

PARLAMENTO EUROPEO



DIPUTADO AL PARLAMENTO EUROPEO

Ms Federica MOGHERINI

High representative of the European Union for foreign affairs and security policy

Brussels, 29th of March 2017,

Madam High Representative,

On the 29th of July of 2016, the Sahrawi political prisoners of the “Gdeim Izik” group were informed that their case would be heard again by a civil court, following international protests against their illegal conviction by a military court in 2013, to sentences ranging from 20 years to life imprisonment.

The brutality and illegality of their confinement, for over 6 years, for no other crime than their peaceful demands for the right of the Sahrawi people to self-determination has been condemned by international institutions (such as the UN) and independent observers alike. One of the members of the group, Hassanna Aalia, was granted international protection by the Spanish courts for these very reasons.

Proceedings on the new civil procedure started on the 13th of March in the Rabat, an extra-territorial court given the fact that the Kingdom of Morocco has no recognized jurisdiction over Western Sahara.

Before that, the presiding judge had already undermined the United Nations Convention against Torture and the decision of the UN Committee against Torture (CAT/C59/D/606/2014) on the case of Eenaama Asfari, one of the members of the Gdeim Izik, by declaring that the legal application of the international convention on torture was not a matter of concern for the Court. It should be remembered that the accusations against “Gdeim Izik” group rest fundamentally on oral declarations that the prisoners have repeatedly declared to have been falsified and obtained under torture.

International observers have repeatedly denounced that the proceedings have failed to comply with international legal standards, since torture will not be investigated under the Istanbul Protocol and the accused have been repeatedly harassed during the trial.

The obstacles to Sahrawi families and observers to participate in the trial add to an atmosphere of intimidation that confirm the political character of the proceedings.

We, as Members of the European Parliament, express our solidarity with the “Gdeim Izik” group and demand your intervention to ensure that:

- The families of the “Gdeim Izik”, along with Sahrawi and other international observers are allowed free access to the trial;
- All current charges against the “Gdeim Izik” group are lifted and the prisoners released;
- The fundamental rights of all Sahrawi political prisoners are upheld;

Sincerely yours,

Paloma López Bermejo (GUE/NGL)

Ana Maria Gomes (S&D)

Ivo Vajgl (ALDE)

Florent Marcellesi (Verts/ALE)

Fabio Massimo Castaldo (EFDD)

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Martina Anderson (GUE/NGL)

Matt Carthy (GUE/NGL)

Lynn Boylan (GUE/NGL)

Liadh Ní Riada (GUE/NGL)

Tania González Peñas (GUE/NGL)

Javier Nart (ALDE)

Josu Juaristi (GUE/NGL)

Yannick Jadot (Verts/ALE)

Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE)

Karima Delli (Verts/ALE)

Sabine Lösing (GUE/NGL)

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