UN/OAU PEACE EFFORTS CONTINUE AS POLISARIO AND MOROCCO MEET

August 11 U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar presented the joint UN/OAU peace proposal designed to end the long, bitter war in Western Sahara to representatives of the two parties to the conflict, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Polisario Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro. Separate meetings were held with the parties with the Foreign Minister of Mali, Modibo Keita, present as special envoy of President Moussa Traore, current chairman of the Organization of African Unity.

Perez de Cuellar described the proposal as "a compromise which will no doubt promote a just and durable solution of the Western Sahara question, under conditions acceptable to the international community."

The objective of the proposal is to bring about a cease-fire, followed by a referendum, determination, in accordance with resolutions of the U.N. General Assembly. Those resolutions include 1514 (XV), 3292 (XXIX), 39/40 and 40/50 which include placing the Western Sahara on the list on non-self-governing territories with the right to self-determination, calling for an advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice, reaffirming that the solution of the question of Western Sahara lies in the implementation of AHG/Res 104 "which establishes ways and means for a just and definitive political solution to the Western Sahara conflict," requesting the parties to the conflict, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Rio de Oro to undertake direct negotiations with a view to bringing about a cease-fire to create the necessary conditions for a peaceful and fair referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, a referendum without any administrative or military constraints under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations, and inviting the Chairman of the OAU and the Secretary-General of the U.N. to exert every effort to persuade the two
parties to the conflict...to negotiate, in the shortest possible time and in conform-

ity with resolution AHG/Res 104 (XIX) and the present resolution, the terms of a cease-
fire and the modalities for organizing the said referendum.

The Secretary-General of the U.N. and his representatives and the Chairman of the OAU (then Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia) met periodically with representatives of the Kingdom of Morocco and the Polisario Front from November 1987 to August 1988. Consultation was also made with Mauritanian and Algerian leaders because of the proximity of those two nations to the conflict.

According to reports, the August 1988 proposal does not contain a timetable for the holding of the referendum, although some news reports have suggested the close of 1988 as a target date. Among items reported to have been included in the proposal were peace negotiations between the two parties, a substantial reduction and gradual withdrawal of Moroccan troops from the territory, the sending of a 2,000 man U.N. peacekeeping force and administrative personnel to the region to oversee the referendum, a choice in the referendum be-

between independence for the territory or acceptance of Moroccan sovereignty, and use of the 1974 Spanish census to determine eligibility to vote.

The Secretary-General of the U.N. had set September 1 as the proposed deadline for agreement by the two parties to the proposal. Discussions during the month of August ended with both parties agreeing to the conditions as outlined in general in the proposal.

Representing the Polisario Front in the meetings in New York on August 11 and after were Bachir Mustapha Sayed, head of the secretariat of the Political Bureau of the Polisario Front, Mohamed Sidati, Mouloud Said and Madjid Abdouallah. The Morocco delegation was headed by Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdelatif Filali.

It has been reported that the non-aligned nations will be asked to endorse the peace plan at their meeting in Nicosia, Cyprus in September, and, later, to ask the U.N. General Assembly to approve a resolution backing the peace plan. It is expected that pressure from European nations and the Arab states will continue over the months to come to ensure the success of the peace proposal so that the suffering undergone by the Sahrawi and Moroccan peoples over the past thirteen years may come to an end and that stability in that region of northwest Africa might again return.
This document published by the Polisario Front is valuable because it highlights major events in the struggle for liberation of the Sahrawi people from 1973 to 1988. It is a catalog rather than an explanation, but the major events of the war for independence which includes political activities as well as armed struggle activities, are all here. Also included are a number of photographs, the Manifesto of the Polisario Front and a general evaluation of activities.


The article by Zunes, an instructor in the Department of Politics at Ithaca College, describes his visit in 1987 to the Western Sahara and to the refugee camps of the Sahrawis. The close of the article includes reference to an earlier article by Elise Boulding in Fellowship and suggests possible actions by the Friends.


The article by Pazzanita, an attorney, describes the process of referenda for resolution of conflicts and uses the specific case of Western Sahara to illustrate these points. The article is truly interesting now given the recent agreement of the Polisario Front and Morocco to the UN proposal for a referendum.


"BITS AND PIECES, ON THE DOCKET," AFRICA NEWS, August 8, 1988, p. 12.

Both articles are brief but the contents reflect the careful covering of the issue of Western Sahara by AFRICA NEWS since 1976.

THE UNITED STATES, MOROCCO AND THE WESTERN SAHARA, John M. Zindar, Research Analyst, The Center for Defense Information for Testimony before the UN Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the implementation of the declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples, August 9, 1988, 17 pp.

The statement is interesting particularly in view of the fact that it comes from an analyst with the Center for Defense Information, a non-profit, non-partisan, research organization, founded and directed by retired officers of the U.S. military. Zindar notes that he trained officers of the Moroccan Royal Armed Forces during 1983-85. The writer calls for a reassessment of U.S. policy toward Morocco and the Western Sahara and urges that the U.S. use
its leverage with Morocco and other appropriate allies to press for a negotiated settlement. The major contribution of the statement are the tables showing Moroccan arms imports and military expenditures, U.S. foreign military sales agreements, military equipment transfers to Morocco and other U.S. military assistance to Morocco.

DISCUSSIONS OF WESTERN SAHARA CONFLICT TO BE PART OF AFRICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEET

Two panels sponsored by ACAS, the Association of Concerned African Scholars, will be held at the annual meeting of the ASA in Chicago this fall. The first of these, The Western Sahara War at Year Thirteen, Part I: The International Framework, will have panelists, Teresa K. Smith, Yahya Zoubir and John Entelis. It is from 9 to 11 AM on Sunday, October 30. The second part of the panel will concern Regional Impact and Internal Developments. Panelists include Smith and Anthony Pazzanita.

Two other panels will have panelists discussing aspects of the conflict in Western Sahara. On Monday, October 31, a panel entitled, Decolonization in Africa, the Unfinished Agenda: Namibia, Western Sahara, Eritrea, is scheduled from 11 AM to 1 PM. Discussants include Amare Tekle, George Shepherd and Berhe Habte-Glorgis. On Friday, October 28, a panel on Continuity and Change in African Women's Organizations will include a paper by Anne Lippert on "Sahrawi Women's Insertion in the Liberation Struggle in Western Sahara." That panel is scheduled from 8:30-11:00 AM. The ASA Annual Meeting is at the McCormick Center Hotel in Chicago from October 28-31.

REPORT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEES FOR HELP TO THE SAHRAWI PEOPLE, JULY 1988

European Parliament:

1. Because of the actions of the Intergroup, two new reporters have been named to allow the Parliament to review its position on the Western Sahara. On May 18, 1988, at Strasbourg, a day of information, political contact, introduction and a Sahrawi cultural evening were held. A delegation of European Committees led by the President, Pierre Galand, was present in force.

National Intergroups Formed:

2. In the past several months national Parliamentary intergroups have been established for the following countries: Austria, Italy, Greece, Belgium, Switzerland, Ireland, Sweden and West Germany. Also being formed are intergroups for Great Britain, Spain, Holland and France.

Reception of Sahrawi Children


Publications:

4. Two dossiers: Violation des Droits de l'Homme (Spain) and Accord de Peche (France) have been published and are available from committees of
those countries. Other publications will become available soon from other committees.

Future Activities:


BROADCASTS ABOUT THE SADR

1. Journalist Carlos Wilson, recently returned from the refugee camps of the Sahrawis in Algeria described his visit on KPOO Radio, 89.5 FM, San Francisco, on August 23, 1988, at 7:45 PM. Wilson's discussion was a follow-up to an earlier discussion on June 21, 1988.

2. SPSC LETTER editor Anne Lippert was interviewed by Chip Young, on KFAI Radio in Minneapolis on August 31, 1988, on the recent peace venture by the UN and the meaning of the agreement by the Polisario Front and Morocco to the referendum.

JOURNALIST VISITS ALL FOUR CAMPS DURING STAY IN SADR

Carlos Wilson, a US journalist who spent 12 days in the Sahrawi refugee camps last June, noted in a telephone interview with the SPSC Letter that the Sahrawis in the camps exhibited a strong belief in their cause and themselves. He visited all the wilaya during his stay. Among developments he noted was that the chicken project which is the major source of protein in the camps is now in full operation. (Polisario sources note that illness due to protein deficiency is now disappearing.) The project, funded by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, is a state-of-the-art computerized and air-conditioned operation which provides eggs and chicken to the refugees.

During his stay Wilson interviewed a number of Moroccan prisoners of war who expressed hope that a settlement might be reached shortly in the conflict. He was accompanied by Sheila Wilson, M.D., during this visit. In August 1987 Wilson had visited the camps and the Western Sahara, crossing the sand walls with Polisario freedom fighters. This visit his interest focussed on the refugee camps.

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PEACE PROCESS CONTINUES ON

During the Arab Summit Meeting held in Algiers June 7-10, SADR Ambassador to Algeria, Mohamed Abdelfettah, attended the Arab League’s opening session and the formal dinner. He was an invited guest to the closing session as well, but did not attend out of deference to concerns for Arab unity. It was reported that Moroccan King Hassan boycotted the dinner.

Following the Arab Summit a meeting of five of the Maghrib states (Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Tunisia and Mauritania) was held with King Fahd of Saudi Arabia in attendance. Questions of bilateral cooperation between the states were discussed and a statement was issued expressing the desire of the five states to have the question of the conflict in Western Sahara resolved. The Financial Times reported August 12 that following the Summit and the meeting of the five Maghrib states two weeks of direct negotiations were held between Morocco and Polisario representatives in the Saudi Arabian city of Jeddah. The Moroccan delegation included a member of King Hassan’s family.

Part of the peace process seems to hinge on the development of the Greater Maghrib; thus, movement toward building the Greater Arab Maghrib has accelerated with the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between Algeria and Morocco. In the past several months Algeria, Mauritania and Tunisia have gradually developed closer ties and cooperative undertakings with the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic. In March representatives of Algeria, Libya, the SADR, Tunisia and Mauritania met in Ouargla, Algeria, to discuss Saharan economics. SADR delegate Mohamed Fadhel Ismail, who is SADR Minister of Commerce, spoke on "For A Better Struggle Against Desertification" at the three-day meeting.

It appears that these efforts at regularization of SADR participation in Maghribi activities including locust control and the movement of all parties in the region toward some acceptance of the idea of the Greater Arab Maghrib have been part of a long-range goal of bringing the conflict to an end. The referendum is a logical conclusion to these efforts.

MOROCCAN/ALGERIAN AGREEMENT SPEAKS TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

In a joint communiqué following reestablishment of diplomatic relations, President Chadli Bendjedid of Algeria and King Hassan II of Morocco noted that "the two parties concerned with encouraging the success of international efforts undertaken with the view to hastening the process of the good offices (UN/OAU) for a just and definitive solution to the conflict in Western Sahara through a fair and free referendum for self-determination, undertaken in the most total sincerity and with no constraints" . . . "have decided upon reestablishing diplomatic relations....."

In an interview in Le Monde (France) and in El Hawadeth
Lebanon) published following the meeting of the five Maghrib states, President Chadli Benda­jedid of Algeria made the follow­ing comments on the reestablish­ment of diplomatic rela­tions between Morocco and Al­geria:

"We consider the reestablish­ment of diplomatic relations with our Moroccan brother to be an important contribution to the establishment of a lasting climate for peace, good neighborliness and cooperation in the Maghrib, a strengthening of Arab ranks and an encouraging step along the way in the search for a just and definitive solution to the conflict between our brothers of the Kingdom of Morocco and of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic in the Sahara."

He noted that Algeria will spare "no effort to help speed up the process for resolving the conflict in conformity with the wishes of Africa, of the international community and with the aspirations of the Moroccan and Sahrawi peoples and brothers." In an interview with Paul Balta published July 2 in El-Bayane (United Arab Emirate), El Djazira (Saudi Arabia) and El Qabas (Kuwait and Great Britain), Bendjedid added that "Algeria supports without reservations the good offices of the UN and the OAU (for the resolution of the conflict) while remaining available to facilitate direct or indirect dialogue between the two warring parties." He noted that "the dynamic of dialogue and of rapprochement which has been established in the region of the Maghrib will extend naturally to the two protagonists in the conflict."

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**NEWS NOTES: THE SADR AROUND THE WORLD AND IN THE NEWS**

1. An Arab/African Women's Conference held in Algiers June 27-29 included Palestinian (PLO), Sahrawi (Polisario Front), Namibian (SWAPO), and South African (ANC) women participants. The theme of the conference was peace and independence and was hosted by the National Union of Algerian Women. Among women present was Oum Jihad, widow of Abou Jihad, the assassinated PLO leader.

2. An SADR delegation led by Mohamed Sidati took part as observers in the working meeting of the Socialist International held in Madrid May 11-12. The delegation met with several of the delegations to the conference.

3. A delegation of the Polisario Front headed by Mahfoud Ali Beida, member of the Executive Committee and Minister of Foreign Affairs, took part in the meetings of the Intergroup Peace in Western Sahara of the European Parliament in Strasbourg May 17-20. A meeting with Michael MacCown, president of the Development Commission of the European Parliament, focused on Sahrawi development efforts and programs that might be realized with European assistance.

A delegation of Sahrawi women led by Guejmoula Ebbe, head of the Sahrawi Women's Union, visited the European Parliament May 17 and 18 and met with women members of Parliament of the different European parliamentary groups. On May 18 a series of film docu-
mentaries on the struggle of the Sahrawis and their daily life were shown in the Parliament.

4. At the close of its meeting in Karlsruhe June 15-18, the socialist youth group of the Social Democratic Party of the German Federal Republic adopted a resolution calling for the recognition of the SADR by West Germany.

5. Mohamed Abdelaziz, SADR President, was in Mali June 18-20 for a working visit with President General Moussa Tjora, current president of the OAU. Ibrahim Hakim, SADR Minister of Information, visited with President Juvenal Habyarimana of Rwanda on June 17 and carried a message to that president from the SADR president concerning bilateral relations between the two nations. Hakim also visited Burundi. Mahfoud Ali Beida, Foreign Affairs, spoke with Rajiv Ghandi, Prime Minister of India on June 17 as well. That meeting was attended by two other SADR officials: Ali Habib Kentaoui, Ambassador to India, and Malainine Sedik.

6. El Moudjahid, Algerian daily paper in French carried the full text of the congratulatory statement by SADR President Mohamed Abdelaziz on the occasion of the Arab Summit meeting. The heading in the June 12 issue read: From the President of the SADR.

Sahrawi Friends celebrate the 15th anniversary of the beginning of their current struggle for independence. Earlier, on May 10, they commemorated the 15th anniversary of the Polisario Front, which held its constituent congress at Ain Bentili under the leadership of Mohamed El Ouali Assayed (Lulei). El Ouali, who was killed in battle during the fighting with Mauritania, appears in image on a number of posters and banners and a number of institutions bear his name.

The international press was in full force for the celebrations on May 20 in the refugee camps. The celebration included a military parade with arms captured from the enemy, battalions of women military personnel, commando units and male battalions and student groups. Following the parade there were visits to an arms display and visits to traditional Sahrawi tents. A number of speeches were given and the evening activities included Sahrawi music and dance.

Sadek Zouaten, member of the permanent secretariat for the FLN led an Algerian delegation to the celebration. In his speech he emphasized Algerian interest in a just and definitive solution to the conflict, a long-standing goal of that nation, according to Zouaten. Other nations represented at the celebration were Mali, Madagascar, Mauritania, Libya, India, Cuba, Austria as well as support groups.