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The constants in the Algerian diplomacy

الثوابت في الدبلوماسية الجزائرية

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Abstract

Following its independence in 1962, Algeria undertook to work for peaceful cooperation between all countries in a spirit devoid of all exclusivity and prejudice and based on mutual respect between peoples. Algeria thus became part of the great international family, whose laws it embraced and to which it intended to give its full and open cooperation.

In compliance with these laws and in keeping with the commitment it had made, Algeria established diplomatic relations with almost every country in the world. Participating in numerous international conferences, its contribution has never been lacking, especially when it came to dealing with complex situations that required both courage and discernment. This dynamic approach has enabled Algeria to refine and consolidate its foreign policy since independence. This policy is unambiguous. It is determined by a set of factors that define the fundamental elements on which the country's choices and options are based and supported. These multiform factors are based as much on history and geography, economy and culture as they are on the conditions under which independence was achieved, the emergence of the 'Third World', the major ideological trends, peaceful coexistence.

Key words: Algerian foreign policy, Diplomacy, constants principles, international cooperation

الملخص

تعهدت الجزائر بعد استقلالها عام 1962 بالعمل من أجل التعاون السلمي بين جميع البلدان بروح خالية من كل تفرد وتحيز، وعلى أساس الاحترام المتبادل بين الشعوب. وهكذا أصبحت الجزائر جزءاً من الأسرة الدولية الكبرى، التي احتضنت قوانينها والتي تعزز تقديم تعاونها الكامل والصريح إليها. وامتنالاً لهذه القوانين وامتنالاً للالتزام الذي قطعتة على نفسها، أقامت الجزائر علاقات دبلوماسية مع كل بلدان العالم تقريباً. ومن خلال مشاركتها في العديد من المؤتمرات الدولية، لم تكن مساهمتها غائبة أبداً، خاصة عندما يتعلق الأمر بالتعامل مع المواقف المعقدة التي تتطلب الشجاعة والفتنة. وقد مكّن هذا النهج الديناميكي للجزائر من تحسين وترسيخ سياستها الخارجية منذ الاستقلال. هذه السياسة لا لبس فيها وتتحدد من خلال مجموعة من العوامل التي تحدد العناصر الأساسية التي تقوم عليها وتدعم اختيارات الدولة وخياراتها. وتستند هذه العوامل المتعددة الأشكال إلى التاريخ والجغرافيا والاقتصاد والثقافة بقدر ما تعتمد على الظروف التي تحقق فيها الاستقلال، وظهور "العالم الثالث"، والاتجاهات الأيديولوجية الرئيسية، والتعايش السلمي

الكلمات المفتاحية: السياسة الخارجية الجزائرية، الدبلوماسية، المبادئ الثابتة، التعاون الدولي

1. INTRODUCTION

Algeria possesses many elements that make it a country of international importance, in addition to being the largest African and Arab country in terms of area and geopolitical importance, it possesses a diplomacy that has been known since its independence with multiple characteristics, accordingly, we have clarified the most important principles and features that characterize it. Algerian diplomacy is characterized by general features that have remained associated with it over the ages, as the principles and features of diplomacy have not changed significantly, and Algeria has maintained its principles and features in making its foreign policy, therefore, understanding Algerian foreign policy is directly related to understanding these general contents, so that we can explain and predict them

This paper aims to search for possible explanations to understand the consistent positions of the Algerian foreign policy despite the changing international and regional environment. It also looks at the features of change in some of the issues at stake. In order to reach the results, we had to pose the following questions

What can explain the consistency of Algeria's foreign policy in dealing with various issues in the international arena?

The role of Algeria in its vital space

As an African and Arab country, Algeria belongs to a vast group of entities which, since the colonial era, and particularly since the Bandung Conference, have become aware of their shared destiny. Algeria naturally feels directly concerned by everything that happens in this group

Algerian diplomacy has given permanent support to countries still under foreign domination, such as Angola, Southern Rhodesia, Palestine, South Africa, Portuguese Guinea, Mozambique, Western Sahara, etc. Algeria's total support for the liberation movements of these countries is a permanent feature of its international action, and is based on the following principles enshrined in its constitution:¹

Art. 29 - Algeria refrains from resorting to war to infringe the legitimate sovereignty and freedom of other peoples. It endeavours to settle international disputes by peaceful means.

Art. 30. - Algeria stands in solidarity with all peoples struggling for political and economic liberation, for the right to self-determination and against all racial discrimination.

Art. 31 Algeria works to strengthen international cooperation and to develop

friendly relations between States on the basis of equality, mutual interest and non-interference in internal affairs. It subscribes to the principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter.

For Algeria, the liquidation of colonialism in all its forms is and will be the credo of its political and diplomatic action. It is a basic fact that there can be no harmonious international community or genuinely fruitful cooperation between States as long as peoples remain subjugated. This is why Algeria, faithful to itself and to the principles of the United Nations Charter, makes it its duty to help liberate these peoples.

Algeria and its neighborhood

As a Maghreb country, Algeria spares no effort in promoting the North African entity. Building the Greater Maghreb is by no means an easy undertaking. Major difficulties have to be overcome before the prospects of political integration can take shape. Nevertheless, the ties of all kinds that unite the peoples of the Maghreb, their common aspirations and their Mediterranean vocation, give us every hope of fulfilling a long-held and cherished wish.²

Already, the initiatives taken in the economic and cultural fields, and the gradual rectification of certain situations often caused by temporary

misunderstandings, are allowing exchanges to intensify and opening up new horizons on the road to cooperation, a prelude to the advent of the Greater Maghreb. It is nevertheless understood that this idea should never be in contradiction with the building of African unity or the unity of the Arab world.

The Algerian contribution in African liberation movement

Immediately after independence, Algeria 'played an important and pioneering role through its solidarity with liberation movements around the world, becoming a Mecca for African revolutionaries who decided to follow in its footsteps to liberate their countries'³.

Algeria's role vis-à-vis the causes of liberation in the world 'was from the outset an expression of its loyalty to its immutable principles and not to be at the service of any party, this attitude 'is shared by all Algerians without hesitation, based on the principle that what is taken by force can only be taken back by force'. Accordingly, the Algerian revolution 'has given the whole world a lesson in morality and revolutionary liberation thinking that has made it unique of its kind'.

In Africa, Algeria is guided by a dual imperative: on the one hand, to make its contribution to the emancipation of African

countries still enslaved by colonialism, and on the other, to help consolidate the independence achieved through ever closer cooperation between the continent's young states⁴.

Since independence, Algeria has tried to be at the head of the movement to help African nationalism. the repercussions of the Algerian liberation struggle have been great throughout the continent, and the fighting of the Algerian war was very quickly accompanied by diplomatic offensives involving many other countries. Emerging from a long and bloody night of seven and a half years, the Algerian people of 1962 became an example; the socialist options rapidly defined and applied by its leaders confirmed this role.

Alternately criticized by 'moderate' African countries, applauded by clandestine nationalists and envied by certain states that thought they would retain African leadership, Algeria played an important role in helping Africa at war.

This contribution manifests itself in various ways. Although the African nationalist movements benefited from Algerian financial and material assistance, the most effective aid that Mr Ben Bella's government could provide was diplomatic. It is true that Algiers contributed its share of the financial aid decided in 1963 by the United Nations.

As a member of the 'Nine' committee in Dar-Es-Salaam, the Algerian government had sent various consignments of arms to Angola.

The Organization of African Unity which Algeria is one of one of the founders was created precisely to help Africans coordinate their efforts, rationalize cooperation between African countries, give their action on the international stage its full dimension and, lastly, settle their differences without any foreign intervention.⁵

For its part, Algeria, which is firmly attached to the ideals that inspire the OAU, will not bargain in its efforts to enable it to play its role to the full, overcome its current difficulties and firmly establish African unity.

Algeria's Afro-Asian solidarity

Algeria's action on the African continent is inseparable from its action in the wider context of Afro-Asian solidarity. This solidarity, sealed in Bandung, will be given new impetus by the conference that will bring together the Heads of State of Asia and Africa in Algiers on 5 November, for the second time in history.

The choice of Algiers as the venue for this conference is of great significance. It is a tribute to the heroic struggle of the Algerian people for their independence and to their

constant fidelity to the principles of freedom and fraternity proclaimed in Bandung. Algeria is particularly honoured by this choice: it will leave no stone unturned to ensure the complete success of this conference, which must respond to the hopes and aspirations of the peoples of Africa and Asia.⁶

Admittedly, since Bandung, the world has changed considerably and many countries have gained independence. But imperialism continues to survive; its direct or indirect hold continues to be exerted, sometimes in the most violent form, in both Africa and Asia. An atrocious war continues in Vietnam, courageously fought by a heroic people who suffer the horrors and misery on a daily basis. Faced with this situation, Afro-Asian solidarity must assert itself more vigorously than ever in order to demand and obtain respect for the Vietnamese people's right to peace and freedom.

The conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, which is leading two brotherly peoples to kill each other, plunges the Afro-Asian family into sadness and consternation. Along with all the peoples of Africa and Asia, Algeria expresses the hope that the voice of reason will triumph and that the Kashmir problem will be tackled by both sides realistically and without any climate of passion. The time has come when wisdom must prevail and confirm the Afro-Asian

peoples in the need to unite for their common good.⁷

Developments in today's world are bringing the Afro-Asian world and the countries of Latin America closer together. The similarity of problems and aspirations is creating links between all these countries that are destined to grow stronger in the near future. They are already beginning to get to know each other better and to appreciate each other more, and prospects for concerted action are emerging which will no doubt be usefully explored during the meetings already taking place between leaders at different levels. Algeria has done all it can to encourage this trend, which will lead to a broadening of Afro-Asian solidarity with the peoples of Latin America.

Algeria policy toward the Arab states

Algeria's faith in the future of humanity is not an expression of wishful thinking. It does not reflect a passive view of events, still less a contemplative, delusional tendency.

In the early days of independence, Algeria proclaimed its determination to play its role as a responsible country, and to contribute with all its might to the solution of the major problems relating to international peace and security.

The Palestinian issue and Algeria

From the very beginning of its existence, independent Algeria made the Palestinian question one of its primary concerns in terms of Arab and international policy.⁸

It has defended the Palestinian cause both in international forums and at the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council. Our country, which knows what living under occupation means, has placed its diplomacy and resources at the disposal of this cause, of which Yasser Arafat was one of the historic representatives.

Discreetly, without media fanfare, Algeria has been a constant supporter of the Palestinians, welcoming them on its soil when they experienced the new tragedy of expulsion from Beirut in June 1982. Unlike other Arab countries, which have exploited the Palestinian cause for their own ends, Algeria has never ceased to ensure that this support is unequivocal and that there is no haggling of any kind.

In 1973, Algeria, which was presiding over the UN General Assembly, gave President Arafat the opportunity to speak for the first time from the august podium of the United Nations and to address the international community directly.

It was in New York, where Yasser Arafat had made a speech of peace, with the olive tree of peace in his hand, expressing the readiness of the Palestinian resistance to

work for a just and equitable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.⁹

Helping the Palestinians without posturing has been Algeria's constant policy since 1962, supporting the Palestinian people when they needed it most without show or pretense, and always present to answer their call,

The question of the western Sahara

Firstly, historically and ideologically, Algeria, itself a former French colony, led a revolution for its independence. It is naturally aligned with other anti-colonial movements in Africa and internationally. Known for its unwavering support for the Palestinian and Saharan peoples, it is part of a tradition of solidarity with oppressed peoples denied their fundamental right to self-determination.

The principles of Algerian foreign policy play a decisive role in its position on the Sahara issue. It is true that since its independence Algeria has achieved an advanced position on the world stage, it has worked and continues to work for the right of peoples to make their own choices and firmly supports national liberation movements such as the Polisario Front.¹⁰

This support is based on the conviction that all peoples have the right to decide their own future and the right to a referendum without

outside interference and the fight against colonialism and foreign domination. Algeria is committed to neutrality and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, and to seeking cooperation and mutual assistance with neighbouring countries in accordance with international law.

As conclusion, Algeria's policy of non-alignment is a policy of independence which refuses to be compromised in any way. Its strict application was illustrated by Algeria's active and constructive participation in the Belgrade Conference in 1961 and the Cairo Conference in 1964, and also by the courageous position it adopted in very delicate circumstances.

The policy of non-alignment practiced by Algeria does not accept either the game of seesaw between East and West or passive and ineffective neutralism. It is based on the fundamental principles that guide peoples in the defence of their aspirations in the face of attempts at hegemony.

This policy therefore implies support for those governments which are struggling with imperialism; it also implies the strengthening of solidarity between the countries of the 'Third World' and the revision of international relations in a direction more favorable to small countries¹¹.

It is therefore with complete clarity that Algeria proclaims its desire to promote frank and loyal cooperation with all the other countries of the world. Founded on mutual respect and reciprocal interest, such cooperation is part of the perspective of solidarity and friendship between all peoples. The foundations of this cooperation were laid, even before Algeria's independence, in the support and sympathy it received during its liberation struggle¹²

Since its independence, Algeria has developed its cooperation relations, particularly with socialist countries, as a result of its internal choice for socialism. These relations are on the economic, technical and managerial training levels and respond to the needs of the Algerian economy's recovery and the building of an independent Algeria.¹³

Algeria and United Nations

Admitted to the UN on 8 October 1962, Algeria and its 'neutral diplomacy' soon became a very active player on the international stage. Some of the constants that subsequently marked Algeria's foreign policy date from this period. The leaders tried to theorize the experience acquired during the years of armed struggle. There were three basic postulates: the fight against imperialism and colonialism, support for liberation movements, and international

cooperation both with Third World countries and with the socialist powers. As an integral part of the Arab Maghreb, Algeria practices 'positive neutralism and non-alignment' - Article 2 of the Constitution.¹⁴

Algeria remains convinced that the United Nations can be the most effective instrument for bringing people together, resolving the conflicts that divide them and maintaining world peace. Is this not, moreover, the mission that it has assigned itself and which justifies its creation? The difficulties that threaten the United Nations in its existence and paralyze its functioning find their main source in its inadequacy to the current world.

The UN crisis, it is the obvious that the manifestation of the political unease is resulting from the unequal distribution of responsibilities between all members; It is important that the operating rules of the Organization be revised with a view to allowing an increase in the participation of small countries in the decisions which determine the action of the various international institutions. It is not through compromises between great powers that the survival and effectiveness of the Organization will be ensured, but through a serious and radical revision of its statutes and structures, which alone will make it possible to provide a definitive remedy to its imperfections and inadequacies.¹⁵

Algeria has paid dearly enough for the right to become a free and independent nation again to give its all to the establishment of real and lasting peace between peoples. It therefore intends to assume all of its obligations towards the international community and make its contribution, however modest, to safeguarding peace in the world. It is without resentment, without prejudice and without ulterior motives that it offers its friendship to all peoples, convinced that humanity will only be able to overcome its difficulties and ensure its happiness through loyal and sincere cooperation between all the countries of the world.

Conclusion

Algeria's foreign policy was characterized by 'strength and dynamism', especially in its African and Arab field, where it contributed to supporting the liberation movements to complete the decolonization of the remaining colonial African countries during the 1960s and then contributed strongly to the establishment of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and then the transition to the African Union (AU).

Algeria's foreign policy in the Arab sphere, especially in support of the Palestinian cause, was also dynamic, which continued later by working to reform the Arab League

organization to give it 'greater strength and dynamism in the service of the Arab nation,

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Citation

¹⁴ Algerian constitution

¹⁵ Laurence Aïda Ammour op cit

¹ Algerian Constitution

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⁷ Laurence Aïda Ammour op cit

⁸ Anouar Boukhars, op cit p23

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Mohamed Redha Bougherira op cit

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid

¹³ Laurence Aïda Ammour op cit