

# END VIOLENCE AGAINST SAHARAWI WOMEN

## More than 16 Sahrawi Women, 16 Days

### Press release

**EI Aaiún – 25 November to 10 December 2022**

To commemorate International Day on the Elimination of Violence against Women, a collective of Sahrawi women human rights defenders and NGO's and their international supporters are launching a campaign to shed international light on decades of systematic physical and psychological violence against indigenous Sahrawi women by Morocco inside the Western Sahara, a territory it has occupied since 1975.

From 25 November, and 16 days onwards, the collective will share 16 short stories of courageous Saharawi women living under occupation. The segments will be shared on social media and be made available in a Google Drive Folder available [here](#). The folder also includes information about Western Sahara, a territory closed to international human rights monitors and media, and the human rights situation of Saharawi women.

"All Sahrawis including women are subjected to violence because we have a common demand: the independence of our country, and our right for self-determination", states Mahfouda Lefkir an ex political prisoner from Western Sahara and one of the sixteen women sharing their stories of gender violence.

The campaign's main goals are to expose Morocco's human rights violations against Saharawi women, to support the women's peaceful struggle for freedom and to appeal to the international community to show solidarity with Saharawi women, whose struggle has received very little international attention.

The powerful testimonies of the sixteen Sahrawi women will drive the campaign...Some of the women involved in the campaign are family members of political prisoners sentenced to long-term imprisonment. Others have family members that were assassinated or subject to enforced disappearance, and some were disappeared themselves. All have suffered gender violence as punishment for their human rights activism and support for the right to self-determination for the people of Western Sahara.

The international campaign is organized by local Saharawi NGOs in the occupied territories, the Saharawi refugee camps, the diaspora and local Saharawi women human rights defenders, supported by the Norwegian Support Committee for Western Sahara and the Spain-based NGO Nomads HRC. All civil society actors are encouraged and welcome to join the campaign and may contact the organizers at [epost].

The 16-day long campaign coincides with a larger global civil society initiative to highlight violence against women and girls, that kicks off 25 November, on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and runs until 10 December, Human Rights Day.

Read more about the 16 global day campaign here: <https://16dayscampaign.org/>

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#### CONTACT THE ORGANIZERS:

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