

Thursday, 17 May 2012

## Western Sahara

The Australian Council of Trade Unions notes that:

- Morocco has occupied Western Sahara since 1975;
- UN efforts to accomplish the decolonisation process in Western Sahara have not been successful;
- For the past 37 years, over 165,000 Saharawis have lived in dire conditions in refugee camps in South West of Algeria, awaiting return to their occupied homeland;
- The only just, legal and lasting solution to the conflict in Western Sahara, is to end the Moroccan illegal occupation and allow the Sahara people to exercise their right to self-determination, in accordance with the UN decolonisation doctrine;
- The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the European Parliament, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have all called on the UN to extend the mandate of its mission in Western Sahara to monitor the human rights situation.

Congress:

- Strongly supports the right of the Saharawi people to self-determination and independence;
- Condemns the gross violations of human rights in the occupied territories of Western Sahara;
- Calls on the Moroccan Government to respect human rights in the Saharawi occupied territories and to release all Saharawi political detainees forthwith;
- Urges the UN to expand the mandate of its mission in Western Sahara to include human rights monitoring; and
- Calls on the UN to proceed without further delay with the organisation of the long overdue referendum of self-determination.

Congress urges the Australian Government to:

- Support the right of the Saharawi people to self-determination in accordance with UN resolutions and relevant UN decolonisation doctrines;
- Call on Australian companies to end the importation of phosphate from Western Sahara through agreements made with Moroccan regime;
- Pressure Morocco to end human rights abuses in the occupied areas of Western Sahara; and
- Provide humanitarian assistance to Saharawi refugee camps situated in the Southwest of Algeria.