



Adala UK

British Organisation for Justice, Human Rights and International Law
Cambridge, United Kingdom

Date: 05-02-2026

To:

Dr Abdul Basit Syed
Founding President
World Humanitarian Drive (WHD)
43 Lancaster Gate
London
W2 3NA
United Kingdom
Email: contact@whd.org.uk

Subject: Observations on Statements Concerning Western Sahara Published in *Assahra Al Maghribia*

Dear Dr Sayed,

We write on behalf of Adala UK, a British organisation concerned with matters of international law, decolonisation, and the protection of the right of peoples to self-determination.

We refer to the interview attributed to you and published in the Moroccan newspaper *Assahra Al Maghribia*. In that interview, views are expressed regarding the status of Western Sahara and the Moroccan autonomy proposal. In light of the potential for misunderstanding, we consider it appropriate to place a number of matters on the record.

The position of the United Kingdom

Your remarks appear capable of being read as reflecting, or at least aligning with, the official position of the United Kingdom. This would be a misapprehension.

As confirmed in writing by the Minister of State responsible for North Africa on **9 January 2026**, to the Adala UK's Chair, the United Kingdom Government:

- Does not mention recognizing Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara;
- Remains committed to a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution;
- Continues to support the principle of self-determination, in accordance with the United Nations Charter;
- Regards Security Council Resolution **2797** as part of an ongoing political process, rather than its conclusion.



It follows that any implication of British recognition of Moroccan sovereignty would be inaccurate.

Legal status of Western Sahara

Western Sahara remains a Non-Self-Governing Territory under international law and is subject to the United Nations decolonisation framework.

The **International Court of Justice**, in its **1975 Advisory Opinion**, found that no ties of territorial sovereignty existed between Morocco and the territory, and that the governing principle is the right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination. That position has not altered.

Security Council Resolution 2797 and autonomy

Resolution 2797 does not confer legal status upon Moroccan sovereignty, nor does it predetermine the outcome of the political process. As with previous resolutions, it emphasises the need for a political solution that provides for self-determination. Autonomy proposals remain proposals and do not, in themselves, displace the applicable legal framework.

European judicial findings

The **Court of Justice of the European Union** has, in a series of judgments between 2016 and 2023, confirmed that Western Sahara is legally separate from Morocco, that Morocco has no sovereignty over the territory, and that any agreement relating to it requires the consent of the people of Western Sahara, represented by the **Polisario Front**. These judgments provide authoritative guidance on the application of international law.

Representation

Within the United Nations process, the **Polisario Front** is recognised as the representative of the people of Western Sahara. This is a matter of established UN practice and is central to the conduct of the political process.

Role of civil society

As the founding president of an organisation enjoying consultative status with **ECOSOC**, your public interventions may reasonably be taken to carry institutional weight. It is therefore particularly important that such interventions reflect legal accuracy and avoid conflation of personal opinion with governmental or international positions.

Concluding observations

In these circumstances, we would respectfully suggest that it would be helpful if:



- It were made clear that the views expressed in the interview represent personal perspectives;
- Care were taken in characterising the positions of the United Kingdom and the United Nations;
- Future engagement on Western Sahara were framed consistently with the right of the people of the territory to self-determination and with established international law.

The question of Western Sahara remains one of decolonisation. A durable settlement can only be achieved through a process that accords with international legality and the freely expressed will of the people concerned.

We remain willing to engage in constructive and measured discussion should that be of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Sidi Ahmed Lydasi
Chair, Adala UK

For Justice, Law, and Human Dignity www.adalauk.org

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sidi Ahmed Lydasi', written over a horizontal line.