




OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

REF : 10/3/3/1
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TO: Members of the Executive Council
Executive and Local Mayors
Heads of the Provincial Departments
Municipal Managers
Heads of Parastatals

South Africa`s diplomatic position on the Kingdom of Morocco and its allies regarding Western Sahara

1. Reference is made to the above matter.
2. With reference to the attached letter from the Director General of the Department for International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) regarding the hosting of the Crans Montana Forum in Dakhla, we wish to reiterate the following:
 - 2.1. That South Africa condemns the last form of colonization of the Saharawi people by the Kingdom of Morocco.
 - 2.2. That South Africa will not support any activity aimed at perpetuating colonization and undermining the self-determination and independence of Western Sahara.
3. We therefore advise all Provincial departments and their parastatals, District and local municipalities not to participate in the Crans Montana Forum and any other activities organized by the Kingdom of Morocco without diplomatic clearance by Office of the Premier and DIRCO.
4. Kind regards


NS Nchabeleng
Acting Director General

10/03/2016
Date



international relations & cooperation

Department:
International Relations and Cooperation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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To:

The Directors – General of National Departments
The Directors – General of Provincial Governments
Executive Mayors of Metropolitan Municipalities
The Secretary of Parliament
The Secretaries of Provincial Legislatures
The CEO of the South African Local Government Association (SALGA)

Dear Colleagues

Subject: Morocco's hosting of the Crans Montana Forum in Dakhla, the occupied territory of Western Sahara from 17 to 22 March 2016.

It has come to the attention of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) that the Crans Montana Forum together with the Kingdom of Morocco have sent out invitations to South African public representatives at both national and provincial levels, inviting them to attend the Crans Montana Forum scheduled to take place in Dakhla, from 17 to 22 March 2016. Dakhla falls within the illegally occupied territory of Western of Sahara.

South Africa's position on the issue of Western Sahara is one that recognises the inalienable right of the Saharawi people to self-determination and independence. Moreover, South Africa regards the issue of Western Sahara as the last question of decolonization in Africa and has consistently spoken out against the illegal occupation of Western Sahara by Morocco. President Zuma moreover in recent statements have joined the African Union in calling on the United Nations to determine a date for holding of the referendum on self-determination.

It should be noted that, Crans Montana arranged a similar event in Dakhla in 2015. In that regard the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government, at its 24th Ordinary Session, considered that "the organisation of any international conference in the current circumstances in Western Sahara is in contradiction with the efforts made by the International Community to resolve the conflict in Western Sahara, and can only create an atmosphere of confrontation in the territory". It further called on the organisers to cancel the meeting in the occupied city of Dakhla, as it is a grave violation of International Law. Moreover, the 26th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in January 2016 reiterated its 24th Ordinary Session resolution and appealed to all Member States, African civil society organizations and other relevant actors to boycott the upcoming 2016 Crans Montana event in Dakhla.

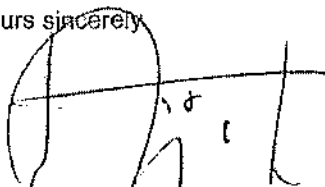
Furthermore, it is worth noting that in response to a letter from the Saharawi President and Secretary General of the Polisario Front, Mr Mohamed Abdelaziz, it has been reported that the UN Secretary General Mr Ban Ki-moon called on all officials and UN bodies not to participate in the upcoming 2016 Crans Montana Forum.

Kgoro ya Tirisano le Tshomišano ya Dinaga lša Boditšhabatšhaba • Lefapha la Dikamano le Tahabediso Dinaheng tsa Maljhaba • Lefapha la Dikamano tsa Boditšhabatšhaba le Tirisano • UMnyango Wezobudlelwano Nokubambisana Bamazwe Namazwe • Likko Letebudlelwano Bamave kanye Nekusabentisano • ISebe lezobudlelwano neNisebenziswano yamZwe ngamaZwe • UMnyango waTjhebiswano nokuSobenzisana kwoenTjhabatjhaba • Mhasho wa Vhushaka ha Dzitshakatsheke na Tshumišano • Ndzawulo ya Vuxaka bya Matiko ya Misava na Ntirhisano • Departement van Internasionale Betrekkinge en Samewerking

The decision taken by Crans Montana to proceed with the convening of the 2016 meeting in the non-self-governing territory of Western Sahara, despite the call by both the AU and the UN, demonstrates a blatant disregard for the AU, the UN, International Law and for the current negotiation process.

It is in light of the above that DIRCO would **strongly advise against** any South African participation in the Crans Montana Forum, scheduled to take place in the occupied city of Dakhla in Western Sahara from 17 – 22 March 2016.

Yours sincerely



Ambassador JM Matjila
Director-General

Date: 03/03/2016

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