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COMMUNIQUE

The African Union concerned by the incidents in Laayoune and the resulting loss of lives

Addis Ababa, 10 November 2010: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Jean Ping, has followed with great concern the tragic events that have unfolded in Laayoune, Western Sahara, in the last couple of days, as a result of the assault by Moroccan forces against the peaceful encampment of Sahrawis in the outskirts of the city.

The forcible measures taken by the Moroccan authorities to dismantle the camps and disband the protesters have regrettably resulted in the loss of lives and the destruction of property, in a context characterized by heightened tension over the last several weeks.

The African Union calls upon the Government of Morocco to refrain from the use of force and to seek the path of dialogue as the only productive means of resolving the crisis and creating more conducive conditions for a lasting solution to the dispute over Western Sahara.

In this respect, and in pursuit of relevant AU decisions, including the Tripoli Plan of Action of 31 August 2009, the African Union reiterates its support to the ongoing efforts by the United Nations to find a solution to the conflict consistent with relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions that will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

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