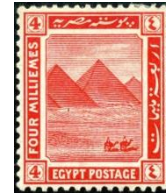




Universiteit
Leiden



African Studies Centre Leiden

African Postal Heritage

APH Paper Nr 6: part 5

Ton Dietz

Sahara: POST 1975 SAHARA

Version January 2017

Introduction

Postage stamps and related objects are miniature communication tools, and they tell a story about cultural and political identities and about artistic forms of identity expressions. They are part of the world's material heritage, and part of history. Ever more of this postal heritage becomes available online, published by stamp collectors' organizations, auction houses, commercial stamp shops, online catalogues, and individual collectors. Virtually collecting postage stamps and postal history has recently become a possibility. These working papers about Africa are examples of what can be done. But they are work-in-progress! Everyone who would like to contribute, by sending corrections, additions, and new area studies can do so by sending an email message to the APH editor: Ton Dietz (dietzaj@asc.leidenuniv.nl). You are welcome!

Disclaimer: illustrations and some texts are copied from internet sources that are publicly available. All sources have been mentioned. If there are claims about the copy rights of these sources, please send an email to asc@asc.leidenuniv.nl, and, if requested, those illustrations will be removed from the next version of the working paper concerned.

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Illustrations cover page:

ASC Leiden postage stamp Nederland (2011): ©African Studies Centre Leiden

Cape of Good Hope postage stamp 1853:

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/7c/Cape_Triangular_Postage_Stamp.jpg/400px-Cape_Triangular_Postage_Stamp.jpg

Egypt postage stamp 1914:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4b/Post_Stamp_Egypt.jpg

AFRICAN POSTAL HERITAGE

Ton Dietz, African Studies Centre Leiden

Leiden, February 2017

SAHARA

Ifni, Cabo Juby, Rio de Oro, La Agüera, Spanish Sahara, Spanish West Africa, and post-1975 Sahara

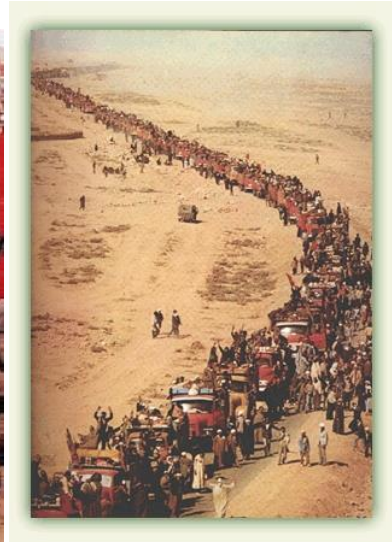
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Part 5: Post-1975 Sahara

Moroccan stamps commemorating the Green March

Morocco organised a 'Peaceful March' (La Marche Verte) in 1975 (on 6 November), with more than 300,000 unarmed civilians, who peacefully occupied most of the Spanish Sahara.



http://www.maroc.ma/sites/default/files/styles/thumbnail_page_detail/public/image_actualite/la-marche-verte-m-504x300.jpg?itok=vvJpfyQ3

http://www.vip-blog.com/photos/medias/1209/rolbenzaken-vip-blog-com-769727marche_verte.jpg

Spain accepted the fait accompli in February 1976 and accepted the division of the territory of former Spanish Sahara in a Moroccan and a Mauritanian part. In 1979 the Mauritanian part was occupied by Morocco as well.

A FRENCH WEBSITE [HTTP://WWW.HISTOIRE-ET-PHILATELIE.FR/PAGES/005_DECOLONISATION/0502_MAROC_2.HTML](http://WWW.HISTOIRE-ET-PHILATELIE.FR/PAGES/005_DECOLONISATION/0502_MAROC_2.HTML) ADDED:

6 NOVEMBRE 1975 :

Début d'une opération civilo-militaire pour obliger l'Espagne à céder le "Sahara Espagnol" au Maroc. Cette campagne portera le nom de "Marche Verte". 350 000 "volontaires" marocains y participeront, «*le Coran d'une main et le drapeau marocain de l'autre*».

Tous les ans depuis 1976, un timbre commémore l'anniversaire de cette opération.

Deux timbres seront surchargés dès le 30 octobre 1975”

And about what happened in 1976-1979:

27 FÉVRIER 1976 :

Proclamation à Bir Lehlou par le Front Polisario de la République Arabe Sahraouie Démocratique (RASD), au lendemain du départ du dernier soldat espagnol du territoire. Une guerrilla commence entre l'armée du Polisario, soutenue par l'Algérie, et les armées marocaines et mauritaniennes.

JUILLET 1978 :

Putsch en Mauritanie qui renverse le Président Moktar Ould Daddah.

Le Front Polisario déclare un cessez-le-feu unilatéral avec Nouakchott. Le cessez-le-feu est approuvé par l'ONU.

10 AOÛT 1979 : Un traité de paix est signé entre le Polisario et la Mauritanie dans lequel la Mauritanie cède sa partie du Sahara ex-espagnol (Oued Ed Dahab) au Front Polisario.

14 AOÛT 1979 :

360 représentants sahraouis, mandatés par la population de Oued Ed-Dahab, se déplacent de leur province cédée au Polisario vers Rabat pour faire acte d'allégeance au Roi du Maroc. Le Maroc annonce sa décision d'annexion de cette province.

Morocco has issued many postage stamps to commemorate the 'Marche Verte', starting in 1975.



http://www.histoire-et-philatelie.fr/images/005_decolonisation/07_maroc/marche_verte_surch_75_2.jpg



1975; Marche Verte, December issue; http://www.timbres-afrique-francophone.com/img/timbre/1975/mini1975_MAC_0745.jpg

1976; 1st anniversary: http://www.histoire-et-philatelie.fr/images/005_decolonisation/07_maroc/marche_verte_2.jpg

1977; 2d anniversary: http://www.histoire-et-philatelie.fr/images/005_decolonisation/07_maroc/marche_verte_4.jpg



1978: http://www.timbres-afrique-francophone.com/img/timbre/1978/mini1978_MAC_0806.jpg and
<http://i.colnect.net/images/t/1895/020/Promotion-of-the-Sahara.jpg>



1979; Récupération de la Province de Oued Ed-Dahab: http://www.histoire-et-philatelie.fr/images/005_decolonisation/07_maroc/sahara_espagnol_recupere.jpg



1980: http://www.timbres-afrique-francophone.com/img/timbre/1980/mini1980_MAC_0865.jpg



Estafette50

www.delcampe.net

1980: 5th anniversary of the Green March: http://images-01.delcampe-static.net/img_large/auction/000/344/387/322_001.jpg



1981: 25 years of independence; Sahara part of the map,, but also Algeria. <http://i.colnect.net/images/b/2395/633/Symbol-of-Independence.jpg>

1981 King Hassan and the 6th anniversary, also the Canary Islands on the map now ; <http://i.colnect.net/images/b/2461/139/King-Hassan-II.jpg>

1982: railroad of unity; <http://i.colnect.net/images/b/1731/837/Unity-railroad.jpg>



1983: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/AMJ-i.jpg>

1984: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/ANG-i.jpg>

1985: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/AOE-i.jpg>

1986: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/AOX-i.jpg>



1987: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/AQA-i.jpg>

1988: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/AQR-i.jpg>

1989: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/ARL-i.jpg>

1990: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/ARW-i.jpg>



1991: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/ASR-i.jpg>

1992: http://timbresenfolies.free.fr/public/Maroc/1992_17_annee_de_la_marche_verte_3.40.JPG

1993: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/AUG-i.jpg>



1994: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/AVA-i.jpg>

And <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/AVB-i.jpg>

1995: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/AVO-i.jpg>

and <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/AVP-i.jpg>



1996: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/AWG-i.jpg>

1997: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/AWU-i.jpg>

1998: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/AXK-i.jpg>

1999: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/AYD-i.jpg>



2000: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/AZH-i.jpg> and

<http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/AZI-i.jpg>

2001: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/BAG-i.jpg>

2002: http://timbresenfolies.free.fr/public/Maroc/2002_27_eme_annee_de_marche_verte.JPG



2003: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/BCE-i.jpg>

2004: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/BDA-i.jpg>



2005: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/BEI-i.jpg> and
<http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/BEJ-i.jpg>



2006: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/BFN-i.jpg> and
<http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/BFO-i.jpg>

2007: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/BHO-i.jpg>



2008: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/BJM-i.jpg>



2009: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/BKK-i.jpg>

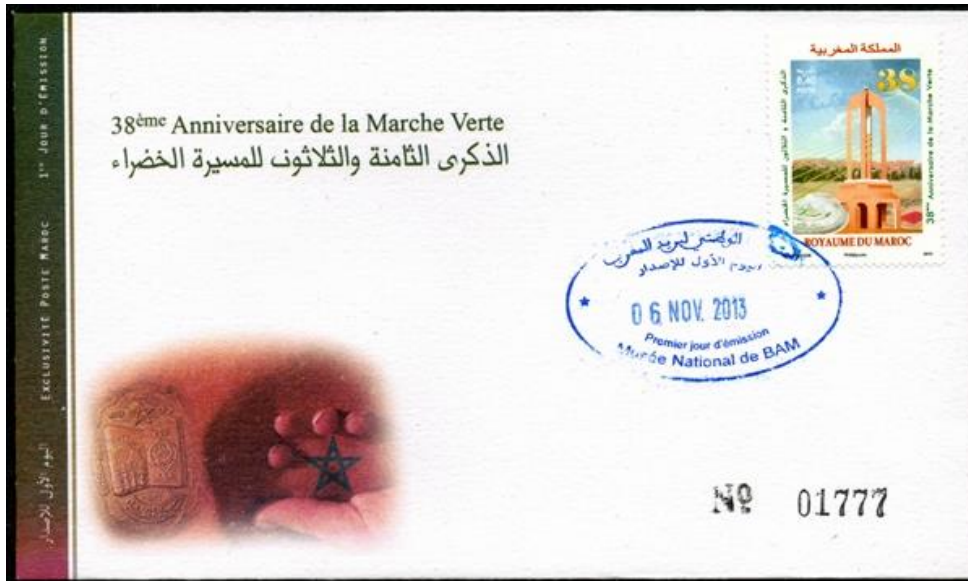
2010: http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_dUahITfektY/TNqi0Nj_Pi/AAAAAAAAAHk/6I3Shh_uYao/s400/timbre-marche-verte_M.jpg



2011: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/BOC-i.jpg>

2012: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/BPA-i.jpg>

2013: <http://www.stampworld.com/media/catalogue/Morocco/Postage-stamps/BQI-i.jpg>



2013: http://www.timbres-du-maroc.info/blog/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/FDC_YT_1680_MarcheVerte38_600px.jpg

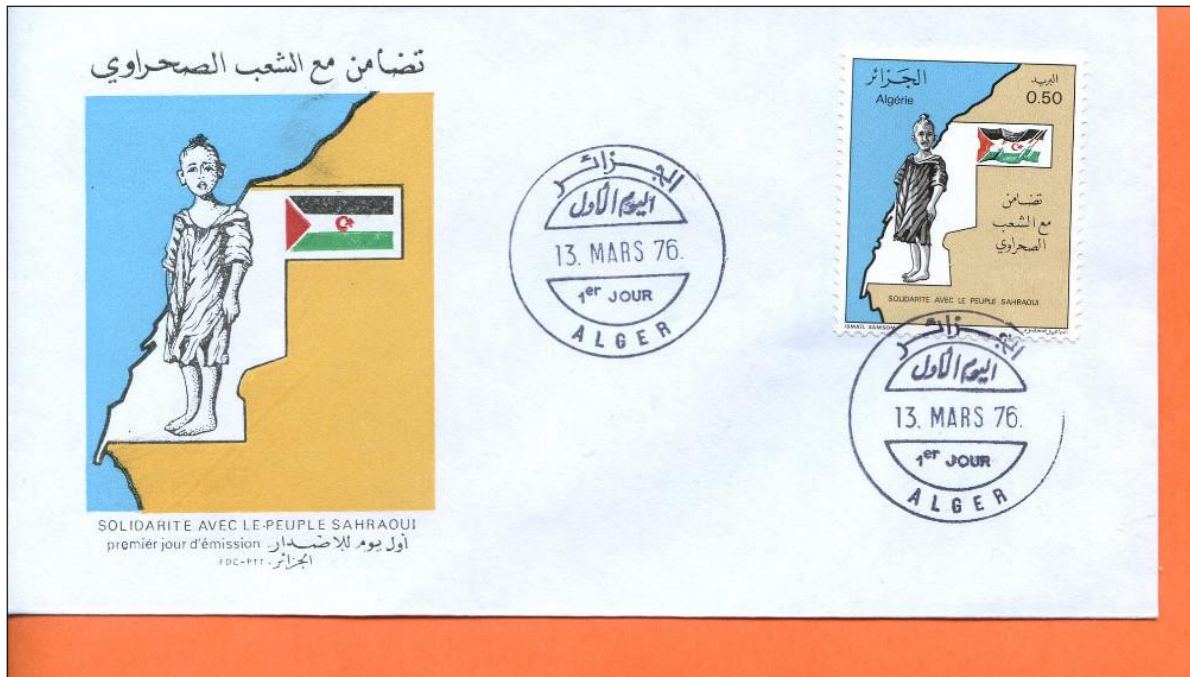


2014: http://www.philatelie.ma/wcsstore/Philatelie/images/catalog/39-MVerte_big.gif

2015 <http://www.philateliedz.com/umaphotos/Maroc2015/MarcheVerte.jpg>

Algerian support stamps for Polisario

Algeria was and is very much against Moroccan rule and supports the liberation struggle of the Saharan people, under a movement called **Polisario**. In March 1976 Algeria issued a support stamp for the Saharan people.



Estafette50

www.delcampe.net

http://images-02.delcampe-static.net/img_large/auction/000/350/542/930_001.jpg



<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/4f/Cartemaroc1880.jpg/800px-Cartemaroc1880.jpg?1455470436027>

Algeria is afraid that Morocco's claims will also extend to areas of Algeria (and Mauritania and Mali) formerly part of Moroccan empires. This is a map showing the area of the Sultan's influence in 1880, before European incursions. The next map shows claims of a 'Great Morocco', which became popular around 1956, when Morocco became an independent Kingdom (and saw itself as an Empire).



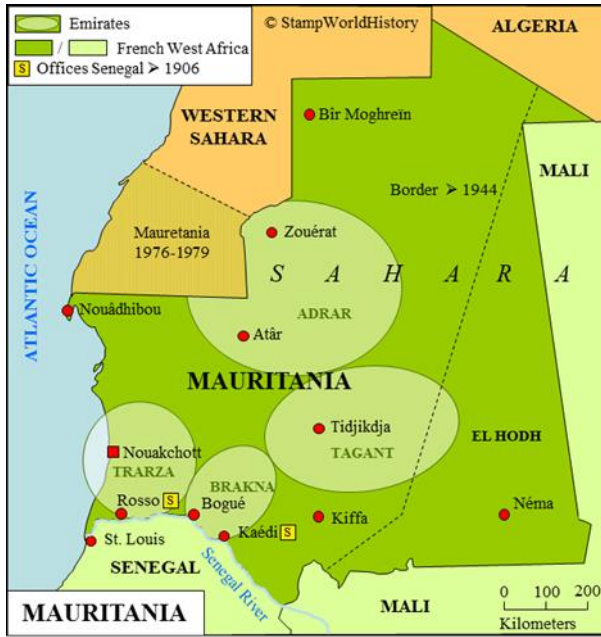
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b1/Grand_Maroc.svg/320px-Grand_Maroc.svg.png?1455470639379



http://www.histoire-et-philatelie.fr/images/005_decolonisation/07_maroc/marruecos_m5_surch_fdc.jpg

Moroccan postal presence in the Sahara after 1975

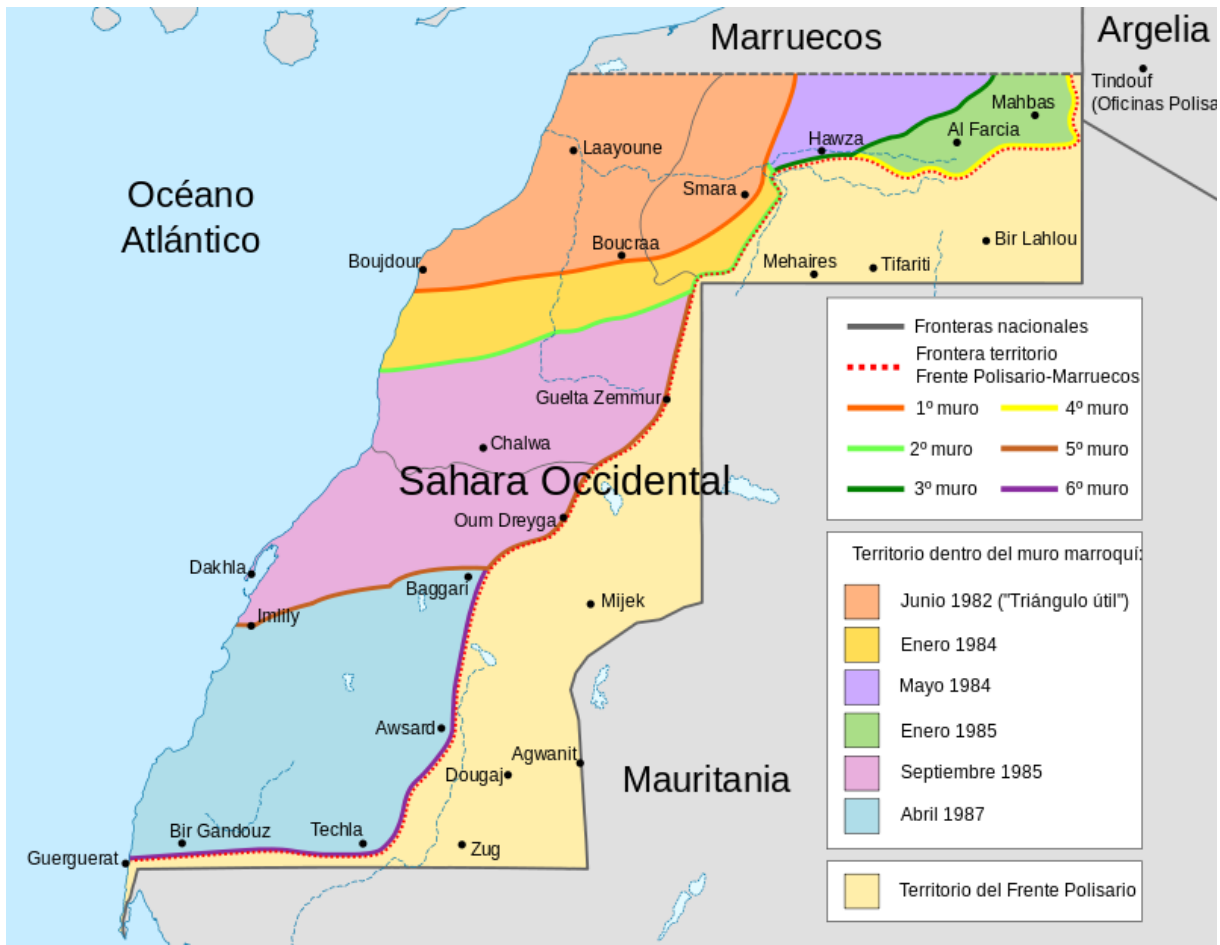
The map below shows the original division between Morocco and Mauritania (in 1976), followed by a map showing Morocco's actual occupation dynamics.



<http://www.stampworldhistory.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Mauritania1.png>



http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-aEnDC5D1M6U/TkA7ddOpNKI/AAAAAAAAAx0/rfkDMcGa-nM/s1600/Western_Sahara.jpg



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/02/Western_sahara_walls_moroccan_map-es.svg/800px-Western_sahara_walls_moroccan_map-es.svg.png?1455314649507b

In the meantime **Morocco** (re-)organised postal services in the occupied territories, that were now regarded as integral parts of the Kingdom of Morocco. El Aayun was now called Laayoune and has its own cancellation types.

A Czech collector, who specifically went there to study the postal services (in 2014) has this to say:

“Cover or postcard from Western Sahara is considered rather rare among collectors. There are several reasons for the scarcity of items sent from this region among collectors.

This territory is long-time disputed between the Morocco and the Saharawi people. In 1974, the Spanish government succumbed the pressure lead by the United Nations and it issued promises of a referendum on independence in its colony/province **Spanish Sahara**.

The Saharawi political representation immediately proclaimed the independent Saharawi Republic. At the same time, Morocco claimed the sovereignty over the territory, arguing that it had been artificially separated from their territories by the European colonial powers. The UN attempted to settle these disputes between Saharawi representation and Morocco via the International Court of Justice (ICJ). It acknowledged that Western Sahara had historical links with Morocco and Mauritania, but these are insufficient arguments or sovereignty over this territory. The court stated that Saharawi population possess the right of self-determination. Despite the ICJ verdict, Morocco occupied the Western Sahara territory. On 6 November 1975 Morocco initiated the Green March into Western Sahara; 350,000 unarmed Moroccans converged on the city of Tarfaya in southern Morocco and waited for a signal from King Hassan II of Morocco to cross the border in a peaceful march. A few days before, on 31 October, Moroccan troops invaded Western Sahara from the northwest. Since then, Western Sahara is administrated by Morocco and all international attempts to organize the referendum on the status of Western Sahara were successfully boycotted by Morocco with great help of USA and France, which are permanent

members in the UN Security Council. After the years of occupation, Morocco controls the vast majority of the Western Sahara territory. The Saharawi political representation control only minor part of the desert in the eastern part of the WS territory.

From the philatelic point of view, it is very easy to find and/or buy “stamps” of the **Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)** on the internet. However, these “stamps” are cinderellas and they have never been used for postage. All major cities of Western Sahara are administrated by **Morocco**, therefore **Maroc Post** is the official postal service for this territory. The political representation of Western Sahara (**POLISARIO**) resides in the refugee camp near the **Tindouf** city in Algeria. Thus it is very likely that Saharawi people use Algerian Post for their correspondence. There is nothing like **SADR (Western Sahara) postal service**.

Back to scarcity of the philatelic items sent from Western Sahara. I think that the major reason of such scarcity is the disputed status of the territory. For the safety reasons, the territory is highly controlled by the Army. Therefore at least **Laayoune** is definitively not prepared for massive tourism yet. Other reason might include the fact that many collectors mistakenly consider **SADR** stamp as official stamps for postage in Western Sahara forgetting that all mail going from the territory of Western Sahara travels through Moroccan postal service. The only possibility to get cover or postcard from this region is to have a friend in one of few major cities (Laayoune, Boujdour, Dakhla, Esmara) or somebody travelling there.

While visiting the city of **El-Aaiún (Al-Aaiún, Laayoune)**—capital of Western Sahara, I tried to send couple of covers and postcards to my collectors friends. Buying postcard in this city is rather challenging and it was impossible to buy a single card of Laayoune or anything related to Western Sahara. Under Moroccan administration, cards refer to **Southern Morocco (Sud de Maroc)**.

Sending philatelic covers seems easier than sending postcards, as the Moroccan Postal Service works perfectly. There are several post office downtown in the city centre of **El-Aaiún**. I managed to send couple of covers to myself and several collectors friends.”

<https://coverspostcardsworldwide.wordpress.com/2014/05/19/western-sahara-2014-under-moroccan-administration/>



https://coverspostcardsworldwide.files.wordpress.com/2014/05/ws_po.jpg



<http://www.sahara-developpement.com/Portals/0/POSTES.jpg>

Stamps issued by Polisario

Polisario indeed issues many vignettes that are not being used for postal services but as propaganda for its cause. On the stamps one can see “R.A.S.D. Sahara Occ.” Later “República Saharaoui”.



http://3.bp.blogspot.com/QWPuwq8To8/SsiOguEexNI/AAAAAADB8/13AFvbXFlo/s200/Polisario_276864008.jpg

Examples are given below.

1991 Polisario propaganda postage stamps



<http://stampmall.com.au/images/85120.jpg>

(see http://stampmall.com.au/index.php?main_page=index&cPath=108_956 for many other examples between 1991 AND 1999).

1992 Polisario propaganda postage stamps



[http://i.ebayimg.com/00/s/MTExM1gxMzMw/z/HvsAAOSwo0JWPzLx/\\$_57.JPG](http://i.ebayimg.com/00/s/MTExM1gxMzMw/z/HvsAAOSwo0JWPzLx/$_57.JPG)

1993 Polisario propaganda postage stamps



<https://coverspostcardsworldwide.files.wordpress.com/2014/05/sadr2.jpg?w=406>

http://www.sellosmundo.com/sellos/sello_184003.jpg

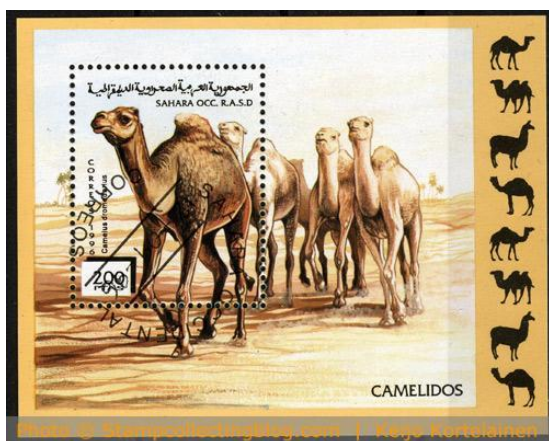
1996 Polisario propaganda postage stamps



<http://1.bp.blogspot.com/>

7C1v7yNP8lc/VQBmDHONG51/AAAAAAAZUw/qpiK02Gz4A/s1600/Sahrawi%2B1996%2BBirds%2Bof%2BPrey%2BPortrait%2Bstamp%2B-%2BAccipiter%2Bnisus%2B29%2Bptas.jpg

also in 1996



<http://www.stampcollectingblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/sahara-occ-rasd-camels-souvenir-sheet.jpg>

1998 Polisario propaganda postage stamps, now using **Republica Saharai**



[http://i.ebayimg.com/00/s/MTA3MFgxNjAw/z/ddsAAOSwl-BWPzGx/\\$ 57.JPG](http://i.ebayimg.com/00/s/MTA3MFgxNjAw/z/ddsAAOSwl-BWPzGx/$ 57.JPG)

1999 Polisario propaganda postage stamps

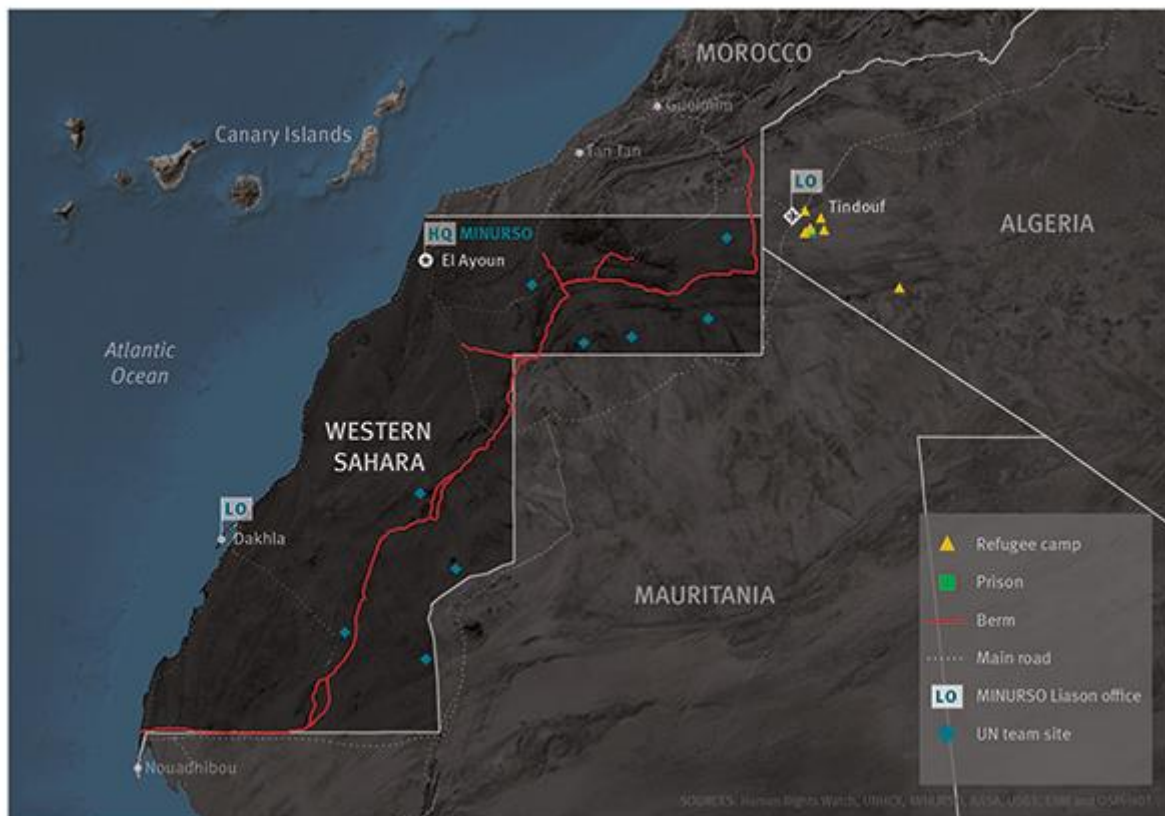


http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-ECW2OYg_UM0/VQHD02JYjil/AAAAAAAAzY4/S_OZwNEUV1o/s1600/Western%2BSahara%2B1999%2BBirds%2Bof%2BPrey%2Bstamp%2B-%2BFalco%2Btinnunculus%2B29%2Bptas.jpg

Polisario's headquarters is in Tindouf, Algeria, not far from the border.



http://img00.deviantart.net/ab6b/i/2015/219/d/0/polisario_front_by_avt_cccp-d94kzuq.png



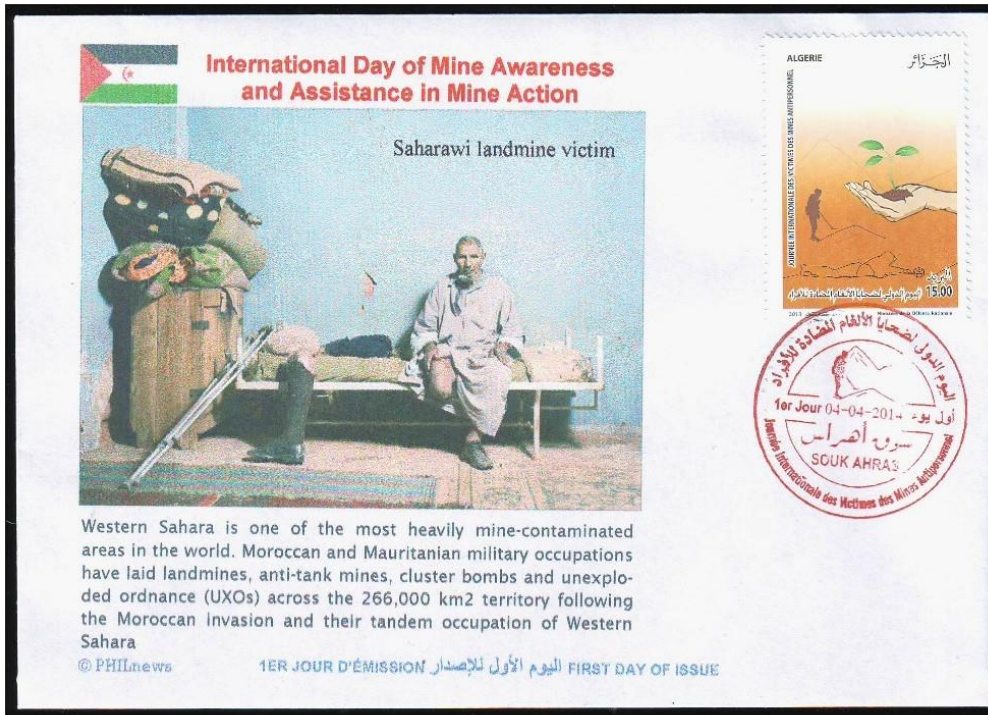
https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/media/images/photographs/westernsahara_mapWeb.jpg



<http://www.lemag.ma/english/photo/art/grande/7541660-11636343.jpg?v=1425726444>

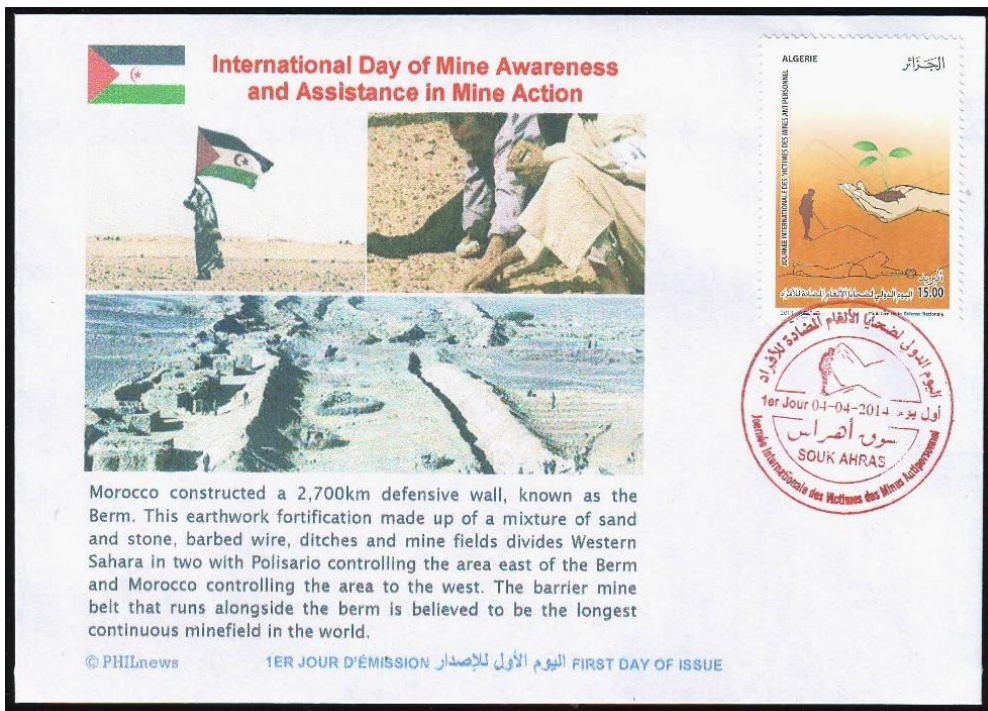


<http://moroccoonthemove.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Rubin-1024x619.png>



Yugerten

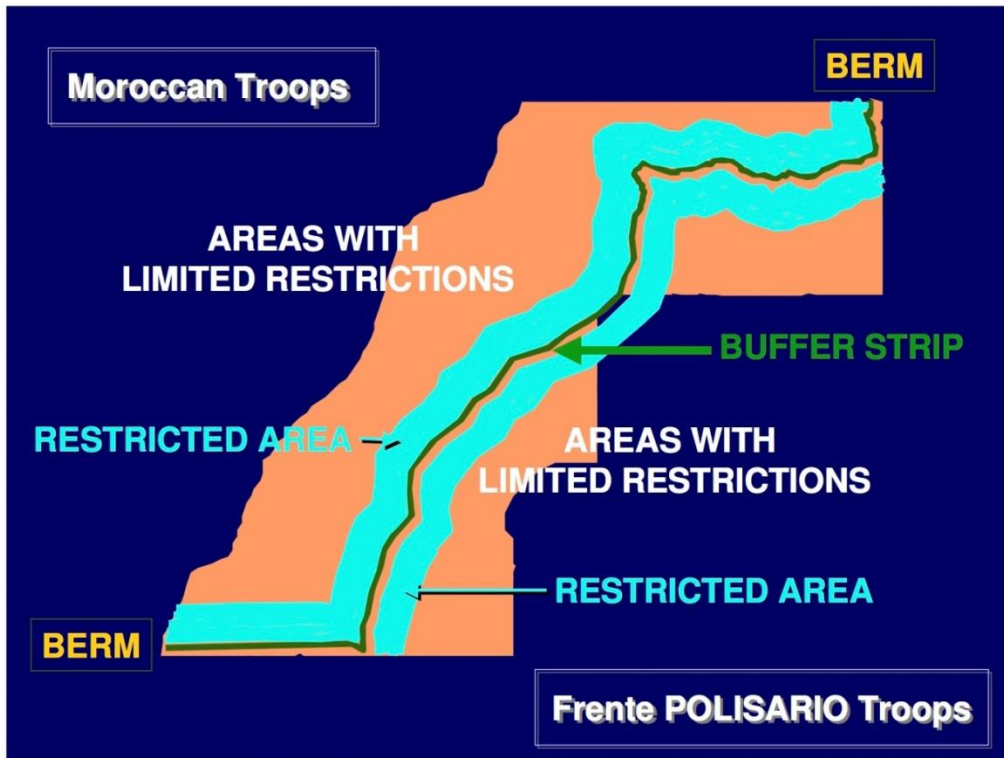
www.delcampe.net



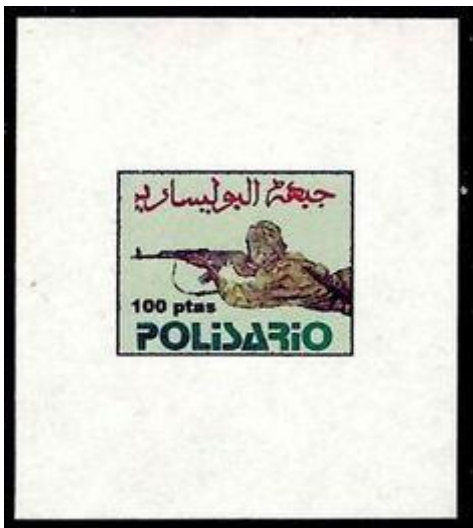
Yugerten

www.delcampe.net

Algerian stamp and postcards (2013) asking for attention for the many land mines in the Western Sahara: http://images-01.delcampe-static.net/img_large/auction/000/338/559/228_001.jpg and http://images.delcampe.com/img_large/auction/000/338/555/917_001.jpg



https://sandanddust.files.wordpress.com/2011/11/ceasefire_schematic_p2.jpg



"POLISARIO-Sahrawi-National-Liberation-Front-Fantasy-stamp"

<https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/236x/01/ec/fd/01ecfd3b4d8669ee1e9c5231c03f5cf0.jpg>