



Congressman Donald Payne

Tenth District - New Jersey

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Payne Expresses Concern over Aminatou Haidar

Washington, DC - Today I again join many around the world in expressing my continued concern over the well-being of Saharawi human rights defender, Aminatou Haidar on her 31st day of a hunger strike. On November 13th, Ms. Haidar, recipient of the 2008 Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Prize and the 2009 Train Foundation Civil Courage Prize, was arrested following her arrival at La'ayoune airport in the occupied territory of Western Sahara. Ms. Haidar remains at Lanzarote airport in the Canary Islands of Spain, where she has been since her expulsion from La'ayoune by the Moroccan authorities. I am gravely concerned that Ms. Haidar's health is rapidly deteriorating towards the point of no return. Let her sacrifice be an urgent call to His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco, the Moroccan Government, and to the international community highlighting the urgent need for a resolution of the crisis of the Western Sahara through negotiations mediated by United Nations Special Envoy Christopher Ross and, ultimately, self-determination for the Sahrawi people. I urgently call upon the Moroccan authorities to take immediate and necessary measures to permit Ms. Haidar's safe return to her home and family in Western Sahara.

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