



Thione Niang
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Actions Report

Prepared For: Professor Mohamed Cherkaoui

Prepared By: Thione Niang
thionen@gmail.com
202-436-9709

Executive Summary

Upon my return to Tindouf I set up some meetings in DC to talk to key people to inform them about the situation in the Camps and my recommendations from a young American leader.

Conference Call with YDA National Executive board

The week of our return in DC Chris Anderson and I held a conference call briefing of the Trip and steps to take toward resolution with YDA (Young Democrats of America) national executive board.

Outcome: This again continues to bring awareness to the young leaders across the country whom knew nothing about the Sahara issue prior to our involvement.

Letters to the State Department

Upon my return to Tindouf I send a meeting request letter to inform the US State Department and the White House about my trip in both Tindouf and Morocco and share my thoughts with them. My main concern with them will be the need for the US to act for our security. I had was with Tashea Brodgers who is helping me set up the meeting in Washington with the young Moroccans and the Young people from the Camps.

Meeting with Congressman Payne

Background on Conyers:

Congressman Conyers is the chair of the Black Caucus. He wrote the letter to President Obama to pressure Morocco to investigate the recent issues in Layoone. He is an important person on this issue in DC.

In this meeting I gave a report of our trips in Tindouf and Morocco, what we have seen on both sides and the need for the United States to act quickly.

I also stressed the need for the Black Caucus to investigate all information it receives from all parties very carefully. Because when I arrived to the meeting there was impressions that the other side has gotten to them by their grassroots work on the recent events in Layoone. In result to that Payne's office delivered a letter to the President to pressure Morocco to investigate the death of a young boy.

I have informed them that in my very recent trip in Morocco last week that those photos was not real and stressed the need to take time to investigate.

I have also indicated that it will be for the best interest our country and our reputation take a look at both sides to have a better picture of the situation like I just did which they promised to so.

Issue: In this matter I have learnt that the grassroots of the other side has been very strong in DC and was successfully able to put Morocco against the defense mode.

There is not enough pressure from Morocco on the grassroots side to do the same or at least balance things.. In result to that the image of morocco here needs to be protected and I will just be honest.

Outcome of this meeting:

The Congressman, his office and many many people including my self receive so many emails every week from the other sides on every little thing that happens in Layoone or Dakhla and for that they get sensitive to the issue. I personally forwarded all of the emails I have been receiving since the Layoone from the other side.

So I shared with the Congressman what I have heard from Morocco that those pictures the Spanish newspapers are just using them to make Morocco look bad but there more untold stories there. He asked me to share those info Algene and follow up with a meeting with her.

Another Meeting with Algene Sajery

Background on Algene: She is the author of the letter that the Congressman wrote and is the point person dealing with this issue at the Africa Subcommittee. As of last week she became the new staff director of the committee. She is also important because her position tends to influence the Payne's.

Algene and I met again few days after the initial meeting to talk about the event I am working on to bring the young Moroccans and young people from Tindouf on the table here. But most importantly follow up with her on Payne's request. In this meeting I have stressed the need for her to go to Tindouf so she can see the difference.

She is very sensitive about the people on the camps I believe because of the pictures they have been showing them and there is no one up until now that is telling them the opposite and I guess that is what I am doing at this point with her and the rest of the members that I have been meeting.

Issue:

She informed me that they were working on another letter for Congress and the White House they are working on and this time for Human Rights issues in Layoone. She also had been received a lot of emails and info from the other side. They are daily sending info where there is nothing from Morocco in return.

Outcome of this meeting:

I was able to convince her to take her time to look at both sides because there is obviously some propaganda here when it comes to the info she receives from the other side and I care more than anything about the credibility of our Nation. I

showed her the videos that I received from Manelle and pictures, which helped to have her think about things a little different, but there is still a lot of work to be done with her and I am willing to continue to do so.

Needs:

To continue to work with the Congressman Payne's office and keep putting pressure on them to let them know that it is not Ok to take blunt decisions without consequences. The way to do that is to monitor the actions and always follow up with whatever comes up. We cannot wait till things happen to respond, there should be a permanent operation going on non-stop in DC which I will highlight on my recommendations.

Meeting with Congressman Conyers and his stuff

Background on Conyers: He is the founder of the Black Caucus and been serving in Congress since 1965. He is the Chairman of the US Congress Judicial Committee. He is the second longest serving member in the US Congress now.

In our first trip to Morocco he arranged for the CIA to give us a report on the issue and set up a meeting for our delegation to be received by his friend US Ambassador Kaplan in Rabat.

Meeting:

In the meeting I gave him a full report of the rip to Morocco and Tindouf. I have shared with him what I have seen in Layoone, the progress, the development, my meeting with families who came back from the camps, the Cheikhs, the Human Rights Organizations who assured me that all was going well in that matter, etc... I have also shared with him the situation at the camps and how difficult it is for people there, and that our government should do something immediately. Because he is in charge of the security of our nation, CIA, FBI and Homeland security, we discussed the security aspect where I warned him of the potential threat if we don't move fast because of the vulnerability of the youth in the camps who can be picked up by Al-aeda if we do nothing.

I have shared with him pictures of both sides. He asked his staff member Isaac Robinson present in the meeting to note the security part and he will call a meeting to hear from the State Department to see what has been done and we go from there. He has been informed now and he is going to take steps and I will continue to follow up with him cause I am also helping him for a Bill he dearly cares about which is the Water for the World Act that I testified in Congress last Wednesday. I also organized a conference call for him with the National Board of the young Democrats of America. So it is a huge step to work on having him on our side because he is very listened to in Washington DC. I also urged him on the propaganda from the other side in case he receives anything from them or Payne's office.

Outcome of this meeting

In this meeting I gave the Congressman a full report of both of my trips. He instructed his staff/ advisor Isaac Robinson (Vice President of the Young Democrats of America whom I brought to Morocco with me) and work with me on following up with the State Department and see what have been done and he will take the steps forward. I am willing to follow up with that as well

Meeting with Congressman Bobby Rush's staff (Angelle Kwemo)

Background on Bobby Rush: He is a senior member and also the Chair of the Commerce and trade committee. He is also one of the seniors of the Black Caucus. He is very close to the President. The Congressman signed the first letter sent to the President to pressure Morocco.

Angelle Kwemo: She is the Legal Counsel for the Congressman and advice the Congressman on this particular issue.

Once I received the letter that went to the White House, I immediately called a meeting with Angelle Kwemo who is a good friend of mine and we both serve in the Congressional African Staff Association(this association is for all African born staffers or former staffers of US Congress) which she is the President and I am the communication Director. I was able to clarify things with Angelle, to show her the videos that I received from Manele. She was shocked to learn about it from Morocco's point of view. Few days later she talked to the Congressman and decided the will NOT SIGNED ANOTHER letter and they from now on as I urged them to investigate all of the info that they receive from either side.

Article

Upon my return I have written an article sent to the Washington Post and the New York Times, which was not published as of now.

Concerns:

I am aware that you stressed importance of this article in your last email but I think that if this article was published Ok it will be good for Morocco for a day or two but the long-term I will be very limited to what I can do to help bring end to this issue. Many articles have been published about the issue both in New York Times and the Post and/or support letters sometimes by members but situations still did not change if it is not worsen. Therefore I believe we have got to take a different approach. And that approach has to be the grassroots and also for me to be able to navigate around DC having in mind that the end goal is to show that the autonomy plan is the ideal to resolve this issue. I can't reach that by jumping to conclusion openly this soon. There is a lot of work to be done and it can't be minimized. Morocco is way behind when it comes to the grassroots in the US. Everyone has info from the other side but no office that I went had anything from Morocco on the

recent events in Layoone. If I openly step forward, the other side will scream to the rest of the people in DC whom can listen to me that I am bought by Morocco so I am not credible to speak. I have to try at least to bring solutions. This is how I have to be seen. And to be honest that's how I feel because I want to see an end to this. So the grassroots work I have been doing is way more important than a published letter or article because I am able to know who is thinking what and I am working on changing the perception toward the situation and specially toward Morocco.

Note: I am not excluding the support letter but I just want it to be more timely and more effective. Write a letter to just write it will not help.

Example: The other side agreed to let their youth come meet their counterparts from Morocco and if I do the letter now they will shut all of their doors immediately and we will not have no progress. We will start from zero again. But if I try those steps, I will be able to have the ear of my government afterward when I send a letter or go to Congress and testify which I plan to do. It will be important in Congress when I testify to show that I have taken the steps necessary and I believe after all that Morocco's Autonomy Plan is the solution. For now it is premature and will not help Morocco at all.

Recommendations

What is clearly missing in DC for Morocco is the grassroots aspect I repeat. The other side is way ahead of you guys on this very important issue to you. In result to that Morocco is always on a defense side, which is not very good.

We ought to create strategic outreach plan to build a grassroots portfolio in DC to target the concerning parties and have a very constant operation. We can help with that, specially with the huge databases that we possess. I am open to discuss that after we clear this item. If needed, we will prepare a proposal for you. This will be with my team, as it will take more teamwork to get the job done.

-Thione NIANG

