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Western Sahara

# **Faced with the war escalation: with the Saharawi people, for their right of self-determination and the end of the occupation**

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**The current situation in Western Sahara is extremely serious and represents a qualitative leap and a historical event before which we cannot remain impassive.**

In the past 45 years, Morocco has not complied with the Peace and Human Rights Accords at any time. The illegal occupation of the territory, the blockade of the referendum, the human rights violations against the Sahrawi population and the plundering of their natural resources are a good example of this. For three years, these breaches have been compounded by the construction of a road that crosses the Guerguerat pass, once again in breach of the 1991 agreements, with the clear intention of exporting the goods resulting from the plunder of the occupied territory.

Activists and Sahrawi civilians had been protesting peacefully for three weeks at this point when the Moroccan army attacked them, to which the Sahrawi People's Liberation Army responded legitimately to protect its citizens. This is de facto the biggest act of warfare by Morocco since the ceasefire.

*Anticapitalistas* energetically condemns this new attack on human rights and the breaking of the ceasefire by the Moroccan regime, as well as recognizing the right of the Saharawi people and the Polisario Front, as their representatives, to the legitimate defence of its population, its territory and the right of self-determination, which is supported by all international legality and the Peace Accords.

Spain is not a neutral agent in this conflict. Spain is politically responsible for the situation and is also the administering power of Western Sahara, as the UN has recognized. Therefore, the Spanish government cannot continue to maintain a false pose of neutrality in the face of the situation in recent days. The statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs appealing to the UN to guarantee respect for the ceasefire, while it has been ignoring and failing to comply with the commitment to hold a referendum on self-determination as set out in the 1991 agreements, is a position that de facto sides with the Moroccan regime and against international law.

This is in addition to other actions by this government that in the last year has made clear its position with the Moroccan regime, following the trend of various Spanish governments in the last forty-five years since the so-called Madrid agreements. The gift of police equipment, through a Ministry of Foreign Affairs foundation, to the Moroccan regime or the visits of the Minister to Rabat in the heat of controversy over the sovereignty of Saharawi waters are an example of this.

It is at times like these that the presence of Unidas Podemos ministers should be visible, forcing the government to take steps to stop being a problem as it has been until now and to become part of the solution to the political problem in the Sahara. But on the contrary, both Podemos and Izquierda Unida and their ministers have settled for generic statements that do not condemn the Moroccan attack on the Saharawi people. For this reason, we demand from the Spanish government the immediate condemnation of the breaking of the ceasefire by Morocco, that it assumes its role as formally administering the territory and guarantees respect for the human, social and economic rights of the Saharawi people as a step prior to ensuring a just, peaceful, democratic and lasting solution to this conflict, which inevitably requires respect for the right to self-determination of the Sahrawi people.

The impossibility of reaching a peaceful solution and, therefore, a return to an armed conflict is today too plausible a scenario. In the event that responsibilities occur, they will have to be sought among those who have done nothing or have directly obstructed an incomplete decolonization process that still requires a referendum and many outstanding commitments. And let no one hide behind an international community without names and surnames.

*Anticapitalistas* reiterates its commitment to the right of self-determination of the Saharawi people and we will work in the coming weeks, together with the solidarity movement and the Polisario Front, to organize a citizens' response in our country that pressures the government to change its position and end the historic support that all governments to date, without exception, have provided to the Moroccan regime and the occupation.

17 November 2020

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