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To:

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS)

100 Parliament Street

London, SW1A 2BQ

Subject: Formal Objection to Screening and Promotion of *The Odyssey* Filmed in Occupied Western Sahara

Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of **Adala UK**, an organization dedicated to upholding human rights and international law in Western Sahara, I wish to express our profound concern regarding the production of the film *The Odyssey* by director Christopher Nolan, which includes scenes filmed in **Dakhla**, a city located in the **occupied territory of Western Sahara**.

It is important to emphasize that Western Sahara remains a non-self-governing territory under international law, with its final status pending a legitimate process of self-determination consistent with United Nations resolutions and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice. Neither the United Kingdom nor the international community recognize Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara.

Filming the movie in Dakhla without the consent of the Sahrawi people and without acknowledging the disputed status of the territory serves to legitimize Morocco's ongoing unlawful occupation. This is particularly concerning given the extensive documentation by Adala UK, international human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and UN working groups on arbitrary detention, regarding persistent human rights violations against Sahrawi civilians in the occupied territories.

We note with appreciation the recent formal response from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) to Adala UK's correspondence, which reiterates the UK Government's commitment to the rules-based international order and fundamental principles enshrined in the UN Charter, including respect for the right to self-determination. The FCDO's letter also affirms support for ongoing UN-led mediation efforts under the auspices of the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy, Staffan de Mistura, and welcomes the planned third UK-Morocco Human Rights Dialogue session. Importantly, Adala UK understands from the FCDO's response that the United Kingdom does not recognize Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara and remains fully committed to international legality and the Sahrawi people's right to self-determination.

In light of these considerations, we respectfully urge the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport to:



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1. Publicly acknowledge the concerns related to the filming and promotion of *The Odyssey* in occupied Western Sahara;
2. Conduct a thorough review of any direct or indirect support related to the distribution, promotion, or public funding of the film within the United Kingdom;
3. Collaborate with the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC), cinema chains, film distributors, and public broadcasters to ensure that *The Odyssey* is not screened or promoted in the UK unless the filmmakers urgently acknowledge and address the serious legal and ethical issues concerning the filming location;
4. Reaffirm the UK Government's unwavering support for international law, the right to self-determination, and non-recognition of any territorial acquisition resulting from occupation.

Given the significant influence of major cultural productions, it is essential that such projects adhere to international legal standards and do not contribute, even indirectly, to legitimizing an unlawful occupation.

Adala UK stands ready to provide further information and engage constructively with your department to address these urgent concerns.

We look forward to your considered response and stand ready to engage constructively to address these important concerns.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Sidi Ahmed Alyadasi

Chair, Adala UK, Representative to the OHCHR

info@adalauk.org

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