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Sultana Khaya Continues Rooftop Protest in Western Sahara After Moroccan Forces Brutalize Co-protestors

WASHINGTON, D.C./Boujdour, Western Sahara – What does Sultana Khaya do when her fellow protesters are beaten, tortured, trapped in their homes, and hospitalized? She installs a flagpole for each woman who can't be present so that she may carry on the daily rooftop protests for self-determination of Western Sahara.



She takes a break to yell at the plainclothes officers that perpetually surround her home. “You torture and beat and rape us on our land. [But we persist.] It's what we have to do for our homeland justice will prevail”

Sultana Khaya has been protesting for human rights and self-determination on her rooftop in Boujdour, Western Sahara since November 2020 when Moroccan Occupation Forces began their arbitrary detainment and siege of her house. For the following 482 days, the forces invaded the house, cut the electricity, destroyed or removed all furnishings, and poured noxious chemicals on the walls and in the water supply. Furthermore, they beat and raped Sultana and her sister, Waari, in front of their 84-year-old mother who was bound and forced to watch. On March 16, 2022, international unarmed civilian protectors (UCP) entered the Khaya home, bringing a reprieve of the siege and the rapes.



The UCP guests in Sultana's home opened the space for other Saharawis to join Sultana on her rooftop for nonviolent demonstrations. The Khaya house is called "The Free Zone." The picture above is of one such protest on April 15, 2022. In the following days, every single woman in this picture had been beaten, some sexually molested, some requiring hospitalization. One woman had bones broken in both feet and both hands in addition to severe bruising over her entire body.



Sultana continues to protest on her rooftop. She yells at the Moroccan Occupation Agents below, “You're trying to make me look unstable! But you are the unreasonable ones! You won't succeed in flipping the script to make it seem like I am in the wrong.”

She added, “You should take shame that you are acting this way during Ramadan!”

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