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EU-Morocco fisheries agreement/Western Sahara

EP ignores major concerns and backs controversial agreement

The European Parliament today voted in favour of a new EU-Morocco fisheries agreement, two years after decisively rejecting an earlier version. The Greens criticised the vote and the agreement, which would give the EU the right to fish in Western Saharan waters despite the fact the government of Morocco has no right to sell the resources of Western Sahara under international law (1). Commenting after the vote, Green fisheries and human rights spokesperson **Raül Romeva** said:

"MEPs have today stuck their heads in the sand in voting to endorse this controversial agreement. The EU-Morocco fisheries agreement is the most shameful episode in the EU's neo-colonial fisheries policy. Under the agreement, the Moroccan government illegally grants fishing rights to the EU fishing fleet to fish in the waters of Western Sahara, but it has no right to do so under international law.

"In addition to the issue of Western Sahara, the same concerns remain as regards the unsustainable nature of the agreement from a fisheries perspective and its dubious economic basis. This agreement will now remain as a major blot on the foreign and fisheries policies of the EU."

(1) Western Sahara is recognised by the United Nations as a non-self-governing territory.

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