



Security Council

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Resolution 2703 (2023)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 9460th meeting, on 30 October 2023

The Security Council,

Recalling and *reaffirming* all its previous resolutions on Western Sahara,

Reaffirming its strong support for the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to implement resolutions [1754 \(2007\)](#), [1783 \(2007\)](#), [1813 \(2008\)](#), [1871 \(2009\)](#), [1920 \(2010\)](#), [1979 \(2011\)](#), [2044 \(2012\)](#), [2099 \(2013\)](#), [2152 \(2014\)](#), [2218 \(2015\)](#), [2285 \(2016\)](#), [2351 \(2017\)](#), [2414 \(2018\)](#), [2440 \(2018\)](#), [2468 \(2019\)](#), [2494 \(2019\)](#), [2548 \(2020\)](#), [2602 \(2021\)](#), and [2654 \(2022\)](#),

Expressing its full support for Staffan de Mistura, the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara and his efforts to advance the political process, building on the progress of the former Personal Envoy and in line with relevant precedents; and welcoming the visits undertaken by the Personal Envoy in this regard to the region,

Welcoming the momentum created by the first round-table meeting on 5–6 December 2018 and the second round-table meeting on 21–22 March 2019, and the engagement by Morocco, the Frente POLISARIO, Algeria, and Mauritania in the UN political process on Western Sahara in a serious and respectful manner in order to identify elements of convergence; and *recalling* the important contributions of the former Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara in holding the round-table process, and *further welcoming* the convening by the current Personal Envoy of informal consultations with Morocco, the Frente POLISARIO, Algeria and Mauritania as well as France, the Russian Federation, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States, at the United Nations headquarters on 27–31 March 2023,

Encouraging the continuation of consultations between the Personal Envoy and Morocco, the Frente POLISARIO, Algeria and Mauritania in this regard to build on the progress achieved,

Reaffirming its commitment to assist the parties to achieve a just, lasting, and mutually acceptable political solution, based on compromise, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in the context of arrangements consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, and noting the role and responsibilities of the parties in this respect,

Reiterating its call upon Morocco, the Frente POLISARIO, Algeria, and Mauritania to cooperate more fully with each other, including through building



additional trust, and with the United Nations, as well as to strengthen their involvement in the political process and to achieve progress towards a political solution,

Recognizing that achieving a political solution to this long-standing dispute and enhanced cooperation between the Member States of the Maghreb Arab Union would contribute to stability and security, in turn leading to jobs, growth and opportunities for all the peoples in the Sahel region,

Welcoming the efforts of the Secretary-General to keep all peacekeeping operations, including the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), under close review and reiterating the need for the Council to pursue a rigorous, strategic approach to peacekeeping deployments, and effective management of resources,

Recalling resolution [2378 \(2017\)](#) and its request of the Secretary-General to ensure that data related to the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations, including peacekeeping performance data, is used to improve analytics and the evaluation of mission operations, based on clear and well identified benchmarks, and further recalling resolution [2436 \(2018\)](#) and its request of the Secretary-General to ensure that decisions to recognize and incentivize outstanding performance and decisions regarding deployment, remediation, training, withholding of financial reimbursement, and repatriation of uniformed or dismissal of civilian personnel, are predicated on objective performance data,

Recalling resolution [2242 \(2015\)](#) and [2538 \(2020\)](#) and its aspiration to increase the number of women in military and police contingents of United Nations peacekeeping operations,

Recognizing the important role played by MINURSO on the ground and the need for it to conduct the safe and regular resupply of its team sites, to conduct patrols throughout its area of responsibility, and to fully implement its mandate, including its role in supporting the Personal Envoy to achieve a mutually acceptable political solution, and *welcoming* the progress made by MINURSO for the resupply of its team sites in order to sustain these crucial operations,

Noting with deep concern the breakdown of the ceasefire,

Expressing concern about the violations of agreements made with the United Nations and reiterating the importance of full and renewed adherence to these commitments, and taking note of the commitments provided by the Frente POLISARIO to the former Personal Envoy,

Taking note of the Moroccan proposal presented on 11 April 2007 to the Secretary-General and welcoming serious and credible Moroccan efforts to move the process forward towards resolution; also taking note of the Frente POLISARIO proposal presented 10 April 2007 to the Secretary-General,

Encouraging in this context the parties to demonstrate further political will towards a solution including by expanding upon their discussion of each other's proposals and recommitting to UN efforts in a spirit of realism and compromise, further encouraging neighbouring countries to make contributions to the political process; and stressing the importance of all concerned expanding on their positions in order to advance a solution,

Encouraging the parties to cooperate further with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees in identifying and implementing confidence-building measures that can serve to foster the trust necessary for a successful political process,

Stressing the importance of improving the human rights situation in Western Sahara and the Tindouf camps, and encouraging the parties to work with the international community to develop and implement independent and credible measures to ensure full respect for human rights, bearing in mind their relevant obligations under international law,

Encouraging the parties to sustain and prioritize their respective efforts to enhance the promotion and protection of human rights in Western Sahara and the Tindouf refugee camps, including the freedoms of expression and association,

Welcoming in this regard, steps and initiatives taken by Morocco, and the role played by the National Council on Human Rights Commissions operating in Dakhla and Laayoune, and Morocco's interaction with Special Procedures of the United Nations Human Rights Council,

Urging enhancing cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), including through facilitating visits to the region,

Noting with deep concern the continued hardships faced by Sahrawi refugees, their dependency on external humanitarian assistance, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and further noting with deep concern insufficient funding for those living in Tindouf refugee camps and the risks associated with the reduction of food assistance; and strongly encouraging donors to provide additional funds in light of the deteriorating humanitarian situation and for aid agencies to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance in accordance with United Nations best practices,

Strongly reiterating its request for a refugee registration in the Tindouf refugee camps and emphasizing the importance of efforts being made in this regard,

Recalling United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325 and 2250 and related resolutions; stressing the importance of a commitment by the parties to continue the process of negotiations through the United Nations-sponsored talks and encouraging the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and active and meaningful participation of youth in these talks,

Recognizing that the status quo is not acceptable, and noting further that progress in negotiations is essential in order to improve the quality of life of the people of Western Sahara in all its aspects,

Affirming its full support for Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara and Head of MINURSO Alexander Ivanko,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 2 October 2023 (S/2023/729),

1. *Decides* to extend the mandate of MINURSO until 31 October 2024;
2. *Emphasizes* the need to achieve a realistic, practicable, enduring and mutually acceptable political solution to the question of Western Sahara based on compromise and the importance of aligning the strategic focus of MINURSO and orienting resources of the United Nations to this end;
3. *Expresses* its full support for the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to facilitate the negotiations process in order to achieve a solution to the Western Sahara question, building on the progress and framework of the former Personal Envoy, and strongly welcoming the efforts of the current Personal Envoy, including to this end his convening on 27–31 March 2023 of informal consultations, and *strongly encourages* Morocco, the Frente POLISARIO, Algeria, and Mauritania to engage with the Personal Envoy throughout the duration of this process, in a spirit of realism and compromise, to ensure a successful outcome;

4. *Calls upon* the parties to resume negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General without preconditions and in good faith, taking into account the efforts made since 2006 and subsequent developments with a view to achieving a just, lasting, and mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in the context of arrangements consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, and noting the role and responsibilities of the parties in this respect;

5. *Invites* Member States to lend appropriate assistance and support to these talks and to the Personal Envoy's efforts;

6. *Reaffirms* the need for full respect of the military agreements reached with MINURSO with regard to the ceasefire and calls on the parties to comply fully with those agreements, implement their commitments to the former Personal Envoy, and refrain from any actions that could undermine UN-facilitated negotiations or further destabilize the situation in the Western Sahara;

7. *Reiterates* its call upon all parties to cooperate fully with MINURSO, including its free interaction with all interlocutors, and to take the necessary steps to ensure the security of as well as unhindered movement and immediate access for the United Nations and associated personnel in carrying out their mandate, in conformity with agreements made with the United Nations;

8. *Calls for* the safe and regular resupply of MINURSO team sites to ensure the sustainability of the Mission's presence;

9. *Emphasizes* the importance of a renewed commitment by the parties to advancing the political process in preparation for further negotiations, recalls its endorsement of the recommendation in the report of 14 April 2008 ([S/2008/251](#)) that realism and a spirit of compromise by the parties are essential to achieve progress in negotiations, encourages the neighbouring countries to make important, active contributions to this process; and stresses the importance of all concerned expanding on their positions in order to advance a solution;

10. *Calls upon* the parties to demonstrate political will and work in an atmosphere propitious for dialogue in order to advance negotiations, thus ensuring implementation of resolutions [1754 \(2007\)](#), [1783 \(2007\)](#), [1813 \(2008\)](#), [1871 \(2009\)](#), [1920 \(2010\)](#), [1979 \(2011\)](#), [2044 \(2012\)](#), [2099 \(2013\)](#), [2152 \(2014\)](#), [2218 \(2015\)](#), [2285 \(2016\)](#), [2351 \(2017\)](#), [2414 \(2018\)](#), [2440 \(2018\)](#), [2468 \(2019\)](#), [2494 \(2019\)](#), [2548 \(2020\)](#), [2602 \(2021\)](#), and [2654 \(2022\)](#) and the success of negotiations;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to brief the Security Council on a regular basis, and at any time he deems appropriate during the mandate period, to include within six months of this mandate's renewal and again prior to its expiration, on the status and progress of these negotiations under his auspices, on the implementation of this resolution, assessment of MINURSO's operations and steps taken to address challenges, expresses its intention to meet to receive and discuss his briefings and in this regard, further requests the Secretary-General to provide a report on the situation in Western Sahara well before the end of the mandate period;

12. *Welcomes* the initiatives undertaken by the Secretary-General to standardize a culture of performance in UN peacekeeping, and reaffirms its support for the development of a comprehensive and integrated performance policy framework that identifies clear standards of performance for evaluating all United Nations civilian and uniformed personnel working in and supporting peacekeeping operations that facilitates effective and full implementation of mandates, and includes comprehensive and objective methodologies based on clear and well-defined benchmarks to ensure accountability for underperformance and incentives and recognition for outstanding performance, and calls on him to apply this framework to

MINURSO as described in resolution 2436 (2018), and requests the Secretary-General to seek to increase the number of women in MINURSO, as well as to ensure the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women in all aspects of operations;

13. *Urges* the parties and neighbouring states to engage productively with MINURSO as it further considers how new technologies can be used to reduce risk, improve force protection, and better implement its mandate;

14. *Encourages* the parties to cooperate with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to identify and implement confidence-building measures, including to engage women and youth, and encourages neighbouring states to support these efforts;

15. *Strongly urges* Member States to provide new and additional voluntary contributions to fund food programmes to ensure that the humanitarian needs of refugees are adequately addressed and avoid reductions in food rations; and urges aid agencies to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid in accordance with United Nations best practices;

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to take necessary measures to ensure full compliance of all personnel in MINURSO with the United Nations zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and to keep the Council fully informed through his reports to the Council about the Mission's progress in this regard, and urges troop-contributing and police-contributing countries to continue taking appropriate preventative action including vetting of all personnel, predeployment and in-mission awareness training, and to ensure full accountability in cases of such conduct involving their personnel through timely investigation of allegations by troop-contributing and police-contributing countries and MINURSO, as appropriate;

17. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.
