

ALGERIA TODAY

Volume 6, Issue 7

Wednesday, April 5th, 2006

PRESIDENT BOUTEFLIKA ATTENDS ARAB LEAGUE SUMMIT IN SUDAN



President of the Republic, H.E. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, attended the Arab League Summit in Khartoum, Sudan, from March 27th to 29th. During the opening session, Sudanese President, H.E. Omar El-Bachir, praised President Bouteflika's efforts at the Arab League, saying that he had displayed "competence and perceptiveness" during Algeria's term as chair of the League. He stressed that Algeria's role was sanctioned by "concrete achievements," especially establishing "Arab common action."

On March 28th, President Bouteflika and other Arab leaders adopted the Khartoum Declaration, in which they underlined their determination to fulfill "Arab integration through the revival of the implementation of economic projects, particularly the Great Arab Free Trade Area."

ALGERIA'S ECONOMIC & FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE



In a recent press conference, the Algerian Prime Minister, Mr. Ahmed Ouyahia, expressed satisfaction with Algeria's economic and financial performance over the past year. He unveiled a number of projects that the Government would be implementing "for a better diversification of the economy and a consolidation of the market economy." However, he stressed that "development is a long process" and that a lot remains to be done before the country can "achieve its objectives of consolidating its market economy and pursuing the opening of its economy while improving the living conditions of its population." This, he insisted, can only be achieved through "sustainable development."

Mr. Ouyahia said that the country's GDP reached \$101 billion in 2005, per capita income rose to \$3,100, and economic growth reached 5.1% while inflation was maintained for the eighth year in a row at 1.6%. He also said that close to \$16 billion were invested in the country, with \$2.8 billion by foreign investors. In the employment area, Mr. Ouyahia indicated that 684,000 jobs were created last year, thus bringing down the unemployment rate to 15.3%. To remedy the housing shortage in the country, he added, 250,000 housing units have already been delivered, 600,000 additional units were being constructed, and 800,000 others were due for completion by the end of the current year.

ALGERIA HAS RECOVERED ITS INTERNATIONAL PLACE

"Algeria has fully recovered her place and her role on the international scene," says Foreign Affairs Minister, H.E. Mohammed Bedjaoui.

Algerian diplomacy has always been part and parcel of the struggle for the consolidation of the country's sovereignty, the preservation of its territorial integrity, the recuperation of its natural

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US ASSISTANT SECRETARY DAVID WELCH VISITS ALGERIA



US Respects Algeria's Reconciliation Charter



US Assistant Secretary of State for the Middle East and North Africa, H.E. David C. Welch, visited Algeria for two days starting March 13th for meetings and talks with officials. Mr. Welch said that he and his Algerian counterparts had a chance

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to discuss not only bilateral issues but various other matters of global concern as well.



He described the relationship between Algeria and the US as a "real and sophisticated partnership," based on "confidence." In a press briefing, Mr. Welch told reporters that US-Algeria relations "have developed very rapidly and very broadly in all issues of concern." He also noted that Algiers and Washington are "cooperating very closely" to "counter the threat of terrorism," and commended the fact that Algeria "has emerged from a long period of difficulties."

PROFESSOR CLOVIS MAKSOU
IN ALGERIA

Speaking before the Algerian National Council, Professor Clovis Maksoud, Director of American University's Center for the Global South, addressed the issue of political decision-making in the U.S. and the probable input of Arab states in shaping it. The speaker also praised Algeria's "major role" in the Arab world and her "intellectual and political contribution" to the orientation of Arab political positions.



Mr. Maksoud met with Algerian political representatives and officials, including Foreign Minister Mohammed Bedjaoui, the Secretary-General of the FLN, Abdelaziz Belkhadem, and the former Head of Government, Smail Hamdani.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER, H.E. MR. BEDJAOU, VISITS CHINA

H.E. Mohammed Bedjaoui visited Beijing from March 27th to 30th at the invitation of his Chinese counterpart, H.E. Li Zhaoxing, to "reinforce traditional friendly relations, solidarity, and cooperation between the two countries." Minister Bedjaoui described his meetings with Mr. Zhaoxing and Algerian-Chinese cooperation as "exemplary." Both ministers reasserted their commitment to "give a strategic dimension to the bilateral partnership," that had been decided by both heads of state when the Chinese President visited Algeria in February 2004 .

The two ministers expressed their satisfaction with the "excellent tradition of concertation that exists

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**MINISTER KHELIL WELCOMES U.S.
NNSA DELEGATION**

Algeria chooses transparency and cooperation

Minister of Energy and Mining, Mr. Chakib Khelil, welcomed a delegation from the U.S. National Nuclear Security Association (NNSA) on March 18th. The delegation, headed by Mr. Kenneth E. Barker, met with Mr. Mohamed Dourdour, the Commissioner of the National Commission on Atomic Energy (COMENA), and other officials to discuss cooperation in the areas of security and peaceful use of nuclear energy. The two delegations exchanged views and explored establishing counterpart laboratories in the two countries.

At the opening of their meetings, Minister Khelil insisted upon the necessity of an assurance that nuclear technology only be used for science and technology.

**MINISTER OF WATER
RESOURCES, MR. SELLAL,
ATTENDS WATER FORUM**

Minister of Water Resources, Mr. Abdelmalek Sellal, represented Algeria at the 4th World Water Forum held in Mexico City from March 16th-22nd. The WWF raised awareness on water issues all over the world through presentations and round-table discussions. Minister Sellal, who took part in the Ministerial Conference, called for increased international cooperation in improving the resources available to all people, noting that one third of the world's population does not have access to water.

U.S.-ALGERIA COMMERCIAL EXCHANGE ABOVE \$11BN

The U.S. and Algeria exchanged a little over \$11.5 billion in 2005, compared to less than \$7 billion in 2004 and less than \$5 billion in 2003. Algerian exports to the U.S. in 2005 were estimated at about \$10.4 billion, and imports from the U.S. amounted to close to \$1.16 billion.

\$8.5 BILLION IN OIL REVENUES IN TWO MONTHS

Algeria's oil earnings for the months of January and February amounted to \$8.5 billion. On March 20th, Minister of Energy and Mining, Mr. Chakib Khelil, said "We have worked very well these last two months, with oil earnings nearly topping \$8.5 billion." He said that the "Oil price will remain beyond \$50," and that OPEC's meeting next June in Caracas will help examine the oil market's progress and determine its future actions.

In 2005, Algeria exported \$45.6 billion worth of hydrocarbons, 45% more than in 2004

WORKSHOP ON PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET CONTROL



Members of Algeria's Parliament attended a workshop in Algiers on March 18th to receive training and expert guidance on budget control and analysis. This training is a UNDP program that focuses on strengthening parliamentary institutions in the Arab region and West Africa, called GPPS (Global Program for Parliamentary Strengthening). The workshop brought together members of the Parliamentary Finance and Budget commissions and various legislative participants, including Algerian, American, Belgian, French, and Lebanese experts.

ALGERIA WELCOMES U.S. TRADE EXPERTS

An American delegation of experts from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) joined the U.S.-Algeria Business Council (USABC) in Algeria from March 27th to the 29th for a development conference on how to encourage greater cooperation and trade between the two countries. The seminar gave participants the opportunity to better understand the rules and regulations of American commerce and the means to develop better access to American markets.

A participant in the conference said that the meetings were an opportunity to examine the potentialities and numerous benefits for the U.S. and Algeria in terms of commerce, investments and partnership.

The USDA delegation is part of the U.S. State Department's Middle East Project Initiative (MEPI). The seminar was organized by the Algerian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the U.S. Government.

IFC FINALIZES STUDY ON BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT IN ALGERIA



The International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank group, will soon finalize a study on ways to improve investment opportunities in Algeria. This project was proposed by the Algerian Ministry of Finance, and was started in early 2006 by IFC experts.

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resources, and the affirmation of its principles and interests on the international scene, said H.E. Mr. Bedjaoui, in an interview to the Algerian news agency, *Algerie Presse Service*.

Minister Bedjaoui stressed that Algeria has fully recovered its place on the international scene. Its diplomacy is focused, realistic, dynamic and result-oriented. Algeria's foreign policy, as defined and led by President Bouteflika, is bound by the very principles and values that guided its war for independence and the creation of a national independent state. Its diplomatic action integrates various contemporary perceptions and challenges and projects the interests of Algeria in a changing world, as it develops the affinities, friendships, solidarities and partnerships required to influence the course of world events.



EMBASSY OF THE PEOPLE'S
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
2118 KALORAMA RD, NW,
WASHINGTON, D.C., 20008

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS
TEL: 202-265-2800
FAX: 202-667-2174
EMAIL:
AMBASSADOROFFICE@YAHOO.COM

ALGERIA SOON TO RATIFY THE CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL LIABILITY FOR DAMAGES CAUSED BY SPACE OBJECTS

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Mohammed Bedjaoui, said that Algeria will soon ratify the convention on the registration of objects launched into space, claiming international responsibility for damages caused by such space objects. Algeria's adherence to the *Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects* "will allow it to implement a national space program and develop civilian space in accordance with international rules and standards in that field," said a statement released by the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

On March 21st, the Algerian Space Agency and the UN organized a seminar in Algiers on International Space Law and National legislation.

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between the two countries" and the significance of their "increased level of economic exchange."

Their meetings highlighted the need for the two countries to strengthen the mechanisms of their political consultation and to reinforce economic cooperation in all areas, including energy, water resources, new information technology, infrastructure development, and health.

ALGERIAN PAINTER'S WORKS EXHIBITED AT NEW YORK'S MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Algerian painter, Rachid Koraichi, has contributed his artwork to the collective exhibition of Islamic Art at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The exhibit opened on February 26th and will run until May 22. The museum's exhibit, entitled "Without boundary: seventeen ways of looking", brought together works of artists from all over the Muslim world (Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Palestine) who work or live abroad, as a way to show that the Islamic World has a rich and diverse culture. Organizers of the exhibit said that it showed that "Islam is more than what is presented by the media, political circles and by religious leaders."

CITY OF BISKRA: SAHARAN HOT SPOT

Biskra, located about 425 km from Algiers, hosted the *Second International Saharan Tourism Show* from March 25-29. The event officially kicked off with the inauguration of "Tourist Village" within the Hammam Essalihine spa by the Minister of Tourism, Mr. Nouredine Moussa. Diplomatic representatives from South Africa, Burkina Faso, and Saudi Arabia also attended.



"Tourist Village" was a row of tents, each devoted to a specific region or province of the Algerian Sahara. The event underscored the cultural diversity in Algeria's Sahara Desert by gathering all artisans and travel agencies from the 14 southern wilayas who came to exhibit their products and services.



MOULOUD FERAOUN, HONORED 44 YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH

March 15th marked the 44th anniversary of the assassination of writer Mouloud Feraoun and five of his companions, four days before the signing of the Evian agreements, on March 19, 1962, that marked the end to the war of independence. The Cultural Association of Beni Douala, in Mr. Feraoun's birthplace, Tizi Hibel, held a week of activities commemorating his accomplishments through lectures and theatre performances.

Mr. Feraoun, a prolific writer, is most known for his diary during the revolution, *Journal 1955-1962 Reflections on the French-Algerian War*, and other works, including *Le Fils du Pauvre* and *Les Chemins qui Montent*.

YASMINA KHADRA AWARDED TROPIQUES PRIZE

The French Development Agency (AFD) awarded the 16th Tropiques Prize, on March 21st in Paris, France, to Algerian writer Yasmina Khadra for his book *L'Attentat*.

