Challenges of Algerian Diplomacy in the African Sahel: Case Studies of Mali, Niger, and Sudan

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Abstract

This paper examines the complexities and challenges faced by Algerian diplomacy in the African Sahel region, with a focus on Mali, Niger, and Sudan. Through analysis of recent diplomatic initiatives, security cooperation, and economic engagements, the study highlights Algeria's strategic interests and the obstacles it encounters in projecting influence in these key Sahelian states. The research draws on a combination of diplomatic records, policy documents, and expert interviews to provide a comprehensive assessment of Algeria's evolving role in regional stability and development.

Problem Statement: Algeria, as a major North African power, has long sought to play a stabilizing role in the Sahel region. However, the complex political landscapes, security threats, and competing international interests in Mali, Niger, and Sudan present significant challenges to Algerian diplomatic efforts. This study aims to identify and analyze these challenges, examining how they impact Algeria's ability to achieve its strategic objectives in the region and maintain its influence amidst changing geopolitical dynamics.

Keywords: Algerian diplomacy، Sahel region، Mali conflict، Niger security، Sudan crisis، Economic diplomacy،Regional stability، Non-intervention principle، Mediation

1. INTRODUCTION

The Sahel location, a great semi-arid belt stretching throughout Africa, has long been a focus of geopolitical interest and instability. Algeria, as the biggest united states of america in Africa by means of land mass and a great nearby power, has historically performed a critical function in shaping the political and security landscape of this vicinity. This paper examines the evolving nature of Algerian diplomacy within the Sahel, with particular recognition on its engagement with Mali, Niger, and Sudan.

Algeria's involvement in the Sahel is rooted in its own national safety concerns, which includes the spillover results of regional conflicts and the hazard of terrorism. The u . S .'s diplomatic efforts have been aimed toward selling stability, mediating conflicts, and countering the affect of both non-country armed organizations and competing global powers.[1]

However, the complex and frequently volatile political conditions in Mali, Niger, and Sudan gift huge challenges to Algeria's diplomatic ambitions. This examine ambitions to analyze these demanding situations, inspecting how they impact Algeria's ability to gain its strategic targets and maintain impact in a rapidly changing geopolitical environment.

2.Theoretical Framework and Methodology :

This examine employs a constructivist technique to international members of the family, emphasizing the role of ideas, norms, and identities in shaping state behavior. This framework is specially relevant in know-how Algeria's self-belief as a nearby chief and its technique to diplomacy inside the Sahel.[2]

The research method combines qualitative analysis of diplomatic documents, policy statements, and media reviews with semi-established interviews of dip **.**[3]

3.Case Study: Mali

3.1 Historical Context of Algerian-Malian Relations

Algeria and Mali percentage a 1,376 km border, making their relationship critical for local stability. The roots of Algerian international relations in Mali can be traced again to the on the spot publish-independence period of both countries. Algeria's aid for Mali in the course of the 1963 border dispute with Mauritania marked the beginning of an extended-standing diplomatic engagement.[4]

Throughout the Nineteen Seventies and Nineteen Eighties, Algeria played a extensive position in mediating conflicts among the Malian authorities and Tuareg rebels. The 1991 Tamanrasset Accords, facilitated by Algeria, had been a landmark achievement in struggle decision, although their implementation remained tough.

3.2 The 2012 Crisis and Algerian Intervention

[1]- Boukhars, A. (2022). "Algeria's Sahel Conundrum." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace., p. 3.
[2]- Wendt, A. (1999). Social theory of international politics. Cambridge University Press, p. 246
[3]- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2023). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. SAGE Publications, p. 105
[4]- Bensaâd, A. (2016). "Algerian-Malian Border: From Desert to Frontier." Politique Africaine, 142(2), p. 145.

The 2012 Tuareg revolt and next jihadist career of northern Mali marked a turning factor in Algerian diplomacy. Initially reluctant to intervene militarily, Algeria targeted on diplomatic efforts to solve the crisis. This method become partially stimulated via Algeria's personal history, mainly the "Black Decade" of the Nineteen Nineties, which made it wary of overseas military interventions.

Algeria's diplomatic strategy all through this era blanketed:

a) Hosting peace talks among the Malian authorities and diverse revolt agencies.

B) Advocating for a political answer as opposed to a more often than not army technique.

C) Coordinating with nearby and international companions, which includes ECOWAS and the UN.

3.3 The Algiers Process and 2015 Peace Agreement

The fruits of Algeria's diplomatic efforts changed into the Algiers Process, which brought about the signing of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali in 2015. This agreement turned into visible as a large diplomatic achievement for Algeria, showcasing its capacity to bring to.[1]

Key elements of the agreement blanketed:

- Decentralization and more autonomy for northern regions
- Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of rebel opponents
- Economic improvement initiatives for northern Mali

3.4 Challenges and Limitations

Despite the preliminary success of the Algiers Agreement, implementation has faced severa barriers:

a) Continued insecurity: The continual threat from jihadist businesses has undermined the peace manner.

B) Political instability: The 2020 and 2021 army coups in Mali have complicated diplomatic efforts

. C) International competition: The presence of other worldwide actors, particularly France (until its withdrawal), Russia, and nearby bodies like ECOWAS, has every now and then conflicted with Algerian pastimes.[2]

3.5 Recent Developments and Algerian Adaptation

In reaction to the converting dynamics in Mali, Algeria has needed to adapt its diplomatic approach:

a) Engaging with the transitional government post-coup while emphasizing the need for a return to constitutional order. B) Intensifying efforts to combat terrorism through nearby cooperation, inclusive of the Nouakchott Process. C) Balancing its ancient non-interventionist stance with the need for extra energetic engagement in nearby safety.

3.6 Economic Diplomacy

[1]- Boutellis, A., & Zahar, M. J. (2017). "A Process in Search of Peace: Lessons from the Inter-Malian Agreement." International Peace Institute. p. 22.

[2] - Lounnas, D. (2019). "The Transmutation of Jihadi Organizations in the Sahel and the Regional Security Architecture." Middle East Policy, 26(3), p. 78.

Algeria has additionally leveraged economic ties as a diplomatic tool in Mali. Projects consisting of the Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline and elevated bilateral alternate have been used to bolster relations and exert gentle power influence[1].

This extended case look at of Mali demonstrates both the strengths and barriers of Algerian diplomacy within the Sahel. While Algeria has shown sizeable potential for mediation and warfare resolution, it maintains to face demanding situations in imposing lengthy-term answers and adapting torapidly changing political and security landscapes.

Algeria has been deeply involved in efforts to stabilize Mali, in particular for the reason that 2012 Tuareg revolt and next jihadist occupation of northern Mali. Algeria's function as a mediator within the Algiers Process, which caused the 2015 peace agreement among the Malian authorities and Tuareg rebels, tested its diplomatic abilties.[2]

However, the patience of jihadist companies and the 2020 navy coup have complex Algeria's efforts. The presence of international forces, especially French troops underneath Operation Barkhane (until their withdrawal in 2022), has additionally posed challenges to Algeria's impact in Mali.[3]

Algeria's method has been to emphasise political solutions and countrywide reconciliation, frequently putting it at odds with greater militarized techniques desired through different global actors. This case look at examines the successes and barriers of Algeria's diplomatic method in Mali, and how it has adapted to converting instances on the floor

4. Case Study: Niger

4.1 Historical Context of Algerian-Nigerien Relations

Algeria and Niger percentage a 956 km border, making their relationship crucial for local balance and protection. The diplomatic ties between the two international locations date again to their respective independences in the early Sixties. Algeria's engagement with Niger has been characterized through a focus on border safety, financial cooperation, and nearby balance.[4]

4.2 Security Cooperation

The security dimension of Algeria-Niger relations has been paramount, specially given the shared demanding situations of terrorism, smuggling, and abnormal migration:

a) Joint Border Patrols: Since the early 2000s, Algeria and Niger have carried out joint navy operations alongside their shared border to combat smuggling and terrorist activities.

B) Intelligence Sharing: Both nations have set up mechanisms for sharing intelligence on terrorist organizations and criminal networks working within the Sahel-Saharan location.

[1]- Daragahi, B. (2023). "Algeria Seeks to Boost Economic Ties with Sahel Neighbors." Al-Monitor. p. 2.

[2]- Lounnas, D. (2018). "The Transmutation of Jihadi Organizations inside the Sahel and the Regional Security Architecture." Middle East Policy, 25(1)), p. 57.

[3] Thurston, A. (2021). "France's War inside the Sahel and the Evolution of Counter-Insurgency Doctrine." African Affairs, 120(480), p. 542.

[4]-Boukhars, A. (2019). "Reassessing Algeria's Role in Counter-Terrorism." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. p. 8

C) Counter-terrorism Training: Algeria has supplied military schooling and know-how to Nigerien forces, leveraging its enjoy from the "Black Decade" of the Nineteen Nineties.[1]

4.3 Economic Diplomacy and Development Initiatives

Algeria has used monetary cooperation as a key pillar of its diplomatic method in Niger:

a) Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline: This bold undertaking, while going through delays, has been a cornerstone of financial international relations between Algeria, Niger, and Nigeria.

B) Infrastructure Development: Algeria has invested in avenue creation initiatives linking the 2 international locations, aimed at facilitating alternate and strengthening ties.

C) Energy Cooperation: Algeria's state-owned oil organisation, Sonatrach, has been involved in oil exploration sports in Niger, further cementing monetary ties[2].

4.4 Mediation and Conflict Resolution

Algeria has played a function in mediating inner conflicts in Niger:

a) 2009 Political Crisis: Algeria became worried in diplomatic efforts to resolve the constitutional disaster in Niger following President Mamadou Tandja's attempt to enlarge his time period.

B) Tuareg Issues: Given its experience with Tuareg populations, Algeria has supplied insights and mediation in addressing Tuareg grievances in northern Niger.

4.5 Challenges to Algerian Diplomacy in Niger

Despite robust bilateral family members, Algeria faces numerous demanding situations in its engagement with Niger:

a) Competing Influences: The developing presence of different global actors, inclusive of France, the USA, and extra these days, Russia and China, has complicated Algeria's diplomatic efforts.

B) Regional Instability: The spillover consequences of crises in neighboring nations, in particular Libya and Mali, have impacted Niger's stability and, by extension, Algeria's strategic pursuits.

C) Terrorism and Organized Crime: The chronic danger from businesses like Boko Haram and Islamic State inside the Greater Sahara (ISGS) maintains to challenge safety cooperation efforts.[3]

4.6 Migration Management

The trouble of migration has end up an increasing number of imperative to Algeria-Niger members of the family:

a) Repatriation Agreements: Algeria has signed agreements with Niger for the repatriation of Nigerien migrants, a circulate that has on occasion strained family members because of humanitarian worries.[4]

B) Border Control: Both international locations have multiplied efforts to manage irregular migration, with Algeria presenting technical aid to Niger on this domain.

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[1]- El-Katiri, L. (2021). "Algeria's Energy Diplomacy in Africa." Middle East Policy, 28(2), p. 88.

[2]- Ghanem, D. (2023). "The Geopolitics of the Sahel: Algeria's Perspective." Brookings Doha Center Publications. p. 11.

[3] - International Crisis Group. (2023). "Averting a Full-Blown Crisis in Niger." Africa Briefing N°183. p. 4.

[4] - Zoubir, Y. H. (2023). "Algeria's Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times." Mediterranean Quarterly, 34(1), p. 360.

4.7 Recent Developments and Future Prospects

The July 2023 military coup in Niger has presented new demanding situations for Algerian diplomacy:

a) Initial Response: Algeria condemned the coup and known as for a rapid go back to constitutional order, aligning with the placement of ECOWAS and the worldwide network.

B) Mediation Efforts: Algeria has offered to mediate between the army junta and worldwide stakeholders, leveraging its non-interventionist military junta and international stakeholders, leveraging its non-interventionist stance and regional influence.

c) Economic Implications: The coup has raised questions about the future of joint economic projects, including the Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline. *[1]

4.8 Balancing Act in Regional Dynamics

Algeria's technique to Niger within the wake of the coup demonstrates its complicated balancing act in the location:

a) Maintaining Stability: Algeria prioritizes nearby stability, now and again on the fee of democratic principles, reflecting its pragmatic overseas coverage method .

B) Countering External Intervention: Algeria has expressed reservations approximately ability navy intervention in Niger, consistent with its standard competition to overseas navy involvement inside the location.

C) Soft Power Projection: Through endured engagement with Niger throughout more than one domain names, Algeria seeks to preserve its influence and undertaking gentle electricity within the face of developing competition from international and nearby powers.

5. Case Study: Sudan

5.1 Historical Context of Algerian-Sudanese Relations

Algeria and Sudan have maintained diplomatic members of the family considering the fact that Sudan's independence in 1956. Despite not sharing a border, Algeria has long considered Sudan a strategic accomplice in its broader African coverage. The dating has been characterised by way of political cohesion, monetary cooperation, and shared concerns over local stability.[2]

5.2 Algeria's Stance on Recent Sudanese Political Developments

The political panorama in Sudan has been turbulent because the ousting of lengthy-time president Omar al-Bashir in 2019. Algeria's approach to those developments has been cautious however engaged:

a) Support for the Transitional Period: Algeria to start with backed the civilian-military transitional authorities established after Bashir's fall.

[1]* The Trans-Saharan pipeline is a joint project between Nigeria, Algeria and Niger. The plan is for a 4,000 km pipeline to ferry up to 30 billion cubic meters of gas a year from Nigeria, through Niger, to Algeria where it would connect up with existing pipelines across the Mediterranean to Europe. https://www.climatechangenews.com/2024/02/14/problems-mount-for-sahara-gas-pipeline-leaving-nigerian-taxpayers-at-risk/

[2]- Zoubir, Y. H. (2020). "Algeria's Role in African Affairs." In Routledge Handbook of State Recognition. Routledge. p. 293.

B) Response to the 2021 Coup: When General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan led a army takeover in October 2021, Algeria expressed concern however prevented outright condemnation, calling for talk and a return to the transitional technique.[1]

5.3 Algeria's Support for Burhan Amidst the 2023 Conflict

The outbreak of conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) led through Burhan and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) led through Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemedti) in April 2023 marked a crucial juncture in Algeria's Sudan policy:

a) Recognition of Burhan's Government: Algeria's decision to acquire Burhan as the legitimate consultant of Sudan's government turned into a full-size diplomatic circulate. This reception, which occurred amidst the ongoing struggle, signaled Algeria's guide for the hooked up navy management over the RSF defense force.[2]

B) Motivations for Supporting Burhan:

Stability Concerns: Algeria viewed Burhan's forces as more likely to repair order and save you country fall apart.

Legitimacy Principle: Despite the controversial nature of Burhan's rule, Algeria identified him as the head of the established nation institutions.

Regional Geopolitics: Supporting Burhan became seen as a counterbalance to the have an effect on of Gulf states, specifically the UAE, which turned into appeared to be backing Hemedti's RSF[3].

5.4 Algeria's Opposition to External Intervention

Algeria's aid for Burhan ought to be understood in the context of its broader foreign coverage ideas, mainly its competition to external intervention:

a) Criticism of UAE Involvement: Algeria has expressed subject over the alleged help of the UAE for the RSF, viewing it as destabilizing external interference.

B) Calls for African-led Solutions: In line with its lengthy-status policy, Algeria has endorsed for African-led mediation and determination to the Sudan conflict, opposing interventions via non-African powers.

C) Humanitarian Concerns: While supporting Burhan, Algeria has also called for an stop to hostilities and emphasised the need to defend civilians, reflecting its preference for a solid however no longer overly militarized decision[4].

5.5 Implications for Regional Dynamics

Algeria's role at the Sudan struggle has several implications for regional dynamics:

a) Countering Gulf Influence: By assisting Burhan, Algeria targets to restrict the expansion of Gulf states' impact within the Horn of Africa and the broader Sahel area.

B) Reinforcing Non-Interventionist Stance: Algeria's technique reaffirms its dedication to the precept of non-intervention through external powers in African affairs.

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[1]- Ghanem, D. (2023). "Algeria's Cautious Diplomacy in Times of Regional Turmoil." Brookings Institution Policy Brief. p. 5.

[2]- El-Gomati, A. (2023). "The Geopolitics of the Sudan Conflict." Chatham House Research Paper ،p. 18.

[3]- Cherif, Y. (2023). "The UAE's Expanding Influence in the Horn of Africa." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. p. 9.

[4]- Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2023). "Statement on the Situation in Sudan." Official Press Release.

C) Balancing Act: Algeria's guide for Burhan, at the same time as opposing outside intervention, demonstrates its try to stability stability worries with its principled foreign policy stance.

5.7Future Prospects

As the state of affairs in Sudan keeps to conform, Algeria's diplomatic method faces several challenges and opportunities:

a) Mediation Role: Algeria might also are seeking for to leverage its role to play a more lively mediation position among Sudanese factions.

B) Regional Security: The outcome of the Sudan war will have huge implications for nearby security, a key challenge for Algerian overseas coverage.

C) Balancing Influences: Algeria will probably retain to place itself as a counterweight to other local and international powers searching for have an impact on in Sudan and the broader region.[1]

This case take a look at of Sudan illustrates the complicated interplay of ideas and pragmatism in Algerian international relations. By supporting Burhan even as opposing external intervention, Algeria seeks to preserve its influence in a strategically essential united states of america whilst adhering to its center overseas policy ideas. However, this method additionally highlights the demanding situations Algeria faces in navigating the complex and regularly contradictory needs of nearby politics inside the Sahel and East Africa.

6.Cross-reducing Challenges

The case research of Mali, Niger, and Sudan display several go-slicing demanding situations that Algerian international relations faces in the Sahel area. Foremost among those is the continual threat of terrorism and transnational crime. The Sahel has turn out to be a breeding ground for diverse jihadist companies, inclusive of associates of Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. These businesses exploit porous borders, susceptible country establishments, and local grievances to set up footholds throughout the location. Algeria's method to counterterrorism, which emphasizes intelligence sharing and ability constructing over direct military intervention, has shown mixed outcomes. While it has helped save you a few attacks, the overall protection situation inside the Sahel stays precarious.

Economic improvement affords any other sizeable challenge. The Sahel international locations, which includes Mali, Niger, and Sudan, rank most of the international's poorest, with limited infrastructure and excessive unemployment rates. Algeria has tried to cope with this through financial diplomacy, which includes investments in infrastructure projects and energy cooperation. However, the dimensions of the improvement desires regularly outstrips Algeria's capability to address them effectively. Moreover, monetary initiatives are often hampered by using security worries, growing a vicious cycle wherein underdevelopment fuels instability, which in flip hinders monetary development.[2]

[1]- Thurston, A. (2023). "The Sahel Crisis and Its Impact on North Africa." RAND Corporation . p. 28.

[2]- Zoubir, Y. H. (2023). "Algeria's Foreign Policy in a Changing Regional Order." Mediterranean Politics, 28(3), p. 360

The have an impact on of outside powers adds another layer of complexity to Algeria's diplomatic efforts. France, the previous colonial electricity in much of the vicinity, has maintained a widespread navy and economic presence. More recently, Russia and China have multiplied their engagement within the Sahel, supplying navy cooperation and financial investments. The United Arab Emirates and other Gulf states have also sought to extend their influence, particularly in Sud an. This multipolar competition often complicates Algeria's efforts to position itself as a key regional mediator and security partner.

7. Algeria's Diplomatic Strategies and Tools

In reaction to those challenges, Algeria has evolved a multifaceted diplomatic method. At the multilateral level, Algeria has been a key proponent of regional tasks which includes the Nouakchott Process, which brings collectively Sahel and Maghreb countries to coordinate on security problems. Algeria has additionally actively participated within the African Union's efforts to address conflicts in the location, emphasizing African-led answers to African problems. This method aligns with Algeria's ancient stance of non-intervention and competition to Western navy involvement in Africa.[1]

Bilaterally, Algeria has relied closely on high-degree diplomacy, with frequent visits by using senior officers to Sahelian capitals and reciprocal visits to Algiers. These engagements regularly result in cooperation agreements masking safety, alternate, and cultural change. Algeria has additionally leveraged its enjoy in counter-terrorism and deradicalization applications, presenting education and expertise to its southern buddies. Economic equipment, inclusive of preferential change agreements and joint infrastructure initiatives, form every other pillar of Algeria's bilateral engagement method.

Algeria has additionally sought to put itself as a impartial mediator in regional conflicts. Its position in facilitating the 2015 Mali peace agreement is often noted as a a hit example of this approach. However, the effectiveness of this strategy has been examined by the complex and evolving nature of conflicts in the vicinity, as seen in the current crises in Sudan and Niger.

8. Analysis of Effectiveness and Limitations

The effectiveness of Algeria's diplomatic efforts inside the Sahel has been blended. On the high quality facet, Algeria has maintained its popularity as a key regional participant and has efficaciously averted any foremost terrorist attacks on its soil emanating from the Sahel. Its mediation efforts, particularly in Mali, have contributed to de-escalating some conflicts. Algeria's regular stance in opposition to foreign military intervention has additionally resonated with many African states and has helped it preserve credibility as an impartial actor[2].

However, numerous limitations have come to be obvious. Algeria's non-interventionist approach, even as principled, has on occasion been perceived as passive inside the face of rapidly evolving crises. This was glaring in the preliminary levels of the Mali war in 2012

[1]- Lounnas, D. (2024). "Terrorism in the Sahel: Evolving Threats and Regional Responses." Journal of North African Studies, 29(1), p. 82.

[2]- Wehrey, F., & Alkoutami, S. (2024). "China's Balancing Act in the Maghreb-Sahel Region." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. p. 125.

and extra lately within the Sudan crisis. Additionally, Algeria's recognition on state-to-kingdom members of the family and emphasis on balance has every now and then come on the fee of engaging with civil society and addressing underlying governance issues that gas conflicts.

Algeria's monetary barriers additionally constrain its diplomatic impact. While it has the biggest economy in North Africa, Algeria lacks the monetary sources to compete with the extent of funding presented by means of worldwide powers like China or rich Gulf states. This monetary constraint has emerge as greater pronounced in recent years as Algeria grapples with its own economic demanding situations, together with falling hydrocarbon revenues and the want for home monetary reforms.[1]

Furthermore, the converting nature of conflicts inside the Sahel, characterized by means of complicated, non-state armed businesses and intercommunal violence, has challenged Algeria's conventional diplomatic toolkit. The united states of america has struggled to evolve its approache to these new realities, often relying on state-centric solutions that may not fully address the root causes of instability.[2]

9. Algeria's Economic Approach

Algeria's engagement with the Sahel region extends beyond security concerns, encompassing a robust economic diplomacy strategy. This approach aims to strengthen ties, promote stability through development, and secure Algeria's economic interests in the region. As Zoubir (2023) notes, "Algeria's economic diplomacy in the Sahel is a crucial component of its broader foreign policy strategy, aimed at creating a zone of stability along its southern border".[3]

This multifaceted approach recognizes the intrinsic link between economic development and security in the Sahel.

9.2 Key Economic Initiatives

a) Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline The ambitious Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline project, connecting Nigeria to Algeria through Niger, represents a cornerstone of Algeria's economic diplomacy. Despite facing numerous challenges, the project symbolizes Algeria's commitment to regional economic integration. Ouki (2022) argues that "the pipeline, if realized, would not only boost Algeria's role as a major gas supplier to Europe but also create significant economic opportunities for transit countries like Niger" [4].

However, security concerns and financing issues have delayed the project's implementation.

b) Infrastructure Development Algeria has invested in crucial infrastructure projects, particularly in northern Mali and Niger. These projects, including road construction and telecommunications networks, aim to enhance connectivity and stimulate economic growth

[1]- Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2023). "Strategic Vision for African Cooperation." Policy Document. p. 3.
[2]- International Crisis Group. (2024). "Algeria's Regional Diplomacy: Ambitions and Constraints." North Africa Report N°215. p. 4.
[3]- Zoubir, Y. H. (2023). "Algeria's Foreign Policy in a Changing Regional Order." Mediterranean Politics, 28(3), pp. 362
[4]- Ouki, M. (2022). The Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline: Dream or reality? Oxford Institute for Energy Studies,p8

in border regions. Ghanem (2023) highlights that "Algeria's infrastructure investments in the Sahel are strategically focused on creating economic corridors that can foster trade and development in historically marginalized areas"[1] .

For instance, the Trans-Saharan Highway, connecting Algiers to Lagos through the Sahel, is a key project in this initiative.

c) Trade Facilitation Efforts to streamline cross-border trade have been a key focus, with Algeria working to reduce barriers and establish preferential trade agreements with Sahelian countries. El-Katiri (2021) observes that "Algeria's push for trade facilitation in the Sahel is part of a broader strategy to diversify its economy and reduce dependence on hydrocarbon exports" [2] . This includes initiatives to modernize border crossings and harmonize customs procedures.

9.3Challenges to Economic Diplomacy

a) Security Concerns The persistent security challenges in the Sahel often hamper economic initiatives. Terrorist activities and political instability have delayed or disrupted several projects. Lounnas (2024) argues that "the volatile security situation in the Sahel presents a significant obstacle to Algeria's economic diplomacy, often necessitating a recalibration of investment priorities and timelines"[3]. This has been particularly evident in northern Mali, where infrastructure projects have faced repeated setbacks due to security issues.

b) Competition from Other Powers Algeria faces increasing competition from other regional and global powers, particularly China and Gulf states, in economic engagement with the Sahel. Wehrey and Alkoutami (2024) note that "the growing economic presence of China and Gulf countries in the Sahel challenges Algeria's traditional influence in the region, forcing Algiers to adapt its economic diplomacy strategies"[4]. This competition is particularly intense in sectors such as infrastructure development and natural resource extraction.

c) Economic Constraints Algeria's own economic challenges, including falling hydrocarbon revenues, have limited its capacity for large-scale economic initiatives in the region. Achy (2024) points out that "Algeria's ability to sustain its economic diplomacy in the Sahel is increasingly constrained by domestic economic pressures, particularly the need for economic diversification and fiscal consolidation"[5].

This has led to a more selective approach in economic engagements, focusing on projects with clear strategic benefits.

9.4 Case Study: Economic Diplomacy in Niger

[1]- Ghanem, D. (2023). "Algeria's Cautious Diplomacy in Times of Regional Turmoil." Brookings Institution Policy Brief. pp. p. 13.

[2]- El-Katiri, L. (2021). "Algeria's Energy Diplomacy in Africa." Middle East Policy, 28(2), pp. 90

[3]- Lounnas, D. (2024). "Terrorism in the Sahel: Evolving Threats and Regional Responses." Journal of North African Studies, 29(1), pp. 84.

[4]- Wehrey, F., & Alkoutami, S. (2024). "China's Balancing Act in the Maghreb-Sahel Region." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. pp 127.

[5]- Achy, L. (2024). Algeria's economic challenges and their impact on regional policy. Middle East Economy, 5(1),pp. 83.

Algeria's economic engagement with Niger offers a prime example of its broader Sahelian strategy. Cooperation in energy exploration, joint border development projects, and increased bilateral trade have been key features of this relationship. Ammour (2020) highlights that "Algeria's economic diplomacy in Niger is characterized by a focus on mutual benefit, particularly in sectors like energy and agriculture, which align with both countries' development priorities"[1]. The joint development of oil fields in Niger's Agadem basin is a notable example of this cooperation.

9.5 Impact and Future Prospects

While Algeria's economic diplomacy has yielded some positive results, particularly in strengthening bilateral ties, its overall impact on regional stability and development remains mixed. The International Crisis Group (2024) assesses that "Algeria's economic initiatives in the Sahel have had a modest but positive impact on local development, though their contribution to overall regional stability is less clear".[2]

The future effectiveness of this approach will depend on Algeria's ability to navigate regional security challenges, compete with other international actors, and leverage its own economic strengths.

Economic diplomacy represents a crucial component of Algeria's broader Sahel strategy. By intertwining economic interests with security concerns, Algeria aims to create a more comprehensive approach to regional stability. However, the success of this strategy faces significant challenges and will require sustained effort and adaptation in the coming years. Boukhars (2023) concludes that "Algeria's economic diplomacy in the Sahel is at a critical juncture, with its future success dependent on Algiers' ability to adapt to changing regional dynamics and overcome its own economic limitations".[3]

Conclusion:

Algeria's diplomacy inside the Sahel reflects each the united states's aspirations for regional management and the complex challenges it faces in realizing the ones objectives. As the security state of affairs in the Sahel continues to evolve, Algeria will in all likelihood need to conform its diplomatic techniques to remain applicable and effective. This might also within the location, and a greater bendy technique to mediation which can respond fast to emerging crises.

Looking beforehand, Algeria's function within the Sahel might be formed via several elements. These encompass its potential to control its own home political and economic transitions, the evolving dynamics of incredible strength competition in Africa, and the fulfillment or failure of modern stabilization efforts in international locations like Mali, Niger, and Sudan. Algeria's diplomatic effectiveness will also rely upon its ability to build

[1]- Ammour, L. A. (2020). Algeria's role in the Sahelian security crisis. Stability: International Journal of Security and Development, 9(1),p7.

[2]- International Crisis Group. (2024). Algeria's regional diplomacy: Ambitions and constraints. North Africa Report N°215, pp. 6.

[3]- Boukhars, A. (2019). "Reassessing Algeria's Role in Counter-Terrorism." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. pp.19.

stronger partnerships with different regional players, which includes Nigeria and Egypt, to create a more coordinated approach to Sahelian safety and improvement.

Ultimately, Algeria's diplomatic engagement in the Sahel remains a work in progress. While the U . S . Has proven a commitment to regional balance and a potential for constructive mediation, it faces enormous demanding situations in translating its diplomatic efforts into lasting answers for the complicated issues afflicting its southern buddies. As the Sahel remains a focus of global difficulty, Algeria's potential to navigate those demanding situations can be crucial not handiest for its own security and regional status but also for the wider stability of North and West Africa.

***"Operation Barkhane" and the new French strategy.** [1]

[1]- In January 2013, France intervened militarily in Mali to confront the rebellion of Islamic militias in the north, in what was known as "Operation Serval," where approximately 4,000 soldiers were deployed. However, the Islamists who survived Serval quickly began waging a hybrid war against French, Malian, and United Nations forces. A hybrid war is a military strategy that combines conventional warfare with irregular warfare, often exhausting regular armies and requiring advanced tactics to confront and overcome it.

Then, "Operation Barkhane" was launched on August 1, 2014, covering almost the entire Sahel region, from Mauritania to Chad. The operation initially included 3,500 soldiers, but this number gradually increased to 5,100 soldiers by early 2020. As of October 7, 2020, they were supported by seven fighter jets, three armed Reaper drones, and 22 helicopters. Barkhane receives support from several European countries, particularly in the form of helicopters, as well as logistical and intelligence support from the United States. France is trying to further internationalize Barkhane through "Operation Takuba," which will include hundreds of special operations forces contributed by several European countries.

Of course, Operation Barkhane can be seen as more challenging than Operation Serval, as the armed groups have strengthened and gained legitimacy from the prevailing local discontent among the population, growing significantly within local communities, which has led to the expansion of the crisis from northern Mali to central Mali, Burkina Faso, and parts of Niger.

Operation Barkhane can be placed within the French strategy towards the G5 Sahel countries (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad, and Mauritania), It aims to assist partner countries in gaining the ability to ensure their security independently, through a comprehensive approach (political, security, and developmental), with the French military taking on the military aspect through Operation Barkhane. In other words, France simply wants to bring the situation to a point where it can leave matters to local forces, meaning it does not aspire to achieve stabilization in the Sahel region or to defeat jihadists definitively.

During Operation Barkhane, it seemed that the French military had assigned itself a limited role, focusing solely on military matters, distancing itself from most of the implications of that, while leaving the remaining developmental tasks (economic and social) to other parts of the French government and its international partners, and above all, to the governments of the Sahel region.

Official documents indicate that the French military in the Sahel divides its time among three activities:

1. Combat operations, which often take the form of classic "cordon and search" operations aimed at "neutralizing" terrorists and seizing essential materials such as weapons and ammunition.

2. Civil-military engagement, meaning exporting "goodwill" signals to local populations, which includes activities such as digging wells, providing medical services, distributing gifts and in-kind donations, and so on.

3. Training local forces and ensuring their readiness to face current security challenges.from the website:

michael Shurkin, "France's War in the Sahel and the Evolution of Counter-Insurgency Doctrine", Texas National Security Review, Volume 4, Issue 1, Winter 2020/2021 http: https://tnsr.org/2020/11/frances-war-in-the-sahel-and-the-evolution-of-counter-insurgency-doctrine;

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