

RELEASE IN FULL

Explanation of Vote by Ambassador Brooke Anderson, U.S. Alternate Representative for Special Political Affairs, on MINURSO, in the Security Council Chamber

Brooke Anderson

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U.S. Mission to the United Nations

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AS DELIVERED

The United States fully supports the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy Chris Ross in their efforts to find a peaceful, sustainable, mutually-agreed solution to the Western Sahara conflict and welcomes the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Western Sahara and head of MINURSO Hany Abdel-aziz.

We welcome the fact that, during Ambassador Ross' recent trip to the region, all of his interlocutors confirmed their commitment to cooperate with the United Nations to reach a solution to the Western Sahara conflict as soon as possible.

We encourage all involved to come to the table without preconditions. This conflict has languished for too long, and has hindered regional cooperation on urgent and emergent issues facing North Africa.

We believe it is essential that the parties demonstrate the political will to identify a mutually-acceptable solution, and we hope that neighboring states will assist the parties in doing so.

We call on the parties to work collaboratively with the UNHCR to facilitate the implementation of their agreement regarding family visits, including the establishment of family visits by land. We hope that family visits by air will be resumed as soon as possible, and that the parties will engage constructively with each other and the Personal Envoy of the Secretary General to pursue other forms of confidence building measures.

We are deeply concerned about the allegations of human rights abuses by the parties. We urge the parties to work with the international community to ensure full respect for human rights in both Western Sahara and in the Tindouf camps.

In this context, we underscore the importance of making progress on the human rights situation.

Given the current situation on the ground and Ambassador Ross' continuing efforts, we agree the presence of MINURSO remains indispensable and that is why we have just supported renewing MINURSO's mandate for another 12 months.

Thank you Mr. President.