

From: Ronny Hansen

Subject: Regarding Ballance's imports of phosphates from occupied Western Sahara

Date: Tuesday, July 1, 2008, 9:49 PM

Dear Larry Bilodeau

CEO of Ballance Agri-Nutrients

As you might be aware, Western Sahara has been occupied by Morocco since 1975. Trading with or shipping phosphates from the occupied country is highly unethical and in violation of international law.

The Norwegian Support Committee for Western Sahara finds it regrettable that the Norwegian owned shipping company Gearbulk, is participating in this trade. The company's collaboration in this trade has been widely covered in the media, such as in this editorial in one of Norway's biggest newspapers this week-end: http://vest-sahara.no/index.php?parse_news=single&cat=49&art=990

On June 20th, 29 parliamentarians from Norway, UK and New Zealand sent a letter to Gearbulk, urging them to follow the advice of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and stop carrying out such transports. The letter from the parliamentarians is CC'd to Ballance. Please find a copy of the letter here: http://vest-sahara.no/files/dated/2008-06-24/letter_gearbulk_20.06.08.pdf

With today's phosphate prices, Morocco earns 40 times as much on the phosphate exports from occupied Western Sahara, than the refugees in Algeria get from humanitarian aid from the UNHCR/FAO/ECHO in total. The humanitarian situation in the camps is now worse than in Darfur, with one out of each 5 children suffering from malnutrition. We would like to draw your attention to the fact that this emergency humanitarian situation had not existed if Morocco had respected international law, by not occupying Western Sahara, or by respecting the more than 100 UN resolutions that calls for self-determination for the Sahrawi people. Collaborating with the Moroccan government in this trade offers legitimacy and financial support to the brutal and illegal occupation.

We would like to urge your company to immediately terminate the imports from Western Sahara, by finding alternative sources for your phosphate imports.

Mr. Bilodeau, we urge you also to learn more about the situation, by either visiting the refugee camps in Algeria or by visiting the Sahrawis living in the occupied territories. If you'd like to know how such a trip can be carried out, do not hesitate to contact us, as we have been to the region many times over the last 15 years.

Looking forward to hear from you,

Yours sincerely,

Ronny Hansen

Chairman, Norwegian Support Committee for Western Sahara

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