

# ALGERIA TODAY

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## ALGERIA'S YOUNG ARE THE KEY TO ALL REFORMS



Addressing the country's 48 Walis (Governors) participating alongside central government authorities in a national conference devoted entirely to young people and started on October 21, 2007, President Bouteflika stressed the urgent necessity of "tackling one of the most important challenges facing our country today", namely the prevailing conditions of young people. The President strongly called on every level of authority of the State - central, regional and local - to enact "efficient" policies and measures. Since becoming independent in 1962, Algeria has devoted enormous resources to this large segment of its population but, as the President said, the situation has become "critical". Although the head of the State underlined that youth problems are not unique to our country, he nonetheless criticized past policies for "lacking coherence and efficiency" and advocated a "courageous and lucid" approach to the issue. Young people, said the President, are part and parcel of the comprehensive national reform effort. State, regional and local authorities need to emphasize better social integration of young people through collective cultural and educational activities, such as membership in scout organizations and local youth centers.

See **YOUTH CONFERENCE** page 3

## GERMAN PRESIDENT KOEHLER VISITS ALGERIA



At the invitation of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, German President Horst Koehler began on November 11, 2007, a four-day visit to Algeria focused on deepening the already strong

Algerian-German relations. The first official visit by a German President to Algeria is meant to conclude with the signing of protocol agreements by both countries in many areas covered during the official visit made by President Abdelaziz Bouteflika to Germany in April 2001. Relations between Algeria and Germany have registered a significant boost over the years as reflected by numerous exchanges of visits by officials of both countries, including German Economy Minister Michael Glos last February, and by a marked presence of German firms doing business in Algeria.

President Koehler visit to Algeria will have come on the heels of the official 3-day visit made on October 15, 2007, by General Wolfgang Schneiderhan, Inspector General of the German Armed Forces and closest advisor to Chancellor Angela Merkel for military affairs, at the invitation of his Algerian counterpart, Army Chief of Staff, General Ahmed Gaïd Saleh. In March of this year, General Gaïd Saleh had led a high-level delegation on a four-day visit to Germany to discuss strengthening friendship and increasing cooperation between the Algerian and the German militaries.

During his official visit, President Horst Koehler will also co-chair with President Abdelaziz Bouteflika the Ninth Africa Partnership Forum on "Governance and Development" representing Germany in its capacity as President of the Group of Eight leading industrialized countries (G8). In his speech at the Forum's opening ceremony, President Bouteflika underlined that the Forum should aim at "a better conjugation of our efforts so that the dynamic of dialogue, joint cooperation, and mutually beneficial partnership fully meets our hopes and aspirations." In the same vein, President Koehler demanded fair trade terms for Africa and urged the world's industrialized nations to remove tariffs on processed products, saying that "we need policies and practices that ensure Africa's riches in raw materials benefit the people" of the continent.

## JUSTICE SYSTEM AGAINST CORRUPTION AND ORGANIZED CRIME



In a major policy speech delivered on October 28, 2007, on the occasion of the opening of the 2007-2008 Judicial Year, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika praised the Algerian magistrates for "the qualitative leap" accomplished so far in their contribution to "the consolidation of the security and stability" in the country. He reminded his audience, however, that the Algerian people were "hoping that this effort will be pursued with seriousness and sincerity to protect them against behaviors contrary to our values and virtues." In this respect, the President insisted that "fighting corruption, whatever its forms and aspects, will remain our major concern". The head of the State also argued that justice should be administered by men and

women "known for their loyalty, integrity, competence and skills allowing them to place the authority of the law above all in any circumstances and in any situations." The President stressed once again with much vigor that Algeria is "more than ever" determined to achieve its development, "whatever the obstacles and however difficult these may be". In this enterprise, said Mr. Bouteflika, Algeria has "no way other than the pursuit and consolidation of the policy of national reconciliation" to guarantee the consecration of stability. Finally, he called on the country's magistrates to speed up the review of "the considerable number of cases" still pending before the Supreme Court, focus on the "quality of sentencing", fight drug trafficking, "place justice on par with the challenges imposed by internal and external mutations" and, above all, progressively adapt the administration of justice to "Algerian reality."



## PRINCE ANDREW, DUKE OF YORK, VISITS ALGERIA

Accompanied by a delegation of British business people, Prince Andrew made an official visit to Algeria in his capacity as the United Kingdom's Special Representative for International Trade and Investment. On November 3, he was received by President Abdelaziz Bouteflika with whom he discussed international and regional issues and addressed Algerian-United Kingdom joint efforts to reduce the threat from transnational terrorism. Prince Andrew told journalists that his first visit to Algeria aims to study means to enhance economic cooperation between Algeria and the United Kingdom. Prince Andrew emphasized the importance of the energy relationship with Algeria, a key supplier of liquefied natural gas to both the UK and Europe. The UK now tops the list of foreign investors in Algeria with an investment volume estimated at \$20 billion, \$4 billion of which were made by British Petroleum.

In July 2006, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika's visit to the United Kingdom ended with the conclusion of important agreements. The two countries signed a formal agreement to establish a joint commission with regular ministerial talks held yearly. Up to now, Algeria has signed four legal treaties with the UK on Extradition, Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, Judicial Cooperation in Civil and commercial Matters, and the Readmission and Circulation of Persons. A bilateral Double Taxation Convention is under negotiation.

The global trade volume between Algeria and the UK reached 800 million pounds in 2006. Algeria is the UK's third trading partner in the Arab world.



## MICROSOFT CEO VISITS ALGERIA

"Fascinating and interesting" are the terms used by Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer to characterize his meeting with President Abdelaziz Bouteflika on October 3, 2007, in Algiers.

Mr. Ballmer, who met with the head of state at the El Mouradia Palace, said to the President that the policy of Microsoft "remains the same, that is, to help the development of new information technologies in Algeria." Stressing that he was "extremely happy" to visit Algeria, Mr. Ballmer said that President Bouteflika "has done a lot of remarkable things and is thinking about the development of the (Algerian) economy and society."

Mr. Ballmer also held meetings with Messrs. Boubekour Benbouzid and Boudjemâa Haïchour, respectively, Minister of National Education and Minister of Post and Information and Communication Technologies, and explored with them ways to further expand Microsoft's presence in Algeria and contribute to the development of ambitious national technological projects, including the Sidi Abdellah Cyberpark, the OusraTIC Project, a government operation to encourage use of home computers and access to the internet, among others.

## ALGERIAN FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER VISITS PORTUGAL



Foreign Affairs Minister Mourad Medelci visited Portugal in early November to participate in the two-day Euro-Mediterranean Seminar on political, economic, social and security issues. Addressing the Ninth Ministerial Euro-Mediterranean Conference in Lisbon, Mr. Medelci stressed the need to deepen the partnership on both sides of the Mediterranean so as to take up "the real challenges facing our region." The Algerian Foreign Minister underlined the significance of "focusing our efforts on a limited number of priority economic cooperation measures." Such measures, said Mr. Medelci should target sustainable development, productive investment, technology transfer, employment, and health services. These are cooperation key areas, he said, before underlining the Algerian proposal to hold a ministerial meeting devoted to development. The Algerian Foreign Minister said that such a conference would improve on the Barcelona Process and would "revive it and enhance its visibility and co-ownership" and stressed that Algeria has focused its efforts on Europe and invested heavily in the energy market that would "ensure regular natural gas supplies to the European market, well before the Euro-Mediterranean Process was launched". Algeria, Mr. Medelci said, "is resolute in contributing to the emergence of a euro-mediterranean energy market founded on supply security and demand". Mr. Medelci also addressed the issue of freedom of movement of people and denounced the "restrictive practices have developed here and there, in spite of our aspirations". Such practices, said the Minister, are contrary to "the objectives of the Barcelona Process aiming at bridging both sides of the Mediterranean."

## AMBASSADOR AMINE KHERBI ADDRESSES THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS 37<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE



Invited to attend the proceedings of the Congressional Black Caucus 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Legislative Conference by Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, Co-Chair of the Algeria Caucus, the Ambassador of Algeria to the United States underlined the important role played by Algeria's supplies of oil and liquefied natural gas to the United States and the significance of such contribution to the energy security of the U.S. The Ambassador also seized the opportunity to review the "good and promising relationship" that exists between Algeria and the United States of America. The Algerian Ambassador also spoke of the satisfactory level of cooperation between the two countries and of their mutual desire to expand and elevate it to "a higher and more ambitious" degree that would better serve their mutual interests.

## LAKHDAR BRAHIMI NAMED TO “THE ELDERS”



Lakhdar Brahimi, former Algerian Foreign Minister, and former Special Advisor to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and a Director's Visitor at the Institute for Advanced Study of Princeton, has been named a member of the “Elders”, a group created at the initiative of Nelson Mandela and his wife Gracia Machel. The group is chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and is made up of an elite of senior statesmen and stateswomen, who are dedicated to solving thorny global problems.

## YOUTH CONFERENCE (from page 1)

Mr. Bouteflika pledged the active support of the State and strong subsidies to get young people off the streets and away from sources of negative influence. Until now, the State has devoted over 150 billion Algerian Dinars to youth programs and equipment. Hundreds, if not thousands, of projects involving young people have been or will be implemented. With 70% of the Algerian population under 25, the country needs to create 300,000 jobs a year to meet the demand, no small feat even for the most advanced countries.



## ALGERIA CHAIRS THE 2007 IMF-WORLD BANK ANNUAL MEETING

Following the tradition to rotate chairmanship of the annual meeting among membership, Algeria has presided this year over the Joint Annual Meeting of the Boards of Governors of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank held in Washington, D.C., on October 20-22, 2007. Represented by Finance Minister Karim Djoudi, Algeria chaired a meeting that was inaugurated in Savannah, Georgia, in March 1946, and has since been customarily held in Washington for two consecutive years and in another member country in the third year.

On the margins of this year's annual gathering, the Algerian Finance Minister met with new World Bank Chairman Robert Zoellick, IMF Director General Rodrigo de Rato and with Ms. Daniela Gressani, the head of the institution's Middle East-North Africa Department, with whom he reviewed the current relationship and future cooperation prospects between Algeria and the World Bank. H.E. Mr. Djoudi also held an important meeting with International Finance Corporation (IFC) Vice President Lars Thunel. Addressing IFC activities in our country, the Algerian Finance Minister stressed Algeria's wish for greater and better-focused involvement by the World Bank affiliate in the privatization and development process of private entities in Algeria, namely through equity investment in small- and medium-sized enterprises slated for private ownership. Mr. Karim Djoudi also participated in the G24 ministerial meeting and African Finance Ministerial Caucus.

In recent years, the Annual Meetings have been preceded by meetings of the International Monetary and Financial Committee, the Development Committee, the Group of Ten, the Group of Twenty-Four, and various other groups of members, which issue communiqués at the conclusion of their meetings. The Annual Meetings include 2 days of plenary sessions, during which Governors take up matters of business, consult with one another, and address the assembled delegates to present their countries' views on current issues in international economics and finance. During the Annual Meetings, the Boards of Governors make decisions on how current international monetary issues should be addressed and approve corresponding resolutions.

## ALGERIA TO EXPAND PETROLEUM GAS COMPLEX



Sonatrach announced on October 4<sup>th</sup> that it has awarded two Japanese firms a \$1.1 billion contract to expand the world's largest liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) complex. Under the agreement, Itochu and Ishikawajima-Harima Heavy Industries (IHI) will build a new refining plant and storage facilities for the GP1Z complex in western Algeria.

Construction is slated for completion by mid-2010. Once operational the new refinery is to produce three million tons of LPG per year, increasing GP1Z's capacity to nine million tons a year. In July Sonatrach signed a \$2.88 billion deal with US engineering and construction company Kellogg Brown & Root (KBR) for the construction of the country's largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant, capable of producing 4.5 million tons of LNG per year.



## ALGERIA KICKS OFF NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR FIGHTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Minister Delegate in Charge of the Family and Women's Affairs Nouara Saadia Djaafar said a national strategy for fighting violence against women had been launched under the slogan "Women Safety, Stability of Family."

National Solidarity minister Djamel Ould Abbas, Religious Affairs minister Abdellah Ghoulamallah and a large number of international and official institutions representatives as well as civil associations attended this event.

This strategy came after years of studies and consultations on children and women's situations in Algeria. A total of 13 ministries, the Parliament, the National Gendarmerie and security services, over 35 civil associations and some international organizations supported this strategy. The national strategy for fighting violence against women is based on three aspects. It is meant to protect women by developing partnership with security services and the civil society as well as avoiding prejudices against women victim of violence. The second aspect consists in considering the violence against women as a problem relating to public health. Health sector is the first refuge for women victim of violence. The national strategy for fighting violence against women is also based on legitimate protection and legal assistance by supporting technical capacities of judicial institutions.

## SONATRACH COMMITTED TO INCREASE INVOLVEMENT IN EUROPEAN MARKET



Business Middle East reports that Algeria's energy corporation Sonatrach reaffirmed its commitment to deepen its involvement in the European gas market, despite moves by the European Commission to restrict access of major energy producers to the electricity and gas transmission sector. The Commission's legislative proposals (comprising two directives and three regulations), which were announced on September 19th, were considered by some to amount, in effect, to an attempt to a bar to the entry of Sonatrach into the transmission business.

Proposals entail two options: one envisaging full unbundling, whereby energy producers would be prohibited from owning transmission networks; the other involving the establishment of independent system operators, in which management and operation would be separated, but not ownership, added the source. The Commission has also specified that companies from outside the EU would only be allowed into the transmission market on the basis of full reciprocity.

Algeria's Energy and Mining minister, Chakib Khelil, said that he was not greatly concerned about the Commission's proposals. He observed that Algeria already allows European companies access to its own energy market, and that therefore the issue of reciprocity should not be a serious obstacle for Sonatrach. Moreover, he said that details of how the proposals will work in practice have yet to be agreed among the 27 EU member states. In the meantime, Sonatrach would continue to market Algerian gas in countries where it already has a presence, such as Spain and Portugal, he said. Mr Khelil has been involved in intensive negotiations with Spain about how much gas Sonatrach will be permitted to sell directly once the Medgaz pipeline starts up in 2009. El Economista, a Spanish newspaper, also reported in late September that Sonatrach had submitted a bid to buy a 30% stake in Cepsa, one of Spain's leading energy distribution companies.

## HSBC SETTLES IN ALGERIA



The Council of Money and Credit (CMC) has authorized the British HSBC bank (Hong Kong and Shanghai banking) to establish an Algerian subsidiary in conformity with the relevant regulations agreed upon on September 26th 2006.

Endowed with a share capital of 2.5 billion Algerian dinars (AD), the minimum required by the Algerian banking legislation, HSBC pledges to bring its capitalization to 3.671 billion AD by the third year of its "active" presence on the Algerian market.

It should be noted that the HSBC bank has a global scope. Being the most important in its own country, Great Britain, HSBC is the biggest bank in Europe, notably with a stock-market capitalization of 160 billion Euros.

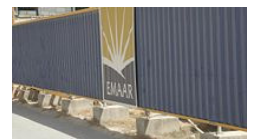
On the international plan, HSBC ranks fourth in terms of stock-market capitalization. The HSBC network extends over 82 countries and its portfolio counts 125 million clients on the 5 continents.

## EMIRATI CORPORATION EMAAR'S MEGA PROJECTS IN ALGERIA

Emaar Properties, which is building the world's tallest tower Burj Dubai, has announced the development of four mixed-use projects in Algeria worth \$20 billion.

These include the New City of Sidi Abdellah; a tourist resort at Colonel Abbes west of the capital; a waterfront development by Algiers Bay and a modern healthcare city at Staouali.

These projects mark the company's biggest involvement in North Africa - a region where Emaar has the biggest project footprint.



## ALGERIA TO LAUNCH SECOND SATELLITE SYSTEM ALSAT-2 IN 2008



During a speech at an international workshop held in Algiers, the director-general of Algeria's space agency ASAL, Mr. Azzedine Oussedik, said that Algeria is on schedule to launch her second satellite system, Alsat-2, most likely in late 2008. The system will collect high-quality images for agricultural resource mapping, forestry, locating minerals and oil resources, monitoring locust swarms and managing natural disasters. Satellite control and image analysis will be performed by technicians working from a base located in Arzew, Western Algeria.

The Alsat-2 system will be comprised of two satellites, Alsat-2A and Alsat-2B. 30 Algerian researchers, trained in Toulouse, France, will be assisted by a French team to launch the Alsat-2A satellite.

The plan is for Algerian technicians to place the Alsat-2B in orbit by 2009 without French assistance. The country's first satellite, Alsat-1, was launched five years ago.

The total cost of the project, according to Mr. Oussedik, could reach US\$16 to \$17 million.

Once the Alsat-2 launch has been completed, there are plans for a communications satellite to be placed into orbit to allow Algeria to be independent of international telecom services.

Under the present program, a total of 10 satellites are planned by Algeria's space Agency ASAL.

## ALGERIA TO SEND SIX BOXERS TO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS IN CHICAGO



Algeria will send a six-member team to the International Boxing Association (AIBA) 2007 World Boxing Championships in Chicago, to start on October 23th, the Algerian Boxing Federation announced. The team is to include Hamoud Boubraout (-48 kg), Abderrahim Mechenoui (-51 kg), Abdelhalim Ouradi (-54 kg), Abdelkader Chadi (-57 kg), Hamza Kramou (-60 kg) and Abdelaziz Touilbini (-91 kg). The Championships will serve as an Olympic qualifier for the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. With nearly 700 boxers from more than 120 countries, the eleven-day event will be the largest world boxing championships in history.

## FRENCH PLANS OF MINEFIELDS LAID DURING WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE OFFICIALLY DELIVERED TO ALGERIA

Visiting French Army Chief of Staff General Jean-Louis Georgelin officially handed to his Algerian counterpart Lieutenant General Ahmed Gaïd Salah the plans of minefields laid by the French army between 1956 and 1959. Some three million anti-personnel mines stretching some 750 miles had been planted on Algeria's borders with Morocco and Tunisia are still in place. The minefield plans have been demanded by Algeria since independence in 1962. Their official revelation is said by French authorities as a desire to "move forward" and to "build relations of trust" with Algeria where General Georgelin arrived on October 20<sup>th</sup> for a four-day visit aimed at increasing military cooperation between the two countries.

## ALGERIAN BASKET BALL COACHES TO ATTEND TRAINING CAMP IN INDIANAPOLIS

Thanks to an arrangement reached between the Algerian Basket Ball Federation and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, thirty Algerian coaches hailing from around the country will spend two weeks beginning November 3, 2007, at U Sport University in Indianapolis, improving their skills in teaching basket ball to young players.



## ALGERIAN NATIONAL SOCCER TEAM'S NEW COACH

Mr. Rabah Saadane is the new coach in charge of the Algerian National Soccer Team (the Desert Foxes). He takes over for Mr. Jean Michel Cavali who was fired after Algeria failed to qualify for the African Cup of Nations. Mr. Saadane is a familiar figure in Algeria. This is the fifth time he has coached the Algerian team.

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