



# Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic Petroleum Authority



## STATEMENT BY H. E. EMHAMED KHADAD ON THE OCCASION OF THE LAUNCH OF THE SADR SECOND LICENSING ROUND

HOUSTON (TEXAS), 5 FEBRUARY 2008.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you all for joining us today. I am very pleased to be in Houston to make this important announcement on behalf of my country, the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic.

In May, 2005, the SADR began a licensing initiative to enable international oil and gas companies to participate in the exploration of the natural resources of our territory. There was a good response to this first initiative, and the SADR awarded nine licenses to eight oil companies.

Today, we are launching the second licensing round. Our government is again inviting companies to apply for licenses to explore the potential for oil and gas in the offshore and onshore areas of the Saharawi Republic.

Western Sahara is rich in natural resources, from fish to phosphates, and the prospects for oil are promising.

The licensing initiative we are introducing today prepares for the day when the Saharawi Republic will exercise full sovereignty over all its rightful territory, including our offshore waters and our natural resources.

When that day comes, and we trust it will be soon, the SADR will prove that it is a lawful, democratic and rights-respecting country, whose government will fully respect its international and commercial obligations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to give you a little history of my country. Most of Western Sahara is occupied by Morocco since 1975. The UN and the African Union have repeatedly said that this illegal occupation must end.

The Saharawi people demand the implementation of UN resolutions and international law. These stipulate that there must be a fair process of self-determination for the territory of the Western Sahara. What the Saharawi people want is a free and fair referendum under UN auspices. That is the democratic and just solution.

PO Box 291  
Glebe NSW 2037  
AUSTRALIA

Tel: +61 2 92 65 82 58  
Email: [info@sadroilandgas.com](mailto:info@sadroilandgas.com)

Fax: +61 2 92 83 92 70  
Web: [www.sadroilandgas.com](http://www.sadroilandgas.com)



# Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic

## Petroleum Authority



I trust that the government and the people of the United States will support this. In fact, in August last year a large group of US senators and representatives made a bipartisan appeal to the President of the United States to support the right of the Saharawi people to self-determination. They wrote:

“We strongly urge you to take steps to ensure that your Administration demonstrates respect for the right of the Saharawi people to democratically choose their own political and economic future.”

There can be no stable solution for the Western Sahara without respect for the inalienable right of the Saharawi people to self-determination and independence. The United Nations has been unequivocal in its support of this right. Indeed, in 1975, the International Court of Justice upheld this right of the Saharawi people. The United Nations has since passed dozens of resolutions reaffirming our right to decide our own future. Unfortunately, these resolutions have been ignored by Morocco.

You may be aware of the ongoing UN-sponsored discussions between the SADR and Morocco held at Manhasset near New York. The most recent round took place on 7 to 9 January, 2008 and there will be another round of talks in March of this year.

I have attended these talks. We have been disappointed by the slow progress of the talks and Morocco's obstructionist attitude. For example Morocco has refused a UN proposal to increase confidence building measures through visits and meetings between Saharawis who have been separated by war and exile.

Nevertheless, we will continue to give peace a chance and engage in the UN process. But it is time for something to be done about Moroccan obstructionism. The occupation and the injustice must end. The United Nations must hold to its principles, and the Security Council must enforce its decisions which call for the organization of a free and fair referendum in Western Sahara.

The Saharawi people have waited for justice far too long, many of them – some 170,000 – in desert refugee camps, in dire conditions, out of sight, and out of mind, of the world. Those who remained in the occupied areas are subject to gross violations of human rights including murder, torture, kidnapping and intimidation. Morocco also restricts the entry of independent observers and journalists to the occupied areas. Furthermore, the Moroccan government plunders the resources of our country with no benefits to our people.

Morocco is an absolute monarchy that denies basic human rights to our people, illegally occupies parts of our country and continues to violate UN resolutions with impunity.

Ladies and gentlemen,

No state or international organization recognizes Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara. For the US, Robert Zoellick, then the United States Trade Representative, stated in 2004 in reference to the Free Trade Agreement between the USA and Morocco that “The United States and many other countries do not

PO Box 291  
Glebe NSW 2037  
AUSTRALIA

Tel: +61 2 92 65 82 58  
Email: [info@sadroilandgas.com](mailto:info@sadroilandgas.com)

Fax: +61 2 92 83 92 70  
Web: [www.sadroilandgas.com](http://www.sadroilandgas.com)



# Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic

## Petroleum Authority



recognize Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara” and added that “the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) covers trade and investment in the territory of Morocco as recognized internationally, and does not include Western Sahara.”

Meanwhile, over eighty countries from all continents officially recognize the SADR as the legitimate government in Western Sahara. The SADR is a full member of the African Union.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This licensing round is a legal and legitimate act for the SADR government. We are undertaking the new licensing initiative in accordance with the UN legal opinion of 2002 regarding commercial activities in the Western Sahara, which states that “resource exploitation activities [...] conducted in Non-Self-Governing Territories for the benefit of the peoples of those Territories, on their behalf or in consultation with their representatives, are considered [...] in conformity with the General Assembly resolutions and the principle of ‘permanent sovereignty over natural resources’”. The licenses granted under this round are the only avenue to the legal exploitation of the oil resources of the Western Sahara.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Saharawis are a peace-loving people, who reject violence, believe in democracy, freedom and secularism.

Because of the justice of our cause and the unwavering determination of our people, we are absolutely confident that we will recover our full sovereignty soon. The independence of East Timor and Namibia, who were denied their freedom for many years, further reinforces our strong believe in the inevitability of our own full independence.

Following the recovery of our full sovereignty the SADR government will aim to immediately build friendly relations of cooperation and mutual respect with all countries of our region including Morocco. This will create an atmosphere of stability, peace and progress that will certainly be of benefit not only for the Moroccan and Saharawi peoples but also for the entire Maghreb region and the world at large. This government will also allow the immediate implementation of the licenses that we have granted under this initiative, allowing for the economic development of the territory and region.

We are looking forward to the day when the Saharawi people, the rightful owners of Western Sahara’s natural resources, will finally benefit from the wealth of their land. Please join us in this endeavour.

Thank you for your kind attention.

PO Box 291  
Glebe NSW 2037  
AUSTRALIA

Tel: +61 2 92 65 82 58  
Email: [info@sadroilandgas.com](mailto:info@sadroilandgas.com)

Fax: +61 2 92 83 92 70  
Web: [www.sadroilandgas.com](http://www.sadroilandgas.com)