

## MOROCCO

### Fort of Villa Cisneros (fort de Dakhla)

In July 2004 Moroccan authorities began demolishing parts of the Fort of Villa Cisneros (fort de Dakhla). This fortification, erected by the Spaniards, goes back to the 1880s and is an important witness of the historical evolution of the Western Sahara. ICOMOS' attention was drawn to the ongoing demolition by the *Grupo de cultura saharani 'Suerte Mulana'*.

In the meantime ICOMOS Morocco has informed us that the Moroccan Ministry of Culture has a great interest in this building and is planning to initiate the process of listing the fort as a historic monument. The Director of Cultural Heritage stated that: "Steps are currently being taken to restore the fort and to convert it into a 'maison de culture'".

After the printing deadline we received news that „the authorities started the last phase of the Fort destruction on 13 December 2004“ – unfortunately, this could not be verified anymore. We can only hope that this important historic building will be saved after all.



Demolition of a wall of the fort



Aerial view of the fort

Historic view of the fort from 1916



Historic view of the fort from 1916

