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## Western Sahara and Morocco

### Written question No. 745 to the Committee of Ministers

by Mr Fourat BEN CHIKHA, Belgium, Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group

Morocco was recently admitted as "partner for local democracy" of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

While developing ties between Europe and Northern Africa is of course positive and is to be encouraged, I have some concerns on the position of the Council of Europe towards the illegal occupation and annexation of Western Sahara by Morocco.

As no country in the world (including none of the European Union and Council of Europe member States) has recognised the sovereignty of Morocco over Western Sahara, illegally occupied for over four decades,

Mr Ben Chikha

To ask the Committee of Ministers,

Could the Committee of Ministers clarify the rules and principles applicable to relations of the bodies of the Council of Europe with third countries? In particular, what are the rules applicable to the territorial scope of such co-operation in case of third countries that occupy a foreign territory without an international mandate?

Given that no member State of the Council of Europe has recognised the sovereignty of Morocco over Western Sahara, could the Committee of Ministers clarify the territorial scope of the co-operation of the different bodies of the Council of Europe with Morocco and whether it includes Western Sahara?

