



Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission Hearing

Human Rights Threatened, Self-Determination Deferred: The Status of Western Sahara

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

1334 Longworth House Office Building

Panelists



Kerry Kennedy is the president of Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights. For more than thirty years, Ms. Kennedy has devoted herself to the pursuit of equal justice, the promotion and protection of basic rights, and the preservation of the rule of law. She has worked on a range of issues, including children's rights, child labor, disappearances, indigenous land rights, judicial independence, freedom of expression, ethnic violence, impunity, and the environment. She has concentrated specifically on women's rights, exposing injustices and educating audiences about women's issues, particularly honor killings, sexual slavery, domestic violence, workplace discrimination, sexual assault, abuse of prisoners, and more. She is the author of *Speak Truth to Power: Human Rights Defenders Who Are Changing Our World*, which features interviews with human rights activists including Marian Wright Edelman, the Dalai Lama, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and New York Times Best Seller *Being Catholic Now*. She appears regularly on ABC, NBC, CBS, CNN and PBS as well as on networks in countries around the world, and her commentaries and articles have been published in *The Boston Globe*, *The Chicago Sun-Times*, *L'Unita*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Miami Herald*, *Marie Claire*, *The New York Times*, *El Pais*, and the *Yale Journal of International Law*, among others.



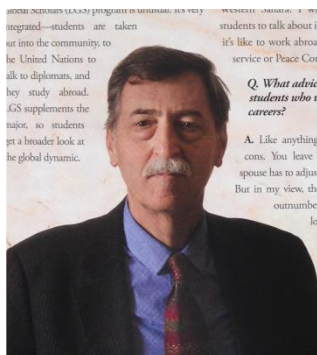
Eric Goldstein, deputy director of Human Rights Watch's Middle East and North Africa division, is an expert on Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Western Sahara. He has conducted research missions to these and other regions of the Middle East since the 1980s, writing numerous reports for Human Rights Watch and publishing articles in news media and academic journals. He has taught courses on human rights at Princeton and Georgetown universities.

Before joining Human Rights Watch, Goldstein worked at the Committee to Protect Journalists. He holds a bachelor's degree from Harvard University and a master's in international affairs from Columbia University.



Erik Hagen is the founder and a board member of the international association Western Sahara Resource Watch, which focuses on the illegal exploitation of natural resources in the Western Sahara. It is an umbrella organization with NGO members in around forty countries. His specialty is the investigation of extractive industries in occupied Western Sahara and confronting the companies with the human rights implications of such business practices. Hagen also works as director of the Norwegian Support Committee for Western Sahara, where he monitors the human rights situation on the ground in the territory. Hagen previously worked as an investigative

journalist covering business and human rights in a number of developing countries. Hagen has a background as a human geographer, with a particular focus on refugees in West Africa.



Francesco Bastagli was special representative of the UN secretary-general for Western Sahara and head of MINURSO between August 2005 and September 2006.

Before then Mr. Bastagli served for three years in the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo with the rank of assistant secretary-general responsible for civil administration. Between 1999 and 2002 he was United Nations resident coordinator in Iran. Prior to that appointment, Mr. Bastagli was a director at the UN office on drugs and crime and, later, chief of the executive office of the UN Relief Agency for Palestine Refugees. In a long UN career, Mr. Bastagli also dealt with refugee assistance in Central America and international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Between 2014 and 2015, Mr. Bastagli was head of the European Union Border Assistance Mission in Moldova and Ukraine. A senior advisor at the Institute for International Political Studies in Milan, Mr.

Bastagli lectures on international peace and security. His commentaries have appeared in The International Herald Tribune, Foreign Policy and The New Republic, among others.