



Marie Rimmer CBE, MP
Member of Parliament for St. Helens
South & Whiston
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
Tel: 020 7219 4847/01744 752075

Western Sahara:

As constituents may know, the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) was originally established by UN Security Council resolution in 1991 to monitor the ceasefire between Morocco and the Polisario Front, and to implement a referendum to determine Western Sahara's final status. I recognise that no such referendum has yet taken place.

The renewal of MINURSO's mandate is due to be voted upon at the end of this month. More widely, I know that the role of the UN Secretary-General's personal envoy for Western Sahara was vacant for a prolonged period from May 2019. On 6 October 2021, it was announced that Staffan de Mistura had been appointed to this role. I strongly support the work he has been doing since then and welcome his visit in September 2023 to the region, including Western Sahara.

I want to see both parties stand by the 1991 ceasefire agreement and encourage them to re-engage constructively with the UN-led political process.

I welcome that the UK Government has said its position in relation to Western Sahara remains unchanged and that it continues to regard the status of Western Sahara as undetermined.

I will continue to follow the situation in Western Sahara and encourage the UK Government to support UN efforts towards a lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that provides for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

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Constituency Office:

Marie Rimmer CBE, MP, 2nd Floor, Century House, Hardshaw Street, St. Helens WA10 1QU, 01744 752075,
marie.rimmer.mp@parliament.uk
Website: www.marierimmer.co.uk