

Dear,

It has now been made public that Spain, Portugal and Morocco will jointly be hosting the 2030 world cup.

As we are all aware and has been consistently made most obvious - the celebration of the largest sports events cannot be and should not be separated from the respect and promotion of human rights.

In 1975 Western Sahara was invaded and occupied by Morocco. An occupation that was judged illegal by the international Court of Justice and condemned by the United Nations General Assembly. Western Sahara remains listed by the UN as a Non-Self-Governing Territory - a colony in the process of decolonisation. Since the invasion the Saharawi, the indigenous people of the territory, have been denied their basic right to self-determination and have watched as other former colonies have gained their independence.

Morocco has divided the territory with a 2400km wall protected by landmines and heavily armed with troops, in which Morocco carries out a theft of phosphates, fisheries and crops to be illegally sold as of Moroccan origin on the global trading market. It takes place in blatant violation of basic principles of international law. In Western Sahara it is illegal to display the flag of Western Sahara or call for self-determination; there are many disappearances of those with the courage to speak up. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and others regularly publish reports of the abuses of Saharawi.

As a result of this illegal occupation, and the resistance of the Saharawi people against it, human rights abuses in Western Sahara are increasing. The same is true in the Kingdom of Morocco, whose regime was condemned in a resolution of the European Parliament of 19 January for failing to respect the rights to freedom of expression and due legal processes, and calling for the release of all political prisoners. It is proven that in both territories, journalists, lawyers, politicians and activists have been subjected to violent and systematic repression.

What credibility does Morocco have to host a sports event of this nature when, in order to achieve its political purposes, it blackmails other countries using migrant and drug routes, bribes members of the European Parliament and European officials (as shown in the Moroccogate affair) and summarily deports all those who want to visit Western Sahara because they do not want what is happening there to be seen? A country that has even prevented the Office of the UN Human Rights Council and the Personal Representative of the UN Secretary General for Western Sahara from freely visiting this territory.

I appeal to the (INSERT NATION NAME) Football Federation to publicly condemn this decision, otherwise the World Cup could become an occasion to cover up human rights abuses committed by the Moroccan regime. What is worse, those who, knowing the situation, are helping to cover it up, thus discrediting the sports event and exacerbating the duty of denunciation by people and organizations that fight for human rights. This is particularly relevant following the hosting of the World Cup by Qatar where the competition became marred by discussions of the human rights abuses when people should have been talking about the football.

The (INSERT NATION NAME) FA, with the position it holds on the global stage, should use its privilege to condemn what should be condemned.

Yours faithfully,