



14 July 2026

The Rt Hon Foreign Secretary

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

Subject: Urgent Request for Intervention on Behalf of Mr Naâma Asfari and the Gdeim Izik Prisoners

Dear Foreign Secretary,

We are writing on behalf of **Adala UK**, a UK-based non-governmental organisation dedicated to promoting and protecting human rights in Western Sahara.

We wish to draw your urgent attention to the critical condition of **Mr Naâma Asfari**, a prominent Sahrawi human rights defender, and to the continued arbitrary detention of the Gdeim Izik prisoners.

Mr Asfari has been imprisoned for more than fifteen years following proceedings that have been repeatedly criticised by United Nations human rights mechanisms over allegations of torture, the use of coerced confessions and serious breaches of fair trial standards. Since **8 June 2026**, he has been on an open-ended hunger strike and has now spent **36 days** without food in protest against his detention and prison conditions. According to information received by our organisation, his health has deteriorated to a critical stage, yet he continues to be denied the specialised medical care his condition urgently requires. We are also deeply concerned that his wife, the French human rights defender **Claude Mangin**, has reportedly been prevented from visiting him for the past eight years.

Mr Asfari's case is emblematic of the wider situation facing the Gdeim Izik prisoners, many of whom have also undertaken hunger strikes in solidarity while continuing to report arbitrary detention, ill-treatment, prolonged solitary confinement and severe restrictions on family contact.

In **Opinion No. 23/2023**, the **United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention** concluded that the detention of the Gdeim Izik prisoners is arbitrary and called for their immediate release and effective remedies. The **United Nations Committee against Torture** has likewise raised longstanding concerns regarding allegations of torture and the reliance on confessions allegedly obtained under duress. These recommendations remain unimplemented.

In light of the urgency of the situation, we respectfully urge His Majesty's Government to engage with the Moroccan authorities and to call for:

- the immediate and unconditional release of Mr Naâma Asfari, the Gdeim Izik prisoners and all arbitrarily detained Sahrawi political prisoners;



- the implementation of Opinion No. 23/2023 and other relevant recommendations issued by United Nations human rights mechanisms;
- immediate access to independent specialist medical care for Mr Asfari;
- unrestricted access for his family and the International Committee of the Red Cross;
- an end to reprisals against the families of Sahrawi detainees;
- unrestricted access for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; and
- a country visit by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture.

The United Kingdom has consistently championed the rule of law, human rights and the international rules-based order. As a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, it is well placed to encourage compliance with international human rights obligations. We respectfully encourage His Majesty's Government to use its dialogue with the Kingdom of Morocco to help prevent irreversible harm to Mr Asfari's life and health and to support the implementation of the recommendations made by United Nations human rights mechanisms.

Given the urgent humanitarian nature of this case, we would be grateful for your early consideration and would welcome the opportunity to provide any further information that may assist the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office.

Yours sincerely,

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