

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 3, 2009

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Vital U.S. interests in North Africa are increasingly challenged by growing regional instability. Terrorist incidents in the Maghreb have increased by more than 400 percent since September 11, 2001, and the emergence of Al Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) has led to a spike in terror attacks against both symbols of national government and institutions reflecting cooperation between the Arab world and the West. The single greatest obstacle impeding the security cooperation necessary to combat this transnational threat is the unresolved territorial dispute over the Western Sahara.

In addition to bringing peace to the people of Morocco and to the Saharawi, and shrinking the space for global terrorist elements to recruit and operate, resolving the conflict in the Western Sahara would have considerable economic benefits and improve the lives of millions of Africans. The entire Maghreb would finally be free to pursue serious economic integration, attract increased foreign investment, and realize the potential for regional trade and cooperation. All of these important goals are currently blocked by the continued conflict and the tension it creates between states in the region.

In 2007, at the urging of the United States and the United Nations, Morocco, our oldest ally and partner for peace in the Middle East, initiated a ground-breaking autonomy plan to resolve the more than 30 year-old conflict within the framework of self-determination for the Western Sahara. The Moroccan compromise plan received widespread support from the international community as a critical breakthrough for achieving peace and led to four rounds of UN mediated negotiations.

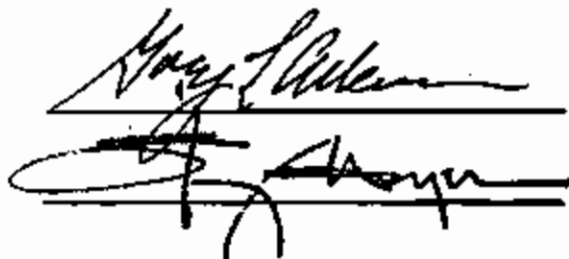
The UN Security Council, in resolution 1813 (2008), described Morocco's compromise efforts as "serious and credible." In pressing for adoption of the resolution the United States reaffirmed the policy initiated under President Clinton, and continued under President Bush, that, "Genuine autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty is the only feasible solution."

After the four rounds of negotiations did not produce any real progress, the UN Secretary General's Personal Envoy for the Western Sahara, Mr. Peter van Walsum, issued an assessment to the Security Council in April 2008. He said, "My conclusion is that an independent Western Sahara is not an attainable goal that is relevant today because it lies at the root of the current negotiation process," and he urged that future rounds of talks be held only on the subject of autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty.

Unfortunately, following this bold statement the negotiations process stalled. Mr. van Walsum has been replaced by Ambassador Christopher Ross as the new UN Personal Envoy. We are hopeful that Ambassador Ross's appointment will result in the continuation of the talks based on Mr. van Walsum's assessment.

We remain convinced that the U.S. position, favoring autonomy for Western Sahara under Moroccan sovereignty is the only feasible solution. We urge you to both sustain this longstanding policy, and to make clear, in both words and actions, that the United States will work to ensure that the UN process continues to support this framework as the only realistic compromise that can bring this unfortunate and longstanding conflict to an end. We look forward to working with you towards the success of this policy.

Sincerely,



Two handwritten signatures are present on the left side of the page. The top signature is in cursive and appears to be Nancy Pelosi's. Below it is another signature, also in cursive, which is less legible but appears to be another name.



A handwritten signature in cursive is present on the right side of the page, which appears to be Eric Cantor's. Below the signature is a horizontal line.

Bob [unclear]

Ray Frank

Susan Davis

Michael [unclear]

May [unclear]

John P. [unclear]

Tom [unclear]

Alan [unclear]

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Richard [unclear]

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John [unclear]

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Ray [unclear]

Carl [unclear]

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Gerold [unclear]

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Bill DeLahud

Paul Weyl

~~Eric Selous~~

~~Paul King~~

Ch. Brown

Tim J.

Stanley

Arthur Wilson

~~James~~

Allyson J. Smith

Jennifer

Bob & Ann

J.P. Martin

Tom Hobbs

Jack Reball

Lucy Bradley

Bill & Betty

Steve & Lisa

Paul & Linda

~~John~~

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NY-07

William Dindig

Ch. B. Ford

Norm Sieck

John Hessel

Jim Moran

Pat H. King

Michael H. H. H. H.

Samuel B. B. B.

Jim Act

~~John Johnson~~

John Johnson

Ma. R.

Rosa L. De Jaur

Colin B. Maloney

Eliot L. Engel

Michael H. H. H.

Neil Abernethy

Eric J. J. J.

Quella D. Clark

Robert

Gene Cook

Jim Langwin

Jeff

Joe Country

Frank

Frank Patton Jr.

Ann Snow

Jim May

Ch. C.

Lothar

Kath

Bart Gordon

Don

Bonnie H. Thompson

Wm. Lacy Clay

Tom

Rubie Higgins

Gene

Chris J. Hill

Carlynn C. Kistner

Elijah E. Turroni

Colin C. Adams

John P. Adams

David Price

Gregory Kaptur

Ben Van Haller

Paul Carabon

James M. Pitt

Edie Bonnie Johnson

Tam Penello

Ann Dunn

Di. C. C. C.

Janice J. Dandberg

Rush Holt

Paul Ellis

Joe Lestak

Ch. R.

Franklin

John Beck

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Charles Miller

Rich Carter

Pete Hochstet

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Mr. Lang

Tom Clark 08-4

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Fred McLean Co 25

Sam Johnson

Maxwell 12-6

Mr. Kelly

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Roy Newman

Walter B. Jones

Wm. T. McCall

Howard White

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Ralph M. Hall

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James Conroy

John M. McHugh

James E. Chapman

Arthur Davis

John B. Faison

Charles J. Melancon

Richard E. Anderson

Lucy Keyrick

Paul C. Brown

Miss McFudge

Alan B. Kellner

Alma B. Lethman

Fred Lucas

Tim Murphy

Ken Calvert

Patricia L. Kelly

Jerry Lamb

R. H. Stewart

Chuck Lane

Beezy

~~Bill~~

Shelley Moore Caputo

Bob Ross

~~Bill~~

Mary Fullin OK-5

Gary Brown

Professor

D. H. H.

Virginia Cox

Joe Wilson

Hal Regan

Jerry Moran

Hy E R J

Connie Mack
Ray Walden

Franklyte

Steve Clark

Alan Kim

Alan Smith

T. McCann

Dan Burton

Kirkling

Murphy

Al. Bouslog Jr. CA-7

John Sullivan OK(1)

Mary Bowtrick

Tommy Jones

Ray Lee

Lamar Smith

John Culberson

Ronald A. Manzullo

Julia IL19 (Shirley)

Robert

Ray

Ray Bailey

Robyn Alexander Ra 05

Chris

Ray Hunt
M.M.

Robt. M.

Wm. Campbell CA-48

Bill Gray 4615

Tom Allan

Derin News

K. B.

Bill Shuster

Nathan Deal

Sam Groves

Todd T. White

John Fleming
Frank Trank

Judy Bisset

Wm. B.

Bob

Jim Lunsford

John Kline

F. L. LeBeau

John Rogan

E. Whittier

Wm. H. H.

Colin Smith
15-3

Gene Smith OH-7 ~~Ann Vane~~ TX-2

Kenard Ehler JM 711 FL-01

Chad King GA-11 J Lag Yob

Jack Kingston GA-1 Gene King IA-5

Pat J. Thi ~~Mr G B~~

~~W S R~~ ~~Mr J~~ NE

~~Steve Boyer IA-4~~ Mr Shadegg

Jim Gunders Wally Harger

Mike Brown ~~K K~~

~~John Thi~~ ~~Mark~~

~~Bob~~ Eric Paulson

~~Mike~~ Michele Bachmann