

The current situation in Western Sahara

Presentation of the virtual seminar

The latest escalation

The actual beginning of the conflict was in 1975, when Spain, before their eviction from Western Sahara, signed the Madrid Agreement with both Morocco and Mauritania, according to which the two neighboring countries divided the Sahara, instead of organizing a free referendum on self-determination that guaranteed the right of indigenous peoples to freely choose.

The Sahrawis rejected this agreement and established the Polisario Front, and they continued to demand independence, like all the colonies at that time.

On October 16, 1975, Morocco announced the so-called "Green March", which consisted of thousands of Moroccan civilians and an army that occupied the Sahara region and occupied eighty percent of its lands. In January 1976, the "Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic," the Sahrawi state, was declared established.



GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

- Western Sahara is a region in North Africa, bordered by:
- Morocco to the north.
- Algeria to the east.
- Mauritania to the south.
- The Atlantic Ocean to the west.
- With an area of about 284,000 square kilometers.

**Map of the separation berm
in Western Sahara from:**
<https://www.arso.org/CEASmuro05.htm>

- Here we can notice the Berm map separating the region into 6 parts, and we can imagine here what will happen to humans, animals and vegetation.
- The word in red is "wall of shame" in French



- The war in Western Sahara lasted 16 years, until the United Nations managed to reach a ceasefire agreement between Morocco and the Polisario Front in 1991 without reaching a final settlement of the conflict so far.
- A buffer zone was established along Western Sahara region , separating the part occupied from the territory from the part liberated by the Polisario. The UN peacekeepers are responsible for securing the area until the referendum is organized, which was part of the terms of the ceasefire agreement.
- No referendum was organized by the United Nations, and Morocco extended its economic and military activities to the buffer zone, which made the ceasefire agreement collapse and a second war began on November 20, 2020.
- Accordingly, the Western Sahara region has become again in a state of war, in light of the failure of the Security Council's efforts, and the sense of injustice felt by the Sahrawis, for not completing the path of legal decolonization.

The state of the saharawi community. The ongoing human tragedy

The Saharawi community is divided into three parts

- Sahrawis in the occupied territories their suffering increased after the second war, due to the media blockade and the Moroccan police activity against anyone who expresses any opinion against the occupation (for example the rape of Sultana khaya and her sister on May 12, 2021)

_ - The Sahrawis in the Sahrawi refugee camps in southwestern Algeria, thousands of Sahrawis live as refugees waiting to return to their homeland, and their condition is one of the most complex cases of refugees alongside the Palestinians

The Sahrawis are in the diaspora, and they are the communities in countries such as Spain and France etc...

-This situation, which resulted from the illegal Moroccan occupation of the Western Sahara, the former Spanish colony, displaces the indigenous population and deprives them of their lands and livelihoods, and the continuation of this human tragedy to the point of time.

latest news

- There is no peace in Western Sahara so far. Rather, there is a war taking place around the separation wall that cannot be covered by the media.
- The United Nations continues to renew the presence of its peace mission in Western Sahara every year without tangible results.
- Sahrawis live in the occupied territories under police surveillance day and night, the most recent of which is the siege of the home of human rights activist Ali Salem Tamek, who has been concealed to this day.
- The ongoing litigation between the Polisario and the European Union, which signed fishing and agricultural agreements with Morocco, includes the non-independent Sahara region, whose residents are not consulted about the exploitation of their natural wealth.
- Polisario won the case earlier, but the European Union appealed the case, which was held for its sessions in Luxembourg yesterday.