

MESTRADO EM ESTUDOS AFRICANOS

WESTERN SAHARA - Olof Rydbeck
**His mission as Special Representative of UN Secretary-
General, Kurt Waldheim**

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Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto

2025

*To Maitre Olfa Ouled, Sidi Abdallah Abbahah, Fito Alvarez Tombo, José Manuel de la
Fuente, and Rosario García Díaz*

*For your courage, your unwavering commitment to justice, and your tireless defense
of human dignity.*

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I further declare that I have not used generative artificial intelligence tools (chatbots based on large language models) to carry out part(s) of this dissertation.

[Porto, Data]

Isabel Maria Gonçalves da Silva Tavares Lourenço

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As Julian Assange stated:

"If wars can be started by lies, peace can be started by truth."

Resumo

O conflito do Sahara Ocidental continua a ser um dos conflitos mais longos do mundo, uma vez que o povo saharauí continua a lutar pela sua autodeterminação sob a ocupação marroquina. Esta dissertação analisa a missão de Olof Rydbeck, o primeiro representante especial do Secretário-Geral das Nações Unidas, Kurt Waldheim, nomeado em 1976 para avaliar a situação no Sahara Ocidental. A missão de Rydbeck teve lugar numa altura crítica após a retirada de Espanha e a invasão marroquina-mauritana, levantando questões importantes sobre a intervenção da ONU e a eficácia diplomática.

Este estudo reconstitui os esforços diplomáticos de Rydbeck e analisa o conteúdo e as implicações dos seus relatórios, que permaneceram em grande parte inacessíveis durante décadas. Examina as consequências da sua missão e avalia se as suas conclusões influenciaram a política subsequente da ONU. Ao examinar os arquivos diplomáticos e os documentos desclassificados disponíveis, esta dissertação lança luz sobre o papel de Rydbeck na definição do envolvimento inicial da ONU no conflito do Sahara Ocidental. O estudo situa igualmente a missão de Rydbeck no quadro mais vasto dos enviados pessoais e especiais da ONU e da sua eficácia na mediação de conflitos. As comparações com enviados posteriores, realçam as limitações práticas e políticas enfrentadas pelos mediadores da ONU. A dissertação argumenta que a missão de Rydbeck foi uma iniciativa diplomática precoce e estabeleceu um precedente para o futuro envolvimento da ONU no Sahara Ocidental, mas acabou por não conseguir alterar o curso do conflito devido a constrangimentos políticos, influências externas e resistência marroquina.

Ao reavaliar a missão de Rydbeck, este estudo contribui para a compreensão do conflito do Sahara Ocidental e do papel das Nações Unidas nos esforços de descolonização diplomática. Também fornece informações sobre os desafios da mediação internacional em conflitos prolongados em geral.

Palavras-chave: Sahara Ocidental, Olof Rydbeck, Nações Unidas, autodeterminação, mediação diplomática

Abstract

The Western Sahara conflict remains one of the world's longest running conflicts, as the Sahrawi people continue their struggle for self-determination under Moroccan occupation. This dissertation examines the mission of Olof Rydbeck, the first Special Representative of United Nations Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, who was appointed in 1976 to assess the situation in Western Sahara. Rydbeck's mission took place at a critical time following Spain's withdrawal and the Moroccan-Mauritanian invasion, raising important questions about UN intervention and diplomatic effectiveness.

This study reconstructs Rydbeck's diplomatic efforts and analyses the content and implications of his reports, which have remained largely inaccessible for decades. It examines the consequences of his mission and assesses whether his findings influenced subsequent UN policy. By examining diplomatic archives and available declassified documents, this dissertation sheds light on Rydbeck's role in shaping the UN's early involvement in the Western Sahara conflict.

The study also situates Rydbeck's mission within the broader framework of UN Personal and Special Envoys and their effectiveness in conflict mediation. Comparisons with later envoys, highlight the practical and political limitations faced by UN mediators. The dissertation argues that Rydbeck's mission was an early diplomatic initiative and set a precedent for future UN involvement in Western Sahara, but ultimately failed to change the course of the conflict due to political constraints, external influences and Moroccan resistance.

By reassessing Rydbeck's mission, this study contributes to the understanding of the Western Sahara conflict and the role of the United Nations in diplomatic decolonisation efforts. It also provides insights into the challenges of international mediation in protracted conflicts in general.

Key-words: Western Sahara, Olof Rydbeck, United Nations, self-determination, diplomatic mediation

Image Index

FIGURE 1- UN ARCHIVES SERIES 0904, BOX 49, FILE 5 ACC. DAG 1/5.3.2.8 52

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FIGURE 3- NU/141/76/AO 75

List of abbreviations and acronyms

AU	African Union
ALN	Armée de Libération Nationale
DNI	Documento de Identificación Nacional (National Identification Document)
DPPA	Department of Political and Peace Building Affairs
EEUU	Estado Unidos de America (United States of America)
FAR	Forces Armées Royales (Moroccan Royal Armed Forces)
ICJ	International Criminal Court
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ISTLIQAL	MOROCCAN INDEPENDENCE PARTY
MAP	Maghreb Arabe Press
MINURSO.....	Mission de Nations Unies pour el Referendum au Sahara Occidental
MP	Popular Movement
MPDC	Popular Constitutional and Democratic Movement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OAU	Organization of African Unity
ONU	Organização das Nações Unidas
OSCE.....	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OXFAM	OXFORD COMMITTEE FOR FAMINE RELIEF
PESG	Personal Envoy of Secretary-General
PLUSD.....	Public Library of the US Diplomacy-Wikileaks
POLISARIO FRONT	Frente Popular de Liberación de Saguía El Hamra y Río de Oro
PSC	President of the Security Council

PUNS Partido de Union Nacional Saharaui (Sahrawi
 National Union Party)
 SADRSahrawi Arab Democratic Republic
 SG Secretary-General
 SPS Sahara Press Service
 SRSG Special Representative of the Secretary-
 General
 UA União Africana
 UK United Kingdom
 UN..... United Nations
 UNGA United Nations General Assembly
 UNHQUnited Nations Headquarters
 UNSC United Nations Security Council
 UNSG United Nations Secretary-General
 UNTERM United Nations Multilingual Terminology
 Database
 USA United States do América
 USFP (Union Socialist de Forces Populaires) Socialist
 Union of Popular Forces

Introduction

Presentation of the Theme

The Western Sahara conflict has been one of the most prolonged and complex in modern international relations. The region, located in North Africa, was colonized by Spain until 1975. Shortly before Spain's withdrawal, Morocco and Mauritania invaded the territory, despite the Sahrawi people's right to self-determination, as enshrined in international law. The situation has led to decades of instability, with numerous diplomatic initiatives attempting to resolve the conflict, albeit with limited success.

One of the key figures involved in the early diplomatic efforts was the Swedish Ambassador Olof Rydbeck, appointed in 1976 by United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) Kurt Waldheim as his Special Representative to the region. Rydbeck's mission came at a critical juncture, just after Morocco's military action in Western Sahara in October 1975 and the subsequent occupation and settler introduction called "Green March" in November which saw tens of thousands of Moroccans move into the territory. His task was to assess the situation on the ground and provide the UNSG and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) with an independent evaluation of the evolving political and military dynamics.

Despite Rydbeck's central role in the early stages of the United Nations (UN) involvement in the Western Sahara conflict, his reports and conclusions have remained largely classified for decades. This lack of transparency, resulting in and combined with the scarce academic attention given to his mission, has raised important questions regarding the reasons for such secrecy and the impact of his work on the subsequent actions of the UN. Furthermore, the continuation of the occupation remains at the heart of global debates on self-determination, territorial integrity, and human rights and makes the study of Rydbeck's role particularly relevant.

This dissertation seeks to explore Olof Rydbeck's mission, retracing his diplomatic steps, assessing his reports, and analyzing the reasons behind their classification, as well as the difficulties he encountered. The study will also examine how his work influenced the

UN's actions and how the lessons learned from his mission could be applied to current efforts for conflict resolution in the region.

Justification for Choosing the Topic

The decision to explore the role of Olof Rydbeck in the Western Sahara conflict is grounded in the apparent lack of comprehensive scholarly work addressing his mission. While much has been written about the involvement of subsequent Personal Envoys to the region, such as James Baker III, Christopher Ross, and Horst Köhler, Rydbeck's efforts remain under-explored. This gap in literature is particularly striking given the pivotal moment in history during which Rydbeck was tasked with assessing the situation, just as the invasion of Western Sahara had turned it into a focal point of international diplomacy.

Additionally, the classification of Rydbeck's reports and the limited access to key documents have hindered a deeper understanding of his contribution. The classification of these materials raises significant questions. Why was the work of the first Special Representative of the UNSG to Western Sahara not available for public scrutiny, especially when the efforts of subsequent envoys have been widely accessible?

The scarcity of information about Rydbeck's mission stands in stark contrast to the extensive documentation available on later UN efforts in Western Sahara. This discrepancy highlights a critical gap in the study of the conflict and offers an opportunity for a more nuanced understanding of the role those individual diplomats and envoys played in shaping the UN's approach to the region. As a result, the need to investigate Rydbeck's mission, its outcomes, and its influence on subsequent diplomatic efforts is both timely and necessary.

Furthermore, the ongoing nature of the Western Sahara conflict, particularly in light of the resumption of armed hostilities in 2020 (A/31/59_S/12002), underscores the continued relevance of Rydbeck's work. Despite the passage of nearly five decades, the conflict remains unresolved, with Morocco's occupation of Western Sahara persisting and the Sahrawi people continuing to call for their legitimate right to self-determination. Understanding the early efforts to mediate the conflict, as represented by Rydbeck's

mission, can offer valuable insights into why the international community has struggled to resolve the issue and what lessons can be drawn for future peace efforts.

Objectives of the Thesis

The central aim of this thesis is to explore the role of Olof Rydbeck as the Special Representative of the UNSG to Western Sahara and to assess the impact of his mission on the UN's response to the conflict. This will be achieved by:

1. Retracing the key steps of Rydbeck's mission, including his assessment of the situation on the ground and the recommendations he made to the UNSG.
2. Investigating the reasons behind the classification of his reports and the lack of scholarly attention to his work. What factors may have contributed to this omission, and how did it affect the UN's approach to Western Sahara?
3. Evaluating the influence of Rydbeck's mission on the actions taken by the UNSG and the UNSC regarding Western Sahara. Did his reports and conclusions play a role in shaping subsequent diplomatic efforts, or were they disregarded?
4. Providing a comprehensive account of the first phase of the Western Sahara conflict, from 1975 to the late 1976s, through the lens of Rydbeck's diplomatic efforts.
5. Reactions and Comments in Diplomatic Cables

The behind-the-scenes reactions of diplomats from various countries to Olof Rydbeck's appointment reveal a complex web of political analysis and strategic positioning. Through the diplomatic cables published by Julian Assange, we gain insight into how different countries viewed Rydbeck's role and the broader implications for the Western Sahara conflict. These comments often contrast sharply with the public actions or official stances of their governments, highlighting the tension between diplomatic rhetoric and political action in relation to the situation in Western Sahara. Such cables provide an invaluable perspective on the interplay between international diplomacy and national interests, especially regarding the country's most directly involved in the conflict.

The thesis will also aim to fill in the gaps in literature concerning the early years of the Western Sahara conflict, using previously classified and newly accessible documents to

reassess the role of the UN and its representatives. By investigating Rydbeck's mission, this study will contribute to a better understanding of the complexities of international diplomacy in Non-Self-Governing Territories and the challenges faced by international mediators in entrenched conflicts.

Methodology

Given the complexity and historical nature of the subject, the study employed a multi-disciplinary approach, drawing on insights from international relations, legal studies, history, and political science. This allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the Western Sahara conflict and the role of individual diplomats in shaping international responses to the crisis.

This thesis adopted a historical research methodology, focusing on the analysis of primary and secondary sources. The primary sources include official UN documents, diplomatic correspondence, and the reports produced by Rydbeck during his mission. These documents have been examined to assess the scope of Rydbeck's findings and to explore the hypothetical reasons for the classification of his reports.

To ensure a comprehensive analysis, this study also made use of archival research in multiple countries, including the UN, Sweden's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Algerian National Archives, the Public Library of US Diplomacy (PLUSD-Wikileaks) and various French and Spanish institutions. These archives provided valuable primary materials, such as news articles, diplomatic cables, memos, and classified documents that have become accessible.

Secondary sources include academic literature on the Western Sahara conflict, on the role of Personal Envoys in international diplomacy, and the broader context of UN peacekeeping efforts in Non-Self-Governing Territories. This literature helped contextualize Rydbeck's mission within the larger framework of international conflict resolution and provide insights into the broader political and legal implications of the Western Sahara conflict.

For the language verification and proofreading the following software were used: QuillBot AI, Grammarly, DeepLWriter.

In summary, this research combines conceptual discussion, archival research and theoretical analysis to explore the untold story of Olof Rydbeck's mission to Western Sahara. By doing so, it will hopefully provide a new perspective on the conflict and contribute to the broader academic discourse on international diplomacy and conflict resolution.

PART 1 – The Western Sahara Conflict and the UN

1. Historical and Political Context

1.1. Historical framework of the Western Sahara Issue

Western Sahara, designated as a Non-Self-Governing Territory by the United Nations on December 31, 1963, under Chapter XI of the UN Charter [A/5514], remained a Spanish colony until 1976, who is still Administrator de Jure until now. Spain's role as the colonial power over the territory is pivotal in understanding the ongoing conflict and its implications for international law and human rights.

1.1.1. Colonial History of Western Sahara (Spanish rule, decolonization process)

The colonial history of Spain in Western Sahara began in the late 19th century when Spain took control of what was then known as Spanish Sahara during the "Scramble for Africa." Unlike other European colonial powers in Africa, Spain did not establish an extensive settler presence in Western Sahara, and the area remained largely neglected. Spain's colonial governance was focused on resource extraction, primarily phosphate mining and fishing, with little attention given to the development or welfare of the Sahrawi population. The Spanish administration faced constant resistance from local tribes and nationalist movements, but these efforts were often suppressed.

Spain's initial control over the territory was primarily nominal, as the vast Saharan landscape posed challenges for effective governance. By the mid-20th century,

however, the increasing international pressure for decolonization and the rise of nationalist movements in other African territories forced Spain to reconsider its position. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Spain maintained a relatively isolated position regarding international discussions on decolonization, while nationalist groups within Western Sahara, such as the POLISARIO Front, began organizing for self-determination.

Following the Second World War, the rise of nationalist sentiment had a destabilizing effect on the European colonial powers. The UN eventually responded to the growing demands for self-determination by adopting a resolution on decolonization in 1960 (UNGA, 1960).

In 1966, as part of the UN's broader push for decolonization, the General Assembly passed Resolution 2229 (XXI), calling for a referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara. Spain, however, resisted this process, citing Morocco's territorial claims over the region. This refusal would set the stage for further tensions and negotiations, which would escalate in the coming decade (Hodges, 1983).

1.1.2. Emergence of the POLISARIO Front and Saharawi resistance

To avoid portraying the emergence of the POLISARIO Front as a sudden or ahistorical reaction, it is essential to situate its formation within two interconnected historical processes. First, Morocco's internal political trajectory in the post-independence era set the stage for regional conflict. The failure of the Istiqlal Party to seize power and push the country toward a bourgeois-democratic transformation left a political vacuum that was filled by King Hassan II, whose consolidation of power relied heavily on French support. As Vermeren (2016) notes, this reorientation of Morocco's domestic and foreign policy culminated in the monarchy's increasing dependence on phosphate revenues and geopolitical expansionism. The defeat of the ALN (Armée de Libération Nationale) in the Western Sahara in 1958 during joint Franco-Spanish operations, and Morocco's subsequent withdrawal from the radical Casablanca Group by 1961, reflect this pragmatic, authoritarian turn. Rather than a revolutionary liberation agenda, Rabat pursued territorial claims driven by state survival and rent-seeking logic.

Second, profound socio-economic changes within Western Sahara itself, largely induced by the development of the phosphate industry, catalyzed a generational rupture and the politicization of Sahrawi society. The Fosfatos de Bu-Craa S.A. mining project, while providing few jobs and institutionalizing labor discrimination, generated considerable foreign investment, urbanization, and state-driven modernization. According to Santos (2024), this abrupt shift from a nomadic to a wage-dependent and urbanized society created a class of educated, underemployed youth increasingly disillusioned with both colonial rule and the Sahrawi notables. These dynamics gave rise to a new political subjectivity among Sahrawi—students, workers, and former nomads—who found in Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el Hamra y Río de Oro (POLISARIO Front), not only a vehicle of anti-colonial resistance but also an expression of their demand for sovereignty, autonomy and dignity in the face of Moroccan colonial ambitions.

By the early 1970s, as anti-colonial movements gained momentum across Africa, the Sahrawi people, under the leadership of the POLISARIO Front, began organizing their own struggle for self-determination. POLISARIO was founded in 1973 and quickly became the leading force advocating for the independence of Western Sahara. POLISARIO's founding mission was to oppose both Spanish colonial rule and the encroachment of Morocco, which had long considered the region a part of its historical territory (Hodges, 1984).

POLISARIO's resistance was characterized by guerrilla warfare, and it increasingly gained the support of the Sahrawi population, who were disillusioned with Spain's neglect of their rights. The Spanish government, in turn, found itself embroiled in internal confrontations with the growing liberation movement, and by the mid-1970s, it was clear that the situation was untenable (Cobo & Menéndez, 2006).

Spain's decision to withdraw was complicated by the fact that Morocco, along with Mauritania, laid claim to the region. Morocco's territorial ambitions, particularly under King Hassan II, who sought to regain what he called "historically Moroccan" lands, created an international diplomatic crisis. After two years of guerrilla warfare, Spain agreed to undertake a U.N.-sponsored referendum, scheduled to be held in the territory in 1975. In preparation for the process, Spain conducted a census in 1974 of the population present in the territory.

Meanwhile, Morocco had asserted its own claims to sovereignty over the Western Sahara. In response to the ongoing territorial conflict, on December 13, 1974, the United Nations General Assembly formally requested an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The court was asked to determine whether, at the time of Spain's colonization, the Western Sahara was considered *terra nullius*—a legal term meaning "no man's land," indicating a territory that belonged to no sovereign state. Additionally, if the territory was not *terra nullius*, the ICJ was asked to assess the nature of the legal ties that existed between the Western Sahara and both the Kingdom of Morocco and Mauritania.

On October 16, 1975, the ICJ issued its advisory opinion. The court found no evidence to suggest that Western Sahara was territorially sovereign under either Morocco or Mauritania. However, it did recognize the presence of certain legal ties between the Moroccan sultan and some of the tribes residing within the territory, although these ties did not extend to all of the indigenous groups. Similarly, the court acknowledged the existence of specific rights, including some related to land use, which constituted legal links between the Western Sahara and a distinct Mauritanian entity.

Despite these findings, the ICJ ultimately determined that none of the legal ties identified were sufficient to override the application of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV), which pertains to decolonization. Specifically, the court emphasized that these ties did not negate the principle of self-determination, which remains fundamental to the process of decolonizing the Western Sahara.

Despite the ICJ's support for the principle of self-determination, King Hassan II of Morocco chose to interpret the opinion as an affirmation of Morocco's claims to the territory. Thus, King Hassan launched what has come to be known as the "Green March," during which an estimated 350,000 Moroccan citizens marched across the border into the Western Sahara; at the same time, the government began to build up its troops on the territory. The United Nations Security Council and General Assembly passed resolutions denouncing the Green March and calling for the withdrawal of all the participants in the march (HRW, 1995). However, on October 31, 1975, additional Moroccan forces entered the Western Sahara, and armed conflict broke out between the POLISARIO Front and the Moroccan Royal Armed Forces (FAR).

...The symbolism and advance publicity of the Green March suggest that it was an orchestrated event, designed to deflect attention away from the armed invasion of Western Sahara, which actually began a week earlier, on 31 October 1975 (Teresa, 1991).

POLISARIO, meanwhile, continued to push for decolonization and self-determination through both military and diplomatic channels. The Sahrawi liberation movement attracted significant international attention, and despite Spain's refusal to accept the demands for a referendum, the movement gained recognition among African nations, culminating in the eventual proclamation of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) in 1976 (Ferreira, 2018).

1.1.3. Invasion and occupation by Morocco and Mauritania in 1975

King Hassan II of Morocco, undeterred by the ICJ's ruling, started the armed invasion of Western Sahara, on 31 October 1975 and launched the "Green March" on November 6, 1975, sending about 350,000 Moroccan civilians into Western Sahara. This mass mobilization was framed as a peaceful demonstration of Morocco's territorial claim, but in reality, it was a calculated act of occupation with the immediate transfer of settlers to change the demographics and occupy houses and land. In the weeks that followed, part of the Sahrawi population fled the region in fear, seeking refuge in neighboring Algeria. The POLISARIO Front moved to defend the Sahrawi people's right to self-determination, escalating the situation into open warfare (Zoubir, 1996).

On November 14, 1975, pressured by Morocco and ready to wash its hands from the Western Sahara issue, Spain signed the Madrid Accords, a tripartite agreement between Spain, Morocco, and Mauritania. This agreement marked Spain's official withdrawal from the territory, but it was deeply controversial and not legal. Under the terms of the Madrid Accords, Spain ceded administrative control of Western Sahara to Morocco and Mauritania, in exchange for economic concessions, including a 35% stake in the Bou-Craa phosphate mines and fishing rights. The Accords did not, however, take into account the wishes of the Sahrawi people, who had long been advocating for self-determination nor were they recognized by the United Nations (Barata, 2012)

The Madrid Accords were criticized by many in the international community, particularly because they ignored the Sahrawi people's right to self-determination, enshrined in international law. While Morocco and Mauritania were content with the arrangement, the POLISARIO Front immediately rejected it, viewing it as a violation of their independence struggle.

In response to the escalating crisis in Western Sahara, then UNSG Kurt Waldheim (1972-1981) proposed a plan aimed at resolving the situation. His initiative built upon recommendations from the UN Visiting Mission Report, which had been published shortly before. Waldheim noted that Spain was open to UN involvement, including the possibility of the organization assuming temporary administration of the territory until a mechanism could be established to gauge the will of the Sahrawi population. He engaged in diplomatic consultations, expressing optimism that the involved parties would acknowledge the UN's pivotal role in facilitating a solution.

Although never formally documented by the United Nations, the Waldheim Plan's details became publicly known in 2005, thanks to André Lewin, who had served as Waldheim's spokesperson and special envoy. In late October 1975, Lewin was dispatched to present the "Waldheim Plan" ("WESTERN SAHARA: THE REFERENDUM THAT WASN'T AND THE ONE THAT STILL MIGHT BE," 1998) and from 3 to 6 of November he visited Morocco and Algeria to brief on Spain's position.

20. The Secretary-General undertook a mission to the area, between 25 and 28 October 1975. During the mission, he met with King Hassan II at Marrakesh, President Moktar Ould Daddah at Nouakchott, President Houari Boumediene at Algiers and President Arias Navarro of Spain at Madrid. The Secretary-General subsequently sent Mr. Andre Lewin, his Special Envoy, to Marrakesh and Algiers, from 3 to 6 November, to brief both Morocco and Algeria on the position of Spain. (UNGA, 1977)

The initial draft suggested appointing a UN High Commissioner, sending a small team of 30 UN officials, and deploying a peacekeeping force of around 700 personnel. A later revision proposed that the UN would temporarily govern the territory, manage Spain's

withdrawal, oversee the return of displaced Sahrawi, and facilitate negotiations among stakeholders to determine how a consultation process should be conducted—including voter identification and the framing of referendum questions. Additionally, the UN would be responsible for ensuring a political climate conducive to free expression, allowing the people of Western Sahara to voice their aspirations without external coercion (Ruiz Miguel, 2020).

Despite its ambitions, the plan never materialized. Morocco strongly opposed it, having already secured a covert agreement with Spain's interim head of state, Prince Juan Carlos, who governed between 30 October and 22 November 1975, just before his coronation. This behind-the-scenes diplomacy undermined the UN's efforts, rendering the Waldheim Plan ineffective and reinforcing Morocco's push to consolidate control over the region (Ruiz Miguel, 2020).

1.1.4. The UN's Role: Mediation, Peace Efforts, and the Stalemate

The United Nations played a significant, though ultimately ineffective, role in trying to resolve the conflict. From 1976 onwards, the international community recognized the SADR and acknowledged the rights of the Sahrawi people to self-determination. However, international interventions, especially from France and the United States, often tilted in favor of Morocco, reflecting strategic interests in the region (Ferreira, 2018).

In 1991, after years of failed diplomatic efforts, the UN brokered a ceasefire agreement between Morocco and the POLISARIO Front, known as Military Agreement No. 1 (MINURSO, n.d.). This agreement created the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), which was tasked with overseeing the voter registration process and preparing for a referendum on the region's future status. Despite these efforts, the referendum has never taken place due to disagreements over voter eligibility, primarily driven by Morocco's efforts to alter the demographic makeup of the territory (Barata, 2012).

The role of MINURSO has been fraught with difficulties from the beginning. Morocco imposed barriers to the free and fair implementation of the referendum, including

restrictions on the movement of MINURSO personnel and journalists, as well as surveillance and control measures. Additionally, Morocco engaged in a strategy of demographic engineering, encouraging the settlement of Moroccan civilians in the occupied territory and thus skewing the voter roll in its favor (Barata, 2012; Ferreira, 2018).

Despite these challenges, the UN and various mediators, including Morocco's traditional allies USA and France, continued to advocate for a peaceful solution. However, by the early 2000s, it became clear that the situation had reached a diplomatic impasse. The failure of successive UN peace initiatives, coupled with Morocco's increasing militarization of the territory, has left the Sahrawi people with few options but to continue their struggle for self-determination.

In 2020, after decades of stagnation, the conflict was reignited when Moroccan forces attacked peaceful Sahrawi protesting for over two weeks in the Guergarat Buffer Zone, an area under the supervision of MINURSO ("The end of the ceasefire in Western Sahara," 2021; UNSG, 2021). This attack, on November 13, 2020, marked the end of the ceasefire and the resumption of active hostilities, highlighting the continued volatility of the region and the failure of the international community to broker a lasting peace (Teixeira, 2022).

The role of Spain in the ongoing conflict cannot be understated. Its colonial legacy, marked by an extractive relationship with the territory, laid the foundation for the subsequent occupation and resource exploitation by Morocco. Despite its formal withdrawal from Western Sahara in 1976, Spain's involvement in the Madrid Accords and its subsequent economic interests in the region make it complicit in the ongoing occupation. The failure to support the Sahrawi people's quest for independence — coupled with its ongoing economic relations with Morocco — reflects Spain's refusal to confront its colonial past and present and its responsibilities under international law.

Spain's actions, or lack thereof, during the decolonization process that was never implemented, and the subsequent period of Moroccan occupation have had long-lasting consequences for the people of Western Sahara. While Spain was quick to abandon its

colonial responsibilities, the political and economic arrangements it made with Morocco in the 1970s continue to affect the region's geopolitical dynamics, ensuring that the Sahrawi struggle for self-determination remains unresolved.

Spain remains to this day administrator *de iure* and therefore part of the conflict responsible for the decolonization of the territory.

2. Who are the Personal Envoys of the UN Secretaries-General and how did they come about?

The UN tried unsuccessfully to frame the decolonization of Western Sahara, as seen above. Independently of its outcomes, its role followed the standard procedures the organization adopted for similar contexts, which included mandates for Special Envoys. The role of Personal Envoys within the UN has evolved as a strategic response to the complexities of international diplomacy and conflict resolution. These envoys are appointed by the UN Secretary-General to address specific issues or conflicts, leveraging their expertise and diplomatic acumen to facilitate dialogue and propose solutions.

Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General Definition:

A Personal Envoy is assigned to undertake a mission in pursuance of an initiative of the Secretary-General, without a specific mandate of the Security Council or the General Assembly (UNTER, 2006).

2.1. Creation and Evolution of the Personal Envoy Role

The concept of appointing special representatives or envoys has deep historical roots, originating from the early days of diplomacy when individuals were assigned temporary mandates to represent states or international organizations in sensitive matters. Within the United Nations framework, the first significant instance occurred in 1948, when the General Assembly appointed Swedish diplomat Folke Bernadotte as the UN Mediator in Palestine. This established an important precedent for using special envoys to navigate complex international conflicts (Ilán & College, 1989).

Over time, the role of Personal Envoys has evolved to encompass a wide range of mandates, including conflict prevention, peace negotiations, and responses to global

challenges such as climate change and health crises. These envoys enable the UN to engage with pressing international issues in a flexible and dynamic manner, often focusing on specialized diplomatic efforts that supplement broader multilateral strategies.

A pivotal analysis of the role of special representatives and envoys is found in *Preventing Deadly Conflict* by Cyrus R. Vance and David A. Hamburg (1997). Commissioned by the Carnegie Corporation of New York as part of the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, the report examines the function of UN special representatives and Personal Envoys, emphasizing their role in early warning, fact-finding, and mediation efforts. It highlights how the UN Secretary-General deploys Personal Envoys to facilitate diplomatic dialogue and oversee peacekeeping missions, particularly in post-Cold War conflict resolution settings. Unlike traditional diplomats, these envoys often operate under challenging conditions with limited resources, yet their contributions remain vital in brokering peace negotiations, maintaining diplomatic channels, and ensuring the implementation of international agreements (Vance, 1997).

The role of UN Special Representatives has expanded significantly, moving beyond fact-finding missions to include mediating crises and overseeing peacekeeping operations. By the mid-1990s, the use of Special Envoys had quadrupled under the UN Secretary-General, illustrating the increasing demand for preventive diplomacy. However, the deployment of such envoys remains a contentious issue, with some UN member states favoring a more restrained approach while others advocate for a proactive and engaged UN presence. The *Preventing Deadly Conflict* report also highlighted the need for greater regional cooperation, emphasizing collaboration with organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to address regional conflicts effectively.

To enhance the UN's diplomatic effectiveness, Vance and Hamburg recommended the establishment of a dedicated Fund for Preventive Action to support envoy missions. They argued that increasing financial resources, refining recruitment procedures, and implementing more structured training programs would improve the overall efficacy of Special Representatives. The report further stressed the importance of granting the UN

Secretary-General greater flexibility in deploying envoys, describing their work as a cost-effective and low-risk strategy for preventing conflicts before they escalate into widespread violence.

Beyond the UN, regional organizations have also strengthened their reliance on Special Envoys. The African Union (AU) has progressively adopted a more active mediation role, appointing approximately twenty Special Envoys, representatives, and mediators to manage conflicts across the continent. The AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC) Protocol (*Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union*, 2002) outlines the responsibilities of its bodies in conflict prevention, mediation, and post-conflict reconstruction, ensuring a structured approach to peacemaking efforts.

Most AU envoys and representatives are appointed by the AU Commission, which oversees conflict resolution initiatives. However, the appointment of the Special Envoy for Western Sahara was an exception, as it required formal approval from the AU Peace and Security Council rather than being solely decided by the Commission. This structured method allows the AU to deploy experienced diplomats and mediators to volatile regions, ensuring a coordinated and strategic response to conflicts throughout Africa (Morini, 2018). The increasing use of Special Envoys by both the UN and the AU highlights their critical role in global diplomacy, reinforcing the necessity for strong institutional backing and strategic coordination in conflict resolution efforts.

The role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), who serves as the head of MINURSO, should not be confused with that of the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General (PESG) for Western Sahara. The distinction between these roles evolved over time. In 1976, Olof Rydbeck was appointed as the first Special Representative for Western Sahara, tasked with mediating the conflict between Morocco and the POLISARIO Front before the formal establishment of a UN peacekeeping mission.

Following the 1991 ceasefire agreement, the United Nations introduced two separate roles: the SRSG, responsible for overseeing MINURSO's operations, and the PESG,

created in 1997 to focus specifically on political negotiations. Unlike the SRSG, the PESG does not operate within MINURSO's structure but instead engages in diplomatic efforts to find a lasting resolution to the conflict.

This distinction is not exclusive to Western Sahara, as the UN has appointed Special Envoys and Personal Envoys in other conflicts, including Syria and Myanmar. However, in the case of Western Sahara, the simultaneous existence of both roles is particularly significant, reflecting the UN's dual approach of maintaining a peacekeeping mission while actively seeking a diplomatic solution through high-level mediation.

Given the similarities between Olof Rydbeck's mandate and that of the PESG in the Case of Western Sahara, this study will compare his role to that of the Personal Envoys rather than the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara. Although Rydbeck was officially designated as a Special Representative, his primary function—mediating between the parties in search of a political solution—aligns more closely with the mandate of the PESG than with that of the SRSG, whose role is focused on overseeing MINURSO rather than direct negotiations.

The role of Special Envoys extends beyond Western Sahara, demonstrating the UN's adaptability in addressing diverse global conflicts. By examining cases of success and failure, we can assess their relevance and the challenges of conflict resolution through these appointments.

Álvaro de Soto was appointed Personal Envoy of the UN Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar in 1990 to mediate El Salvador's civil war, a 12-year-long conflict between the government and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). Despite deep political and ideological divisions, de Soto successfully led negotiations that culminated in the Chapultepec Peace Accords, signed on January 16th, 1992, in Mexico City. His success was based on his ability to maintain impartiality, build trust among the conflicting parties, and leverage international pressure to ensure compliance with the agreement (UN, 2015). A key factor in de Soto's success was his insistence on institutional reforms rather than just a ceasefire. The Chapultepec Peace Accords (UNSC, 1992) included reductions in military power, the creation of a new civilian police force,

and the transformation of FMLN from a movement into a legal political party. Unlike many peace agreements that failed due to weak implementation, de Soto helped secure UN-backed mechanisms to oversee the transition, ensuring that both sides adhered to their commitments. His role in bringing international legitimacy to the process and maintaining a strict negotiation framework was instrumental in ending the war and preventing a return to large-scale conflict. De Soto's mediation in El Salvador is widely considered a success, as it resulted in a relatively stable democratic transition. While the country later faced issues of crime and gang violence, the political settlement was held, marking one of the most effective UN peace interventions in Latin America. His approach—focusing on structural reforms, power-sharing, and long-term implementation—became a model for future UN peace processes (Holiday & Stanley, 1993).

Matthew Nimetz was appointed Personal Envoy of the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 1999 to resolve the long-standing name dispute between Greece and North Macedonia (UNSG, 1999). The conflict, which began after Macedonia declared independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, revolved around Greece's objection to the use of the name "Macedonia", which it claimed implied territorial ambitions over its northern province of the same name. For nearly two decades, Nimetz engaged in continuous mediation, maintaining dialogue between the two sides despite repeated setbacks. His persistence and ability to balance diplomatic sensitivities ultimately led to the Prespa Agreement, signed on June 17, 2018, which officially changed the country's name to North Macedonia and ended the dispute (Ker-Lindsay, 2019).

Nimetz's success was due to his patience, impartiality, and deep legal expertise, which allowed him to craft compromises that satisfied both parties. Unlike many failed negotiations, where mediators are changed frequently, Nimetz remained in his role for 20 years, ensuring continuity and trust-building with Greek and Macedonian leaders (UNDPPA, 2019). The Prespa Agreement not only resolved the name issue but apparently unlocked North Macedonia's path to NATO and EU membership. While the country is a full member of NATO since 2020 (NATO, 2024) the European Union membership is still not a reality (Milchevski, 2013). His approach—focusing on

incremental progress, diplomatic engagement, and strategic timing—proved essential in breaking one of Europe’s most enduring deadlocks.

Nimetz’s mediation is widely seen as one of the most successful UN diplomatic efforts in Europe, as it resulted in a peaceful resolution to a complex historical dispute without military conflict. His work demonstrated the importance of sustained engagement, neutrality, and strong international backing, making him one of the most effective UN Personal Envoys in recent history.

The United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) has frequently appointed envoys to mediate in global conflicts, yet many of these missions have struggled to achieve lasting peace. One recent example is the failed mission of María Ángela Holguín in Cyprus. Appointed by UNSG António Guterres in 2023, her mandate was to reignite reunification talks between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. However, her efforts collapsed as political divisions and entrenched positions blocked any meaningful negotiations ("Our View: The puzzle of UN envoy’s failed mission to restart talks," 2024).

Myanmar has also seen repeated failures of UN envoys. Over the years, various representatives, including Noeleen Heyzer, appointed by UNSG António Guterres in 2022, have been unable to facilitate dialogue between the military junta and opposition forces. The deep-rooted political crisis, intensified by the 2021 coup, rendered her mission ineffective, mirroring past unsuccessful UN interventions (TheIrrawaddy, 2022).

In Libya, multiple UN envoys have resigned amid worsening instability. Ghassan Salamé, appointed by UNSG António Guterres in 2017, stepped down in 2020 after failing to prevent escalating violence and foreign interference (Wintour, 2020). His successor, Jan Kubiš, faced similar challenges before leaving his post in 2021. Despite the UN Security Council later approving Abdoulaye Bathily as a new envoy, peace efforts in Libya remain fragile ("UN Security Council approves new Libya envoy," 2021).

Syria’s long-standing conflict also proved insurmountable for UN envoys. Staffan de Mistura, appointed by UNSG Ban Ki-moon in 2014, struggled to broker a political transition amid continued fighting and international disagreements. He resigned in 2018, citing frustration with the lack of progress in peace negotiations ("UN Syria envoy

Staffan de Mistura to step down next month," 2018). His departure echoed the fate of previous envoys, highlighting the broader challenges the UN faces in resolving entrenched conflicts.

These cases demonstrate the persistent difficulties faced by UN envoys, often due to intractable political divisions, foreign interference, and lack of enforcement mechanisms. While their missions are intended to foster dialogue and peace, the failure to secure lasting solutions underscores the limitations of diplomatic efforts in deeply polarized conflicts.

2.2. Personal Envoys of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara

THE SITUATION CONCERNING WESTERN SAHARA⁷²

Decision

At its 2826th meeting, on 20 September 1988, the Council proceeded with the discussion of the item entitled "The situation concerning Western Sahara".

Resolution 621 (1988) of 20 September 1988

The Security Council,

Having heard a report by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on his mission of good offices,⁷³ pursued jointly with the current Chairman of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, in conformity with General Assembly resolution 40/50 of 2 December 1985, with a view to settling the question of Western Sahara,

Taking note of the agreement in principle given by the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro on 30 August 1988 to the joint proposals of the Secretary-General and the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity,

Anxious to support these efforts with a view to the holding of a referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, organized and supervised by the United Nations in co-operation with the Organization of African Unity,

1. Decides to authorize the Secretary-General to appoint a Special representative for Western Sahara;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to transmit to it as soon as possible a report on the holding of a referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara and on ways and means to ensure the organization and supervision of such a referendum by the United Nations in co-operation with the Organization of African Unity.

Adopted unanimously at the 2826th meeting

72 Resolutions or decisions on this question were also adopted by the Council in 1975.

73 See Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-third Year, 2826th meeting (UNSC, 1988)

The excerpt from Seddon's(1987) book reproduces a 1988 *UN Chronicle* article detailing Héctor Gros Espiell's appointment as the UN Special Representative for Western Sahara. Tasked by Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, Gros Espiell was to implement a UN-OAU peace plan featuring a ceasefire and a self-determination referendum. The plan, agreed to by Morocco and the Polisario Front in Geneva (August 1988), granted him exclusive authority to oversee troop withdrawals, prisoner exchanges, and referendum preparations, with UN observers ensuring compliance.

Though Gros Espiell's mission (1988–1990) established the framework for MINURSO (launched in 1991), the referendum was thwarted due to Morocco's oppositions on voter eligibility criteria and reluctance to withdraw its troops. Seddon's citation of the *UN Chronicle* underscores the gap between the UN's initial diplomatic

efforts and the conflict's unresolved status today—highlighting how Gros Espiell's work, while foundational, ultimately failed to break the political deadlock.

After the cease-fire agreement the United Nations has appointed various Personal Envoys to facilitate negotiations and resolve the Western Sahara conflict and to address the lack of implementation of the referendum due to Morocco's opposition. Below is a list of these envoys, the Secretaries-General who appointed them, their achievements, and the challenges they faced.

2.2.1. James Baker's Appointment and Mediation

On March 18, 1997, James Baker was appointed as the Personal Envoy of the UN Secretary-General by Kofi Annan, tasked with facilitating negotiations between Morocco and the POLISARIO Front to resolve the ongoing Western Sahara conflict. His mandate was to break the deadlock in the implementation of the 1988 UN Settlement Plan, which had remained stalled due to disputes over voter eligibility for the long-promised referendum on self-determination (Zoubir, 1996).

Baker led four rounds of direct negotiations in 1997, marking the most significant mediation efforts in years. The first and second rounds, held in London (June and July) resulted in a compromise proposal concerning the identification process for eligible voters. The third round, in Lisbon (August), focused on humanitarian issues, particularly the fate of prisoners of war and political detainees. The fourth round, held in Houston (September), produced what became known as the Houston Agreements, which reinitiated the voter identification process in December 1997 and established a framework for further negotiations (Zoubir, 1996).

Despite initial progress, the conflict remained unresolved. In 2000, Baker resumed mediation with three more rounds of talks in London (May and June) and Berlin (September), involving Morocco, POLISARIO, and neighboring Algeria and Mauritania. However, no substantive progress was made. Morocco resisted any referendum that included independence as an option, while POLISARIO insisted that self-determination through a fair vote was non-negotiable. Frustrated with the lack of movement, Baker suggested that alternative solutions be explored, but neither party agreed to shift their stance (Bell, 2019).

In 2001, Baker drafted a Personal Envoy's Draft Framework Agreement, also known as Baker Plan I. The plan proposed granting Western Sahara limited autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty. POLISARIO rejected the proposal outright, condemning it as an attempt to integrate the territory into Morocco without true self-determination (Bell, 2019). No formal negotiations took place in 2001 or 2002, as tensions persisted over the plan.

Baker presented a revised proposal, known as Baker Plan II, in January 2003. This plan included provisions for an autonomous Western Sahara Authority during a transition period, leading to a referendum within four to five years. The final referendum would offer three options: full independence, autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty, or complete integration into Morocco. While POLISARIO accepted the plan, Morocco rejected it outright, unwilling to accept the possibility of independence appearing on the ballot (Bell, 2019). This impasse ultimately led Baker to resign as Personal Envoy in June 2004, marking the end of his seven-year effort to mediate a lasting solution to the conflict.

Baker's mediation efforts were considered a partial success in fostering dialogue but ultimately failed to achieve a definitive resolution due to Morocco's firm opposition to a genuine self-determination referendum and POLISARIO's unwillingness to relinquish the legitimate right to self-determination of the Sahrawi People. His resignation signaled a shift in UN strategy, with subsequent envoys facing similar obstacles in efforts to resolve one of the world's longest-running conflicts.

2.2.2. Alvaro de Soto (2004–2005)

After James Baker's resignation as Personal Envoy in 2004, there was an attempt to merge the responsibilities of the Personal Envoy with those of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG). At the time, Álvaro de Soto was serving as the SRSG for Western Sahara, and the UN Secretary-General sought to expand his mandate to include the diplomatic role of the Personal Envoy. In Report S/2004/827, paragraph 3, the Secretary-General stated:

3. Following my Personal Envoy's resignation, I requested my Special Representative for Western Sahara, Alvaro de Soto, to continue to work with the

parties and the neighboring States towards a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, which would provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. (UNSG, 2004)

However, the Polisario Front refused to recognize de Soto as Personal Envoy, only accepting him in his existing capacity as Special Representative. This rejection reaffirmed the distinction between the two roles, preventing the UN from consolidating the responsibilities of mediation and peacekeeping under a single official. As a result, the position of Personal Envoy remained vacant until the appointment of Peter van Walsum in 2005, restoring the traditional separation between MINURSO's leadership and the diplomatic mediation process (Ruiz Miguel, 2020).

2.2.3. Peter van Walsum's Appointment and Mediation

On 29 July 2005, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan appointed Peter van Walsum as the Personal Envoy for Western Sahara, tasking him with reviving negotiations between Morocco and the POLISARIO Front. His mandate focused on facilitating direct dialogue between the parties, who remained entrenched in their opposing positions on the long-standing territorial conflict.

2.2.4. Challenges in Negotiations (2006-2007)

In 2006, Van Walsum struggled to initiate direct talks, despite encouragement from both the UN Security Council and Kofi Annan. POLISARIO refused to engage in new negotiations unless they focused on the previously promised referendum on self-determination. In April 2006, King Mohammed VI of Morocco proposed granting autonomy to Western Sahara under Moroccan sovereignty, but POLISARIO rejected this, insisting that a referendum including full independence was the only acceptable resolution (Mundy, 2009).

By 2007, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1754 (30 April 2007), calling on the parties to resume negotiations. Under Van Walsum's mediation, a first round of direct talks took place in June 2007, followed by a second round in August 2007. However, no significant progress was made, as Morocco remained firm on its autonomy plan, while POLISARIO insisted on full independence. By the end of the year, POLISARIO began

considering a return to armed conflict, expressing frustration over the lack of progress (Mundy, 2009).

2.2.5. Manhasset Negotiations and Controversy (2008)

Between 7-9 January 2008, Van Walsum mediated another round of negotiations in Manhasset, New York. The discussions failed to bridge the fundamental disagreements, leading to another session on 18-19 March 2008, again without results. Growing frustrated, POLISARIO accused Van Walsum of bias after he publicly stated that independence for Western Sahara was unrealistic, given the political and geopolitical dynamics of the conflict. In May 2008, POLISARIO officially demanded his replacement, citing a loss of confidence in his mediation (Mundy, 2009).

2.2.6. End of Van Walsum's Tenure (2009)

The UN did not record any armed clashes in 2009, but the negotiations remained at an impasse. On 14 January 2009, Peter van Walsum was formally replaced. His time as mediator was marked by stalled negotiations, growing frustration from POLISARIO, and the ongoing Moroccan insistence on autonomy rather than full self-determination. Despite multiple rounds of talks, Van Walsum's mediation failed to produce a lasting resolution to the conflict.

His tenure exemplifies the complexities of UN diplomacy in protracted conflicts, where entrenched positions and regional power dynamics make negotiations exceptionally difficult. While he attempted to move the process forward, his statements regarding the unlikelihood of independence ultimately undermined his credibility with POLISARIO, contributing to his eventual replacement.

2.2.7. Christopher Ross's Appointment and Mediation

Christopher Ross was appointed as the UN Secretary-General's Personal Envoy for Western Sahara on 14 January 2009 by SG Ban Ki Moon, replacing Peter van Walsum. In February 2009, Ross initiated a series of separate meetings with the conflicting parties to mediate the long-standing conflict between Morocco and POLISARIO (Zoubir, 2010).

Ross facilitated direct negotiations between the two parties in Duernstein, Austria, on 10 and 11 August 2009. While both sides expressed satisfaction with the discussions and committed to future negotiations, substantive progress remained elusive, as Morocco maintained its autonomy proposal while POLISARIO insisted on a referendum with the option of independence (Mundy, 2009; Zunes & Mundy, 2010).

Throughout 2010, Ross continued his mediation efforts, leading three rounds of negotiations between Morocco and POLISARIO. The first set of informal talks took place near New York in February 2010 but ended without progress (Zunes & Mundy, 2010). Subsequent meetings in New York on 8–9 November 2010 were overshadowed by the Moroccan military's intervention and dismantling of Gdeim Izik, the peaceful Sahrawi protest camp near El Aaiun, leading to fatalities, arbitrary arrests and torture cases (Lourenço, 2017). Despite these tensions, additional negotiations were held between 16 and 18 December 2010, though no consensus was reached. The parties agreed to continue talks in 2011 (Zunes & Mundy, 2010).

In 2011, Ross mediated further negotiations, beginning with a round of talks in Malta in March, followed by three additional rounds in New York in May, June, and July. However, these meetings did not yield a breakthrough, as both parties continued to reject each other's proposals (*Western Sahara*, 2022).

Mediation efforts persisted into 2012, with Ross overseeing negotiations outside of New York in March. This round of talks included participation from Mauritania and Algeria, expanding the diplomatic scope of the discussions (Besenyő et al., 2022).

In 2016, Ross continued shuttle diplomacy, facilitating negotiations between Morocco and POLISARIO in February, September, and again from late November to early December. However, no resolution was achieved. He faced Moroccan accusations of bias, limited progress, and growing Moroccan hostility toward his mandate. Morocco severed relations with the UN in 2016 after Ban Ki-moon referred to Morocco's presence in Western Sahara as an "occupation." (Mohsen-Finan, 2016)

By 2017, mediation efforts had ceased, and no further negotiations were recorded. In October 2017, Ross was succeeded by Horst Köhler as the UN Secretary-General's

Personal Envoy for Western Sahara Conflict and Peace in Western Sahara: The Role of the UN's Peacekeeping Mission (MINURSO). (n.d.). Reino Unido: Taylor & Francis (Besenyő et al., 2022).

2.2.8. Horst Köhler's Appointment and Mediation

Horst Köhler was appointed as the UN Secretary-General's Personal Envoy for Western Sahara in October 2017 by SG António Guterres, succeeding Christopher Ross (*Western Sahara*, 2022). Unlike his predecessor, who struggled with prolonged deadlocks in negotiations, Köhler sought to revive the peace process by bringing the parties back to the negotiating table.

In December 2018, Köhler successfully organized the first direct negotiations between Morocco and the POLISARIO Front in six years. The Geneva talks, held on 5 and 6 December, were attended by representatives from Morocco, the POLISARIO Front, Algeria, and Mauritania. Although no concrete agreements were reached, the meeting was significant in re-establishing diplomatic engagement between the conflicting parties (Miles, 2018).

In June 2018, Köhler undertook a significant visit to the occupied territories of Western Sahara. From 28 June to 1 July, he visited El Aaiun, Smara, and Dakhla, where he met with local authorities, civil society organizations, and business representatives. During these meetings, Köhler was briefed on the social, economic, and human rights situation in the region. He also engaged in discussions on the use of natural resources, a key point of contention in the conflict. Köhler emphasized the importance of progress toward a just and lasting political solution that would ensure the right of self-determination for the Sahrawi people (MINURSO, 2018).

Köhler continued his mediation efforts in 2019, leading another round of negotiations in Geneva on 21 and 22 March. The discussions aimed at finding a mutually acceptable political solution to the conflict but once again resulted in limited progress, as both parties remained firm in their positions—Morocco insisting on autonomy under its sovereignty and the POLISARIO Front advocating for a referendum on self-determination (Besenyő et al., 2022; USDS, 2019).

Despite his efforts, Köhler resigned from his position in May 2019, citing health reasons. However, a senior POLISARIO official claimed that his resignation was also due to political pressure from France and Morocco, particularly at the United Nations Security Council. Reports suggest that Köhler faced challenges in maintaining neutrality and resisted efforts to be pressured into endorsing Morocco's autonomy plan (Thomas-Johnson, 2019). His departure was seen as a setback to the UN-led peace process, as he had managed to rekindle dialogue between the disputing parties after years of diplomatic stagnation.

Following his resignation, the post remained vacant for over two years, further stalling negotiations on the Western Sahara issue. The International NGO Oxfam expressed deep concern that during this prolonged vacancy, all political negotiations—revitalized by Köhler after six years of stagnation—had completely stalled, contributing to the collapse of the 29-year ceasefire between the Polisario Front and Morocco. Oxfam also warned that the diplomatic void left by the absence of a new Envoy played a role in the worsening security situation, threatening regional stability and the safety of Sahrawi refugees (OXFAM, 21-05-2021).

2.2.9. Staffan de Mistura's Appointment and Actions

Staffan de Mistura was officially appointed as the UN Secretary-General's Personal Envoy for Western Sahara on 6 October 2021, by SG António Guterres, filling a position that had remained vacant for over two years following Horst Köhler's resignation in 2019 (UN, 2021). His appointment was met with mixed reactions. While the POLISARIO Front welcomed his designation, Morocco emphasized its commitment to maintaining its sovereignty over Western Sahara and insisted that negotiations should focus on its autonomy plan.

Morocco's Permanent Representative to the UN, Hilal, stated that Morocco "*has solemnly reaffirmed*" its constant position for "*autonomy, nothing but autonomy*" as a solution for the conflict." (Toutate, 2021).

In January 2022, de Mistura embarked on his first regional tour, visiting Rabat in Morocco, the Sahrawi refugee camps in Tindouf, Algeria, Nouakchott in Mauritania, and

Algiers in Algeria to discuss possible paths for negotiations (*Western Sahara*, 2022). During his visit to Sahrawi refugee camps, he was met with demonstrations from Sahrawi activists demanding a referendum on self-determination, reinforcing the deep divisions between the parties involved (Ouabou, 2022).

Throughout 2023, de Mistura faced significant challenges in reviving direct talks between Morocco and the POLISARIO Front. In June, he visited Rabat and Algiers again in an attempt to resume negotiations without any success (UNSG, 2023).

During a visit to the occupied territories of Western Sahara in September 2023, de Mistura met with members of the Association for Surveillance of Wealth and Environmental Protection in Western Sahara, who presented a report detailing human rights violations and the plundering of Sahrawi natural resources by the Moroccan occupation. The report cited figures and statistics on resource exploitation, referencing rulings from the European Court of Justice affirming that Morocco has no legal right to Western Sahara's resources and that the POLISARIO Front is the legitimate representative of the Sahrawi people. The association also criticized the United Nations for its inaction in enforcing international legal rulings and addressing the worsening human rights situation in the occupied territories. They highlighted the military and security blockade imposed on Sahrawi cities, the suppression of peaceful protests during de Mistura's visit, and the deteriorating socio-economic conditions leading to Sahrawi youth migrating to the Guerguerate buffer zone despite the risks involved (SPS, 2023).

Despite his difficulties in initiating direct negotiations, de Mistura held diplomatic consultations with key UN Security Council members, including Russia, the United States, and France. Russia has historically taken a neutral stance but has been critical of Western intervention in African conflicts. His meeting aimed to secure broader international backing for renewed peace talks. Similar discussions took place with the United States, where the Biden administration reaffirmed its support for Morocco's autonomy plan, and France, which also backs Rabat's position (UNSG, 2023).

In February 2024, de Mistura's visit to South Africa sparked further controversy. The Moroccan government expressed outrage, viewing the visit as interference in its

internal affairs and an attempt to garner international support for the POLISARIO Front's position. Morocco argued that the visit risked undermining the UN-led negotiation framework and further polarizing the conflict (Kasraoui, 2024). South Africa has long supported the POLISARIO Front, and Morocco perceived de Mistura's engagement with South African officials as siding with their stance rather than maintaining a neutral mediating role. The controversy surrounding this visit added another layer of diplomatic tension ("Hilale: Marruecos no permitirá nunca que su Sáhara se convierta en un terreno de maniobra diplomática de Sudáfrica," 2024).

In March 2024, de Mistura attempted to organize another round of informal discussions, but no concrete steps towards negotiations materialized. Meanwhile, tensions escalated as the POLISARIO Front accused Morocco of increasing military operations near the buffer zone. In April, the UN released a statement reaffirming de Mistura's commitment to finding a just and lasting solution for Western Sahara, but skepticism remained high among analysts and regional actors.

Sergey Lavrov met with Staffan de Mistura, on March 11, 2024, in Moscow to discuss the Western Sahara settlement, MINURSO's role, and regional stability, emphasizing a UN-backed, fair resolution (MFARF, 2024).

A major controversy arose in October 2024, when Mistura was exploring a territorial partition of Western Sahara as a possible solution. Neither Morocco nor the Polisario Front accepted the proposal (REUTERS, 2024). POLISARIO Front, viewed the partition as a violation of the Sahrawi people's right to self-determination and refused it categorically (FRANCE24, 2024). While Morocco's official stance remained centered on an autonomy framework rather than partition. "The sovereignty and territorial integrity of Morocco concerning Western Sahara will never be part of any negotiation or agreement," Moroccan Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita stressed (Newsroom, 2024).

Staffan de Mistura's tenure as UN Personal Envoy for Western Sahara has been marked by diplomatic deadlock, political pressures, and increased regional instability. While he has made efforts to revive negotiations, the stark divide between Morocco's insistence on autonomy and the Polisario Front's demand for a referendum continues to prevent

meaningful progress. His future in the role remains uncertain amid growing criticisms and geopolitical challenges.

2.2.10. Summary Assessment of Personal Envoys

The role of the Personal Envoys has been crucial in keeping the Western Sahara issue on the international agenda, but their efforts have often been undermined by the conflicting positions of Morocco and the POLISARIO Front. While some, such as James Baker, proposed plans for resolution, their inability to gain acceptance from both sides underscores the limitations of their mandates. Ban Ki-moon's tenure as Secretary-General highlighted these challenges, with Morocco's expulsion of UN staff following his "occupation" comment illustrating the political sensitivities surrounding the issue.

The history of Personal Envoys in Western Sahara highlights the persistent diplomatic deadlock caused by Morocco's refusal to include independence as an option and the Polisario Front's insistence on a self-determination referendum. Despite efforts by figures such as James Baker, Peter van Walsum, Christopher Ross, and Horst Köhler, no UN envoy has successfully bridged the fundamental divide between the two parties. Baker's mediation produced the most structured proposals, but Morocco rejected any referendum that included independence. Subsequent envoys faced similar roadblocks, with Morocco maintaining its autonomy framework while Polisario and its allies pressed for a legal and internationally recognized referendum as had been initially agreed by the parties. Köhler's resignation in 2019, reportedly due to political pressure, left the negotiation process in complete stagnation for over two years.

Since his appointment, Staffan de Mistura has struggled to restart direct negotiations, encountering geopolitical pressures, diplomatic challenges, and regional tensions. His tenure has seen failed attempts at informal consultations, accusations of bias, and the controversial proposal of partition, which was widely rejected. Additionally, his visit to South Africa in 2024 angered Morocco, which saw it as interference favoring Polisario's position. The collapse of the 29-year ceasefire in 2020 and the continued diplomatic impasse raise concerns about a potential return to armed conflict, making it evident that

without significant international pressure or a change in strategy, Western Sahara's status will remain unresolved for the foreseeable future.

Despite these challenges, the continued appointment of Personal Envoys demonstrates the international community's recognition of the need for a resolution, even if tangible progress remains elusive.

Part 2- Rydbeck and Western Sahara

1. The Rydbeck missions: the 1975-1976 Conjuncture and review of his mission and parallel events during his visits

« Pendant la première phase de sa mission. Mr. Rydbeck a vu le territoire - sans la population. Pendant la deuxième phase, il a vu la population - sans le territoire. » Ambassador Rahal of Algeria (Meeting between SG and Ambassador Rahal of Algeria on 15 April 1976 at 6 p.m.)

1.1. Olof Rydbeck's appointment

Before his appointment, Olof Rydbeck was no stranger to the Western Sahara issue and Morocco's strategy of invading the territory. In 1975, he represented Sweden as President of the Security Council. As mentioned in a US diplomatic cable of 17 October 1975 (USMUN, 1975d), Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim called de Piniés, the Spanish ambassador to the UN, concerned about the Western Sahara issue. De Piniés discussed the issue with the US representative to the UN, Moynihan, advising a dual approach and immediate action by the Fourth Committee so that the decolonization process could be dealt with in the General Assembly. In the same cable, de Piniés told the US ambassador that he would consult the President of the Security Council, who at the time was none other than Olof Rydbeck, on the issue. In de Piniés opinion the Security Council should become seized since the planned Moroccan invasion represented a threat to security and peace under articles 34, 35 and 73 of the UN Charter.¹

¹ <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text>

Just one day later, in another US diplomatic cable (USMUN, 1975c), de Piniés informed the US Political Counsellor that Security Council President Rydbeck had stated that the Security Council would take no action on the Spanish Sahara issue unless a formal meeting was requested. In the same cable, de Piniés said that Morocco's "irrational plans" were a threat to peace and that the Security Council would tell the Moroccans "*not to commit an idiocy*". De Piniés did not say which countries he had consulted.

According to the US cable, De Piniés had prepared a letter asking the Security Council to take action, although it was not certain that he had Madrid's permission to do so. He also consulted with members of the Security Council and the 24th and 4th Committees. Morocco's Permanent Representative to the UN, Slaoui, also consulted widely with members of these UN mechanisms. Rydbeck confirmed that he had met with de Piniés on 17 October.

The security council had a meeting on 20 October to discuss the situation in Spanish Sahara (USMUN, 1975b) following a meeting on the 18 October between Piniés and Rydbeck and another meeting between SG Waldheim and Rydbeck. (USMUN, 1975a).

On the same day and the following ones, the Security Council addressed Spain's complaint about Morocco's plan for a 350,000-person march into Western Sahara, a Spanish-administered territory, which Spain claimed threatened international peace. The Council heard statements from Spain, Morocco, and Mauritania, followed by Spain's reply.

In the discussion of the Security Council on October 21, 1975, Spain raised serious concerns regarding Morocco's actions in Western Sahara, revealing that a powerful Moroccan army was stationed at the border, indicating preparations for an imminent invasion. Additionally, Spain provided evidence that Moroccan operatives, referred to as "terrorists," were systematically laying mines across the territory, as confirmed by the destruction of Spanish military vehicles. Spain insisted that the UN Security Council urgently send a mission to investigate Morocco's true intentions and appealed for immediate action to prevent a military escalation. Despite these warnings, Morocco continued to justify its actions by claiming that the Moroccan people were merely "going

back home,” dismissing accusations of an invasion. However, the presence of a military force at the border and preemptive mine warfare directly contradicted this assertion. Spain also made it clear that it bore no responsibility for the consequences of Morocco’s march and reaffirmed its duty to protect the Sahrawi people against external aggression. (USMUN, 1975e)

Morocco’s historical justification for its claim over Western Sahara was equally dubious, as it asserted that the region had been part of Morocco for “thousands of years.” (USMUN, 1975e). This claim, however, is historically indefensible, given that no modern nation-state has existed in its current form for such a duration, particularly not the Moroccan kingdom, which was only formally consolidated in the 20th century. Prior to colonial rule, Western Sahara was inhabited by independent Sahrawi tribes with cultural ties to both Morocco and Mauritania but was never legally part of either state. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) had already ruled on October 16, 1975, that while historical links existed, Morocco had no sovereignty over the territory and that the Sahrawi people had the right to self-determination (ICJ, 1975). If Morocco’s argument were accepted, it would set a dangerous precedent where any nation could claim vast territories based on vague historical affiliations. The discussion at the UN demonstrated the growing tension between Spain’s insistence on decolonization under international law and Morocco’s aggressive expansionist approach, which combined both diplomatic maneuvering and military coercion to secure control over Western Sahara.

Mauritania’s stance during the UN Security Council discussions reflected its own territorial ambitions while also aligning with Morocco to an extent. Mauritania’s representative, El Hassen, stated that Western Sahara was an “integral part” of Mauritania and that its reunification with his country was necessary. He also acknowledged Morocco’s claim over northern areas of the territory and did not oppose the planned Moroccan march. While advocating for a solution under the UN framework, Mauritania emphasized its historical and cultural connections with the Sahrawi people. However, Spain and other members of the Security Council viewed Mauritania’s position as an attempt to divide the region between Morocco and Mauritania rather than supporting the Sahrawi people’s right to self-determination. This dual claim complicated

the situation further and demonstrated that the contest over Western Sahara was not merely a bilateral conflict between Spain and Morocco but a broader struggle involving regional actors with competing interests (USMUN, 1975e).

Costa Rica then introduced a draft resolution (UNSC, 1975b) which was withdrawn approving resolution 377 on the 22 October 1975 requesting the Secretary-General to enter into consultations with the parties concerned on the Western Sahara question.(UNSC, 1975a).

None of the UN committees visited the Spanish Sahara after the Security Council meeting, nor did they do anything to prevent the Moroccan military action of 31 October 1975, when it invaded the Sahrawi territory from the north in preparation for the "Green March" of 6 November. (Hodges, 1983).

In November 1975, Ambassador Andrés Córdova of Ecuador assumed the presidency of the Security Council.

Morocco had not yet confirmed its agreement with the proposal of Rydbeck as UNSG Special Representative on the 30th of January².

On the 31st of January 1976, UNSG Kurt Waldheim appointed ambassador Olof Rydbeck as his Special Representative for the Spanish Sahara (UNSG, 1976) being his mandate in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 3458(1975-1976), 1975) entrusting him with an exploratory mission to find out the opinions of the parties involved - the States as well as the populations -, how they viewed this act of self-determination and also how they viewed the question of self-determination and the involvement of the United Nations ("UN Archives Series-0904 Box-50 File 5-Transcription de la Conférence de presse par S.E. L'Ambassador Olof Rydbeck," 1976).

Eighty-six days had passed since the "Green March" and no assistance nor protection had been extended by the UN to the Sahrawi population that had been forced to flee and establish refugee camps in neighboring Algeria. During December 1975 and January 1976 over 40.000 Sahrawi, mostly women, children and elderly had to flee from the

² See annex SFM DOC 5

Moroccan bombings that included napalm, white phosphorous and fragmentation bombs (Beristain et al., 2012; Cobo & Menéndez, 2006; Reviejo, 2021).

Humanitarian aid was provided by the Algerian Red Crescent and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, through the supply of supplementary aid consisting of medicines, tents, clothing, powdered milk, flour and food for children (ICRC, 1976).

As we can see from the documents³ provided by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs the preparation of Ambassador Rydbeck's mission had been the subject of a situation analysis by Swedish diplomats in the countries concerned.

1.2. Rydbeck'S first mission to Western Sahara

Ambassador Olof Rydbeck commenced his exploratory mission to Western Sahara on February 4, 1976, departing New York with a team provided by the United Nations. The mission aimed to assess the conditions for self-determination in the region, as mandated by General Assembly Resolution A/RES/3458(XXX)[B](UNGA, 1975)

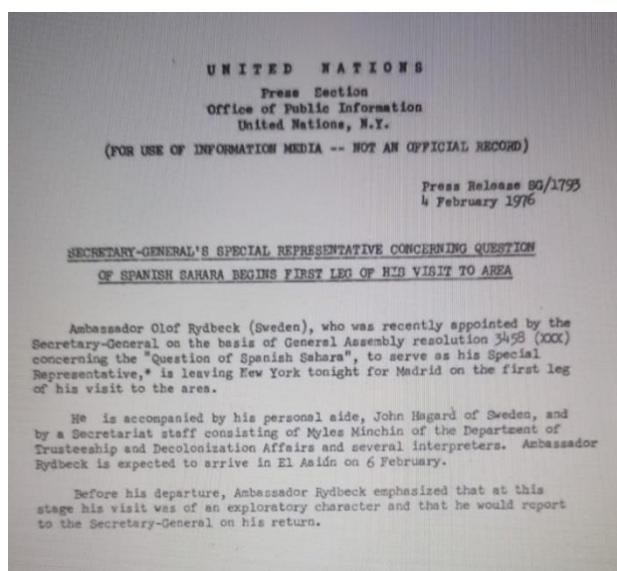


Figure 1- UN Archives Series 0904, BOX 49, File 5 ACC. DAG 1/5.3.2.8

On the same day (February 4th) Egyptian Vice President Hosni Mubarak was in his fourth visit to Algeria where he met with Algerian President Houari Boumediene. Algerian media coverage of the visit was minimal, omitting details such as Mubarak's subsequent

³ See the documents in the Appendix section

travel to Fes and his return to Cairo. Notably, they did not report on Mubarak's statement that his mediation efforts had opened the door to direct contacts among the parties involved in the Western Sahara conflict (Morocco, Mauritania, and the Saharan people), or that leaders like Boumediene, King Hassan II of Morocco, and President Ould Daddah of Mauritania were found to be "supple." The media continued to portray Morocco and Mauritania as aggressors and emphasized that the only issue requiring mediation was between them and the Saharan people (USEA, 1976c).

Upon arrival in Madrid on February 5, Rydbeck held consultations with Spanish officials, including José María de Areilza, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Alfonso Osorio, the Minister of the Presidency, along with senior officials from their respective ministries. These discussions centered on Spain's decolonization policies and the practical challenges of implementing the resolution ("Series 0904; Box 50; File 5; ACC. DAG 1/5.312.8-Report to the Secretary-General by Ambassador Olof Rydbeck (Sweden), Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Appointed on the Basis of General Assembly Resolution 3458 (XXX) Concerning the Question of Western Sahara," 1976)⁴.

On February 7, Rydbeck traveled to El Aaiun in Western Sahara, where he met representatives of the tripartite administration. This included Rafael de Valdés (Spain), Driss Bensouda (Morocco), and Abdallahi Ould Cheikh (Mauritania), alongside Driss Basri, the Moroccan Secretary of State for the Interior, and Driss Slaoui, Morocco's Permanent Representative to the United Nations. He also engaged with the Djema'a, the local representative assembly established by Spain, including its president and members (Hultman, 1977; "Series 0904; Box 50; File 5; ACC. DAG 1/5.312.8-Report to the Secretary-General by Ambassador Olof Rydbeck (Sweden), Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Appointed on the Basis of General Assembly Resolution 3458 (XXX) Concerning the Question of Western Sahara," 1976; USEM, 1976).

According to information from the U.S. Embassy in Madrid, Moroccan authorities reportedly suppressed a small Polisario demonstration in El Aaiun during UN envoy

⁴ See also annex 30

Rydbeck's visit, while simultaneously orchestrating a pro-Moroccan rally involving approximately 3,000 Sahrawi, allegedly coerced into participation. The Saharan issue had become a rallying point for Spanish political opposition, which has added it to its list of grievances against the government. The recent dismissal of Colonel de Viguri, the acting Spanish military governor in the Sahara—due to his disagreement with official policy—was seen by both the U.S. Embassy and defense attachés as a sign of growing dissatisfaction within the Spanish military over the nature of Spain's withdrawal from the territory.(USEM, 1976)

Between February 8 and 9, Rydbeck conducted further meetings in El Aaiun with representatives from Spain, Morocco, and Mauritania, as well as various Saharawi community groups. These included representatives of the Front for Liberation and Unity (FLU) and the National Union Party of the Sahara (PUNS), as well as individuals who claimed to have defected from the POLISARIO Front. Notably, during these meetings, Mohamad Saddah, a phosphate worker at Bu-Craa handed Rydbeck a letter supporting the POLISARIO Front and sought his protection, highlighting the tension in the region ("Series 0904; Box 50; File 5; ACC. DAG 1/5.312.8-Report to the Secretary-General by Ambassador Olof Rydbeck (Sweden), Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Appointed on the Basis of General Assembly Resolution 3458 (XXX) Concerning the Question of Western Sahara," 1976).

The other incident, more serious, occurred in El Aaiun when a member of a delegation of workers of from the phosphate mining enterprise at Bucra'a, handed me surreptitiously a letter supporting the Polisario Front. His action was observed by other members of the group and led to his seeking my protection, asserting that his life was in danger. Since it was evident that the man was in a state of acute fear, I acceded to his request and arranged for him to be placed under the protection of the Spanish authorities. At his insistence, he was later

escorted to the airport and flown out of the Territory by the Spanish authorities.
Olof Rydbeck in his report⁵ (USEA, 1976b)

In a February 9 meeting with the U.S. Embassy in Algiers, Moroccan Chargé d’Affaires Mouline reaffirmed Morocco’s fait accompli position by insisting that the Western Sahara issue was closed and that the sole purpose of mediation was to facilitate Algeria’s withdrawal; however, the embassy remained cautious, noting the absence of tangible evidence supporting Mouline’s hints at flexibility and observing that other Moroccan diplomats continued to adopt a rigid, uncompromising line (USEA, 1976a).

During diplomatic exchanges with the US embassy on the same day in Rabat, Moroccan officials made clear that recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara was a non-negotiable precondition for talks with Algeria. In return, Morocco hinted at the possibility of joint exploitation of the region’s natural resources, notably the phosphate deposits in Western Sahara (Bu-Craa) and iron reserves in Algeria’s Gara Djebilet region. As noted in a U.S. Embassy cable from Rabat, Morocco explicit framing of the conflict in economic terms, suggesting that control over resource wealth was a central strategic objective behind its uncompromising stance on sovereignty. It was marked that it was the first time that the Moroccans raised the possibility of sharing Sahara wealth. The question of formal border ratification remained notably absent from Moroccan statements, reflecting domestic resistance to any concession.

The Moroccan Government announced that Bu Craa Phosphate excavation had resumed on February 9. (USER, 1976d). Parallel diplomatic efforts were made by Abdallahi Ould Boye, Mauritania’s Minister of State for Human Resources and Islam, who returned to Nouakchott on February 9 after visiting several Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Jordan. The discussions were centered on the Western Sahara issue, and Ould Boye reported strong support among Arab leaders for the Mauritanian and Moroccan positions. These leaders reportedly affirmed that Mauritania had fulfilled its duty by asserting

⁵ See Appendix 33 e

sovereignty over Wadi Dhehab and that lasting peace in the region hinged on the international recognition of the Mauritanian-Moroccan agreement on the division of the territory.(USEN, 1976b).

On February 10, Rydbeck visited Dakhla (formerly Villa Cisneros), where he met Colonel Enrique Balenilla, the local Spanish representative; Hamoud Ould Abdel Wedoud, the Mauritanian Governor; and Taibbel Arbi, a local Moroccan representative. Meetings also included fourteen members of the Djema'a, among them three deputies to the Spanish Cortes ("Series 0904; Box 50; File 5; ACC. DAG 1/5.312.8-Report to the Secretary-General by Ambassador Olof Rydbeck (Sweden), Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Appointed on the Basis of General Assembly Resolution 3458 (XXX) Concerning the Question of Western Sahara," 1976).

Meanwhile on the same day in an interview with La Stampa, in Paris, Moroccan Information Minister Benhima reaffirmed that Morocco would not tolerate any discussion of self-determination or territorial changes, insisting that sovereignty over Western Sahara was non-negotiable. He emphasized that while Morocco was open to economic cooperation with Algeria, including sharing the region's riches, it would not indefinitely accept what he termed the "illegal occupation" of its territory by Algerian and Polisario forces concentrated in Mahbes (USER, 1976c).

According to Mauritanian press accounts, Rydbeck was received in Dakhla by a crowd of local Sahrawi who, in a display interpreted as political endorsement, expressed their willingness to "*rejoin the mother country, Mauritania*."(USEN, 1976b).

The U.S. Embassy Cable from Nouakchott on the Mauritanian Administration in Western Sahara outlines statements made by Hamoud Ould Abdel Wedoud, the Mauritanian governor overseeing the provisional administration of Wadi Dhehab (Rio de Oro), as reported in a government-controlled newspaper. Wedoud asserted that Mauritania had assumed full administrative control over Dakhla, including police, security, education, and essential public services, with Spanish and Moroccan personnel withdrawing. Health services, telecommunications, and utility infrastructure were in the process of transitioning to Mauritanian control.

Wedoud emphasized efforts to address logistical challenges, notably the provisioning of food and basic goods to the local population, citing shipments organized by the Mauritanian government and humanitarian aid from the Red Crescent. The state import agency, SONIMEX, had also established a branch in Dakhla to ensure regular supplies.

Regarding the visit by Rydbeck to Dakhla, Wedoud described it as productive, stating that the Sahrawi population had expressed clear support for integration with their respective "mother countries"—Mauritania for Wadi Dhehab and Morocco for Saguia el-Hamra—reflecting the post-Madrid Accords understanding between Morocco and Mauritania (USEN, 1976a).

On the following day, February 11, Rydbeck visited Smara, Western Sahara's second-largest town where he also met local authorities and nine members of the Djema'a and other representatives of Sahrawi societal sectors ("Series 0904; Box 50; File 5; ACC. DAG 1/5.312.8-Report to the Secretary-General by Ambassador Olof Rydbeck (Sweden), Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Appointed on the Basis of General Assembly Resolution 3458 (XXX) Concerning the Question of Western Sahara," 1976).

In parallel, on February 11, the Secretary-General of the OAU, William Eteki Mboumoua, arrived in Rabat as part of a fact-finding mission concerning regional tensions over Western Sahara. In his arrival statement, Eteki expressed the OAU's intent to gather information that might support peace efforts. However, during his February 12 meeting with Moroccan Foreign Minister Ahmed Laraki, the Moroccan government reaffirmed its refusal to reconsider the status of Western Sahara or accept external pressure, asserting that its issue with Algeria stemmed from Algerian interference rather than a bilateral conflict. The Moroccan communiqué emphasized Morocco's surprise at reports of Eteki's encounter with Polisario representatives in Algiers. Eteki allegedly claimed he had been misled by Algerian hosts into believing he would meet the press, and upon unexpectedly meeting Polisario members, he declined to engage with them. In a February 13 editorial in *Maroc Soir*, the semi-official daily's editor, Ahmed Alaoui, offered a detailed rebuttal to Algeria's communiqué of February 11 concerning Eteki's visit. He claimed Arab mediators uniformly supported Morocco's position and accused Algeria of attempting to shift the narrative from aggression to a legal dispute. Alaoui

concluded that arbitration was unfeasible, affirming Morocco's sole right to set terms for negotiations (USER, 1976e).

1.3. Impact of Rydbeck's first mission

On February 12, Rydbeck concluded his fieldwork in Western Sahara with a comprehensive inspection of El Aaiun before returning to Madrid. According to Moroccan press, Rydbeck's final act involved a walk through El Aaiun, reportedly arranged to demonstrate public support for Moroccan sovereignty. He declined to comment publicly on the outcome of his mission, stating he would report directly to Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim.(USER, 1976e).

In Madrid, he held further discussions with José María de Areilza and other senior officials of the Ministry of the Presidency ("Series 0904; Box 50; File 5; ACC. DAG 1/5.312.8-Report to the Secretary-General by Ambassador Olof Rydbeck (Sweden), Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Appointed on the Basis of General Assembly Resolution 3458 (XXX) Concerning the Question of Western Sahara," 1976). In this meeting he highlighted the importance of the help and information he received from the Spanish Military representatives in the occupied territories *"especially as the testimony of others had been carefully orchestrated and was evidently part of a well-planned scheme organized by the Moroccans."*⁶

On February 12, Moroccan newspaper Al Alam accepted the notion of joint exploitation of Tindouf region, contingent upon its return to "Moroccan sovereignty", and rejected foreign involvement in Moroccan phosphate or Algerian Tindouf iron ore ventures, calling on Algeria to annul its Soviet agreement for the development of Gara Djebilet.

In anticipation of the upcoming European Community Political Directors' Meeting scheduled for February 16–17 in Luxembourg, Ambassador Meisch of Luxembourg—representing the EC Presidency—met with U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, Richard Hartman. This meeting formed part of a broader series of general

⁶ Appendix: see Meeting with H.E. Mr. Jose Maria Areilza (Minister of Foreign Affairs held at the Foreign Ministry, Madrid on 13 February 1976 at 11.30 a.m.

consultations between the United States and the European Community the Western Sahara conflict and related diplomatic initiatives have featured prominently given the timing and focus of the subsequent EC meeting.

Hartman conveyed to Ambassador Meisch that the situation was reported to have stabilized somewhat after intense clashes in late January, during which Morocco captured the Polisario base at Amgala and subsequently advanced to Tifariti, Bir Lahlu, and Mahbes without apparent resistance by February 10. Despite continued propaganda efforts from Algiers, Polisario had yet to declare a provisional government.

Diplomatic mediation attempts had intensified. Arab states, particularly Egypt and Syria, dispatched senior envoys to Algiers, Rabat, and Nouakchott in an effort to broker peace. However, these efforts had yielded no tangible results. Discussions of a joint Arab League–OAU mediation initiative were also emerging. Meanwhile, the United Nations Secretary-General had appointed Swedish diplomat Ambassador Rydbeck as Special Envoy for Saharan affairs; his fact-finding mission to the region had recently concluded.

The central unresolved issue remained whether Algeria would accept a compromise on the principle of self-determination—possibly through a face-saving arrangement—or whether it would persist in supporting insurgent activity as part of its broader rivalry with King Hassan II's Moroccan regime, despite weak support in the Arab world.

On the ground, both Morocco and Mauritania continued to entrench their civil and military control over their respective zones of Western Sahara. Mauritania, militarily weaker than the other actors, remained vulnerable to sporadic Polisario guerrilla attacks.

The United States government reaffirmed its preference for a diplomatic resolution to the conflict, reiterating its support for the Madrid Accords of 14 November as a legitimate basis for a settlement. In line with this position, the US voted in favour of a 'pro-Moroccan' resolution at the United Nations that recognised the accords, while abstaining on a competing 'pro-Algerian' resolution. While the U.S. maintained a desire for stable relations with Algeria, it also acknowledged Soviet and Libyan military support

for Algiers, and indicated that it would continue to provide limited assistance to help Morocco modernise its military.(USMUN, 1976b).

1.4. Rydbeck's action between missions and further international reactions

Following his field visits, Rydbeck traveled to Vienna on February 14 to provide an oral report to Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim. His first mission officially concluded on February 17 when he returned to New York ("Series 0904; Box 50; File 5; ACC. DAG 1/5.312.8-Report to the Secretary-General by Ambassador Olof Rydbeck (Sweden), Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Appointed on the Basis of General Assembly Resolution 3458 (XXX) Concerning the Question of Western Sahara," 1976). On February 14 a non-disclosed meeting took place between Amb. Rydbeck and the ICRC in Geneva.

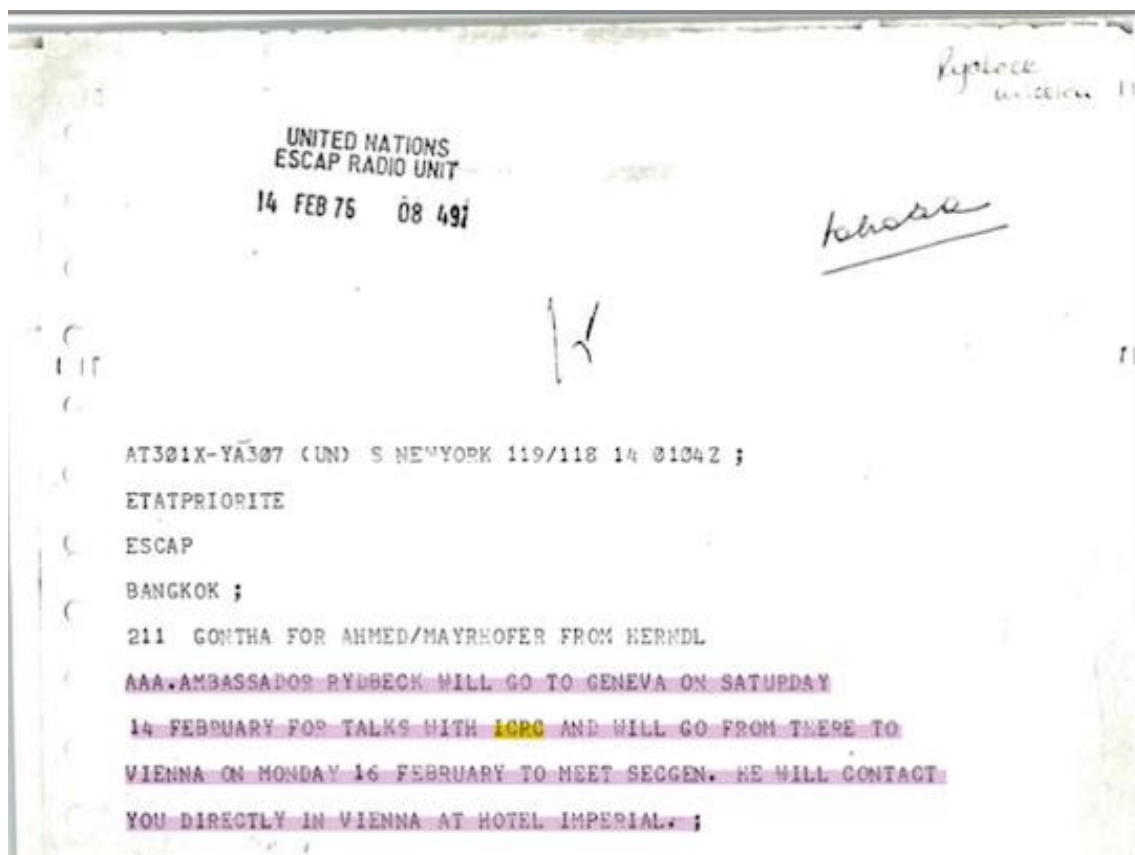


Figure 2-Note about ICRC. Source: ("Series 0904; Box 50; File 5; ACC. DAG 1/5.312.8-Cable informing about Rydbeck meeting in Geneva with ICRC," 1976)

Having returned to the UN headquarters, Rydbeck intended to brief the Chairman of the Special Committee on Decolonization (Committee of 24), Salim Ahmed Salim, to determine that committee's potential role in future discussions concerning the territory. During a press briefing on February 18, he reiterated his findings and disclosed that he was preparing a factual, non-recommendatory report for Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim. In response to press inquiries, Rydbeck admitted that the military situation on the ground precluded any realistic path toward self-determination for the Saharan people at that time. Although he did encounter a representative of the Polisario Front during his mission, his report would refrain from policy suggestions, instead focusing solely on the observed facts (USMUN, 1976d).

Ambassador Rydbeck, in discussions with U.S. officials, conveyed his assessment of the Western Sahara conflict, later documented in a cable from the U.S. Mission to the United Nations on March 4, 1976 (USMUN, 1976c). He noted that Algeria remained firmly opposed to Morocco's claims, advocating for Sahrawi self-determination, while Mauritania took a passive stance, avoiding strong alignment. Morocco, in contrast, dismissed further UN involvement, seeking to solidify its control.

Rydbeck was skeptical about his mission's success, believing a visit to Algiers would achieve little. He saw Morocco aiming to prevent outside interference while Algeria sought to counter its occupation of the territory. Mauritania's hesitation added to the diplomatic stalemate, leaving the conflict primarily between Morocco and Algeria. Despite doubts, Rydbeck continued his work with UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, recognizing the limited prospects for a resolution.

Annex II of the A/31/23/Rev.1[Vol.II], distributed on February 17, 1976, contains a formal letter from Algerian Foreign Minister Abdelaziz Bouteflika (formerly known as A/AC.109/514), transmitted via Algeria's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Abdellatif Rahal, to the Chairman of the Committee of 24 (UNGA, 1977).

In the letter, Algeria expresses grave concern over the worsening situation in Western Sahara, warning of the dangers of further regional escalation. Bouteflika condemns Moroccan military actions, particularly the attack on an Algerian convoy carrying humanitarian aid to Sahrawi civilians on January 27, 1976, characterizing it as

unprovoked aggression. He notes that Algeria chose to de-escalate to avoid broader conflict.

The letter accuses Morocco of pursuing a deliberate policy of provocation and territorial aggression, and of attempting to shift blame onto Algeria following Polisario's successful attack on Moroccan forces on February 15, 1976. Morocco's efforts to portray Algeria as a belligerent party, Bouteflika argues, serve to distract from its own responsibilities in the conflict.

Bouteflika references the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative, Ambassador Olof Rydbeck, asserting that Rydbeck "*undoubtedly observed*" the deteriorating conditions on the ground. He urges urgent international action to stop the escalation.

The letter reaffirms Algeria's support for the UN's decolonization framework, and its unwavering backing of the Sahrawi people's right to self-determination, to be exercised through a free and genuine referendum, in line with established UN principles and resolutions.

On February 18 in a confidential communication, US Ambassador Moynihan reports on a debrief from Spanish Mission Officer Villar, who had recently returned to New York following his service as liaison officer during Rydbeck's mission to the Spanish Sahara (USMUN, 1976e).

According to Villar, Rydbeck is described as "*extremely depressed*" over the situation in Western Sahara. This emotional reaction reflects his disillusionment following observations made during the fact-finding mission, particularly regarding the severe depopulation of key Saharan towns. El Aaiun and Villa Cisneros retained only one-fifth to one-quarter of their original populations, while Smara had been almost entirely emptied of its civilian inhabitants. The visible presence was dominated by Moroccan military forces, with no civilian youth in sight, contributing to a bleak picture that likely deepened Rydbeck's sense of pessimism.

The British role emerges indirectly through Villar's account. He notes having spoken with British diplomats in New York, who relayed two proposed courses of action under consideration, though both were seen as impractical or unappealing:

- The first option suggested reconvening the *Djema'a* to reaffirm the Saharan people's will. However, Morocco opposed this, arguing the *Djema'a* had already done so previously.
- The second option involved Spain transferring its remaining jurisdiction over Western Sahara to the United Nations by February 28. However, according to the British, as relayed by Villar, it was very unlikely the UN would agree to assume such responsibility.

This cable reflects growing frustration and gridlock within international diplomatic channels. The UN's limited appetite for further involvement, Spain's potential withdrawal of legal responsibility, and Morocco's resistance to renewed expressions of Sahrawi self-determination illustrate a situation in which no viable diplomatic mechanisms remained in play. The overall tone suggests deepening institutional fatigue, diplomatic paralysis, and moral unease within the UN apparatus, embodied most starkly in Rydbeck's personal despair.

Swedish official Rolf Ekéus provided a detailed account of Ambassador Rydbeck's reflections following his recent mission to the Spanish Sahara to an officer of the US Mission to the United Nations on the 18th of February. According to Ekéus, Rydbeck's engagement was primarily limited to Spanish authorities, and it remained uncertain whether he would return to the region to engage other actors, including the Polisario Front. This decision, Rydbeck believed, was for the UN Secretary-General to make.

Ekéus reiterated the deeply troubling conditions previously reported by other observers, noting the near-total disappearance of the original Sahrawi population from key towns such as El Aaiun and Smara. Many civilians were reportedly relocated to "reorientation camps." According to Rydbeck, the entire societal structure of the Sahrawi that existed under Spanish colonial rule had collapsed, the local economy was in ruins, and most of the region's camels — a central part of Sahrawi livelihood — had died. The territory was now dominated by Moroccan military forces, with only a token or negligible presence of Mauritanian officials (USMUN, 1976d).

On February 19, the USA decided to sell 24 F-E jet fighters to Morocco in public act of support of King Hassan II in the occupation of Western Sahara.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 21—The United States has decided to sell a squadron of up-to-date F-5E jet fighter planes to Morocco as a sign of continuing American support for King Hassan II, whose kingdom is locked in a bitter dispute with Algeria and Algerian backed insurgents over the phosphate-rich Western Sahara, Administration and Congressional sources said today.

The proposed \$120 million sale of the 24 jets was divulged on a classified basis to Congress on Wednesday and made known today. New York Times (Gwertzman, 1976)

Between the 19 and 21st of February 1976, the Sahrawi civilian population was subjected to intense and indiscriminate bombings with napalm and white phosphorus by Moroccan forces (Beristain et al., 2012).

El problema, a juicio de este asesor en Comisiones de la Verdad y consultor de la Corte Penal Internacional, es que a pesar de haber testigos de lo ocurrido, entre ellos dos enfermeras españolas que atendieron a los heridos, a pesar de todo el trabajo de documentación que se hizo desde El oasis de la memoria, ningún organismo oficial ha investigado todavía lo ocurrido. "El Sahara es el conflicto más olvidado del mundo", subraya Beristain, que alude al gran poder de Marruecos, a sus alianzas con Francia y EEUU y a su coacción sobre España para explicar esa inacción absoluta, tratándose de unos delitos muy graves contra la humanidad y de unos ciudadanos que, en el momento de producirse la masacre, eran españoles y hasta llevaban el DNI en la cartera. (Reviejo, 2021)

These attacks occurred shortly after Ambassador Olof Rydbeck concluded the first phase of his mission as the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Western Sahara, and just before the second part of his mandate began. During this interlude, daily briefings and diplomatic consultations on the Western Sahara question were ongoing in New York. Yet, these brutal aerial bombings—which constitute grave breaches of international humanitarian law—were never mentioned or addressed in any formal

setting. This silence is even more disturbing considering that the Spanish forces had not yet completed their withdrawal from the territory, and that the attacks were already known and denounced internationally. The Polisario Front issued urgent appeals, including a formal call to the OAU to intervene and halt the Moroccan bombings, as documented in contemporary media such as the 1976 British Pathé report⁷. Declassified UN records and U.S. diplomatic cables released by Wikileaks in the Public Library of Diplomacy⁸ further confirm that the international community was aware of the bombings yet chose to ignore them. This inaction raises enduring questions about the complicity, selectivity, and silence of global powers during a critical moment in the Sahrawi people's pursuit of self-determination.

On February 24, 1976, U.S. Ambassador Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Ambassador Bennett met with UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim to discuss the rapidly evolving situation in Western Sahara, ahead of Spain's formal withdrawal on February 28 and the dissolution of the tripartite administration established under the Madrid Accords.(USMUN, 1976a).

According to the cable concerning this discussion Waldheim conveyed that, during a meeting with the Spanish Foreign Minister in Zurich (February 23), Spain confirmed its imminent and complete withdrawal from the territory. The Spanish government provided a draft of the letter they intended to present to the UN, stating that Article 3 of the Madrid Agreement had not been fulfilled — notably, that consultations with the Sahrawi assembly (Djema'a) had not taken place. Spain accused Morocco of obstructing the self-determination process and of lacking any real interest in fulfilling that obligation.

Waldheim reported that Morocco refused a Spanish proposal to reconvene the Djema'a under UN auspices to decide the territory's future. King Hassan had declared the matter "closed," affirming Morocco's claim to the territory. Morocco continued to maintain

⁷ <https://www.britishpathe.com/asset/148140/>

⁸ See: https://www.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1976/RABAT_01850_50b.html

that self-determination had already occurred, referencing the oath of allegiance taken by the head of the Djema'a to the Moroccan monarch.

Morocco's UN representative Slaoui requested that the UN send an observer to a scheduled Djema'a meeting on February 26, offering safe conduct to Sahrawi members in exile. However, Waldheim expressed skepticism that the Committee of 24 would agree, given the preordained outcome in favor of annexation. He emphasized that *"the rump Djema'a will vote for absorption and those members in exile will not return — for fear of being killed."*

Slaoui also voiced Morocco's dissatisfaction with Ambassador Olof Rydbeck, particularly over his remarks about military conditions preventing a referendum and the mass departure of Sahrawi youth. Waldheim responded by reminding Slaoui that Morocco had not objected to Rydbeck's appointment when it was first proposed, and therefore, their current objections were unfounded.

Waldheim expected to receive Rydbeck's full written report later that day. He mentioned that while Morocco opposed Rydbeck meeting with Polisario representatives, the UN had not yet ruled out a visit to Algeria for this purpose. Rydbeck had already met one Polisario representative during his mission, despite

Waldheim closed the meeting by candidly expressing his belief that the situation in the Sahara was a *"fait accompli"*. *"Nothing could be done,"* he told the U.S. representatives. He relayed that Slaoui had spoken directly with King Hassan, who reaffirmed that Western Sahara was, in his view, *"Moroccan territory, pure and simple."*

During an informal Security Council lunch⁹ on February 25, 1976, Amb. Rydbeck, shared reflections on his recent mission, noting that his formal report would be ready within

⁹ A Security Council lunch is an informal and off-the-record gathering of the United Nations Security Council members, typically hosted by the monthly rotating president of the Council or, on occasion, by the UN Secretary-General. These lunches serve as a space for non-binding discussions among ambassadors, allowing them to exchange views, test ideas, or seek consensus on sensitive issues without the constraints of formal procedure or public record. While not part of the Council's official decision-making process, these meetings can shape diplomatic tone and influence behind-the-scenes negotiations, particularly in times of stalemate or political complexity.

the following days. Rydbeck's tone was marked by deep pessimism: he stated that the opportunity for a just solution based on self-determination had likely passed two or three years earlier, and that the current situation no longer allowed for even an approximate realization of that principle, it "was too late".(USMUN, 1976g).

Rydbeck observed that the traditional Saharan social structure had been irreparably dismantled. The Djema'a as such had effectively ceased to exist, and the major towns—El-Aaiun, Villa Cisneros (Dakhla), and Smara—were largely depopulated (referring to the Sahrawi population). In El Aaiun, only women, children, and elderly men remained, while Smara counted as few as a thousand residents. Rydbeck estimated that more than half of the original population, roughly 40,000 Sahrawi, had fled to refugee camps in Algeria and the eastern borderlands. The absence of young men of military age, he suggested, implied their mobilization into the armed struggle against Morocco.

He added that this demographic and political collapse had been worsened by severe drought, which decimated the local economy—most starkly evidenced by the reduction of the region's camel population from half a million to fewer than 100,000.

From Rydbeck's perspective, the Moroccan-Mauritanian occupation was a *fait accompli*, and unlikely to be reversed. The primary challenge for the United Nations now, he suggested, was how to present or "gloss over" the *de facto* situation. He repeatedly lamented that Morocco and Mauritania had not taken the basic diplomatic step of providing even a "fig leaf" to cover their actions—a gesture that might have spared the United Nations the embarrassment.

"Problem for UN is what kind of gloss to put on the *de facto* situation. Several times he expressed regret that moroccans-mauritanians had not "at least covered their actions with some kind of "fig leaf." (USER, 1976f)

Significantly, Rydbeck made no reference to Algerian military involvement, even when it was raised by others during the lunch. He concluded with the remark that he was not aware of any plans for a second mission.

At a press briefing on 26 February 1976, UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim stated that the mission of Ambassador Olof Rydbeck had not ended, though no immediate

plans were in place for its continuation. Addressing Morocco's request for a UN observer to attend the Djema'a meeting, Waldheim firmly declined, emphasizing that the Djema'a did not constitute a popular consultation and could not substitute for a genuine act of self-determination. He underscored that what was in the UN texts involvement through supervision, not mere observation, and only under UN auspices. Waldheim also confirmed that Spain would formally withdraw from Western Sahara on 28 February, leaving unresolved the requirement under the Madrid Accords to consult the Sahrawi people—a step that had not been fulfilled (USER, 1976f).

1.5. Rydbeck's 2ND Mission to Western Sahara (1976)

Following the first phase of his mission, during which he had been able to visit the Western Sahara territory but not engage meaningfully with its displaced population, Olof Rydbeck undertook a second phase of exploratory work. This time, his focus was on meeting Sahrawi representatives and other stakeholders outside the occupied territory. However, diplomatic obstacles soon emerged that would significantly affect the trajectory of his mission ("Series 0904; Box 50; File 5; ACC. DAG 1/5.312.8-Second report on the exploratory mission concerning the question of Western Sahara by Olof Rydbeck, special Special Representative of the Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim," 1976).

After receiving further instructions from the UN Secretary-General, Rydbeck departed for Algeria, a key regional actor supporting the self-determination of Western Sahara. Upon arrival in Algiers on 30 March 1976, he was welcomed by Mr. Abdelmalek Benhabyles, Secretary-General of the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Abdellatif Rahal, Algeria's Permanent Representative to the United Nations. During an informal discussion, Ambassador Rahal outlined the Algerian government's planned itinerary for the visit, which included direct interactions with Sahrawi refugees near Tindouf.

That afternoon, Rydbeck held an official meeting with H.E. Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Algeria. Also present at the meeting were Mr. Benhabyles and Mr. Rahal. The discussions centered on Algeria's stance regarding the Western

Sahara issue. Bouteflika reaffirmed his government's commitment to a resolution based on UN General Assembly Resolution 3458 (XXX) and expressed strong support for a referendum on self-determination. The Algerian authorities insisted that Rydbeck should visit Tindouf to hear the perspectives of Sahrawi living outside the occupied territory.

Senegalese Foreign Minister Assane Seck, arrived in Rabat on March 30, as part of a tour of countries involved in the Sahara conflict. The following day, March 31, Seck had an audience with King Hassan II, during which he delivered a personal message from President Léopold Sédar Senghor. The leaders of Istiqlal and USFP were concurrently in Dakar at Senghor's invitation (USER, 1976b)

On March 31, 1976, King Hassan II received leaders from Moroccan "opposition" parties—including Istiqlal, USFP, MPCD, and MP—and tasked them with diplomatic missions abroad to explain Morocco's position on the Sahara. These efforts, reminiscent of similar campaigns in 1974, were officially presented as informational visits to heads of state, yet they reveal a broader attempt to demonstrate national unity under the crown. The April 1, 1976, edition of the semi-official *Le Matin* framed this initiative as the launch of a "new Moroccan diplomatic campaign."

Among those involved was Ali Yata, leader of the PPS, who was attending a communist conference in Bulgaria and was expected to visit additional socialist states on behalf of the government—an effort to sway leftist parties in Eastern Europe. According to a regional diplomat, Morocco anticipates favorable responses regarding the recognition of the SADR. In contrast, Abdallah Ibrahim of the UNFP abstained from participating in these missions, maintaining his critical distance, as in 1974. (USER, 1976b).

1.6. Visit to Tindouf and Meetings with Sahrawi Representatives

On the morning of 31 March 1976, Rydbeck traveled by air to Tindouf, where he stayed overnight before returning to Algiers the following day. Shortly after his arrival, he was

escorted to the Camp Robinet¹⁰ refugee settlement, located 25 kilometers from Tindouf. The visit provided an opportunity to witness the humanitarian conditions of the Sahrawi refugees who had fled the conflict.

Following his brief tour of the camp¹¹, Rydbeck convened with six different groups of Sahrawis, including:

- Eighteen members of the Djema'a (Western Sahara's former governing body under Spanish colonial rule), accompanied by five additional sheikhs and elders who were now members of the Provisional National Council of Western Sahara.
- Representatives from the National Union of Sahrawi Women.
- A delegation of recently arrived Sahrawi refugees from Western Sahara.
- Thirteen Sahrawi administrators overseeing the refugee camps.
- Mr. El Ouali, Secretary-General of POLISARIO Front, along with seven other high-ranking members of the movement.

In each meeting, the representatives expressed strong opposition to what they described as the "*forceful occupation*" of Western Sahara by Morocco and Mauritania. They unanimously supported Polisario's position and called for the withdrawal of Moroccan and Mauritanian forces before any genuine referendum on self-determination could take place.

On the first of April the Moroccan "opposition party chiefs" began their "Sahara Explaining Mission" going to several African, Asian, eastern and western European States

1.7. Final Meetings in Algiers and Diplomatic Repercussions

¹⁰ "Camp Robinet, now known as Rabuni, was originally named after a faucet (robinet in French) located at a water well in the area. This faucet distinguished the well from others that lacked such a feature, making it a key geographic reference used by the Sahrawi to identify the location."

¹¹ <https://www.britishpathe.com/asset/204110/> video by Reuters - United Nations special envoy Olof Rydbeck toured camps of refugees from the disputed Western Sahara on Wednesday (31 March) and Thursday (1 April) in the Tindouf region of southwest Algeria.

Rydbeck returned to Algiers on 2 April 1976 for a high-level meeting with H.E. President Houari Boumediene of Algeria. The discussion reaffirmed Algeria's view that any resolution to the Western Sahara question must respect the Sahrawi people's right to self-determination. Boumediene emphasized that Algeria had no economic or strategic interests in Western Sahara but supported the cause purely as a matter of principle. Questioned by President Boumediene if Rydbeck had been told in the camps about the atrocities committed by the occupying forces and their use of napalm against the Sahrawi population, Rydbeck answered that

“these were matters for the international Red Cross and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to investigate. He had heard reports about such things, but it was not within his mandate from the Secretary-General to investigate them.”¹²

Later that day, Rydbeck departed Algiers for Geneva, where he was scheduled to brief the UN Secretary-General.

Upon his arrival in Geneva on 6 April 1976, Rydbeck delivered an oral report to the Secretary-General detailing the findings of his mission. However, diplomatic tensions had already begun to escalate. The governments of Morocco and Mauritania formally communicated to the UN that, as a consequence of Rydbeck's meetings with POLISARIO Front representatives in Tindouf, they refused to receive him in their respective capitals.

“But of course, the tour aroused anger in Rabat and Nouakchott since both countries consider the Saharan issue as finished and no longer a question for debate. The fact that the UN met representatives of the Polisario Front while in Algiers prompted the Moroccans and Mauritians to announce that Rydbeck was persona non grata and refused him entry.” (“Sahara seeking recognition,” 1976)

This development effectively brought the second phase of his mission to an abrupt and premature end. Given the diplomatic blockade imposed by Morocco and Mauritania,

¹² See annex 41 a); b), c)

Rydbeck's conclusions were necessarily limited to the insights gained from his visits to Spain, Algeria, and Sahrawi refugee camps in Tindouf. Key takeaways from his report included:

- Both Spain and Algeria agreed that, under current conditions, a fair and credible self-determination process for the Sahrawi people was not feasible.

Further Moroccan reactions to the Rydbeck mission revealed an ongoing strategy to contain the Western Sahara question avoiding substantive engagement with the underlying issue of Sahrawi self-determination. During a call on April 29, 1976, Moroccan Foreign Ministry Secretary-General Abdelhakim El-Iraqi acknowledged to U.S. officials that, although Morocco considered the Sahara issue "closed," the government remained in constant contact with UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, seeking ways to manage the legal implications of the UN General Assembly resolutions of December 4, 1975. Moroccan jurists, he indicated, were exploring mechanisms to escape what he described as a "legal impasse" stemming from those resolutions. Of particular relevance was Spain's position regarding the unfulfilled provisions of the November 14, 1975, Madrid Accords, notably the required consultation with the Sahrawi population. El-Iraqi suggested that a modification of Spain's position on this issue could provide Waldheim with diplomatic leverage. Significantly, he also noted the upcoming May 5 visit of Spanish Foreign Minister José María de Areilza, which followed intensified bilateral activity, including agreements on phosphate exploitation at Bu-Craa (signed April 24) and resumed talks over offshore fishing rights.

This exchange underscores how Spanish-Moroccan diplomacy had increasingly turned toward consolidating economic interests in the territory, with little regard for the Sahrawi population, whose displacement and suffering were already being compounded by Moroccan military actions, including the use of napalm against civilian areas. While Moroccan officials privately admitted to a tactical need to prevent the Sahara issue from resurfacing as a contentious item at the next UN General Assembly, their emphasis remained fixed on legal maneuvering and geopolitical control. For Spain's part, its continued participation in the economic exploitation of Western Sahara's resources—particularly in the phosphate-rich Bu-Craa region—despite its formal withdrawal in

1975, shows its intended refusal to uphold its ongoing legal responsibilities as the de jure administering power, a status that UN envoy Olof Rydbeck reportedly reaffirmed. Under international law, particularly Article 73 of the UN Charter and established norms concerning Non-Self-Governing Territories, administering powers are obligated to protect the interests and rights of the local population until a genuine act of self-determination has taken place. Spain's actions during this period, far from fulfilling these obligations, appear to prioritize bilateral economic arrangements over the legal and moral imperatives of decolonization and the protection of Sahrawi rights.(USER, 1976a).

- The Sahrawi Rydbeck met in Tindouf overwhelmingly rejected Moroccan and Mauritanian claims over Western Sahara and called for a referendum under UN supervision.
- The POLISARIO Front leadership, despite proclaiming the SADR, remained open to an UN-sponsored referendum to determine the territory's final status.

Ultimately, this second phase of Rydbeck's mission confirmed the findings of his earlier visit to Western Sahara, reinforcing the conclusion that a genuine self-determination process could not take place under the prevailing conditions. With Morocco and Mauritania obstructing further diplomatic engagements, Rydbeck's mission was effectively stalled, and his role as Special Representative came to an uncertain end.

The mission's failure to gain traction in Morocco and Mauritania underscored the geopolitical constraints surrounding UN efforts to mediate the Western Sahara dispute—an impasse that would persist in the years and decades to follow.

“When the Swedish UN ambassador, Olof Rydbeck, visited the Western Sahara to examine how the UN might proceed, he was so struck by the scale of the Moroccan military presence, the repressive political atmosphere, the developing guerrilla war and the exodus of refugees that he advised Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim that a genuine consultation of local views was impossible.

Consequently, the UN decided that the essential conditions for the exercise of self-determination were not fulfilled.” (Seddon, 1987)

2. The reaction to Olof Rydbeck's reports – A Balance

2.1. UN and international reaction to the Rydbeck's MISSIONS

- Reception or lack thereof of the Rydbeck reports by the UN and Member States
- Political and diplomatic implications of Rydbeck's conclusions
- Assessment of the impact of your actions on the ground

According to Eric Jensen “Olof Rydbeck’s report was not published; it may have been thought to be too sensitive. ” (Jensen, 2005) In fact there is no report to be found from the SG Waldheim neither to the Security Council nor the General Assembly with the report of Amb. Rydbeck. The spokesman of SG Waldheim also informed on February 25 1976 that Rydbeck’s report would not be circulated as UN document (USMUN, 1976f). Hence there were no official reactions on the part of the United Nations.

The war, occupation and massive settler introduction continued without any kind of impediment from the international community except the steadfast support from the Algerian Government to the Sahrawi refugees that to this date live in the refugee camps near Tindouf in Algeria.

The UNGA adopted a resolution “Cuestión del Sahara Occidental A/RES/31/45”¹³ (in December 1976) but not mentioning the mission, the UNSG never addressed the issue of Rydbeck’s mission either. This complete silence is a strong indication of the intentional stalemate the issue was victim of.

Indeed, two letters from Algeria and one from Spain to the UNSG Waldheim are the documents that can be found during the timespan of Rydbeck’s appointment mentioned the Western Sahara Issue (UNSC, 1977).

¹³ A/RES/31/45



Figure 3- NU/141/76/ao

The letter submitted by the Government of Algeria to the United Nations Secretary-General on 6 February 1976 (document S/11971) presents a comprehensive denunciation of the processes and actions that led to the Moroccan and Mauritanian presence in Western Sahara following Spain's announced withdrawal from the territory. Algeria's position, articulated with reference to international law and relevant UN resolutions, centers on the contention that the

decolonization of Western Sahara was deliberately derailed through a series of unilateral and coercive measures by Morocco and Mauritania, in violation of the inalienable right of the Sahrawi people to self-determination.

A focal point of the letter is the Moroccan-organized "Green March" of November 1975, which Algeria characterizes not as a peaceful expression of popular will, but rather as a strategic deception. According to the Algerian account, the Green March served as a pretext to justify the presence of Moroccan regular forces in the territory and to facilitate covert negotiations with Spain and Mauritania. Algeria contends that this action was undertaken in direct contravention of Security Council resolutions and represented a deliberate circumvention of the decolonization process established by the

United Nations. The ultimate result was the Madrid Agreement of 14 November 1975, through which Spain transferred administrative control over Western Sahara to Morocco and Mauritania without consulting the Sahrawi people, whom Algeria describes as the only legitimate holders of sovereignty in the territory.

The letter further argues that both Morocco and Mauritania, through their coordinated military invasion, assumed the status of aggressor states under international law. Citing the United Nations Charter, General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV) on Friendly Relations, and resolution 3314 (XXIX) on the Definition of Aggression, Algeria asserts that these states violated the principle prohibiting the use of force to deny a people its right to self-determination. The letter recalls that Article 7 of the annex to resolution 3314 explicitly affirms the right of peoples under colonial or foreign domination to resist occupation and to seek and receive support in their struggle, thereby justifying international solidarity with the Sahrawi resistance.

Algeria also references the 16 October 1975 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), which concluded that there existed no legal ties of territorial sovereignty between Western Sahara and either Morocco or the Mauritanian entity that would affect the application of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). The ICJ, in rejecting Morocco's claims, reinforced the centrality of self-determination through the free and genuine expression of the will of the Sahrawi people. This legal interpretation was echoed by the United Nations Visiting Mission to Western Sahara, which recommended that any credible popular consultation would require, among other conditions, the withdrawal of foreign military forces, the return of exiled Sahrawi, and a transitional period under United Nations administration.

In Algeria's view, the process initiated by the Madrid Agreement is not only illegal but also constitutes a regression from the international consensus that had developed over a decade through multiple UN resolutions, decisions of the OAU, and positions of the Non-Aligned Movement. The memorandum declares the agreement null and void and argues that Spain, as the administering power, remains bound by its obligations under Chapter XI of the UN Charter and by General Assembly resolution 3458 A (XXX), adopted

on 10 December 1975, which reaffirmed the right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination under UN supervision.

Furthermore, the Algerian government raised grave concerns regarding the humanitarian and security consequences of the invasion. It asserts that the aggression is “now virtually assuming the proportions of genocide” and that the situation poses a serious threat to peace and stability in the region. In this context, Algeria calls upon the international community to urgently restore legality by ensuring that the Sahrawi people are afforded the opportunity to exercise their inalienable rights through a free and genuine referendum.

In sum, Algeria’s memorandum to the UN (A/31/48_S/11971) presents a legal, political, and moral indictment of the actions taken by Morocco and Mauritania in Western Sahara. It underscores the failure of the Madrid Agreement to meet international legal standards and calls for renewed international engagement to uphold the principle of self-determination and to halt what Algeria characterizes as an illegal occupation with severe humanitarian implications.

In a letter from Spain to the UN Secretary-General, 26 February 1976 (A/31/56_S/11997), the Government of Spain formally communicates its intention to terminate its presence and responsibilities in the Territory of Western Sahara as of 28 February 1976. This declaration marks a pivotal moment in the region’s decolonization process and the culmination of Spain's disengagement following the Madrid Accords signed in November 1975 with Morocco and Mauritania.

The letter acknowledges that, despite the tripartite agreement, the terms of Article 3 of the Madrid Accords—specifically concerning the organization of consultations with the Sahrawi population—have not been fulfilled. In particular, Spain notes the absence of “*appropriate consultations*” with the Djema’a, the colonial-era assembly used by Spain as a representative body. This admission highlights internal tensions within the Spanish administration about the legal and moral limitations of the transition agreement.

Crucially, the letter asserts that Spain does not intend to assume any international responsibility for the administration of Western Sahara after 28 February 1976. This stance implicitly challenges the prevailing interpretation of Spain's obligations under Chapter XI of the UN Charter, which defines the duties of administering powers in Non-Self-Governing Territories. By unilaterally declaring the end of its role, Spain attempts to offload its obligations without formally transferring sovereignty to the Sahrawi people or to the United Nations, as required by international decolonization principles.

This document confirms a key legal and diplomatic rupture: Spain's exit did not result in the recognized completion of decolonization but rather left a legal vacuum, subsequently exploited by Morocco and Mauritania. The letter also reaffirms that Spain's decision occurs without a referendum and without the consent of the indigenous Sahrawi population, in contradiction with General Assembly resolutions, the 1975 ICJ Advisory Opinion, and the findings of the UN Visiting Mission.

In the Letter from Algeria to the Secretary-General on 8 March 1976 (A/31/59_S/12002), Algeria reiterates its firm position regarding the illegitimacy of the Moroccan and Mauritanian military presence in Western Sahara and its rejection of the Madrid Accords of November 1975. The letter reflects Algeria's mounting diplomatic campaign following Spain's formal withdrawal from the territory on 28 February 1976 and the unilateral declaration of the SADR by the Polisario Front on 27 February 1976.

Algeria addresses the Secretary-General in the immediate aftermath of these critical events, asserting that the decolonization process has been hijacked by external actors—namely Morocco and Mauritania—through military occupation and political manipulation, in contravention of UN resolutions and the principles of international law. Algeria stresses that any transfer of authority over Western Sahara must involve the Sahrawi people themselves, as the only legitimate holders of sovereignty, and must take place under United Nations supervision, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) on the granting of independence to colonial territories.

The letter reaffirms Algeria's support for a genuine process of self-determination through an UN-organized referendum, denouncing the Madrid tripartite agreement as null and void. Algeria warns of the implications of continued aggression, emphasizing that the regional peace and security are at stake and urging the international community to act to halt the illegal occupation and restore the rule of international legality.

The timing and tone of the letter underscore Algeria's increasing support for the Polisario Front as the representative of the Sahrawi people, and its broader geopolitical objective to block Moroccan consolidation of territorial control while galvanizing international solidarity around the principle of decolonization through self-determination.

Throughout the critical years of 1976 and 1977, France played a pivotal yet publicly understated role in shaping the trajectory of the Western Sahara conflict, despite not being formally designated a party to the dispute by the United Nations or involved in Olof Rydbeck's mediation efforts. France's position was marked by an ambivalent neutrality that masked a clear strategic alignment with Morocco, underpinned by overlapping geopolitical, military, and economic interests. As Tony Naylor (Naylor, 1987) argues, French policy during this period consistently deferred to Morocco's regional ambitions, viewing a stable Moroccan administration in the Western Sahara as a guarantor of Western-aligned order in North Africa, while showing little interest in multilateral approaches or the principle of Sahrawi self-determination. France never engaged with Rydbeck's mission, nor did it support a broader UN debate on the findings, effectively sidestepping its responsibility as a former colonial power and permanent member of the Security Council. This silence, however, belied France's active role on the ground. In late 1977, Paris launched *Opération Lamantin*, a clandestine military campaign involving air strikes against Polisario units, carried out by French Jaguars operating from the Oukam base near Dakar. As Didi Sidemhamed (Sidemhamed, 2024) has documented through both French and Sahrawi testimonies, the intervention was framed as a response to Polisario attacks on the Mauritanian railway infrastructure, but

in practice served to bolster the Mauritanian regime and indirectly reinforce Morocco's military occupation of the Western Sahara.

Carried out under conditions of extreme secrecy, the operation reveals the continuity of French military doctrine in former colonial territories, drawing explicitly on lessons from earlier counter-insurgency campaigns, including Opération Écouvillon (1958). The use of elite units, advanced airpower, and counter-guerrilla tactics further underscores the depth of French involvement, which contrasted starkly with its public posture of disengagement. France's refusal to recognize the POLISARIO Front, combined with its material support for Morocco and silence in international fora, reflects a broader pattern of selective adherence to international norms, where strategic interests eclipsed legal commitments. In doing so, France—like the United States—helped entrench the occupation of Western Sahara while circumventing the institutional responsibilities associated with decolonization and self-determination.

2.2. Difficulty in declassifying documentation relating to Rydbeck's mission

The process of declassifying and accessing documentation related to Olof Rydbeck's mission presented numerous challenges, beginning with the difficulty of identifying him as the first special representative to the region. Scholarly references to his mission are remarkably scarce, with only a handful of academic works—such as those by Hodges, Ruiz Miguel, and Zundy & Mundy—briefly mentioning it. However, these sources provide minimal detail on the scope of his activities, focusing instead on the conclusion that a genuine consultation of the Sahrawi people was rendered impracticable due to the prevailing military situation, as stated in UN resolutions. The absence of substantive analysis on the mission's extent necessitated a more in-depth archival investigation.

Initial research efforts were hindered by the fact that many relevant United Nations documents remained classified. A formal request for their declassification was submitted, and shortly thereafter, access was granted. However, further difficulties arose due to the limited availability of contemporary press coverage online, which made it challenging to determine specific points of inquiry beyond the general timeframe of

the mission. The lack of readily accessible primary sources necessitated extensive archival consultation across multiple countries.

In Algeria, accessing relevant newspaper archives required traveling to Algiers, where the National Archives facilitated research with the support of a team of staff members who assisted with both document retrieval and translation from the Arabic when necessary. The investigation also required physical consultations at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris, the Hemeroteca in Santiago de Compostela, and the SADR archives located in the Sahrawi refugee camps. Despite the extensive documentation available in some of these archives, significant limitations emerged: none of the POLISARIO members who had engaged directly with Ambassador Rydbeck during his mission were still alive, making it impossible to conduct interviews to supplement the documentary record.

Further archival research extended to Swedish diplomatic sources, including consultations with the Swedish Embassy in New York and the archives of the Swedish Foreign Ministry. Despite multiple requests, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva refused to declassify documents related to Rydbeck's February 1976 meeting with their representatives or other possibly existing documents related to his mission, despite prolonged correspondence on the matter. Efforts to obtain documentation from Moroccan national archives and newspaper records were similarly unsuccessful, as no response was received and no relevant materials were accessible online.

A significant breakthrough, however, came from an alternative source—Wikileaks. The platform provided access to extensive diplomatic communications from the United States Mission to the United Nations, which contained detailed exchanges on Rydbeck's mission. These documents proved essential in bridging the gaps left by inaccessible institutional archives, offering crucial insights into the mission's context and the diplomatic discussions surrounding it.

The challenges encountered in accessing and declassifying documentation on Rydbeck's mission underscore the broader difficulties of conducting historical research on

politically sensitive topics. The necessity of cross-referencing archival materials from multiple countries, the inaccessibility of key institutional records, and the absence of surviving firsthand witnesses illustrate the complexities involved in reconstructing historical events. Nevertheless, the combination of official archives, press records, and alternative sources such as Wikileaks ultimately allowed for the development of a more comprehensive understanding of the mission and its historical significance.

Conclusion

Exposing the structural limitations of United Nations diplomacy, Olof Rydbeck's mission allows for a critical re-examination of the commonly accepted narrative of contingency that often shapes accounts of the failure to decolonize Western Sahara. Events such as the death of Franco in 1975, the institutional fragility of the United States following the Watergate scandal, or the apparent hesitation of the UN are frequently invoked to explain the international community's inaction as the product of unforeseen disruptions or external instability. However, the content of Rydbeck's reports—and the diplomatic context surrounding them—suggest quite the opposite: that the collapse of the Saharan decolonization process was not accidental, but the result of deliberate political choices, coordinated interests, and a clearly articulated set of strategic priorities by key state actors. Far from a failure brought on by historical misfortune, the derailment of self-determination was part of a preexisting logic of normalization, wherein occupation was gradually rendered acceptable through diplomatic recognition, economic agreements, and the careful management of international silence. In this sense, Rydbeck's mission does not simply document a moment of failure—it helps reveal the architecture of that failure, showing how what may appear as contingency was in fact deeply predetermined by forces already in motion.

In revisiting Olof Rydbeck's mission, this study has uncovered not only the constraints faced by a single diplomat operating within the UN system, but also a broader pattern of international abdication. Rydbeck's experience must be read as symptomatic of a larger structural failure: the inability—or unwillingness—of the United Nations and its most powerful member states to uphold their legal and moral commitments to

decolonization and self-determination. While his reports highlighted fundamental violations, including forced displacement, military occupation, and demographic manipulation, the Security Council remained silent, and his findings were never debated in multilateral fora. This silence was not merely procedural—it represented the effective sidelining of international law in favor of geopolitical pragmatism. France’s military intervention, Spain’s abdication of its legal responsibilities, and the United States’ diplomatic endorsement of Moroccan control all point to a pattern in which state interests overrode legal obligations.

Rydbeck’s mission, therefore, serves as a crucial early warning of the limitations of UN mediation in settler-colonial contexts, particularly when major powers are complicit in the outcome. As such, it remains an essential case study for understanding not only the Western Sahara conflict, but also the erosion of the decolonization mandate in international relations. The continuing failure to resolve the status of Western Sahara—and the protracted suffering of the Sahrawi people—should not be seen as a policy impasse, but as the legacy of a diplomatic failure whose roots lie in this very period.

The analysis of diplomatic exchanges and meetings before and during Amb. Rydbeck’s mission as Special Envoy for Western Sahara reveals a profound and persistent disregard for the Sahrawi civilian population by the principal actors involved — Spain, Morocco, and Mauritania. These actors overwhelmingly focused on strategic, territorial, and economic objectives, while the fundamental rights, safety, and survival of the Sahrawi people were conspicuously ignored.

Crucial humanitarian concerns — such as forced displacement, the destruction of homes, the interruption of education, the absence of health infrastructure, and the bombing of civilian populations and of water wells— were systematically excluded from the agenda. The fact that Sahrawi civilians were subjected to aerial bombardment, in violation of international humanitarian law, was never raised in any substantial way in the meetings or diplomatic correspondence. This silence must be understood not as a diplomatic oversight, but as a deliberate manifestation of dehumanization.

Algeria alone raised concerns for the well-being of the Sahrawi population and provided refuge to those fleeing the violence, particularly in the Tindouf region. Meanwhile, Spain — the colonial power in retreat — continued to assert its interests over fisheries and phosphate mines, as illustrated in Foreign Minister Areilza's 5 February 1976 statement to Special Envoy Olof Rydbeck, in which

“he (minister Areilza) explained that Spain was very interested to know what steps the United Nations might take because, although Spain was withdrawing from the Territory, it had continuing interests there such as the fishing facilities and the phosphate mines” .

This remark encapsulates the prevailing logic of the negotiations — one in which the material wealth of the territory was given precedence over the rights and lives of its indigenous population.

This erasure of the Sahrawi from international negotiations reflects a broader colonial logic, one that renders indigenous populations invisible and dispensable. As postcolonial theorists such as Edward Said, Frantz Fanon, and Achille Mbembe have demonstrated, this process of dehumanization is central to both colonial and postcolonial structures of power. It allows the dispossession, repression, and silencing of populations to occur under the guise of political pragmatism or territorial administration. As Edward Said argued in *Orientalism* (Said, 1995), imperial discourse depends on the silencing and objectification of colonized peoples, reducing them to passive subjects over whom history is written. Frantz Fanon similarly described the colonial subject as the colonized thing, denied agency, voice, and recognition (Philcox et al., 2004). Achille Mbembe's analysis in “necropolitics” (Mbembe, 2019) further illuminates how postcolonial regimes may inherit and reproduce colonial modes of power, determining who is allowed to live and who can be left to die.

To this day, the Sahrawi people continue to live under Moroccan colonial rule — Morocco acting as the *de facto* administrator of Western Sahara — while Spain remains the *de jure* administering power under international law, having never completed the decolonization process. The Sahrawi people's right to self-determination although

enshrined in International Law and in accordance with the UN remains denied. POLISARIO Front emerged and asserted — through persistent armed resistance, political organization, and diplomatic engagement — its role as legitimate representative of the Sahrawi people, a status recognized by the United Nations.

Olof Rydbeck, as Special Representative of the Secretary-General, played a significant role in documenting the situation on the ground. However, his reports and meetings largely failed to center the human cost of the conflict — namely, the violations of human rights and humanitarian law. Despite having personally witnessed the aftermath of bombings in the refugee camps, and despite facilitating the safe escape of a Sahrawi man targeted for repression, Rydbeck's mission remained constrained within a framework of political observation rather than human rights advocacy. One is left to ask: could a stronger focus on civilian suffering, war crimes, and systemic repression have altered the trajectory of international engagement? Could it have brought the Sahrawi plight onto the United Nations' agenda with greater urgency and moral clarity?

The massive Moroccan military presence observed during Rydbeck's visit to the occupied territory further underscores the coercive nature of the so-called "integration" process. The exclusion of these realities from the official diplomatic discourse reflects not only a historical injustice but an enduring failure of international accountability. The Sahrawi people were rendered invisible at the very moment when their future was being decided — a pattern that continues to this day. A critical reckoning with this history is essential, not only to understand the roots of the ongoing conflict, but to confront the structures of dehumanization that still shape international responses to colonial legacies and territorial occupation.

The United States as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, and its intimate knowledge of the situation on the ground particularly during the mission of Olof Rydbeck— gave the United States ample opportunity to uphold international law and advance the principle of self-determination through multilateral mechanisms. Internal U.S. diplomatic cables revealed that Washington was fully aware of the scope and nature of Morocco's actions: the military occupation, the use of napalm against Sahrawi civilians, the forced displacement of the local population into exile and desert

hinterlands, the imposition of Moroccan civil servants with minimal Sahrawi input, and the beginning of a deliberate process of demographic engineering aimed at permanently altering the ethnic and political character of the territory. All of these measures, taken together, constitute violations of international humanitarian law and amount to war crimes under the Geneva Conventions—particularly the prohibitions against collective punishment, the targeting of civilians, and forced population transfers in occupied territories.

Despite this knowledge, the United States chose not to pursue any formal discussion of Rydbeck's findings in the Security Council, nor did it raise the question of Morocco's conduct as an occupying power, or the implications of Spain's continued *de jure* status as the administering authority, which Rydbeck himself reportedly affirmed. This strategic silence reflects not merely a failure of moral leadership, but an active abdication of legal responsibility under the UN Charter and international law. Rather than leveraging its privileged position to uphold the rights of the Sahrawi people, the United States facilitated the normalization of occupation through tacit endorsement and the suppression of debate. Its policy, aimed at preserving regional alliances and limiting Algerian or Soviet influence, effectively marginalized the UN's legal and normative frameworks, transforming a question of decolonization into one of geopolitical expediency.

In doing so, the United States played a central role in rendering invisible the suffering and resistance of the Sahrawi people, whose plight was reframed not as the result of state violence or territorial conquest, but as a temporary disruption in the path toward regional "stability." The absence of any Security Council deliberation on Rydbeck's mission—despite clear evidence of unlawful military occupation, repression, and economic exploitation—marks a profound institutional failure. It underscores how power asymmetries within the international system can foreclose legal remedy and political recognition for stateless and colonized peoples, even in full view of international actors who possess both the knowledge and the means to act.

Another key dimension that merits emphasis in concluding this study is the centrality of natural resource exploitation to Morocco's diplomatic strategy during and after

Rydbeck's mission. The Moroccan leadership appeared to operate on the assumption that the material value of Western Sahara's resources—particularly phosphates, offshore fisheries, and prospective mineral deposits—could be leveraged to secure international acceptance of its territorial claims. This approach was not merely rhetorical: Morocco actively pursued bilateral agreements with Spain and other foreign partners that would enable joint exploitation of Sahrawi resources, thus transforming economic interests into political alignment. The April 24, 1976, phosphate-sharing agreement with Spain, negotiated while the UN was still formally engaged through Rydbeck's mission, exemplifies how economic entanglement was used to bypass legal obligations and substitute contractual arrangements for multilateral consensus. Beyond Western Sahara, Morocco even sought access to Algerian iron ore reserves, including through proposals that Algeria considered diplomatically aggressive and economically exploitative—moves that further strained relations and exposed the opportunistic logic of Morocco's regional economic ambitions.

While this resource-based diplomacy succeeded in garnering implicit or tacit support from various international actors, Algeria stood out as the principal state actor to resist this trend, grounding its opposition not in economic calculations but in a consistent appeal to international law and the right of self-determination. Algeria's legalist position, reinforced through its support of the POLISARIO Front and its denunciation of unilateral exploitation, highlighted the deep normative divide that characterized the regional dispute. In this context, Morocco's economic strategy functioned not only as a mechanism of territorial consolidation, but also as an instrument of soft coercion in international diplomacy—a calculated effort to replace political consent with commercial interest, and international legitimacy with resource dependency. That such a strategy gained considerable traction —particularly among Western and non-aligned states— speaks to the structural vulnerabilities of a global order where access to resources too often eclipses commitments to decolonization and human rights.

Although Olof Rydbeck's mission was initially formally “welcomed” by Morocco, Spain, and Mauritania, a closer examination of both diplomatic records and the political context reveals that this support was largely instrumental and tactical, aimed at gaining

time and legitimacy rather than facilitating a genuine process of decolonization. For Morocco in particular, the timing of the mission coincided precisely with an accelerated campaign to consolidate military and administrative control over the territory. While ostensibly cooperating with the United Nations, Morocco was simultaneously deploying civil servants, redrawing provincial boundaries, forcibly resettling displaced Sahrawi nomads, and suppressing resistance through military means, including the reported use of napalm. These efforts were carried out alongside a coordinated diplomatic offensive, sending high-profile emissaries to Eastern and Western capitals—including to socialist parties and non-aligned governments—to argue Morocco's case and preempt recognition of the Polisario-backed SADR.

At the same time, Morocco engaged in intensive backchannel diplomacy with Spain, whose formal legal status as administering power under international law remained unresolved. Despite having withdrawn militarily, Spain continued to negotiate bilateral agreements with Morocco concerning the exploitation of phosphate resources at Bu-Craa and resumed fishing negotiations—measures that signaled increasing Spanish complicity in Morocco's *fait accompli*. Spain's decision to avoid any substantive engagement with Rydbeck's findings or to press for a proper act of self-determination was not coincidental; it reflected a shared interest in the quiet stabilization of the occupation, which allowed both powers to secure economic and political advantages while publicly maintaining an appearance of legal ambiguity. Mauritania's parallel role, though less prominent, also aligned with this strategy, as it entered partition and exploitation arrangements with Morocco while offering no meaningful cooperation with the UN process.

Rydbeck's mission thus served, for all three actors, as a convenient diplomatic façade — a means of deflecting international scrutiny and appearing to honor UN procedures, all while taking irreversible steps to alter the legal and demographic landscape of Western Sahara. Far from reflecting a commitment to self-determination, the “welcoming” of the mission was part of a broader strategy to reshape the conflict into a postcolonial territorial dispute, managed through bilateralism, strategic silence, and selective adherence to international norms.

Nearly five decades after Olof Rydbeck's mission, the conflict in Western Sahara remains unresolved, and its core questions—sovereignty, self-determination, and legal accountability—persist in suspended animation. The diplomatic and political failures of 1975–1976 were not mere historical anomalies; they helped establish the conditions for the ongoing paralysis of the United Nations in the face of active territorial occupation and settler expansion. The fact that the UN has since presided over one of its longest-standing peacekeeping missions without ever organizing a referendum, as initially promised, is a direct legacy of the moment studied in this dissertation. The Rydbeck mission did not simply fail—it marked the beginning of the international community's gradual disengagement, cloaked in bureaucratic procedures and annual resolutions that reaffirm principle while doing little to enforce it.

In this context, Western Sahara stands today as a stark example of natural resource colonialism in the postcolonial age. The same dynamics analyzed in the 1970s—phosphate extraction, fishing agreements, and foreign investments facilitated by Morocco without the consent of the Sahrawi people—have only deepened. Recent legal decisions from the European Court of Justice, which ruled that trade agreements involving Western Sahara require the explicit consent of its people, have reasserted the legal framework long ignored by state actors. Yet enforcement remains elusive. Morocco continues to leverage access to Saharan resources to secure international alliances, while powerful states, including permanent members of the Security Council, maintain a deliberate ambiguity on the legal status of the territory.

Most damning, however, is the complete and enduring disregard of the international community for the suffering of the Sahrawi people. Despite decades of exile, systemic repression, and ongoing conflict, the Sahrawi remain largely invisible in the diplomatic arena, reduced to abstractions—mere black dots on a geopolitical gameboard, maneuvered without agency or voice. The UN Security Council, endowed with the authority to act, has repeatedly abdicated its responsibilities, prioritizing regional alliances and political expediency over the human cost of inaction. The silence in the face of war crimes, forced displacement, and demographic manipulation is not merely a diplomatic failure—it is a moral and legal indictment of the international system itself.

And yet, perhaps the most striking continuity is the durability of the Sahrawi struggle. Against enormous odds—military occupation, forced displacement, diplomatic marginalization—the POLISARIO Front, the SADR and the Sahrawi people have sustained a claim rooted not only in international law, but in a lived experience of resistance. If Rydbeck’s mission revealed the limits of institutional diplomacy in the face of geopolitical interests, the persistence of Sahrawi demands reveals the limits of occupation in producing legitimacy. That contradiction remains unresolved, and it will continue to haunt the credibility of international diplomacy until it is addressed not with silence or strategic calculation, but with the long-denied promise of self-determination and dignity.

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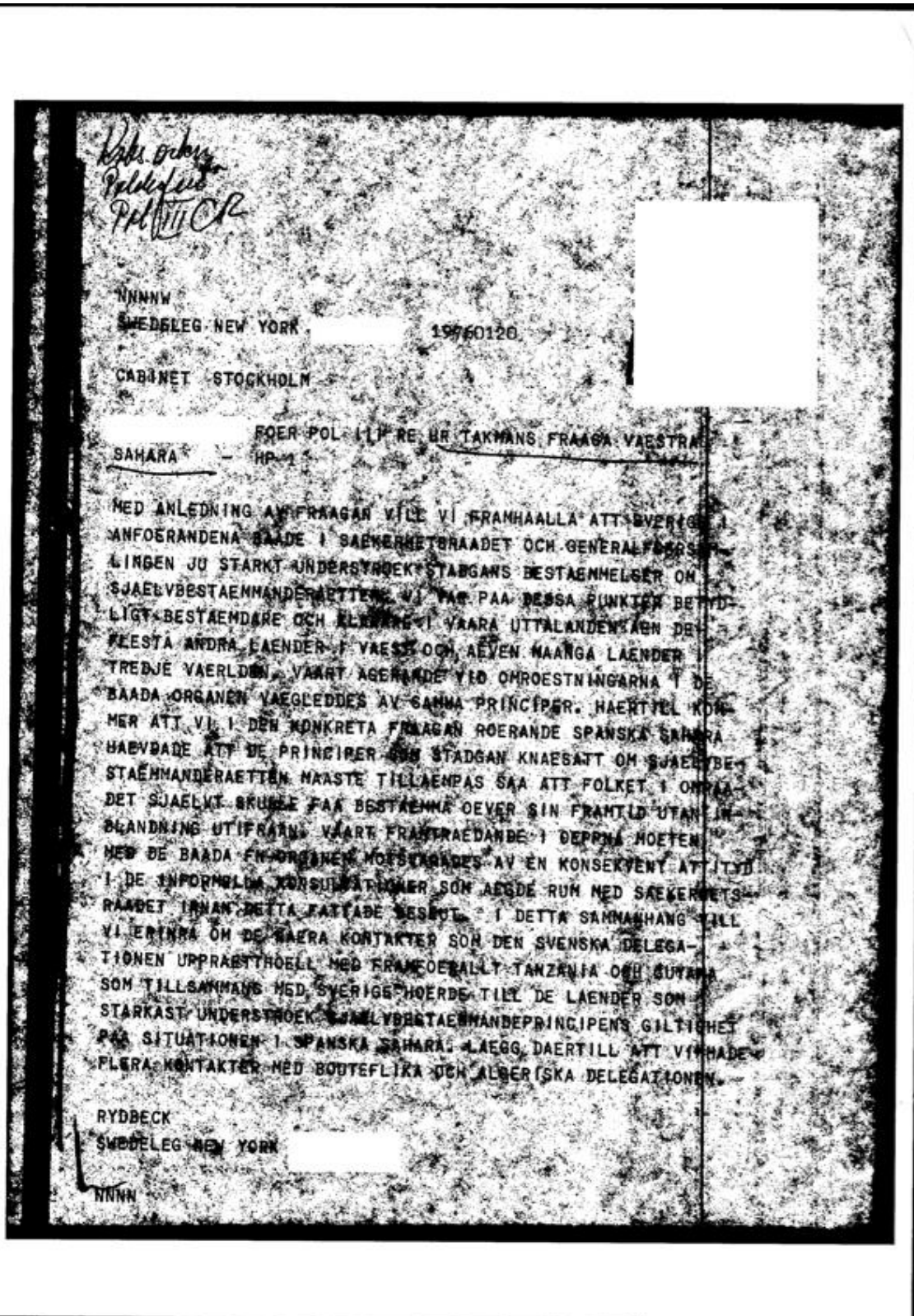
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Appendix

Appendix 1

SFM DOC 1



Appendix 2

SFM DOC 2

UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET		ORIGINAL	
Kopie till:	Åtgärd: (se regler på blankettbaga)		
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CABINET STOCKHOLM		RE VÄSTRA SAHARA	
FÖR VAKTHAVANDE. BENÄGET MEDDELA OMEDELBART KABINETTSSEKRETERAREN FRÅN RYDBECK.			
WALDHEIM RINGT MIG IKVÄLL OCH MEDDELAT FÖLJANDE.			
HAN HADE UNDER DAGEN OCH KVÄLLEN KONTAKTATS AV ALGERISKA OCH SPANSKA REGERINGARNA I FRÅGAN OM DEN KRISARTADE SITUATIONEN I SPANSKA SAHARA. FRÅN ALGERIET HADE BOUFEFLIKA RINGT FLERA GÅNGER..			
DET HADE FRAMGÅTT AV SPANIENS, ALGERIETS OCH OCKSA MAURETANIENS REGERINGAR ATT MAN ÖNSKADE ATT WALDHEIM SKULLE AGERA I ENLIGHET MED OP.PAR. 8 I GENERALFÖRSAMLINGS- RESOLUTIONEN 3458 (XXX). TEXTEN TILL PARA 7 OCH 8 I RESOLUTIONEN AATERGES AVSLUTNINGSVIS. WALDHEIM HADE SÖKT ITVERKA EN REAKTION PÅ DETTA FRÅN MAROCKO MEN ANNU EJ FÅTT NÅGOT RESULTAT.			
WALDHEIM BEGÄRDE ATT VIA SVENSKA REGERINGEN FÅ RIKTA EN ENTRÄGEN VÄRBJÄN TILL GUNNAR JÄRRING ATT DENNE, SOM GENERALSEKRETERARENS REPRESENTANT, SKULLE BEGE SIG TILL OMRADET FÖR ATT OMEDELBART KONTAKTA REGERINGARNA I ENLIGHET MED MANDATET I OVANNÄMMDA RESOLUTION.			
DET STOD ATT FRÅN WALDHEIMS SÖNDERINGAR ATT INGEN AFKTRÄN KUNDE INFÖRTES DETTA UPPDRAG PÅ GRUND AV FRÅGANS KANSLIGA KARAKTÄR UR AFRIKANSK SYNPUNKT. DEN			

SKT ARKIV 80

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Appendix 3

SFM DOC 3

UTRICKESDEPARTEMENTET	Arviden	ORIGINAL
Datum	Ärendet (se tecken på blankettlogga)	
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ALLMÄNNA UPPFATTNINGEN VAT ATT ENDAST EN VÄSTEUROPE KUNDE KOMMA IFRÅGA. JARRING HADE UTMORDENTLIGA MERITER OCH STOR ERFARENHET. ALGERIET, SPANIEN OCH MAURETANIEN HADE GIVIT SITT SAMTYCKE TILL VALET AV JARRING. MAROCKO HADE ÄNNU EJ REAGERAT.

WALDHEIM HEMSTÄLLDE ATT REGERINGEN SKULLE BITRÄDA MED EN OMGÅENDE KONTAKT MED JARRING.

OP.PAR 7 OCH OP.PAR 8.

7. REQUESTS THE GOVERNMENT OF SPAIN, AS THE ADMINISTERING POWER, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE VISITING MISSION AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ADVISORY OPINION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE, TO TAKE IMMEDIATELY ALL NECESSARY MEASURES, IN CONSULTATION WITH ALL THE PARTIES CONCERNED AND INTERESTED, SO THAT ALL SAHARAS ORIGINATING IN THE TERRITORY MAY EXERCISE FULLY AND FREELY, UNDER UNITED NATIONS SUPERVISION, THEIR INALIENABLE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION.

8. REQUESTS THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF SPAIN, AS THE ADMINISTERING POWER, AND THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES, TO MAKE THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SUPERVISION OF THE ACT OF SELF-DETERMINATION REFERRED TO IN PARAGRAPH 7 ABOVE.

SVENSKA
RUBBECK
SKF ARKIV 800

Appendix 4

SFM DOC 4

UTVÄRDEDEPARTEMENTET		Arbets-		ORIGINAL	
Kopia till: KABE NITH KABE POL CH POL II POL III		Älgård: (se register på blankettkopier)		48 1 20k (genny)	
SWEDELEG NEW YORK CABINET STOCKHOLM		1976-01-30			
RE VÄSTRA SAHARA					
O M E D E L B A R T FÖR KABSEKR OCH POLCHEFEN					
<p>JAG RINGDE WALDHEIM FÖR ATT FRAMFÖRA NEGATIVA BESKEDET FRÅN JARRING ENLIGT OVAN ANFÖRDA CHIFFER SATT GENERALSEKRETERAREN LITELFONSAKTAL MED JARRING. DET FRÄMGICK ATT AXEL AXELSSON JOHNSON MOTSÄTTER SIG ATT GUNNAR ÅTAR SIG UPPDRAGET MED HÄNSYN TILL RISKERNA FÖR JOHNSON-KONCERNEN AV ATT JARRING EVENTUELLT INVECKLAS I POLITISKA KONTROVERSSER. ENLIGT WALDHEIM FÖREFÖLL GUNNAR JARRING SJÄLV DOCK INTE ÖINTRESSERAD OCH HADE INTE HELT SLAGIT IGEN DÖRREN. WALDHEIM HADE BETT HONOM SOVA PÅ SAKEN VILKET HAN LOVAT. WALDHEIM VADJADE TILL MIG ATT SÖKA ÖVERTALA JARRING OCH HANS ARBETSGIVARE VILKET JAG OFÖRBEHÅLLSAMT LOVADE GÖRA. SÄVAL ALGERISKA SOM SPANSKA REGERINGARNA PRESSAR PÅ FÖR ATT FÅ UT EN REPRESENTANT FÖR GENERALSEKRETERAREN TILL VÄSTRA SAHARA NÄSTA VECKA. JAG FINNER ANGELÄGET ATT REGERINGEN UTÖVAR ALLT DET INFLYTANDE PÅ JARRING OCH HANS ARBETSGIVARE SOM ÄR MÖJLIGT FÖR ATT HAN SKALL FÖRMÅS ÅTAGA SIG UPPDRAGET. JAG KAN INTE TRO ATT DETTA KAN NEGATIVT PÅVERKA JOHNSON-KONCERNEN OCH FINNER UNDER ALLA FÖRHÅLLANDEN ATT EN VADJAN FRÅN GENERALSEKRETERAREN I DET LÄGE SOM NU RÄDER I SAHARAOMRÅDET BÖR TILLMÄTAS STÖRSTA VIKT INTE BARA AV JARRING OCH JOHNSON UTAN OCKSÅ AV SVENSKA REGERINGEN.</p>					
RYDBECK					
SWEDELEG NEW YORK					

Appendix 5

SFM DOC 5

Pol. avdeln., ut Leifland, 13		Angående	
Västtra Sahara		1976-01-30	
Dundeling NEW YORK		Jarring	
Omställbart för Rythod. Håret		En Västtra Sahara.	
<p>Vi har varit i kontakt med Gunnar Jarring. Hans första reaktion är att han har stora svårigheter lägga sig på en ny roll som uppdrag. Inom han slutgiltigt bestämt sig skulle han gärna vilja att du införskaffade uppgifter om hur lång tid uppdraget kan beståda ta. Kan också vara exakta informationer införskaffa om uppdragets karaktär - är det fridga om att förbereda den i § 6 nämnda aktionen eller ingår också ett genomföra och övervaka denna aktion?</p> <p>Vi noterar att Marokko ännu inte gett sitt samtycke och vglar från att - om så inte sker - tanken på uppdraget förfaller.</p> <p>Är intresset varit vidare att, för det fall Jarring accepterar, erfara hur snart Waldheim kommer se denna i New York.</p> <p>Gulinet</p> <p>En te Polchefen</p>			

Foreign Ministry (Utrikesdepartementet)

Date: January 30, 1976

From: Political Department (Pol. avdeln.), Leifland

To: Swedish Delegation, New York (SWEDELEG)

Subject: Western Sahara – Potential Role for Gunnar Jarring

- Contact has been made with Gunnar Jarring regarding a possible assignment in Western Sahara.
- Jarring's initial reaction is that he has significant difficulties in taking on a new role due to current obligations.
- Before making a final decision, Jarring wants further details regarding the mission, specifically:
 - How long the assignment would last
 - The exact nature of the task – whether it involves preparing a mission or actively overseeing and implementing measures.
- Sweden notes that Morocco has not yet given consent to the mission. If Morocco does not agree, the assignment will be abandoned.

- Sweden is awaiting confirmation on whether UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim still wants Jarring for the role, which will be clarified upon Waldheim's arrival in New York.

Appendix 6

SFM DOC 6

Avdelningschef		Pol. avdeln., ur Leifland, IB		Avgående	
Tavla		Västra Sahara		1976-01-30	
Adress		Sveolag NEW YORK		Jarring	
Tavla		Gunnar Jarring för Rydbeck. Re Västra Sahara.		Jarring	
		Gunnar Jarring nu definitivt meddelat mig han inte vill komma i fråga för uppdraget.			
		Jarring kommer till New York torsdag nästa vecka för Johnson-konferensen räkning. Han söker då kontakt med Mig.			
		Gabinat			
		76-01-30		76-01-30	
		1976-01-30		1976-01-30	

Swedish Delegation - New York

Immediate transmission to Rydbeck. Regarding Western Sahara.

Sender: Political Department (Pol. avdeln.), from Leifland.

Date: January 30, 1976.

Subject: Western Sahara.

Recipient: Swedish Diplomatic Officials

- Gunnar Jarring has now definitively informed me that he does not wish to be considered for the assignment.
- Jarring will arrive in New York next Thursday for the Johnson Conference.
- He will seek contact with you at that time.

End of message.

Appendix 7

SFM DOC 7

SFM DOC 7		Date	
Subject: Western Sahara		Classification	
Priority: High		Status: []	
Origin: Stockholm		Destination: []	
Date: 1976-02-03		Time: 10:00	
Author: Pol III de Liungman		Reviewer: []	
Distribution: []		Comments: []	
<p>1. The Swedish Government has decided to send an official to Western Sahara on Wednesday at 19:00 NY time on Iberia flight 25. Arrival in Madrid on Thursday at 07:40 Madrid time.</p> <p>2. Request for Bernström to be informed.</p> <p>3. In light of press reports on the situation in the area, we request that by Wednesday morning we receive updates from the embassies in Madrid, Rabat, and Algiers on the latest developments.</p>			

Foreign Ministry (Utrikesdepartementet)

Date: February 3, 1976

From: Pol III de Liungman

To: Swedish Embassies in Madrid, Algiers, and Rabat

Copy to: Various Swedish political and diplomatic offices (KABS, BITR KABS, POL CH, POL II, POL III, Swedeleg New York, Cabinet Stockholm).

Urgent: Western Sahara

- Departure of an official is planned for Wednesday at 19:00 NY time on Iberia flight 25. Arrival in Madrid on Thursday at 07:40 Madrid time.

- Request for Bernström to be informed.

- In light of press reports on the situation in the area, we request that by Wednesday morning we receive updates from the embassies in Madrid, Rabat, and Algiers on the latest developments.

Signed: Rydbeck

Swedish Delegation, New York

Appendix 8

SFM DOC 8

SWEDISH DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENCE

TO: SWEDISH DELEGATION IN NEW YORK, CABINET STOCKHOLM, SWEDISH EMBASSY IN ALGIERS

FROM: SWEDISH DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENCE

DATE: FEBRUARY 3, 1976, 19:20

COPY TO: KABS, BTR KABS, POL CH, POL II, POL III

FOR IMMEDIATE RELAY TO THE NEW YORK DELEGATION.

- Waldheim's decision to send a delegation led by Ambassador Rydbeck to Western Sahara and involved parties has been welcomed in Algiers.

- The Algerian military force that participated in battles at Amgala has returned to its base in Algeria. No information has been provided about their losses.

- The Algerian action within Western Sahara was justified as a humanitarian transport mission, requested by Polisario for military protection.

- Thanks to Egyptian mediation, the risk of continued Algerian military operations within Western Sahara is currently considered low.

- Approximately 35,000 Algerian troops have been concentrated near the Moroccan border, particularly in Bechar, Hassi Messaoud, and Tindouf.

- The Soviet Union does not wish for the conflict to escalate further and is only providing Algeria with enough weaponry to maintain a slight advantage over Morocco.

- A few dozen Soviet military experts have arrived in Algeria for training purposes.

- The presence of Cuban and North Vietnamese advisors is officially denied.

- In Algiers, there is little visible sign of increased military readiness. Industrial development continues, though some unfinished projects are delayed by a year.
- The Algerian government continues land reforms and social development projects. The 1976 national budget is balanced, with estimated revenues of 24 billion dinars and expenditures of 23 billion dinars.
- Domestically, Algeria remains politically stable, and President Boumediene's position is strong.
- Algiers is hosting several major international conferences, including one on Third World economic issues, with observers from socialist countries.

Signed: Edelstam

Appendix 9

SFM DOC 9

[illegible]

Foreign Ministry (Utrikesdepartementet)

Type: Report / Handwritten Letter / Telegram

Department: Political Division (Utrikesavdelningen)

Marked as: Secret

Distribution List:

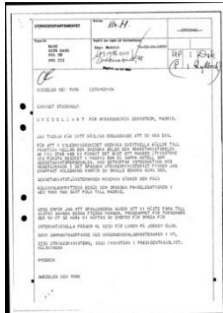
- King of Sweden
- Various Swedish government officials, including secretaries, diplomatic divisions, and military offices
- Embassies and diplomatic missions in key locations: Washington, Paris, Berlin, Moscow, Algiers, Rabat, Tunis, Tel Aviv, and others

Content Summary:

This document appears to be an internal Swedish diplomatic report concerning Western Sahara and North African affairs. The document was classified as secret and distributed to high-ranking Swedish government and diplomatic officials.

Appendix 10

SFM DOC 10



Foreign Ministry (Utrikesdepartementet)

Date: February 4, 1976, 18:30

From: Swedish Delegation, New York (SWEDELEG)

To: Ambassador Bernström, Madrid

Copy to: Cabinet Stockholm, Swedish Diplomatic Offices (KABS, BITR KABS, POL CH, POL III, Exp: Madrid)

Immediate Message for Ambassador Bernström, Madrid.

- Thank you for your kind offer to host me.
- To avoid any possible friction between the Swedish team and the Secretariat, we have decided that Hagard will, at least for the first visit to Madrid, stay in the same hotel as the Secretariat staff.
- Regarding introductions to the relevant officials in the Spanish Foreign Ministry, I do not see why you would need to handle it.
- The Secretariat official Minchin already knows them from the Colonial Committee's visit, and the Spanish UN delegation in New York has sent people to Madrid.
- I have just learned that the Spaniards expect us to leave for Western Sahara on Friday morning.
- Thursday's schedule now includes:
 - 12:30 PM - Lunch at Jockey Club with the Head of the Bureau for International Affairs.

- 4:00 PM - Meeting with the UN Under-Secretary-General.
- 5:30 PM - Meeting with the Spanish Foreign Minister.
- 6:30 PM - Meeting with the Minister in the President's Office.

Best regards,

Rydbeck

Swedish Delegation, New York

Appendix 11

SFM DOC 11

The document is a scanned form titled 'SFM DOC 11' with a header 'Amstar' and a date '2010-09-15'. It contains several tables with columns for 'Distribution List', 'Date', 'Time', 'Location', and 'Status'. The tables are filled with handwritten entries, including names and dates. There are also some handwritten notes and signatures at the bottom of the document.

Foreign Ministry (Utrikesdepartementet)

Date: 76 02 04

From: Political Division (Utrikesavdelningen)

Marked as: Secret

Type: Report / Telegram / Handwritten Note

Distribution List:

- King of Sweden
- Various Swedish government officials, including secretaries, military divisions, and foreign diplomatic mission
- Embassies and diplomatic missions in strategic locations: Washington, Paris, Berlin, Moscow, Algiers, Rabat, Tunis, Tel Aviv, and others

Appendix 12

SFM DOC 12

[illegible]

Foreign Ministry (Utrikesdepartementet)

Date: March 3, 1976

From: Pol III, Liungman/MB

Swedish Delegation, New York (SWEDELEG) 1976-02-27

Cabinet Stockholm

Subject: Western Sahara

For POL III, Regarding Western Sahara

Since the exchange of letters between Mauritanian officials and the UN Secretary-General has not been published, parts of it are reproduced here.

New York, February 25, 1976

To the Secretary-General,

I have the honor to inform you that the Tripartite Agreement signed in Madrid on November 14, 1975, between Morocco, Spain, and Mauritania, which was acknowledged in Resolution 3458 B, provides for the consultation of the population of Western Sahara through the Jamaa (Legislative Assembly).

In accordance with this agreement and under the terms of the aforementioned resolution, the Jamaa will meet on February 26, 1976, two days before Spain's planned withdrawal from the territory.

My government, which has always worked to ensure that the United Nations plays its rightful role, wishes that this meeting of the Jamaa be held in the presence and with the support of a UN representative.

I have therefore been tasked by my government to invite you to designate a UN representative to attend the Jamaa's session and possibly record the decisions that will be made there.

I extend to you, Mr. Secretary-General, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Appendix 13

SFM DOC 13 a)

UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET	Arvode:	---ORIGINAL---	
Kopie til:	Angivet (se regler på blankethed)		

MOULAYE EL HASSEN
REPRESENTANT PERMANENT

S.E. M. KURT WALDHEIM
SECRETAIRE GENERAL
DES NATIONS UNIES
NEW YORK
IL

SLUTCIT

CIT B

25 FEBRUARY 1976

EXCELLENCY,

I HAVE THE HONOUR TO ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF YOUR LETTER DATED 25 FEBRUARY 1976 BY WHICH YOU INVITED ME TO DESIGNATE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED NATIONS TO ATTEND THE MEETING OF THE MEJ JEMA'A OF WESTERN SAHARA WHICH WILL BE HELD TOMORROW 26 FEBRUARY 1976, AND TO TAKE NOTE OF THE DECISIONS WHICH THE JEMA'A WILL EVENTUALLY ADOPT.

IN THIS CONNEXION, YOU WILL RECALL THE TERMS OF RESOLUTIONS 3458 A AND B (XXX), WHICH THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTED ON 10 DECEMBER 1975. IN PARAGRAPHS 7 AND 8 OF RESOLUTION 3458 A (XXX) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SLUTCIT

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IT IS EVIDENT FROM THE PARAGRAPHS CITED ABOVE THAT THE ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTIONS 3458 A AND B (XXX) HAVE NOT BEEN FULFILLED. ACCORDINGLY, EVEN IF TIME HAD PERMITTED AND THE NECESSARY CLARIFICATIONS HAD BEEN FURNISHED REGARDING THE MEETING OF THE JEMA'A, THE DESIGNATION BY ME OF A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, WHO WOULD ATTEND THE MEETING AND EVENTUALLY TAKE NOTE OF THE DECISIONS ADOPTED, WOULD NOT

Appendix 14

SFM DOC 13 b)

UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET	Ärende:	—ORIGINAL—		
Kopia till:	Åtgärd: (se regler på blankettkopia)			

CONSTITUTE FULFILLMENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS
REFERRED TO ABOVE.

PLEASE ACCEPT, EXCELLENCY, THE ASSURANCES OF MY HIGHEST
CONSIDERATION.

KURT WALDHEIM

H.E. M. MOULAYE EL HASSEN
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
MAURITANIE TO THE UNITED NATIONS
SLUTCIT

RYDBECK

SWEDELEG NEW YORK

SFM DOC 14

119

Appendix 16

SFM DOC 15 a)

*Kabson
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ORIGINAL TELEGRAM
KOPISERT ANT

27 Feb 76 22 20

82:11367
41 1 DSK

NNNN
OR

SWEDELEG NEW YORK 204 1976-02-27

CABINET STLH

369. FOER POL III RE VAESTRA SAHARA.

FOER EDER INFORMATION AATERGES NEDAN INNEHAALLET I DE TVAA
SENASTE PRESSELEASERNA ROERANDE VAESTRA SAHARA. VI
AATERKOMMER INOM KORT NED REDOGGERELSE.

''SAHARA ESPAGNOL: LE SECRETAIRE GENERAL NE SERA PAS REP-
RESENTE A LA SESSION EXTRAORDINAIRE DE LA DJENAA.

LE SECR'TAIRE GENERAL A FAIT SAVOIR AU MAROC QU'IL NE
POURRAIT ETRE REPRESENTE LE 26 FEVRIER A UNE
SESSION EXTRAORDINAIRE DE LA DJENAA AU SAHARA ESPAGNOL.

LE MINISTRE DES AFFAIRES ETRANGERES DU MAROC, H AHMED
LARAKI AVAIT INFORME LE SECRETAIRE GENERAL HIER QU'EN PRE-
VISION DU RETRAIT DE L'ADMINISTRATION ESPAGNOLE LE
29 FEVRIER, L'ASSEMBLEE LOCALE DU TERRITOIRE (LA DJENAA)

ln

Appendix 17

SFM DOC 15 b)

SID 2

TIENDRAIT UNE DEHAIANDAIT AU SECRETAIRE GENERAL D'ENVOYER UN OBSERVATEUR A CETTE REUNION. LE MINISTRE MAROCAIN LANCAIT EN OUTRE "UN APPEL A TOUS LES MEMBRES DE LA DJENAA QUI SE TROUVENT EN DEHORS DU TERRITOIRE" POUR QU'ILS PARTICIPENT A CETTE SESSION AFIN D'EXPRIMER LIBREMENT LEURS OPINIONS". M. LARAKI AJOUTAIT QUE SON PAYS EST PRET A LEUR ASSURER LA LIBRE CIRCULATION "SOUS LA GARANTIE DES NATIONS UNIES, Y COMPRIS LA POSSIBILITE DE QUITTER LE TERRITOIRE SI TEL ETAIT LEUR DESIR".

DANS SA REPONSE, LE SECRETAIRE GENERAL A FAIT OBSERVER A M. LARAKI QUE SA NOTE "POSE UN CERTAIN NOMBRE DE QUESTIONS QUI AURAIENT DU ETRE ELUCIDEES". IL RAPPELLE LES TERMES DES RESOLUTIONS 3458 ADOPTES PAR L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE EN DECEMBRE DERNIER SUR LA QUESTION. LA PREMIERE PRIE LE SECRETAIRE GENERAL DE FAIRE, DE CONCERT AVEC L'ESPAGNE ET LE COMITE DE LA DECOLONISATION, LE NECESSAIRE POUR LA SUPERVISION DE L'AUTODETERMINATION. LA DEUXIEME INVITE L'ADMINISTRATION INTERIEURE A PRENDRE DES MESURES POUR ASSURER L'EXERCICE DE L'AUTODETERMINATION AU MOYEN D'UNE CONSULTATION LIBRE ORGANISEE AVEC LE CONCOURS D'UN REPRESENTANT DU SECRETAIRE GENERAL.

Appendix 18

SFM DOC 15 c)

SID 3

"H. WALDHEIN NOTE QUE L'ESPAGNE, 'A LA FOIS PUISSANCE ADMINISTRATIVE ET MEMBRE DE L'ADMINISTRATION INTERNAIRE ' ' N'ETAIT PAS AU COURANT DE LA NOTE MAROCAINE. DANS CES CONDITIONS, DECLARE LE SECRETAIRE GENERAL, 'VOUS COMPRENDREZ, J'EN SUIS CERTAIN, QU'IL NE M'EST PAS POSSIBLE D'ENVISAGER DE PRENDRE DES MESURES A L'EGARD DE VOTRE MESSAGE'".

LE SECRETAIRE GENERAL QUI S'ETAIT ENTRETENU HIER AVEC SON REPRESENTANT SPECIAL, M. RYDBECK, AINSI QU'AVEC LE DELEGUE DU MAROC, M. DRISS SLAUI, ET LE PRESIDENT DU COMITE DE LA DECOLONISATION A POURSUIVI SES CONSULTATIONS SUR LE SAHARA, RENCONTRANT LES REPRESENTANTS DE L'ESPAGNE ET DE LA MAURETANIE. IL A EGALEMENT ETE EN CONTACT PAR TELEPHONE AVEC LE REPRESENTANT DE L'ALGERIE, M. ABDELLATIF RAHAL."

"LE SECRETAIRE GENERAL: L'ESPAGNE ESTIME QUE LA REUNION DE LA DJEHAA SAHRAOUIE N'EST PAS UNE CONSULTATION POPULAIRE AUX TERMES DE L'ACCORD DE MADRID ET DE LA RESOLUTION 3459 B (XXX) DE L'ASSEMBLEE

AU COURS D'UNE CONFERENCE DE PRESSE, LE SECRETAIRE GENERAL A FAIT SAVOIR QUE L'ESPAGNE NE CONSIDERE PAS LA REUNION ORGANISEE

Appendix 19

SFM DOC 15 d)

SID 4

AUJOURD'HUI A LA DUEHAA DU SAHARA OCCIDENTAL COMME CONSTITUANT LA CONSULTATION DE LA POPULATION PREVUE PAR L'ACCORD INTERINAIRE ET PAR LA RESOLUTION 3468 B(XXX) DE L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE. DANS UNE NOTE QU'IL LUI A ADRESSEE, LE GOUVERNEMENT ESPAGNOL ESTIME QUE CETTE CONSULTATION DOIT SE DEROULER EN PRESENCE D'UN REPRESENTANT DE L'ONU NOMME PAR LE SECRETAIRE GENERAL CONFORMEMENT A CES TEXTES. IL AJOUTE QU'IL A INFORME LE HAROC ET LA MAURETANIE DE SA POSITION.

M. WALDHEIM A RAPPELE DE SON COTE QUE TOUT EN ETANT CONTRA-DICTOIRES SOUS CERTAIN ASPECTS, LA RESOLUT

ION 3468

DE L'ASSEMBLEE

GENERALE PREVOIENT QUE L'ACTE AUTODETERMINATION SE FERA DANS UN CAS SOUS LA SUPERVISION DES NATIONS UNIES ET DANS L'AUTRE, QU'ELLE SERA ORGANISEE AVEC L'ASSISTANCE D'UN REPRESENTANT DES NATIONS UNIES. OR, NOTE

M. WALDHEIM, LE HAROC N'ENVISAGEAIT QUE L'ENVOI D'UN OBSERVATEUR. QUANT A LA MAURETANIE ELLE STIPULAIT DANS SON INVITATION QUE LE REPRESENTANT DU SECRETAIRE GENERAL "PRENDRA NOTE" DES DECISIONS PRISES PAR LA DUEHAA. DANS CES CONDITIONS, A CONCLU LE SECRETAIRE GENERAL, J'AI DECIDE DE NE PAS ENVOYER DE REPRESENTANT, CAR CELA N'AURAIT PAS ETE CONFORME AUX TERMES DES DEUX RESOLUTIONS DE L'ASSEMBLEE.

Appendix 20

SFM DOC 15 e)

SID 5	II. WALDHEIM A EGALEMENT RAPPELE QUE SON REPRESENTANT SPECIAL. II. RYDBECK, AVAIT DECLARE QUE DANS LES CIRCONSTANCES ACTUELLES, ETANT DONNE LA SITUATION MILITAIRE DANS LE TERRITOIRE, IL NE SERAIT PAS POSSIBLE DE TENIR UNE CONSULTATION VALABLE. II. WALDHEIM A AJOUTE QUE LA MISSION DE SON REPRESENTANT SPECIAL AVAIT POUR OBJET D'AIDER LES PARTIES A TROUVER UNE SOLUTION ET QU'ELLE N'ETAIT PAR CONSEQUENT PAS TERMINEE. "NOUS ALLONS VOIR COMMENT ELLE PEUT SE POURSUIVRE", A-T-IL DECLARE."
RYDBECK	
SWEDEN NEW YORK KL 1530	
NNNN	

Appendix 21

SFM DOC 16

*Kabscu
pocw
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and
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ORIGINAL TELEGRAM
(KODING ENLIGHT)
28 FEB 76 09 20
CHR 82-1737
HP 1 DSK

SWEDELEG NEW YORK 207 1976-02-27

CABINET STOCKHOLM

371. FOER POL III RE VAESTRA SAHARA.

P R I I O

UNDER SECUNDO AATERGES SKRIFTVAEXLING IELLAN
MAROCKANSKA VEDERBOERANDE OCH GENERALSEKRETERAREN. I
TERTIO AATERGES DET BREV SOM SPANIENS STAENDIGA ONBUD
TILLSTAELLDE GENERALSEKRETERAREN DEN 26 FEBRUARI.

SECUNDO
24 FEBRUARY 1976

Appendix 22

SFM DOC 17

SIR,
I HAVE THE HONOUR TO TRANSMIT HERewith THE TEXT OF A
MESSAGE ADDRESSED TO YOU BY H.E. DR. AHMED LARAKI,
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO.

I REQUEST YOU TO ARRANGE FOR THIS LETTER AND THE TEXT OF
THE MESSAGE TO BE CIRCULATED AS AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT OF
THE UNITED NATIONS.

ACCEPT, SIR, THE EXPRESSION OF MY HIGHEST CONSIDERATION.

(SIGNED) DRISS SLAOUI
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

H.E. MR. KURT WALDHEIM
SECRETARY-GENERAL

Appendix 23

SFM DOC 18

SID 2

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

I HAVE THE HONOUR TO BRING TO YOUR ATTENTION THE FACT THAT THE TEMPORARY TRIPARTITE ADMINISTRATION INSTITUTED IN WESTERN SAHARA UNDER THE MADRID AGREEMENT OF 14 NOVEMBER 1975, CONCLUDED BETWEEN MOROCCO, MAURETANIA AND SPAIN, WILL COME TO AN END ON 28 FEBRUARY 1976, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 2 OF THAT AGREEMENT.

IN ANTICIPATION OF THAT EVENT, WHICH WILL BE MARKED BY THE FINAL DEPARTURE OF THE SPANISH GOVERNOR FROM THAT ADMINISTRATION, THE LOCAL ASSEMBLY (THE DJENNA'A) WILL HOLD FOR THAT PURPOSE AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING ON THURSDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 1976.

WE APPEAL ON THIS OCCASION TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE DJENNA'A WHO ARE OUTSIDE THE TERRITORY TO PARTICIPATE IN THAT MEETING IN ORDER TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS FREELY, AND WE ASSURE THEM OF FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT UNDER UNITED NATIONS GUARANTEE, INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY OF LEAVING THE TERRITORY IF THAT SHOULD BE THEIR WISH.

I REQUEST YOUR EXCELLENCY TO ARRANGE TO BE REPRESENTED BY AN OBSERVER AT THAT MEETING.

ACCEPT, SIR, THE EXPRESSION OF MY HIGHEST CONSIDERATION.

DR. AHMED LARAKI
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

Appendix 24

SFM DOC 19

SID 3

24 FEBRUARY 1976

SIR,

I HAVE THE HONOUR TO ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF YOUR LETTER OF 24 FEBRUARY 1976 TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF THE MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, H.E. DR. AHMED LARAKI.

I HAVE ADDRESSED A REPLY TO H.E. DR. AHMED LARAKI, A COPY OF WHICH IS ATTACHED HERETO.

INASMUCH AS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH YOUR WISHES, YOUR LETTER AND MESSAGE WHICH WAS ATTACHED THERETO WILL BE ISSUED AS AN OFFICIAL UNITED NATIONS DOCUMENT. I HAVE GIVEN INSTRUCTIONS FOR MY REPLY TO BE SIMILARLY DISTRIBUTED.

ACCEPT, SIR, THE ASSURANCES OF MY HIGHEST CONSIDERATION.

KURT WALDHEIM
SECRETARY-GENERAL

Appendix 25

SFM DOC 20 a)

SID 4

24 FEBRUARY 1976

EXCELLENCY,

I HAVE THE HONOUR TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE RECEIPT OF YOUR MESSAGE DATED 24 FEBRUARY 1976 BY WHICH YOU INFORM ME THAT THE D J E H A'A, OR LOCAL ASSEMBLY, OF WESTERN SAHARA WILL HOLD AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING ON 26 FEBRUARY 1976, THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF MOROCCO IS ISSUING AN APPEAL TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE D J E H A'A WHO ARE OUTSIDE THE TERRITORY TO PARTICIPATE IN THAT MEETING AND THAT IT WILL ASSURE THEN FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT, INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY OF LEAVING THE TERRITORY, UNDER THE GUARANTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS. I NOTE FURTHER YOUR REQUEST THAT I DESIGNATE AN OBSERVER TO REPRESENT ME AT THE SAID MEETING.

IN THIS CONNEXION, YOU WILL RECALL THE TERMS OF RESOLUTIONS 3459 A AND B (XXX), WHICH THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTED ON 10 DECEMBER 1975. IN PARAGRAPHS 7 AND 9 OF RESOLUTION A, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

Appendix 26

SFM DOC 20 b)

"7. REQUESTS THE GOVERNMENT OF SPAIN, AS THE ADMINISTERING POWER, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE VISITING MISSION AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ADVISORY OPINION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE, TO TAKE IMMEDIATELY ALL NECESSARY MEASURES, IN CONSULTATION WITH ALL THE PARTIES CONCERNED AND INTERESTED, SO THAT ALL SAHARANS ORIGINATING IN THE TERRITORY MAY EXERCISE FULLY AND FREELY, UNDER UNITED NATIONS SUPERVISION, THEIR INALIENABLE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION.

SID 5

"8. REQUESTS THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF SPAIN, AS THE ADMINISTERING POWER, AND THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES, TO MAKE THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SUPERVISION OF THE ACT OF SELF-DETERMINATION REFERRED TO IN PARAGRAPH 7 ABOVE."

FURTHER, IN PARAGRAPH 4 OF RESOLUTION B, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

"4. REQUESTS THE INTERIM ADMINISTRATION TO TAKE ALL NECESSARY STEPS TO ENSURE THAT ALL THE SAHARAN POPULATIONS ORIGINATING IN THE TERRITORY WILL BE ABLE TO EXERCISE THEIR INALIENABLE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION THROUGH FREE CONSULTATIONS ORGANIZED WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED NATIONS APPOINTED BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL."

Appendix 27

SFM DOC 20 c)

YOUR EXCELLENCY'S MESSAGE RAISES A NUMBER OF ISSUES WHICH WOULD HAVE HAD TO BE CLARIFIED UNDER THE TERMS OF THE ABOVE RESOLUTIONS. HOWEVER, THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SPAIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS HAS INFORMED ME TODAY THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WAS NOT AWARE OF YOUR MESSAGE. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, AS SPAIN IS BOTH THE ADMINISTERING POWER OF THE TERRITORY AND A MEMBER OF THE INTERIM ADMINISTRATION, I AM SURE YOU WILL UNDERSTAND THAT I AM NOT IN A POSITION TO CONSIDER TAKING ACTION WITH REGARD TO YOUR MESSAGE.

PLEASE ACCEPT, EXCELLENCY, THE ASSURANCES OF MY HIGHEST CONSIDERATION.

KURT WALDHEIM
SECRETARY-GENERAL
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

HIS EXCELLENCY
DR. AHMED LARAKI
MINISTER OF STATE IN CHARGE
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
RABAT
MOROCCO

Appendix 28

SFM DOC 21 a)

SID 6

T E R T I O

SECURITY COUNCIL
THIRTY-FIRST YEAR

A/31/56

S/11997

LETTER DATED 26 FEBRUARY 1976 FROM THE PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF SPAIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED
TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM MY GOVERNMENT, I HAVE THE HONOUR TO CALL
YOUR EXCELLENCY'S ATTENTION TO THE FOLLOWING:

IN NUMEROUS COMMUNICATIONS, I HAVE HAD TO INFORM YOUR
EXCELLENCY OF THE WILLINGNESS OF THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT TO
PROCEED, IN AN ORDERLY AND PEACEFUL MANNER, WITH THE DE-
COLONIZATION OF THE TERRITORY OF WESTERN SAHARA, IN
ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE CHARTER AND THE
RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

ON 20 AUGUST 1974 (A/9714), THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT
ANNOUNCED THE HOLDING OF A REFERENDUM FOR THE SELF-
DETERMINATION OF THE TERRITORY DURING THE FIRST SIX MONTHS
OF 1975. HOWEVER, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, IN ITS RESOLUTION
3292 (XXIX) REQUESTED THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE
TO GIVE AN ADVISORY OPINION AND URGED THE SPANISH GOVERN-
MENT TO POSTPONE THE REFERENDUM.

Appendix 29

SFM DOC 21 b)

SID 7

- ALTHOUGH THAT RESOLUTION PROLONGED SPAIN'S RESPONSIBILITIES AND CREATED A CLIMATE OF UNCERTAINTY, SPAIN ACCEDED TO THE POSTPONEMENT BECAUSE THE RESOLUTION RECOGNIZED THE RIGHT OF THE INDIGENOUS POPULATION OF THE TERRITORY TO SELF-DETERMINATION.

EXTERNAL FACTORS DID NOT CONTRIBUTE, AS WOULD HAVE BEEN REQUIRED BY RESPECT FOR THE PRINCIPLES AND PRECEPTS OF THE CHARTER, TO A CLIMATE OF PEACE AND ORDER: ON THE CONTRARY, THEY AGGRAVATED THE INSTABILITY OF THE SITUATION IN THE TERRITORY AND THE AREA.

IN A COMMUNICATION DATED 23 MAY 1975 (A/10095), I INFORMED YOUR EXCELLENCY THAT, IF THOSE DISTURBING FACTORS DID NOT CEASE, SPAIN WOULD BE OBLIGED TO END ITS PRESENCE AND ADMINISTERING ROLE, FOR WHICH AN APPROPRIATE DATE WOULD BE SET.

THE SERIOUS SITUATION THAT HAD ARISEN IN THE TERRITORY LED TO THE CONVENING OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL, ON 20 OCTOBER 1975, AT SPAIN'S REQUEST (S/11951). THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT ONCE AGAIN INDICATED ITS WILLINGNESS TO ENSURE A SPEEDY AND PEACEFUL DECOLONIZATION OF THE TERRITORY OF THE SAHARA, BEING READY TO ACCEPT A TEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE TERRITORY, AS STATED IN YOUR EXCELLENCY'S REPORT TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/11974).

Appendix 30

SFM DOC 21 c)

SID 9

IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS 377 (1975), 379 (1975) AND 390 (1975), THE GOVERNMENTS OF SPAIN, MOROCCO AND MAURETANIA ENTERED INTO NEGOTIATIONS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF ARTICLE 33 OF THE CHARTER. ON 14 NOVEMBER 1975, IN MADRID, AS A RESULT OF THOSE NEGOTIATIONS, A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES WAS SIGNED WHICH IS SET FORTH IN DOCUMENT S/11880 AND WHICH, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 102 OF THE CHARTER, WAS REGISTERED WITH THE SECRETARIAT ON 9 DECEMBER 1975. IN ITS RESOLUTION 3458 B (XXX), ADOPTED ON 10 DECEMBER 1975, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TOOK NOTE OF THE AGREEMENTS CONTAINED IN THAT DECLARATION. IN PARAGRAPH 2 OF THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES, IT WAS LAID DOWN THAT THE TERMINATION OF THE SPANISH PRESENCE IN THE TERRITORY WOULD BE COMPLETED BY 28 FEBRUARY 1976 AT THE LATEST.

IN A COMMUNICATION DATED 19 JANUARY 1976, I INFORMED YOUR EXCELLENCY THAT THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT HAD REQUESTED THE CO-OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF MOROCCO AND MAURETANIA WITH A VIEW TO IMPLEMENTING GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 3458 (XXX), AND I OFFERED YOUR EXCELLENCY CO-OPERATION AND EVERY POSSIBLE AND NECESSARY ASSISTANCE TO THE REPRESENTATIVE APPOINTED BY YOU SO THAT HE MIGHT PROCEED TO THE TERRITORY AND ASSESS THE SITUATION WITH A VIEW TO ENSURING THE RIGHT OF ALL SAHARANS TO SELF-DETERMINATION. THAT OFFER WAS TO BE REITERATED IN COMMUNICATIONS TO YOUR EXCELLENCY ON 29 AND 30 JANUARY. ON THE OCCASION OF THE VISIT TO MADRID AND THE TERRITORY OF THE SAHARA BY AMBASSADOR RYDBECK, THE REPRESENTATIVE APPOINTED BY YOU, THE SPANISH AUTHORITIES CO-OPERATED

Appendix 31

SFM DOC 21 d)

SID 9

WITH HIM, GRANTING HIM ALL POSSIBLE FACILITIES AND ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISCHARGE OF THE MISSION ENTRUSTED TO HIM IN ORDER TO ENABLE HIM TO ASSESS THE SITUATION IN THE TERRITORY MORE ACCURATELY WITH A VIEW TO IMPLEMENTING THE ABOVE-MENTIONED RESOLUTION, BEARING PARTICULARLY IN MIND THAT THE TERMINATION OF THE SPANISH PRESENCE IN THE TERRITORY SHOULD TAKE PLACE BEFORE 28 FEBRUARY, AS INDICATED ABOVE: THAT ASSESSMENT HAS NOT BEEN POSSIBLE, SINCE THE RELEVANT REPORT HAS NOT YET BEEN DISTRIBUTED.

THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT HAS REPEATEDLY INDICATED THAT IT HAS DONE ITS UTMOST TO ACHIEVE SPEEDY DECOLONIZATION UNDER PEACEFUL CONDITIONS AND WITH RESPECT FOR THE VIEWS OF THE POPULATION OF THE TERRITORY. THE PERSISTENCE OF CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND ITS CONTROL HAS MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE THUS FAR TO ORGANIZE THE POPULAR CONSULTATION PROVIDED FOR IN THE AGREEMENTS OF 14 NOVEMBER 1975 AND IN RESOLUTION 3458 B (XXX).

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF PARAGRAPH 2 OF THE MADRID DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES OF 14 NOVEMBER 1975, THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT, AS OF TODAY, DEFINITELY TERMINATES ITS PRESENCE IN THE TERRITORY OF THE SAHARA AND DEEMS IT NECESSARY TO PLACE THE FOLLOWING ON RECORD:

Appendix 32

SFM DOC 21 e)

SID 10

A) SPAIN CONSIDERS ITSELF HENCEFORTH EXEMPT FROM ANY RESPONSIBILITY OF AN INTERNATIONAL NATURE IN CONNEXION WITH THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SAID TERRITORY, IN VIEW OF THE CESSATION OF ITS PARTICIPATION IN THE TEMPORARY ADMINISTRATION ESTABLISHED FOR THE TERRITORY.

B) THE DECOLONIZATION OF WESTERN SAHARA WILL REACH ITS CLIMAX WHEN THE VIEWS OF THE SAHARAN POPULATION HAVE BEEN VALIDLY EXPRESSED.

I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOUR EXCELLENCY WOULD ARRANGE FOR THIS NOTE TO BE DISTRIBUTED AS A DOCUMENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

(SIGNED) JAIME DE PINIES
AMBASSADOR
PARLIAMENT REPRESENTATIVE

RYDBECK

SWEDELEG NEW YORK KL 1950

Appendix 33

SFM DOC 22 a)

UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET	Ärende:	— ORIGINAL —	
Kopia till: KABS BITR KABS POL GH POL III POL II	Åtgärd: (se regler på blankettkopia) Åtgärd se bif lista	100	1 Dsk 1 Rydbeck

SWEDELEG NEW YORK 1976-03-02

CABINET STHLM

RE VAESTRA SAHARA.

GENERALSEKRETERAREN RINGDE MIG I FOERMIDDAGS, UTAN ATT DESS-
FÖRINNAN HA KONSULTERAT MIG I FRÅGAN, OCH MEDDELÅDE ATT HAN
NU VILLE BE MIG FARA TILL ALGERIET FÖR ATT FORTSÄTTA MIN
EXPLORATORY MISSION VI D. KONTAKTER MED DE FLYKTINGAR SOM
VISTAS DÅR. HAN FRAMHÖLL ATT MANDATET SKULLE VARA DETSAMMA SOM
FÖR FÖRSTA FASEN AV MIN MISSION. JAG SKULLE DOCK INTE UNDVIKA
KONTAKT MED ALGERISKA VEDERBÖRANDE ELLER POLISARIO, TVÄRTOM.

JAG OMBADS ATT INFORMERA ALGERIETS, MAROCKOS OCH MAURETANIENS
HÄRVARANDE AMBASSADÖRER HÄROM SAMT MEDDELA ATT JAG F
STOD TILL FÖRFOGANDE FÖR BESÖK I RABAT OCH NOUAKCHOTT OM
RESPEKTIVE REGERINGAR SÅ ÖNSKADE.

ALGERIETS RAHAL UTTRYCKTE SIN TILLFREDSSTÄLLELSE MED GENERAL-
SEKRETERARENS BESLUT OCH FÖRKLARADE ATT ALLA MEDEL SKULLE
STÄLLAS TILL MITT FÖRFOGANDE FÖR ATT MITT UPPDRAG SKULLE KUNNA
LÖSAS PÅ BÄSTA SÄTT.

MAURETANIENS EL HASSAN NOTERADE FAKTUM OM MIN RESA TILL
ALGERIET OCH MIN BEREDVILLIGHET ATT BESÖKA NOUAKCHOTT SAMT
FÖRKLARADE ATT HAN SKULLE INFORMERA SIN REGERING.

MAROCKOS SLAOUI REAGERADE YTTÉRST NEGATIVT OCH BETECKNADE
GENERALSEKRETERARENS INITIATIV YTTÉRST NEGATIVT OCH BETECKNADE
GENERALSEKRETERARENS INITIATIV SOM MONSTRUÖST. FRÅN MAROCKANSK
SIDA VILLE MAN STARKT MISSTÄNKA AT T GENERALSEKRETERAREN NU SÖKTE
EN PRAKTISK LÖSNING, OACCEPTEBEL FÖR MAROCKO. DET MANDAT SOM JAG
SKULLE SÄNDAS UT PÅ IFRÅGASATTES. HAN KRITISERADE WALDHEIM FÖR
ATT INTE SÄNDA MIG FÖR ATT BESÖKA FLYKTINGARNA I MAROCKO
OCH MAURETANIEN EFTER KONSULTATIONER MED DE BERÖRDA REGERINGARNA.
ATT INFORMERAS NÅGOT OM ATT JAG STOD TILL FÖRFOGANDE FÖR ETT
BESÖK OCKSÅ I RABAT VORE E E E ATT INFORMERAS OM ATT JAG STOD
TILL FÖRFOGANDE FÖR ETT BESÖK OCKSÅ I RABAT VORE NÅGOT HELT

Appendix 34

SFM DOC 22 b)

UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET	Ärende:	— ORIGINAL —		
Kopia till:	Åtgärd: (se regler på blankettkopia)			
<p>ANNAT.</p> <p>JAG HAR INFORMERAT GENERALSEKRETERAREN IKVÄLL OM DE REAKTIONER JAG MÖTT. HAN FÖREFÖLL INTE FÖRVÄNAD ÖVER DEN MAROCKANSKA. INFÖR UTSIKTERNA ATT EN RESA TILL ALGERIET EVENTUELLT SKULLE KUNNA RISKERA LEDA TILL EN FÖRVÄRRAD SITUATION FÖRKLARADE HAN ATT SLUTLIGT BESLUT OM AVRESA BÖR ANSTÅ TILL MORGONDAGEN.</p> <p>DÅ HAR HAN HUNNIT ANALYSERA LÄGET YTTRELLIGARE OCH FÖRMODLIGEN OCKSÅ KONSULTERAT FLER MEDARBETARE I SEKRETARIATET OCH DE BERÖRDA OCH INTRESSERADE LÄNDERNAS REPRESENTANTER HÄR.</p> <p>TENTATIVT PLANERAS ATT JAG RESER TILL GENEVE INSTUNDANDE SÖNDAG, FÖR ATT MÅNDAGEN BEN 8 MARS FARA TILL ALGER.</p> <p>JAG UTGÅR FRÅN ATT DE ARRANGEMANG RÖRANDE MIN OCH HAGARDS TJÄNSTGÖRING, SOM ÖVERENSKOMS MED KELLBERG VID MIN FÖRA RESA KOMMER ATT GÄLLA OCKSÅ VID DENNA.</p> <p>RYDBECK</p> <p>SWEDELEG NEW YORK</p>				

Appendix 35

SFM DOC 23

UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET	Ärende:	— ORIGINAL —	
Kopie till: KABS BTR KABS POL CH POL III POL II	Åtgärd: (se regler på blankettkopia)	✓	4/10 / Dsk

55 *an*

SWEDELEG NEW YORK 1976-03-03

CABINET STOCKHOLM

RAETTELSE TILL VÅRT
 FEMTE STYCKET RAD FEM LÄS: "EN PARTISK LÖSNING"

SWEDELEG NEW YORK

hr

Appendix 36

SFM DOC 24 a)

Chyf Plan at d HP 1 Dsk

UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET
Politiska avdelningen
Tredje byrån

PROMEMORIA
1976-05-04

Överlämnas till Händelser
av Utrikesdepartementet Pol. III
- 4 MRS 1976

STRÄNGT FÖRTROLIG

Västra Sahara

HP 1 Dsk
P 1 Kydbeck

Följande har inberättats av ambassadören Rydbeck vid FN-representationen i New York 1976-03-02:

Utsäddes rätt

*Waller: De Sida
Sida*

K 14/3

GENERALSEKRETERAREN RINGDE MIG I FOERMIDDAGS, UTAN ATT DESS-
FÖRINNAN HA KONSULTERAT MIG I FRÅGAN, OCH MEDDELÅDE ATT HAN
NU VILLE BE MIG FARA TILL ALGERIET FÖR ATT FORTSÄTTA MIN
EXPLORATORY MISSION V.D. KONTAKTER MED DE FLYKTINGAR SOM
VISTAS DÅR. HAN FRÅMHÖLL ATT MANDATET SKULLE VARA DETSAMMA SOM
FÖR FÖRSTA FASEN AV MIN MISSION. JAG SKULLE DOCK INTE UNDVIKA
KONTAKT MED ALGERISKA VEDERBÖRANDE ELLER POLISARIO, TVÄRTOM.

JAG OMBADS ATT INFORMERA ALGERIETS, MAROCKOS OCH MAURETANIENS
HÄRVARANDE AMBASSADÖRER HÄROM SAMT MEDDELA ATT JAG F
STOD TILL FÖRFOGANDE FÖR BESÖK I RABAT OCH NOUAKCHOTT OM
RESPEKTIVE REGERINGAR SÅ ÖNSKADE.

ALGERIETS RAHAL UTTRYCKTE SIN TILLFREDSSTÄLLELSE MED GENERAL-
SEKRETERARENS BESLUT OCH FÖRKLARADE ATT ALLA MEDEL SKULLE
STÄLLAS TILL MITT FÖRFOGANDE FÖR ATT MITT UPPDRAG SKULLE KUNNA
LÖSAS PÅ BÄSTA SÄTT.

MAURETANIENS EL HASSAN NOTERADE FAKTUM OM MIN RESA TILL
ALGERIET OCH MIN BEREDVILLIGHET ATT BESÖKA NOUAKCHOTT SAMT
FÖRKLARADE ATT HAN SKULLE INFORMERA SIN REGERING.

MAROCKOS SLAQUI REAGERADE YTTERST NEGATIVT OCH BETECKNADE
GENERALSEKRETERARENS INITIATIV YTTERST NEGATIVT OCH BETECKNADE
GENERALSEKRETERARENS INITIATIV SOM MONSTRUÖST. FRÅN MAROCKANSK
SIDA VILLE MAN STARKT MISSTÄNKAT AT T GENERALSEKRETERAREN NU SÖKTE
EN PRAKTISK LÖSNING, OACCEPTABEL FÖR MAROCKO. DET MANDAT SOM JAG
SKULLE SÄNDAS UT PÅ IFRÅGASATTES. HAN KRITISERADE WALDHEIM FÖR

ATT INTE SÄNDA MIG FÖR ATT BESÖKA FLYKTINGARNA I MAROCKO
OCH MAURETANIEN EFTER KONSULTATIONER MED DE BERÖRDA REGERINGARNA.
ATT INFORMERAS NÅGOT OM ATT JAG STOD TILL FÖRFOGANDE FÖR ETT
BESÖK OCKSÅ I RABAT VORE E.E.E. ATT INFORMERAS OM ATT JAG STOD
TILL FÖRFOGANDE FÖR ETT BESÖK OCKSÅ I RABAT VORE NÅGOT HELT

Appendix 37

SFM DOC 24 b)

ANNAT.

JAG HAR INFORMERAT GENERALSEKRETERAREN IKVÄLL OM DE REAKTIONER JAG MÖTT. HAN FÖREFÖLL INTE FÖRVÄNAD ÖVER DEN MAROCKANSKA. INFÖR UTSIKTERNA ATT EN RESA TILL ALGERIET EVENTUELLT SKULLE KUNNA RISKERA LEDA TILL EN FÖRVÄRRAD SITUATION FÖRKLADE HAN ATT SLUTLIGT BESLUT OM AVRESA BÖR ANSTÅ TILL MORGONDAGEN.

DÅ HAR HAN HUNNIT ANALYSERA LÄGET YTTRELLIGARE OCH FÖRMODLIGEN OCKSÅ KONSULTERAT FLER MEDARBETARE I SEKRETARIATET OCH DE BERÖRDA OCH INTRESSERADE LÄNDERNAS REPRESENTANTER HÄR.

TENTATIVT PLANERAS ATT JAG RESER TILL GENEVE INSTUNDANDE SÖNDAG, FÖR ATT MÅNDAGEN BEN 8 MARS FARA TILL ALGER.

JAG UTGÅR FRÅN ATT DE ARRANGEMANG RÖRANDE MIN OCH HAGARDS TJÄNSTGÖRING, SOM ÖVERENSKOMS MED KELLBERG VID MIN FÖRA RESA KOMMER ATT GÄLLA OCKSÅ VID DENNA.

// *els*

SFM DOC 25

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Appendix 39

SFM DOC 26 a)

UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET	Ärende:	—ORIGINAL—	
Kopia till:	Åtgärd: (se regler på blankettkopie)		
KABS BITR KABS POL CH POL III POL II		HP w/p	1 1 Dsk Kydberk

SVEDELEG NEW YORK 1976-03-03

CABINET STOCKHOLM

FÖR KABINETTSSEKRETERAREN. RE VÄSTRA SAHARA.

I ANSLUTNING TILL MITT

JAG HAR IDAG HÅFT YTTRELIKARE ETT SANTAL MED GENERAL-
SEKRETERAREN. DET FRÅNGICK ATT WALDHEIM PÅ FÖRMIDDAGEN
HÅFT ETT LÅNGT SANTAL MED SIN MAROCKANSKE KOLLEGA.

ENLIGT WALDHEIM FÖREFALLER DET SOM OM DE SVÄRIGHETER SOM
FRÅNGICK AV DET MAROCKANSKA AGERANDET IGÅR SKULLE KUNNA
LÖSAS GENOM ATT GENERALSEKRETERAREN NÅGOT OMFORMULERAR
FRÅGAN OM MITT EVENTUELLA BESÖK I RABAT. SLAGUI FÖRESLÖG
ÄVEN ATT JAG ÅTER SKALL BESÖKA SPANIEN. MAROCKOS-BESKED
VÄNTAS I MORGEN.

MIN MAURITANSKE KOLLEGA MEDDELADE MIG IDAG ATT JAG
I OCH FÖR SIG SKULLE MÅLSAS VÄLKOMMEN TILL MAURITANIEN
MEN UNDER OMSTÄNDIGHETERNA UTTRYCKTE HAN DEN FÖRHOPP-

NINGEN ATT GENERALSEKRETERAREN SKULLE KUNNA OMFORMULERA
FRÅGAN OM MIN RESA DIT.

GENERALSEKRETERAREN KOMMER OCKSÅ ATT HA ETT SANTAL MED
MAURITANIERN.

OM WALDHEIM FÅR POSITIVT BESKED FRÅN MAROCKO I MORGEN
PLANERAS MIN RESA TENTATIVT PÅBÖRJAS MÅNDAGEN DEN 8 MARS
TILL MADRID. JAG FORTSÄTTER DÄRIFRÅN ANTINGEN DIREKT
ELLER VIA GENEVE TILL ALGER. VISTELSEN I ALGERIET BÖR

Appendix 40

SFM DOC 26 b)

UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET	Ärende:	— ORIGINAL —	
Kopie till:	Åtgärd: (se regler på blankettkopie)		

KUNNA AVSLUTAS DEN 13 ELLER 14 MARS. EFTERSOM MAROCKO
 INSISTERAR PÅ ATT RESAN INTE FÖRETAGS DIREKT MELLAN
 ALGERIET OCH MAROCKO MÅSTE JAG DÄREFTER FARA VIA EUROPA.
 FÖRMODLIGEN FAR JAG VIA GENEVE, MEN JAG VILL INTE UTE-
 SLUTA MÖJLIGHETEN ATT STANNA NÅGON DAG I ROM I STÄLLET.
 JAG ANLÄNDER, EVENTUELLT SÄLEDES, TILL RABAT NÅGON AV
 DAGARNA 16-18 MARS. AVFÄRD TILL NOUAKCHOTT ÄR FÖR
 TIDIGT ATT UTTALA SIG OM. JAG FÅR ANLEDNING ÅTERKOMMA.

RYDBECK

SWEDELEG NEW YORK

SKRIFTLIGT ARCHIV 80-8

UMBA 1973

Appendix 41

SFM DOC 27 a)

Handwritten: 10. sen
10. sen
10. sen

ORIGINAL TELEGRAM
10. sen
10. sen

3 MAR 76 21 1700 Regard to bit 10. sen

82-9389
1976-03-03
1 Dsk

SWEDEN NEW YORK 230

CABINET STOCKHOLM

399. FOER POL III RE VAESTRA SAHARA

NEDAN AATERGES IN EXTENSO DEN ENGELSKA OEVERSAETTNINGEN AV
DEN PRESSRELEASE, SON MAROCKO OCH MAURITANIE UTGAV TILL-
SAHARANS DEN 1 MARS. UTTALANDET UTGOER REAKTION PAA GENERAL-
SEKRETERARENS BESLUT ATT INTE LAATA SAENDA EN REPRESENTANT
TILL NOETET MED DJENAN DEN 26 FEBRUARI.

CIT IN THIS PRESS CONFERENCE HELD AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF
THE ORGANIZATION ON FEBRUARY 26, 1976, THE SECRETARY GE-
RAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOUND IT USEFUL TO SAY THAT THE
INTERIM ADMINISTRATION DID NOT FULFIL THE CONDITIONS PRE-
SCRIBED IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS WITH REGARD TO
THE SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE SAHARANS. THE SECRETARY-
GENERAL ADDED THAT EVEN IF HE HAD COMPLIED WITH THE REQUEST
OF MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA TO SEND AN OBSERVER TO ATTEND
THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE JEMAA, THIS WOULD NOT
HAVE IN ANY CASE CONSTITUTED AN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS WITH REGARD TO THE EXERCISE OF
THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION BY THE POPULATION OF WESTERN
SAHARA.

Appendix 42

SFM DOC 27 b)

SID 2

THIS PRESS CONFERENCE AND THE ANSWERS HE GAVE TO MOROCCO AND HAUTITANIA SEEM TO IMPLY THAT THE POLICY OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL WITH REGARD TO WESTERN SAHARA DOES NOT QUITE FIT INTO THE FRAMEWORK OF RESOLUTIONS A AND B ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. BECAUSE, IF WE TAKE RESOLUTION B AS A BASIS, WE WONDER AT THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S REFUSAL TO DESIGNATE A REPRESENTATIVE TO HELP IN THE CONSULTATION OF THE SAHARAN POPULATIONS THROUGH THE JEIHA. INDEED, THE TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT OF MADRID, ISSUED BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL IN DOCUMENT S/11890 AND REGISTERED AT THE SECRETARIATE IN CONFORMITY WITH ARTICLE 102 OF THE CHARTER, STIPULATES IN ITS PARAGRAPH 3 THAT THE OPINION OF THE SAHARAN POPULATION WILL BE EXPRESSED THROUGH THE JEIHA. IT IS PRECISELY THIS AGREEMENT, OR SHOULD WE RECALL, THAT WAS ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ITS RESOLUTION B AND FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WHICH IT REQUESTED THE ASSISTANCE OF A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL. HENCE THERE SHOULD BE NO DOUBT REGARDING THE MODALITIES OF THE CONSULTATION THAT IS PROVIDED FOR IN PARAGRAPH 4 OF RESOLUTION B.

Appendix 43

SFM DOC 27 c)

SID 3

THEN TO CONSIDER THAT THE HOLDING OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE JENAA, UNDER DISCUSSION, AND THE ASSISTANCE OF A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL FOR THIS PURPOSE, CANNOT CONSTITUTE "IN ANY CASE AN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS WITH REGARD TO THE EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT OF THE SAHARAN POPULATION TO SELF-DETERMINATION", IS TO GIVE AN INTERPRETATION THAT IS BASED NEITHER ON THE MADRID AGREEMENT NOR ON RESOLUTION B WHICH TOOK NOTE OF THIS AGREEMENT.

IF, ON THE CONTRARY, WE REFER EXCLUSIVELY TO RESOLUTION A, IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO ASSERT THAT IT HAS GIVEN A PRECISE DEFINITION OF THE PRACTICAL MODALITIES OF THE INTENDED CONSULTATION, A DEFINITION THAT ALLOWS THE SECRETARY GENERAL TO CONSIDER THAT MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA HAVE NOT FULFILLED THE CONDITIONS. ONE CAN VENTURE TO THINK THAT THIS RESOLUTION CONTAINS DELIBERATELY AN AMBIGUITY SO THAT THE ACT OF SELF-DETERMINATION CAN BE PERFORMED IN MANY WAYS AND ESPECIALLY THROUGH THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE POPULATION. MOREOVER THE PRACTICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION IS OF SUCH A VARIETY THAT THIS ACT IN ITSELF HAS HAD UP TO NOW AS MANY INTERPRETATIONS AS THERE HAVE BEEN SPECIFIC SITUATIONS. IT MAY NOT BE INTERPRETED IN A SYSTEMATIC MANNER AS MEANING "POPULAR CONSULTATION", AN EXPRESSION USED BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE.

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SID 4

TO RELY ON THE ARGUMENT ACCORDING TO WHICH SELF-DETERMINATION OR THE "POPULAR CONSULTATION" IS THE COMMON ELEMENT TO BOTH RESOLUTIONS A AND B, THUS THE ONLY ELEMENT TO KEEP IN MIND IS TO ERR OUT OF SIMPLICITY BECAUSE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS ARE AN INDIVISIBLE WHOLE. NOT TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THIS CHARACTER OF INDIVISIBILITY IS TO GIVE LITTLE IMPORTANCE TO THE LETTER OF THESE RESOLUTIONS AND TO THE SPIRIT IN WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN ELABORATED. IF THE SECRETARY GENERAL CONSIDERS THESE TWO RESOLUTIONS AS CONTRADICTIONARY AND CONSEQUENTLY VERY DIFFICULT TO IMPLEMENT, THIS MAY NOT BE ARGUED UPON. BUT THAT HE WANTS TO SELECT, INTERPRETE AND IMPLEMENT SOME DISPOSITIONS RATHER THAN OTHERS, THIS IS AN ATTITUDE CAPABLE OF AROUSING A SCEPTICISM THAT MIGHT WELL BE JUSTIFIED. SLUTCIT.

RYDBECK

SWEDELEG NEW YORK KL 1505

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§ bil U

SVERIGES
STÄNDIGA REPRESENTATION
VID
FÖRENTA NATIONERNA

New York 1976-03-02

HEMLIG

enligt 3 § sekretesslagen.

8/3 1976

Utrikesdepartementet

Pol 3, Ds Hellgren/su Utrikesrådet Leifland
1989-10-20 UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET
Ex till: Maikki Lemne
amb. Rabat (unr)

Åtgärd se bif lista

STRÄNGT FÖRTROLIGT

Uppdrag i Västra Sahara
(1 bil.)

Broder,

1. *W*

Närslutet finner Du en officiell skrivelse med redogörelse för mitt uppdrag som generalsekreterarens "special representative". Jag sänder den på detta sätt till Dig istället för att låta den gå den vanliga vägen, då jag är angelägen att se till att rapporten icke ges någon spridning utöver kretsen utrikesministern/kabinettssekreteraren samt berörda beskickningschefer inklusive Madrid.

Olof Rydbeck
Olof Rydbeck

58

INKOM UD

-8 MRS 1976

Aut. <i>HP</i>	Gr. <i>1</i>	Mål. <i>DSK</i>
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Address: 625 Third Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10022

Telephone: (212) 751-6900

Telegram: SWEDLEG New York

Telen: 22 41 50

Appendix 47

SFM DOC 30 a)

SVERIGES
STÄNDIGA REPRESENTATION
VID
FÖRENTA NATIONERNA
NEW YORK

*Bil. ad hbr
Rydbeck-Leifland
1976-03-02*

1976-03-01 Nr. 184FN HP 48

Pol 3, Ds Hellgren/su
1989-10-20
Ex till: Maikki Lemne,
amb. Beirut (unr)

HEMLIG

enligt 3 § sekretesslagen.
8/3 1976
Utrikesdepartementet

Utrikesdepartementet
STOCKHOLM

Un III:

STRÄNGT FÖRTROLIGT

Västra Sahara
3 bil.

INK. UTRIKES DEP.
D.Nr 83/184
8.3-244.170
AVP 1 DSK

JK

Den 31 januari utsågs jag av FN:s generalsekreterare till dennes särskilde representant i frågan rörande Västra Sahara. Uppdraget gällde att vid kontakter med företrädare för den administrerande makten Spanien samt i Västra Sahara med olika företrädare för befolkningen söka utröna vilka förutsättningar var för att genomföra den konsultation som åsyftas i både del A och B av resolution 3458 (XXX). Denna syftar till att tillförsäkra befolkningen i Västra Sahara dess rätt till självbestämmande. Dessutom skulle jag undersöka vilken form FN:s närvaro eller samarbetet vid denna konsultation borde gestaltas.

Redan efter det första samtalet med den spanske utrikesministern i Madrid den 5 februari stod det klart att möjligheterna att genomföra den "act of self determination" som omtalas i del A av resolutionen eller den "consultation" som åsyftas i del B skulle omöjliggöras

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Appendix 48

SFM DOC 30 b)

HP1 Dsk

2.

redan av det skälet att Spanien skulle komma att stå fast vid sitt beslut att lämna territoriet senast den 28 februari. Som bekant drog sig Spanien tillbaka fullständigt redan den 26 februari. Vid mitt andra samtal med utrikesminister Areilza den 13 februari preciserade han vad han vid det företa sammanträffandet betecknat som en önskan från spansk sida att få in FN i bilden före fullständigt tillbakadragande genom att helt enkelt konstatera att vad Spanien önskade var att FN skulle inträda i Spaniens ställe i den interimistiska administrationen av territoriet tillsammans med Marocko och Mauritania.

./.

För departementets dokumentation bifogas uppteckningar av de samtal jag hade med den spanske utrikesministern den 5 och 13 februari.

Av det uppenbara skälet att FN inte bör sanktionera ett av framförallt Marocko framtvingat fait accompli har generalsekreteraren inte velat agera på ett sätt som skulle innebära att denna spanska önskan uppfylle. Som framgått av de telegram jag sänt under den gångna veckan har generalsekreteraren inte heller velat kompromettera FN genom att sända en representant att närvara vid det möte som Marocko och Mauritania arrangerade med den s k Djemaan den 26 februari.

Redan vid ankomsten till El Aiun den 7 februari förstod jag att Marocko, som med mycket litet mått av entusiasm accepterat generalsekreterarens förslag att utse en särskild representant för Västra Sahara-frågan, skulle göra sitt yttersta för att söka visa mig att befolkningen i Västra Sahara enhälligt slöt upp kring, som det uttrycktes, återanslutningen till moderlandet Marocko.

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3.

Honnörstrupper, demonstrationer med marockanska flaggor och kungaporträtt, musikgrupper från Marakesh och utvalda grupper som genom talesmän framförde väl inrepeterade marockanska slogans stod för den yttre ramen. De marockanska myndighetspersoner och talesmän som jag bereddes tillfälle att träffa framförde den marockanska uppfattningen något olika vid olika tillfällen beroende på frågeställningen och omständigheterna. Dels framhölls att någon konsultation med befolkningen i Västra Sahara inte borde genomföras, eftersom detta territorium alltid varit en marockansk provins. Som exempel för stunden anfördes att man inte kunde föreställa sig att innevanarna i Paris skulle kunna tillfrågas om sin önskan att bibehålla Paris som en del av Frankrike. Dels framhölls att konsultationen redan genomförts den 29 november, då Djemaan sade ha uttalat sig om trepartsöverenskommelsen i Madrid den 14 samma månad. Dels försökte man hävda att min närvaro i området var den konsultation som förutses i del B av resolution 3458. Härtill kommer att man kategoriskt avvisade varje form av referendum. Möjligtvis skulle man kunna tänka sig ytterligare en konsultation av Djemaans önskan för att, som man sade, tillfredsställa FN:s önskemål. Det förefaller som om mötet med Djemaan den 26 februari iscensattes i detta syfte.

Även om vi fick samstämmiga uppgifter om att delar av befolkningen höll på att återvända till territoriet strax före och under mitt besök - uppgiften bekräftades av den spanske tillförordnade generalguvernören - kunde jag konstatera att stora delar av den befolkning, som funnits i El Aiun, Smara och Villa Cisneros (Dakhla) under tiden för kolonialkommitténs mission, nu helt enkelt inte fanns på plats. Äldre personer, kvinnor och barn syntes men vi träffade och såg ytterst få män i åldrarna femton till fyrtio år.

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4.

Den marockanska militära närvaron var påfallande. Vi transporterades i militärplan, inlogerades i det marockanska högkvarteret, f d hotell Parador, på flygplatsen i El Aïun stod ett trettiotal militära plan uppställda, F 5, Sabres och äldre propellerdrivna spanings- eller eldledningsplan, deras aktivitet i luften kunde vi notera dagligen. En morgon vaknade jag av att en bataljon och hela dess tross lastbils- transporterades utanför mitt hotellfönster. Vid besöket i Villa Cisneros förekom även mauritansk trupp. Vid ett samtal som mina medarbetare Minchin och Hagard hade en kväll med bl a översten Dlimi framkom att han nära följt mina resor. Han presenterades för mig först vid avfärden. Han besökte Villa Cisneros dagen före min ankomst dit för att förvissa sig om att läget var under kontroll. Sedan vi återvänt till Europa, erfor vi att Smara bara två dagar före mitt besök hade varit platsen för strider. Detta kan ha varit skälet till varför säkerhetsföranstaltningarna vid besöket där var rigorösa. Staden föreföll i övrigt vara praktiskt taget tom. Från samtalet med Dlimi kan noteras att han förklarade sig vara beredd att inom en till tre dagar gå mot Tindouf i Algeriet. Hans respekt för FN sträckte sig inte längre än att han framhöll att FN visserligen varit något att ha 1956, då Marocko uppnådde självständighet, men nu skulle FN inte lägga sin näsa i blöt. Han skulle inte tveka att skjuta på vilken blå hjälm som än uppenbarats i Marocko, vari Västra Sahara inkluderades.

De desinfektionsoperationer i territoriet som leddes av Dlimi, han använde själv den termen, gjorde opposition mot den marockanske ockupanten i det närmaste omöjlig.

Den spanske tillförordnade generalguvernören, som jag träffade i enrum strax efter min ankomst och som gav mig informationer, som gjorde det lättare för mig att uppskatta vad som senare sades mig, berättade att det skulle vara

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5.

högst osannolikt om jag träffade på någon som vågade opponera sig. Möjligtvis skulle någon Polisario-medlem lyckas smyga sig med en grupp som i övrigt bestod av lojala marockovänner. Ett sådant fall inträffade när en grupp arbetare från fosfatgruvorna i Bu Craa besökte mig i El Aiun. Den incident som följde har jag redan redogjort för i särskild ordning. Jag kan här nämna att statssekreteraren i det marockanska inrikesministeriet, Basri, dagen för den asylsökandens avfärd till Kanarieöarna sökte förmå honom att kvarstanna. Man sökte även förmå den spanske generalguvernören att ändra sitt beslut. Denne förklarade sig beredd under förutsättning att sådant beslut fattades på samma sätt som beslut fattats om hans utresa, alltså i min närvaro. Kvällen före vår avresa från territoriet frågade jag översten Valdes om mannen verkligen befunnit sig i livsfara. Valdes svävade inte på målet utan konstaterade att enligt hans uppfattning kunde den asylsökande ha skjutits omgående efter min avfärd.

Ett annat tillfälle då opposition kom till uttryck var i Smara. En grupp sheiker intervjuades och samtliga uttryckte sin stora tillfredsställelse över Madridöverenskommelsen utom en som sade att denna hade ^{inte} fått uttrycka sin uppfattning om eller beretts tillfälle godkänna. Han tystades omedelbart genom att röstning medelst handuppräckning genomfördes.

Mina slutsatser framgår av rapporten till generalsekreteraren. Denna bifogas.

./.

I samband med min återkomst till New York ställdes främst av pressen frågan varför jag inte besökte de flyktingar som vistas i Algeriet. Jag hade själv frågat generalsekreteraren om denna möjlighet innan jag reste. Han hade understrukt att det på detta stadium av mitt uppdrag inte fanns anledning att besöka Algeriet. Däremot höll han inte då för otroligt att han senare skulle be mig fara dit.


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6.

När jag överlämnade rapporten framhöll generalsekreteraren att han fortfarande håller dörren öppen för ett besök i Algeriet. Innan beslut härom fattas, synes han vilja analysera situationen som den ter sig sedan Polisario utropat Saharas arabiska och demokratiska republik samt hur OAU:s ministerråd kommer att agera i Addis Abeba på den rekommendation som befrielsekommittén antog i Lourenzo Marques i början av februari rörande erkännande av Polisario som befrielseörelsen för Västra Sahara. Härtill kommer att han måste bli förvissad om att samtliga berörda och intresserade stater i frågan kommer att kunna medverka till ett sådant andra steg i min mission. Avsikten är att ett besök i Algeriet skall bygga på samma mandat som hittills, nämligen att utreda huruvida det är möjligt att genomföra en konsultation som gör det möjligt för folket i territoriet att på ett genuint fritt sätt uttala sig om sin framtid. Jag har inte ansett det möjligt att engagera mig i en vidare roll som exempelvis medling mellan Algeriet och Polisario å ena sidan och Marocko och Mauritania å den andra.

I skrivande stund väntar jag fortfarande på besked från generalsekreteraren. Ber han mig fara, skall jag självfallet ställa mig till förfogande.



Olof Rydbeck

Appendix 53

SFM DOC 31 a)

Meeting with H.E. Mr. Jose Maria de Arellano (Minister of Foreign Affairs) held at the Foreign Ministry, Madrid, on 13 February 1976, at 11.30 a.m.

HP 1 DSK
New York skf.nr. 154 Jan 13 1976

Present:

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Rydbeck, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Messrs. Benito, Aguirrebengoa, Villar, Minchin and Nagard.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs welcomed Ambassador Rydbeck. He said that he was eager to listen to what the Ambassador had to say after his visit to Western Sahara.

Ambassador Rydbeck said that, apart from one incident, the visit had gone very smoothly. He wished to make it clear at the outset, however, that he did not feel that he could say very much concerning the visit. He nevertheless wished to express his gratitude for the exceedingly helpful attitude of the Acting Governor-General, Ltd. Col. Valdez, and his colleague in Villa Cisneros, Col. Banenilla. Their help, and the valuable information which they had given him with all frankness, had been of the utmost importance, especially as the testimony of others had been carefully orchestrated, and was evidently part of a well planned scheme organized by the Moroccans. The information furnished to him by the Spanish representatives at the outset of his visit concerning the situation prevailing in the Territory had been especially useful because what he saw was somewhat in contradiction with what the representatives of Morocco wanted him to see.

Ambassador Rydbeck thought that the two liaison officers would agree with his impression that the number of persons in El Aaiun was much less than its normal population. He had the impression that people moved about in order to give the impression that their numbers were greater than they actually were. This was even more obvious in Villa Cisneros, where it seemed that only about 1,000 of the original 5,400 inhabitants were left. Saara was also practically empty and here the security situation did not appear to be to the full satisfaction of the Moroccan command because there were sentries posted around the perimeter at intervals of about 200 metres, all facing towards the desert. In all three towns, the persons encountered consisted mostly of old people and children.

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He had not been surprised that all the groups which presented their views to him expressed themselves in favour of the Moroccan position. The long talks he had with them were repetitions. Their statements appeared to have been well orchestrated and they all said the same things. However, he was not yet ready to draw conclusions.

It was obvious that most of the young people were absent and apparently had left the Territory. The elders told him that their sons had been subverted or kidnapped. Those groups of young people which did appear before him as representatives of the Saharan youth seemed subdued and he noticed that the persons appearing as spokesmen for the youth were the same in El Aaiun and Smara.

Ambassador Rydbeck said that he had met several members of the Djema'a in El Aaiun, Villa Cisneros and Smara. His impression was that many of the members had returned to the Territory just prior to his visit. Different figures as to the numbers present in the Territory were given to him. One estimate was 74.

Concerning the conclusions to be drawn from his visit, he said that he was not prepared to make ~~even~~ a preliminary analysis at the present stage. On the other hand, he was interested to hear the views of the Spanish Government concerning the possibilities for holding a consultation of the population of the Western Sahara under existing circumstances. The views of the Government in this respect would be helpful to him in preparing his report to the Secretary-General.

The Minister said that the Spanish Government maintained the position that, in accordance with the Madrid agreement, the consultations should be carried out through the Djema'a. However it was another question under what circumstances this could be done. He noted for instance that the Algerians claimed that the majority of members of the Djema'a were in Algeria whereas Ambassador Rydbeck had been told that the majority were either in the Territory or in Mauritania.

The Spanish Government had insisted upon the point in the Madrid agreement concerning consultation of the Djema'a, because Spain wanted to show, when it withdrew from the Territory, that the will of the population had been respected. However, that would be Spain's last message. Spain was determined to quit the Territory.

He asked if Ambassador Rydbeck thought that it would be possible to hold a referendum.

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- 3 -

Ambassador Rydbeck said that the answer must be negative. He wondered however, what would be the reaction of the majority of Member States of the United Nations, especially at Spain's withdrawal. A consultation of the Djema'a would probably not meet with the approval of the majority. When Mr. Areilza signified his agreement with this, Ambassador Rydbeck went on to refer to the military situation in the Territory. It was obvious, he said, that fighting was continuing along the border and that this affected the possibilities for a genuine consultation. Nevertheless, in carrying out his mandate he had tried to set aside this aspect of the problem for the time being, and had put specific questions to those with whom he had talked concerning the type of consultation which might be possible taking into account the characteristics of the Territory and its inhabitants. He had enquired into the alternative possibilities of a referendum, a consultation of the Djema'a and a consultation of the cheikhs, or heads of fractions and sub-fractions. He had received no clear-cut indication of the wishes of the populations in this regard. It had been made clear, however, that even under normal conditions a referendum might present difficulties. Ambassador Rydbeck said that he had no suggestions to put forward at the present time. He was sure, however, that many Members of the United Nations would invoke Spain's responsibilities as administering Power.

The Minister said that he was fully aware that a storm would creep in the United Nations if Spain withdrew without having fulfilled all its responsibilities. However, "sticks and stones broke no bones", and Spain could endure verbal criticisms. He confirmed that Spain would withdraw by 28 February. That had been clearly stated in the tripartite agreement. No change was foreseen on this point. Spain was not ready to undertake any further responsibilities.

He asked if Algeria would be ready to accept a consultation through the Djema'a.

Ambassador Rydbeck answered in the negative. He added that not only Algeria but possibly also the Committee of 24 would object. His experience of the Committee's stand in regard to the implementation of Resolution 1514 and the discussions in the Security Council indicated this. He was, as a matter of fact, quite sure that they would not be prepared to accept such a solution.

Mr. Areilza then pointed out that Spain had remained in the Territory without any troops. The tension there was increasing every day. The communique

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- 4 -

issued after the meeting of the day before of the Revolutionary Council of Algeria was an attack on everybody else involved in the problem of Western Sahara. He thought that there was a plan behind this, namely to mount tension in order to produce a clash. Spain was determined not to be involved in such a development. Spain had already lost a lot of money and had soldiers had lost their lives. That was enough. The situation for Spain was however not too bad since it would withdraw on 28 February. In regard to the possibility that the Committee of 24 would not accept Spain position, he acknowledged that Spain would come under attack. He indicated that under such circumstances he would instruct his good friend Ambassador Pinies to keep silent.

Ambassador Rydbeck said that the situation in Western Sahara, as he had seen it, came as no surprise to him. He enquired what Spain had expected his mission to achieve. He admitted that the Secretary-General had taken the formal initiative to establish the mission but it was Spain which had insisted on it.

The Minister, speaking frankly said that Spain had, in the past, appealed to the United Nations three, four and even five times for help. The result had not always been to Spain's satisfaction. Now Spain wanted to tell the United Nations that when it withdrew it would leave behind a vacuum in the Territory. Spain should be replaced by the United Nations and the Secretary-General should assume the responsibility for the transfer of sovereignty. At present the responsibility was in nobody's hands. Someone had to take up Spain's position and remain as a temporary administrator together with Morocco and Mauritania. In addition the United Nations should supervise the Territory.

A tripartite administration involving the United Nations might placate Algeria. He did not hope that the United Nations would be able to create a buffer between Algeria and Morocco. He considered that Mauritania did not play any role.

Here the Under-Secretary of State intervened and pointed out that the Algerian Ambassador at a meeting with the Minister yesterday had been extremely violent in its attitude towards Spain.

Ambassador Rydbeck informed Mr. Areilza that he would try to meet the Secretary-General in Vienna and submit an oral report and then proceed to New York to draft

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a written one to be submitted to Mr. Waldheim on his return. It would then be up to him to decide what further steps should be taken.

The Minister repeated that, in the opinion of his Government, the United Nations should replace Spain in the administration of the Territory.

Mr. Benito remarked that this would probably not be acceptable to Morocco.

The Minister said that Spain could not say that it had transferred sovereignty over the Western Sahara to Morocco and Mauritania, because that sovereignty was not vested in Spain -- it rested with the inhabitants of the Territory.

Mr. Benito said that any solution which was acceptable to the United Nations, in this regard, would be acceptable to Spain.

The Minister emphasized once again that Spain would not entertain the possibility of remaining after 28 February. If Spain could assist the United Nations in any way, he was prepared to do so, but to remain would create enormous complications for Spain, because he strongly believed that the military situation would grow much worse in the coming months. Spain was not willing to be involved.

Mr. Benito added that Morocco and Spain had asked Spain to leave.

The Under-Secretary of State stressed that Spain's decision to withdraw was not a recent one. It had first been announced on 23 May 1975 and repeated on 14 November 1975.

The Minister asked Ambassador Rydbeck what, in his opinion, was the minimum formula for self-determination which Algeria would accept.

Ambassador Rydbeck said that he had not asked Algeria because that was not part of his mandate. He thought, however, that Algeria would have insisted upon a referendum and would probably not accept a consultation of the Djema'a. It was difficult to reply since the Polisario had made claims to the effect that it was the sole spokesman for the Saharan population. He doubted, however, whether Algeria would bring up that point in the United Nations, now.

The Minister, concluding the meeting, said that he was happy that Ambassador Rydbeck was satisfied with the co-operation which he had received from the representatives of Spain in the Territory. He said that Spain would take no action without first informing the Secretary-General. He hoped that close contact would be maintained through Ambassador Pinies.

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Ambassador Rydbeck said that he would report fully to the Secretary-General the substance of this discussion.

The Minister said that he would be in Brussels on Wednesday, 18 February, and would be staying at the Hilton Hotel. He would probably telephone the Secretary-General on Wednesday morning.

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SFM DOC 32

HP 1 Dsk
Bd. ... Sv.FN-repr. i
New York skir.nr. 184 den. 1/3 1976

Meeting with H.E. Don Jose Maria de Arellano, Minister of Foreign Affairs, held at the Ministry, Madrid, on 5 February, 1976, at 1700 hours.

Present:

The Minister
Ambassador Rydbeck
Messrs. Hagard, Minchin, and Benito

The Minister welcomed Ambassador Rydbeck, and said that the Spanish Government was very anxious to see the mission fulfilled. He was sure that Ambassador Rydbeck fully understood the situation as well as the attitude of Spain. Although the tripartite administration was still in place its duration would be short. Spain had set the deadline for its final withdrawal from the Sahara as 25 February, but if it was convenient it might leave the Territory earlier. The Spanish army had already been withdrawn and there remained only a few civilian staff, some of whom might remain thereafter, in particular in the southern part of the Territory, but under individual contract with Mauritania.

He said that the Spanish Government wished to fulfil its obligations to the United Nations. These were to decolonize the Territory and to do so on the basis of consultations with the people. These had been its declared goals since 1966. However, after the Green March, which Morocco had mounted very effectively, the Spanish Government had entered into the Madrid Agreement on 14 November 1975 under pressure and in order to avoid violence. It had done so because it considered this necessary in order to maintain peace. So far, it had not been possible to achieve self-determination. The agreement stipulated that this would be achieved through the *Djema'a*s, but the latter was now practically split as many members of the former *Djema'a* had disappeared.

Spain was anxious to fulfil all its obligations to the United Nations. It wished this to be known publicly. Spain will state clearly, when it leaves the territory that the population of Western Sahara has not had the opportunity to exercise its right to self-determination. It had already informed the Moroccan and Mauritanian Governments about that. If, as seemed likely, self-determination was not achieved by the deadline for withdrawal, this would be due to circumstances beyond its control. On the other hand, Spain wants to show the world that the United Nations comes into the picture prior to Spain's final withdrawal.

Ambassador Rydbeck was fully aware of all the difficulties in the way of achieving self-determination. He was happy to learn that he would have the full support and co-operation of the Spanish authorities in the Territory. He said that he had received similar assurances from the Moroccan and Mauritanian representatives in New York.

He said that his mission was to ascertain facts and report on the situation to the Secretary-General, to whom he would submit his conclusions. The duration of his stay in the Territory would depend on the time necessary to obtain all relevant information. He intended to return to Madrid after his visit. Thereafter, his itinerary would depend upon the Secretary-General. It might be necessary for him to visit other countries, but that could only be decided later.

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He stressed, and the Minister fully agreed, that his mandate from the Secretary-General did not call for any involvement in the mediation efforts by the Arab States and the OAU.

The Minister assured Ambassador Rydbeck that he and Mr. Osorio would give him every possible support and assistance, in obtaining the information needed for his report to the Secretary-General. He said that Ambassador Rydbeck would find the situation in the Territory very tense and difficult.

Ambassador Rydbeck said that one of the difficulties arose from the conflict between the two parts of resolution 3458 (XXX). His consultations in New York had made it clear that the views of the different parties did not coincide.

The Minister said that when he had last encountered Mr. Bouteflika, the latter had had misgivings concerning the Secretary-General's decision to send a representative to the area. Mr. Bouteflika had suggested that the representative might be Swedish.

Ambassador Rydbeck commented that Mr. Bouteflika had apparently changed his position and recently had welcomed the appointment of a representative.

The Minister said that he was very pessimistic regarding the prospects for self-determination. He regretted that efforts to achieve this had not been made two or three years earlier when the chances for success would have been greater. He pointed out, in this connexion, that he had only recently assumed office. He had the impression that now the situation in the Territory had changed and that it was no longer a political one but a military one. He thought that under present circumstances it was very difficult to know if a consultation could take place under conditions which would be considered satisfactory by the standards of Western Europe.

Ambassador Rydbeck stressed that his was a fact-finding mission. He wished to travel in the Territory to ascertain the situation and, for this, he would need the help of the administering Power.

The Minister said that outside the towns, which could be visited without difficulty, there were military units at all the principal centres within a 2-front which was not clearly defined. Moreover, travel by land might be difficult.

He said that he would be away from Madrid for approximately one week from 16 February. He hoped to meet Ambassador Rydbeck either before his departure or upon his return. If necessary, Ambassador Pinies could be asked to come from New York to participate in the consultations.

Putting a question to Ambassador Rydbeck, he asked what would the United Nations do, if the Ambassador found that conditions in the Territory made it impossible to hold the consultations envisaged in resolution 3458 (XXX). He explained that Spain was very interested to know what steps the United Nations might take because, although Spain was withdrawing from the Territory, it had continuing interests there such as the fishing facilities and the phosphate mines.

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Ambassador Rydbeck believed that the United Nations would not be content with a simple takeover of the Territory by Morocco and Mauritania. He could not say, however, how the United Nations would react. For his part, he would have to consult the Secretary-General.

The Minister repeated that it was a pity no action had been taken 2-3 years earlier. He was very pessimistic regarding the possibilities at the present time.

One of the difficulties arose from the conflict of interests between the different parties. His recommendation to the United Nations was that the different parties did not negotiate.

He said that when he had last encountered Mr. Bouteflika, the latter had expressed his opinion that the United Nations should not get involved in the conflict. He suggested that the United Nations should not get involved in the conflict.

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HP 1 DSK
Bil. till Sv.FN-repr. i
New York skickad 18/2 den 1/3 1976


23 February 1976

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith my report on the exploratory mission to Western Sahara and Spain which I undertook as your special representative.

In my report I have refrained from proposing specific measures that would have to be taken in order to establish conditions allowing the populations of Western Sahara freely to exercise their right to self-determination in the situation that now prevails in the Territory and its vicinity. The solution to this problem presupposes a political agreement among all the Governments concerned and interested. The exploration of the possibilities to arrive at such an agreement was plainly not covered by my mandate. There is a second reason why I felt that I should abstain from coming forth with any specific suggestions in my report to you. Assuming that an agreement between the parties concerned and interested could be reached and that they would thus cooperate in the process of consultation, it seems to me that the United Nations would have to be involved extensively if the right of the population were to be guaranteed. In the absence, for the time being, of any sign of such an agreement, it seemed to me inadvisable to make any suggestions in my report as to a possible future role of the United Nations.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.


Ambassador Olof Rydbeck

Secretary-General
United Nations
New York

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HP 1 Dsk

REPORT TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL BY AMBASSADOR OLOF RYDBECK (SWEDEN),
SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, APPOINTED
ON THE BASIS OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 3458 (XXX)
CONCERNING THE QUESTION OF SPANISH SAHARA

Terms of reference

1. On 31 January 1976, the Secretary-General, after consultations with the parties concerned and interested as well as with the Chairman of the Special Committee of 24, appointed me as his Special Representative to undertake a mission on the basis of General Assembly resolution 3458 (XXX) concerning the question of Spanish Sahara. I was instructed that my mission at this stage was to be of an exploratory nature. My task would be to visit Spain, as the administering Power, and the Territory for the purpose of: ascertaining the modalities for the exercise of self-determination by the populations of Western Sahara in accordance with the above-mentioned resolution and advising the Secretary-General on the role of the United Nations in such act of self-determination.

Itinerary and programme of the mission

2. I left New York on 4 February 1976 accompanied by a staff placed at my disposal by the Secretary-General. In accordance with my mandate, I proceeded first to Madrid for consultations with the Government of Spain. I arrived in Madrid on 5 February and on that day and the following day had separate discussions with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, H.E. Mr. José María de Areilza, and the Minister of the Presidency, H.E. Mr. Alfonso Osorio, and also with senior officials of their respective Ministries. At these meetings, the two ministers explained to me the policy of their Government with regard to the decolonization of Western Sahara and discussed with me ways and means of implementing resolution 3458 (XXX).

3. On 7 February, I left Madrid for Western Sahara aboard a special airplane furnished by the Spanish Government and accompanied by two liaison officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Presidency. I arrived at El Aaiún shortly before midday on the same day. I was met upon my arrival by the three heads of the interim tripartite administration, namely the Acting Governor-General, Lt. Colonel Rafael de Valdes (Spain), Mr. Driss Bensouda (Morocco) and Mr. Abdallahi Ould Cheikh (Mauritania). They were accompanied, among others, by Mr. Driss Basri (Secretary of State in the Ministry of the Interior of Morocco), Mr. Driss Slaoui (Permanent Representative of Morocco at the United Nations) as well as the President and other members of the Djema'a of Western Sahara.

4. Immediately upon my arrival, I had meetings, at my request, with the Acting Governor-General, the tripartite administration, those members of the Djema'a

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who were present in El Aaiún, numbering 36, and with the Permanent Commission of the Djema'a, all except two of the ten members of which were present. Later that day I met jointly with the three heads of the tripartite administration.

5. During the following two days, 8 and 9 February, I remained in El Aaiún, where I had separate meetings with the representatives of Spain, Morocco and Mauritania on the tripartite administration and received a total of seven groups representing different sections of the Saharan community as well as representatives of the Front for Liberation and Unity (FLU), and the National Union Party of the Sahara (PUNS). I also met with a group of four people who said they had first joined and then left the Polisario Front. After one of these meetings, there occurred an incident which is described in paragraph 16 below.

6. The next day, 10 February, was devoted to a visit to Dakhla, formerly Villa Cisneros, in the zone administered by Mauritania, aboard a military airplane furnished by the Moroccan authorities. In Dakhla I met separately with the local Spanish representative, Colonel Enrique Balenilla, and also with the Mauritanian Governor, Mr. Hamoud Ould Abdel Wedoud, together with Mr. Taibbel Arbi, local representative of Morocco. In the course of my stay, I had meetings with fourteen members of the Djema'a who were present in Dakhla, including three of the six Saharan deputies to the Cortes of Spain. I also met with four groups representing various sectors of the community, and made a tour of inspection of the town before returning to El Aaiún.

7. On 11 February, I visited Smara, the second largest town in Western Sahara, where I had meetings with the local authorities, nine members of the Djema'a and other groups of Saharans representing different sections of the community. I returned to El Aaiún during the evening of the same day.

8. On 12 February, after a morning devoted to a complete tour and inspection of El Aaiún, I left Western Sahara by air for Madrid where, on the following day I had a further meeting with the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs and, in the absence of the Minister of the Presidency, with the Secretary of State at the Ministry, accompanied by senior officials of their respective ministries.

9. On 14 February, I left Madrid for Vienna to report orally to the Secretary-General. I returned to New York on 17 February.

10. At this stage of my report, I wish to express my appreciation to the Government of Spain and to the representatives of the three Powers comprising the interim tripartite administration for the facilities accorded to me in the discharge of my mandate. I am, in particular, grateful to the three governors, and especially to the Acting Governor-General and his representative at Dakhla for the valuable information which they provided to me, which enabled me to appraise the situation in the Territory.

General situation in Western Sahara

11. In view of the specific and limited nature of the mandate entrusted to me, I did not consider it appropriate, or desirable for security reasons, to carry

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out a detailed investigation into conditions prevailing in all parts of the Territory. I did not therefore seek to visit outlying areas which had recently been, or which might continue to be, the scene of military activities. I restricted my visits to the three towns which, according to the population census of 1974, contained approximately half of the total population. My direct observation of the situation in these towns, added to the information which was supplied to me during my visit, helped me in my assessment as to whether or not the necessary conditions existed for a free expression of their wishes by the inhabitants.

12. Even before my visit to the Territory, reliable reports indicated that the situation in and around Western Sahara was a military one and that fighting was continuing in areas adjacent to the frontier with Algeria and in certain other parts of the Territory, notably around Guelta Zemmur and Ausert, which were reported to be still occupied by the forces of the Polisario Front. Although those last strongholds of resistance were reportedly occupied by Moroccan and Mauritanian forces during, or shortly after, my visit, it seems clear to me that the whole Territory remains in a state of tension. This was made evident during my visit by the presence in the Territory of Moroccan and Mauritanian forces, as well as by movements of troops, frequent airforce patrols and by the existence of sentries and security forces at strategic points. When visiting Smara, on 11 February, I noted that sentries had been posted at intervals of approximately 150 metres along the route into the town, all of them facing towards the desert. Indeed, both the Spanish authorities and the Moroccan Governor, Mr. Driss Bensouda, in his discussions with me, made clear their opinion that conditions were not at present conducive to the holding of a popular consultation because, among other things, of the existing state of tension and the fact that the populations were dispersed and many members of the Djema'a were absent from the Territory.

13. My personal observations in El Aaiún, Dakhla (Villa Cisneros) and Smara convinced me that the dispersal of the population had attained significant proportions. In all three towns it appeared that the number of the inhabitants had substantially diminished and that a large proportion of the youth and young adults was absent, the majority of those whom I saw being either elderly persons or children. This was borne out in my meetings with members of the Djema'a and with sheikhs and notables who repeatedly complained that their sons had been, as they put it, subverted or kidnapped to Algeria. In El Aaiún, I gained the impression that those who remained numbered far less than half the normal population and that in Dakhla and Smara there remained in each town only between one and two thousand persons out of a normal population of about 5,400 in the case of Dakhla and about 7,300 in the case of Smara. These impressions were confirmed by the Spanish representatives.

14. In the towns which I visited, the most notable feature, apart from the greatly reduced numbers of inhabitants, was the absence of any manifestations of opposition to the integration of the Territory into Morocco and Mauritania. Whereas the visiting mission in May 1975 had witnessed massive public demonstrations in support of independence and had reported that almost all the Saharans

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which it encountered had opposed the territorial claims of Morocco and Mauritania, I encountered exactly the opposite. The public demonstrations which I encountered upon my arrival in each of the three towns, and also the members of the Djema'a and other groups representing sections of the community with whom I met, all proclaimed almost without exception their Moroccan or Mauritanian identity and their acceptance of the Madrid agreement of 14 November 1975 as the basis for a permanent settlement. The Acting Governor-General, Lt. Colonel Valdes, wished to attribute this change in part to the ingrained tendency of a population accustomed to a life of hardship in the desert to seek solutions which will ensure survival. This does not, however, seem to provide a full explanation for such a dramatic change.

15. In any case I could not fail to note the almost complete absence of any dissenting voice among the Saharans who were previously known to be politically divided. One explanation for this change repeatedly given to me was that the majority had become disenchanted with the Polisario Front and that they were now convinced that the Polisario Front was serving the interests of a foreign Power. I noted that many of the statements made by different groups were couched in very similar terms and that nearly every group interviewed had its views presented by a spokesman. Indeed two groups of young people which I met in El Aaiún and Smara, both had the same spokesman, who was also the spokesman for the FIJU.

16. Two incidents which occurred in connexion with my meetings with representatives of Saharans are significant being the only cases when dissent was voiced. The first, a minor incident, occurred during an interview with a group of sheikhs. In this case, an elderly sheikh who disagreed with a statement that the Djema'a had been consulted on the Madrid agreement and had given its consent thereto, was immediately silenced by the other members of the group. The other incident, more serious, occurred in El Aaiún when a member of a delegation of workers from the phosphate mining enterprise at Bucra'a, handed me surreptitiously a letter supporting the Polisario Front. His action was observed by other members of the group and led to his seeking my protection, asserting that his life was in danger. Since it was evident that the man was in a state of acute fear, I acceded to his request and arranged for him to be placed under the protection of the Spanish authorities. At his insistence, he was later escorted to the airport and flown out of the Territory by the Spanish authorities. He is now reportedly in Algeria.

17. It seems clear from the above that the atmosphere in Western Sahara is at present tense. Whatever the reasons may be, none of the spokesmen for the groups interviewed expressed opposition to the integration of the Territory with Morocco and Mauritania. For those who have not left, the transfer of powers would appear to be an accomplished fact demonstrated by the withdrawal of the already all but nominal Spanish presence with de facto control exercised by Morocco and Mauritania.

Modalities for the exercise of self-determination

18. As my principal task was to explore the possibilities for implementing General Assembly resolution 3458 (XXX), my discussions with the Government of Spain, as the administering Power, the interim administration of Western Sahara and the groups of Saharans with whom I met, were designed primarily to elicit their views and

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suggestions as to the modalities for the exercise of self-determination and the role to be played by the United Nations.

19. During my discussions in Madrid with the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of the Presidency, I was informed that in the opinion of the administering Power there could be no possibility of Spain carrying out the terms of part A of the resolution. Spain considered itself bound by the Madrid agreement of 14 November 1975 which provided that consultations should take place through the Djema'a, as the body constituted to represent the populations. However, in the light of the military situation in the Territory and Spain's determination to complete its withdrawal by 28 February at the latest, Spain did not see how an effective consultation which would be acceptable to the United Nations could be organized under prevailing circumstances, especially since some of the members of the Djema'a were absent. Spain recognized that without such consultation, the process of decolonization would not have been completed. It considered that sovereignty did not rest with Spain but with the inhabitants and that therefore it could not be transferred except with their consent. Nevertheless, having handed over effective control to Mauritania, Spain was powerless to alter the situation. If the United Nations should decide that a genuine act of self-determination could not be carried out in the prevailing situation, the Spanish Government's suggestion would be for the United Nations to fill the vacuum created by Spain's withdrawal by taking its place in the tripartite administration until such time as self-determination could be achieved.

20. My discussions with the leaders of the interim administration in the Territory also revealed that in the light of the Madrid agreement there could be no question of implementing part A of resolution 3458 (XXX). For the Moroccan and Mauritanian representatives the situation was very clear. Spain, under the terms of the agreement, had recognized the legal ties existing between Morocco and Mauritania and their respective zones and influence in the Territory and the populations of the Sahara had been reintegrated with Morocco and Mauritania. It was not possible therefore to envisage any other alternative, such as independence for the Territory. The Moroccan and Mauritanian representatives both insisted that the populations had already expressed their approval of the Madrid agreement through the Djema'a at a meeting which took place on 29 November 1975. ^{1/} Thus there was no need for a further consultation. Furthermore a referendum was inappropriate in view of the fact that the populations had always been Moroccan or Mauritanian and one could hardly ask populations who comprised a segment of a nation whether or not they wished to retain their national identity. In this connexion the representative of Morocco referred to the advisory opinion delivered by the International Court of Justice of 16 October 1975. The Madrid agreement

^{1/} I was subsequently informed by the Spanish authorities in Madrid that the Djema'a, at its meeting on 29 November 1975, did not in fact vote to approve the Madrid agreement. Furthermore, only 32 members of the Djema'a were present at the meeting which was convened for the purpose of informing the Djema'a that the tripartite agreement had been concluded and of introducing the members of the tripartite administration.

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of 14 November 1975 had, in their view, merely re-established what had always existed. By signing the agreement, Spain, they maintained, had recognized the links which existed historically between the Territory and Morocco. The representatives of Morocco and Mauritania stated however, that in order to comply with the provisions of part B of resolution 3458 (XXX), they were prepared to hold a further consultation at which the solution implicit in the Madrid agreement would undoubtedly be reaffirmed.

21. As to the modalities of such a consultation, the Moroccan and Mauritanian representatives rejected the holding of a referendum also on the grounds of the impossibility of identifying who was, and who was not, a Saharan indigenous to the Territory. They pointed out that such identification would have presented great difficulties under normal circumstances due to the nomadic character of the populations and that under present circumstances in which the populations were dispersed, the difficulties would be insurmountable. Furthermore, they insisted that the tribal traditions of the Saharans made a referendum unnecessary, since it was the accepted custom among them to express their wishes through their tribal chiefs.

22. The Moroccan and Mauritanian representatives both considered that the appropriate procedure, which took account of Saharan customs, would be to consult the Djema'a, which was the properly constituted body representing all sections of the population of Western Sahara. They pointed out, and the Spanish representative agreed with this, that the Djema'a, as presently constituted, represents not only the tribal chiefs, but also other sections of the community and is composed in part of representatives elected by adult male suffrage. They admitted that elections to the Djema'a had not been held since 1973 and that, owing to the current situation, a number of its members were absent from the Territory. They believed, however, that it would be possible to bring together 74, or more than two-thirds of the total of 103 members.

23. When I tentatively suggested to them the possibility of a third alternative procedure, namely the establishment of a constituent assembly, based on the membership of the Djema'a augmented by the addition of all the heads of tribal fractions and sub-fractions, they did not exclude the possibility that such a method of consultation could be envisaged.

24. The representatives of Morocco and Mauritania maintained that conditions were not appropriate for the holding of a consultation at the present time. In their opinion, it should not be held until calm had been fully restored and attacks on the Territory from the outside had ceased.

25. As regards the role of the United Nations in such a consultation, they envisaged that, in the event that it was decided to consult the populations through the Djema'a what would be required would be for a representative of the United Nations appointed by the Secretary-General to observe the proceedings and report thereon.

26. In my interviews with the members of the Djema'a, including its Permanent Commission, and also with the various groups of Saharans whom I encountered, I put similar questions. In all cases the response was the same. They considered

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that the question of the future of the Territory had been decided by the Madrid agreement and that the populations had overwhelmingly expressed their wishes to me. If a further formal confirmation was necessary, it should be through a consultation of the Djemma'a, as the body legally constituted to represent the views of the populations. They were all opposed to a referendum. Those in the zone administered by Morocco contended that they had amply demonstrated their identity as Moroccans and that they would not accept any referendum which placed that issue in doubt. Many of them contended that the President of the Djemma'a when he pledged his allegiance to King Hassan II of Morocco, had done so in the name of all the populations of the northern zone.

Conclusions

27. My exploratory talks with representatives of the administering Power, Spain, have made it clear that Spain is firm in its decision to leave the Territory by 28 February at the latest, and that it does not see any possibility of implementing paragraph 7 of part A of resolution 3458 (XXX) for the reason that it no longer exercises an effective control over the affairs of Western Sahara.

The withdrawal of Spain from the interim administration established through the Madrid agreement of 14 November 1975 in practice also makes impossible the implementation of paragraph 4 of part B of the resolution after the date of the Spanish withdrawal since the interim administration to which the paragraph addresses itself then will cease to exist.

28. In view of the tense situation prevailing in the Territory of Western Sahara and its vicinity and the absence from the Territory of a considerable segment of its population, it does not seem possible to obtain any assurance that any consultations undertaken at the present time would result in a free and genuine expression of the wishes of all the populations of the Sahara.

29. The de facto situation now prevailing represents a radical change from the one existing when the visiting mission reported its findings and even from the situation on 10 December 1975 when resolution 3458 (XXX) was adopted. It appears to me that the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and eventually the General Assembly itself will have to take under renewed consideration how the exercise by the Saharan populations of their right to self-determination in accordance with resolution 1514 (XV) can be guaranteed in the new circumstances.

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UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET		Ärende:		—ORIGINAL—	
Kopia till:		Åtgärd: (se regler på blankettkopia)			
KABS BITR KABS POL CH POL III <i>an fr</i> POL II :		Åtgärd: <i>se bil 100</i>			
				SEP	1 Dtk

SWEDELEGNEW YORK 1976-03-16

CABINET STHLM

RE VÄSTRA SAHARA.

LÄGET FÖR DAGEN IFRÅGA OM MIN SAHARAMISSION ÄR ATT WALDHEIM SEDAN ETT PAR VECKOR FÖR UTDAGNA ÖVERLÄGGNINGAR MED ALGERIET, MAROCKO OCH MAURETANIEN RÖRANDE MODALITETERNA FÖR MISSIONENS ANDRA FAS. KÄRNPROBLEMET ÄR POLISARIOS OBEROENDEFÖRKLARING.

MAROCKO OCH MAURETANIEN SOM ÖVER HUVUD TAGET SER MED OVLJA PÅ MISSIONENS FORTSÄTTNING, MEN SOM INTE VILL TA PÅ ODUM AV ATT MOTSÄTTA SIG DEN, INSISTERAR ATT JAG ENDAST KAN BESÖKA OCH KONFERERA MED REGERINGARNA I "STATES CONCERNED AND INTERESTED" ENLIGT RES 3458. VARJE ANNAN KONTAKT VORE ATT GÅ UTANFÖR DET MANDAT SOM DENNA RESOLUTION GER GENERALSEKRETERAREN.

WALDHEIM HAR IDAG MEDELAT MIG ATT HAN INFORMERAT ALGERIETS CHARGE D'AFFAIRES OM LÄGET OCH FÖRESLAGIT ATT MINA BESÖK IN INSKRÄNKTS TILL ATT GÅLLA RESPEKTIVE REGERINGAR OCH ATT DE KONTAKTER MED POLISARIO SOM GIVETVIS ÄR OFRÄNKOMLIGA SKER INOM RAMEN FÖR ÖVERLÄGGNINGAR MED DEN ALGERISKA REGERINGEN. NÅGRA BESÖK I FLYKTINGSLÄGREN FRÅN MIN SIDA VAR OBEHOVLIGA DÅ UNHCR SVARAR FÖR DEN HUMANITÄRA ASPEKTEN. FÖR SYFTET MED MIN MISSION SOM ÄR RENT POSLITISKT RÄCKER DET MED KONTAKTER I ALGER.

LIKSOM FÖRÖVRIGA PARTER HAR WALDHEIM UNDERSTRUKT FÖR ALGERIET ATT POLISARIO-KONTAKTER INTE PÅ NÅGOT VIS UTGÖR NÅGOT ERKÄNNANDE.

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UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET	Ärende:	—ORIGINAL—		
Kopia till:	Åtgärd: (se regler på blankettkopia)			

ALGERISKE CHARGEN HADE OMGÅENDE REAGERAT POSITIVT PÅ WALDHEIMS UPPLÄGGNING. HAN SKALL NU RAPPORTERA TILL ALGER OCH ÅTERKOMMA. WALDHEIM KONTAKTAR DÄREFTER PÅ NYTT MAROCKO OCH MAURETANIEN.

PÅ GRUND AV DEN LÅNGDRAGNA OMGÅNGEN AV KONTAKTER RÄKNAR JAG NU KNAPPAT MED ATT KUNNA GENOMFÖRA MISSIONENS ANDRA FAS FÖRRÄN EFTER NORDISKA UTRIKESMINISTERMÖTET.

RYDBECK

SWEDELEG NEW YORK

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UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET
Politiska avdelningen

Revyt Datum Handtecknat
Pol IV 760322 Karlsson

☐ RAPPORT ☐ HANDBREV ☐ TELEGRAM ☒ PM

Ordförande *Pol IV* *76-03-22*
Ansvarig
Chef för byrå *Västra Sahara*

Överlämnas för kännedom ☐ utan bil ☐ bil ☐ bil till dnr och angivits ☐ bil kan lämnas på UD ☒ HEMLIGSTÄMPLAS

<input type="checkbox"/> Kammen	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Statsrådskanslern	<input type="checkbox"/> KAM	<input type="checkbox"/> Nord Afrikastiftelsen
<input type="checkbox"/> Statsminister	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Arbetsdep	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Förrvarningsdep 4 ex	<input type="checkbox"/> Svenska KO-kommittén
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Arbetsdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Bostadsdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Arrendansens FN-avdelning	<input type="checkbox"/> Svenska Unesco-rådet
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Bostadsdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Finansdep 2 ex	<input type="checkbox"/> FOA 4 ex	<input type="checkbox"/> Svenska FN-Rådsgut
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Finansdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Förrvarningsdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Exportkreditnämnden	<input type="checkbox"/> Östsk byrå
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Förrvarningsdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Handelsdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Kommerskollegium 2 ex	<input type="checkbox"/> Bankförordningen
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Handelsdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Industridep	<input type="checkbox"/> Riksbanken	<input type="checkbox"/> Exportrådet 2 ex
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Industridep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Jordbruksdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Rikspolisstyrelsen	<input type="checkbox"/> Gravelstiftelsen
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Jordbruksdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Justitiedep	<input type="checkbox"/> SIDA 2 ex	<input type="checkbox"/> Industriförbundet 2 ex
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Justitiedep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Kommunikationsdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Sektionsstyrelsen	<input type="checkbox"/> Radsstyrelsen
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Kommunikationsdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Kommundep	<input type="checkbox"/> AS Atomenerg	<input type="checkbox"/> LO
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Kommundep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Socialdep	<input type="checkbox"/> IVA	<input type="checkbox"/> SAF
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Socialdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Utbild dep	<input type="checkbox"/> SMHI	<input type="checkbox"/> AAS
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<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr 1-sekr	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr 1-sekr Utbild dep	<input type="checkbox"/> Miljöförhållanden	
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<input type="checkbox"/> Större beskickningar FN-representanterna 2 ex	<input type="checkbox"/> Bonn	<input type="checkbox"/> Moskva	<input type="checkbox"/> Peking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Washington 2 ex
	<input type="checkbox"/> London	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paris	<input type="checkbox"/> Tokio	<input type="checkbox"/> FN-rap
<input type="checkbox"/> Norden 4 ex	<input type="checkbox"/> Helsingfors	<input type="checkbox"/> Köpenhamn	<input type="checkbox"/> Oslo	<input type="checkbox"/> Reykjavik
	<input type="checkbox"/> Belggrad	<input type="checkbox"/> Berlin A	<input type="checkbox"/> Bukarest	<input type="checkbox"/> Sofia
<input type="checkbox"/> Övriga Östeuropa 8 ex	<input type="checkbox"/> Berlin Öst	<input type="checkbox"/> Budapest	<input type="checkbox"/> Prag	<input type="checkbox"/> Warszawa
<input type="checkbox"/> Övriga Västeuropa och Kanada 16 ex	<input type="checkbox"/> Ankara	<input type="checkbox"/> Bryssel	<input type="checkbox"/> Uusabon	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom
	<input type="checkbox"/> Athen	<input type="checkbox"/> Dublin	<input type="checkbox"/> Madrid	<input type="checkbox"/> Wien
	<input type="checkbox"/> Bern	<input type="checkbox"/> Haag	<input type="checkbox"/> Ottawa	<input type="checkbox"/> Bryssel-dal
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nordafrika 4 ex	<input type="checkbox"/> Alger	<input type="checkbox"/> Kairo	<input type="checkbox"/> Rabat	<input type="checkbox"/> Tunis
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mellanöstern 2 ex	<input type="checkbox"/> Bagdad	<input type="checkbox"/> Beirut	<input type="checkbox"/> Jeddah	<input type="checkbox"/> Kuwait
	<input type="checkbox"/> Bangkok	<input type="checkbox"/> Dacca	<input type="checkbox"/> Hongkong Öst	<input type="checkbox"/> Jakarta
<input type="checkbox"/> Övriga Asien och Australien 12 ex	<input type="checkbox"/> Canberra	<input type="checkbox"/> Hanoi	<input type="checkbox"/> Islamabad	<input type="checkbox"/> Kuala Lumpur
	<input type="checkbox"/> Addis Abeba	<input type="checkbox"/> Gaborone	<input type="checkbox"/> Lagos	<input type="checkbox"/> Manrovia
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Övriga Afrika 9 ex	<input type="checkbox"/> Dar-es-Salaam	<input type="checkbox"/> Kinshasa	<input type="checkbox"/> Lusaka	<input type="checkbox"/> Nairobi
<input type="checkbox"/> Latinamerika 11 ex	<input type="checkbox"/> Bogotá	<input type="checkbox"/> Buenos Aires	<input type="checkbox"/> Guatemala	<input type="checkbox"/> Lima
	<input type="checkbox"/> Brasília	<input type="checkbox"/> Caracas	<input type="checkbox"/> Havana	<input type="checkbox"/> Mexico
	<input type="checkbox"/> Antwerpen	<input type="checkbox"/> Istanbul	<input type="checkbox"/> Manila	<input type="checkbox"/> New York
<input type="checkbox"/> Visse länder kanslari 13 ex	<input type="checkbox"/> Chicago	<input type="checkbox"/> Leningrad	<input type="checkbox"/> Minneapolis	<input type="checkbox"/> Rio de Janeiro
	<input type="checkbox"/> Hamburg	<input type="checkbox"/> London	<input type="checkbox"/> Montreal	<input type="checkbox"/> San Francisco

<input type="checkbox"/> Utrikesministern	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Pol IV	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr int u-samarb	<input type="checkbox"/> Inspektören	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Västra Sahara</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Stater Stigurdson	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef H-anhet I	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef multilaterala anh	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Särskildafrändan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Pol IV</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Kabinsekreter	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef H-anhet II	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef bilaterala anh	<input type="checkbox"/> Utr min sekreterare	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Karlsson</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Btr Kabinsekreter	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef H-anhet III	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Rapportsekr	<input type="checkbox"/> Björk	
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Pol and	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef H-förll grupp	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Protokoll	<input type="checkbox"/> Bohm	
<input type="checkbox"/> Btr chef Pol and	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Bistånd	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Pressbyrå	<input type="checkbox"/> Thorsen	
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Pol I	<input type="checkbox"/> Btr Chef Bistånd	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Inform byrå	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Hansson</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Pol II	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Adm and	<input type="checkbox"/> Folkförhållanden	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Carlsson</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Pol III	<input type="checkbox"/> Btr Chef Adm and	<input type="checkbox"/> Folkförhållanden 2 ex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Carlsson</i>	

Antal ex på sidan 32 2
Antal ex bil 2
Exemplar den 22-03-76
Distribuerad den 27-03-76
Lsg postning 1
Datum 27-03-76

Dep U 365, 1973-11, 30 bil & 30 ex 30 Carlsson Yvonne 19880

Appendix 73

SFM DOC 16

UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET 55	Ärende:	—ORIGINAL—	
Kopia till: kabs bitr kabs polch pol 3	Åtgärd: (se regler på blankettkopia) Pol III 1976-05-04 deps L. Schönander, GE PM se bif. lista	748	1 Dsk

SWEDELEG NEW YORK 1976-05-03
CABINET STOCKHOLM

B R Å D S K A N D E FÖR KABINETTSSEKRETERAREN OCH
HEFEN POL III

BL A MED ANLEDNING AV ATT EN MAROCKANSK OPPOSITIONSPOLITIKER
MR BOUABID INOM KORT SKALL BESÖKA STOCKHOLM FINNER JAG AN-
LEDNING ATT INSÄNDA FÖLJANDE REDOGÖRELSE OCH KOMMENTARER
RÖRANDE ANDRA DELEN AV MITT UPPDRAG I SAHARA. DETTA SKER
INNAN JAG AVLÄMNAT SKRIFTLIG RAPPORT TILL WALDHEIM, MUNT-
LIG AVGAVS REDAN I GENEVE. UPPGIFTERNA TORDE DÄRFÖR BEHANDLAS
YTTERST KONFIDENTIELLT.

JAG SAMMANTRÄFFADE DEN 29 MARS MED DEN SPANSKE UTRIKESMI-
NISTERN AREILZA. HAN HADE EGENTLIGEN INGET NYTT ATT LÄGGA TILL
DEN INSTALLNING SOM SPANIEN REDAN REDOVISAT VID MITT FÖRSTA
MADRIDBESÖK. ENLIGT SPANSK UPPFATTNING HAR MAN LÄMNAT VÄSTRA
SAHARA BAKOM SIG OCH NÅGRA MÖJLIGHETER ATT SPELA EN AKTIV
ROLL I DEN FORTSATTA UTVECKLINGEN DÄR STRANDAR PÅ DET FÖR-
HÅLLET ATT HELA DEN SPANSKA ADMINISTRATIONEN LÄMNAT OM-
RÅDET.

I MADRID SAMMANTRÄFFADE JAG DESSUOTM MED DEN ALGERISKE OCH
MAURITANSKE AMBASSADÖREN OCH AVHANDLADE PRAKTISKA FRÅGOR OM
MINA BESÖK I DESSA LÄNDER.

I ALGER FICK JAG ETT VÄNLIGT MOTTAGANDE DEN 30 MARS. OM DE
FRÅGOR SOM UPPSTOD MED ANLEDNING AV ATT ALGERIERNA INSISTERADE
PÅ BESÖK I TINDOUF ISTÄLLET FÖR SOM PLANERAT KONTAKTER MED
POLISARIO I ALGER HAR JAG REDAN REDOGJORT MUNTligen VID BESÖK
I DEPARTEMENTET DEN 9 APRIL. SEDAN JAG HAFT KONTAKT MED

Appendix 74

SFM DOC 17

UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET	Ärende:	—ORIGINAL—		
Kopie till:	Åtgärd: (se regler på blankettkopie)			

WALDHEIM PER TELEFON, SOM MEDDELADE ATT HAN HELST SÅG ATT SAMMANTRÄFANDET MED POLISARIOS FÖRETRÄDARE SKEDDE I ALGER MEN ATT JAG VID EVENTUELLT INSISTERANDE FRÅN ALGERISK SIDA BORDE RESA TILL TINDOUF FÖR ATT DET INTE SKULLE FRAMSTÅ SOM OM GENERALSEKRETERAREN OCH HANS SÄRSKILDE REPRESENTANT VAR OVILLIGA

ATT SAMMANTRÄFFA MED FÖRETRÄDARE FÖR POLISARIO BESLÖT JAG SEDAN BOUTEFLIKA SLAGIT FAST ATT MAN FRÅN ALGERISK SIDA ANSÅG N BESÖK ENDAST I ALGER FULLSTÄNDIGT MENINGSLÖST ATT FARA TILL TINDOUF.

ALLMÄNT KAN SÄGAS ATT ALGERIERNA OCH FÖRETRÄDARE FÖR POLISARIO SOM JAG TRÄFFADE OGNDE I ALGER OCH TINDOUF GJORDE SITT YTTERSTA FÖR ATT MITT BESÖK I ALGERIET SKULLE BLI SÅ LÅNGVARIGT SOM MÖJLIGT. FÖRE AVRESAN TILL TINDOUF HADE JAG ETT LÅNGT SAMTAL MED BOUTEFLIKA OCH FÖRE AVRESAN DEN 2 APRIL FRÅN ALGERIET

MOTTOGS JAG I AUDIENS AV PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENNE.

BÅDE BOUTEFLIKA OCH BOUMIDIENNE UNDERSTRÖK DEN INSTÄLLNING I FRÅGAN SOM ALGERIET REDAN FRAMF ÖRT TIDIGARE. BÅDA UNDERSTRÖK FRÅGANS BRÄNNANDE KARAKTÄR OCH PEKADE PÅ DE RISKER DEN MEDFÖR FÖR FREDEN I REGIONEN. I BOUMIDIENNES UTTALANDE TYCKTE JAG MIG SPÅRA EN VISS VILJA TILL FÖRHANDLINGSLÖSNING MED HASSAN II, MEN HAN UTVECKLADE INTE PÅ VILKA VILLKOR EN SAMFÖRSTÅNDSLÖSNING SKULLE KUNNA UPPNÅS.

VID BESÖKET I TINDOUF, SOM OCKSÅ INKLUDERADE ETT EN TIMME LÅNGT BESÖK I DET FLYKTINGLÄGER SOM LIGGER EN HALV TIMMES BILFÄRD FRÅN STADEN, STÖTTE VI PÅ SVÄRIGHETER ATT FÅ SAMMANTRÄFFANDEN MED POLISARIOS FÖRETRÄDARE. EFTER TIMMARS VÄNTAN KOM DE TILL STÅND. - I DETTA SAMMANHANG VILL JAG UNDERSTRYKA ATT DET INTE GJORDES NÅGRA FÖRSÖK FRÅN DEN ALGERISKA REGERINGENS SIDA ELLER FRÅN VÄSTSAHARIERNAS TALESMÄN ATT FÅ PERSONER ATT FRAMTRÄDA SOM REPRESENTANTER FÖR VÄSTSAHARAS DEMOKRATISKA OCH ISLAMISKA REPUBLIK. TVÄRTOM VAR DET PÅFALLANDE HUR MAN VINNLADE SIG OM ATT DE VÄSTSAHARIER JAG TRÄFFADE ANTINGEN PRESENTERADES SOM FÖRETRÄDARE FÖR POLISARIO ELLER FLYKTINGLÄGERADMINISTRATIONEN ELLER LIKANDE.

Appendix 75

SFM DOC 18

UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET	Ärende:	—ORIGINAL—		
Kopia till:	Älgörd: (se regler på blankettkopie)			

POLISARIOS TANKAR OM EN LÖSNING TORDE VID DET HÄR LAGET VARA VÄL KÄNDA. DE ~~OMKAR~~ SE FN MEDVERKA TILL ATT MAROCKO OCH K MAURITANIEN DRAR SIG UN DAN FRÅN OMRÅDET SÅ ATT BEFOLKNINGEN FRITT SKALL KUNNA FÄUTOVA SIN SJÄLVBESTÄMMANDERÄTT. MAN HYTE INGET TVIVEL OM MAN UNDER SÅDANA OMSTÄNDIGHETER SKULLE FÅ SE

EN ÖVERVÄLDIGANDE MAJORITET AV VÄSTSAHARIERNA UTTALA SIG FÖR SJÄLVSTÄNDIGHET. NÄR JAG PEKAD E PÅ ATT PROKLAMERANDE AV REPUBLI-

KEN KUNDE UTGÖRA EN KOMPLICERANDE FAKTOR SVARADE MAN ENSTÄMMIGT ATT POLISARIO VORE BERETT ATT PÅ ALLT SÄTT ME SAMVERKA MED FN FÖR ATT EN KONSULTATION AV VÄSTSAHARIER NA SKULLE KUNNA SKE UNDER FN:S FULLSTÄNDIGA BESKYDD, EN GARANTI FÖR ATT FRÄMMANDE INBLANDNING SKULLE UNDIKAS.

MAITRE BOUABID, SOM VISSERLIGEN FÖRETRÄDER ETT AV OPPOSITIONS-

PARTIERNA I MAROCKO, KOMMER DOCK TILL SVERIGE SOM REPRESENTANT FÖR EN DEL AV DEN LOJALA OPPOSITIONEN I LANDET. DET FINNS AN-

LEDNING FÖRMODA ATT HAN KOMMER ATT FRAMLÄGGA EN SYN PÅ FRÅGAN SOM UPPVISAR STORA LIKHETER MED DEN SOM MAROCKO FÖRETRÄDER UTÅT. DET HAR JU I SAMSTÄMMIGA RAPPORTER FRÅN FLERA HÅLL HÄVDATS ATT OPPOSITIONEN HELT SOLIDARISERAR SIG MED DEN POLITIK SOM KUNG HASSAN FÖR I FRÅGAN OM VÄSTRA SAHARA. NÅGRA BEDÖMARE

VILL GÅ SÅ LÅNGT SOM ATT SÄGA ATT OPPOSITIONEN MED ISTIQLAL-

PARTIET I SPETSEN SKJUTER KUNGEN FRAMF ÖR SOG.

MED DEN ERFARENHET JAG HAR AV FÖRETRÄDARE FÖR DET OFFICIELLA MAROCKO, BÅDE HÄR I NEW YORK OCH VID BESÖKET I VÄSTRA SAHARA I

FEBRUARI ANSER JAG ATT RISKEN ÄR MYCKET STOR, VAD ÄN UTRIKESMINIS-

TERN ELLER STATSMINISTERN KOMMER ATT HA ATT ANFÖRA VID BOUABIDS BESÖK, ATT MAROCKO VID ETT SENARE TILLFÄLLE KOMMER ATT UTNYTTJA BESÖKET FÖR SINA SYFTEN. MED ANLEDNING HÄRAV SKULLE JAG VILJA AVRÅDA FRÅN ATT STATSMINISTERN SAMMANTRÄFFAR MED BOUABID. SOM OMTALATS I MEDDELANDE TILL RABAT DEN 22 APRIL KAN JU ETT SÅDANT NEGATIVT BESKED RÖRANDE BESÖK HOS STATSMINISTERN FÖRKLARAS MED DENNES HÄRT BELASTADE PROGRAM.

Appendix 76

SFM DOC 19

UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET	Ärende:	—ORIGINAL—	
Kopia till:	Åtgärd: (se regler på blankettkopia)		

JAROCKANERNA HAR SÖKT FÖRA FRAM ATT JAG VID BESÖKET I ALGERIET SKULLE A HA AVVIKIT FRÅN MITT MANDZT. HÄROM VILL JAG GÖRA FÖLJANDE KOMMENTAR. MANDATET HAR JAG FÅTT AV WALDHEIM OCH INTE AV SPANIEN, ALGERIET, MAROCKO ELLER MAURITANIEN. BÅDE GENERALSEKRETERAREN OCH JAG SJÄLV GJORDE DET HELT KLART FÖR MAROCKOS OCH MAURITANIENS FÖRETRÄDARE HÄR I NEW YORK FÖRE AVRESAN ATT JAG VID BESÖKET I ALGERIET SKULLE KOMMA ATT TRÄFFA FÖRETRÄDARE FÖR POLISARIO, SÄRSKILT MED TANKE PÅ DEN ALGERISKA REGERINGENS INSTÄLLNING. DETTA ACCEPTERADES, OM ÄN MED NÅGON MOTVILJA, AV DEN MAROCKANSKE OCH MAURITÄNSKE FN-AMBASSADÖREN.

WALDHEIM HADE SÖKT ORDNA SÅ ATT SAMMANTRÄFFANDET MED FÖRETRÄDARE FÖR POLISARIO SKULLE SKE I ALGER. NÅGOT KLICKADE I DENNA FRÅGA OCH MAN KAN NATURLIGTVIS SPEKULERA OM DETTA SKETT AV TEKNISKA SKÄL ELLER ARRANGERATS MED UPPSÅT AV ALGERIET. FRÅGAN LÖSTES EFTER TELEFONSAMTAL MED GENERALSEKRETERAREN, FÖR VILKET REDOVISATS OVAN.

WALDHEIM HAR TILL MAROCKO OCH MAURITANIEN SAMT OFFENTLIGT KLART AVVISAT TANKEN PÅ ATT JAG SKULLE HA AVVIKIT FRÅN MITT MANDAT. HAN HAR DESSUTOM VÄDJAT TILL PARTERNA ATT OMPRÖVA SIN INSTÄLLNING TILL MITT BESÖK I DE BÅDA LÄNDERNA SÅ ATT JAG SKULLE KUNNA FORTSÄTTADIT I VILKET ANNAT FALL BÅDA LÄNDERNAS REGERINGARS SYN PÅ FRÅGAN OM VÄSTRA SAHARA I NULÄGET INTE KAN KOMMA ATT MEDTAS I GENERALSEKRETERARENS RAPPORT TILL DEN TRETTIOFÖRSTA GENERALFÖRSAMLINGEN.

RYDBECK

SWEDELEG NEW YORK

SFM DOC 20

UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET

Politiska avdelningen

Brevet

Datum

Handläggare

☐ RAPPORT ☐ HANDBREV ☐ TELEGRAM ☒ PM

Påskott 4.5.76 Ljunggren

Gedeborn
CR
Chef för byrå

Om/ Datum/ Nr eller nummer
Stockholm 1976-05-04
Anläggning
Vadsten Salma

Överlämnas för kännedom

☒ utan bil

☐ bil

☐ bil till utl
om engivis

☐ bil kan lämnas
på UD

☒ HEMLIGSTÄMPLAS

<input type="checkbox"/> Kamman	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Statsrådsberedn	<input type="checkbox"/> KAU	<input type="checkbox"/> Nord Afrikastiftelse
<input type="checkbox"/> Statsminister	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Arbetsdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Försvarstaben	<input type="checkbox"/> Svenska RÖ-barnstiftelse
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Arbetsdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Bostadsdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Arméstabs FN-avdelning	<input type="checkbox"/> Svenska Unesco-råd
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Bostadsdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Finansdep	<input type="checkbox"/> FOA	<input type="checkbox"/> Svenska FN-förbundet
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Finansdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Försvardep	<input type="checkbox"/> Exportkreditnämnden	<input type="checkbox"/> Östsk kyrka
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Försvardep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Handelsdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Kommersellagrum	<input type="checkbox"/> Bankförordningen
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Handelsdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Industridep	<input type="checkbox"/> Riksbanken	<input type="checkbox"/> Exportrådet
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Industridep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Jordbruksdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Rikspolisstyrelsen	<input type="checkbox"/> Gravelhörs
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Jordbruksdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Justitiedep	<input type="checkbox"/> SIDA	<input type="checkbox"/> Industriförbundet
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Justitiedep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Kommunhögdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Socialstyrelsen	<input type="checkbox"/> Radsolförordningen
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Kommunhögdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Kommundep	<input type="checkbox"/> AS Atomenergi	<input type="checkbox"/> LO
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Kommundep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Skattehögdep	<input type="checkbox"/> IVA	<input type="checkbox"/> SAF
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Skattehögdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr Utbild dep	<input type="checkbox"/> SAMH	<input type="checkbox"/> AMS
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Utbild dep	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-sekr Ind dep	<input type="checkbox"/> Motorbränsleverket 1-sekr	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Salma SB
<input type="checkbox"/> Stats Lånb	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-sekr	<input type="checkbox"/> Statens Invandrareverk	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Stats Lånborg	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-sekr Jordbruksdep	<input type="checkbox"/> STU	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Stats Lånb	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-sekr Kommunhögdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Telestyrelsen	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Utrikesnämnden/Utrikesrådet 41 an	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-sekr Skattehögdep	<input type="checkbox"/> Farkostinspektöringen	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Utrikesnämndens sekr	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-sekr Utbild dep	<input type="checkbox"/> Måttvärdsberedningen	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Utrikesnämndens bitr sekr	<input type="checkbox"/> FEB	<input type="checkbox"/> Nordiska Rådets svenska del	<input type="checkbox"/>

<input type="checkbox"/> Större besöksningar FN-representanterna	10 an	<input type="checkbox"/> Bonn 2 an	<input type="checkbox"/> Moskva	<input type="checkbox"/> Peking	<input type="checkbox"/> Washington 2 an
		<input type="checkbox"/> London	<input type="checkbox"/> Paris	<input type="checkbox"/> Tokio	<input type="checkbox"/> FN-repr
<input type="checkbox"/> Norden	4 an	<input type="checkbox"/> Helsingfors	<input type="checkbox"/> Köpenhamn	<input type="checkbox"/> Oslo	<input type="checkbox"/> Ryckjevik
		<input type="checkbox"/> Belggrad	<input type="checkbox"/> Berlin A	<input type="checkbox"/> Bukarest	<input type="checkbox"/> Sofia
<input type="checkbox"/> Övriga Östeuropa	8 an	<input type="checkbox"/> Berlin Gd	<input type="checkbox"/> Budapest	<input type="checkbox"/> Prag	<input type="checkbox"/> Warszawa
		<input type="checkbox"/> Ankara	<input type="checkbox"/> Bryssel	<input type="checkbox"/> Uppsala	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom
<input type="checkbox"/> Övriga Västeuropa och Canada	16 an	<input type="checkbox"/> Athen	<input type="checkbox"/> Dublin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Madrid	<input type="checkbox"/> Wien
		<input type="checkbox"/> Bern	<input type="checkbox"/> Haag	<input type="checkbox"/> Ottawa	<input type="checkbox"/> Bryssel del
<input type="checkbox"/> Nordafrika	4 an	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alger	<input type="checkbox"/> Kairo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rabat	<input type="checkbox"/> Tunis
		<input type="checkbox"/> Bagdad	<input type="checkbox"/> Beirut	<input type="checkbox"/> Jeddah	<input type="checkbox"/> Kuwait
<input type="checkbox"/> Mellanöstern	4 an	<input type="checkbox"/> Bangkok	<input type="checkbox"/> Dacca	<input type="checkbox"/> Hongkong Gd	<input type="checkbox"/> Jakarta
<input type="checkbox"/> Övriga Asien och Australien	12 an	<input type="checkbox"/> Colombo	<input type="checkbox"/> Hanoi	<input type="checkbox"/> Islamabad	<input type="checkbox"/> Kuala Lumpur
		<input type="checkbox"/> Addis Ababa	<input type="checkbox"/> Gaborone	<input type="checkbox"/> Lagos	<input type="checkbox"/> Manrovia
<input type="checkbox"/> Övriga Afrika	9 an	<input type="checkbox"/> Dar-es-Salaam	<input type="checkbox"/> Kinshasa	<input type="checkbox"/> Lusaka	<input type="checkbox"/> Malindi
		<input type="checkbox"/> Bogen	<input type="checkbox"/> Buenos Aires	<input type="checkbox"/> Guatemala	<input type="checkbox"/> Lima
<input type="checkbox"/> Latinamerika	11 an	<input type="checkbox"/> Brasilia	<input type="checkbox"/> Caracas	<input type="checkbox"/> Havana	<input type="checkbox"/> Mexico
		<input type="checkbox"/> Antwerpen	<input type="checkbox"/> Istanbul	<input type="checkbox"/> Manila	<input type="checkbox"/> New York
<input type="checkbox"/> Vissa övriga konulat	13 an	<input type="checkbox"/> Chicago	<input type="checkbox"/> Leningrad	<input type="checkbox"/> Minneapolis	<input type="checkbox"/> Rio de Janeiro
		<input type="checkbox"/> Hamburg	<input type="checkbox"/> London	<input type="checkbox"/> Montreal	<input type="checkbox"/> San Francisco

<input type="checkbox"/> Utrikesminister	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Pol IV	<input type="checkbox"/> Statssekr int u-samarb	<input type="checkbox"/> Inspektören	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Stats Regeraden	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef H-natet I	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef multilaterala an	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Särskottsbörsanden	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Kabinsekreter	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef H-natet II	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef bilaterala an	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Utr min sekretärs	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Bitr Kabinsekreter	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef H-natet III	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chef Rapportsekr	<input type="checkbox"/> Björk	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Pol ord	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef H-förh grupp	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Protokollat	<input type="checkbox"/> Sahn	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 an för byrå
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bitr chef Pol ord	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Rättsskriv	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Pressbyrå	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thorsen	<input type="checkbox"/> C-öfören 8 an
<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Pol I	<input type="checkbox"/> Bitr Chef Rättsskriv	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Inform byrå	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Salma	<input type="checkbox"/> Regeringssekreter
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chef Pol II	<input type="checkbox"/> Chef Adm ord	<input type="checkbox"/> Föreläsningsskugga	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ljunggren	<input type="checkbox"/> And chefsekreter
<input type="checkbox"/> Bitr Chef Pol III	<input type="checkbox"/> Bitr Chef Adm ord	<input type="checkbox"/> Föreläsningsskugga	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Håkansson	<input type="checkbox"/> Byråsekreter
Ansl an till				

Appendix 78

SFM DOC 21

<p style="text-align: center;">SVERIGES STÄNDIGA REPRESENTATION VID FÖRENTA NATIONERNA NEW YORK</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">1976-05-05</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Utrikesrådet Leifland UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET</p>
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<p>1976-05-10 Ex t: Kab.sekr. Ds Norman ur Leifland, IB</p>	<p><i>Tae 14</i></p>	<p style="text-align: right;">146</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">INKOM UD</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">- 7 MAJ 1976</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Avg</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Gr</td> <td style="text-align: center;">MSI</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">JJP</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Dsk</td> </tr> </table>	INKOM UD			- 7 MAJ 1976			Avg	Gr	MSI	JJP	1	Dsk
INKOM UD														
- 7 MAJ 1976														
Avg	Gr	MSI												
JJP	1	Dsk												

STRÄNGT FÖRTROLIGT

<p><u>Västra Sahara</u> ✓ (2 bil.)</p> <p>Broder,</p> <p><i>1. AM</i> Jag översänder bifogade uppteckningar av samtalen med utrikesminister Boutefflika den 30 mars och presidenten Boumedienne den 2 april. Jag har ännu inte rapporterat skriftligen till Waldheim om mitt besök i Algeriet och denna rapport kommer inte heller när den överlämnats till honom att offentliggöras. Samtalsuppteckningarna bör inte spridas utanför en begränsad krets.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>En tveigång</i> <i>Olof Rydbeck</i> Olof Rydbeck</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">HEMLIG</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">enligt 3 § sekretesslagen.</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">1976-05-11</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Utrikesdepartementet</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">...GH...</td> </tr> </table>	HEMLIG		enligt 3 § sekretesslagen.		1976-05-11		Utrikesdepartementet		...GH...	
HEMLIG											
enligt 3 § sekretesslagen.											
1976-05-11											
Utrikesdepartementet											
...GH...											

Address:	Telefon:	Telegram:	Telefax:
825 Third Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10022	(212) 751-5900	SWEDLEG New York	22 41 50

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[illegible]

Dep W 243.

Appendix 80

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Meeting with the Foreign Minister of Algeria, Mr. Bouteflika, at Algiers on 30 March 1976 at 5.00 p.m.

[Also present Messrs. Benhabyles and Rahal]

Ambassador Rydbeck said that Ambassador Rahal had doubtless informed the Foreign Minister of the talks which they had had earlier in the day. Ambassador Rydbeck had spoken with the Secretary-General concerning the programme in Algeria and the Secretary-General's position was as follows. The Secretary-General was very conscious of the extremely delicate problem involved in contacts with the Frente Polisario. He wished first of all that there be no formal contacts with the government of the Saharan Republic as such and that meetings with the Frente Polisario should be within the context of Ambassador Rydbeck's talks with the Algerian Government. There should be as little publicity as possible given to these meetings. The Secretary-General had said that Ambassador Rydbeck could go to Tindouf if Mr. Bouteflika insisted but he wished Ambassador Rydbeck to draw Mr. Bouteflika's attention to the risk that such a visit might lead to an end of the mission. The Secretary-General had stressed the desirability of the mission continuing, and that the mission per se would not be a source of friction.

Ambassador Rydbeck said that the Secretary-General had asked him to convey his good wishes to all concerned for the success of the mission.

Mr. Bouteflika welcomed Ambassador Rydbeck on his first visit to Algeria. The Algerian Government had deeply appreciated the position taken by Sweden, on the question of the so-called Spanish Sahara, and had a particular respect for Ambassador Rydbeck as an individual since the Algerians knew that he always had just positions to defend. It had been greatly pleased with his designation as Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

Mr. Bouteflika recalled that the Secretary-General by coincidence had been at the Airport of Madrid when the Foreign Ministers of Morocco and Mauritania arrived there to sign the Madrid Agreement. Algeria could not ignore the role which external pressures upon Spain had undoubtedly played in bringing this about, for until that time no one, and certainly not Spain, had contemplated that instead of a genuine consultation, there should be a mockery of a consultation with those members of the Djema'a who had left the Territory. For Algeria there could, of course, be no solution which was not based upon the resolutions of the General Assembly, and in particular resolution 3458 A (XXX). For Algeria part A of resolution 3458 (XXX) was the natural basis for a solution. If part B had not dealt with self-determination it would never have passed. Throughout the years prior to the adoption of resolution 3458 (XXX) and after its adoption Morocco and Mauritania had expressed themselves in favour of a free and authentic consultation. Suddenly, self-determination became inadequate for them and, instead of a consultation of the people, they insisted upon only a meeting of the Djema'a composed of those members who had not left the Territory. The Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States, Spain and the United Nations, none of them accepted to be present at this parody of a consultation,

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Mr. Bouteflika commented that even before coming to Algeria, Ambassador Rydbeck had been doubtless already somewhat persona non grata with Morocco.

Continuing, he said that Algeria had no designs on the Western Sahara. It had no economic interests in the Territory and was not prepared to "trade" the blood of the Saharans for any profit to itself. It stood by the principle of the right of colonial peoples to self-determination, a right which, in the case of the so-called Spanish Sahara had been affirmed in more than a dozen resolutions adopted by, or at the instance of, the Special Committee of 24. Algeria could not accept any settlement which was not based upon the free exercise of this right as a matter of conscience. It was not simply for humanitarian reasons, but because a very important political principle was at stake. The issue was whether the principle of self-determination was to be respected or not. That issue was quite clear, and that was why Algeria could not accept the position of Morocco and Mauritania. He added that Algeria wanted to get out of the prevailing situation without losing its international creditability by letting down the Saharan populations, especially not when there was a military occupation of the Territory. If the situation was such an easy one as the Moroccans claim Mr. Bouteflika said that it would not have been necessary for the Moroccans to place an army of 30,000 soldiers and the entire Mauritanian army in the Territory. Today there was one soldier on each remaining inhabitant in the Territory, he said.

Mr. Bouteflika assured Ambassador Rydbeck that his Government was not in any way involved in the proclamation of the Democratic Arab Republic. It would have been much easier for Algeria to have given recognition to the liberation movement. But the Saharans did not wish to allow a political vacuum to continue after Spain's withdrawal from the Territory. He found it difficult, however, to accept the deviousness of the United Nations and its hesitancy to recognize the Republic as a legitimate entity since, after all the United Nations, or rather, the Fourth Committee of the Assembly, had already accepted the Frente Polisario as an authentic spokesman for the Saharan people. He believed that the United Nations tended to lean towards Morocco and added that the Secretary-General should preserve his right to discuss with the Frente Polisario.

He said that the Western Sahara was a one-party State, and consequently any Saharan whom Ambassador Rydbeck might meet would be a member of the Frente Polisario. The same situation prevailed in Algeria and other countries in Africa, where the party and the government were the same although there was a juridical distinction to be made between them. In view of this juridical distinction, there should be no difficulty for Ambassador Rydbeck to meet individuals as members of the party rather than in their capacity of members of the government. He was sure, for example, that Ambassador Rydbeck had met the delegation of the Frente Polisario which had attended the 30th session of the General Assembly. It had included both the President and the Foreign Minister of the new Saharan government.

Mr. Bouteflika was not happy with all the complications which had been raised in regard to this visit. While the United Nations appeared to be bluffing, Morocco and Mauritania had presented it with one fait accompli after another. It was time that the United Nations confronted the real issues. For example, there was no point to Ambassador Rydbeck's visit to Algeria unless he was prepared to visit Tindouf, meet with the Saharans, including the refugees and ascertain the facts of the situation. If all that Ambassador Rydbeck was expected to do was to ascertain

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the position of Algeria on the Saharan question, that could have been done quite easily by talking to Ambassador Rahal in New York.

The Visiting Mission in its report had said that almost all the Saharans encountered by it appeared to support the independence movement. Now several months later, one could fairly say that all the inhabitants were for independence. What Ambassador Rydbeck had seen in the Territory did not, of course, reflect the real situation as many of those whom he had met were in fact Moroccans who had supplanted the Saharans, after the latter fled to the liberated areas. In fact, the behaviour of the Moroccan invaders had strengthened the determination of the Saharans to go on fighting for independence.

Mr. Bouteflika repeated that he suspected the United Nations was "playing" with the situation. If so, it might find itself obliged to pay a heavy price. The Algerian Government had done its best to prevent the situation from deteriorating. It had limited the incidents at Angala by refusing to respond to Morocco's challenge. However, so long as there was no genuine consultation of the wishes of the Saharan people as to their future status, Algeria would continue to refuse to recognize the claims of Morocco and Mauritania to the Territory.

Mr. Bouteflika said that the situation in Western Sahara posed a problem of security for Algeria. There was no doubt that Morocco was part of one sphere of influence and Mauritania of another. It was well known that military bases were involved, and that these bases could be utilized to exert pressure on the Arab world. He pointed to a recent agreement of the same nature that Spain had entered into.

Algeria's position was well known. Algeria considered that the question of the Sahara was a problem for the international community and one which could not be solved by bilateral or trilateral negotiations. Algeria wanted to be neither more nor less involved than any other State which shared the common responsibility of trying to uphold internationally accepted principles, including the basic rights of peoples. It was well-known that a large segment of opinion in Spain considered that there had been a "sell-out" by the Spanish Government. Mr. Bouteflika said that it was necessary to address oneself to the Saharaouis while at the same time one should see to it that the juridical problem was avoided.

Ambassador Rydbeck thanked Mr. Bouteflika for having given a very clear explanation of Algeria's position. But he wanted to be sure that there was no misunderstanding concerning the purpose of his visit to Algeria, as the Secretary-General did not want to make only a gesture or to mislead anyone. There had never been any understanding that Ambassador Rydbeck should not see the Saharans in Algeria, including Polisario. Both Morocco and Mauritania quite understood that he would, especially as the purpose of the mission was to make available to the Secretary-General all relevant information which could help him in arriving at the best possible arrangements for an exercise of self-determination. Ambassador Rydbeck said that he was perfectly ready to see Saharans, including members of the Frente Polisario, and expected to do so. The question was where and how the meetings should take place. The sole objective in his discussions with Ambassador Rahal and now with Mr. Bouteflika, was to try to ensure that the mission did not

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exacerbate tension but on the contrary helped to allay it. The Secretary-General had no intention of allowing himself to be pressured or intimidated by anyone. Ambassador Rydbeck said that nothing in the situation was of such a nature that one should avoid to investigate everything to establish what the possibilities were for a true act of self-determination. He could, however, not possibly stay more days in Tindouf.

He pointed out that the Secretary-General in his consultations stressed that the goal had been to make the mission a contribution to efforts in finding peaceful solutions and that the mission in itself should not lead to controversy.

The Secretary-General had been aware of the possibility of problems. The phase of the mission was not complete. But he wanted to have the results of it before sending his Special Representative on the second leg.

Mr. Bouteflika said that when Algeria recognized the Saharan Republic, it made quite clear in its announcement that it fully supported the principle of self-determination and its action in no way precluded the further application of that principle. Algeria's position had not changed subsequently.

The Saharans had themselves taken the same position when they proclaimed the Republic.

The situation was not very different from that which had confronted Algeria when it declared its independence from France for it was many years before Algeria won recognition as an independent State. The purpose of such a declaration in the case of the so-called Spanish Sahara was to avoid the appearance of a political vacuum after Spain's withdrawal from the Territory.

Mr. Bouteflika said that when the Secretary-General had been arranging the present visit in consultation with the four governments, he (Mr. Bouteflika) had been out of personal contact with the Secretary-General for several weeks. Consequently, it was possible that the Secretary-General might have entered into agreements which he, Mr. Bouteflika, did not know about. However, Mr. Bouteflika could hardly be expected to respect any agreements to which he was not a party. He emphasized that the situation concerning western Sahara was potentially very explosive since Algeria and Morocco had broken off diplomatic relations and was much more serious than appeared on the surface.

Ambassador Rydbeck said that during the first phase of his mission he had remarked both the absence of a large segment of the population of western Sahara from the Territory, and also the incapacity of Spain to control the situation. These were two factors which made the implementation of the Assembly's resolution calling for self-determination very difficult, if not impossible.

Ambassador Rydbeck said that the purpose of his mission was to obtain the views of all parties concerning the method whereby the Saharans should exercise their right to self-determination. During the first phase of his visit, he had sought the views of representative groups of Saharans as well as those of the authorities. He prepared to follow the same approach in Algeria. He asked if the Algerian Government had any suggestions to make.

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Mr. Bouteflika said that his Government could not suggest an appropriate method at the present time. Circumstances would have to change first. However, Algeria's policy was to support whatever method was chosen by the Saharans themselves so long as it did not lead to a parody of justice. He repeated that Algeria had no vested interests in the Western Sahara and only insisted that the Saharans be given an opportunity to express their genuine wishes free of any constraints. Algeria would accept whatever resulted from such a consultation.

Algeria itself had never had any difficulty in agreeing to a referendum organized by France as the colonial Power. The situation in Western Sahara was, however, different because the Territory had been transferred from one colonizing Power to another. In this case, there had to be some international guarantee of freedom of expression.

Ambassador Rydbeck said that in his personal opinion, such a guarantee would be essential.

As to the appropriate method of consultation, one possibility he had envisaged was for the population to be consulted through their sheikhs. However, some Saharan elements, notably the youth, seemed to reject their traditional authorities as valid spokesmen.

Mr. Bouteflika assured Ambassador Rydbeck that if the Saharans could all voice their opinions freely, all age groups would say what they wanted and their views would be identical. It must be remembered, however, that some of the chiefs had been influenced by the Spanish authorities (to whom they owed their positions and other favours). He considered that the only logical method for carrying out a genuine consultation would be by a referendum of all the people. He was sure that this would show overwhelming support for independence. He believed that the Saharan people had become so politically conscious that the sense of nationality was now very strong and that this had noticeably affected the status of the chiefs as interlocutors for the people.

He did not think that the nomadic character of Saharan society precluded the holding of a referendum. Air communication was so good that it was possible to travel easily throughout the Territory. Also the people had little difficulty in coming together, as for the fair at Tindouf.

If the Saharan people really were Moroccans, why did Morocco fear a referendum? To say that the question was now closed, was simply a Moroccan argument to avoid discussion. The fact that the Spanish authorities had planned to hold a referendum, proved that it was possible.

Mr. Bouteflika said that Spain's withdrawal from the Territory had created a very grave situation. It had left a political vacuum. Spain must be severely blamed for not having lived up to its responsibilities as the administering Power.

Ambassador Rydbeck remarked that when he had visited the Territory, Spain had to all effect surrendered any power to influence the situation, because there were only 200 Spanish officials remaining in the Territory.

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Mr. Bouteflika, looking at the situation objectively, said that if Spain had turned over its authority to Morocco and Mauritania without consulting the people, then it was the responsibility of those who took over either to legitimize their presence by obtaining the assent of the people or to withdraw, leaving the people to decide their own status. Otherwise, it was merely a transfer from one form of colonial rule to another.

Spain had always said that there must be self-determination. It had now completely revised its stand.

Ambassador Rydbeck thought that the decision to withdraw had been taken during a period when Spain was wholly concerned with internal problems.

Mr. Bouteflika believed that the withdrawal had been orchestrated by a Power other than Morocco.

Returning to the question of Mr. Rydbeck's programme, Mr. Bouteflika said that by visiting Tindouf, Ambassador Rydbeck would be able to balance what had been told to him during his stay in Western Sahara, by obtaining the views of the majority of the population who had fled to Algeria. This was vital for the objectivity of his mission. The contacts with the Saharan refugees would enable him to see the true spirit of the Saharan people, who were much braver, more determined, more politically aware and more civilized than one might think.

Ambassador Rydbeck could certainly not think that his visit to Western Sahara had given him a complete picture of the situation. One would hardly go to South Africa to study what the Africans subject to apartheid really thought.

He was dismayed at the lack of consistency shown by many States in regard to this question. For example, France supported Morocco in its opposition to a referendum and in its claim that the Saharan population was too small to constitute a viable State. Yet France had conducted two referenda in Mayotte and was trying to organize another in Djibouti. It apparently did not consider that these were micro-States.

Ambassador Bahal pointed out that by visiting Tindouf, Ambassador Rydbeck would be enabled to hear the views of the majority of the members of the former Djemaa'a who had left the Territory. He had already devoted more than one meeting to hearing the views of the minority who remained in the Territory. Mr. Bouteflika expressed the wish to meet with Ambassador Rydbeck upon his return from Tindouf.

It was agreed that Ambassador Rydbeck would leave for Tindouf the following morning and that he would have a further meeting with Mr. Bouteflika upon his return.

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Bj. till Mr. Rydbeck
J. H. H. den 15 1976

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Meeting with President Boumedienne in Algiers on 2 April 1976 at 1100 hours

[President Boumedienne was accompanied by Mr. Boueflika]

Ambassador Rydbeck said that the Secretary-General had asked him to convey his greetings to President Boumedienne. Ambassador Rydbeck had returned from Tindouf on the previous day. While there he had met with the Secretary-General and other leaders of the Frente Polisario as well as with members of the P. J. J. a and other groups of Saharans. He had not met with the "government of the Democratic Arab Republic of Sahara."

His meeting with the Frente Polisario leaders had been very interesting. They had made it clear that they expected help from the United Nations and that they would accept an act of self-determination under United Nations supervision. It was also clear that they did not consider present circumstances made possible the holding of such an act.

In reply to a question by President Boumedienne, Mr. Rydbeck said that his mission so far had reached no significant new developments. He said that after a stay in Geneva he would visit Morocco and Mauritania. He would be surprised if Morocco and Mauritania changed attitude.

President Boumedienne asked whether Ambassador Rydbeck expected to be received in Morocco and Mauritania. He remarked that Sweden was not very popular in those countries. He added that this fact honoured Sweden.

Ambassador Rydbeck said that his nationality was not material as he was representing the Secretary-General. He was aware that there had been some reaction to his visit in Algeria, however.

President Boumedienne observed that both Morocco and Mauritania had declared that the question of the decolonization of Western Sahara was closed. It seemed that Ambassador Rydbeck had re-opened it.

Ambassador Rydbeck said that both Morocco and Mauritania had stated that the question was closed before he left New York but they nevertheless had been willing to receive him. There was no indication that their attitude had changed when Ambassador Rydbeck spoke to the Secretary-General upon his return from Tindouf. It had been made absolutely clear to both the Moroccan and Mauritanian Permanent Representatives in New York that Ambassador Rydbeck would meet with representatives of the Frente Polisario during the visit to Algeria. In New York there had been no opposition to this.

Certain things could have happened which would have put an end to the mission. One of these could have been recognition of the government of the Saharan Republic. However, Ambassador Rydbeck had made it clear that he would not meet with any persons representing the government as such. He had, on the contrary, met the leaders of the Frente Polisario.

President Boumedienne said that Ambassador Rahal had informed him about some of the observations which Ambassador Rydbeck had made on the situation which he found in El Aaiun. Ambassador Rydbeck had been very observant and had accurately described the situation in the Territory.

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Ambassador Rydbeck said that he had seen a great many empty houses in el Aaiun and even more in Dakhla and Smara.

President Boumedienne said that there were more than 30,000 Moroccan troops, police and administrators in the northern region alone. He could cite the names of the military units involved, if desired. There was famine among the civilian population remaining in the north, and the exodus continued.

He said that the new colonial regime was more oppressive than its predecessor, for it could be described in no other way than as a form of colonialism, since Morocco and Mauritania had acted completely outside the rules of international law. As a matter of fact the colonialism of today was worse than the colonialism of yesterday.

He said that the Saharan Liberation Army now held about 200 Moroccan and Mauritanian prisoners of war. Algeria found itself obliged to shelter literally tens of thousands of refugees.

For Algeria, there was a moral dilemma. Algeria supported the justice of the Saharan cause. It was prepared to give them arms but could not send them to their death. That was why it was important that the international community should be made fully aware of their situation.

Ambassador Rydbeck said that he had been impressed by the group of young administrators of the refugee camps who he had met at Tindouf. They were very articulate and had obviously thought things out very carefully.

President Boumedienne asked if Ambassador Rydbeck had been told of the atrocities committed by the occupying forces and their use of napalm against the Saharan population.

Ambassador Rydbeck replied that these were matters for the international Red Cross and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to investigate. He had heard reports of such things, but it was not within his mandate from the Secretary-General to investigate them. His task was a very specific one.

President Boumedienne said that it was a problem for the conscience of the whole international community and underlined that the UNHCR should send a representative.

He was convinced that the exodus of refugees would continue and that the Liberation Army would maintain its assistance so long as the occupation continued. Morocco would never be able to subdue the Saharan people. The situation was a real menace to the peace and stability of the region.

He believed that King Hassan did not fully appreciate the seriousness of the situation. Mauritania merely followed Morocco's lead. The Mauritanian army was now little more than a section of the Moroccan army for it receives its orders from the Moroccan High Command. Units of the Moroccan army were in Mauritania and the latter would not be able to get rid of them without a struggle.

He wondered what was to prevent Senegal from following the example set by Morocco and launching a "Green March" into Gambia.

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He hoped that the Secretary-General would publish Ambassador Rydbeck's report.

Ambassador Rydbeck said that the Secretary-General was not required to submit a report on action taken by him on the basis of resolution 3458 (XXX), but believed that he might decide to do so.

Ambassador Rydbeck said that his report to the Secretary-General would reflect the fact that he had received the information he needed from the Government of Algeria. He added that he would, of course, make two reports to the Secretary-General. The first would be an oral report, which would be followed by a written one.

President Boumediene hoped that Ambassador Rydbeck would call the Secretary-General's attention to the fact that there had been serious developments which could affect the tranquility of the region. Contrary to what Morocco believed, the Saharan dossier was not closed, neither on the legal level nor on the ground.

He thought that the United Nations had a very important role to play. If King Hassan was willing to see reason, he thought a solution could be arrived at. In his opinion, King Hassan was capable of resolving the situation by himself.

A solution must be found with the assistance of the United Nations.

The Saharan people were determined to continue their resistance and they would undoubtedly receive arms from outside. Algeria had been accused of providing arms and fostering the Saharan liberation struggle for its own purposes, but it had not done so. Algeria's only interest was to arrive at a solution that was in conformity with international law. Algeria had no economic interests in Western Sahara - whether in regard to its phosphates, fisheries or any other. It rejected any barter arrangement because it wished only to support international morality and the principles laid down by the United Nations.

President Boumediene concluded the audience by assuring Ambassador Rydbeck that the Government of Algeria would remain always at the disposal of the Secretary-General to facilitate his task.

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UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET		Ärende:		— ORIGINAL —	
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<p>SWEDELEG NEW YORK 1976-05-11 <i>Pol III: R</i></p> <p>CABINET STOCKHOLM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">B R Å D S K A N D E R E V Ä S T R A S A H A R A</p> <p>MED ANLEDNING AV ATT JAG INOM DE NÄRMASTE DAGARNA KOMMER ATT SAMMANTRÄFFA MED DEN NYAA HIT ÅTERVÄNDE MAROCKANSKE FN- AMBASSADÖREN - JAG HAR REDAN TRÄFFAT DEN MAURITANSKE - VORE JAG TACKSAM FÅ DEL AV SÅDANA INFOMRATIONER FRÅN BESKICKNINGEN I RABAT, SOM KAN VARA AV VÄRDE INFÖR SAMTALEN MED SLAUI.</p> <p>RYDBECK</p> <p>SWEDELEG NEW YORK</p> <p style="text-align: left;"><i>48</i></p>					

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UTRIKESDEPARTEMENTET		Ärende:		—ORIGINAL—	
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RE VÄSTRA SAHARA. FÖR POLCHEFEN OCH POL III.					
<p>P R I M O</p> <p>VID SAMTAL MED WALDHEIM I FREDAGS SADE MIG DENNE ATT HAN NOTERAT EN MARKANT ÄNDRING I DEN ALGERISKA ATTITYDEN I SAHARA-FRÅGAN. ALGERIETS AMBASSADÖR RAHAL SOM EN TID VISTATS I ALGERIET HADE EFTER ÅTERKOMSTEN HIT FRAMHÅLLIT BETYDELSEN AV SENEGALS MEDLING SOM ALGERIERNAS TIDIGARE NEDVÄRDERAT. SENEGALS MEDLINGSARBETE PÅGÅR ALLTJÄMT. DET HADE FRAPPERAT WALDHEIM ATT RAHAL INTE VISAT MINSTA INTRESSE FÖR LÄGET BETRÄFFANDE GENERALSEKRETERARENS RAPPORT TILL GENERALFÖRSAMLINGEN. RAHAL HADE TALAT OM DE PROBLEM SOM POLISARIO BEREDER ALGERIET OCH ERKÄNT ATT ALGERIET BEGÅTT MISSTÄG. HAN HADE I SAMMANHANGET BETONAT VIKTEN FÖR ALGERIET ATT KONCENTRERA DE NATIONELLA ANSTRÄNGNINGARNA PÅ DE EKONOMISKA FRÅGORNA. WALDHEIM MENADE SJÄLV ATT BRISTEN PÅ STÖD FRÅN ARABISKA OCH AFRIKANSKA GRUPPERNA SOM ÄR OENSE INBÖRDES HADE VARIT MER AVGÖRANDE.</p>					
<p>S E C U N D O</p> <p>JAG HAR SJÄLV TRÄFFAT RAHAL VID ETT PAR TILLFÄLLEN EFTER HANS ÅTERKOMST UTAN ATT HAN MED ENS EN ANTYDAN BERÖRT SAHARA-FRÅGAN ELLER VISAT INTRESSE FÖR MIN RAPPORT FRÅN MIN ANDRA RESA. DENNA RAPPORT HAR SOM EN DRAFT LÄMNATS GENERALSEKRETERAREN OCH VI HAR ÖVERENSKOMMIT ATT JAG SKALL KONFERERA MED WALDHEIM INNAN DEN OFFICIELLT ÖVERLÄMNAS.</p>					
<p>T E R T I O</p> <p>WALDHEIM BERÄTTADE ATT DEN KINESISKE UNDERGENERALSEKRETERAREN TANG SOM ÄR ANSVARIG FÖR DEKOLONISERINGSFRÅGOR IFRÅGASATT OM NÅGON RAPPORT FRÅN GENERALSEKRETERAREN TILL GENERALFÖRSAMLINGEN ÖVERHUVUD TAGET BEHOVER LÄMNAS. FÖRSAMLINGENS RESOLUTIONER KRÄVER DET INTE DIREKT. SKULLE ALGERIET INTE INSISTERA KANSKE ANDRA FORMER KUNDE FINNAS FÖR GENERALSEKRETERAREN ATT INFORMERA FÖRSAMLINGEN OM ATT HAN ÅGERAT I FRÅGAN.</p>					
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