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HOUSE OF COMMONS
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Rt Hon. Lord David Cameron of Chipping Norton
Secretary of State, FCDO
King Charles Street
London, UK
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23rd May 2024

Dear Foreign Secretary,

In the landscape of international relations and geopolitical stability, few areas present as critical an opportunity for positive influence and mutual benefit as Morocco's Western Sahara. Amid the vast turmoil we are witnessing globally, it has become more crucial than ever for the UK to strengthen its alliances with stable, like-minded nations to promote regional stability and international security. Morocco stands paramount among these partner nations, it is a top strategic ally in North Africa, with shared values and perspectives crucial to both our countries.

The dangerous escalations and catastrophic effects of conflict in the Middle East have intensified the spread of terrorism and extremism, providing an opportunity for hostile militias to broaden their ideological reach and influence beyond their own borders. Additionally, the growing instability in the Sahel creates a vacuum that poses a significant risk of spreading instability and malign influence, posing a threat of further fragmentation and extremist indoctrination.

The Western Sahara region offers a promising opportunity for progress and stability: but this could be put at risk if we do not resolve this issue quickly and pragmatically. There should be no space for further separatism or division. To the contrary, we must reinforce Morocco's proactive engagement in fostering regional security and stability. The country's efforts have not only significantly contributed to strengthening alliances that are pivotal for ensuring peace and prosperity across Africa and the Middle East, but also as part of a global security architecture that addresses challenges like radicalization, terrorism and migration crises.

In addition, the Western Sahara region has the potential to significantly enhance energy opportunities, secure supply chains, and enable access to new markets. Today, the development of strategic infrastructures, such as the impressive port in Dakhla, highlights the region's economic and geopolitical significance. These advancements not only demonstrate sustainable progress, but also showcase the region as a hub of innovation and international cooperation in Africa. To fully realize this potential, it requires the backing of our financial

institutions, such as UKEF and BII. This approach has been similarly adopted by other countries, including the US and France, in recent times. This would also be consistent with our trade agreement with Morocco which covers the Western Sahara and which has been ruled lawful by the High Court of Justice last year.

Some of us have had the opportunity to visit Morocco, including the Western Sahara, and have gained valuable, eye-opening firsthand insights into the vast potential and opportunities that exist both for the local community and for the United Kingdom. We have engaged with various stakeholders, including local leaders, civil society representatives, and human rights organizations, gaining a multi-faceted perspective on the region's challenges and prospects.

Our observations, coupled with insights from respected scholars like Professor Marc Weller - Cambridge University's Chair of International Law and International Constitutional Studies - on the international legal framework, reinforce our conviction that the United Kingdom must provide proactive support for Morocco's Autonomy Plan. Such support aligns with our principles and international commitments, it would not compromise our position in the British Overseas Territories, and it can contribute ultimately to peace in this vital region.

The Autonomy Initiative proposed by Morocco for Western Sahara, balanced with respect for local traditions and democratic aspirations, offers a viable path toward lasting peace and stability. With broad backing from our Western allies and more than 80 countries worldwide, the initiative is heralded as the most practical and pragmatic path to stability, emphasizing that it is time to move beyond inertia.

Rallying around this plan, which stands ultimately as the sole realistic solution, underscores a global commitment to resolving the issue. The collective support it boasts signals a readiness among international partners to promote regional stability and prosperity, reinforcing the Autonomy Initiative's pivotal role in advancing regional peace efforts.

Today, we have the opportunity to adopt a realistic and pragmatic approach. It is essential for our leadership to recognize that following the example set by our main allies is indeed the right course of action. Remaining neutral or attempting alternative resolutions can only perpetuate a harmful status quo that jeopardizes the security of the region.

The upcoming UK-Morocco strategic dialogue presents a singular occasion for the United Kingdom to redefine its role and influence in the region. Morocco deserves our unequivocal and complete support; it is our responsibility, and the security of the region urgently demands it.

Yours,

The Rt. Hon Sir Liam Fox MP

Lord Udny-Lister

Daniel Kawczynski MP

Lord Hannan

Mark Garnier MP

Heather Wheeler MP

Rehman Christi MP

The Rt. Hon Sir Brandon Lewis MP

Anthony Mangnall MP

Lord Arbuthnot

Royston Smith MP

Baroness Neville-Jones

Lord Maude

Lord Polak

Lord Mendelsohn

Lord Bellingham

Flick Drummond MP

Paul Scully MP

Lord Mott

Lord Goddard

Lord Kilclooney

Gary Sambrook MP

Kevin Foster MP

Lord Mann

Lord Pickles

Lord Brennan

Baroness Finn

Lord Elliot

Lord Swire

Baroness Uddin

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