

MEDIA RELEASE

Australian Labor Party calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Saharawi political prisoners and reaffirms strong support for Saharawi Self-Determination at the ALP National Conference.

Adelaide, 25 July 2026 — The Australia Western Sahara Association (AWSA) has warmly welcomed the adoption of a strong and principled resolution on Western Sahara by the Australian Labor Party at its 50th National Conference.

The resolution reaffirms Labor's longstanding commitment to international law, decolonisation and the inalienable right to self-determination. Importantly it calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Saharawi political prisoners and supports expanding the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum of Western Sahara (MINURSO) to include independent monitoring, reporting and protection of human rights in the occupied territory of Western Sahara.

AWSA Secretary, Lesley Osborne, welcomed the resolution stating:

“AWSA welcomes the ALP's continued commitment to the Saharawi people's internationally recognised right to self-determination and its concern for the ongoing human rights situation in the Territory occupied by Morocco.” Ms Osborne continued:

“The Saharawi people have waited for decades to exercise the right to self-determination promised by the United Nations. Labor's reaffirmation of this policy demonstrates Australia's continued support for a rules-based international order.”

“The resolution's call for the release of political prisoners is both timely and highly relevant. Saharawi political detainees continue to languish in Moroccan prisons, many following trials that have been widely criticised by United Nations human rights mechanisms and international organisations.”

Ms Osborne drew particular attention to the case of **Saharawi human rights defender Naâma Asfari**, whose life is now in grave danger after **45 days on an indefinite hunger strike** in protest against his continued imprisonment and treatment. AWSA urges the Australian Government and the wider international community to use every available diplomatic avenue to help save Mr Asfari's life and to press for his immediate release.

AWSA expressed its appreciation to the Australian Labor Party, affiliated trade unions and conference delegates for maintaining a consistent and supportive position on Western Sahara.

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<https://awsa.org.au>

Backgrounder:

ALP Resolution-Western Sahara

Labor strongly supports the United Nations in its efforts to enable the people of Western Sahara to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination in accordance with United Nations resolutions, including UNSCR 690 (1991) and UNSCR 2797 (2025).

In pursuit of human rights and fundamental freedoms, Labor supports expanding the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) to include independent monitoring, reporting and protection of human rights in the Territory. Labor calls for the immediate and unconditional release of any political prisoners.

Australia Western Sahara Association is a not-for-profit incorporated association established to raise awareness and promote the Saharawi cause in Australia.

In particular it campaigns for:

- *A UN referendum of self-determination.*
- *Access to jobs, housing and education for indigenous Saharawis in occupied zones.*
- *Monitoring of human rights, on both sides, by the UN.*
- *Protection of the country's natural resources for the Saharawi people.*

To do this:

- *AWSA lobbies government and industry.*
- *Organises educational and cultural events.*
- *Appeals for aid to the refugees and human rights defenders.*

<https://awsa.org.au>