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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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**COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN EUROPE**
CHAIRMAN

September 12, 2005

His Excellency Driss Jettou
Prime Minister
The Kingdom of Morocco
c/o Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco
1601 21 Street, N.W.
Washington DC, 20009

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

We write to express our concern regarding reports of the ongoing detainment, and in some cases, allegations of mistreatment and torture, of Sahrawi protestors in Western Sahara. We request that your government allow a full and impartial investigation of the allegations, and conduct fair trials for all of those accused.

Information from reputable human rights and international organizations, such as Amnesty International, indicates that your government is continuing to hold at least 25 demonstrators from the protests in May, and that many involved in the protests were beaten and refused medical certificates after treatment at the local state hospital. In addition, many of those detained allege they were mistreated, forced to sign confessions, and punished for advocating the independence of Western Sahara. We are enclosing a list of prisoners reportedly being held and a partial list of Sahrawis injured during the recent protests.

Several Members of Congress recently met with Latifa Jbabdi, President of the Women's Action Union, as well as with Ambassador Mekouar and six former Moroccan POWs. We were impressed with the democratization and modernization process that is clearly at work in Morocco, particularly the work of the Reconciliation Commission to investigate and shed light on past disappearances and detentions. We urge you to continue this good work and extend it to the situation of the Sahrawis.

The Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights, and International Operations of the United States Congress is committed to the protection of basic human rights, including the rights of individuals to peacefully express their political views. This fall, the Subcommittee will hold a hearing on the issue of Western Sahara, the referendum, and the status of human rights for the Sahrawi. It would send a strong signal of your government's commitment to resolve this longstanding conflict if Members of Congress

knew that a full investigation of the allegations of Sahrawi human rights abuses has begun.

Such an action would be a strong sign of your commitment to human rights.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue. We look forward to hearing your response soon.

Sincerely,



Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress

James M. Inhofe
U.S. Senate

Betty McCollum
Member of Congress

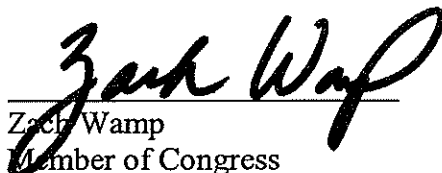


Ted Poe
Member of Congress

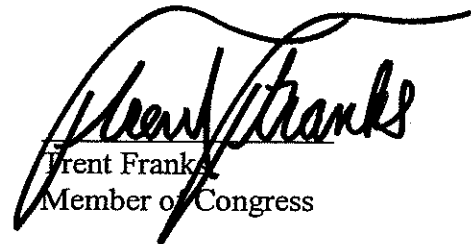
Joseph Pitts
Member of Congress



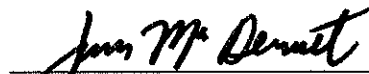
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