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MEPs support for hunger striker

Press release by EFA MEPs Jill Evans and Oriol Junqueras

MEPs from the European Free Alliance Group in the European Parliament are supporting the case of Western Saharan activist Aminatou Haidar.

Ms Haidar is currently on hunger strike at Lanzarote airport in the Canary Islands after being forcibly expelled from her homeland by the Moroccan authorities.

MEPs **Oriol Junqueras** and **Jill Evans** have called on the European Commission and Council to intervene. They have urged the Spanish and Moroccan authorities to fulfil their international obligations and respect Ms Haider's right to freedom of movement.

EFA Vice President and Bloque Nacionalista Galego Spokesperson in Brussels, Ana Miranda will travel to Lanzarote this week with a delegation of MEPs to seek a resolution of the issue. The issue will also be debated in the European Parliament next week.

Speaking from Brussels, **Ana Miranda** said:

"The EU must act quickly to remind Morocco and Spain of their international obligations. Aminatou Haidar is a human rights activist with an international reputation who simply wants to return home.

"This is the latest in a series of attacks by Moroccan authorities on the activities of Saharawi human rights activists. It is totally unacceptable and the EU should intervene."

EFA Group President **Jill Evans** MEP added:

"Morocco's occupation of Western Sahara is illegal under international law and Ms Haidar's work to promote the right of the Saharawi people to self-determination has gained recognition around the world.

"She was on her way back to Western Sahara from the United States where she was receiving a prestigious award when she was denied entry by the Moroccan authorities. She had her passport taken away and was forcibly deported to Lanzarote. The EU must act to put pressure on the Moroccan authorities to allow Mr Haidar to return to her family."

Catalan MEP **Oriol Junqueras** said:

"As the former Colonial power, the Spanish state bears a great deal of responsibility for creating the current situation in which Western Sahara finds itself. Today, it is people like Aminatou Haidar who

are paying the price for these past mistakes.

"We want to remind the governments of Spain and Morocco of their obligations to people such as Ms Haidar who defend people's right to self-determination through peaceful means. Her expulsion from her homeland by the Moroccan authorities is an intolerable outrage."

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Jill Evans

Member

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