



RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT TO WESTERN SAHARA ON THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF COLONIAL OCCUPATION

Adopted by the European Youth Forum / Forum Jeunesse de
l'Union européenne / Forum des Organisations européennes de la
Jeunesse Council of Members / Extraordinary General Assembly
11-12 November 2005, Brussels (Belgium)

The Western Sahara region has been a Spanish colony since 1958. After decades of protests against the Spanish occupation, the Saharawi people finally achieved international recognition of their demands: even the United Nations has acknowledged their right to self-determination. Yet despite that, in October 1975, Morocco invaded their country ('The green march') and on 14th November 1975, Morocco, Mauritania and Spain signed the 'Tripartite Agreement' - according to which, Spain transferred the administration of Western Sahara to the other two countries. A part of the population remained in the occupied territories, while some of them had to abandon their country and survive in refugee camps in the Algerian desert. Since then, an entire generation of young people have been born and raised in the desert and have never been to their home country.

The European Youth Forum and its Member Organisations, conscious of the important role that young people should play with institutions and national and international organisations in defence of human rights, have always been sensitive to any violation of young people's rights in Europe and in other parts of the world.

Mandated by its Member Organisations, the European Youth Forum works for the development of a better understanding and solidarity between young people, and for the protection of human rights throughout the world.

The Youth Forum has voiced its concerns about the situation of the Western Sahara conflict several times, as it remains one of the last cases of decolonisation yet to be resolved. As such, the Youth Forum has also participated in different co-operation and solidarity actions of support to promote the respect of the rights of the Saharawi Peopleⁱ.

Therefore, the European Youth Forum, following the various United Nations resolutions on this issue, on the 30th anniversary of the colonial occupation of Western Sahara by Morocco:

Recognises and declares its support for the right of the Saharawi people to self-determination and independence after the existence of the conflict for 30 years,

Reaffirms its solidarity with the Saharawi youth in the occupied territories of Western Sahara, in the Saharawi refugee camps, and also with UJSARIOⁱⁱ,

Calls for the search for a just solution to the conflict through the holding of a referendum in accordance with the UN resolutions and, in particular, the Security Council resolution 1459,

Calls upon Member Organisations to join the national and international solidarity movements with the Saharawi People, supporting their struggle to restore their legitimate rights and backing their efforts to

attain a dignified, peaceful and prosperous future for the coming Saharawi generations,

Commits itself to implementing projects and programs that raise awareness of the Saharawi conflict amongst European youth,

Commits itself to deploying all necessary efforts to ensure the European Union and the United Nations honour their commitments and to insist on a definitive political solution to the conflict - a solution that respects the legitimate right of the Saharawi people to self-determination and independence,

Calls upon all European youth organisations to include the conflict of Western Sahara on their political agendas and to devise and enhance programmes of technical co-operation and development for the Saharawi youth, and to foster and strengthen the existing bonds of friendship and co-operation with UJSARIO.

Brussels, 12th November 2005

ⁱ Recently, the European Youth Forum celebrated the first meeting of its Working Unit on Global Affairs and Cooperation in the Saharawi Refugees Camps in Tindouf-Algeria, invited by the Union of Youth of Saguía el Hamra y Río el Oro (UJSario) and the Spanish Youth Council, with the purpose of making the Saharawi youth reality closer to the European Youth Forum Member Organisations, and trying to build a pace of work and solidarity between them.

ⁱⁱ UJSARIO: Youth Union of Saguía el Hamra y Río de Oro (Western Sahara Youth Union).