

Ref:SB:dd

11 December 2009

Mrs Navi Pillay
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Via E-mail: registry@ohchr.org

Dear Mrs. Pillay,

RE: Saharawi Human Rights activist - Ms Aminatou Haidar

On behalf of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), which represents two million workers and strong supporters of democratic and human rights, I am writing to you, as High Commissioner for Human Rights at the United Nations, to ask for your intervention on behalf of the Saharawi Human Rights activist Ms. Aminatou Haidar.

Ms Aminatou Haidar is on hunger strike in the terminal of Lanzarote airport protesting her illegal expulsion from her home in Western Sahara since 14th November.

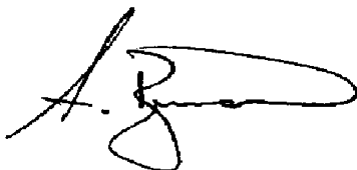
I want to ask you for your urgent support. Aminatou Haidar is not being allowed to go back home. Her passport was taken away by the Moroccan authorities and she was forced to enter Spanish territory without legal documentation and with the connivance of the Spanish authorities. Now, the Spanish Government does not want to assume its responsibility in this matter and force Morocco to accept Ms. Haidar back in El Aaiun.

I call on UN Human Rights High Commissioner to do all in her power to bring pressure to bear on Morocco to accept a solution to this conflict that conforms with international law, namely to allow Aminatou Haidar to travel home to be with her children in El Aaiun, Western Sahara, in accordance with Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

In the spirit of International Human Rights Day, I hope that UN Human Rights High Commissioner, together with the rest of the international community, will not ignore this plea and will support this just struggle to bring Aminatou Haidar back to her homeland.

As a national trade union federation we stand in solidarity with the international trade union movement, supporting an urgent and peaceful solution to the occupation of the Western Sahara, and we hope the UN can ensure that the wishes of the Saharawi people are enacted, and that their long period in exile will be ended.

Yours sincerely,



Sharan Burrow
PRESIDENT