

**Question for oral answer O-0183/2010
to the Council**

Rule 115

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on behalf of the ALDE Group

Subject: Worsening situation in Western Sahara

According to numerous reports, the situation in the occupied territories of the Western Sahara has significantly deteriorated in recent weeks. Over 12 000 Sahrawi men, women and children have left their cities and set up tents in the outskirts of the cities El Aaiun, Smara and Boujdour in protest at the ongoing exploitation of Western Sahara's natural resources and their dire socioeconomic situation, as well as the persistent refusal of Morocco to allow a free and fair referendum to be organised by the UN on the fate of the Western Sahara.

In the midst of this deteriorating situation, a 14-year old boy, Al-Nagem Al-Qarhi, was shot dead on 24 October by Moroccan military officers who oversee the camps. According to the reports, he was shot while in a car bringing supplies to one of the camps set up by Sahrawi protesters. Many people in the camps have also started to suffer from illness related to the new inhumane conditions, due to the Moroccan army blockade of the areas. The situation in the camps in the Western Sahara and Tindouf may develop into a real humanitarian tragedy with unpredictable consequences.

1. Will the Council consider calling upon the Moroccan Government to:
 - ensure that humanitarian assistance and other supplies reach the civilian population in the camps unhindered?
 - put an end to its policy of discrimination and abuses of human rights against the Sahrawi people, as well as the plundering of their natural resources?
 - respect its international commitments and allow the people of Western Sahara to freely decide on their future in a free and fair referendum, as recommended by UN Security Council resolutions?
2. What other actions is the Council considering in this respect?

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Forwarded: 12.11.2010

Deadline for reply: 3.12.2010