CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT:

Analyzing the role of the United Nations in the Western Sahara conflict

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The United Nations is the most productive international organization in resolving international world conflicts. The UN uses different techniques and approaches to resolve international conflicts, including mediation. This study analyzes the process of mediation and international conflict management from the point of view of UN efforts in the Western Sahara conflict, which has been ongoing since 1975.

This study specifically focuses on the UN's role in resolving intercultural conflict in Western Sahara and the concrete steps it has taken, such as implementation of the cease-fire, the Settlement Plan and establishing the Mission for an independence referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). It also examines on the negotiation process of the UN, and leaders of the countries involved in the conflict. Moreover, this research considers how the UN has taken into consideration questions of culture and ethnicity when resolving intercultural conflict.

The study is based on qualitative content analysis of documents such as resolutions and reports published by different UN bodies. Over 200 documents from the years 1991, 1997, and 2016 were retrieved from the UN Official Document System for this research.

The results of this research illustrate that UN mediation, in attempting to resolve the conflict in Western Sahara, helped establish a cease-fire between Morocco and Frente Polisario and the implementation of the Settlement Plan. Nevertheless, this strategy of peaceful negotiation and communication has not yet achieved the main goal of holding an independence referendum in Western Sahara.

Asiasanat – Keywords
International conflict, mediation, conflict management, United Nations, Western Sahara, MINURSO

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1. INTRODUCTION

There are many international conflicts in the world. Such conflicts usually exist between nations, states or peoples. International conflicts can lead to harmful consequences, such as war, or political and economic instability. To prevent those consequences and resolve a conflict peacefully, many peace movements emerge and a multitude of international organizations are established. To settle a conflict peacefully, warring parties can try to negotiate and reach an agreement which will be beneficial for all of them. Nevertheless, in some cases, conflicts cannot be resolved by state negotiations and they need external intervention from some international organization, such as the United Nations, International NGOs or the Peace Corps. These kinds of interventions are called mediations. Mediation is a kind of conflict-management method which helps states when their negotiations reach a deadlock. Mediators can employ military, political or economic interventions in ongoing or frozen conflicts (Bercovitch & Fretter, 2004).

This study analyzes the process of mediation and international conflict management from the point of view of United Nations ("UN") efforts in the Western Sahara conflict, which has been ongoing since 1975. Among other goals, the UN has been created to support peaceful and stable communication among countries. International conflicts prevent and restrain the development of a stable and secure international environment in a globalized world. Therefore, researching international conflicts can help provide a better understanding of the process of conflict and conflict resolution within a global context.

The concept of mediation offers an interesting insight into conflict management. Previous studies show mediation has been one of the most popular approaches to conflict management in conflict resolution (Wallensteen, 2002). It is interesting to concentrate on mediation as previous studies have shown this conflict-management approach is the most

effective method in intercultural conflict resolution. Moreover, previous research in the field

of international conflict management shows that the UN is the most productive international

organization in resolving international world conflicts (Wallensteen, 2002).

Since the end of the Cold War, the UN has been an objective international actor

that takes part in building peace and conflict resolution, using different techniques, tools and

approaches (Wallensteen, 2002). The UN sustains various peacekeeping operations all over

the world. The cost of such efforts has significantly increased since the 1980s, when the

budget for peacekeeping operations was about 300 million US dollars. Compared to the later

costs of peacekeeping operations in Cambodia (1991-93) and Somalia (1992-95) the financial

costs of the peacekeeping operations was already 1.6 billion US dollars for each country

(Rabi, 2010).

This thesis will examine the role of the UN in the conflict in Western Sahara. The

paper will analyze the UN's input, as well as peacekeeping practices in this ongoing conflict.

As Goulding (1999) explains, peacekeeping is a process, which aims to control and prevent

international military conflicts.

The UN uses risk assessment approaches in conflict resolution to monitor each

situation and proposes communication between the conflicting parties, before the situation

becomes critical and the conflict evolves into violence (Carment, 2003).

The role of the UN generally, has gained scholarly attention in the past.

Bercovitch et al. (2004) analyzed world conflicts from 1945 to 2003. The authors present

1,846 conflicts that occurred in Asia, Africa, America, Europe and the Middle East. In

addition, Bercovitch et al. (2004) partly describe the work of the UN generally and found

some results of its interventions in world conflicts. Bercovitch et al (2004) shows that the UN

participated in 956 conflicts (51.8%) of total researched conflicts, and successfully resolved

398 of them, or 21.6%. Compared to other organizations such as the European Union, Organization of American States, and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, which successfully resolved only 31, 58 and 34 international conflicts, respectively, the UN clearly plays a vital role in international conflict resolution.

Further information about UN Peacekeeping operations can be found on the UN website (https://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/). It provides a settled plan for a referendum for the people of Western Sahara. The referendum is a tool with which the UN seeks to offer a choice between Morrocan independence and integration into Western Sahara, for the Western Sahara indigenouse people. These studies and information resources give a clear picture of the UN's experience of peacekeeping in Western Sahara.

The Western Sahara territory is an example of a confrontation between people seeking self-determination and their former colonial rulers (Dahlitz etal., 2003). The conflict represents a clash of at least three different cultural groups and it has lasted for more than 35 years, at the time of writing this thesis. In other words, it is an extreme example of a long lasting, failed intercultural communication process. Despite being an effective mediator, the UN has not been able to resolve the conflict over the decades, therefore, the conflict is still "frozen". This research paper aims to provide an overview of the importance of UN in peacekeeping in Western Sahara. Therefore, this work aims to further develop the field of intercultural conflict communication by researching the UN's conflict management and communication strategies in its attempts to resolves the conflict in Western Sahara.

2. CULTURE AND CONFLICT

Before proceeding to discuss intercultural conflict, it is important to identify what culture is and if there is a difference between a "normal" conflict and an "intercultural" conflict. In the following paragraphs, basic definitions of culture are introduced, followed by a discussion of the connection points between culture and conflict.

2.1 CULTURE

Numerous studies have attempted to define culture by comparing societies using different criteria or dimensions to better understand it, and consider it from different perspectives. In the field of intercultural communication, various definitions of culture are found but there is no agreed definition. For example, Ting-Toomey (1999) defines culture as "a learned meaning system that consists of patterns of traditions, beliefs, values, norms, and symbols that are passed on from one generation to the next and are shared to varying degrees by interacting members of a community" (Ting-Toomey, 1999, p10).

According to Hofstede (2005, 15), culture is "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others".

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) provides another definition of culture, which it uses in its universal declaration on cultural diversity. The declaration reaffirms the definition developed from the conclusions of the World Conference of Cultural Policies of the World Commission on Culture and Development (26.08-04.09.2002). It says that:

"culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs" (p4).

The UN State of the World's Indigenous Peoples (SWIP) uses two definitions of culture to fully explain this term. The first definition was given by Tylor (1871) and is similar to the definition given by Ting-Toomey (1999), above. Tylor (1871) describes culture as: *"that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capacities and habits acquired by man as a member of society"*.

The second definition that the UN SWIP uses in the UNESCO declaration, evolves and expands Tylor's (1871) definition. The definition was given by Friedl and Pfeiffer (1977) (p283-284) and describes culture in the following way: "*Culture is also that aspect of our existence which makes us similar to some people, yet different from the majority of the people in the world… it is the way of life common to a group of people, a collection of beliefs and attitudes, shared understandings and patterns of behaviour that allow those people to live together in relative harmony, but set them apart from other peoples.*"

In this thesis, I focus on the last two definitions of culture used by the UN SWIP. Those definitions show how the UN identifies culture and pays attention to cultural differences of all peoples. Moreover, the definitions are used in fundamental UN resolutions and declarations and therefore influence the UN's work in resolving intercultural conflicts.

Culture plays a crucial role in international and intercultural communication (Gudykunst, 2002). This thesis focuses on the UN intercultural conflict resolution work involving intercultural and international communication in Western Sahara. The UN states in its various declarations that intercultural dialog is an effective instrument that can help create peace and protect cultural diversity within societies (Matsuura, 2001).

Moreover, the UN takes into consideration cultural diversity within societies and accepts cultural rights as fundamental human rights (UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001). The UN affirms that cultural values and cultural heritage is a part

of group identity of indigenous people (Gomez, 2007). According to the UN Secretariat of the

Permanent Forum of the Indigenous Issues, indigenous people with their cultural heritage

have their own rights such as:

    "Land rights, access to land and control over it and its resources are central to

indigenous peoples throughout the world, and they depend on such rights and access for their

material and cultural survival. In order to survive as distinct peoples, indigenous peoples and

their communities need to be able to own, conserve and manage their territories, lands and

resources" (UNPFII (2007c), paras 5-6).

    According to the UN, culture plays a significant role in self-determination and the

decolonization of indigenous peoples. Given peoples' cultural differences and cultural rights,

indegineous peoples have he right to be granted independence and self-government.

2.2 CONFLICT

A considerable amount of literature has been published on conflict and conflict behavior by

communication scholars. Over past decades, definitions of conflict offered, have a lot in

common and typically focus on components and characteristics of the conflict. For example,

Bartos and Wehr (2002) explain that conflict cannot exist without two components: goals

incompatibility and hostility. Conflict can be described as a situation where actors such as

people or groups of people, express hostility to each other in order to attain incompatible

goals (Bartos & Wehr, 2002).

    Conflict cannot exist without a source that is a central part of the conflict. For

example, Isenhart (2000) describes several common sources of conflict: values, procedures,

relationship, structure, data, interests and communication. These common sources can be a

part of a violent or a non-violent conflict. Nevertheless, there are some sources of conflict that

can increase the possibility of violence. Such sources can be economic, political and social (Gardam, 2006).

Himes (1980) defines social conflict as a struggle between collective actors in making progress towards getting desirable values, such as power, status and resources. Conflict is based on the key element of obstruction: one actor attempts to attain a desirable value, but another actor acts as a barrier to obtaining that desirable value

According to Bercovitch and Fretter (2004) conflict is an interaction in which warring parties do not accept the wishes of the other and try to impose their goals and points of view. It is therefore, important to identify the conflicting parties. Bercovitch, Kremenyuk and Zartman (2009) defines "parties in conflict" as "… individuals, groups, organizations, nations, and other system in conflict".

Zariski (2010) distinguishes three levels of conflict: micro level, meso level, and macro level. Micro level includes interpersonal conflict. Meso level describes conflict between groups of people, organizations, or institutions. Macro level conflict refers to conflicts among big groups, for example ethnic groups or conflicts between national governments.

Ramsbotham (2005) also distinguish three levels of conflict: international level, state level, and social level. International level conflict includes global, regional and bilateral relations. State level conflict includes conflicts at national state level, and social level refers to conflicst which occur at grassroot level.

The difference between international and intercultural conflicts will be discussed in the next chapter.

2.3 FROM INTERCULTURAL TO INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT

Rubenfeld and Clement (2012) describe intercultural conflicts as clashes based on cultural differences and misunderstandings. They purport that intercultural conflicts could be a small conflict in the work environment or an international conflict that would threaten the lives of groups of people from different cultural backgrounds. Rubenfeld and Clement (2012) imply that intercultural conflict occurs because people are inclined to identify themselves with a particular group and will defend the interests of that group, if those interests are attacked by members of another group. The authors extend their examination of mediation to factors which govern the formation of groups and the reasons for that formation. Language plays a key role in group-identification, as do historical and contextual factors. When a conflict occurs among different groups, those groups need a mediator to defuse the tension and help one group understand another, and vice versa (Rubenfeld & Clement 2012).

When there is a clash between countries based on cultural differences, it is clear the conflict automatically shifts to the national level and the "parties in conflict" (Bercovitch, et al. 2009, p 7) are not individuals any more, but nations. Bercovitch et al. (2004) found that international conflict is a process of nations struggling for the dominant position - in other words, control - or the destruction of other parties.

International conflict can be divided into several types, and in Bercovitch et al. (2004) four of them are presented. The first step is "interstate conflict" which usually arises between states that have mutual borders. In this case, warring parties have competing ideologies and undertake provocative acts toward one another, which can lead to military conflict. Another type of international conflict is called "internationalized civil conflict" (Bercovitch et al., 2004). This type of conflict occurs when one of the warring parties tries to intervene in the civil war of its enemy. For example, "Saudi Arabia's invasion of Yemen on

the side of the royalists" (Bercovitch et al, 2004). The third type of international conflict is "militarized conflict," and occurs when parties have competing military objectives and goals. Bercovitch et al (2004) states that it is not certain whether this kind of conflict will result in a war, but it can heighten international tensions and people will suffer or die.

The final type of international conflict in Bercovitch et al. (2004) is a "political incident". The central issue of this conflict is politics and the conflict usually arises through political demonstrations, propaganda or ultimatums. The reasons "political incidents" usally occur they are usually visa systems, world trade, the issue of laws directed against other countries actions. In addition, these conflicts are not violent and there is a little likelihood that they turn out to be a war.

As can be seen, international conflicts can have a negative side that results in military interference. The more people involved in the conflict the more severe it can become. Worst of all, international conflicts may lead to a war which leads to hundreds or thousands or even millions of victims. It is also typical that over time, clashing groups don't want to give in and resolve a conflict without military involvement. They continue to do provocative actions, infringe upon each other's rights, and humiliate peoples involved in a conflict. Therefore, this type of conflict needs to be managed and resolved. It goes without saying that it is desirable that it be resolved without bloodshed (Bercovich, 2004).

Gardam (2006) states that most of the international conflicts happen in the poorest countries, or countries with low development according to the UN Human development report (1997-2001). Moreover, violent conflicts are more likely to emerge in the states with non-democratic, autocratic or uncertain democracratic political systems (Gardam, 2006). Nevertheless, there is a relationship between political system and conflict, or war propensity.

Ray (1998) notes that there is always a third factor that influences both the conflict propensity and the system.

International conflict does not always include conflicting states. The conflict could be inside the State's borders and still considered as an international conflict if it is a threat to international peace and universal values, such as human rights or right for self-determination, are violated (Stern, 2016).

Self-determination in terms of decolonization was a legal right for peoples of the colonial territory. Nevertheless, it was always a controversial concept because of several possible outcomes of decolonization for the colonial territories. The State gains independence, joins another State or stays under the former colonial control (Dahlitz et al., 2003).

Before the dependent territory claims its sovereignty from the colonial power, it goes through three phases. Each phase can last for several years or even decades. During the first phase, the colonial power takes all the control over the dependent territory. In the second phase, the colonial power collects all the economic benefits from the dependent territory, and its political status remains the same. During the last phase, the economic returns run low and the local population demands sovereignty (Diehl & Goertz, 2002).

In early 1970s the UN, with the support of the International Court of Justice, gave a clear, legible definition to the concept of self-determination which implies peoples of the colonial territory have the ability to choose their internal and external political status. By peoples we mean the majority of the national population - minorities are not included. The state is a functional governance system (Dahlitz et al., 2003). States where human rights are violated experience more political violence, such as judicial execution, torture, police, and prison violence (Gardam, 2006).

3. CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION

3.1 INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

For creating peace and conflict prevention, peace workers apply conflict resolution strategies, which can help to some extent. As a result, intercultural conflict management emerged and made it possible to analyze conflicts and find ways to reduce international tension. According to Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2001), intercultural conflict management is a process of using a set of culture-sensitive skills that help transition the process of conflict effectively and meet important objects amicably, for warring parties. Intercultural conflict management consists of different methods and types. As Bercovitch et al. (2004) argue, there are three peaceful conflict-management types: diplomatic, legal, and political. The first type is diplomatic, or in other words, bilateral negotiation. Negotiation is a problem-solving process that relies on cooperation and mutual respect in order to satisfy mutual interests (Isenhart, 2000).

This is the kind of conflict management parties use when they want to control a conflict by themselves and do not want to defeat an external power. The second type of conflict management is legal and means states are trying to create a new international law or submit a conflict to the international courts or tribunals. That is, states decline all responsibility for the conflict and do not keep it under control. The third type of conflict management is political and results in the establishment of international organization. These organizations have the express purpose of achieving peace; they are the UN or regional groups, such as the African Union or European Union. The organizations take measures to resolve the conflict or provide warring parties with humanitarian aid. The decisions of those organizations are taken by the government of the countries, but not judges, which is the difference between the legal types of conflicts management (Bercovitch, 2004).

In these situtations, states pass on responsibilities to the external agencies and do

not control the conflict anymore. Therefore, when international organizations are involved in a such conflicts, they have to offer the conflicting parties more than then can do by themselves during the bilateral negotiation. In other words, the international organizations take negotiations into their own hands, undertake the intercultural conflict management, use the culture-sensitive skills and treat everyone with respect.

Stern (2016) states that traditional methods of managing international conflicts are: diplomatic, military, and economic facilities of control. Stern (2016) also describes four basic conflict resolution strategies: power politics, conflict transformation, structural prevention, and normative change. Conflict transformation strategy focuses on reconciliation between the states and satisfaction of mutual interests. Structural prevention focuses on establishing independent organizations to identify nonviolent ways to prevent the conflict. The main point of normative change strategy is the creation of principles, norms and responsibilities for the conflicting states, in order to prevent a violent conflict (Stern, 2016).

Tracks of diplomacy is another concept of conflict management described by Ramsbotham (2005). Track I refers to official communication of high-level leaders or governmental representatives. Track I is a type of official diplomacy which includes such diplomatic activities as mediation, negotiation, or different kinds of sanctions: diplomatic or economic (Nan, 2003). Nan (2003) also notes that war or peacekeeping are not a part of official diplomacy, or in other words, Track I diplomacy. This diplomacy may influence escalation or de-escalation of the conflict (Nan, 2003). According to Ramsbotham (2005), escalation and de-escalation of the conflict can be presented as a graph.

Figure 1. Conflict escalation and de-escalation
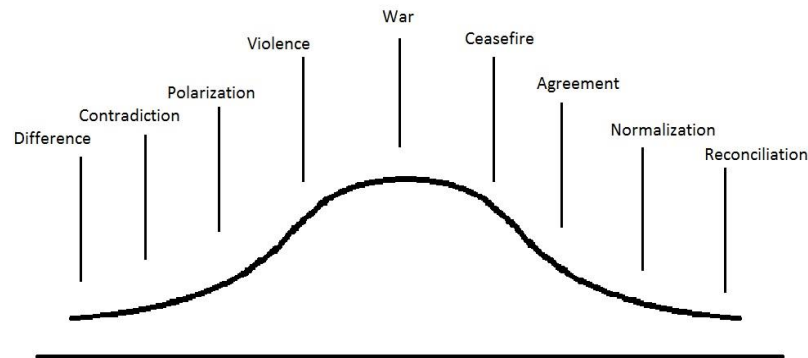
(Ramsbotham, 2005, p.11)

An example of Track I diplomacy can be illustrated by the UN intervention in Iraq

in 1991 (Böhmelt, 2010). Track II diplomacy is unofficial diplomacy that implies unofficial

interactions of mediators with conflict parties (Ramsbotham, 2005). Track II diplomacy

activities are unofficial meetings and conferences where NGOs and unofficial groups can

discuss conflict issues more freely than high-level leaders or governmental representatives

(Kraft, 2000). Track II diplomacy specialists have more regular meetings than actors of Track

I diplomacy. Actors of Track II diplomacy undertake investigations and write reports which

can influence Track I diplomacy (Simon, 2002).

3.2 CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Wallensteen (2002, p8.) defines conflict resolution as "a situation where the conflict parties

enter into an agreement that solves their central incompatibilities, accept each other's

continued existence as parties and cease all violent action against each other". Peace

agreement is an essential part of conflict resolution (Wallensteen, 2002).

Nevertheless, according to previous experience in world conflict resolution, a signed peace agreement is not always a result of successful conflict resolution and can become just a signed paper, with no other actions, that could be easily broken. For example, the peace agreement in Indochina in 1954, the peace agreement between India and Pakistan, and agreement between the Soviet Unit and Nazi Germany in 1939 (Wallensteen, 2002). Another example is the Paris peace agreement in 1991, to stop the violent conflict in Cambodia that had failed. A massive rehabilitation program of the UN to take the control over the political system in Cambodia, UNTAC (Transitional Authority in Cambodia) (Lizee, 1999).

Diehl (2002) assumes that most self-determination conflicts are preceded by military conflict or war. However, some factors can determine whether the dominant territory abandons the dependent territory without a military conflict. One of the factors is how valuable and important the territory is for the colonial power. Another factor is military conflict costs compared to the economic benefits that the colonial power can obtain from the territory.

Conflict prevention is a strategy that helps develop more stable and secure international environments for international actors. Preventive diplomacy can be a very significant instrument in successful conflict prevention, resolution, and can be applied at different stages of conflict (Carment, 2003).

Peacemaking bring conflict parties together to stop the violence and find common ground. Peacekeeping is a process of working together towards a peaceful co-existence between conflict parties after a violent conflict (Gardam, 2006).

Peace research is based on analytical research about the background of the previous and ongoing international wars and its causes (Wallensteen, 2002). However,

conflicts are very diverse and there is no universal approach that can be applied to every

conflict so that it can be resolved effectively (Furlong, 2005).

3.3 MEDIATION

Mediation implies there is collaboration between conflict parties with an unbiased third party

acting as a mediator. The mediator regulates a process of discussion and negotiation between

conflict parties to achieve the main goal of mediation, which is to establish an agreement that

will resolve the conflict (Isenhart, 2000).

Other goals of mediation are: "to facilitate organizational change, create process

for dialogue, break destructive cycles, agreement in principle, and formal written agreement."

(Isenhart, 2000, p47). Successful mediation depends on the skills and experience of

mediators. (Isenhart, 2000).

Princen (2014) talks about intermediary intervention and decision-making process

in the context of international conflict management. Intermediary intervention is essential in

managing international disputes for several reasons. One reason is that negotiations between

the conflict parties should be transparent and open to the public and mass media. Effective

negotiations are possible if an independent, third-party actor takes responsibility for the

conflict negotiations. Another reason intermediary intervention is essential, is that if the

negotiations between the conflict parties are conducted by domestic politicians or diplomats,

they could put all human relations at risk during the negotiation and stop listening to each

other, which will exaggerate the conflict (Princen, 2014). Moreover, Tint (2010) states that

mediation practitioners should always take into account cultural elements and adapt their

communication strategies for those elements.

Groups that work on conflict resolution are individual states, NGOs, regional and

global organizations such as: Institute for multi-track diplomacy, International Alert, the

Carter Center's International Negotiation Network, the International Crisis Group, the Forum on Early Warning and Early Response, the Project on Ethnic Relations, and the Conflict Management Group (Carment, 2003).

Intermediaries could effect the interactions of the conflict parties differently. Two types of mediators can impact interactions between conflict parties: "neutral" and "principal". "Neutral" mediators have some impact on the interaction, but "principal" intermediaries provide focus and effect the agreement between the conflict parties (Princen, 2014).

Involvement of a mediator in the conflict can be an advantage to the conflict parties or countries. As Zartman and Touval (1985) state, very often participation of the mediator in international conflicts is beneficial for the parties because they not only gain benefits from resolving the conflict, but mediators also reduce conflict expenses.

4. THE CONFLICT IN WESTERN SAHARA
4.1 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE CONFLICT IN WESTERN SAHARA

Western Sahara is the geographical name for the territory in Northern Africa, neighbouring Morocco to the south, Algeria and Mauritania to the east and north, and bordering the Atlantic Ocean to the west. Originally, the territory of Western Sahara was inhabited with different nomadic and Berber tribes, which gradually became known as a Saharawi society, as people started to call themselves Saharawi people (San, 2010).

The territory of Western Sahara was colonized by the Spanish Republic in the end of the 19th century, in 1884. During the colonial time, the Western Sahara was recognized as Spanish Sahara and later became a Spanish province. Control over the territory was taken by the Spanish protectorate located in Northern Morocco, which also was a territory of Spain at that time. Northern Morocco and the Western Sahara had been part of Spain for decades, but effective control over the territories from its protectorate in Morocco Spain, only began in 1930 (San, 2010).

Later, in 1956, when France retrieve independence to Morocco, it was obliged to reneg control over the northern territory of Morocco and Spanish protectorate had been dislocated to the Western Sahara (San, 2010).

Spain had intended to enhance its position in the territory through building military bases, trading posts, making investments into infrastructure of Western Sahara cities, and exploring the territory for mineral resources. After several geological expeditions of Spanish geologists to Western Sahara in the middle of 20th century, large deposits of phosphate were discovered, extraction and usage of which led to a rapid economic growth (San, 2010).

Spain subsequently did enhance its position in the colonized territory – developing the region, strengthening its economy, and increasing the population's literacy rate. Nevertheless, people of the Western Sahara considered Spain as a foreign enemy that sooner or later should leave the Saharawi territory (San, 2010).

4.1.1 The origins of the liberation movement. In 1953, when the French government had jailed the king of Morocco, Mohammed V, several groups of Moroccan guerillas organized into a Liberation Army. Similar to the Liberation movement in Morocco, Saharawi guerillas united into a liberation movement that was called a "Saharawis Liberation army". The guerillas were struggling against the French and Spanish armies, that were located on the territory of Morocco and the Western Sahara. But because of insufficient forces to fight the trained and well prepared Spanish and French armies, the guerillas were destroyed (San. 2010).

After these failed attempts to attack French and Spanish armies, a new liberation movement started to originate in Western Sahara. More and more Saharawis joined the new movement. The members of the liberation movement started to gather in peaceful assemblies, publish articles about decolonization of the Spanish Sahara, and self-determination as the Western Sahara Republic. Frequent protests and assemblies soon developed into massive nationalist propaganda. This movement found support from the UN, and in 1967 the UN started to demand that Spain decolonize the territory of Western Sahara. As a result of the UN's repeated insistence for a self-determination referendum, and the desire to decolonize the Western Sahara, Spain started to change its colonists politics from the Francoist strategies of control to more democratic politics. However, Spain continued to maintain its military bases and protectorate status in Western Sahara.

Later, in 1969, the Liberation movement created a Nationalist and Anti-colonialist political party which asserted the right for self-determination for the Western Sahara. The party demanded independence from Spain and Morocco, and Mauritania in the future, because it suspected that Morocco or Mauritania could seize the territory and divide it between themselves, when Spain leaves it.

In 1970, the Saharawi Liberation movement gathered more than 5,000 people. The members of the movement were trying to peacefully negotiate with the Spanish government to gain independence for Western Sahara from Spain, so they gathered a mass meeting in Zemla in 1970. However, the protesters were killed by the Spanish military forces. This event went down in history as "the Zemla massacre".

After these events, three years later in 1973, a group of young nationalists created a liberation movement called "Polisario Front". These nationalists were strong enough to fight for independence and stop all the peaceful negotiations. The main reason the Polisario Front did not want Spaniards to control their territory, was because Saharawi people were different from Spanish people, and they didn't want Europeans changing their lifestyle, or bring in new rules and traditions. They wanted their country to evolve independently, without the influence of a foreign enemy (San, 2010).

Polisario Front, the Saharan anti-colonial struggle, didn't find support from Morocco because the Moroccan government intended to stop the Polisario Front-led revolt and occupy the territory of the Western Sahara itself. Moroccan authorities even   attempted to occupy the territory by sending a group of policemen, but they failed to take any actions during this occupation. Despite the Moroccan government being opposed to the Polisario Front, a lot of Moroccans supported it and joined the movement. Besides Moroccans, the

Polisario Front consisted of Saharawis and people from the former Saharawi Liberation army (San, 2010).

Gradually, this new liberation movement (i.e. Polisario Front) gathered enough people to start armed action attacks against Spanish posts and military bases situated all over the Western Sahara territory. These armed action attacks led to a war named the "Liberation War in Spanish Sahara". After a year of of the Liberation War, in 1974, Spain declared that it was ready to hold a decolonization and self-determination referendum as demanded by the UN since 1967. The UN insisted on the referendum to decide the country's future. The Saharawi people gained the right to vote in that referendum and to decide if they wanted to be an independent country, free from Spanish colonialism (San, 2010).

While Saharawis were trying to remove Spanish control, Morocco had created a plan to establish a Greater Morocco and decided to annex the territory of Western Sahara. The Moroccan government sensed that Spain will soon leave the territory and started to take actions to occupy it. Morocco applied to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) with a claim that the Western Sahara historically was a Moroccan territory. However, the ICJ dismissed the claim. Regardless, Hassan II, the king of Morocco at that time, was not satisfied with the decision of the ICJ and announced that: "Morocco will liberate its Sahara", no matter what ICJ has decided. The king started to prepare the "Green March" of 350,000 Moroccan volunteers, who had to cross the border of the Western Sahara to "save it" from the foreign invasion (Spain) (San, 2010).

To avoid the conflict with Morocco, which had the potential to lead to a new war between Spain and Morocco, the Spanish government agreed to cede the Western Sahara to Morocco and Mauritania. So, the territory was divided proportionately, where of 80% of Western Sahara was allocated to Morocco and 20% to Mauritania. The Moroccan annexation

of Western Sahara was supported by the United States of America and France. Morocco was taking advantage of the fact that the Spanish General Francisco Franco was dying and the Francoist regime was receding. As a result, in 1975, the Spanish army left the Western Sahara territory and the UN recognized the Polisario Front as the legitimate authority of the Saharawi people (San, 2010).

The Moroccan government's actions lead to a new war with the Polisario Front. The war continued until 1991. During the war, Moroccan military forces had been launching bomb attacks and undertaking violent acts against Saharawi people. Moroccans killed and robbed Western Sahara inhabitants, and raped Saharawi women. Saharawis were forced to leave their homes and move to the Saharan desert, to the southern border with Algeria. There they have organized refugee camps under the control of the Polisario Front (San, 2010).

According to Herz (2013), refugee camps are humanitarian spaces where people can live and support their biological existence. Refugees are given medical care, water and food. However, refugees' freedom is limited socially and politically as they are denied fundamental human rights such as the rights to vote or work outside the camps. Refugees in the camps are dependent on the actions of others and excluded from cultural, economic and social exchange.

In 2013, approximately 160,000 Saharawi people lived in the refugee camps and most of them had been living there for more than 35 years (Herz, 2013). The self-determination referendum had never been held in Western Sahara and therefore, the conflict remains unresolved.

4.2 THE ROLE OF THE UN IN THE WESTERN SAHARA CONFLICT

According to the UN declaration 2072 (1965), the UN requested that the Spanish government give sovereignty to the Spanish Sahara territory (what later became known as the Western Sahara) in 1965. This attempt to liberate the territory of Western Sahara relied on the right to

self-determination which was mentioned in the UN declaration 1514 issued in 1960.

According to the UN declaration 1514 (1960)

"All people have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development." (Declaration 1514(XV) 14.12.1960)

After the Spanish decolonization of Western Sahara in 1975, control over the territory was split between Morocco and Mauritania (Daadaoui, 2008). In 1991, the UN, with cooperation of the Government of the organization of African Unity, established the peacekeeping operation called the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). The purpose of MINURSO was to hold the referendum in Western Sahara. The referendum was intended to start a cease-fire as well as negotiations between the government of Morocco and the Polisario Front to allow the nations of Western Sahara decide whether to become a sovereign state or integrate with their former colonial power, Morocco. (2,984th meeting, 19 April 1991, S/22464 and Corr.1).

Figure 2. Timeline of significant moments in the Western Sahara conflict

1965

1975
Spain cedes the Western Sahara to Morocco and Mauritania

Morocco respondes with "Green March" over the border

The UN calls on Spain to begin decolonization of the Western Sahara

1976
Refugee camps in Tindouf, Algeria. Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic is declared.

1988
Polisario Front and Morocco agreed on ceasefire

1991
the Settlement plan, MINURSO

MINURSO is established to oversee the implementation of the peace plan (Settlement plan)

1997
Houston Agreement

1999
the king of Morocco Hassan II died

2003
the Baker Plan

2016…

5. METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the choice of research methodology for this study. Firstly, we clarify the aim of the study. Secondly, we look at the basic ideas behind qualitative research and explain which research methodology will help to answer the research questions that are set up for this thesis. This is followed by a description of the kind of data that was collected, and how it was collected. The last part of the chapter explains the process of data analysis.

5.1. PROBLEM FORMULATION AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study analyzes the strategies that the UN used to resolve the Western Sahara conflict. This conflict involved several countries and cultural groups, and is considered an intercultural conflict for the purposes of this study. Therefore, an intercultural approach is needed to resolve it. The objective of the study is to determine whether the strategies that the UN used, can be seen as culture-sensitive. The conflict includes not only the conflicting parties but also exterior countries that became involved in the conflict resolution or deadlock. It is interesting to identify the interests and roles those countries have played within the conflict process. The main research question of this study is:

> RQ 1) *What is the role of the UN in intercultural conflict resolution in the*
>
> *ongoing Western Sahara conflict?*

To narrow down the research question, it was divided into three sub-questions:

1. What steps did the UN take to try and resolve the conflict in Western Sahara?

2. How did the UN Secretary-General, or his representatives, communicate with the leaders of the countries or government representatives of the countries involved in the conflict?

3. How did the UN take questions of culture and ethnicity into consideration when attempting to resolve this conflict?

5.2 CHOOSING A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

This study is rooted in qualitative methodology. Qualitative research is a set of interpretive and descriptive approaches in the humanities and social sciences (Flick, 2007). It is difficult to offer a brief definition of qualitative research due to the absence of a common theory or paradigm, and the wide variety of methods and strategies of qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Basically, qualitative research provides analytic explanation for various social processes (Barbour, 2008). It has been applied across disciplines such as sociology, psychology, medicine, politics and the economy. For every discipline, different methods or strategies can be found for undertaking the qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

For example, Travers (2001) distinguishes five main qualitative research methods: observation, interviewing, ethnographic fieldwork, discourse analysis, and textual analysis. Qualitative research relies on various sources of data such as textual data derived from archival material, letters, textbooks, newspaper stories; visual data derived from images, photographs or videos; verbal data from interviews and conversations (Barbour, 2008).

Travers (2001) notes that one of the epistemological ideologies relevant to qualitative research is interpretivism. Interpretivist approaches allow social scientists to interpret people's actions from their own perspective.

There are many reasons why researchers might choose a qualitative approach for their research. Due to its flexibility, qualitative research allows the researcher "to take a holistic and comprehensive approach to the study of phenomena" (Corbin, 2014). Gillham (2010) describes different characteristics and arguments for the use of qualitative research. He states that qualitative research allows researchers to study human behavior through understanding its context. Since the purpose of this study is to analyze the strategies that the

UN implemented in its attempts to resolve the ongoing conflict in Western Sahara, a qualitative approach seems the most suitable for this study.

5.3 UNOBTRUSIVE QUALITATIVE METHODS

Liamputtong and Ezzy (2007) define several types of qualitative research methods: interviews, focus groups, unobtrusive methods, narrative analysis, and participatory action research. For this study, we focused on unobtrusive methods that allow for conducting qualitative research using different types of existing data such as literature or archived materials. Unobtrusive methods do not need participation from respondents or subjects of the research like, for example, interviews, focus groups, observation or participatory action research (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2007).

One of the most important advantages of unobtrusive qualitative research is that it allows data collection from the past, regardless of whether the subjects of the research are still contactable or alive. For unobtrusive research methods using textual resources, data can be obtained from published materials such as textbooks, government policy documents, journals, newspapers, magazines, and the like. If the researcher uses audiovisual material, data can be obtained, for example, from films, television programs, videos, images, music or photographs (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2007). Due to the absence of audiovisual data for this present research paper, it became clear that relevant data would mostly come from published materials related to the topic.

Of course, there are some disadvantages to unobtrusive methods. One of the limitations of unobtrusive methods is that they exclude a large amount of data that takes into account the subjects' point of view. Another disadvantage is that the data may also suffer from inaccuracy because it was created by other people, therefore the data may be selective (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2007). However, when compared with other research methods,

unobtrusive research methods seem most suitable for this project. This method allows

analysis of qualitative, textual data that was published decades ago. It also enables analysis

without requiring participation of subjects of the research, such as the UN and the parties in

conflict.

5.4 GATHERING THE DATA

This study uses public record documents from the UN. Such documents can be retrieved from

several online sources that are mentioned on the UN research website http://research.un.org/.

The UN provides free online access to its documentation which could be found through

Official Document System (ODS) http://www.un.org/en/documents/ods/; UN Info Quest

(UN-I-QUE) (http://lib-unique.un.org/DPI/DHL/unique.nsf?Open); UN Bibliographic

Information System (UNBISNET) (http://unbisnet.un.org/); UN Member states: on the

Record (http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/unms/).

   To decide which document search system would be the most suitable for the

study, I developed several criteria to help select a database. The most important of these was

the decision to focus on three periods of the conflict timeline. The first time period is the year

1991, when the UN Mission for Referendum in Western Sahara was established. The second

time period is the year 1997, when the Houston Agreement was signed to prolong the

MINURSO mandate. The third period is the year 2015 until the time of writing this study

(2016). The second criterion was access to full text documents. The third criterion was that

the documents contained within the database should be reports, resolutions or summary

records, as these provide the most relevant information concerning the topic. The UN-I-QUE

database provides only document indexes and codes of UN documentation, not the full text

documents. The full text documents could be retrieved using UN-I-QUE indexes and codes

from other UN search systems, such as ODS or UNBISNET. UN Bibliographic Information

System (UNBISNET) provides access to bibliographic records, voting records, and index to

Speeches. Bibliographic Records is a database of UN documents, the UN Dag Hammarskjöld

Library and the Library of the UN Office in Geneva. The UNBISNET contains UN

documents only from year 1993, and does not include documents from the year 1991, which

is crucial in the context of the timeline of the ongoing conflict in the Western Sahara. Voting

records consist of votes for UN resolutions and does not provide the necessary information

requird for the research. Index to Speeches is a catalogue of citations and full speeches made

in the General Assembly by the Security Council, Economic and Social Council, and the

Trusteeship Council. The UN Member State: On the Record search system provides full text

documents about the 189 UN Member States, including information about membership,

resolutions, and conventions. Comparative evaluation of the UN's documents search systems

is shown in the Table 1.

Table 1. Comparative evaluation of the UN's documents search systems

Criteria	ODS	UN-I-QUE	UNBISNET			UN Member State: on the Record
			Bibliographic records	Voting records	Index to Speeches	
1. Time (documents since 1991)	Yes	Yes	No (only from 1993)	Yes	Yes	Yes
2. Full text documents	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
3. Reports, resolutions, summary records	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

From Table 1 we can conclude that only the ODS system meets all the research criteria listed above. Therefore, for this study, I chose to retrieve data concerning the conflict in Western Sahara from the ODS. The ODS provides documentation since 1946, and it is updated regularly. The ODS database contains documents such as reports and statements made by the Secretary-General on the different questions relevant to this research. The ODS provides full text documents of draft resolutions and resolutions by the Security Council. It includes different types of letters from officials, representatives, and the Secretary-General. Summary records and reports of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, annotated agenda of the regular Session of the General Assembly, and financial reports are included as well.

A simple search query for "Western Sahara" in the ODS database resulted in over 47,000 documents published in English. Looking specifically at the chosen time periods, the same search query for English documents identified 1,400 to 1,600 documents in ODS, depending on the year, for every year since 1970, except for the year 2016, where the system returned about 300 documents only (the search was completed in the spring of 2016).

5.5 ANALYSIS

Today, most interactions between people are reflected in different kinds media. These could be newspapers, television or websites. Different techniques and ways to obtain and analyze this data are required. Any kind of textual data can be valuable for research, starting from a note pinned to a board by a coworker to the text published in the regional publications (Travers, 2001).

There are different techniques available to analyze textual data. These include, but are not limited to, content analysis, thematic analysis, semiotic analysis, and discourse analysis (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2007). For this study, content analysis was chosen. This technique will be described in more detail below.

5.5.1 Qualitative content analysis. Qualitative content analysis is one possible research technique that is used to analyze unstructured textual data. The purpose of the method is to generate a valid interpretation from the available data set.

To conduct qualitative content analysis, a researcher needs to develop a research design. The first step of the content analysis research design is to determine whether it is possible to answer the research questions and make valid inferences out of the existing textual data (Krippendorf, 2004). The research design consists of several analytical steps or components: unitizing, sampling, recording/coding, reducing data, abductively inferring contextual phenomena, and narrating. The first four components of content analysis research design sort, reduce and conceptualize the data for the analysis. The first step of the content analysis design is unitizing. Unitizing is a process of differentiating pieces of information that could be suitable for the analysis. For example, pieces of text, images or other chunks of information that are worth observing (Krippendorf, 2004).

The reduction of qualitative data is important in content analysis because the amount of qualitative data suitable for the analysis could be enormous. The researcher needs to examine small segments of data, otherwise the research can take years (Krippendorf, 2004). Therefore, after the unitizing, the data should be sorted and reduced by sampling. Sampling is the next component of content analysis that helps to identify some measurable data out of a big amount of unstructured textual matter (Krippendorf, 2004).

Textual data can be sampled according to genres, concepts, plots, and frames. Texts also can be sampled as letters, issues of newspapers, etcetera. Different techniques can be applied to sample textual data, such as random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling, varying probability sampling, cluster sampling, snowball sampling, relevance sampling, census and convenience sampling (Krippendorf, 2004).

Relevance sampling seems to be the most suitable sampling technique for this research. Relevance sampling is a technique where a researcher examines the textual data before the analysis. When searching for data through an online search engine such as Google or Internet explorer, keywords for the search should be identified. Using more than one keyword helps to reduce the number of results that a search engine provides. For example, for this research data sources could be: Google search engine, or the UN Official document system (ODS). Here are some examples of keywords that can be used for relevance sampling in this research, about the conflict in the Western Sahara.

1. Google search keywords. We will analyze the first 20 results for each keyword:

    a. Western Sahara conflict

    b. Western Sahara conflict resolution

    c. Sahrawi Republic

    d. Western Sahara United Nations

2. The UN ODS

    a. Western Sahara

    b. MINURSO

Using the initial search terms of "Western Sahara" in the ODS, returned on average between 1,400 and 1,600 documents, depending on the year. The results of the search for the documents in the UN ODS are shown in the Table 2.

Table 2. The UN ODS relevance sampling table.

Year	Number of results	Year	Number of results
2000	1,432	2009	1,664
2001	1,479	2010	1,693

2002	1,433	2011	1,641
2003	1,435	2012	1,637
2004	1,526	2013	1,598
2005	1,620	2014	1,602
2006	1,648	2015	1,611
2007	1,603	2016	254
2008	1,650		

There are no limitations on where to find appropriate texts for relevance sampling. Therefore, the researcher decides where to find the data, whether that be on the internet, in newspaper issues, in archives, libraries, and the like. Relevance sampling does not provide a representative sample of all relevant data for the research. Nevertheless, relevance sampling creates a set of relevant textual matter for future analysis (Krippendorf, 2004). The next step in sampling is to decide how big the sample size should be. Since sample size is specific to a particular piece of research, the researcher decides how big the proper sample size should be.

5.5.1.1 Recording and coding. The next step in content analysis is recording/coding. Recording is a process of interpretation of the information that a researcher analyses. During the process of recording the researcher formulates and implements some recording instructions. Later those instructions can be seen as rules for coding.

Krippendorf (2004) specifies several terms for recording that have to be maintained in order to develop observer-independent instructions for coding. In other words, to diminish subjectivity while interpreting the data and make it replicable for other researchers. For example, to conduct content analysis, a coder should have certain

qualifications such as suitable cognitive abilities and appropriate educational background. It is also important that a coder includes some information about "the syntax and semantics of the data language". The researcher must also ensure that appropriate instructions are provided about "the nature and administrations of the records" (Krippendorf, 2004).

Coding is a method of qualitative data analysis, in which the researcher describes and interprets the data by separating them into codes and categories. In qualitative analysis, there are two types of coding: coding as indexing, and coding as a conceptual device (Schreier, 2013).

Indexing coding, or reductive coding, is a process of gathering the data that falls into the same category or concept. Coding as a conceptual device is a method of analyzing data through finding new concepts. It is a process of creating and identifying ties between various concepts, and also between concepts and data (Schreier, 2013). For this research, indexing, or reductive coding, was chosen as the coding method.

After recording and coding are completed, the researcher should prepare three kinds of information for the records: administrative information, information on the organization of records, and substantive information about the phenomena in the records. Administrative information is information about recording what has been done. For example, by whom the recording has been done, name of the project, what kind of data is represented in a project, and some examples of texts. "Information on the organization of records" allows for records of hierarchies of categorized units of texts (Krippendorf, 2004).

After administrative information, information about the organization of records and substantive information about the phenomena in the records is collected. The next steps in the research design are: abductively inferring contextual phenomena and narrating. The last two steps were replaced with more relevant "Searching for texts" technique suggested by

Seale (2004). Searching for text can be undertaken either by a text searching program (such as is often the case in quantitative content analysis) or by a researcher. The main point of this technique is to find relevant concepts in the text and then create nodes around those concepts (Seale 2004).

      5.5.2. Validity and reliability of qualitative content analysis. Credibility of qualitative research is based on reliability and validity of the data and the research method. Reliable data and methods in qualitative research increase reliability of the results. The research is seen as more reliable if it can be repeated by some other researchers and get the same or similar results. In other words, reliability estimates to which extent the results of repeated experiment are similar to the original results (Silverman, 2006). Reliability of the research is also determined by its level of detail. Qualitative research becomes more reliable if it is depicted and described in details, and the whole process of the research is clear and transparent (Silverman, 2006).

6. DATA ANALYSIS

This section presents the data analysis of the UN documents found in the UN ODS system. First, this section will explain how the data was reduced and structured. To reduce the data, unitizing, sampling, coding, and coding techniques were used. The results of the data analyses will be presented in chapter 7.

6.1 UNITIZING

The qualitative data for this research was found in the UN ODS system that was described and justified earlier in the chapter 6. The documents in UN ODS are resolutions and reports written by different UN bodies. UN ODS stores resolutions and reports published by the Secretary-General, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Human Rights Council, the Secretariat, the Administrative Tribunal and the General Assembly (from first to six's committee). The system also stores documents published in six official UN languages. For this research, the documents published in English were chosen. At this point, the amount of data is still enormous and it is necessary to continue reducing the data.
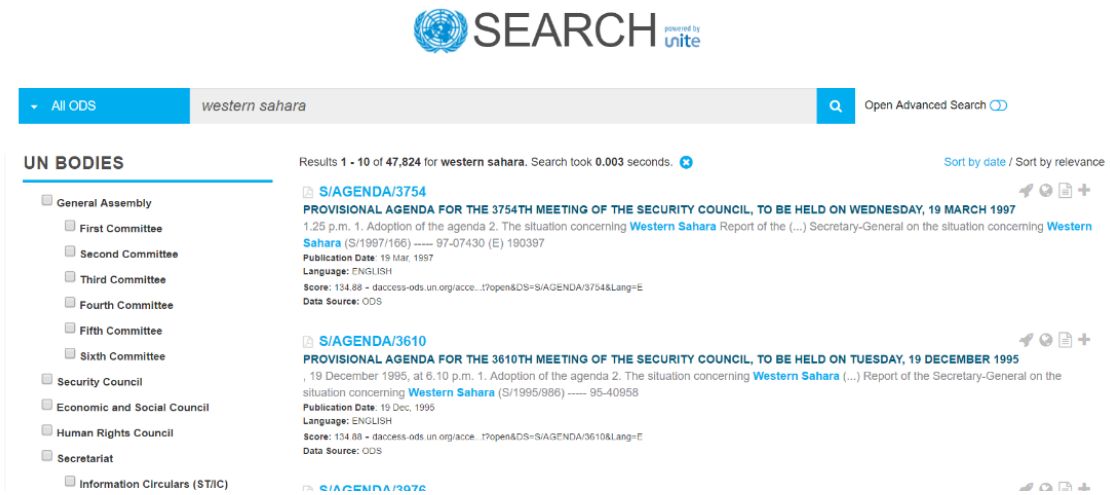
6.2 SAMPLING

As it was discussed above, that for this research, relevance sampling was chosen as a sampling technique. Relevance sampling can be done by using relevant keywords in the search field. For the relevance search in UN ODS, two keywords were chosen: "Western Sahara" for the first search and "MINURSO" for the second.

The keyword, "Western Sahara", was used because this keyword the system will identify most of the documents related to the Western Sahara. The keyword "MINURSO" was used because it is the main peacekeeping operation undertaken by the UN in the conflict territory.

For the "Western Sahara" keyword, UN ODS produced 47,824 text documents in English.

Figure 3. Sampling in UN ODS, for documents in English, "Western Sahara" key word

For the "MINURSO" keyword, UN ODS found 1,592 text documents in English. The results of the search are presented in the picture 2.

Figure 4. Sampling in UN ODS, for documents in English, "MINURSO" key word.
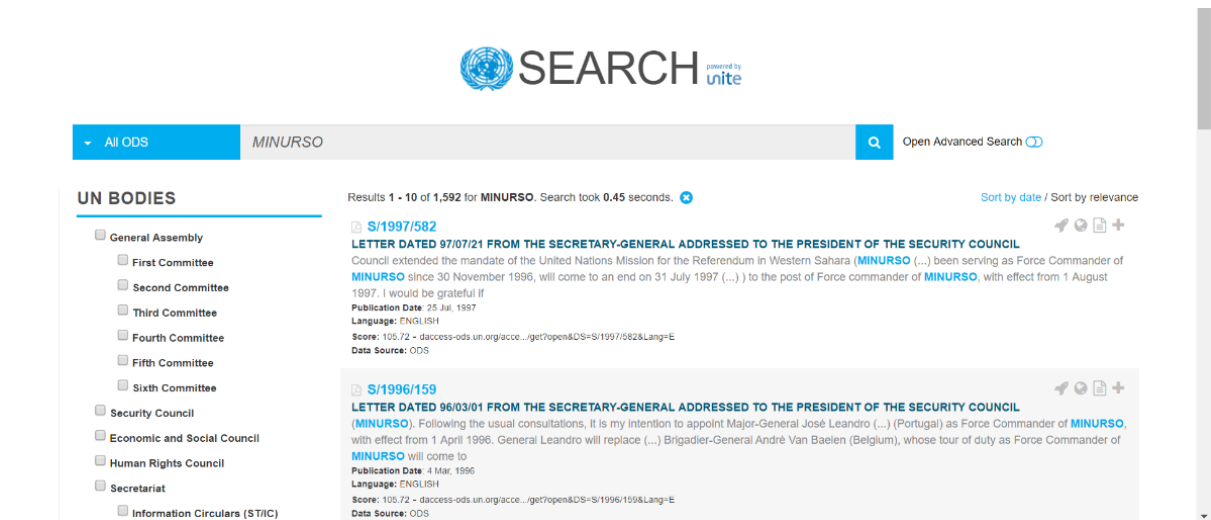
Next, the relevance sampling technique will be elaborated by choosing "UN bodies" on the left hand side of the search system interface. The UN bodies chosen were: the General Assembly (First Committee), the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council,

and the Human Rights Council. This means that the search system will find reports and resolutions made by these UN bodies.

After specific UN bodies were added to the search criteria, the results for the "Western Sahara" keyword reduced by three, with 15,866 documents identified instead of 47,824.

Figure 5. Data sampling. Specific UN bodies added to the search for "Western Sahara" keyword.
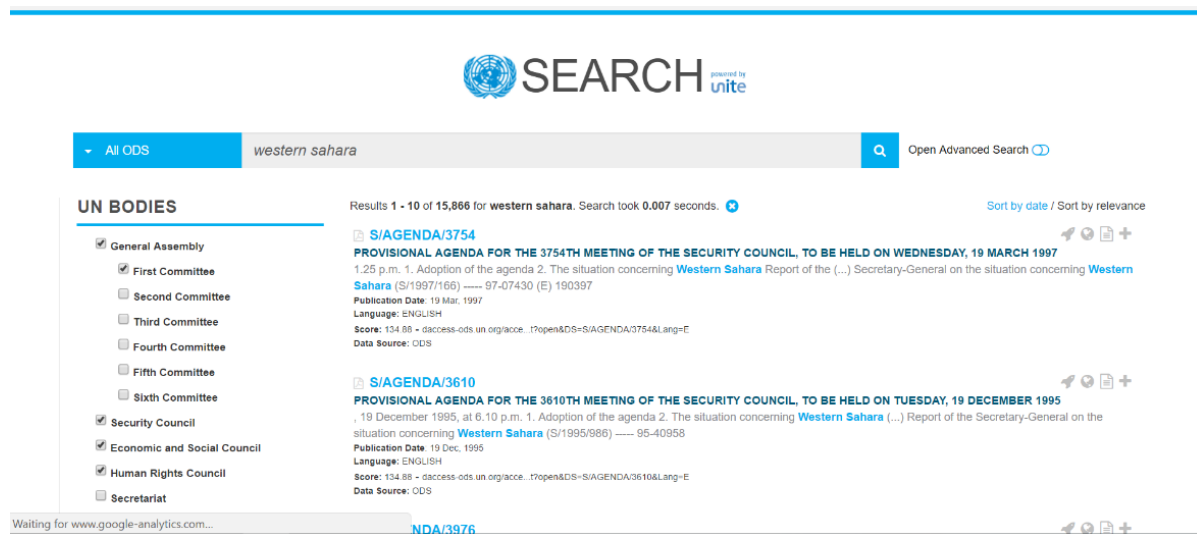
For the "MINURSO" keyword, the system found 397 documents related to the this keyword.

Figure 6. Data sampling. Specific UN bodies added to the search for "MINURSO" keyword
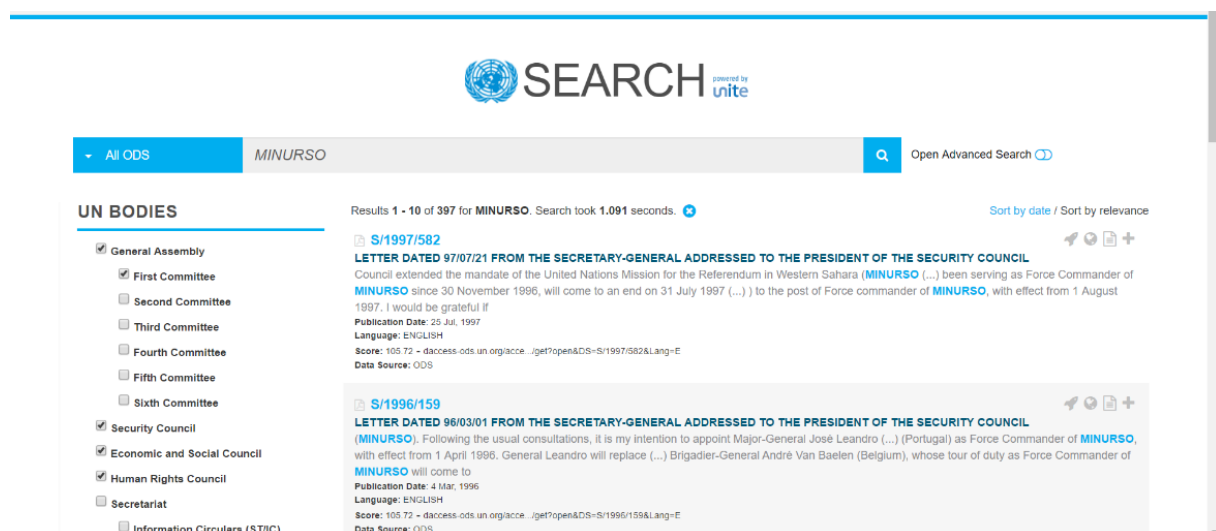
Relevance sampling can be strengthened by other search criteria such as year of document publication. For this research, several time periods were chosen. The first time period isthe year 1991 when the Settlement Plan and MINURSO were established. In addition to this, one year before and one year after 1991 (i.e. 1990 and 1992) were added to the time period. The last two time periods are the year 1997, when Houston plan was implemented, and the year 2016, when negotiations about the referendum were still going on.

6.3 RECODING/CODING

The next step in reducing qualitative data is recording/coding. For the recording process several categories that will help to organize and structure the data were chosen. After looking through the documents, several possible categories that can be used in the research were identified. These categories, are types of UN documents published by different UN bodies, discussed in the previous section, Unitizing. These categories are: resolutions, reports, summary records and financial reports. These categories are related to the research questions and can help answer the research questions.

As mentioned above, after recording and coding was completed, it was necessary to gather administrative information: information on the organization of records and substantive information in the records. For this purpose, an Excel table was created where all the information, mentioned above is presented. The table contains information about the name of documents, date of publication, type of document, and the main points and content of the document. The table also contains information about the language of used in the documents, what keywords were used to find each document, and the UN body that published the document. Here is an example of the table with meta-information of the qualitative textual data used.

Figure 7. Information about the data (part 1)

Name of the document	Date in the title of the document	date in the head of the document	Type	From whom	To whom	About	Search keywords	Language		secretary general in 1997 is Kofi A Annan	Security Council Presidency in 2016
N9724517	12.09.1997	18.09.1997	Letter	The secretary general Kofi A. Annan	THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL	1. Question of western sahara. 2. Extension of the mandate of the UN in Western Sahara (MINURSO)	Houston agreement	English		Kofi A Annan (his personal envoy is Mr. James A. Baker III)	The presidency of the Council is held by each of the members in turn for one month following the English alphabetical order of the Member States names.
N9726204	-	02.10.1997	Report of the Secretary General	The secretary general Kofi A. Annan	General Assembly	Agendaitem18 Implementation ofthe Declaration onthe Granting ofindependence toColonial Countries and Peoples. the report of the Secretary General on the question of Western Sahara (A/52/364). 2. the Council that during the fourth round of direct talks in Houston, Texas, Morocco and the Frente (FrentePOLISARIO) had reached agreement on the code of conduct for the referendum campaign and on a declaration relating to the authority of the United Nations during the transitional period. In addition, they had agreed to a set of practical measures for the resumption of the identification process.	Houston agreement	English	General Assembly	Personal Envoy held separate meetings in London on 10 and 11 June with the two parties to the Settlement Plan, Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO, as well as the two neighbouring countries, Algeria and Mauritania (as observors). 2. More detailed information in S/1997/742, about all rounds of talks	Russian Federation is a permanent member
S/RES/1108 (1997)		22.05.1997	Resolution. 1997 Security Council Resolutions	the security council		extend the mandate of MINURSO until 30.09.1997	resolution 1108. S/RES/1108	English		implementability of the Settlement Plan would be through direct talks between the two parties, under United Nations auspices	
S/RES/1131 (1997)		29.09.1997	Resolution. 1997 Security Council Resolutions	the security council		Summary and adoption of the report of the Secretary-General of 25.09.1997 (S/1997/742). 2. Extended mandate MINURSO until 20.10.1997	S/RES/1131	English		talks would be private	
N9724808 S/1997/742		24.09.1997	Report of the Secretary General	The secretary general Kofi A. Annan		results of the first, second, third and fourth rounds of talks in London on the 19 and 20th July 1997. 2. 30,229,800$ gross for the maitenance of Minurso from 01.07.1997 to 30.08.1997	S/1997/742	English			

Sheet1   Sheet2   ⊕

Figure 8. Information about the data (part 2)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	Name of the document	Date in the title of the document	date in the head of the document	Type	From whom	To whom	About	Search keywords	Language			secretary general in 1997 is Kofi A Annan	Security Council Presidency in 2016
11	N9026856 A/C.4/45/L.2		19.10.1990	Implementation of the declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and Peoples. Question of Wesrtern Sahara	The general assembly	General Assembly	1. Implementation of the declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and Peoples. Question of Wesrtern Sahara 2. Recalling resolution 1514(XV), resolution 621(1988), resolution 658(1990), resolution 44/88, resolution 40/50.	MINURSO	English				
12	N9056372		17.10.1990	Summary record of the 8th meeting	Chairamn Mr. Adouki (Congo)	General Assembly 45th session	Summary record of the 8th meeting . Mentioned the document A/AC.109/1048	MINURSO	English				
13	N9056402		18.10.1990	Summary record of the 9th meeting	Chairamn Mr. Adouki (Congo)	General Assembly 45th session	Summary record of the 9th meeting	MINURSO	English				
14	N9056501		23.10.1990	Summary record of the 11th meeting	Chairamn Vice-chairman Mr. Al-Kindi (United Arab Emirates)	General Assembly 45th session	Summary record of the 11th meeting	MINURSO	English				
15	N9056531		24.10.1990	Summary record of the 12th meeting	Chairamn Mr. Adouki (Congo)	General Assembly 45th session	Summary record of the 12th meeting	MINURSO	English				
16	N9162073		08.01.1992	General Assembly	President Mr. Shishabi (Saudi Arabia)	General Assembly 46th session	71 pages :(		English				
17	NR054148 Resolution 621(1988)		20.09.1988	Resolution	the security council		the Security Council decides to appoint to the Secretary General a special representatie for Western Sahara	resolution 621	English				
18	Resolution 40/50 A/RES/40/50		02.12.1985	Resolution	The general assembly		General Assembly. Question of Western Sahara. Recalling resolution 1514 (XV) and Resolution 39/40 05.12.1983	resolution 40/50	English				

Sheet1   Sheet2   ⊕

6.4 SEARCHING FOR TEXTS

In the final sample, approximately 200 text documents were selected, covering each of the different years selected for data analysis. The length of the documents varied from one page to 80 pages. In the final 200 documents, there were 20 text documents which contained very relevant information for the present study. In some documents, references to older reports and resolutions that could be relevant to this research were found. Most of those older resolutions (e.g. from 1965, 1985 and 1988) are fundamental UN resolutions about human rights,

decolonization of the colonial countries, and the rights of nations to independence. Therefore, these text documents can help answer some of the research questions and were added to the data sample. The results of the analysis of the UN textual documents related to the conflict in Western Sahara is presented in the chapter 7.

7. RESULTS

In this chapter, the results of the analysis undertaken will be presented and examined. The result section is divided into several subsections that are related to the research questions. First, the description of the UN actions in the conflict of Western Sahara is presented. Second, communication between leaders of country and government representatives, and UN representatives is analyzed. Third, training of military and civil personnel used by the UN for improving communication between local people and the UN personnel, is discussed. Fourth, questions of culture, ethnicity and identity of the people of Western Sahara is considered. Finally, the fifth sub-section looks at human rights resolutions that involve actions for gaining independence and holding a referendum for the people of Western Sahara.

7.1 CONTRIBUTION OF THE UN IN RESOLVING THE CONFLICT

7.1.1 Cease-fire. The UN has participated the conflict in Western Sahara as a mediator since 1975. Since then, the UN has been requesting that the war between the conflict parties of Morocco and POLISARIO Frente stop. The UN Secretary-General has been requesting conflict parties to undertake a cease-fire, which can be seen in the documents of the UN, since 1985. According to the General Assembly resolution 40/50 of 99th plenary meeting on the 2nd of December 1985, the UN:

"…Again requests, to that end, the two parties to the conflict, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente Popular para la Liberacion de Saguia el-Hamra y de Rio de Oro, to undertake direct negotiations, in the shortest possible time, with a view to bringing about a cease-fire to create the necessary conditions for a peaceful and fair referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara…"

Ultimately, the UN actions did succeed in stopping the war between the military forces of Morocco and independence movement POLISARIO Frente in 1991. Over the next

paragraphs, we will take a closer look at an overview of the report of the Secretary-General where he highlighted the situation in Western Sahara and requested that conflict parties undertake the cease-fire. Later in the document, the Secretary-General also made some comments about the referendum and the UN responsibilities in relation to the referendum.

At the time the document was published, the Secretary-General of the UN was Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. His representative in Western Sahara was Mr. Johannes Manz, appointed in 1990. The Secretary-General appointed a representative who had sole and exclusive authority over all matters relating to the referendum. The representative had a support group that helped with organizational matters. The support group had a civilian unit, a military unit and a security unit.

According to the Report of the Secretary-General (18.06.1990 S/21360) after negotiation between the UN Secretary General and leaders of Morocco and Frente POLISARIO, the government of Morocco and Frente POLISARIO agreed to undertake the cease-fire. The cease-fire was needed to stop all hostility and prevent any military constrains while organizing the referendum in Western Sahara. The start date of the cease-fire had not yet been determined, but it would have been set for after the Secretary-General of the UN sent offical letters to Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO, in which he proposed a date for the cease-fire. The date of the cease-fire had to be determined after all parties reached an agreement.

"10. In the Letter dated 11 June and 10 June 1991, respectively, Morocco and the Frente Polisario informed the Secretary-General of their acceptance of his proposal that the formal cease-fire begin at 0600 GMT on 6 September 1991." (Report of the Secretary-General, Implementation of the Declaration of the Granting of Independence to colonial countries and people. Question of Western Sahara, N9135073 23.10.1991, p7).

7.1.2 The Referendum. According to the Report of the Secretary-General (18.06.1990 S/21360), the referendum in Western Sahara was to be organized by the UN in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU). To hold the referendum, it was necessary to identify the people who could vote in the referendum. Ultimately, it was decided that the 1974 census taken by the Spanish authorities would serve as the baseline for this decision:

> "…a referendum will be organized in Western Sahara to enable the people of the Territory to decide their own future freely and democratically. The referendum will be organized and conducted by the United Nations, in co-operation with OAU, during a transitional period." (the report of the Secretary General from 18.06.1990 S/21360).

According to the Report of the Secretary-General 18.06.1990 S/21360, the UN had set out some procedural guidelines for the referendum. The UN Secretary General determined the rules for the people of Western Sahara for holding the referendum and voting in the referendum. The document shows the that people who attended the referendum can choose between independence from or integration with, Morocco. The document also shows how the voting would proceed and what would happen with the results of the referendum. The UN Secretary-General states that both Morocco and Frente Polisario have to accept the results of the referendum and uphold the decision of the people of Western Sahara. Here are some procedures concerning the referendum and its results:

> "31. The people of Western Sahara will choose, freely and democratically, between independence and integration with Morocco."
> "32. Voting will be by secret ballot, arrangements will be made for people who cannot read or write."

```
"40. Morocco and the Frente POGISARIO undertake to accept and abide

by the results of the referendum" (the report of the Secretary-

General from 18.06.1990 S/21360)
```

Later in the document the Secretary-General reports that a special group, MINURSO, is responsible for holding the referendum in Western Sahara. The Secretary-General describes MINURSO as an integrated group of UN civilians, military and civil police. The head of the MINURSO was the special representative, who was appointed by the Secretary-General. The Report of the Secretary-General (18.06.1990 S/21360), shows that Mr. Hector Gros Espiell was appointed as the Special Representative in Western Sahara by the Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar (Report of the Secretary-General 19.10.1988). After Mr. Hector Gros Espiell resigned, Mr. Johannes Manz was appointed as the Special Representative in the Report of the Secretary-General 19.01.1990.

In the Report of the Secretary-General about human rights question from 19.11.1991 (paragraph #24, p28), states that the UN takes the responsibility for the organization and supervision of the referendum in Western Sahara. This document also shows that this supervision would be undertaken in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The OAU includes all African countries except Morocco, which withdrew from the unity in 1984. One of the goals of OAU is to protect and defend the sovereignty of African countries (Bercovitch & Fretter, 2004). Here is a small part of the report that shows that the UN has support from the OAU in organizing the referendum in Western Sahara.

```
The referendum is to be organized and supervised by the UN in

cooperation with the Organization of African Unity. MINURSO is expected

last for up to 35 weeks.
```

7.1.3 MINURSO. In the Report of the Secretary-General 18.06.1990 (S/21360), MINURSO is mentioned as an integrated group of UN civilians, military and civil police

personnel. The head of MINURSO was a Special Representative who had been appointed by the Secretary-General. The document also outlines the code of functions and measures that MINURSO had to carry out while preparing for the referendum. The MINURSO's group of personnel was responsible not only for the referendum but also for logistics support, communication, air transport and medical support. Here is a part of the report that outlines some of MINURSO's responsibilities:

```
"…command and control functions, logistics support,
communications, air transport, and medical support…" (Implementation of the
Declaration of the Granting of Independence to colonial countries and
people. Question of Western Sahara. Report of the Secretary-General,
23.10.1991, 7p)
```

According to the Report of the Secretary-General about human rights question, (19.11.1991), MINURSO included three UN units: civilian, security and military. In 1991, MINURSO had approximately 2,175 people working across those units. The document shows how many people worked in each MINURSO unit in 1991. The biggest MINURSO unit was military, where about 1,600 observers worked at that time:

```
"The Civilian Unit of MINURSO is expected to total approximately
275 international staff members, the security unit up to 300 police
officers and the military unit approximately 1,600 observers." (Report of
the Secretary-General Human Rights question, N9136519 (19.11.1991, 28)).
```

7.1.4 The UN responsibilities in the referendum. The UN had some responsibilities in relation to the referendum in Western Saharan. These responsibilities are were described in the different UN documents. The Report of the Secretary-General 18.06.1990 S/21360shows that the UN was trying to establish clear instructions for the referendum and its responsibilities during the event. The document also shows that the UN paid attention to the freedom of speech and human rights of the voters. This demonstrates that

the responsibilities of the UN were to protect the rights of the voters and ensure that the rights were not violated during the referendum. Here is an extract of the Report of the Secretary-General 18.06.1990 S/21360 (paragraph 59) which details some of the UN's responsibilities regarding the referendum.

```
a. "The identification and registration of those eligible to vote;"

b. "The establishment of the conditions and modalities for a referendum
   campaign in which freedom of speech, assembly, movement and the press
   are guaranteed;"

c. "The conduct of the voting in a manner permitting participation by
   all eligible voters, without interference or intimidation, and
   ensuring the secrecy of the ballot."
```

According to the Report of the Secretary-General 18.06.1990 S/21360, Identification Commission assisted the Special Representative with identifying eligible voters. A Referendum Commission also assited the Special Representative to help him organize the referendum.

```
The Secretary-General:

    "1. Decides to authorize the Secretary-General to appoint a special
    representative for Western Sahara." (resolution 621(1988) 20.09.1988)
```

The Report of the Secretary-General 18.06.1990 S/21360 about the situation concerning Western Sahara (paragraph 64) shows that the UN had taken the responsibility for organizing the political meetings and demonstrations for the referendum. It also had decided to collaborate with the local media and make the issues regarding the referendum public. The Report mentions some measures taken by the UN regarding the the referendum and its preparation:

```
a. "Guarantee freedom of movement, the security of the population and
   freedom of speech, assembly and the press;
```

```
...
    d. Facilitate, the peaceful return to the Territory of all persons
       eligible to vote in the referendum;"
```

7.1.5 UN cooperation regarding the referendum. The UN received a lot of support from different countries for holding the referendum in Western Sahara. As mentioned above, that the UN cooperated with the OAU to deliver the referendum. This cooperation was documented in different UN resolutions and reports. The OAU includes almost all African countries which defend independence and sovereignty of African countries, which is a great support for the UN. Here is a part of the resolution 621 that shows that the UN had worked on the referendum in cooperation with the OAU.

```
        The Security Council:

        "Anxious to support these efforts with a view to the holding of a
referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara,
organized and supervised by the UN in co-operation with the Organization of
African Unity." (resolution 621(1988) 20.09.1988)
```

Moreover, in 1991 the UN had been working with some news agencies. The news agencies published brochures which informed the population about the referendum, about MINURSO, and resolutions of the Security Council. The brochures had been published in different languages, including English, French, Spanish and Arabic. Here is an example of the text found in the Report of the Secretary-General that shows the UN's cooperation with news agencies.

```
  Cooperation with the pool of non-aligned news agencies.

        The Department of Public Information produced a brochure that
  was made available at Headquarters and distributed worldwide in Arabic
  (5000 copies), English (6000 copies), French and Spanish (3000 copies
  each). In September, the Department produced a press kit containing a
```

```
short summary of the Mission's parameters, the text of the Security

Council resolution on the establishment of the Mission, the statements

and the report of the Secretary-General on this issue, as well as other

relevant facts. It was distributed worldwide in Arabic and English (2000

copies each) and in French and Spanish (1000 copies each).( Report of the

Secretary-General N9129672 (01.10.1991, 23p))
```

7.1.6 Houston agreement. In 1997, the referendum had not yet been held and the UN continued to call on the conflict parties of Morocco and Frente POLISARIO to negotiate and hold the referendum in the Western Sahara. The negotiation had led to an agreement that the UN would again conduct the referendum, where people of the Western Sahara could decide to gain their independence or to integrate with Morocco. The negotiation was conducted in Houston, Texas, and as such, the agreement was called the "Houston Agreement". Here is a part of the Agreement:

```
    "On September 24th,1997 Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO had

reached agreement (in Houston, Texas) on the code of conduct for the

referendum campaign and on a declaration relating to the authority of the

UN during the transitional period." (General Assembly. Question of Western

Sahara, N9726204 (02.10.1997, 2p))
```

At the time, the Houston Agreement played an important role in resolving the Western Sahara conflict. The Agreement was a replacement of the settlement plan implemented in 1991. As a settlement plan, the Houston Agreement was supposed to bring the referendum to the people of Western Sahara. The negotiations between Morocco and Frente Polisario had stopped for a while after the settlement plan was adopted. Therefore, the Agreement was an important document because it resumed the negotiations and made some progress towards resolving the conflict.

7.2 MEETING OF THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL, OR HIS REPRESENTATIVES, WITH THE LEADERS OF THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED IN THE CONFLICT

According to the Report of the Secretary-General A/45/644 (18.10.1990), the Secretary-General of the UN (Javier Pérez de Cuéllar at that time) visited King Hassan II in Morocco and discussed the implementation of the settlement plan (paragraph 7). He also visited Tindouf to meet the General Secretary of Frente Polissario (Mr. Mohamed Abdelaziz at that time) (paragraph 8). Later, the General Secretary visited Algeria where he met with the President Chadli Bendjedid (paragraph 9). In Mauritania, the General Secretary met with the Permanent Secretary to the Comite Militaire de Salut National (CMSN), Lt.-Col. N'Diaye Kane (paragraph 10). The Secretary-General of the UN had discussions with the leaders of the countries about the referendum in Western Sahara. During those meetings, leaders of Algeria and Mauritania promised to support the UN for the good offices.

As the result of the meetings with the leaders of the countries and representatives of the government, the Secretary-General drew up reports that could serve as a basis for future resolutions. (A/45/644 paragraph 15). As an example, Resolution 658 is based on the Report of the Secretary-General of the UN, which was published in October 1990 after the Secretary-General had visited the government representatives.

7.3 TRAINING

Throughout the conflict, the UN seems to have been aware of the need for training among its employees. There are several documents where training is mentioned in one form or another. For example, in a summary record of the 13th Meeting of the General Assembly (Chairman Mr. Pibulsonggram (Thailand), 30.10.1991), there is a mention of the UN organizing training

for its peace-keeping personnel. Here is a part of the document that mentions the UN had special training for personnel:

"…MINURSO contingent had attended special intensive training courses, using expertise made available by other States and Bulgaria was currently setting up a peace-keeping personnel training centre."

In the UN documents, it was mentioned that the UN provided special training and international seminars for both its civilian and military personnel. The document shows that other papers mentioned in the document are forthcoming. Unfortunately, these documents were not found for this research. Here is a part of the report that provides some information about the training:

"The training guidelines issued by the Secretariat in 1991 had been particularly useful, and his delegation looked forward to other such comprehensive documents on the training of civilian specialized units, as recommended in paragraph 79 of the Special Committee's report. In the report were mentioned some special training for civilian and military personnel, also various international seminars."

Another document that shows the UN had a training programme for its personnel is the report from the General Assembly from 1992. The training programmes review issues of peace-keeping, peacemaking, peace-buildinglinguistic and communication skills. The UN did not, however, provide more detailed documents on the training for personnel. Here is an example of a document that shows some information on the training programmes:

"Training programmes:

a. Comprehensive management development plan

b. Training for peace-keeping, peacemaking and peace-building

c. Upgrading substantive and professional skills

d. Improving staff technological skills

e. Providing orientation and induction programmes

```
f.  Enhancing the linguistic and communication skills of staff"

(Report of the Secretary-General, General Assembly, personnel questions.

A/C.5/47/9, 08.10.1992. Training programme in the Secretariat.)
```

It is difficult to say what kind of training the UN provided for its personnel. In the documents, the UN provided only general information on the training programmes with no explanation.

7.4 QUESTION OF CULTURE AND ETHNICITY

According to the documents, it is clear that the UN tried to take specific aspects of the Saharan society into consideration. Sometimes the documentation included descriptions of people, places, and customs. For example, the Report of the Secretary-General 19.12.1991 (S/23299) describes the people of Western Sahara as follows:

```
    "10. The Saharan society remains for the most part a society

structured around tribal membership, each tribe being subdivided in

fractions subfractions, and family groups (ahels). Some of these tribes

extend beyond the borders of Western Sahara Under the heading status of

an indigenous inhabitant' the 1975 report observed that "in view of the

close affinity which exists between Saharans living within the Territory

and those in neighbouring countries and also of their tradition, the

question of determining who is and who is not an indigenous inhabitant

of the Territory is a somewhat complex matter". That complexity

notwithstanding, it is clear that only members of tribes whose

connection with the Territory within the limits of recognized

international borders is clearly established should participate in the

referendum" (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning

Western Sahara. S/23299. 19.12.1991 (part III paragraph 10), Specific

aspects of the Saharan society).
```

This description of Saharan society is limited to one document. Nevertheless, it shows that the UN had taken into consideration the ethnicity and cultural aspects of the people of Western Sahara. Unfortunately, it was difficult to find more documents where the UN described the Saharan indigenous people. However, this one document plays a key role in the process of mediation and the referendum in Western Sahara. According to this document, the indigenous people have their right to self-determination and sovereignty. Therefore, people of Western Sahara are acknowledged as indigenous people who had the right to choose at the referendum, whether to become an independent state or become part of Morocco. The results of analysis of the human rights resolutions that, according to the UN, gives the right of self-determination for the indigenous people are presented in the section below.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS RESOLUTIONS

According to the Report of the Secretary-General A/45/644 18.10.1990, the situation concerning Western Sahara the UN determined that Western Sahara was a colonial territory that should be decolonized. The reason Western Sahara should be decolonized is that the people of Western Sahara have an inalienable right to independence. This right was mentioned in the earlier resolutions and declarations as well - for example in Resolution 44/88 11.12.1989 of the 80th plenary meeting of the General Assembly. Here is a part of the Report of the Secretary-General where he mentioned these rights:

"the question of Western Sahara is a question of decolonization. Which remains to be completed on the basis of the exercise by the People of western Sahara of their inalienable right to self-determination and independence."

Furthermore, the question of the fundamental rights of all people is discussed in Resolution 1514(XV) 1514(XV) Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and People 14.12.1960, 947, plenary meeting. According to this Resolution, all

people have their right to freedom and better standards of life. Here is an excerpt of the document that outlines these rights:

> "…the United Nations to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom." (Resolution 1514(XV))

The UN also states that not only do indigenous people have the right to self-determination and independence, but that all people have that right. The UN claims that all people have equal rights and the fundamental freedom of sustaining peaceful and friendly relations among states and countries. The document states:

> "Conscious of the need for the creation of conditions of stability and well-being and peaceful and friendly relations based on respect for the principles of equal rights and self-determination of all peoples, and of universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedom for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion" (Resolution 1514(XV))

The UN also raised the issue of decolonization of colonial countries in the 1514(XV) resolution. The UN considered Western Sahara as a colonial country that should be decolonized. The reason why the colonial countries should be decolonized was explained later in the resolution. The UN resolution 1514(XV) also explains why colonialism should not exist in the modern world. Here is an explanation from the text of the resolution:

> "Convinced that the continued existence of colonialism prevents the development of international economic cooperation, impedes the social, cultural, and economic development of dependent peoples and militates against the United Nations ideal of universal peace" (Resolution 1514(XV))

Therefore, the main reason why colonialism should not exist in the modern world is that it restrains the development of the modern world and international society. Peaceful and friendly relations between countries are impossible in a world where colonialism exists.

7.6 FINANCIAL AID VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

The Report by the Secretary-General, Resolution 45/266, (annotated Agenda of the Forty-Sixth Regular Session of the General Assembly 30.09.1991, p.56) details how much funding the UN had devoted to organize the referendum and support the MINURSO mission in 1991:

"The General Assembly decided to approve, in principle, budgetary estimates in the amount of $180,617,000 gross ($176,868,000 net) for the mandate period approved for MINURSO by the Security Council in its resolution 690 (1991). Established a special account for that purpose.

The Report of the Secretary-General of the General Assembly Financing of the UN Missions for the Referendum in Western Sahara (16.10.1991 A/46/783), mentions some voluntary contributions made by Algeria, Morocco, Frente POLISARIO and Switzerland:

"the General Assembly renewed its invitation to Member States to make voluntary contributions both in cash and in the form of services and supplies acceptable to the Secretary-General."

The Report also shows that the UN received some voluntary contributions from the countries mentioned above, in 1991:

Table 3. Voluntary contributions to the resolution of the conflict

Contributor	Services provided
Algeria	Accommodation premises, office space and fuel
Morocco	Accommodation premises, office space, fuel, food air transportation and land transportation.
Frente POLISARIO	Accommodation premises, office space and food
Switzerland	Aircraft in support, of the medical unit 30 support personnel

8. DISCUSSION

The data analysis shows that he UN has put a lot of effort and financial resources into its attempts to resolve the conflict in Western Sahara. The UN spent more than 700 million US dollars to support the MINURSO mission from 1991 to 2010 (Brahim, 2011). Nevertheless, the conflict remains unresolved and the territory is still disputed.

The conflict resolution process used by the UN represents a Track I diplomacy in conflict management, as outlined above, in Section 3.1 Internal Conflict Management. Applying the concepts described by Ramsbotham (2005), in its attempt to resolve the conflict in Western Sahara, the UN relied on official communication between high-level leaders or governmental representatives and applied official diplomacy measures such as mediation, negotiation, and diplomatic and economic sanctions, but did not use war or peacekeeping diplomacy methods (Nan 2003).

The UN's conflict resolution process also corresponds with the graph of escalation and de-escalation of an international conflict (Ramsbotham (2005): see Section 3.1, Diagram 1 above). The conflict in Western Sahara started with "Difference" and "Contradiction" between the conflict parties. Next the conflict developed as it moved into the "Polarization" and "Violence" stages where the liberation movement emerged and "Violence" occurred by people being harassed on the streets. Subsequently, the conflict culminated in a "War" and as the conflict de-escalated, the conflict parties agreed to undertake a "Ceasefire". However, the conflict in Western Sahara did not move beyond the "Ceasefire" stage and therefore did not reach the "Agreement" stage of the escalation and de-escalation graph.

8.1 REASONS WHY THE CONFLICT IS STILL ONGOING

The reasons for an unsuccessful and long lasting conflict resolution effort can be varied. This section explores some of the reasons the UN failed in its conflict resolution process, which

has resulted in continuing conflict in Western Sahara. It is important to mention that the following reasons are not the only factors which can prevent successful conflict resolution. The first reason might be that the Moroccan government has not been meeting its responsibilities and obligations set out in the peace plan proposed by the UN. The data analysis shows that these breaches happened several times throughout the history of the conflict.

The UN has been trying to hold a referendum where the people of Western Sahara can decide whether to gain their independence from Morocco or integrate with it. To make this referendum a reality, the UN had to identify eligible voters in Western Sahara. A census already produced by the Spanish government in 1975 could be used to identify eligible voters for the referendum. The Moroccan government had sent thousands of Moroccans to the territory of Western Sahara so they can vote in the referendum and manipulate the census (Summary record of the 8th meeting of the General Assembly, 18.10.1991). This act and violation of human rights postponed the referendum for several decades and started a war between Morocco and Frente POLISARIO.

In 1991, the UN stopped the military conflict between Morocco and Frente POLISARIO, without military interference. The UN communication between the Moroccan government and leaders of Frente POLISARIO brought them to a cease-fire agreement. However, this negotiation process took several years before the Moroccan government and leaders of the Frente POLISARIO accepted this agreement.

Though the Moroccan government had accepted the peace plan proposed by the UN, the Moroccan government had been breaching its responsibilities and obligations in at least nine instances (Summary Record of the 8th Meeting of the General Assembly). For example, the Moroccan government had sent military aircrafts to monitor the territory of

Western Sahara. (Summary Record of the 8th Meeting of the General Assembly, 18.10.1991).

This illustrates that despite the attempts of the UN in arranging the cease-fire and stop the war in Western Sahara, Moroccan military forces did not want to cede the territory of Western Sahara without a struggle.

Another reason that the conflict remains unresolved is that the sovereignty and self-determination of Western Sahara can bring instability to the Maghreb region (Brahim, 2011). For example, in 1975 the US had not supported the autonomy of Western Sahara and had accepted Moroccan authority over the territory because it did not want instability in the Maghreb region (Brahim, 2011).

In 2007, the United States of America, France and Spain consulted Morocco on the proposal of another peace agreement. The proposal suggested division of control on the territory between Morocco and Frente POLISARIO. It suggested that only the defense and foreign affairs of the Western Sahara would be controlled by Morocco and all the other institutions would be under the control of Western Sahara (Brahim, 2011). However, this proposal was rejected by Frente POLISARIO and was therefore, not implemented.

8.2 LESSONS LEARNED REGARDING CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Records have shown that the UN is an effective mediator in the international conflicts around the world. The mediation strategy that the UN uses to resolve conflicts employs different techniques and approaches, including protecting and defending rights to independence and freedom, peaceful negotiation and ability to establish a peace treaty between conflict parties. This strategy corresponds with the mediation strategy that was described in the literature review. Previous research has shown that the goal of mediation is to bring conflict parties towards peaceful negotiation and establish an agreement between them (Isenhart, 2000). During the conflict resolution process in Western Sahara, the UN conducted many

negotiations and put a lot of effort in the implementation settlement plan and signing the Houston Agreement, which were supposed to lead to the referendum.

As mentioned above in the literature review, successful mediation depends on the skills of mediators (Isenhart, 2000). Unfortunately, the material used in this study does not allow us to draw conclusions about how skillful the UN personnel resolving the conflict were. Nevertheless, the UN documents show that their personnel did receive special training aimed to improve different skills that could be helpful in conflict resolution, such as linguistic, communication and technological skills. Also, training for peace-keeping, peace-building and peacemaking were mentioned in the documents. What this means is that even if UN personnel were initially not skilled enough, the organization tried to offer them additional information and experience in conflict-resolution, during the process.

According to previous research, another factor of successful mediation of international conflicts is that mediator should take into consideration cultural aspects and build their strategy respecting these aspects (Tint, 2010). The UN documents indicate that the UN had taken the cultural aspects of the indigenous people of Western Sahara into consideration. Based on these aspects, the UN had built their strategy of resolving this conflict. The UN proposed the referendum where the people of Western Sahara could decide on independence or becoming a part of Morocco.

The results of the research correspond with the previous findings in the literature. Therefore, the UN mediation strategy that had been used in the Western Sahara conflict resolution can be considered a successful mediation strategy. However, this particular mediation strategy did not successfully resolve the Western Sahara conflict. Therefore, while the strategy itself is a successful mediation strategy, another conflict resolution process may have been more appropriate in this specific context.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 MEETING THE AIM

This study aimed to analyze the role of the UN in resolving the ongoing conflict in Western

Sahara. To meet the aim this study had to answer the following main research question:

RQ 1) *What was the role of the UN in intercultural conflict resolution in*

the ongoing Western Sahara conflict?

The main research question included the following sub questions:

1. What steps did the UN take to try and resolve the conflict in Western Sahara?

2. How did the UN Secretary-General, or his representatives, communicate with

    the leaders of the countries, or government representatives of the countries

    involved in the conflict?

3. How did the UN take questions of culture and ethnicity into consideration

    when attempting to resolve this conflict?

In the next sub-sections, answers to the research questions are presented.

9.1.1 What steps did the UN take to try and resolve the conflict in Western

Sahara? First, in 1991, the UN tried to stop the military conflict between Morocco and Frente

POLISARIO. The data analysis has shown that the UN intervened in the conflict without

using military force. The cease-fire between Morocco and Frente POLISARIO was

established after a long negotiation process with the head of the Moroccan government and

representatives of Frente POLISARIO.

Second, the UN has made many attempts to hold an independence referendum in

Western Sahara. One of those attempts was the organization of a mission for the referendum,

called MINURSO. This organization was supported by the OAU. The UN also had many

MINURSO allies, who had been ready to contribute to the conflict resolution. The data has

shown that in 1991, there were approximately 37 allied countries: Argentina, Australia,

Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Congo, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Finland, France,

Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Malaysia, Nepal,

Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Singapore, Switzerland, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, the Union of

Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the

United States of America and Venezuela (Letter from the Secretary-General addressed to the

president of the Security Council, 03.07.1991). The MINURSO mission mandate had been

prolonged every year since 1991. The mission has been funded by the UN and its allies for

over 700 million US dollars between 1991 and 2010 (Brahim, 2011).

Third, the data analysis has shown that the UN provided special training and

international seminars for its military and civilian personnel. The UN also set up a training

center for its employees, including the personnel of the MINURSO mission. One of the aims

of the training was to improve the technological skills of employees. Another aim was to

enhance the linguistic and communication skills of the staff. The training programmes

included training for peace-keeping, peacemaking and peace-building.

9.1.2 How did the UN Secretary-General, or his representatives, communicate with the leaders of the countries or government representatives of the countries involved in the conflict? The data analysis has shown that communication among

leaders of the conflict parties was carried out through letters and meetings. The Secretary

General of the UN, or his representatives of the MINURSO mission, met with the Moroccan

government and leaders of Frente POLISARIO. Cease-fire negotiations and discussion about

the referendum had also been held with Algerian presidents and Mauritanian prime ministers.

9.1.3 How did the UN take questions of culture and ethnicity into consideration when attempting to resolve this conflict? According to the data, the UN considers the fact that Saharawi people are indigenous people of Western Sahara when making decisions. The UN defines Saharawi tribes as indigenous people of Western Sahara and states that these people have rights to self-determination. According to UN documents, the Sahrawi nation has also rights to a referendum where people of Western Sahara can decide to become a part of Morocco or gain sovereignty and self-determination.

9.2 LIMITATIONS

This study presents an analysis of an international conflict using content analysis. The study has some methodological limitations that will be discussed below.

First, the data collected for the research was limited by one UN database that contains documents published by different UN departments. The data collected was focused only on the documents from the UN Official Document Search system. The data collection was also limited with the type of data that was analyzed. The research is focused on textual data from UN documents that were published and retrieved from the UN database. The study does not analyze the data from other sources such as newspapers and magazines.

In addition, this study has limitations concerning the data collection and the sample size of the text documents analyzed. The data collection is focused only on specific time periods during the conflict (i.e. 1991, 1997 and 2015 onwards). The study does not analyze the documents from the other time periods. The sample size of the data is limited to 200 text documents.

9.3 IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Based on the analysis of intercultural conflict, this study highlights some implication for the field of intercultural conflict communication. One major implication is that this study

provides some data on the work of the UN and its contribution to the conflict resolution process in Western Sahara. The research aimed to provide an overview of the importance of the UN in peacekeeping in Western Sahara and can be helpful in providing guidelines for resolving other international conflicts. This research can be further developed by using information from sources other than the information from the UN database system. Future research about the UN's conflict resolution process can be undertaken using interviews with people who were directly and indirectly involved in the conflict resolution process, as well as textual data from public sources such as newspapers.

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5. Resolution 742(VIII) 27.11.1953

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APPENDIX

Resolution 1514(XV) Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and people. 14.12.1960 947 plenary meeting.

The General Assembly,

"Mindful of the determination proclaimed by the peoples of the world in the Charter of the united Nations to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom." (Resolution 1514(XV))

"Concious of the need for the creation of conditions of stability and well-being and peaceful and friendly relations based on respect for the principles of equal rights and self-determination of all peoples, and of universal respewcr for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedom for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion" (Resolution 1514(XV))

"Recognizing the passionate yearning for freedom in all dependent peoples and the decisive role of such peoples in the attainment of the independence." (Resolution 1514(XV))

"Aware of the increasing conflicts resulting from the denial of or impediments in the way of the freedom of such peoples, which constitute a serious threat to world peace." (Resolution 1514(XV))

"Considering the important role of the United Nations in assisting themovement for independence in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories." (Resolution 1514(XV))

"Reconsidering that the peoples of the world ardently desire the end of colonialism in all its manifestations." (Resolution 1514(XV))

"Convinced that the continued existence of colonialism prevents the development of international economic cooperation, impedes the social,

cultural, and economic development of dependent peoples and militates against the United Nations ideal of universal peace" (Resolution 1514(XV))

"Affirming that peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudicie to any obligations arising out of international economic co-operation, based upon the principle of mutual benefit, and international law." (Resolution 1514(XV))

"Believing that the process of liberation is irresistible and irreversible and that, in order to avoid serious crises, an end must be put to colonialism and all practices of segregation and discrimination associated therewith." (Resolution 1514(XV))

"Welcoming the emergence in recent years of a large number of dependent territories into freedom and independence, and recognizing the increasingly powerful trends towards freedom in such territories which have not yet attained independence" (Resolution 1514(XV))

"Convinced that all peoples have an inalienable right to complete freedom, the exercise of their sovereignty and the integrity of their national territory."(Resolution 1514(XV))

"Solemnly proclaima the necessity of bringing to a speedy and unconditional end colonialism in all its forms and manifestations."(Resolution 1514(XV))

"And to this end Declares that:

1. The subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and is an impediment to the promotion of world peace and co-operation.

2. All peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

3. Inadequacy of political, economic, social or educational preparedness should never serve as a pretext for delaying independence.

4. All armed action or repressive measures of all kinds directed against dependent peoples shall cease in order to enable them to exercise peacefully and freely their right to complete independence, and the integrity of their national territory shall be respected.

5. Immediate steps shall be taken, in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories or all other territories which have not yet attained independence, to transfer all powers to the peoples of those territories, without any conditions or reservations, in accordance with their freely expressed will and desire, without any distinction as to race, creed or colour, in order to enable them to enjoy complete independence and freedom.

6. Any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and the territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

7. All States shall observe faithfully and strictly the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the present Declaration on the basis of equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of all States, and respect for the sovereign rights of all peoples and their territorial integrity." (Resolution 1514(XV))

Resolution 742(VIII) 27.11.1953

"Factors that should be taken into account in deciding whether a Territory is or is not a Territory whose people have not yet attained a full measure of self-government." (Resolution 742(VIII 27.11.1953))

"Factors indicative of the attainment of independence or of other separate systems of self-government: (Annex, list of factors)

A. International status.

1 International responsibility. Full international responsibility of the Territory for the acts inherent in the exercise of its external sovereignty

and for the corresponding acts in the administration of its internal affairs. (Resolution 742(VIII) 27.11.1953)

2 Eligibility for membership in the United Nations.

3 General international relations. Power to enter into direct relations of every kind with other governments and with international institutions and to negotiate, sign and ratify international instruments.

4 National defence. Sovereign right to provide for its national defence.

B. Internal self-government

1 Form of government. Complete freedom of the people of the Territory to choose the form of government which they desire.

2 Territorial government. Freedom from control or interference by the government of another State in respect of the internal government (legislature, executive, judiciary, and administration of the Territory).

3 Economic, social and cultural jurisdiction. Complete autonomy in respect of economic, social and cultural affairs."

(Resolution 742(VIII) 27.11.1953

Factors indicative of the attainment of other separate systems of self-governemnt

A. General

1 Opinion of the population. The opinion of the population of the Territory, freely expressed by informed and democratic processes, as to the status or change in the status which they desire.

2 Freedom of choice. Freedom of choosing on the basis of the right of self-determination of peoples between several possibilities, including independence.

3 Voluntary limitation of sovereignty. Degree of evidence that the attribute or attributes of sovereignty which are not individually exercised will be collectively exercised by the larger entity thus associated and the freedom of the population of a Territory which has associated itself with the

metropolitan country to modify at any time this status through the expression of their will by democratic means.

4 Geographical considerations. Extent to which the relations of the Non-Self-Governing Territory with the capital of the metropolitan government may be affected by circumstances arising out of their respective geographical positions, such as separation by land, sea or other natural obstacles; and extent to which the interests of boundary States may be affected, bearing in mind the general principle of good-neighbourliness referred to in Article 74 of the Charter.

5 Ethnic and cultural considerations. Extent to which the populations are of different race, language or religion or have a distinct cultural heritage, intrrests or aspirations, distinguishing them from the peoples of the country with which they freely associate themselves

6 Political advancement. Political advancement of the population sufficient to enable them to decide upon the future destiny of the Territory with due knowledge.

B. International status

1 General interndtional relations. Degree or extent which the Territory exercises the power to enter freely into direct relations of every kind with other governments and with international institutions and to negotiate, sign and ratify inter national instruments freely. Degree or extert to which the metropolitan country is bound, through constitutional provisions or legislative means, by the freely expressed wishes of the Territory in negotiating, signing and ratifyin3 international conventions which may influence conditions in the Territory

2 Change of political status. The right of the metropolitan country or the Territory to change the political status of that Territory in the light of the consideration whether that Ter ritory is or is not subject to any claim or litigation on the part of another State.

3 Eligibility for membership in the United Nations.

C. Internal self-government

1 Territorial government. Nature and measure of control interference, if any, by the government of another State in respect of the internal government, for example, in respectof the following:

Legislature: The enactment of laws for the Territory by an indigenous body whether fully elected by free and democratic processes or lawfully constituted in a manner receiving the free consent of the population;

Executive: The selection of members of the executive branch of the government by the competent authority in the Territory receiving consent of the indigenous population, whether that authority is hereditary or elected, having regard also to the nature and measure of control, if any, by an outside agency on that authority, whether directly or indirectly exercised in the constitution and conduct of the executive branch of the government

Judiciary: The establishment of courts of law and the selection of judges.

2 Participation of the population. Effective participation of the population in the government of the Territory: (a) Is there an edequate and appropriate electoral and representative system? (b) Is this electoral system conducted without direct or in direct interference from a foreign government?

3 Economic, social and cultural jurisdiction. Degree of autonomy in respect of economic, social and cultural affairs, as illustrated by the degree of freedom from economic pressure as exercised, for example, by a foreign minority group which, by virtue of the help of a foreign Power, has acquired a privileged economic status prejudicial to the general economic interest of the people of the Territory; and by the degree of freedom and lack of discrimination against the indigenous population of the Territory in social legislation and social developments.

Third part. Factors indicative of the free association of a territory on equal basis with the metropolian or other country as an integral part of that country or in any other form.

A. General

1   Opinion of the population. The opinion of the population of the Territory, freely expressed by informed and democratic processes, as to the status or change in status which they desire

2   Freedom of choice. The freedom of the population of Non-Self-Governing Territory which has associated itself with the metropolitan country as an integral part of that country or in any other form to modify this status through the expression of their will by democratic means.

3   Geographical considerations. Extent to which the relations of the Territory with the capital of the central government may be affected out of their respective geographical positions, such as separatiom by land, sea or other natural obstacles. The right of the metropolitan country or the Territory to change the political status of that Territory in the light of the consideration whether that Territory is or is not subject to any claim or litigation on the part of another State

4   Ethnic and cultural considerations. Extent to which the population are of different race, language or religion or have a distinct cultural heritage, interests or aspirations, distinguish ing them from the peoples of the country with which they freely associate themselves.

5   Political advancement, Political advancement of the pop- ulation sufficient to enable them to decide upon the future des tiny of the Territory with due knowledge.

6   Constitutional considerations. Association by virtue of a treaty or bilateral agreement affecting the status of the Ter- ritory, taking into account (i) whether the constitutional guar antees extend equally to the associated Territory, (ii) whether there are powers in certain matters

constitutionally reserved to the Territory or to the central authority, and (iii) whether there is provision for the participation of the Territory on a basis of equality in any changes in the constitutional system of the State.

B. Status

1   Legislative representation. Representation without dis crimination in the central legislative organs on the same basis as other inhabitants and regions.

2   Participation of the population. Effective participation of the population in the government of the Territory: (a) Is there an adequate and appropriate electoral and representative system? (b) Is this electoral system conducted without direct or indirect interference from a foreign government.

3   Citizenship, Citizenship without discrimination on the same basis as other inhabitants.

4   Government officials. Eligibility of officials from the Territory to all public offices of the central authority, by appointment or election, on the same basis as those from other parts of the country.

C. Internal constitutional conditions

1.   Sufrage. Universal and equal suffrage, and free periodic elections, characterized by an absence of undue influence over and coercion of the voter or of the imposition of disabilities on particular political parties.

2.   Local rights and status. In a unitary system equal rights and status for the inhabitants and local bodies of the Territory as enjoyed by inhabitants and local bodies of other parts of the country in a federal system an identical degree of self-gov- ernment for the inhabitants and local bodies of all parts of the federation.

3.   Local officials. Appointment or election of officials in the Territory on the same basis as those in other parts of the country

4.   Internal legislation. Local self-government of the same scope and under the same conditions as enjoyed by other parts of the country

5.   Economic, social and cultural jurisdiction. Degree of autonomy in respect of economic, social and cultural affairs, as illustrated by the degree of freedom from group as pressure exercised, for example, by a foreign minority acquired a by of the of a foreign Power, has acquired a privileged economic status prejudicial to the general economic interest of the people of the Territory; and by the degree freedom and lack of discrimination against the indigenous population of the Territory in social legislation and social developments.

Resolution 40/50 02.12.1985 99th plenary meeting of the General Assembly (http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/40/a40r050.htm)

A/RES/40/50, 2 December 1985. 99th plenary meeting. Question of Western Sahara.

The General Assembly, having considered in depth the question of Western Sahara,

Recalling the inalienable right of all peoples to self-determination and independence, in accordance with the principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples,

Recalling its resolution 39/40 of 5 December 1984 on the question of Western Sahara,

Having considered the relevant chapter of the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the question of Western Sahara,

Recalling resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX) on Western Sahara, adopted by theAssembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its nineteenth ordinary session, held at Addis Ababa from 6 to 12 June 1983,

1. Reaffirms that the question of Western Sahara is a question of decolonization which remains to be completed on the basis of the exercise by the people of Western Sahara of their inalienable right to self-determination and independence;

2. Reaffirms also that the solution of the question of Western Sahara lies in the implementation of resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX) of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, which establishes ways and means for a just and definitive political solution to the Western Sahara conflict;

3. Again requests, to that end, the two parties to the conflict, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente Popular para la Liberacion de Saguia el-Hamra y de Rio de Oro, to undertake direct negotiations, in the shortest possible time, with a view to bringing about a cease-fire to create the necessary conditions for a peaceful and fair referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, a referendum without any administrative or military constraints, under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations;

4. Welcomes the efforts of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity and the Secretary-General of the United Nations to promote a just and definitive solution of the question of Western Sahara;

5. Invites the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity and the Secretary-General of the United Nations to exert every effort to persuade the two parties to the conflict, the Kingdom of Morocco and the

Frente POLISARIO, to negotiate, in the shortest possible time and in conformity with resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX) of the Organization of African Unity and the present resolution, the terms of a cease-fire and the modalities for organizing the said referendum;

6. Reaffirms the determination of the United Nations to co-operate fully with the Organization of African Unity with a view to implementing the relevant decisions of that organization, in particular resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX);

7. Requests the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples to continue to consider the situation in Western Sahara as a matter of priority and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-first session;

8. Invites the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity to keep the Secretary-General of the United Nations informed of the progress achieved in the implementation of the decisions of the Organization of African Unity relating to Western Sahara;

9. Invites the Secretary-General to follow the situation in Western Sahara closely with a view to the implementation of the present resolution and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-first session.

United Nations General Assembly Redsolution 1541(XV) 15.12.1960

The General Assembly,

Considering the objectives set forth in Chapter XI of the Charter of the United Nations,

Bearing in mind the list of factors annexed to General Assembly resolution 742 (VIII) of 27 November 1953,

Having examined the report of the Special Committee of Six on the Transmission of Information under Article 73 e of the Charter,[12] appointed

under General Assembly resolution 1467 (XIV) of 12 December 1959 to study the principles which should guide Members in determining whether or not an obligation exists to transmit the information called for in Article 73 e of the Charter and to report on the results of its study to the Assembly at its fifteenth session,

1. Expresses its appreciation of the work of the Special Committee of Six on the Transmission of Infor mation under Article 73 e of the Charter;

2. Approves the principles set out in section V, part B, of the report of the Committee, as amended and as they appear in the annex to the present resolution;

3. Decides that these principles should be applied in the light of the facts and the circumstances of each case to determine whether or not an obligation exists to transmit information under Article 73 e of the Charter.

948th plenary meeting, 15 December 1960.

ANNEX

Principles which should guide members in determining whether or not an obligation exists to transmit the information called for in article 73 e of the charter of the united nations

Principle I

The authors of the Charter of the United Nations had in mind that Chapter XI should be applicable to territories which were then known to be of the colonial type. An obligation exists to transmit information under Article 73 e of the Charter in respect of such territories whose peoples have not yet attained a full measure of self-government.

Principle II

Chapter XI of the Charter embodies the concept of Non-Self-Governing Territories in a dynamic state of evolution and progress towards a "full measure of self-government". As soon as a territory and its peoples attain

a full measure of self-government, the obligation ceases. Until this comes about, the obligation to transmit information under Article 73 e continues.

Principle III

The obligation to transmit information under Article 73 e of the Charter constitutes an international obligation and should be carried out with due regard to the fulfilment of international law.

Principle IV

Prima facie there is an obligation to transmit information in respect of a territory which is geographically separate and is distinct ethnically and/or culturally from the country administering it.

Principle V

Once it has been established that such a prima facie case of geographical and ethnical or cultural distinctness of a territory exists, other elements may then be brought into consideration. These additional elements may be, inter alia, of an administrative, political, juridical, economic or historical nature. If they affect the relationship between the metropolitan Slate and the territory concerned in a manner which arbitrarily places the latter in a position or status of subordination, they support the presumption that there is an obligation to transmit information under Article 73 e of the Charter.

Principle VI

A Non-Self-Governing Territory can be said to have reached a full measure of self-government by:

(a) Emergence as a sovereign independent State;

(b) Free association with an independent State; or

(c) Integration with an independent State.

Principle VII

(a) Free association should be the result of a free and voluntary choice by the peoples of the territory concerned expressed through informed and

democratic processes. It should be one which respects the individuality and the cultural characteristics of the territory and its peoples, and retains for the peoples of the territory which is associated with an independent State the freedom to modify the status of that territory through the expression of their will by democratic means and through constitutional processes. (b) The associated territory should have the right to determine its internal constitution without outside interference, in accordance with due constitutional processes and the freely expressed wishes of the people. This does not preclude consultations as appropriate or necessary under the terms of the free association agreed upon.

Principle VIII

Integration with an independent State should be on the basis of complete equality between the peoples of the erstwhile Non-Self-Governing Territory and those of the independent country with which it is integrated. The peoples of both territories should have equal status and rights of citizenship and equal guarantees of fundamental rights and freedoms without any distinction or discrimination; both should have equal rights and opportunities for representation and effective participation at all levels in the executive, legislative and judicial organs of government.

Principle IX

Integration should have come about in the following circum stances:

(a) The integrating territory should have attained an advanced stage of self-government with free political institutions, so that its peoples would have the capacity to make a responsible choice through informed and democratic processes;

(6) The integration should be the result of the freely expressed wishes of the territory's peoples acting with full knowl edge of the change in their status, their wishes having been expressed through informed and democratic processes, im partially conducted and based on universal adult suffrage.

The United Nations could, when it deems it necessary, supervise these processes.

Principle X

The transmission of information in respect of Non-Self-Governing Territories under Article 73 e of the Charter is subject to such limitation as security and constitutional considerations may require. This means that the extent of the information may be limited in certain circumstances, but the limitation in Article 73 e cannot relieve a Member State of the obligations of Chapter XI. The "limitation" can relate only to the quantum of information of economic, social and educational nature to be transmitted.

Principle XI

The only constitutional considerations to which Article 73 e of the Charter refers are those arising from constitutional relations of the territory with the Administering Member. They refer to a situation in which the constitution of the territory gives it self-government in economic, social and educational matters through freely elected institutions. Nevertheless, the responsibility for transmitting information under Article 73 e continues, unless these constitutional relations preclude the Government or parliament of the Administering Member from receiving statistical and other information of a technical nature relating to economic, social and educational conditions in the territory.

Principle XII

Security considerations have not been invoked in the past. Only in very exceptional circumstances can information on economic, social and educational conditions have any security aspect. In other circumstances, therefore, there should be no necessity to limit the transmission of Information on security grounds.

Resolution 621 (1988) of 20 September 1988

The Security Council, Having heard a report by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on his mission of good offices," pursued jointly with the current Chairman of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the organization of African Unity, in conformity with General Assembly resolution 40/50 of 2 December 1985, with a view to settling the question of Western Sahara,

Taking note of the agreement in principle given by the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente opular para la Liberacion de Saguia el-Hamra y de Rio de Oro on 30 August 1988 to the joint proposals of the Secretary-General and the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity,

Anxious to support these efforts with a view to the holding of a referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, organized and supervised by the United Nations in co-operation with the Organization of African Unity,

1. Decides to authorize the Secretary-General to appoint a special representative for Western Sahara

2. Requests the Secretary-General to transmit to it as soon as possible a report on the holding of a referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara and on ways and means to ensure the organization and supervision of such a referendum by the United Nations in co-operation with the organization of African Unity. Adopted unanimously at the 2826th meeting.

Resolution 658 (1990) of 27 June 1990

The Security Council

Recalling its resolution 621 (1988) of 20 September 1988, by which it decided to authorize the Secretary-General to appoint a special representative for Western Sahara and to request the Secretary-General to

transmit to it as soon as possible report on the holding of a referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara and on ways and means to ensure the organization and super vision of such a referendum by the United Nations m co-operation with the Organization of African Unity

Recalling also that, on 30 August 1988, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente Popular para la Liberacion de Saguia el-Hamra y de Rio de Oro gave their agreement in rinciple to the proposals of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the current Chairman of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity in the framework of their joint mission of good offices

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara

l. Expresses its full support to the Secretary-General in his mission of good offices, pursued jointly with the current Chairman of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, with a view to settling the question of Western Sahara;

2. Approves the report of the Secretary-General, transmitted to the Council in accordance with resolution 62 l (1988) with a view to settling the question of Western Sahara, which contains the full text of the settlement proposals as accepted by the two parties on 30 August 1988 as well as an outline of the plan provided by the Secretary General in order to implement those proposals;

3. Calls upon the two parties to co-operate fully with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the cur- rent Chairman of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity in their efforts aimed at an early settlement of the question of Western Sahara

4. Welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General to dispatch, in the immediate future, a technical mission to territory and to neighbouring countries, in to refine the administrative aspects of the outlined plan and

to obtain the necessary information for the preparation of a further report to the Council,

5. Requests the Secretary-General to transmit to the Security Council as soon as possible a further detailed report on his implementation plan, containing, in particu lar, an estimate of the cost of the United Nations Mission for the referendum in Western Sahara, on the under- standing that this further report should be the basis on which the Council would authorize the establishment of the mission.