



Human Rights Council, 21<sup>st</sup> Session  
Geneva, 10 September- 28 September, 2012

Statement by France Libertés -Fondation Danielle Mitterrand

Speaker: Mr. Christian Viret

**Item 6: Universal periodic review**  
**Morocco**

Mr. President,

We congratulate the Working Group for its report on the review of Morocco, whose recommendations largely summarize our concerns.

We are however surprised and concerned by the fact that the concerned State considers that certain recommended measures have already been implemented or are being implemented.

Such is the case of the recommendation to "take measures to ensure the adequate protection of human rights in Western Sahara in light of the reported cases of enforced disappearances, torture and ill-treatment, restrictions on freedom of expression, association and assembly by Moroccan security forces "(130.12). Unfortunately, news still show us the contrary, since these last days' peaceful protests were suppressed during the visit of the Special Rapporteur on Torture to El Aaiun (the capital of Western Sahara).

On the other hand, the recommendation rejected by Morocco "to accept the establishment of a permanent human rights component in the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara" can only be interpreted as a deliberate willingness to put obstacles to any improvement and protection of human rights in a non-self-governing territory.

The Kingdom of Morocco can not ignore that in paragraph 3 of resolution 60/251, the General Assembly mandated the Council of Human Rights to respond to situations of violations of human rights, including gross and systematic violations, and make recommendations. By the same text the General Assembly also decided that the Council of Human Rights should promote effective coordination and mainstreaming of human rights within the UN system.

When the Kingdom of Morocco stated that the recommendation submitted by Uruguay does not fall within the mandate of the Council of Human Rights, we can objectively question the Moroccan compliance with the principles of cooperation and genuine dialogue that General Assembly recommended in paragraph 10 of the preamble of the same resolution 60/251 as a basis for the protection and promotion of human rights.

We believe that as Western Sahara remain on the list of the Special Committee on Decolonization, the United Nations should assume responsibility for the supervision and protection of human rights of the Saharawi people. The Kingdom of Morocco seems to be unwilling neither to recognize past and present violations committed by its authorities against Saharawi colonized people nor to sanction officials accountable for crimes and abuses, maintaining thus a state of unacceptable impunity.

We therefore call on the Council to consider the urgent need for the improvement and protection of human rights in Western Sahara through recommending the creation of a human rights component within the mandate of MINURSO.