

**Formal Launch Of The Algerian-American Foundation For Culture,
Education, Science & Technology**

The formal launch of The Algerian-American Foundation for Culture, Education, Science & Technology (AA-Fest), was celebrated at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington on Friday, January 15th .

The evening program and reception featured H.E Abdallah Baali, Algerian Ambassador to the United States, Dr. Nina V. Fedoroff, Special Adviser to the Secretary of State on Science and Technology, and Dr. Elias Zerhouni, Chairman of the Foundation. Ambassador Baali delivered, on this occasion, a speech (see text of the speech below) in which he emphasized the closeness and solidity of the relations between Algeria and the United States and the necessity of reinforcing them in the fields of culture, education, science and technology. He underlined, in this respect, the role that the Foundation can play. For her part, Dr Fedoroff greeted this initiative and reiterated the willingness of the United States to promote bilateral exchanges in these key areas.

“It was one of the most significant gatherings of Algerian-American and American doctors, scientists, scholars, authors, business executives, diplomats and other dignitaries interested in the promotion of science and good relations between the U.S. and Algeria, all gathered as friends of the Algerian-American Foundation”, said Dr. Zerhouni. Dr. Farid Amirouche, president of the Foundation stated, “This historic launch is a unique opportunity for the Algerian-American Foundation to play an active role in building stronger relations in science and technology between the USA and Algeria”.

The mission of the foundation is to address the following objectives: Develop and foster strategic relations of cooperation between Algeria and the USA; promote progress of science, technology and health between the two countries; advance the national interest in education in both countries; encourage innovative ideas whenever they arise; Explore and identify opportunities and resources to promote training and community relations; and to promote Algerian and American cultural exchange activities.

Ambassador's speech

Dr Fedoroff, Mr Chairman, members of the Algerian-American Foundation for Culture, Education, Science and Technology, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

I am most honored to be invited to speak before this august assembly in this prestigious institution, a very symbol of knowledge that is the National Academy of Sciences. Allow me to express my deepest gratitude to the members of the Algerian-American Foundation who gave me this unique privilege and congratulate them for their efforts in preparing this important gathering.

Of all the relations that nations may cultivate with each other, friendship is certainly the most lasting and the most valuable. The one, in particular, which binds the Algerian and the American peoples, is deep-rooted in history, forged by facts and events that will remain forever engraved in the common mind of the two peoples. From the treaty of 1795 which sealed our friendship, to the Algerian mediation which allowed the release in 1981 of the American hostages held in Iran, and passing by Senator Kennedy's historic speech supporting the just struggle of the Algerian people against colonialism. Today Algeria is a close friend and ally of the United States and its second trading partner in Africa and the Arab world. On the other hand, the United States has become the largest trading partner of our country. The bilateral relations are better than they have ever been but we have to and we can be more ambitious.

In this regard, these close bonds will, undoubtedly, be stronger if they are cemented by a true symbiosis between our scientific and cultural communities. Admittedly, our exchanges in these fields are sustained, but we hold the firm view that deepening them and encouraging greater interaction between our two peoples will help carry forward our vision of an exceptional partnership. This is the reason why the creation of your Foundation has such a great significance.

For, at the heart of your worthy mission, science, education and culture ennoble men and beyond that are, especially at this very challenging juncture, a vehicle for understanding, rapprochement and exchange which knows no borders. The first settlement founded by the Europeans in the United States, was named after Saint Augustine, a great Algerian figure of ancient philosophy, a proof that knowledge and culture are common to all humanity.

This is all the more true for our two countries since there is in the United States a large and vibrant scientific community originally from Algeria, composed of women and men who have received their education in our country and who bring every day and in the most highly specialized fields a valuable contribution to the prosperity and development of the United States. One could consider that as a loss for Algeria but I prefer instead to believe that this community can and must constitute a strong link between the two nations. History, in this respect, is full of lessons to be learned. Immigrant communities through the ages made priceless contribution to the relations between their countries of origin and their host countries, by establishing links, building synergies and providing opportunities. The creation of your Foundation is precisely in line with this ideal to which we all aspire.

The recent Algiers's Conference on new technologies of information and communication, a fruit of your initiative, is illustrative of the tremendous potentialities that your institution offers. Today, Algeria, an emergent country which is determined to breathe new life into its technology and science sectors, is more than ever aware of the importance of reinforcing its ties with the United States in these key areas. And it is quite natural that the Algerian government is delighted by the advent of the Foundation which can count on my unwavering support and I will be completely at its disposal in the realization of its objectives in which we all have a stake.

At the same time, I can not but be pleased with the renewed importance that the United States attaches in its relationship with the world to science, technology, education and culture. And it is not without pride that I note that the Chairman of the Foundation, Mr. Elias Zerhouni, who, in the past, directed the National Institutes of Health, was named Special envoy of the United States for Science and Technology.

The Algerian - American Foundation

The vim and determination invested by Mr. Zerhouni and Mr Amirouche and the other founding members in the nascence of this institution so that it see the light of day confirm my conviction that it will carry out its self-assigned mission of opening new horizons for the good of the Algerian and the American peoples.

I have no doubt that those who carry the honor of leading this promising foundation will continue to give, from their talents and energy, a high measure of their devotion to enshrining friendship in the destiny of Algeria and the United States.

I wish them the very greatest success