

# ALGERIA TODAY

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## **PRESIDENT BOUTEFLIKA CALLS FOR SPEEDING UP RATIFICATION OF TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR TESTS**



President of the Republic, Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, stressed the need for speeding up the ratification process of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Tests so that it comes rapidly into force. "As regards the Treaty on the full prohibition of nuclear tests, it is important and urgent to accelerate the ratification process that should hasten the coming into force of the Treaty," the Algerian Head of State said in a speech he delivered at the opening of the regional African Conference on the Contribution of Nuclear Energy to Peace and Sustainable Development, held in Algiers on January 9, 2007.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) "will continue to promote technical cooperation with the developing countries, notably the African ones", declared on the same day this UN agency's general director Mohammed El-Baradei. This cooperation is "particular" in Africa given the challenges faced by this continent, mainly in water management, agriculture, health, industry and energy, Mr. El-Baradei added in his address at the opening of the African regional conference on nuclear energy.

## **ALGERIAN PRESIDENT CALLS FOR AFRICAN SUMMIT ON PEACEFUL NUCLEAR ENERGY**

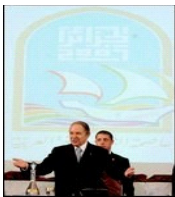


In Addis Ababa, President of the Republic Abdelaziz Bouteflika called, on January 29, 2007, for an African summit on the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

In a speech delivered to the 8<sup>th</sup> summit of the African Union, the Algerian President said that the peaceful use of nuclear energy could help alleviate the suffering of the African people. He reminded the delegates about the first African regional conference held in Algiers on the peaceful use of nuclear energy which was, as he put it, an eloquent expression of the open commitment of the African countries to a complete and comprehensive disarmament. He added that the African countries had, during the Algiers conference, stressed insistently that the real threats facing our continent were not the weapons of mass destruction but more devastating threats, namely famine, poverty, epidemics, and the deterioration of the ecosystem, adding that Africa had the necessary capabilities to achieve this.

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## **PRESIDENT BOUTEFLIKA: THE ARAB NATIONS NEED TO REVIEW THEIR NEAR AND DISTANT PAST**



President Abdelaziz Bouteflika indicated that the Arab nations need to review their near and distant past with the intent to get out of under-development. Speaking at the formal opening of "Algiers Arab Cultural Capital 2007", the Head of the State said that "This meeting of the Arab world's intellectuals is, in my eyes, of paramount importance, as coming at a very sensitive time in our history, during which we are facing genuine dangers, at both internal and external levels and engulfing us in incapacities to progress in spite of our resources and our geopolitical situation".

The League of Arab States' Secretary-General Mr. Amr Moussa wished that 2007 "will be full of creativity." "Algiers, Arab Cultural Capital 2007" is a historical responsibility for Algeria," Mr. Moussa told the press. He seized this opportunity to congratulate Algeria for its organization of such a significant event by focusing on the important role of culture in "bringing peoples and civilizations closer together."

## PREMIER OF PORTUGAL TELLS OF COMMITMENT TO THE MAGHREB



Investment in the development of the Maghreb countries is one of the topics on the agenda for Portugal's forthcoming EU presidency. This was the message conveyed on January 21<sup>st</sup> by Prime Minister José Sócrates on arrival in Algiers. "Europe needs to pay more attention to North Africa and to the development of these countries, and it needs to strengthen economic cooperation with this region. Portugal is very committed to developing this process during its EU presidency", Mr. Sócrates said after his first meeting with his Algerian counterpart, Mr. Abdelaziz Belkhadem, at Algiers airport. Mr. Sócrates added that he was going to do his best to ensure an EU-Africa summit would take place. As for the Luso-Algerian summit, which started on January 21<sup>st</sup> and ended on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, he stressed: "This is a historic summit and it reflects Portugal's new foreign policy priority, which aims to pay more attention to the Maghreb". A total of over 10 accords were signed during the Portuguese Head of Government's visit to Algeria.

## NUCLEAR ENERGY (from page 1)

President Abdelaziz Bouteflika remarked that the working plan, which covers the areas of importance to the strategic program of the African Union's committee and the science and technology program of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), constitutes a pragmatic and realistic strategy which Africa is endeavoring to implement with a view to promoting the use of technologies for its development. He added that the areas covered by the working plan are varied and meet, on the whole, the needs of the region, be they in the areas of biodiversity, energy and water resources or the areas relating to desertification and space, and information technologies. The Algerian President also said that earmarking one per cent of the Gross Domestic Product of the African countries by 2010, was an important investment, which would have positive and definite repercussions for the entire region and that the NEPAD initiative constituted an encouraging platform and a suitable framework which would give a tangible form to these investments through cooperation with international organizations and regional groupings. President Bouteflika concluded his speech by proposing to the African Union's committee to submit a periodical report once a year on the progress achieved in the implementation of the working plan in the areas of science and technology.

## ALGERIA RE-ELECTED CHAIR OF AU'S PEACE & SECURITY BODY



The 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Executive Council of the African Union (AU), which concluded on January 28<sup>th</sup>, culminated in the re-election of Algeria as the Chair State of the AU Peace and Security Council. The unanimous re-election of Algeria, which has taken place in Addis Ababa, to chair for a second term in a row, the AU Peace and Security Council is a clear acknowledgement by the African states of Algeria's continuous peace efforts in the African continent. It also reflects Algeria's outstanding status and significant role in defending the rights of all African people. The re-election is also seen as an expression of support for the Algerian vision on conflict management and its constant role de mediation, which it exercises in accordance with the AU Charter and the international law.

## ALGIERS TO HOST SUMMIT ON AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT IN MARCH 2007



Algiers will host, in March 2007, a summit of Heads of State and Government for the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). This decision was announced by Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, who is also the head of the NEPAD committee, at the end of NEPAD's 16<sup>th</sup> summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Algiers meeting will use the occasion to examine the progress realized by the NEPAD since its inception, said President Obasanjo. It will also enable African countries to take a common position in anticipation of the G8 summit, slated for July 2007 in Germany.

## ALGERIA OFFERS TO TRANSPORT AFRICAN PEACEKEEPING FORCES TO SOMALIA

During the 8<sup>th</sup> summit of the African Union (AU) held on January 29, 2007 in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, the Chairman of the African Union Commission, Mr. Alpha Oumar Konaré, praised Algeria's proposal to guarantee the air transport of the peacekeeping forces which the AU intends to deploy in Somalia. Chairman Alpha Oumar Konaré said President Abdelaziz Bouteflika has expressed his country's willingness to place 12 aircraft at the African Union's disposal to transport Rwandan and Ugandan troops to Somalia. Chairman Konaré urged other African countries to follow the example of Algeria.

## FRENCH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SPEAKER WRAPS MISSION TO ALGERIA



French National Assembly Speaker Jean-Louis Debré spent a three-day visit in Algeria. "All great countries must take responsibility for their history; the glorious past as well as the dark moments", Mr. Debré said, adding that "France, like many other nations, will not fail to meet this requirement". During close to four hours of talks with President Abdelaziz Bouteflika on January 21<sup>st</sup>, Mr. Debré presented a message from President Jacques Chirac praising the "high caliber" of exchanges between France and Algeria and the "depth" of cooperation. He described his talks with President Bouteflika as "frank". Mr. Debré also laid a wreath at the Martyr's Monument, a memorial to the 1954-1962 war for Algerian independence, and signed an agreement to bolster parliamentary cooperation. After meeting on Monday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> with Prime Minister Abdelaziz Belkhadem, Mr. Debré took time to meet with students from the University of Algiers, joining six of them at a campus café to discuss their views on many issues.

## AMBASSADOR AMINE KHERBI IS GUEST SPEAKER AT GLOBAL BUSINESS FORUM LUNCHEON DISCUSSION



H.E. Amine Kherbi was guest speaker at a luncheon discussion organized by the Global Business Forum at the Georgetown Club in Washington on January 23, 2007. The meeting was moderated by Mr. Greg Saunders, Director of International Affairs for British Petroleum, and attended by a number of representatives from corporations already doing business in Algeria and others vying to get on board. As one of the most significant emerging and stable markets, with well-trained manpower, modern infrastructures, strong legislation, and an extensive range of significant potentialities in natural resources, Algeria offers great incentives and opportunities for American and other foreign businesses. This is in substance the message addressed by the Ambassador of Algeria to the United States to the representatives of the US business community. As reflected by the flurry of visits by high-level delegations from all over the world and the numerous multi-billion dollar contracts signed over the past few years by corporations from the US, Europe, Russia and China, to cite but a few, Algeria has indeed become a destination of choice for foreign businesses eager to participate in the country's huge development programs.

## SOUTH KOREA TO BUILD NEW TOWN IN ALGERIA



The South Korean government signed a deal with Algeria on January 15, 2007, to build a new town near Algiers. Under the agreement, a consortium of five South Korean builders will construct a new town in Bouinane, a city 30 kilometers south of Algiers. Ground will be broken in July of this year for the project, which is scheduled to be completed in 2011.

The agreement was concluded as a follow-up on South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun's visit to Algeria in March of last year.

The project, worth 2 trillion won (US\$2.1 billion) to 3 trillion won, is expected to step up economic cooperation between the two countries.

## BRIEFING IN ALGIERS TO REINFORCE ALGERIAN-US TRADE



A briefing intended to boost Algerian-US trade and prepare Algerian economic operators for the international exhibition of Chicago took place in Algiers on January 13<sup>th</sup>, head of US-Algeria Business Council (USABC) Smain Chikhoun told the Algerian press agency (APS). Organized at the joint initiative of USABC and the Algerian Agency for Exports Promotion (ALGEX) and World Trade Center Algeria, this meeting of contact and information was "open to Algerian producers and exporters," he stressed.

## RUSSIA, ALGERIA SIGN ENERGY COOPERATION AGREEMENT



Over the weekend of January 19<sup>th</sup> through the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Russia and Algeria, Europe's two biggest natural gas suppliers, have signed an energy cooperation agreement, which included an asset swap.

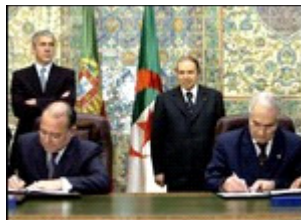
Russia, the world's largest gas producer, supplies a quarter of Europe's gas and Algeria almost 10 percent. The cooperation between the two countries will be "at all levels, from exploration to marketing," Algerian Energy and Mining Minister Chakib Khelil told Bloomberg news service after the signing ceremony with his Russian counterpart Viktor Khristenko in Algiers.

Mr. Khelil said the alliance with Russia won't become a cartel, seeking to ease EU concern. "Russia and Algeria are reliable suppliers of energy," Mr. Khristenko said, according to Algerie Presse Service. The agreement also covers cooperation on nuclear energy.

Representatives of state-controlled gas giant Gazprom and Russia's largest private oil producer Lukoil were in the Russian delegation visiting Algiers. On Aug. 4, 2006, Gazprom and Lukoil agreed to consider producing and processing fuels with the Algerian energy group Sonatrach.

## EDP & SONATRACH PARTNERSHIP

Attending a Portugal – Algeria Summit in Algiers, on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, Prime Minister José Sócrates said that both governments support a strategic partnership between EDP Energias de Portugal SA and Algeria's energy group Sonatrach. He added: "We already have a strategic cooperation with Algeria and we are committed in making that partnership reflected in our companies". Sonatrach could acquire a 5% stake in EDP.



## POLAND LOOKS TO ALGERIAN GAS



Minister Chekib Khelil, on a two-day visit from January 16<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> to Poland, was speaking at a press conference following a meeting with Polish Economy

Minister Piotr Wozniak. The latter said the goal of the visit by the Algerian delegation is to develop economic cooperation ties, primarily in the "energy sector" and especially the deliveries of gas and oil. Minister Wozniak stressed that since 1964 Algeria has been a "big and reliable supplier of LPG gas". He also noted that Algeria is implementing a US \$140 million plan of development of its infrastructure, including housing, telecommunications and "various types" of mining and "we have a very good offer for the Algerians", said the Polish Minister. Members of the Algerian delegation, including representatives of Sonatrach met with partners from the Polish Oil and Gas company (PGNiG) to discuss possibilities of gas supplies to Poland. According to the figures, the value of Polish-Algerian overall trade reached US \$119.75 millions in 2005, up 41% from 2004. Poland's export to Algeria reached US\$119.58 millions.

On January 17, 2007, Mssrs. Wozniak and Khelil signed an economic cooperation memorandum that concentrates on energy, petrochemicals and mining. Minister Khelil urged Polish firms to join the bidding for the construction of a new gas pipeline across the Sahara.

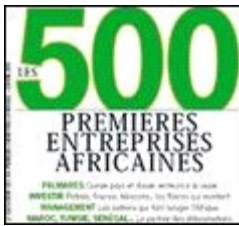
## PETRONET OF INDIA SEEKS LNG FROM ALGERIA



Petronet LNG of India is in talks with Algeria's Sonatrach for LNG supply and may firm up a deal for 2.5 mtpa with Sonatrach for Kochi terminal.

The company chief is visiting Algeria to talk about supplies from Sonatrach, which could start in June 2010.

## SONATRACH AT THE TOP OF 500 BEST AFRICAN COMPANIES



National hydrocarbons company Sonatrach remains at the top of the 500 best African companies, according to the annual classification carried out by "Jeune Afrique" weekly magazine. "Which company can depose Algerian giant in hydrocarbons (Sonatrach) from its number one position out of the 500 best African companies?", the special issue of Jeune Afrique magazine wondered pointing out, by giving an order of magnitude, that the "turnover reached by the 25 first African groups of telecommunications, pioneering activity there, barely reached 75% that of Sonatrach."

## ALGERIA ELECTED VICE PRESIDENT OF ECOSOC



Algeria was elected Vice-President of the United Nations' Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for 2007. During the election which took place with the presence of the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, Lithuania was elected ECOSOC President, while the Philippines, Haiti, Iceland were elected Vice-Presidents together with Algeria whose candidacy to this position was proposed by the African group. This election once more again confirms the trust placed in Algeria, especially by African countries and goes further to strengthen Algeria's role as a voice for the countries of the South. Made up of 54 member countries, the ECOSOC has the mandate of facilitating international cooperation and on standards-making and problem-solving in economic and social issues.

## WCO EXPERT: ALGERIA "AHEAD" IN TERMS OF LEGISLATION AGAINST COUNTERFEITING



An expert in combating counterfeiting and piracy at the World Customs Organization (WCO), Mr. Christophe Zimmermann, has declared on January 16th in Algiers that Algeria was "ahead" in terms of anti-counterfeiting legislation, but the implementation remains hindered by the fact that brand-holders "often refuse to cooperate." "Algeria has already taken tax measures which are said to be good and efficient, even if we can always do better," he told Algérie Presse Service on the sidelines of a conference on combating counterfeiting.

## ALGERIAN PROFESSOR MOSTEFA KEDDARI ELECTED AT FRENCH MEDICINE ACADEMY



Algerian Professor Mostefa Keddari has just been elected "foreign correspondent" in the French National Academy of Medicine (Paris), this institution announced on January 19<sup>th</sup>. Pr Mostafa Keddari, a pediatrician, was elected last January 16<sup>th</sup> by the members of the National Academy of Medicine, as "foreign correspondent in the 1st division," the same source added, indicating that "1st Division" concerns "medicine and medical specialities."

## IOC PRESIDENT SUPPORTS ALGERIA'S HOSTING OF AFRICAN GAMES



Mr. Jacques Rogge, president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), has expressed confidence in Algeria's ability to organize the 2007 African Games, which will be held between July 11th and 23rd. Mr. Rogge said the continental games were an important event because they let athletes test their abilities and improve their performance. The IOC president was speaking on the last day of his three-day visit to Algeria, which ended on December 20, 2006.

## “IMPERATIVE FOR ECONOMIC REFORM REMAINS STRONG” IN ALGERIA SAYS EIU

In its January 22, 2007, country forecast, Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) considers that Algeria is “enjoying a period of relative stability after more than a decade of political and security-related turbulence”. The forecast adds that “the broadly stable political climate will provide a platform for rising levels of both domestic and foreign investments” in Algeria whose “current-account surplus will remain substantial during the forecast period”, that is, 2006-2011. The Economist Intelligence Unit stresses that the Algerian Government “will remain broadly committed to economic liberalization”, despite “buoyant hydrocarbons earnings”. Governmental reform “will be focused on sectors such as financial services, utilities provision and telecommunications” and “foreign firms will have a role to play in these areas as the government recognizes the need for technology transfer and best practice.” Furthermore, says EIU, real GDP growth is projected to accelerate from an estimated 4.8% in 2006 to an average of around 6% in 2007-2008”, adding that the “current account is forecast to record robust surpluses in both 2007 and 2008, averaging around 17.9% of GDP.”

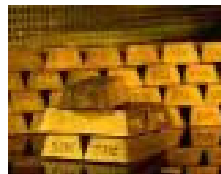
## A POTATO WEIGHING OVER 11KG GROWN IN IN-AMENAS (ILLIZI)



A potato weighing 11.125kg has been dug out in the garden of the primary school of Ibn Khaldoun in the town of In Amenas, 240 km north of the administrative center of Illizi province, according to the headmaster of this school situated in this town of the far southeast of Algeria. This "discovery" in the school's garden, which is used for practical experiences by teachers, is the first of its kind in the history of In Amenas, the same source stressed, pointing out that other potatoes recently "dug out" by this school's pupil, weighed 8kg and 5kg each.

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## GOLD DISCOVERY IN ALGERIA



“An Algerian-Australian company will develop Africa’s second largest deposit: Mammoth discovery of gold in Tamanrasset”, said an article published by Algerian newspaper Liberté on January 25<sup>th</sup>. According to the estimates of an Australian operator, the Amesmessa deposit could produce between 200,000 and 300,000 ounces of gold annually in the next three to five years. “In my entire career, I have never seen a deposit as promising as the one in Amesmessa. It is a chance that you have only once in your life”. That was how Mr. Doug Perkins, the CEO of Gold Mines of Algeria (GMA), the Australian consortium associated with National Company for the Transport and Marketing of Hydrocarbons (Sonatrach) in looking for gold in the south of the country, termed the initial results of the research undertaken by the two companies in the Amesmessa region located 460 km west of Tamanrasset (2,000 km south-east of Algiers). The scope of the discovery seems to have surprised the agencies in charge of exploring that perimeter, as shown by the remarks by the company’s director.

## ALGERIAN CUISINE FEATURED IN THE LOS ANGELES TIMES



If scents of cinnamon, coriander, paprika, and other “ras-el-hanout” ingredients stir up memories of back home and the delightful tagines gently stewing on the stove – the way our mothers would lovingly prepare them in their modest kitchens --, you could either reach for the closest Algerian cuisine cookbook or visit Chef Farid Zadi’s website ([www.chefzadi.com](http://www.chefzadi.com)). This rising star of Algerian cuisine in America -- featured in the article published in the April 2006 issue of **Algeria Today** about The New York Times’ Melissa Clark’s story about the sweet side of the Algerian culture -- headlined the Food section of The Los Angeles Times on January 10, 2007. The Sétif native who is an instructor at the California School of Culinary Arts “quietly influences L.A. menus and fledgling chefs with his classical, cosmopolitan take on Algerian dishes”, says the article which presented recipes of “a tagine of lamb shanks braised with raisins, nuts and apricots in spicy tomato sauce with harissa, the crown of a meal that includes four Algerian salads and the flaky filo snacks called brik.” So definitely try to get that article and head for the kitchen for a tiny bit of Algerian culture and a delightful meal.