocco would like to point out that “polisario” is solely responsible for this “incident”, which it is trying unsuccessfully to exploit in a blatant, despicable and unscrupulous manner, through excuses and false and misleading information, in an effort to distort the reality and conceal a proven and extremely serious violation of the ceasefire and military agreements. The Security Council and



MINURSO should strongly condemn both the violation and the irresponsible attitude of “polisario”.

The Kingdom of Morocco would also like to underline once again that “polisario” bears full and complete responsibility for the landmine problem in Moroccan Sahara. Indeed, during the period of hostilities, between 1975 and 1987, “polisario” illegally laid thousands of landmines without the required laying plans or indicators. Its objectionable objectives included trying to prohibit people and livestock from accessing land and sites of socioeconomic interest and attempting to hinder the movement of the Royal Armed Forces and their erection of the line of defence established as part of efforts to secure the southern provinces of Morocco. This has caused hundreds of deaths and injuries affecting the civilian population as well as Moroccan soldiers and several members of MINURSO.

In view of this situation and the size of the area that needs to be checked in the absence of data that could assist in the location of landmines, the Royal Armed Forces and Major General Kurt Mosgaard, MINURSO Force Commander at that time, agreed in January 2007 that Major General Jurt Mosgaard would request “polisario” to provide the required data and laying plans for the landmines left buried in the soil.

To date, 12 years later, there has been no response to that request and “polisario” still refuses to provide such information. Unfortunately, this criminal behaviour of an armed separatist movement, which violates all international norms and rules, continues to cause deaths and injuries, including among civilians.

The Kingdom of Morocco emphasizes that the Royal Armed Forces have never left or abandoned landmines on the ground. This is clearly stated in paragraph 3 of military agreement No. 3, on the reduction of the threat of landmines and unexploded ordnance, in which it is stipulated that the Royal Armed Forces have not left any minefields as it established successive lines of defence.

Furthermore, although the Royal Armed Forces have never been responsible for laying these landmines, they have carried out large-scale clearance and demining operations in the southern provinces of Morocco since January 2007. The Royal Armed Forces units have cleared an area of 5,419.71 km² and have located and destroyed 20,490 items of unexploded ordnance, 45,021 anti-tank mines and 49,323 anti-personnel mines.

In the light of the above, “polisario”, which is responsible for laying the landmines on the ground and for the human and material damage caused by those landmines since 1975, including the “incident” that occurred in the buffer zone on 1 June 2019, must be held fully responsible by the international community, particularly the Security Council and MINURSO, for these crimes.

Lastly, the Kingdom of Morocco would like, once again, to condemn in the strongest terms the persistent violations by “polisario” of the ceasefire, military agreements and Security Council resolutions. In addition, “polisario” must accept the consequences of these destabilizing acts on the security and stability of the region.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Omar **Hilale**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative