

## Attachment

### **Four Nordic Governments agree that Western Sahara natural resources must not be exploited without the consent of the Sahrawi people and if it not is for their benefit**

#### **Sweden**

*“The Swedish government’s position when it comes to understanding international law in this matter is clear. The area we today call Western Sahara, the former Spanish colony Spanish Sahara, is occupied by Morocco. We base this conclusion on the decision made by the International Court of Justice in 1975: that Morocco has no legal basis for its claim to Western Sahara. This means that Morocco has a duty to maintain general order and public life and welfare, and that Morocco has no right to exploit the natural resources in Western Sahara for its own benefit.”*

Foreign Minister, Carl Bildt, in the Swedish Parliament, 2007.

This position has later been confirmed at several occasions, most recently by the Minister for Agriculture, Eskil Erlandsson in May 2010.

[http://www.riksdagen.se/webbnav/?nid=71&dok\\_id=GU121622&rm=2006/07&bet=1622](http://www.riksdagen.se/webbnav/?nid=71&dok_id=GU121622&rm=2006/07&bet=1622)

#### **Denmark**

*“Taking the principles of international law regarding non-renewable resources from Non-self Governing Territories as a point of reference, it is the opinion of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs that such exploitation should not take place, unless the profits of the exploitation can be said to be of the benefit of the local population.*

*Denmark supports that the status for Western Sahara should be settled in a peaceful process under the auspices of the UN, and that until the time when a final status is found, actions should not take place that are in violation of the local populations’ interests relating to the resource basis of the territory.*

*Even though the principles of international law and human rights are in general not directly binding for Danish companies, the Ministry will at all times encourage Danish companies to be aware of their international responsibility.”*

[http://www.danwatch.dk/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=67%3Adenmark-warns-businesses-over-western-sahara&catid=16%3Aartikler&Itemid=1&lang=en](http://www.danwatch.dk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=67%3Adenmark-warns-businesses-over-western-sahara&catid=16%3Aartikler&Itemid=1&lang=en)

#### **Finland**

*“Until the status of Western Sahara elucidated, Morocco should refrain from taking any action on natural resources which are contrary to the interests of local people. Morocco can use the Sahrawi renewable natural resources of the Saharawi residents’ best interests and in consultation with them, but should adopt a cautious approach to the exploitation of non-renewable natural resources. In the EU, the exploitation of the natural resources in Western Sahara has been discussed in relation to the EU-Morocco Fisheries Partnership Agreement. During the preparatory work on the agreement, which was decided through qualified vote, Finland and certain other states, pointed to the fact than the Western Sahara territorial waters not had specifically been excluded from the agreement’s area of application. Also for years to come, Finland finds it important that international law be respected upon the exploitation of natural resources in Western Sahara.”*

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alexander Stubb, in Finnish parliament, 8 May 2009

[http://www.eduskunta.fi/faktatmp/utatmp/akxtmp/kk\\_332\\_2009\\_p.shtml](http://www.eduskunta.fi/faktatmp/utatmp/akxtmp/kk_332_2009_p.shtml)

## **Norway**

*"Morocco has for a number of years occupied Western Sahara despite strong UN condemnation. The [Pension Fund's Ethical] Council found that [the US petroleum company] Kerr-McGee through its exploration activities most likely will enable Morocco to exploit petroleum resources in the area. The Council regarded this as 'a particularly serious violation of fundamental ethical norms' e.g. because it may strengthen Morocco's sovereignty claims and thus contribute to undermining the UN peace process".*

The Norwegian Ministry of Finances upon divesting from a US oil company involved in exploration in Western Sahara, 2005.

[http://www.regjeringen.no/en/archive/Bondeviks-2nd-Government/ministry-of-finance/Nyheter-og-pressemeldinger/2005/company\\_excluded\\_from\\_the\\_government.html?id=256359](http://www.regjeringen.no/en/archive/Bondeviks-2nd-Government/ministry-of-finance/Nyheter-og-pressemeldinger/2005/company_excluded_from_the_government.html?id=256359)

*"Since Morocco does not exercise internationally recognised sovereignty over Western Sahara, Western Sahara is not seen as a part of Morocco's territory in relation to this agreement. The Free Trade Agreement is thus not applicable to goods from Western Sahara".*

Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Jonas Gahr Store, 11 May 2010, regarding the EFTA-Morocco free trade agreement.

<http://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Sporsmal/Skriftlige-sporsmal-og-svar/Skriftlig-sporsmal/?qid=46630>