

810
600439

London, 10th March 1980.

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher,
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London S.W.1.

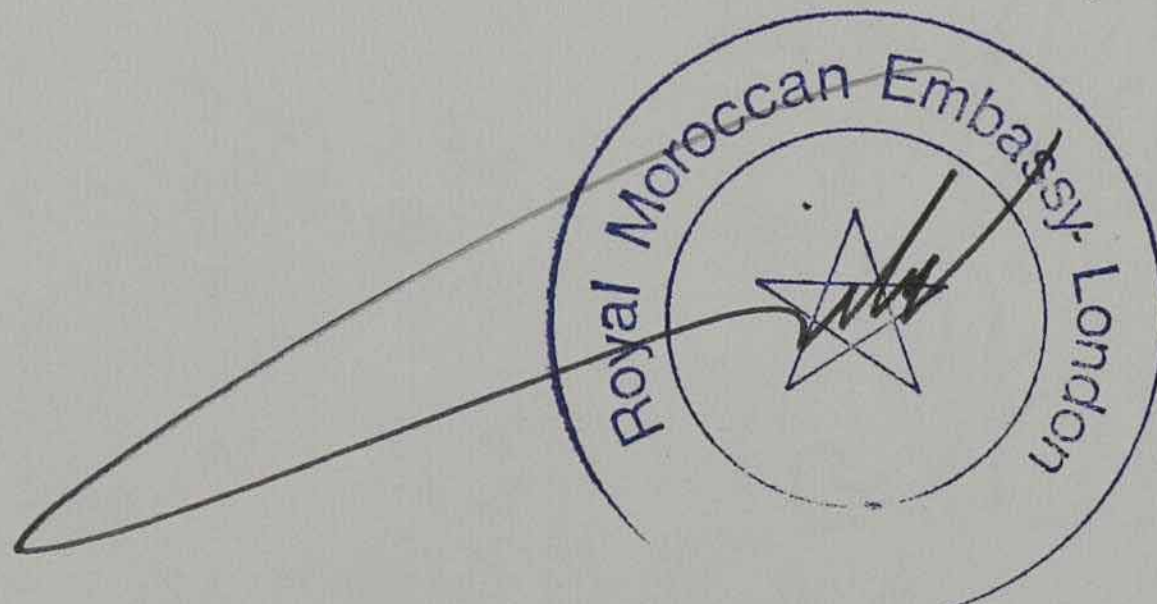
Dear Prime Minister,

It is with great pleasure that I have learnt of your decision to meet our former Moroccan Prime Minister and current Chairman of the Independents' Movement, Mr. Ahmed Osman, during his stay in the United Kingdom this week.

In anticipation of this meeting, I am taking the liberty of enclosing for your perusal a copy of the letter which I recently sent to each Conservative Party Member of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, and which contains information of vital importance to a fair appraisal of the situation, past and present, in North-West Africa.

Please accept, dear Prime Minister, my sincere wishes for a warm and fruitful discussion with Mr. Osman, and the assurance of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,



Badreddine Senoussi
Ambassador

London, 5th February 1980

I have been made aware that some of your colleagues at the European Parliament are about to sponsor two Draft Resolutions with a view to condemning Morocco for what is erroneously labelled "occupation of the Western Sahara" and recognising a puppet state called the "Sahrawi Republic".

Such a move, if successful, will only deepen further the injustice caused to the entire Moroccan nation and widen the threat of an expanding confrontation in North West Africa. It would be even more regrettable that such a situation should be created because of misjudgment or inadequate appraisal of what really lies behind the Sahara issue. This is why I submit to you the following facts:

THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO HAS BEEN IN EXISTENCE FOR CENTURIES AS A FULLY-FLEDGED STATE WITHIN INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED BOUNDARIES. Its recent history, however, was marked by a unique type of colonisation. One of its most outstanding features was the fact that no less than 12 foreign powers took part in the assault on its sovereignty. But two of these, France and Spain, managed to establish a joint protectorate and divided the country into different zones of influence. Consequently, independence was regained by Morocco only in successive stages. The latest of such efforts to complete territorial integrity culminated in the recovery of the Sahara. Unfortunately, violence and propaganda have now made it difficult to mention the Western Sahara without referring to "Polisario". So what is "Polisario", one may ask?

LET US FIRST REMEMBER THAT NEITHER THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANISATION, NOR SUCH BODIES AS THE O.A.U., THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES, AND THE INTERPARLIAMENTARY UNION, HAVE RECOGNISED IT AS A LIBERATION MOVEMENT. WHY?

Because a liberation movement normally resists the colonial power and eventually takes up arms to force it out of its territory. Oddly enough, "Polisario" came into existence only AFTER the coloniser had been driven out by Moroccan

nationalists. "POLISARIO" NEVER FIRED A SHOT AT THE SPANISH OCCUPIER FOR THE SIMPLE REASON THAT IT DID NOT EXIST. It was in fact pieced together by Algeria and Libya, who pooled their efforts, funds and propaganda machinery to provide it with mercenaries, weapons and training. Now it has developed into a powerful force of destabilisation and destruction, using Algerian territory to launch its treacherous assaults on Moroccan towns and villages.

Moreover it is quite surprising that Algeria discovered the existence of a "Sahrawi people" only in 1974, that is, after Morocco had successfully fought the legal battle of decolonisation against Spain. Algeria's hostility to the Moroccan-Spanish agreement was in blatant contradiction with a pledge solemnly made earlier by no less than the former Algerian Head of State. The late President Houari Boumedienne, addressing his peers at the 7th Arab Summit Conference in Rabat, stated that ALGERIA WOULD HELP MOROCCO IN EVERY POSSIBLE WAY IN ITS EFFORT TO FREE WESTERN SAHARA FROM SPANISH COLONIAL RULE.

But not only did Algeria invent the hitherto unheard-of idea of "Sahrawi people"; she now puts their number at over one million, whereas the official figure given by the Spanish authorities themselves, following a population census carried out in 1974, was no more than 74,000. This incredible gap suggests that the "Sahrawis" have accomplished a feat unprecedented in the annals of population growth!

Algerian-engineered propaganda claims that tens of thousands of such fictitious Sahrawis have fled to Algeria as refugees. Apart from the highly questionable figure quoted for the people involved, it is even more deceptive to speak of refugees. THE FACT IS THAT THOSE CIVILIANS HAVE BEEN DISPLACED FROM THEIR SAHARAN DWELLINGS AND BUSINESSES AGAINST THEIR WILL AND THROWN INTO CAMPS AROUND THE CITY OF TINDOUF INSIDE ALGERIAN TERRITORY. Some of them have been press-ganged into the ranks of Polisario. Others are being kept for indoctrination and blackmail purposes.

In this regard it is quite interesting to know that Algeria has always refused the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (HCR) permission to assess the exact number and origin of the people sequestered in the Tindouf camps and presented as "refugees". Because of this refusal, HCR has now decided to suspend all assistance to these pseudo-refugees.

Algeria also contends that the Sahara population should be allowed to express its will through self-determination. But Algeria wilfully ignores that this is precisely what happened when the people involved elected their representative body (the Jemaa) and participated directly in national and regional elections. IT WAS PRECISELY IN THE EXERCISE OF SELF-DETERMINATION THAT THOSE PEOPLE ASSEMBLED AND VOICED IN UNISON THEIR ALLEGIANCE TO THE MONARCH.

* * *

YES, there is a Sahara crisis; there is a real threat of armed conflict between Morocco and Algeria! To defuse the situation, every conceivable attempt has been made by Morocco to enter into negotiations with Algeria. A number of goodwilled Heads of State have offered to mediate. But Algeria has arrogantly brushed aside every conciliatory gesture on the grounds that it has no problem with Morocco and that it is only defending the sacrosanct principle of self-determination. But the truth is that behind such seemingly altruistic concern lies a web of more selfish and sordid motivations:

- Apart from the Sahara, Algeria still has an unsettled border problem with Morocco.
- Algeria is obsessively seeking an outlet on the Atlantic Ocean for shipment of its iron ore lying idle in the south-western part of the country. The distant Mediterranean outlet has proven to be far too costly and uncompetitive.
- Algeria has taken prominence within the Third World and is now making no secret of its hegemonistic designs on the North West African region.

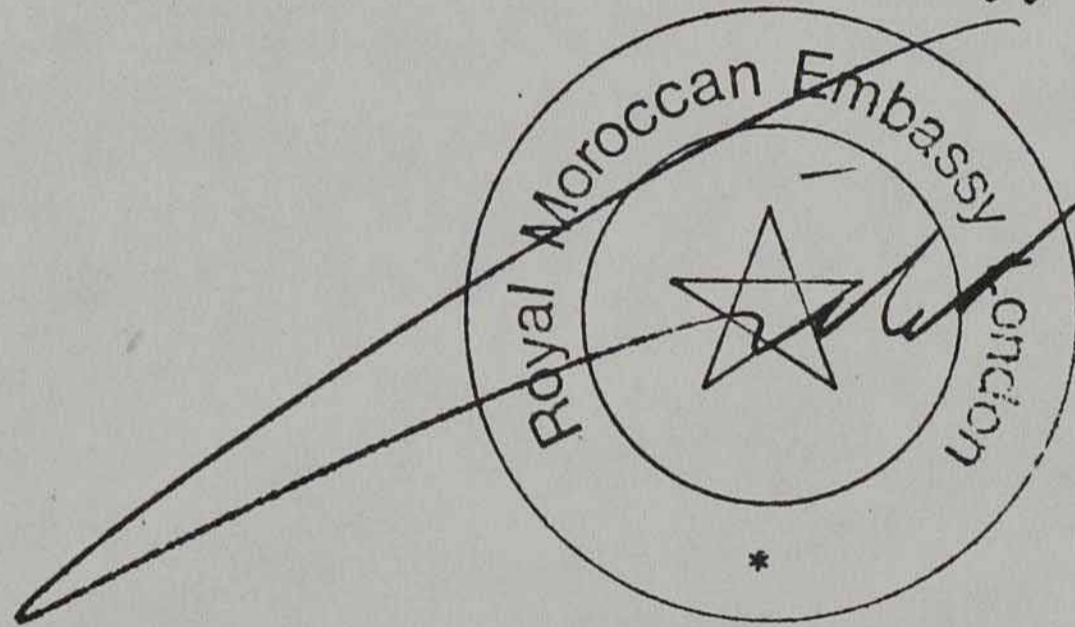
Morocco in the meantime has not given up hope of bringing about a negotiated settlement of this artificial problem. Apart from accepting wholeheartedly all goodwill missions offered up to now, my government has called on the leaders of African countries bordering on the Sahara from the Atlantic to the Red Sea to sit around a negotiating table in order to:

- Discuss the possibility of pooling the human and material resources of the whole region with the aim of defeating hunger, ignorance and fear;

- Work out a formula whereby free access to the sea would be granted to landlocked countries such as Mali, Chad and Niger;
- Integrate the ensuing grouping into the wider scope of Euro-Afro-Arab cooperation.

Such, then, are the facts and prospects concerning the Sahara question. Unless they are fully taken into account, any decision taken on the matter would be inadequate, unfair and highly detrimental to the cause of peace and stability in North West Africa.

Yours sincerely,



Badreddine Senoussi
Ambassador