

## **Petition to stop EU fishery exploitation of Western Sahara**

(Compiled Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2009)

**This is a two page guide for those who have been asked to consider signing the petition.**

**\*\* *Fish elsewhere: stop the EU fisheries in occupied Western Sahara* \*\***  
[www.fishelsewhere.eu](http://www.fishelsewhere.eu)

**Sign the petition: stop the EU fisheries in Western Sahara!**  
**Say no to EU fisheries in occupied Western Sahara**

This campaign is an initiative of Western Sahara Resource Watch  
[www.wsrw.org](http://www.wsrw.org)

### **Western Sahara – ‘The East Timor of Africa’**

The independence struggle in Western Sahara mirrors almost exactly that of the East Timorese. In 1975 when the colonial power Spain withdrew, the neighbouring country, Morocco, invaded. A war ensued until a UN sponsored ceasefire was declared in 1991 when a referendum was promised. Despite UN pressure Morocco refuses to agree to a referendum.

Morocco occupies the major part of its neighbouring country, Western Sahara. Entering into business deals with Moroccan companies or authorities in the occupied territories gives an impression of political legitimacy to the occupation. It also gives job opportunities to Moroccan settlers and income to the Moroccan government. *Western Sahara Resource Watch* demands foreign companies leave Western Sahara until a solution to the conflict is found.

### **The Petition in a nutshell**

The EU is paying Morocco to fish in occupied Western Sahara. The EU-Morocco Fisheries Agreement is both politically controversial and in violation of international law. The international *Fish Elsewhere!* campaign demands the EU to cancel its highly unethical operations, and go fishing somewhere else. No fishing in Western Sahara should take place until the conflict is solved.

**Please see the text of the petition below with some further information.**

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Petition: Stop EU fisheries in Western Sahara!**

To the European Commissioner for Fisheries,

No state in the world has recognised the Moroccan annexation of Western Sahara. Still, the EU is paying millions of Euros annually to the Government of Morocco to allow EU vessels to fish in the waters of Western Sahara. The EU fisheries activities in Western Sahara must immediately come to an end.

## **Petition to stop EU fishery exploitation of Western Sahara**

(Compiled Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2009)

Morocco continues to refuse to cooperate with the decolonization process in Western Sahara, thereby defying more than 100 UN resolutions that insist on the Saharawi people's right to self-determination. Simultaneously, Moroccan authorities commit human rights violations against Sahrawis who voice their political views. No EU states, nor the UN, recognise the Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara.

In this context, cooperating with Morocco in exploiting Western Sahara's natural resources is highly unethical, and clearly jeopardizes the UN's efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict.

According to the UN, the natural resources in Western Sahara cannot be exploited without regard to the wishes and interests of the people of the territory. However, the EU is transferring European taxpayers' money to the Government of Morocco for access to Western Saharan waters, without even consulting the Sahrawi people.

The EU has the legal and moral obligation to stop subverting the UN peace process in Western Sahara, by respecting the Sahrawi people's right to self-determination over their land and their resources.

We urge the European Commission to put an immediate stop to the granting of all licenses to EU vessels fishing in Western Saharan waters, and we demand that no further EU fisheries operations take place in Western Sahara until a peaceful solution to the conflict has been found.

Yours sincerely,

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Sign the petition!**

The petition was published on 06.11.2009 and as at 02 December 2009 now has **7225** signatures.

Please sign the petition via the link at: [www.fishelsewhere.eu](http://www.fishelsewhere.eu)

*To find the petition:* Scroll down the menu column on the right hand side of the screen. Locate the language option list and click on 'English'.

\* \* \* \* \*

**For further information about the petition and any related matters please contact:**

**Ms Georgia Vlassopoulos**  
**Australia Western Sahara Association (Vic)**

M: 0425 702 975

E: gv-@netspace.net.au