

35th Session of the Human Rights Council
General debate - Item 2
Statement by a cross-regional group of states
7 June 2017

Mr. President,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of a cross-regional group of 14 states.

Since the 34th Session of the Human Rights Council in March 2017, a number of developments with regard to Western Sahara took place. We note the Secretary-General's report of 10 April 2017 on the situation in Western Sahara, which includes in its Chapter V(D) on human rights, a seriously concerning enumeration of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; ongoing harassment of Saharawi human rights defenders; routine prevention and dispersal of gatherings in Western Sahara; ongoing illegal exploitation of natural resources; and the lack of progress regarding self-determination.

Mr. President,

While expressing our deep concern about the lack of improvement of the human rights situation in the Non Self-Governing Territory of Western Sahara, we welcome the High Commissioner's decision to relaunch the technical human rights missions in Western Sahara.

We also consider it of utmost importance that the Office of the HC implement ECOSOC Resolution 2016/20, which requests the specialized agencies, organizations and bodies of the UN, inter alia, to formulate appropriate programmes of assistance to the peoples of the Non Self-Governing Territories and recommends that said UN bodies continue to review the implementation of General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV).

Finally, we urge the High Commissioner to include the human rights situation in Western Sahara in his regular future reports to the Council.

I thank you Mr. President.