

52nd session of the UN Human Rights Council Adoption – UPR Morocco

Mr. President,

ISACOM, Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights and Right Livelihood deplore the continued blatant disregard of the Kingdom of Morocco for the recommendations received regarding the rights of Saharawi people during this fourth UPR.

The Kingdom of Morocco is the illegal occupant of Western Sahara, where it engages in systematic human rights abuses against the Sahrawi people. Contrary to what the delegation claimed during its review, the authorities systematically prohibit or disperse peaceful protests, and human rights defenders are brutally silenced, surveilled, tortured, and imprisoned arbitrarily.

It is deplorable that the Moroccan delegation rejected any recommendation pertaining to the Sahrawi's right to self-determination and the applicability of the fourth Geneva convention in the territories concerned. Even more unacceptable is the partial acceptance of some recommendations pertaining to Western Sahara, under the false premise that it is a "Southern province" belonging to the Kingdom of Morocco. This is a complete breach of international law, as Western Sahara remains on the UN list of "Non-Self-Governing Territories" since 1963.

In addition, we note that the delegation accepted recommendations on allowing access to the OHCHR to Western Sahara. While we will continue to call for an observation mission to be urgently dispatched to the territories, it is nonetheless crucial that the access provided be unconditional and not linked to absurd demands of the authorities, including to refer to Western Sahara as part of the Moroccan territories, thus implicitly recognizing Morocco's authority. Such unconditional access must also be extended to all international observers, too often expelled upon arrival.

Mr. President,

Given the current severity of the repression in Western Sahara, we call on Morocco to reconsider its position on rejected recommendations pertaining to the right to self-determination of the Saharawi people and to implement without delay all accepted recommendations, in particular number 293 where it commits to respect the human rights of all people in Western Sahara.

UPR recommendations must not be empty promises.