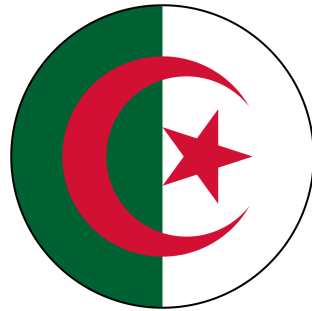


# **People's Democratic Republic of Algeria**

**Embassy of Algeria in the Republic of Namibia**



## **Press Review**

**12<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

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**DOMESTIC NEWS**

**President Tebboune chairs Council of Ministers meeting**

*ALGIERS* - President of the Republic Abdelmadjid Tebboune chairs Sunday a videoconference Council of Ministers meeting.

The Council of Ministers meeting is to consider several ministerial reports directly related to the National Socio-Economic Recovery Plan.

**Revision of the Constitution: Presidential terms, role of the Army main topics in Rahabi's contribution**

*ALGIERS* - Former Algerian diplomat Abdelaziz Rahabi has made a number of proposals, as part of the debate on the preliminary draft Constitution revision. These proposals particularly focus on the presidential terms and the role of the Army.

The contribution, made public on Sunday, revolves around the opportunity and the context of the debate on the draft Constitution revision, the proposals on general principles, the re-election of the President of the Republic as well as on popular representation in the powers and the Rule of Law governance, and the participation of the Armed Forces in the international peacekeeping missions.

Former diplomat Rahabi proposed naming the country in the Constitution "Algeria" or the "Algerian Republic" because, he said, the current name (People's Democratic Republic of Algeria) is "the product of a given historical reality, the balance of power of that era and international relations marked by the ideological division of the then world."

"Our country would be better suited to a name which would in no way alter its political or moral order and would mark the period of the beginning of a new constitutional order," he said.

Regarding the re-election of the President of the Republic, Rahabi proposed that the presidential term be "one and for a period of 6 years."

With regard to popular representation in the powers and the Rule-of-Law governance, Rahabi noted that "the Supreme Council of the Judiciary cannot be seen nor as an extension of the Executive power neither as a union of magistrates but as an Authority that serves the Law and the litigant", proposing that the former presidents of the Republic be members of the Constitutional Court.

In his contribution, he advocated the dissolution of the Council of the Nation (the Upper House).

With regard to the participation of the Armed forces in international peacekeeping operations, the former diplomat said that adapting to new international realities "therefore requires a high degree professionalization of the armed forces."

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"The nature of conflicts has changed, from classic wars to irregular ones, from the Cold War to conflicts of economic interest. This resulted today in a kind of international crisis zone administration. Geopolitics, in all its complexity, is relentlessly imposed on states such as the representation of power relations," he said, stressing that "at this stage in the state of world, our country offers some particularities, assets and constraints."

"The country's geopolitical reality certainly provides assets but demands in particular, because of the cross-border nature of the new threats, an adaptation to new missions as part of the participation of military troops in humanitarian, observation and peace operations which are not explicitly provided for in our Constitution," added Rahabi, noting that "these operations, being subject to the prior approval of internal institutions and a mandate from the United Nations, the African Union or the Arab League, reinforce the principle of popular control over the actions of the Armed Forces beyond national borders."

### Two terrorist supporters arrested in Tamanrasset

*ALGIERS* - Two terrorist supporters were arrested Monday in Tamanrasset (1970-km south of Algiers) by detachments of the People's National Army, the Ministry of National Defence said Saturday in a statement.

"As part of the fight against smuggling and organized crime, a detachment of the People's National Army, in coordination with National Gendarmerie units and border guards, seized a large quantity of cannabis amounting to seven quintals and 76 kilograms in Bechar (3<sup>rd</sup> military region).

In separate operations in Tlemcen (2<sup>nd</sup> military region), Bordj Bou Arreridj and Souk-Ahras (5<sup>th</sup> military region), five drug traffickers were intercepted in possession of five kilograms of cannabis and 6974 psychotropic tablets, the statement said.

In addition, "Army detachments arrested 26 individuals and seized 19 power generating sets, 12 jackhammers, two stone crushers and various other items used in illegal gold mining in Djanet (4<sup>th</sup> military region), Tamanrasset and Bordj Badji Mokhtar (6<sup>th</sup> military region).

In Relizane (2<sup>nd</sup> military region) and Batna (5<sup>th</sup> military region), Army and National Gendarmerie units arrested four individuals and seized one automatic pistol and one shotgun.

### Tamanrasset: Terrorist captured in In M'guel

*ALGIERS* - A terrorist called Melouki Ahmed was captured Saturday in In M'guel in the province of Tamanrasset by a detachment of the People's National Army which operated in coordination with the services of the National Police, said Sunday a communiqué of the Ministry of the National Defense.

"As part of the fight against terrorism, a detachment of the People's National Army captured, in coordination with the services of the National Police, yesterday 11 July 2020 in In M'guel,

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province of Tamanrasset (6<sup>th</sup> Military Region), the terrorist named Ahmed Ouled Chila, alias "Melouki Ahmed," who joined the criminal groups activating in the region of the Sahel in 2012," said the communiqué.

"As part of the fight against organized crime and at the level of 4<sup>th</sup> Military Region, a detachment of the People's National Army arrested in Djanet, seven (07) individuals and seized nine (09) generators, 11 pneumatic drills, as well as 18 bags of stones and raw gold, explosive products and various tools for illicit gold panning operations," said the source, noting that units of the National Gendarmerie seized 7027 units of various beverages in El Oued.

### **Belhimer: Public media must be "thoroughly" reorganized**

*ALGIERS* - Minister of Communication, Government Spokesman, Ammar Belhimer called on the public audiovisual and written for a thorough reorganization, following the new requirements that imply their modernisation and transformation into digital offering a variety of products.

"The public audiovisual and written media are going to be profoundly reorganized," the minister said in an interview with the daily *La Sentinelle*. "This necessary evolution is perfectly in line with the will and vision of the President of the Republic," he added.

"President of the Republic, Abdelmadjid Tebboune, promised to fully invest himself for the advent of a free and independent press, respectful of the rules of professionalism, ethics and deontology, established as a vehicle for the democratic exercise and protected from any form of abuse," said Belhimer.

Asked about a restructuring project for public communication groups, Belhimer said that "there is no question yet of a new project." "It is currently a question of appointing new DGs and CEOs of companies in the economic communication sector. They are responsible for cleaning up companies which are currently based on structural, financial and human imbalances and which are accumulating deficits of all kinds," said the Government Spokesman.

"Once cleaned up, these companies should diversify and produce wealth so that they no longer have to depend on the budget of the Ministry of Communication or on ANEP's providential manna, which keeps the six public newspapers under permanent financial infusion," he said.

"In the meantime, public advertising will continue to constitute the bulk of state aid to the national press as a whole," he added.

The Minister also announced the reactivation of the Press Aid Fund, which was frozen in 2015.

Regarding the digital media reform project, he said that "a regulatory text, and not a law, will be promulgated on the digital press, whose de facto existence we want to legalise, in order to enable it to benefit legally from advertising and any other form of public aid to the press," saying that "the comments and other recommendations of professionals have been taken into account as a whole.

Asked about the reports of overruns by offshore TV channels, Belhimer said the Audiovisual

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Press Regulatory Authority (ARAV) and the Ministry of Communication had been forced to react on more than one occasion to call some offshore TV channels to order and urge them to respect ethics, the law, privacy and personal honour.

### **COVID-19 NEWS**

#### **Covid-19: Benbouzid insists on better healthcare for all citizens**

*ALGIERS* - The Minister of Health, Population and Hospital Reform Abderrahmane Benbouzid on Sunday stressed the need for better healthcare, especially in the fight against the Covid-19.

"I do not want a citizen to go to a hospital and be told that there is no room. It is inadmissible, because the number of beds is sufficient for better healthcare," Prof. Benbouzid told reporters following a videoconference meeting with the heads of provincial health departments and the managers of the country's hospitals.

The Minister said the increase in Covid-19 cases, a "matter of concern, should drive us to join forces in dealing with it," noting that the death toll remains "stable." He stressed that Algeria had the required skills and potential to cope with this pandemic, adding that we just need to use these resources "effectively."

"Our greatest concern is to be at the service of citizens," the minister said. "I was assigned, by the president of the Republic, to run the health sector in order to carry out this task."

The Health Minister sent a message to all health officials in the country to get organized and provide, as soon as possible, the required means for medical emergencies with the bulk of resources devoted to the fight against the Covid-19.

He also emphasized the need to boost the capacity of hospitals in terms of beds and intensive care beds as well as equipment and personnel. The top health official added that if necessary, additional departments, or even new medical facilities, would be opened.

### **ECONOMIC NEWS**

#### **Algiers Port: Decrease in activity in Q1 2020**

*ALGIERS* - The activity of the port of Algiers recorded a decrease for both navigation movement and freight traffic during the first quarter of 2020 compared with the same period in 2019 because of the drop in oil revenues and global health crisis, said a report of Algiers Port Company (EPAL).

Published by the periodical N124 of the company, the report shows "a decrease in container and hydrocarbon traffic," with a drop of about 39% in the number of handled containers, about 10% of freight traffic and about 6% in the number of berthed boats, compared to the first quarter of 2019.

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EPAL treated 80,164 containers in the first quarter of 2020 against a forecast of 133,730 containers, i.e. a rate of achievement of the objectives of 60%, said the report, underlining that this traffic has dropped by 38.87% compared with the same period in 2019.

Freight traffic also decreased, the objective set for this activity, i.e. 3.15 million tons for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2020, having been achieved at 82%, down by 9.75% compared with the same period a year earlier, to stand at 2.57 million tons.

Explaining that this drop in the traffic treated by the company is induced by the decrease in container and hydrocarbon traffic, the report reports an increase in the importation of some homogenous cargoes, notably cereals, metallurgical products and building materials.

### **Innovative project promoters' support: Startup financing fund to be established soon**

*AIN DEFLA* - A financing fund for the startups will be soon established with a view to supporting innovative project promoters, announced Saturday, in Ain Defla, Deputy Minister for Knowledge Economy and Startups Yacine El Mehdi Walid.

“In order to help innovative project promoters, our department will establish a financing fund for the startups very soon,” said Walid on the sidelines of his visit to the company “S.Five Group” specialized in wastewater treatment but which started, since the beginning of Covid-19 pandemic, manufacturing machines producing protection masks and sterilization equipment.

In this respect, he said that this fund, governed by financing mechanisms “more in line with the startups,” can even adapt to the precepts of the religion in the field of financial practices (absence of interest).”

According to him, the fund in question will enable financing startups through a credit, as was the case with ANSEJ mechanism, by taking an equity stake of the company.

## **FOREIGN POLICY NEWS**

### **Algeria gives paramount importance to Mali conflict, says Boukadoum**

*ALGIERS* - Foreign Minister Sabri Boukadoum said Saturday that Algeria gives a great interest to the Malian conflict, shown in its efforts as chair of the monitoring committee of the Peace and Reconciliation Accord in Mali.

Speaking at the forum of the Echaab daily, the minister reiterated Algeria's positions on a number of regional and international issues, including the Malian conflict. Boukadoum said "Algeria works to provide assistance and encouragement to the Malian parties to implement all the provisions of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement, so as to enable the Malian State to preserve its sovereignty and restore security in all parts of the country".

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The Foreign minister highlighted Algeria's strategy, "aimed at boosting security and development in the Sahel, through tangible solidarity with the countries of the region to strengthen their capacities in all areas."

Referring to the Saharawi cause, Boukadoum stressed the need to overcome "the status quo currently marking the settlement process of the conflict, to put an end to the suffering of the Saharawi people, by allowing them to exercise their legitimate right to self-determination within the framework of the MINURSO (UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara)."

In this respect, the Minister reiterated his call for the appointment of a personal representative of the UN secretary-general for Western Sahara "as soon as possible."

### **Boukadoum to Anadolu: Algiers works for territorial integrity of Libya**

*ROME* - Algeria continues its efforts to preserve Libya's territorial integrity at a time when Algerian mediation is being sought by all Libyan parties, Foreign Minister Sabri Boukadoum told Turkish agency Anadolu.

"We do not want to separate the Libyans or take a position that could compromise Libya's territorial integrity, future, peace and unity," said the minister, in this interview granted to Anadolu, on the sidelines of his meeting in Rome with his Italian counterpart, Luigi Di Maio. Algeria is working for "the territorial integrity, unity and stability of Libya (...) these are (issues) absolutely crucial for us," he said.

The Foreign Minister reiterated Algeria's objective to bring all Libyans together, reaffirming also its position which stands equidistant from the Libyan belligerents. Algeria is working to "avoid the partition" of Libya, stressing that "such an eventuality would be dangerous for all, especially for the countries in the neighbourhood," he added.

"Beyond the question of Algeria's security (...) we must help them. And all Libyans have asked us to play this role and we are of course ready to assume it," the Minister said.

Boukadoum did not fail to recall Algeria's support for the conclusions of the Berlin Conference on Libya, also citing the cooperation and exchange of views on the Libyan dossier with the neighbouring countries, Tunisia and Egypt.

In the same context, he called for the speedy appointment of a UN envoy for Libya, a post which has remained vacant since the resignation in March of the Lebanese mediator, Ghassan Salamé. "We insist on the appointment of a special representative of the secretary-general as soon as possible," he told Anadolu.

### **Sahrawi refugees: Supposed "misuse" of humanitarian aid clearly denied by EU**

*BRUSSELS* - Algeria's ambassador to Brussels Amar Belani denounced Saturday the disinformation campaign led by the Moroccan media on the so-called "misuse of the European

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humanitarian aid granted to Sahrawi refugees, noting that these unfounded allegations were clearly denied by EU's top officials in charge of the file.

"The Moroccan media and their satellite media relays are leading for weeks an enraged disinformation campaign aimed at making the public opinion believe that the humanitarian aid granted by the European Union to the Sahrawi refugees was misused by the Polisario Front and our country," said Belani in a reply to a question by APS on the campaign led by the Moroccan media outlets.

"These baseless allegations, reiterated recurrently since 2015 by this country's diplomats and their relays in the European Parliament (notably right wing MPs) and which shouldn't remain unanswered, it is necessary to point out the following facts, as emphasize the official statements of EU's top officials in charge of this file, notably the official responses of the different officials asked about this issue," said Belani.

Among these officials, there is European Commissioner for Crisis Management Januz Lenarcic who underlined on 2 July 2020 in a reply to Euro-MP Dominique Bilde that "concerning the misuse of the humanitarian aid, I want to assure you that we have strong guarantees on site." "I can assure you that our guarantees are robust enough to avoid any misuse of EU's aid," he added.

For her part, former European Commissioner for Budget Kristalina Georgieva underlined, in a debate before the Committee on Budgetary Control of the European Parliament, held on 24 March 2015 that "the accusations of misusing EU humanitarian aid for the Sahrawi refugee camps in Tindouf are unfair, notably following the robust measures taken by the European Committee."

For his part, European Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos Stylianides said in his reply on 27 April 2016 to a question "that it is not up to the EU to conduct a census on the refugees" adding that "this issue should be examined as part of a process led by the United Nations."

### **Polisario: It is obvious that EU does not recognize Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara**

*BRUSSELS* - The Polisario representative for Europe and the European Union (EU), Oubi Bouchraya Bachir, said it was obvious that the EU does not recognize Morocco's alleged sovereignty over Western Sahara, recalling that the European institutions had ruled on the separation between the two territories, Morocco and Western Sahara

Reacting to recent statements by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Josep Borrell, who said that the Union does not recognize the Morocco's alleged sovereignty over Western Sahara, the Saharawi official stressed, in an interview with the APS, that "this statement is indeed remarkably clear, which explains why it has had so much impact."

The Saharawi Ambassador pointed out that "on the substance, it is not a change of doctrine: it is simply the consideration of the legal framework that is imposed on all since the 2016 ruling of



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the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU)". He argued that "this statement is more legal than political, and that makes sense."

Last week, in response to Spanish MEP Miguel Urban Crespo, Borrell said that food products from occupied Western Sahara can only enter the European market with information on origin, and therefore labeling, stating that they do not come from Morocco but from Western Sahara.

"The fundamental demand of the Saharawi people is to exercise their right to self-determination. This demand is driven by a political will but we do not claim anything: we have been asking for the application of the law (...) for more than 60 years now," the Saharawi diplomat insisted.