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**DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY AND SECURITY
OFFICE OF THE UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL**

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

DSS COMMUNIQUÉ

DATE: 25 October 2011

TO: All Designated Officials for Security
A: All CSAs, DSAs, SAs
All Security Focal Points
All Alternate Security Focal Points

FROM: Gregory B. Starr 
DE: Under-Secretary-General

SUBJECT: **Kidnapping of Three International NGO Workers in Labouni, Tindouf**
OBJET:

1. On 23 October at 0040, MINURSO (United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara), received information from Spanish Cooperation in Rabouni that three International NGOs workers, two Spanish nationals (one female and one male) and one Italian female were forcefully abducted from the protocol house in Rabouni. The driver, a Sahrawi national, and one of the abductees were reported to have been injured during the incident. There are no confirmed details on the kidnappers, however, the Frente Polisario reported that the suspects entered the territory from Mali and attacked the centre of the accommodation for foreigners (the protocol house) at the refugee camp located West of Tindouf. The kidnappers were armed and were using a four-wheel-drive vehicle and left the scene in the same direction from which they had come.

2. The Designated Official for Western Sahara has upgraded the security level from Three to Four East of the Berm until Tindouf, and on 25 October 2011, the DO and SMT decided to suspend all Night Observation Posts and Night Ground Patrols East of the Berm until further notice and the following: Maintain a daily UN curfew from dusk till dawn until further notice; Ensure that all security and safety procedures are implemented and in place, including access control and ensuring the closing of gates when not in use; Maintain regular radio checks every hour while conducting day patrols according to standard operating procedures (SOP); Maintain warden radio checks in Tindouf LO, Team Sites East of the Berm; Maintain tracking of UN staff movements; Avoid all unnecessary movements during the day;

Continued presence of FPOL/Algerian security personnel around the Team Sites and Tindouf Liaison Office 24/7; Staff to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activities in their area of responsibility to Mission HQ duty officer on ext 5425/5693 and UN Security Officer on Ext 5333.

3. The Algerian and Polisario authorities were informed. In response, the Algerian gendarmerie increased its presence around Tindouf Liaison office and Frente Polisario posted armed vehicles around Weather Heaven in Rabouni.

4. We will keep you updated on further developments regarding this matter.

Best Regards.