



Australian Institute of International Affairs

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An ACCESS event open to all:

Western Sahara and its Phosphate Rock: Is Australia in a Hard Place?

Mr Kamal Fadel, Western Sahara's representative in Australia, and Mr Tim Robertson SC

Wednesday 5 October, 2011

6pm – 7.30pm

Dyason House

124 Jolimont Road, East Melbourne

Phosphate is essential to the production of our food and is used extensively in Australian agriculture. The main source for most of our superphosphate fertiliser is phosphate rock from the Bou Craa mine in Western Sahara. The problem is that it is exported by Morocco, but it is not theirs to sell, since the Saharawi people have permanent sovereignty over their natural resources.

Most of Western Sahara is illegally occupied by neighbouring Morocco and despite numerous United Nations resolutions regarding self-determination for Western Sahara it remains the last colony in Africa. Morocco is accused of disregarding the wishes of the Saharawi people by selling its phosphate to three Australian companies with no apparent benefit to the indigenous population. By accepting these imports, Australia risks the perception that it is helping to fund the occupation.

The UN issued a legal opinion in 2002 concerning the exploitation of the natural resources of Western Sahara, saying that it is illegal unless the Saharawis both consent to and benefit from the trade. At present neither of these conditions is satisfied.

To discuss the issue, Mr Kamal Fadel is Western Sahara's representative in Australia and former Ambassador to East Timor. With a background in international relations, he has served in India, Iran and the UK as a Saharawi diplomat. He is joined by Mr Tim Robertson SC, a senior NSW barrister and civil libertarian with a very broad practice, predominately in environmental law and public law, including public international law.



RSVP Slip

If you plan to attend this function, please advise us at least 1 day before the event.

Phone: (03) 9654 7271; Fax: (03) 9654 6605; Email: events.vic@aiia.asn.au

Pre-payment is welcome or payment at the door: \$20; students free on presentation of current student card

Snacks and refreshments will be served.

I/we will attend the address by Mr Kamel Fadel and Mr Tim Robertson on 5 October at 6pm:

Name: 1..... AIIA Member/Non-member

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Phone: Fax: Email:

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