

U.S. Department of Justice
Washington, DC 20530

Supplemental Statement

Pursuant to the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended

For Six Month Period Ending 08/31/2012

(Insert date)

I - REGISTRANT

1. (a) Name of Registrant (b) Registration No.

Vision Americas LLC

5907

(c) Business Address(es) of Registrant

1150 K Street NW, Ste 1411
Washington, DC 20005

1901 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Ste 901
Washington, DC 20006

2. Has there been a change in the information previously furnished in connection with the following?

(a) If an individual:

- (1) Residence address(es) Yes No
- (2) Citizenship Yes No
- (3) Occupation Yes No

(b) If an organization:

- (1) Name Yes No
- (2) Ownership or control Yes No
- (3) Branch offices Yes No

(c) Explain fully all changes, if any, indicated in Items (a) and (b) above.

IF THE REGISTRANT IS AN INDIVIDUAL, OMIT RESPONSE TO ITEMS 3, 4, AND 5(a).

3. If you have previously filed Exhibit C¹, state whether any changes therein have occurred during this 6 month reporting period.

Yes No

If yes, have you filed an amendment to the Exhibit C? Yes No

If no, please attach the required amendment.

¹ The Exhibit C, for which no printed form is provided, consists of a true copy of the charter, articles of incorporation, association, and by laws of a registrant that is an organization. (A waiver of the requirement to file an Exhibit C may be obtained for good cause upon written application to the Assistant Attorney General, National Security Division, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC 20530.)

4. (a) Have any persons ceased acting as partners, officers, directors or similar officials of the registrant during this 6 month reporting period?

Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name	Position	Date Connection Ended
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(b) Have any persons become partners, officers, directors or similar officials during this 6 month reporting period?

Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name	Residence Address	Citizenship	Position	Date Assumed
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5. (a) Has any person named in Item 4(b) rendered services directly in furtherance of the interests of any foreign principal?

Yes No

If yes, identify each such person and describe the service rendered.

(b) During this six month reporting period, has the registrant hired as employees or in any other capacity, any persons who rendered or will render services to the registrant directly in furtherance of the interests of any foreign principal(s) in other than a clerical or secretarial, or in a related or similar capacity? Yes No

Name	Residence Address	Citizenship	Position	Date Assumed
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(c) Have any employees or individuals, who have filed a short form registration statement, terminated their employment or connection with the registrant during this 6 month reporting period? Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name	Position or Connection	Date Terminated
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(d) Have any employees or individuals, who have filed a short form registration statement, terminated their connection with any foreign principal during this 6 month reporting period? Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name	Position or Connection	Foreign Principal	Date Terminated
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6. Have short form registration statements been filed by all of the persons named in Items 5(a) and 5(b) of the supplemental statement?

Yes No

If no, list names of persons who have not filed the required statement.

II - FOREIGN PRINCIPAL

7. Has your connection with any foreign principal ended during this 6 month reporting period? Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Foreign Principal

Date of Termination

8. Have you acquired any new foreign principal(s)² during this 6 month reporting period? Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name and Address of Foreign Principal(s)

Date Acquired

9. In addition to those named in Items 7 and 8, if any, list foreign principal(s)² whom you continued to represent during the 6 month reporting period.

Moroccan American Center for Policy (MACP)

10. (a) Have you filed exhibits for the newly acquired foreign principal(s), if any, listed in Item 8?

Exhibit A³ Yes No

Exhibit B⁴ Yes No

If no, please attach the required exhibit.

- (b) Have there been any changes in the Exhibits A and B previously filed for any foreign principal whom you represented during this six month period? Yes No

If yes, have you filed an amendment to these exhibits? Yes No

If no, please attach the required amendment.

² The term "foreign principal" includes, in addition to those defined in section 1(b) of the Act, an individual organization any of whose activities are directly or indirectly supervised, directed, controlled, financed, or subsidized in whole or in major part by a foreign government, foreign political party, foreign organization or foreign individual. (See Rule 100(a)(9)). A registrant who represents more than one foreign principal is required to list in the statements he files under the Act only those principals for whom he is not entitled to claim exemption under Section 3 of the Act. (See Rule 208.)

³ The Exhibit A, which is filed on Form NSD-3 (Formerly CRM-157) sets forth the information required to be disclosed concerning each foreign principal.

⁴ The Exhibit B, which is filed on Form NSD-4 (Formerly CRM-155) sets forth the information concerning the agreement or understanding between the registrant and the foreign principal.

III - ACTIVITIES

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11. During this 6 month reporting period, have you engaged in any activities for or rendered any services to any foreign principal named in Items 7, 8, or 9 of this statement? Yes No

If yes, identify each foreign principal and describe in full detail your activities and services:

MACP - Vision Americas contacted members of Congress and their staffers on issues related to U.S. - Morocco relations including human rights developments in the region, Morocco's role in the Middle East Peace process and the Western Sahara issue. In addition, the registrant provided and continues to provide strategic advice on the aforementioned topics.

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12. During this 6 month reporting period, have you on behalf of any foreign principal engaged in political activity⁵ as defined below? Yes No

If yes, identify each such foreign principal and describe in full detail all such political activity, indicating, among other things, the relations, interests and policies sought to be influenced and the means employed to achieve this purpose. If the registrant arranged, sponsored or delivered speeches, lectures or radio and TV broadcasts, give details as to dates, places of delivery, names of speakers and subject matter.

Vision Americas communicates with various key individuals and staff of the U.S. Congress and Executive Branch in order to educate them on Morocco - U.S. Relationships in order to garner support for Moroccan initiatives set forth by MACP.

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13. In addition to the above described activities, if any, have you engaged in activity on your own behalf which benefits your foreign principal(s)? Yes No

If yes, describe fully.

⁵ The term "political activity" means any activity that the person engaging in believes will, or that the person intends to, in any way influence any agency or official of the Government of the United States or any section of the public within the United States with reference to formulating, adopting or changing the domestic or foreign policies of the United States or with reference to political or public interests, policies, or relations of a government of a foreign country or a foreign political party.

IV - FINANCIAL INFORMATION

14. (a) RECEIPTS-MONIES

During this 6 month reporting period, have you received from any foreign principal named in Items 7, 8, or 9 of this statement, or from any other source, for or in the interests of any such foreign principal, any contributions, income or money either as compensation or otherwise? Yes No

If no, explain why.

If yes, set forth below in the required detail and separately for each foreign principal an account of such monies.⁶

Date	From Whom	Purpose	Amount
05/2012	MACP	Retainer (Feb - May)	80,000
05/2012	MACP	Retainer (Jan)	20,000
06/2012	MACP	Retainer (June)	20,000
07/2012	MACP	Retainer (July)	20,000
08/2012	MACP	Retainer (August)	20,000
			160,000
			Total

(b) RECEIPTS - FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

During this 6 month reporting period, have you received, as part of a fundraising campaign⁷, any money on behalf of any foreign principal named in Items 7, 8, or 9 of this statement? Yes No

If yes, have you filed an Exhibit D to your registration? Yes No

If yes, indicate the date the Exhibit D was filed. Date _____

(c) RECEIPTS-THINGS OF VALUE

During this 6 month reporting period, have you received any thing of value⁹ other than money from any foreign principal named in Items 7, 8, or 9 of this statement, or from any other source, for or in the interests of any such foreign principal?

Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Foreign Principal	Date Received	Thing of Value	Purpose
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6, 7 A registrant is required to file an Exhibit D if he collects or receives contributions, loans, moneys, or other things of value for a foreign principal, as part of a fundraising campaign. (See Rule 201(e)).

8 An Exhibit D, for which no printed form is provided, sets forth an account of money collected or received as a result of a fundraising campaign and transmitted for a foreign principal.

9 Things of value include but are not limited to gifts, interest free loans, expense free travel, favored stock purchases, exclusive rights, favored treatment over competitors, "kickbacks," and the like.

15. (a) DISBURSEMENTS-MONIES

During this 6 month reporting period, have you

(1) disbursed or expended monies in connection with activity on behalf of any foreign principal named in Items 7, 8, or 9 of this statement? Yes No

(2) transmitted monies to any such foreign principal? Yes No

If no, explain in full detail why there were no disbursements made on behalf of any foreign principal.

If yes, set forth below in the required detail and separately for each foreign principal an account of such monies, including monies transmitted, if any, to each foreign principal.

Date	To Whom	Purpose	Amount
03/2012	Jose Cardenas	Work on behalf of MACP	5,000
04/2012	Jose Cardenas	Work on behalf of MACP	5,000
05/2012	Jose Cardenas	Work on behalf of MACP	5,000
06/2012	Jose Cardenas	Work on behalf of MACP	5,000
07/2012	Jose Cardenas	Work on behalf of MACP	5,000
08/2012	Jose Cardenas	Work on behalf of MACP	5,000

30,000

Total

(b) DISBURSEMENTS-THINGS OF VALUE

During this 6 month reporting period, have you disposed of anything of value¹⁰ other than money in furtherance of or in connection with activities on behalf of any foreign principal named in Items 7, 8, or 9 of this statement?

Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Date	Recipient	Foreign Principal	Thing of Value	Purpose
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(c) DISBURSEMENTS-POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

During this 6 month reporting period, have you from your own funds and on your own behalf either directly or through any other person, made any contributions of money or other things of value¹¹ in connection with an election to any political office, or in connection with any primary election, convention, or caucus held to select candidates for political office?

Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Date	Amount or Thing of Value	Political Organization or Candidate	Location of Event
03/28/2012	1,000	Kirk for Senate	N/A
06/25/2012	2,500	Rivera for Congress	N/A
03/1/2012	1,000	Douglas for Senate	D.C.

^{10, 11} Things of value include but are not limited to gifts, interest free loans, expense free travel, favored stock purchases, exclusive rights, favored treatment over competitors, "kickbacks" and the like.

V - INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

16. (a) During this 6 month reporting period, did you prepare, disseminate or cause to be disseminated any informational materials?¹²
 Yes No

If Yes, go to Item 17.

(b) If you answered No to Item 16(a), do you disseminate any material in connection with your registration?
 Yes No

If Yes, please forward the materials disseminated during the six month period to the Registration Unit for review.

17. Identify each such foreign principal.

MACP

18. During this 6 month reporting period, has any foreign principal established a budget or allocated a specified sum of money to finance your activities in preparing or disseminating informational materials? Yes No

If yes, identify each such foreign principal, specify amount, and indicate for what period of time.

19. During this 6 month reporting period, did your activities in preparing, disseminating or causing the dissemination of informational materials include the use of any of the following:

- Radio or TV broadcasts
- Magazine or newspaper
- Motion picture films
- Letters or telegrams
- Advertising campaigns
- Press releases
- Pamphlets or other publications
- Lectures or speeches
- Other (specify) _____

Electronic Communications

- Email
- Website URL(s): _____
- Social media websites URL(s): _____
- Other (specify) _____

20. During this 6 month reporting period, did you disseminate or cause to be disseminated informational materials among any of the following groups:

- Public officials
- Newspapers
- Libraries
- Legislators
- Editors
- Educational institutions
- Government agencies
- Civic groups or associations
- Nationality groups
- Other (specify) _____

21. What language was used in the informational materials:

- English
- Other (specify) _____

22. Did you file with the Registration Unit, U.S. Department of Justice a copy of each item of such informational materials disseminated or caused to be disseminated during this 6 month reporting period? Yes No

23. Did you label each item of such informational materials with the statement required by Section 4(b) of the Act? Yes No

12 The term informational materials includes any oral, visual, graphic, written, or pictorial information or matter of any kind, including that published by means of advertising, books, periodicals, newspapers, lectures, broadcasts, motion pictures, or any means or instrumentality of interstate or foreign commerce or otherwise. Informational materials disseminated by an agent of a foreign principal as part of an activity in itself exempt from registration, or an activity which by itself would not require registration, need not be filed pursuant to Section 4(b) of the Act.

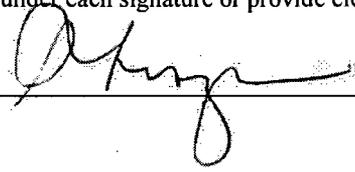
VI - EXECUTION

In accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 1746, the undersigned swear(s) or affirm(s) under penalty of perjury that he/she has (they have) read the information set forth in this registration statement and the attached exhibits and that he/she is (they are) familiar with the contents thereof and that such contents are in their entirety true and accurate to the best of his/her (their) knowledge and belief, except that the undersigned make(s) no representation as to truth or accuracy of the information contained in the attached Short Form Registration Statement(s), if any, insofar as such information is not within his/her (their) personal knowledge.

(Date of signature)

(Print or type name under each signature or provide electronic signature¹³)

01/16/2013

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "A. King", written over a horizontal line. Below the line are three more empty horizontal lines for additional signatures.

¹³ This statement shall be signed by the individual agent, if the registrant is an individual, or by a majority of those partners, officers, directors or persons performing similar functions, if the registrant is an organization, except that the organization can, by power of attorney, authorize one or more individuals to execute this statement on its behalf.

03/06/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Adrielle Churchill	Meeting discussing recent political developments in Morocco	
03/06/10	José Cárdenas	Staffer Mischa Fisher	Meeting discussing recent political developments in Morocco	
03/09/10	José Cárdenas	Staffer Annie Boyajian	Meeting discussing recent political developments in Morocco	
03/12/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Dan Burgess	Email thanking staffer for meeting.	Article by Rep. Steve Cohen "Cohen: Changes Offer Positive Sign for Western Sahara"
03/12/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Annie Wilcox	Email thanking staffer for meeting.	Article by Rep. Steve Cohen "Cohen: Changes Offer Positive Sign for Western Sahara"
03/13/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Jennifer Shirley	Meeting discussing recent political developments in Morocco	
03/13/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Bryan Wood	Meeting discussing recent political developments in Morocco	
03/13/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Bethany Eyre	Meeting discussing recent political developments in Morocco	
03/14/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Jeff Small	Meeting discussing recent political developments in Morocco	
03/14/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Ryan Jarmula	Meeting discussing recent political developments in Morocco	
03/14/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Jennifer Warren	Meeting discussing recent political developments in Morocco	

03/15/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Jesse Walls	Meeting discussing recent political developments in Morocco
03/15/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Kyle Glenn	Meeting discussing recent political developments in Morocco
03/15/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Sean Snyder	Meeting discussing recent political developments in Morocco
03/15/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Bethany Eyre	Meeting discussing recent political developments in Morocco
03/16/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Natalie Farr	Meeting discussing recent political developments in Morocco
03/16/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Valentina Valenta	Meeting discussing recent political developments in Morocco
04/04/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Erin Reif	Email regarding a meeting request to discuss recent political developments in Morocco
04/04/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Dave Hanke	Email regarding a meeting request to discuss recent political developments in Morocco
04/04/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Ryan Tully	Email regarding a meeting request to discuss recent political developments in Morocco
04/04/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Kaitlyn McClure	Email regarding a meeting request to discuss recent political developments in Morocco
04/04/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Igor Khrestin	Email regarding a meeting request to discuss recent political developments in Morocco

04/04/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Tim Morrison w/Senator Kyl's office	Email regarding a meeting request to discuss recent political developments in Morocco
04/04/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Miriam Harmer	Email regarding a meeting request to discuss recent political developments in Morocco
04/04/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Chris Socha	Email regarding a meeting request to discuss recent political developments in Morocco
04/04/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Jason Wiens w/Rep. Jerry Moran	Email regarding a meeting request to discuss recent political developments in Morocco
04/04/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Brian Walsh	Email regarding a meeting request to discuss recent political developments in Morocco
04/04/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Sarah Drake	Email regarding a meeting request to discuss recent political developments in Morocco
04/12/12	Roger Noriega	Staffer David Hanke	Meeting to discuss letter on behalf of MACP to shine light on UN's failure to find resolution to Western Saharan refugees warehoused in Algeria
04/17/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Alan Goldsmith	Email regarding meeting request to discuss letter on behalf of MACP to shine light on UN's failure to find resolution to Western Saharan refugees warehoused in Algeria
04/17/12	Roger Noriega	Staffer Arthur Estopinan	Email regarding meeting request to discuss letter on behalf of MACP to shine light on UN's failure to find resolution to Western Saharan refugees warehoused in Algeria

04/24/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Stephen Vermillion	Email requesting congressman, at next HFAC hearing, to ask about how the Polisario-run refugee camps in Algeria have become a recruiting ground for AQIM, a hub for opportunistic Polisario drug traffickers, how they are a threat to the region and reforms of the Arab Spring.	"The Case for Durable Solutions-Chronology" and "PR Report documents Polisario Camps as Recruiting Ground 4-24-12"
04/24/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Kristin Jackson	Email requesting congressman, at next HFAC hearing, to ask about how the Polisario-run refugee camps in Algeria have become a recruiting ground for AQIM, a hub for opportunistic Polisario drug traffickers, how they are a threat to the region and reforms of the Arab Spring.	"The Case for Durable Solutions-Chronology" and "PR Report documents Polisario Camps as Recruiting Ground 4-24-12"
04/24/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Rebecca Ulrich	Email requesting congressman, at next HFAC hearing, to ask about how the Polisario-run refugee camps in Algeria have become a recruiting ground for AQIM, a hub for opportunistic Polisario drug traffickers, how they are a threat to the region and reforms of the Arab Spring.	"The Case for Durable Solutions-Chronology" and "PR Report documents Polisario Camps as Recruiting Ground 4-24-12"
04/24/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Bethany Eyre	Email requesting congressman, at next HFAC hearing, to ask about how the Polisario-run refugee camps in Algeria have become a recruiting ground for AQIM, a hub for opportunistic Polisario drug traffickers, how they are a threat to the region and reforms of the Arab Spring.	"The Case for Durable Solutions-Chronology" and "PR Report documents Polisario Camps as Recruiting Ground 4-24-12"

04/24/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Ryan Jarmula	Email requesting congressman, at next HFAC hearing, to ask about how the Polisario-run refugee camps in Algeria have become a recruiting ground for AQIM, a hub for opportunistic Polisario drug traffickers, how they are a threat to the region and reforms of the Arab Spring.	"The Case for Durable Solutions- Chronology" and "PR Report documents Polisario Camps as Recruiting Ground 4-24-12"
04/24/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Christian Lyons for Congressman Mike McCaul	Email requesting congressman, at next HFAC hearing, to ask about how the Polisario-run refugee camps in Algeria have become a recruiting ground for AQIM, a hub for opportunistic Polisario drug traffickers, how they are a threat to the region and reforms of the Arab Spring.	"The Case for Durable Solutions- Chronology" and "PR Report documents Polisario Camps as Recruiting Ground 4-24-12"
04/24/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Nien Su w/Rep. Donald Manzullo	Email requesting congressman, at next HFAC hearing, to ask about how the Polisario-run refugee camps in Algeria have become a recruiting ground for AQIM, a hub for opportunistic Polisario drug traffickers, how they are a threat to the region and reforms of the Arab Spring.	"The Case for Durable Solutions- Chronology" and "PR Report documents Polisario Camps as Recruiting Ground 4-24-12"
04/24/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Elise Conner	Email requesting congressman, at next HFAC hearing, to ask about how the Polisario-run refugee camps in Algeria have become a recruiting ground for AQIM, a hub for opportunistic Polisario drug traffickers, how they are a threat to the region and reforms of the Arab Spring.	"The Case for Durable Solutions- Chronology" and "PR Report documents Polisario Camps as Recruiting Ground 4-24-12"

04/24/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Stephen Chandler	Email requesting congressman, at next HFAC hearing, to ask about how the Polisario-run refugee camps in Algeria have become a recruiting ground for AQIM, a hub for opportunistic Polisario drug traffickers, how they are a threat to the region and reforms of the Arab Spring.	"The Case for Durable Solutions-Chronology" and "PR Report documents Polisario Camps as Recruiting Ground 4-24-12"
04/24/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Allison Cooke	Email requesting congressman, at next HFAC hearing, to ask about how the Polisario-run refugee camps in Algeria have become a recruiting ground for AQIM, a hub for opportunistic Polisario drug traffickers, how they are a threat to the region and reforms of the Arab Spring.	"The Case for Durable Solutions-Chronology" and "PR Report documents Polisario Camps as Recruiting Ground 4-24-12"
04/24/12	Roger Noriega	Staffer Kristin Jackson	Email requesting congressman, at next HFAC hearing, to ask about how the Polisario-run refugee camps in Algeria have become a recruiting ground for AQIM, a hub for opportunistic Polisario drug traffickers, how they are a threat to the region and reforms of the Arab Spring.	"PR Report documents Polisario Camps as Recruiting Groun 4-14-12"
04/27/12	José Cárdenas	Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen	Lunch meeting to discuss letter on behalf of MACP to shine light on UN's failure to find resolution to Western Saharan refugees warehoused in Algeria	
05/03/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Alan Goldsmith	Email following up about previous meeting with Rep. Ros-Lehtinen and drafting a letter on behalf of MACP.	
05/11/12	José Cárdenas	Staffers Alan Goldsmith, Sarah Leiby, Matthew Zweig, Gabriella Ra'anan, and Eddy Acevedo	Email thanking staffers for meeting with Rep. Ros-Lehtinen	Article from Prensa Latina "Cuban Youths Support West Sahara Struggle" by Ileana Ferrer Fonte

05/16/12	José Cárdenas	Staffers Alan Goldsmith, Sarah Leiby, Matthew Zweig, and Gabriella Ra'anan	Email containing edit suggestions for the newly drafted letter from Rep. Ros-Lehtinen on behalf of MACP to Secretary Hillary Clinton
05/23/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Arthur Estopinan	Email regarding moving forward on the drafted letter from Rep. Ros-Lehtinen on behalf of MACP to Secretary Hillary Clinton
05/24/12	Roger Noriega	Staffer Yleem Poblete, Matthew Zweig, Sarah Leiby, and Gabriella Ra'anan	Email containing edit suggestions for the newly drafted letter from Rep. Ros-Lehtinen on behalf of MACP to Secretary Hillary Clinton
05/29/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Alan Goldsmith, Yleem Poblete, Matthew Zweig, Sarah Leiby, Gabriella Ra'anan	Email regarding status of final language for drafted letter from Rep. Ros-Lehtinen on behalf of MACP to Secretary Hillary Clinton
06/05/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Alan Goldsmith, Yleem Poblete, Matthew Zweig, Sarah Leiby, Gabriella Ra'anan	Email congratulating staffers on finished letter and asking for a pdf draft for personal files
06/12/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Matt Rimkunas	Email confirming that Senator Graham supports Senator Leahy's language which added conditions on the Foreign Ops bill requiring Morocco FMF on the State Department to produce a report on the human rights situation in Morocco
06/12/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Matt Rimkunas	Email confirming that Senator Graham supports Senator Leahy's language which added conditions on the Foreign Ops bill requiring Morocco FMF on the State Department to produce a report on the human rights situation in Morocco.

06/14/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Andrew King	Email confirming that Senator Graham supports Senator Leahy's language which added conditions on the Foreign Ops bill requiring Morocco FMF on the State Department to produce a report on the human rights situation in Morocco.
06/28/12	José Cárdenas	Staffer Lester Munson	Email requesting information on if there may be someone on the Republican side of the Foreign Ops Subcommittee that is supportive of the Leahy language on the Foreign Ops Bill and want to know who that is.
07/17/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Elizabeth Lad	Email requesting a meeting to discuss Sen. Leahy's additional language on the Foreign Ops Bill requiring Morocco FMF on the State Department to submit a report on their human rights situation.
07/17/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Gretchan Blum	Email requesting a meeting to discuss Sen. Leahy's additional language on the Foreign Ops Bill requiring Morocco FMF on the State Department to submit a report on their human rights situation.
07/17/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Peter Henry	Email requesting a meeting to discuss Sen. Leahy's additional language on the Foreign Ops Bill requiring Morocco FMF on the State Department to submit a report on their human rights situation.

07/17/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Perry Snell	Email requesting a meeting to discuss Sen. Leahy's additional language on the Foreign Ops Bill requiring Morocco FMF on the State Department to submit a report on their human rights situation.
07/17/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Alan Elias	Email requesting a meeting to discuss Sen. Leahy's additional language on the Foreign Ops Bill requiring Morocco FMF on the State Department to submit a report on their human rights situation.
07/17/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Jessica Yearous	Email requesting a meeting to discuss Sen. Leahy's additional language on the Foreign Ops Bill requiring Morocco FMF on the State Department to submit a report on their human rights situation.
07/17/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Justin Hill	Email requesting a meeting to discuss Sen. Leahy's additional language on the Foreign Ops Bill requiring Morocco FMF on the State Department to submit a report on their human rights situation.
07/20/12	Roger Noriega	Staffer Gretchan Blum	Meeting to discuss Sen. Leahy's additional language on the Foreign Ops Bill requiring Morocco FMF on the State Department to submit a report on their human rights situation.
07/24/12	Alex Langhorne on behalf of Roger Noriega	Staffer Peter Henry	Follow up email requesting a meeting to discuss Sen. Leahy's additional language on the Foreign Ops Bill requiring Morocco FMF on the State Department to submit a report on their human rights situation.

07/24/12	Roger Noriega	Staffer Alan Elias	Meeting to discuss Sen. Leahy's additional language on the Foreign Ops Bill requiring Morocco FMF on the State Department to submit a report on their human rights situation.
07/24/12	Roger Noriega	Staffer Elizabeth Ladt	Meeting to discuss Sen. Leahy's additional language on the Foreign Ops Bill requiring Morocco FMF on the State Department to submit a report on their human rights situation.

Cohen: Changes Offer Positive Sign for Western Sahara

- By Rep. Steve Cohen
- Special to Roll Call
- March 12, 2012, Midnight

You may wonder what these very different places on the globe have in common: Manhasset, Long Island; Vienna, Austria; and Valletta, Malta.

Unfortunately, all three represent an enormous piece of diplomatic failure that now helps prolong a decades-old dispute that threatens to put a damper on the most positive outcomes from the Arab Spring while thwarting movements toward democracy, peace and economic development in a key part of the world.

The Western Sahara, a piece of territory the size of Colorado, has perhaps 500,000 people within its borders living, voting and participating under Moroccan sovereignty. The area has been a source of enormous contention for decades, essentially since the Spanish pulled out in 1975. The primary parties are Morocco, the Polisario — whose members live in refugee camps in southern Algeria and number fewer than 100,000 — and the Polisario's principal backers, Algeria.

This week, the United Nations-sponsored negotiations between the parties resume in Manhasset, the ninth such session in the past several years.

Chris Ross, the U.N. secretary general's special envoy for the Western Sahara, has publicly asked for the parties to negotiate in good faith "with the help of the international community."

Interestingly, he has also asked that parties respond to concrete proposals that any party makes aimed at resolving the crisis.

One party — Morocco — has put forward just such a proposal. It's been on the table for years. The kingdom's proposal — for autonomy for the people of the Sahara under Moroccan sovereignty — has gained the endorsement of the past three U.S. administrations — Clinton, Bush and Obama. A majority of Congress has signaled its support on more than one occasion. The previous U.N. special envoy also called for negotiations to be conducted solely on autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty.

Is there another serious conflict in the world where there is such overwhelming bipartisan support in Congress for a path to resolution? We think not.

But during the past eight negotiating sessions, no progress has been made. There's been no serious response by the Polisario or their Algerian backers to the Moroccan approach. No suggestions for how to amend it, shape it, even to fundamentally change it.

But this negotiating session should be different. This session should be the one that suddenly changes the equation and leads to a resolution. Of course, it will take a change in behavior by all parties, but particularly the Polisario.

Why is there a chance to move rapidly forward to a settlement? Because it takes place with an entirely new political and social backdrop in North Africa.

What is this new paradigm that makes settlement of the Sahara dispute such an urgent — and achievable — priority?

First, the main advocates for the Polisario are either gone or are severely weakened. Start with Moammar Gadhafi. Polisario-recruited mercenaries fought to keep him in power, but he's gone. The new Libyan government has endorsed the Moroccan approach.

Moreover, former Polisario supporters are now backing away from them. The Polisario's human rights record has been recently criticized by the French. The Spanish government is no longer a major backer.

And the Polisario is faced with a mounting protest from within, particularly from its youth groups and their frustration over the Sahara stalemate. The recent "re-election" of the Polisario's leader, Mohamed Abdelaziz, with 96-plus percent of the vote, seemed an anachronism, a throw-back to a period — not long ago — when elections across much of North Africa were rigged.

The many crises spawned or exacerbated by the unresolved Sahara issue — human trafficking, drug trafficking, al-Qaida recruitment — have now reached a level where the reformed, democratic governments in the region realize they must be confronted.

Lastly, Algeria is becoming increasingly isolated by its pro-Polisario position. All across North Africa, democracy and promotion of human rights are marching forward. Algeria continues to lag far behind. If the Sahara conflict is resolved, it will pave the way for a "new Algeria" joining with its neighbors, most notably Morocco, to promote social and economic integration in what promises to be a much more stable region — a dynamic one in the best sense of the word.

So we hope that the parties now sitting together in Manhasset are serious about this session being very much unlike all those others. Both parties need to be serious. But only one, thus far, has brought forward a serious proposal aimed at a resolution. At the very least, those who oppose it need to explain why and present a workable alternative.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Report documents Polisario camps as recruiting ground for al-Qaeda in Sahara

Washington, DC (April 24) — As the takeover of Mali's historic Timbuktu by al-Qaeda and other militants highlights volatility in Africa's Sahara/Sahel, a new report documents how refugee camps run by the separatist Polisario Front near Tindouf, Algeria have become a recruiting ground for terrorists and traffickers in the region. The report urges UNHCR (UN High Commissioner for Refugees) to also focus aid to the camps on durable solutions that help resettle refugees, improve humanitarian conditions, and stop perpetuating another source of instability.

"The case for UNHCR supporting durable solutions for the Polisario-run camps," from the Moroccan American Center for Policy, documents recent incidents and expert reports of Polisario-member involvement in:

- Drug/arms trafficking in the Sahara/Sahel;
- Armed incursions into Mali;
- As mercenaries for Qaddafi in Libya; and,
- Kidnappings and collaboration with al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), including the Oct. 23 kidnapping of Western aid-workers in the Polisario-run camps by an AQIM-offshoot, with Polisario-insider assistance.

According to experts at Carnegie Endowment, Atlantic Council, and International Center for Terrorism Studies, the Polisario-run camps have become a recruiting ground for AQIM, a hub for opportunistic Polisario traffickers, and a threat to the region and reforms of the Arab Spring.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon recently warned, "inaction could be catastrophic," as AQIM allies with cocaine traffickers smuggling almost \$1 billion annually through the Sahel, which borders the Sahara in North Africa. That warning came before the crisis and potential "rogue state" in Mali.

Experts fear an "arc of instability" is now stretching across Africa, linking militants from AQIM, Boko Haram in Nigeria, al-Shabaab in Somalia, and the Polisario. Noting close AQIM-Polisario-member ties, Africa security expert J. Peter Pham says, "It is like before 9/11, when we might have asked ourselves: 'Who cares about Afghanistan?' But jihadists ultimately need a place to operate and what we are now seeing is the creation of a safe haven for terrorists and extremists who are being squeezed out elsewhere."

Since 1990, international support for the camps has exceeded \$1 billion—and US aid exceeds \$300 million. Given escalating security concerns, the report recommends that US support to UNHCR for the camps also be used for durable solutions to resettle refugees, remove security threats, and improve humanitarian conditions.

*** For Report/Chronology documenting Polisario-member ties to AQIM/traffickers:**
<http://moroccoonthemove.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/thecasefordurablesolutions-chronology.pdf>

For more on Morocco: MoroccoOnTheMove.com. Follow us on Twitter- @MorocOnTheMove

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The Moroccan American Center for Policy (MACP) is a non-profit organization whose principal mission is to inform opinion makers, government officials and interested publics in the United States about political and social developments in Morocco and the role being played by the Kingdom of Morocco in broader strategic developments in North Africa, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East. For more, please visit www.MoroccoOnTheMove.com

*This material is distributed by the Moroccan American Center for Policy on behalf of the Government of Morocco.
Additional information is available at the Department of Justice in Washington, DC.*

Moroccan American Center for Policy

April 2012

The case for UNHCR supporting durable solutions for the Polisario-run camps near Tindouf, which are becoming a recruiting ground for AQIM and drug traffickers

Evidence continues to mount that members of the Polisario Front have been engaged in drug and arms smuggling in the Sahel, gun battles and incursions in Mali, kidnappings and collaboration with AQIM, and as mercenaries for Qaddafi in Libya. Given escalating security concerns in the region, US assistance to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for the Polisario-run camps near Tindouf, Algeria should also be used to promote durable solutions prioritizing refugee resettlement, thus improving the humanitarian situation of the refugees and removing the security threat emanating from the camps.

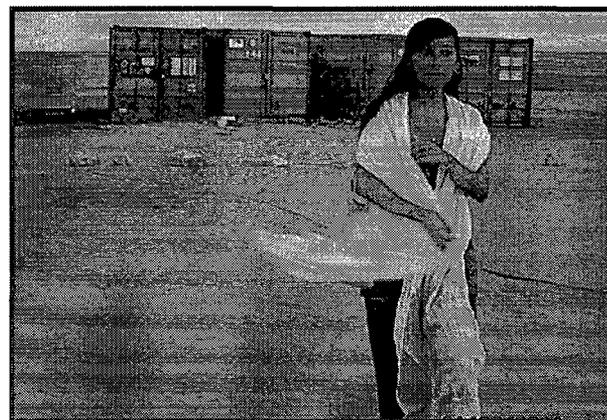
AQIM's growing ties with Polisario members and other militants in the region—Boko Haram in Nigeria and al-Shabaab in Somalia—have created what AFRICOM Commander General Carter Ham calls a “threat to the US”² and what UK Foreign Secretary William Hague says could have a “profoundly destabilizing effect on countries in North Africa and the Gulf.”³ UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has warned that ‘inaction could be catastrophic’ as AQIM and other militants form alliances with traffickers smuggling almost \$1 billion in cocaine a year through Africa’s Sahel.⁴ A recent ICTS study confirms that the Polisario camps have become “a recruiting ground for terrorists, traffickers, and other criminal enterprises,”⁵ and a new Carnegie Paper reports that “deteriorating social and political conditions in the camps in Tindouf represent a tinderbox waiting to explode.” The AQIM-Polisario connection is “a major security threat”⁶ to the region and to aid workers and refugees forced to live in the Tindouf camps, which rely heavily on international and US aid dollars to exist. As such, this money should also be used by UNHCR to promote durable solutions to the refugee crisis.

According to multiple reports, the Polisario violates refugee rights and is the leading impediment to refugee resettlement.⁷ Sahrawi refugees are among the only ones in the world who are welcome to go elsewhere, if the Polisario would let them. Since 1990 international agencies have spent more than \$1 billion perpetuating these conditions in the camps—more than \$300 million coming from the US.⁸ Much of it has reportedly been

diverted to personally profit some Polisario leaders. While international aid has provided vital humanitarian resources to the refugees and should continue, it has done little to promote durable solutions, a principal mandate of UNHCR under international refugee law.

Now is the time to take action to guarantee the stability and security of the Maghreb and Sahel by resolving the refugee crisis. UNHCR must create the conditions for the implementation of durable solutions including: conducting a census to identify and provide documentation to Sahrawi refugees; establishing an intimidation-free, voluntary repatriation program for those Sahrawi refugees who wish to return to their previous homelands and families in Morocco; establishing a viable resettlement program for those Sahrawi refugees who wish to settle in a third country; and creating a partnership with the Algerian government to improve prospects for local integration for those who wish to remain in Algeria.

A review of documented incidents and expert reports confirms that the Polisario-run camps are indeed a recruiting ground for AQIM, a hub for opportunistic Polisario members trafficking arms across the Sahel and drugs into Europe, and a threat to the security of the region and reforms of the Arab Spring. The most significant of these recent developments include:



Rossella Urru and two other Western aid workers were kidnapped October 23, 2011 in the Polisario-run refugee camps near Tindouf, Algeria by an AQIM sect reportedly receiving help from Polisario sympathizers.¹

This information has been produced by the Moroccan American Center for Policy (MACP). www.moroccoonthemove.com

MACP is a registered agent of the Government of Morocco.

Additional information is available at the Justice Department in Washington, D.C.

- **Polisario members have reportedly assisted in and carried out AQIM kidnappings** – On October 23, 2011, Polisario insiders reportedly helped an AQIM offshoot, the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa, kidnap three Western aid workers from the Polisario-run camps near Tindouf, Algeria. The kidnapers were supplied weapons and directions to the victims, who were at the Polisario headquarters in the Rabouni camp, and they had to travel through several security checkpoints to make their escape.⁹ AQIM offshoot 'al Qaeda in Polisario camps' reportedly seized two French victims on November 24.¹⁰ In a separate incident, Mauritanian court records reveal AQIM paid Polisario veterans to kidnap Spanish nationals in 2009.¹¹
- **Polisario drug and arms smuggling rings in the Sahel** – In the last two years, Algeria, Mali, and Mauritania have arrested dozens of Polisario members caught leading or operating major drug and arms trafficking rings in the region, linked to AQIM and South American cartels engaged in trans-Atlantic drugs-for-arms trade with end markets in Europe and the Americas.¹²
- **Polisario-related incursions and battles in Mali** – On December 15, a Polisario force invaded Mali, killing one person, kidnapping three, and provoking a Mali warning that 'this isn't the Wild West.'¹³ In September 2011, a gun battle between Polisario and rival drug gangs killed four in north Mali.¹⁴ On March 22, 2012, Mali's democratically elected government was overthrown in a coup that analysts say was sparked by a "toxic cocktail of rebels, weapons, refugees, drought, smugglers and violent Islamic militants" that spilled into Mali with Tuareg and other pro-Qaddafi forces from the Libya conflict.¹⁵
- **Polisario mercenaries hired by Qaddafi to fight NATO and Libyan rebels** – Last spring, senior NATO officials were reported to receive reliable information that Qaddafi paid hundreds of Polisario mercenaries \$10,000 each to fight for him in Libya.¹⁶

¹ "Three Qaeda hostages seized last week alive." AFP, Oct. 30, 2011, <<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gfskPTlgBSIQzBQKR-Fdjz0A?docId=CNG.fb5674e8c48dbb7ef3f59c256d4c3f07.531>>.

² "Al-Qaeda could be looking for new sanctuaries in troubled African states." *Middle East Online*, October 30, 2011, <<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=48788>>.

³ "EU police, experts to counter al Qaeda in Africa-UK." *Reuters*, November 28, 2011, <<http://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFTRE7AR29020111128?sp=true>>.

⁴ "Ban calls for boost in efforts to fight organized crime in West Africa and Sahel." *UN Press Centre*, February 21, 2012, <<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=41314&Cr=organized+crime&Cr1=>>>.

⁵ Alexander, Yonah. "Special Update Report – Terrorism in North, West, & Central Africa: From 9/11 to the Arab Spring." International Center for Terrorism Studies, at the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, (January 2012). <<http://moroccoonthemove.files.wordpress.com/2012/02/2012-special-update-report-full-report-terrorism-in-africa-from-9-11-to-arab-spring-icts-potomac-2feb2012.pdf>>.

⁶ Boukhars, Anouar. "Simmering Discontent in Western Sahara." *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, March 2012, <<http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/03/12/simmering-discontent-in-western-sahara/a2ah>>.

⁷ Smith, Merrill. "Stonewalling on Refugee Rights: Algeria & the Sahrawi." *US Committee for Refugees & Immigrants*, (2009), <<http://www.uscrrfugees.org/2010Website/30ur%20Work/3213Morocco/Stonewalling.pdf>>. "Group Rights & International Law: Case Study on Sahrawi Refugees in Algeria." *Inter-University Center for Legal Studies/MACP*, (Sept. 2009): 1-71, <<http://moroccanamericanpolicy.com/refugee/report.pdf>>.

⁸ "MINURSO Facts and Figures." *United Nations Mission for a Referendum in the Western Sahara*, <<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minurso/facts.shtml>>.

"Congressional Budget Justification for Department of State Operations." *United States Department of State* (1991-2012), <<http://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/c6112.htm>>.

"The Global Report and Funding Reports." *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (1999-2010), <<http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c278.html>>.

"Food for Peace Fact Sheet." *United States Agency for International Development* (2002-2011), <http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/ffp/algeria.fs.01.04.11.pdf>.

"Algeria." *World Food Programme*, <<http://www.wfp.org/countries/Algeria/Operations/WFP-Activities>>.

⁹ "Three Qaeda hostages seized last week alive." AFP, Oct.30, 2011, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gfskPTlgBS_IQzBQKR_R-Fdj_z0A?docId=CNG.fb5674e8c48dbb7ef3f59c256d4c3f07.531>.

¹⁰ "N. African states take down major narco trafficking network." *World Tribune*, January 11, 2012, <<http://www.worldnewtribune.com/2012/01/11/n-african-states-take-down-major-narcoterror-drug-network/>>.

"Report: Al-Qaeda denies Algeria kidnappings." *Associated Press*, November 28, 2011, <<http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/story/2011-12-09/al-qaeda-kidnappings/51766924/1>>.

¹¹ Pham, J. Peter. "When Crime Does Pay: The Threat of an Emboldened al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb." *World Defense Review*, 23 September, 2010, <<http://worlddefensereview.com/pham092310.shtml>>.

¹² "N. African states take down major narco trafficking network." *World Tribune*, January 11, 2012, <<http://www.worldnewtribune.com/2012/01/11/n-african-states-take-down-major-narcoterror-drug-network/>>.

"Report: Polisario working with Al Qaeda in drug, weapons trafficking." *World Tribune*, September 20, 2011, <http://www.worldtribune.com/worldtribune/WTARC/2011/ss_terror1178_09_20.asp>.

¹³ "Bamako warns Polisario: 'Mali is not Wild West.'" *Middle East Online*, December 17, 2011, <<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=49540>>.

¹⁴ "Mali security forces hunt desert drug traffickers." *AFP*, Sept. 14, 2011,

<<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5g8CmjxraUtlYfTRp39MbQmVbwz?docId=CNG.84013840d691548b4d501bfc5f665885.51>>.

¹⁵ "Analysis: Mali coup shakes cocktail of instability in Sahel." *Reuters*, March 23, 2012, <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/24/us-mali-sahel-instability-idUSBRE82N07120120324>>.

¹⁶ "Gaddafi 'spent £2.1m on mercenaries'." *Telegraph*, April 21, 2011, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8464254/Libya-Col-Gaddafi-has-spent-2.1m-on-mercenaries.html>>.

Chronology

Documented incidents and reports linking members of the Polisario Front with AQIM, trafficking, and other illicit activities in the region.

April 6, 2012

Malian separatists declare independence in northern Mali in what experts fear may be a "rogue state" in the Sahara.¹⁷ The National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad received support from militant Islamic group Ansar Dine, AQIM, and an AQIM splinter group, the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa, in its conquest of Gao and Timbuktu, creating "a security nightmare" in the region. Experts warn that along with AQIM, "the Polisario will gain more power," as a result of the crisis in Mali.¹⁸ Africa security expert Dr. J. Peter Pham echoes these concerns, emphasizing the importance of resolving the Western Sahara conflict. "It is like before 9/11, when we might have asked ourselves: 'Who cares about Afghanistan?' But jihadists ultimately need a place to operate and what we are now seeing is the creation of a safe haven for terrorists and extremists who are being squeezed out elsewhere."¹⁹

March 12, 2012

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace publishes a paper underscoring the "disturbing reality" that growing numbers of disenchanted Polisario youth and fighters are being recruited by AQIM and a "vast network" of regional drug traffickers. The paper, by McDaniel's College professor Anouar Boukhars, cites the October 23 kidnapping of Western aid workers in the Polisario camps as confirmation that, "the deteriorating social and political conditions in the camps in Tindouf represent a tinderbox waiting to explode." It also notes that AQIM-Polisario member links pose "a major security threat to the Maghreb and the Sahel."²⁰

February 21, 2012

Experts testify to a United Nations Security Council special session that drug cartels and smugglers now traffic almost \$1 billion in cocaine a year from Latin America into Africa's Sahel. They add that traffickers are forming alliances with AQIM and other militants, in a region that has seen an influx of Libyan weapons. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon warned leaders: "inaction could be catastrophic."²¹

February 2, 2012

ICTS releases a study reporting that the Polisario-run camps near Tindouf, Algeria have become "a recruiting ground for terrorists, traffickers, and other criminal enterprises." The study recommends that Western aid to the camps "prioritize permanent resettlement" for the refugees to confront this new reality. Noting expanding AQIM links with Polisario members, South American drug cartels, Boko Haram, and al-Shabaab, as well as AQIM's access to the influx of Libyan weapons in the Sahel, the study cites a 500% rise in terrorist attacks in the region since 9/11. It argues that AQIM is seeking to extend an "arc of instability" across Africa to exploit turbulence from the Arab Spring and destabilize the region.²²

January 11, 2012

Algerian and Mauritanian security agencies reportedly break up major trafficking and money laundering rings. Officials say the rings are believed linked with groups such as al-Qaeda, which is working with the Polisario to traffic arms and drugs from Mauritania to northern neighbors. Mali reportedly steps up efforts against AQIM and what is believed its latest offshoot, "Al Qaida in Polisario Camps."²³

¹⁷ "Analysis: Mali's north feared new 'rogue state' in Sahara." *Reuters*, April 4, 2012, <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/04/04/us-mali-rogue-idUSBRE8330X220120404>>

¹⁸ Karraky, Abdelaziz. "Mali coup strengthens rogue groups." *Zawaya*, a service of *Magharebia*, April 4, 2012, <http://zawaya.magharebia.com/en_GB/zawaya/opinion/627>

¹⁹ Pham, J. Peter. "J. Peter Pham Discusses Western Sahara at Council on Foreign Relations – 'The Western Sahara Crisis: Why U.S. Leadership is Needed Now'." *Atlantic Council*, April 3, 2012,

<<http://www.acus.org/news/j-peter-pham-discusses-western-sahara-council-foreign-relations>>

²⁰ Op. Cit. 6

²¹ Op. Cit. 4

²² Op. Cit. 5

²³ "N. African states take down major narco trafficking network." *World Tribune*, January 11, 2012, <<http://www.worldnewtribune.com/2012/01/11/n-african-states-take-down-major-narcoterror-drug-network/>>

January 3, 2012

Security expert Dr. J. Peter Pham, Atlantic Council, reports that economic and political reforms in Africa are "threatened by the spread of violent extremism" and "increasing links" between AQIM and other militants in the Sahel, recently "buoyed by the flow of arms and fighters" from Libya. "More ominously, AQIM has increased its linkages with the Polisario," evident in AQIM's October 23 kidnappings near Tindouf, which were "aided by Polisario sympathizers" inside the Polisario's camps. The camps offer "a ready pool of potential recruits" from "large numbers of idle young fighters."²⁴

December 27, 2011

Mali reportedly distances itself from the Polisario, accusing it of kidnapping, drug trafficking, and suspected collusion with a Sahrawi branch of al-Qaeda in the Maghreb. A source close to the government says Mali is "angry" with the Polisario, and Malian officials say the October 23 kidnapping was done in collusion with the 'Sahrawi link' of AQIM.²⁵

December 24, 2011

Mali refuses entry to "eight young Sahrawis" coming from Niger. "They had no papers. There are laws to be respected in Mali especially when it comes to dubious propaganda," said Malian police.²⁶

December 17, 2011

Mali warns the Polisario, "our country is not the Wild West where they can come to kill and kidnap people." Bamako will "no longer accept the violation of its territorial integrity by the Polisario Front," says a Malian Minister. A local official adds, "everybody here knows who AQIM's accomplices are, they even assisted in abducting the Europeans in Tindouf. His name is Omar al Sahraoui, but neither Mali, nor Algeria, nor the Polisario are doing anything to capture him." In 2010, al Sahraoui, reportedly a Polisario veteran, was sentenced to 12 years in Mauritania for kidnapping Spanish aid workers for AQIM, according to Mauritanian court papers. He was later released in a trade for the aid workers.²⁷

December 15, 2011

Members of the Polisario launch an armed incursion into northern Mali, killing one and abducting three others, ostensibly looking for the kidnappers of three Western aid workers taken October 23 from the Polisario-run camps near Tindouf, Algeria.²⁸

December 10, 2011

A splinter group of AQIM confirms that it is holding the three aid workers kidnapped on October 23 near the Tindouf refugee camps in Algeria. The group, linked by some to al Sahraoui, calls itself "Unity Movement for Jihad in West Africa."²⁹

November 30, 2011

The US House Subcommittee on Counterterrorism & Intelligence hears testimony that AQIM is expanding its ties in the Sahel with the Polisario, as well as militant Nigerian group Boko Haram and Somalia-based al-Shabaab.³⁰

November 28, 2011

UK Foreign Secretary William Hague says AQIM's expanding terrorist ties to other militant groups in the Sahel could have a "profoundly destabilizing" effect on a region already rocked by the Arab Spring.³¹

²⁴ Pham, J. Peter. "Islamist Threat to Africa's Rise in 2012." *Atlantic Council*, January 3, 2012, <http://www.acus.org/new_atlanticist/islamist-threat-africas-rise-2012>.

²⁵ De Serge, Daniel. "Mali distancing itself from the Polisario Front." *Agence France Presse*, December 27, 2011, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5i4CHA2HdwpcQJ_XrfCkoffM4eHBQ?docId=CNG.09c4b8e975cfc23c8718b820ade10fec.161&index=0>.

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ "Bamako warns Polisario: 'Mali is not Wild West.'" *Middle East Online*, December 17, 2011, <<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=49540>>.

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ "Al-Qaeda splinter group' claims kidnap of Westerners." *Agence France Presse*, December 10, 2011,

<<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hJQYCSJBL5a0NCGjPMIyCS8SryfQ?docId=CNG.4df034a80725d0c44da18538105d6420.dd1>>.

³⁰ Madden, Christina L. "Western Sahara: Forgotten Corner of the Arab Spring." *World Politics Review*, December 15, 2011,

<<http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/10947/western-sahara-forgotten-corner-of-the-arab-spring>>.

November 24, 2011

AQIM kidnaps two French tourists from their hotel at night in eastern Mali, claiming they are spies. Officials later report that the abductions were coordinated with the Polisario.³²

November 7, 2011

Algerian Chief of Staff General Qaid Saleh reportedly reprimands Polisario chief Mohammed Abdul Aziz for allowing an al-Qaeda presence inside the Polisario-controlled camps in Tindouf.³³

November 6, 2011

Washington Post columnist Jennifer Rubin cites alarm at AQIM kidnappings in the Polisario camps. "This is a catastrophe waiting to happen. The need to empty the camps, deprive AQIM of a supply of victims and accomplices, and restore order has never been greater."³⁴

October 26, 2011

Spanish daily *El Pais* reports on the Tindouf abductions, noting that, "to cross the checkpoints of the Algerian army and Polisario, kidnappers benefited from support of Polisario's military."³⁵

October 25, 2011

Spain requests a UN security mission to the Polisario-run camps. "We've asked the UN to send a mission to Algeria to assess the security situation in the camps of Tindouf" – Foreign Minister Trinidad Jimenez.³⁶

October 23, 2011

An AQIM splinter group kidnaps three Western aid workers from the Polisario-run camps in Algeria, reportedly with Polisario-insider help. "Unarmed AQIM militants entered the Sahrawi refugee camp in Tindouf, western Algeria, where sympathizers of the Polisario Front gave them weapons and helped them seek out the hostages."³⁷

September 29, 2011

Mauritanian President reports that AQIM has acquired Libyan arms, including surface-to-air missiles.³⁸

September 20, 2011

US terrorism expert Yonah Alexander, International Center for Terrorism Studies, says the "Polisario is intensifying activities to transport and smuggle illegal drugs in both North Africa and Europe. The Polisario is working with Al Qaida in both the drug and weapons trade."³⁹

³¹ Croft, Adrian. "EU police, experts to counter al Qaeda in Africa – UK." *Reuters*, November 28, 2011, <<http://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFTRE7AR29020111128?sp=true>>.

³² "N. African states take down major narco trafficking network." *World Tribune*, January 11, 2012, <<http://www.worldnewtribune.com/2012/01/11/n-african-states-take-down-major-narcoterror-drug-network/>>.

"Report: Al-Qaeda denies Algeria kidnappings." *Associated Press*, November 28, 2011, <<http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/story/2011-12-09/al-qaeda-kidnappings/51766924/1>>.

³³ "Algeria said to discipline Polisario commander over ties to Al Qaida." *World Tribune*, November 7, 2011, <<http://www.worldnewtribune.com/2011/11/07/algeria-said-to-discipline-polisario-commander-over-ties-to-al-qaeda/>>.

³⁴ Rubin, Jennifer. "Al-Qaeda affiliate flexing its muscles in the Maghreb." *The Washington Post*, November 6, 2011, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/right-turn/post/al-qaeda-affiliate-flexing-its-muscles-in-the-maghreb/2011/11/05/gIQANMbdQM_blog.html>.

³⁵ "Kidnappers of three European aid workers benefited from polisario security apparatus' support: Spanish paper says." *Morocco World News*, October 26, 2011, <<http://morocoworldnews.com/2011/10/kidnappers-of-three-european-aid-workers-benefited-from-polisario-security-apparatus-support-spanish-paper-says/12992>>.

³⁶ Ajbaili, Mustapha. "Has Spain switched gear on the Western Sahara?" *Al Arabiya*, October 25, 2011, <<http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/10/25/173691.html>>.

³⁷ "Three Qaeda hostages seized last week alive: mediator." *Agence France Presse*, October 30, 2011, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gfsKPTlgBS_IQzBQK_R-Fdj_z0A?docId=CNG.fb5674e8c48dbb7ef3f59c256d4_c3f07.531>.

³⁸ Stearns, Scott. "Gadhafi Collapse Raises Concerns Over Arms for Africa al-Qaida." *Voice of America*, September 29, 2011, <<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/-Gadhafi-Collapse-Raises-Concerns-Over-Arms-For-Africa-al-Qaida-130788458.html>>.

³⁹ "Report: Polisario working with Al Qaida in drug, weapons trafficking." *World Tribune*, September 20, 2011, <http://www.worldtribune.com/worldtribune/WTARC/2011/ss_terror1178_09_20.asp>.

September 15, 2011

Malian security forces hunt for rival gangs of drug smugglers from Mali, Niger, and the Polisario, after a desert gun battle over ton of cocaine and hashish leaves four dead, according to a Malian army official.⁴⁰

September 10, 2011

Analysts say that Libyan dictator Qaddafi's fall seriously weakens the Polisario in its dispute with Morocco on the Western Sahara, after widespread reports that Polisario mercenaries sided with Qaddafi.⁴¹

May 29, 2011

US Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart urges colleagues in Congress to give "serious attention" to evidence that Polisario members are "participating as mercenaries in Colonel Qaddafi's murderous campaign."⁴²

May 20, 2011

The US Administration expresses concern to Algeria that "credible sources report" that Polisario mercenaries are being paid by Qaddafi "to fight NATO-led forces and kill Libyan protesters and rebels."⁴³

April 21, 2011

The London *Telegraph* reports that senior NATO officials have received information that Col. Qaddafi is hiring 450 Polisario mercenaries for \$10,000 each to fight Libyan rebels and prop up his regime.⁴⁴

January 16, 2011

Former Polisario Chief Police Inspector, Mustapha Salma Ould Sidi Mouloud says "the situation is grave for the youth who are marginalized" in Polisario-run camps in Algeria. "The camps are fertile grounds for Islamic fundamentalist groups and drug traffickers."⁴⁵

January 6, 2011

Terrorism cell and arms cache broken up in W. Sahara suggest "links between AQIM and the Algeria-backed Polisario Front."⁴⁶ *Washington Post* columnist J. Rubin writes, "there is ample evidence the Polisario Front... is in league with al-Qaeda."⁴⁷

January 3, 2010

US DEA former Director of Operations, Michael Braun, calls conditions 'dismal for Saharans living in the Polisario-run camps,' which have become a "breeding-ground for potential future AQIM recruits."⁴⁸

December 21, 2010

Leaders arrested in one of the Sahel's largest drug-smuggling rings are purported to have close ties to the Polisario Front. Nigerien officials call it, "one of the major drug trafficking networks" in the Sahara. It is known as "Polisario" because 90% of its members come from camps of the Polisario Front.⁴⁹

⁴⁰ "Mali security forces hunt desert drug traffickers." *Agence France Presse*, September 14, 2011, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5g8Cmjx_ratUlyFtrp39MbQmv_bzw?docId=CNG.84013840d691548b4d501bfc5f665885.51>.

⁴¹ "Kadhafi's fall strengthens Morocco over Western Sahara." *Agence France Presse*, September 10, 2011, <http://www.zawya.com/story.cfm/sidANA20110910T075729ZH290/Kadhafis_fall_strengthens_Morocco_over_Western_Sahara>.

⁴² Francheska, Alyangka. "U.S. wants probe on Gadhafi's alleged recruitment of mercenaries from Algeria-backed Polisario to fight NATO, rebels." *International Business Times*, May 30, 2011, <<http://au.ibtimes.com/articles/154113/20110529/gade-redafi-libya-rebels-morocco-algeria-u-s-congress.htm>>.

⁴³ "Sources: Gadhafi paying Polisario mercenaries \$10,000 each to fight for him." *World Tribune*, May 20, 2011, <http://www.worldtribune.com/worldtribune/WTARC/2011/me_libya0607_05_20.asp>.

⁴⁴ Coughlin, Con. "Libya: Col Gaddafi 'has spent £2.1m on mercenaries.'" *The Telegraph*, April 21, 2011, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8464254/Libya-Col-Gaddafi-has-spent-2.1m-on-mercenaries.html>>.

⁴⁵ Rubin, Jennifer. "Exclusive: Ex-Polisario Front police chief tells his story." *The Washington Post*, January 16, 2011, <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/right-turn/2011/01/exclusive_ex-polisario_front_p.html>.

⁴⁶ "Arrests of Terrorism Suspects Announced." *The Washington Post*, January 6, 2011, <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/01/05/AR2011010506468.html>>.

⁴⁷ Rubin, Jennifer. "Morocco: A Different Kind of Muslim Country." *The Washington Post*, January 12, 2011, <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/right-turn/2011/01/morocco_a_different_kind_of_muslim_country.html>.

⁴⁸ Lake, Alison. "Unlikely bedfellows: Are some Saharan Marxists joining Al-Qaida operations in North Africa?" *Foreign Policy*, January 3, 2011, <http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/01/03/unlikely_bedfellows_are_some_saharan_marxists_joining_al_qaida_operations_in_north_>.

December 9, 2010

Political experts express increasing concern about violence instigated by pro-Polisario militants in Laayoune, Western Sahara. "The situation is becoming more dangerous, because of the violence and because al-Qaeda is now present." – political analyst T. Tarik.⁵⁰

November 10, 2010

Algeria reports "Cocaine that comes from Brazil, Peru, and Colombia supports the nucleus of al-Qaeda in the region" – Algerian head of the National Office for Combating Drugs & Addiction, Abdelmalek Sayeh.⁵¹

October 18, 2010

A drug ring linked to AQIM is dismantled in Morocco. VOA cites experts and evidence from Mauritania and Mali indicating that AQIM has worked in the last two years "to recruit Sahrawis who are trained fighters to carry out their operations."⁵²

August 23, 2010

AQIM frees three Spanish kidnapping victims after Mauritania agrees to release the perpetrator, Omar Sahraoui, who is "believed to have been a senior commander of the Polisario Front in Western Sahara."⁵³

July 2010

Mauritania sentences reported Polisario veteran, Omar al Sahraoui, to 12 years for the 2009 kidnapping of Spanish aid workers. Mauritanian court papers document that he was paid by AQIM along with at least three other Polisario veterans to organize and carry out the crime.⁵⁴

April 12, 2010

Security expert calls the Western Sahara conflict a "vicious cycle" that terrorists can exploit; cites "evidence that members of the military arm of the Polisario Front have been involved in illicit activities."⁵⁵

February 2010

Polisario veteran Omar le Sahraoui is arrested in Mali and extradited to stand trial in Mauritania for kidnapping Spanish aid workers.⁵⁶

November 29, 2009

AQIM claims responsibility for kidnapping three Spanish aid workers in Mauritania. Mauritanian security services later discover that AQIM had hired Omar al Sahraoui—who was reportedly a member of the Polisario's hierarchy—and at least three other Polisario veterans to organize and carry out the abductions.⁵⁷

⁴⁹ "Key members of Sahara drug ring captured are from Polisario." *Middle East Online*, December 21, 2010, <<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=43149>>.

⁵⁰ Worth, Robert F. and Souad Mekhennet. "Desert Land in Limbo is Torn Apart." *The New York Times*, December 9, 2010, <<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/09/world/africa/09morocco.html?ref=todayspaper>>.

⁵¹ "Al-Qaeda looks to Sahel for new funding sources." *Magharebia*, November 10, 2010, <http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en_GB/features/awi/features/2010/11/10/feature-01>.

⁵² Look, Anne. "Morocco says dismantled drug ring linked to terrorists." *Voice of America*, October 18, 2010, <<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/africa/north/Morocco-says-Dismantled-International-Drug-Trafficking-Ring-Linked-to-Terrorists-105188824.html>>.

⁵³ "Spanish hostages freed by al-Qaida arrive in Spain." *Associated Press*, August 23, 2010, <<http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory?id=11464811>>.

⁵⁴ Pham, J. Peter. "When Crime Does Pay: The Threat of an Emboldened al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb." *World Defense Review*, 23 September, 2010, <<http://worlddefensereview.com/pham092310.shtml>>.

⁵⁵ Pham, J. Peter. "Not Another Failed States: Toward a Realistic Solution in the Western Sahara." *The Journal of the Middle East and Africa* 1 (2010): 1-24.

⁵⁶ Op. Cit. 9

⁵⁷ Ibid

Cuban Youths Support West Sahara Struggle

Escrito por Ileana Ferrer Fonte
miércoles, 09 de mayo de 2012

09 de mayo de 2012, 09:39Havana, May 9 (Prensa Latina) The Cuban Federation of High School Students (FEEM) ratified its support for the West Sahara's struggle against Moroccan colonialism, local media reported on Wednesday.

Leaders from that organization on Tuesday met with Ahmed Lehib Abdi, member of the National Secretariat of the Polisario Front and general secretary of the Student Union of Sagua, el-Hamra and Rio del Oro, which groups junior high and university students from that northern African nation.

During the meeting, FEEM president Mirthia Julia Brossard explained the Saharan leader that Cuban students know about the just causes of the world, among them that of West Sahara, Juventud Rebelde newspaper reported.

In that regard, Brossard said that "the organization will continue supporting the Saharan students in Cuba, one of the noblest actions the island has done for that African nation."

For his part, Ahmed Lehib Abdi thanked Cuba for its support for the struggle of his people, and described as special the relations between the Caribbean nation and the Polisario Front, the daily said.

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