



Security Council

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Letter dated 23 November 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to kindly request that the present letter and its annex, a letter dated 13 November 2020, be issued as a document of the Security Council.

I would like to indicate that the letter dated 13 November 2020 had already been addressed, on that same day, individually to members of the Security Council.

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

* Reissued for technical reasons on 9 December 2020.



Annex to the letter dated 23 November 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you of the latest developments in the Guergarate buffer strip in the Moroccan Sahara:

- “polisario” and its militias have blocked, since 21 October 2020, the road in the Guergarate buffer strip that connects the borders between Morocco and Mauritania.
- The number of military elements of “polisario”, including in civilian clothing, and its militias continued to increase, as did their acts of banditry, the obstacles installed and the camps and tents built on this road, blocking all movement of vehicles and people.
- These extremely serious violations by “polisario” are recurrent since 2016. They are listed in the reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council, including [S/2020/938](#) (para. 12).
- This obstruction goes against the incessant calls of the Secretary-General, since 2017, and recently in September and October 2020, demanding of “polisario” that it not obstruct regular civilian and commercial traffic in Guergarate and not change the status quo of this zone.
- These destabilizing acts also violate the provisions of Security Council resolutions, in which the Council expressed concerns about the presence of “polisario” in Guergarate and demanded its immediate withdrawal (resolution [2414 \(2018\)](#), para. 7). They also go against the commitments made by “polisario” to the former Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General, Horst Kohler, not to return to Guergarate and to refrain from any violations in the area east of the defence structure/berm (resolution [2440 \(2018\)](#), para. 7).
- “polisario” and its militias also harassed United Nations military observers and civilian personnel by organizing demonstrations in front of MINURSO team sites, in the area east of the defence structure. They threatened them physically and verbally, by throwing stones at the United Nations helicopters and by impeding the freedom of movement of these observers. This has seriously endangered their safety and physical integrity.
- “polisario” and its militias have been outrageously provoking, since 19 October 2020, the Moroccan soldiers stationed along the defence structure. For the first time since the proclamation of the ceasefire, 30 years ago, the elements of “polisario” came face to face with the Moroccan soldiers, uttering insults, making obscene gestures and threatening the elements of the Royal Armed Forces in the sight, with the knowledge and in the presence of the military observers of MINURSO. These provocative crowds could have had serious consequences were it not for the restraint and calm of the Moroccan soldiers.
- Violations by “polisario” seriously undermine the relaunch of the political process so desired by the Security Council, in particular in its latest resolution, [2548 \(2020\)](#).
- The presence of “polisario” and its militias in Guergarate also creates the conditions for the infiltration in this area of terrorist elements coming from the Sahelo-Saharan region, who could attack the MINURSO observers and the United Nations presence in the region.

- His Majesty King Mohammed VI sent a letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in order to alert him regarding the grave and unacceptable violations by “polisario” in Guergarate. For his part, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Morocco had a number of phone calls with the Secretary-General on this issue.
- Morocco, at the request of the Secretary-General, has allowed all the time needed to his good offices, in order to get “polisario” to stop its destabilizing acts and leave the buffer zone of Guergarate. However, the calls by the Secretary-General, MINURSO and several members of the Security Council to put an end to this illegal situation of obstruction in Guergarate remained unfortunately unheeded.
- After having committed itself to the greatest restraint, in the face of the grave and unacceptable provocations from the armed elements of “polisario” and its militias, Morocco had no other choice but to assume its responsibilities in order to put an end to the deadlock situation generated by these acts and restore free civil and commercial movement in Guergarate.
- In this regard, the Royal Armed Forces are setting up, since this morning, a security cordon in order to secure the flow of goods and people through this axis. This non-offensive action of civil engineering, which is without any bellicose intent, is taking place according to clear rules of engagement, requiring that any contact with civilians be avoided. MINURSO observers were present throughout this action and observed that there were no contacts with civilians. The latter knowingly set fire to their tents and left Guergarate, directed by armed elements of “polisario”, and embarked in their heavily armoured vehicles.
- Morocco has decided to act in accordance with its attributions, its duties and in full compliance with international legality, taking into account the calls for restraint by the Secretary-General, the members of the Security Council and friendly countries.
- “polisario” alone assumes full responsibility and the full consequences of these destabilizing acts and inadmissible violations.

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