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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Historic Legal Opinion Recognizes the Kabyle People's Right to Self-Determination**

**London, UK – August 5, 2024** — In a landmark decision, leading UK barristers have issued a Legal Opinion affirming that the more than 10 million Kabyle people, who live within the current borders of Algeria or are in self-exile abroad, qualify as a "people" under international law, granting them the fundamental right to self-determination. This unprecedented recognition, provided to the Movement for Self-Determination of Kabylia (MAK), marks a significant step forward in the Kabyle people's longstanding pursuit of self-determination.

The Legal Opinion was submitted by Professor Robert McCorquodale of Brick Court Chambers and Ms. Penelope Nevill of Twenty Essex Chambers in London. Their analysis concludes: "[T]he people of Kabylia are a 'people' under international law. As a consequence, the people of Kabylia have the human right to self-determination under international law."

This is the first independent legal acknowledgment of the Kabyle people's status as a distinct group entitled to self-determination under international law. It provides a credible and authoritative basis for the Kabyle movement's claims and could influence future discussions in international legal and political forums.

The recognition of the Kabyle people's right to self-determination comes at a crucial time, as Algeria faces increasing international scrutiny for its ongoing repression of civic space. In the run-up to the country's presidential elections scheduled for September 7, 2024, Amnesty International has reported a significant crackdown on human rights, including the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and association.

Over the past two years, Algerian authorities have introduced a series of restrictive legal amendments, most notably changes to the penal code in April 2024, that have further stifled freedoms. Amnesty International and other human rights organizations have called for an immediate end to these repressive measures and the release of those detained for peacefully exercising their rights.

The Movement for Self-Determination of Kabylia (MAK) welcomes this Legal Opinion as a historic validation of the Kabyle people's right to self-determination and urges the international community to support their cause. The MAK calls on Algerian authorities to respect international law, cease their crackdown on political dissent, and protect the fundamental rights of all citizens.

**President Ferhat Mehenni of MAK and the Provisional Government in Exile of Kabylia** stated:

"This Legal Opinion is not just a victory for the Kabyle people, but a significant milestone in the global fight for human rights and self-determination."

*This material is distributed by Elisabeth R. Myers on behalf of  
The Movement for Self-Determination of Kabylia.  
Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.*

“We call on the international community to stand with us and support the Kabyle people's right to determine their own future.”

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### **Notes to Editors**

Full Legal Opinion attached

### **About**

MAK is a people's movement founded in Kabylia by Ferhat Mehenni in 2001, dedicated to the independence of Kabylia and the realization of the rights of the Kabyle people. It is the representative of the primary political opposition in Algeria.