



THE FRENTE POLISARIO REJECTS THE INCLUSION OF WESTERN SAHARA IN THE RENEGOTIATION OF THE EU-MOROCCO FISHERIES AGREEMENT

[BRUSSELS, 16 APRIL 2018] The Frente POLISARIO condemns today's decision of the EU Council to authorize the European Commission to negotiate an amendment to the EU-Morocco Fisheries Partnership Agreement in order to explicitly include Western Sahara.

Last February, the European Court of Justice recalled, for the second time, that Morocco has no authority, in its sovereign capacity, to conclude international agreements applicable to Western Sahara. Therefore, it is crystal-clear that these negotiations can only lead to another illegal agreement under EU law and international law.

No safeguards announced in the negotiation mandate may distract from the fundamental illegality of this approach. The European Court of Justice made it repeatedly clear: the only way to negotiate any agreement in relation to Western Sahara is by securing the consent of the Sahrawi people, through their UN-recognized representative, the Frente POLISARIO.

Once again, the action of the EU raises serious questions regarding its commitment to a peaceful settlement of the Western Sahara question under the auspices of the United Nations. These illegal negotiations with the unlawful Moroccan occupier will achieve nothing except undermining the efforts of the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary General, Horst Köhler, for the resumption of direct talks between the POLISARIO Front and Morocco.

As far as Morocco is concerned, its readiness to negotiate international agreements explicitly referring to Western Sahara demonstrates that it recognizes its non-sovereignty over that territory.

Today's decision of the EU Council leaves no other choice to the Frente POLISARIO but to initiate new legal proceedings, on behalf of the people of Western Sahara, before EU Courts. The Frente POLISARIO Front equally warns all EU-based companies of the serious legal risks that they will expose themselves to if they chose to do business within the framework of these illegal EU-Morocco agreements.