

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

29th January 2021

Jean Combricent,

RE: WESTERN SAHARA & MOROCCO

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of Western Sahara and continuing trade between the UK and Morocco. I have read your comments with interest.

The UK regards the status of Western Sahara as undetermined and I am encouraged by UK support for UN-led efforts to reach a lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that provides for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

As a member of the UN Security Council, the UK regularly discusses Western Sahara with Morocco and others - for example, during the renewal of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara's mandate. It is important that a lasting and mutually acceptable political solution is found, and I know that the UK continues to convey this to Morocco.

I welcome the recent announcement of the normalisation of relations between Israel and Morocco, which is a positive step between two valued partners of the UK. I am assured that the UK's position on the status of Western Sahara remains unchanged and unaffected by this announcement. Ultimately, the US' decision to recognise Western Sahara as part of Morocco is a matter for the US; however, I will ensure that ministers are aware of the concerns you have raised.

I am sure that, like me, you were encouraged to see the detail of the UK's agreement with Morocco, which provided a foundation for stronger trade ties between the two countries which can be developed now that the UK has exited the 'transition period' with the EU. You can access details of the agreement via the link below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/854324/UK_Morocco_agreement_parliamentary_report.pdf

Finally, you can be assured that I will certainly mention your concerns to the Foreign Secretary and will continue to monitor developments closely.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes,

Tom

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE