**DECLARATION OF THE CUBAN ASSOCIATION OF UNITED NATIONS ON THE SITUATION OF THE LOCAL POPULATION IN THE OCCUPIED AREA IN WESTERN SAHARA.**

After almost 60 years since Spanish colonialism left Western Sahara, the Saharawi people have not reached their self-determination.

In 1976, the Polisario Front declared the independence of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic and began a fierce war with Morocco, which lasted until 1991, when a cease-fire was declared under the auspices of the United Nations.

In that year, and by decision of the UN Security Council, the United Nations Mission for the referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) was created. Its main task was to guarantee the holding of a referendum that would guarantee its self-determination and independence, as “non-autonomous territories” recognized by resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly. Today, almost 30 years later, the goal has not been achieved.

Despite the successive resolutions of the Security Council and the expressed concerns of governments, international organizations, blocs of nations, non-governmental organizations, among others, a deterioration in the situation of the Sahrawi people and their human rights has persisted. More than 100,000 Sahrawis have been displaced, with little chance of return, and countless flagrant violations of the human rights of Sahrawis.

The Cuban Association of the United Nations expresses its full support for the search for a definitive answer to the question of Western Sahara, which allows its people to exercise the right to self-determination and to live in peace in their territory; based on respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law, and relevant UN resolutions.

The Saharawi people are the only one who, in a sovereign way, can decide their future freely, without pressure or conditioning of any kind.

Havana, November 24, 2020