

The role of state institutions in building a modern African state - Algeria as a model

دور مؤسسات الدولة في بناء دولة إفريقية حديثة –الجزائر أنموذجاً

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Abstract:

This article sheds light on the problem of state-building in Africa. Most African countries have faced, and continue to face, numerous challenges and crises that have prevented them from establishing states according to international standards. Internal crises and external security threats have played a role in disrupting the social, political, and security structures in Africa.

The aim of this study is to demonstrate the pivotal role of state institutions in strengthening and consolidating their functions and in preventing internal and external crises, using Algeria as a case study. The study, through the Algerian case, arrives at several conclusions, including that the continent's countries possess the necessary resources for advancement and development. Furthermore, the political acumen of the leader, in cooperation with the state's various branches and institutions, is a fundamental factor in the advancement and establishment of a modern state.

Key words: State institutions - State building - Africa - Algeria - Political leader.

Introduction:

The world has recently witnessed several political, economic, and military developments, among others. The major international players and their institutions have been the primary actors in these developments. All seek progress and prosperity, thereby fostering cohesion among peoples and societies, and between state institutions and their rulers. This allows for the establishment of a state governed by the rule of law, in accordance with international norms and laws, in African countries, under the umbrella of what is termed "political wisdom." Political acumen and leadership among heads of state and their rulers have become pivotal in overcoming internal crises and external threats that seek to disrupt the balance of power in any country.

Several studies have addressed the reasons for the continued underdevelopment of African countries, as well as the causes of the disintegration, demise, or division of some states. However, these studies have not been sufficient to provide developmental solutions that would allow African countries to adopt them as a foundation for sustainable development and the building of strong, modern states. Therefore, this research will attempt to address the most important factors that enable African states to maintain their developmental trajectory and ensure their survival. This research begins with the premise that political leaders or heads of state possess experience and play a leading role in overcoming crises in any country, thereby enabling them to build a development policy based on the fundamental strengths and characteristics of each nation. Furthermore, natural resources and raw materials are crucial elements in elevating any African country to the ranks of developed and economically prosperous nations.

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However, ethnic and religious diversity, civil wars, poverty, hunger, and deprivation are among the factors that impede the development process and exacerbate crises within African societies, thus hindering democratic transition. Foreign interventions, external security threats, and the exploitation of international law to interfere in the internal affairs of African states are the most significant obstacles to building a modern African state. The more successful a state becomes, the more international problems it generates.

Therefore, the question that arises in this context is: **how can the institutional dimension be activated in the state-building process in Africa in general, and in Algeria in particular, and how can a state based on institutions be established?**

All of this requires careful and detailed study, which is the subject of this research. This is especially true in a period characterized by rapid events and changes, both positive—such as economic growth, technological advancement, and political development—and negative—such as wars, crises, and the exploitation of international law to alter the global balance of power. This increases the power of one state over another.

Accordingly, this research seeks to identify the essential elements of the African state that enable and motivate it to achieve greater success for its people. It also examines the role of state institutions, starting with the highest authority in the country—whether president, king, prime minister, military leader, or other experienced political and military figures—who are characterized by shrewdness and wisdom. These individuals play an active role in the smooth functioning of their countries and in keeping pace with international laws and norms. Ultimately, this allows for the formation of a rational, democratic state that is compatible with the needs of its people, comparable to European nations that have achieved progress in various fields. Furthermore, the research explores the role of economic institutions and their effective function in creating harmony between African peoples and their political systems. It also addresses political institutions and the role of civil society, political development, the extent to which peoples are engaged with international events and their modernization, political parties, and the dissemination of awareness within societies. Finally, the study examined the model of Algeria, a developing nation whose success in certain areas, including achieving self-sufficiency in agriculture and relying on its own resources, has recently become evident.

To achieve the study's objectives and requirements, a descriptive-analytical approach was adopted. This involved describing the African continent and its abundant natural resources, and analyzing the correlation between its potential and capabilities, which serves as a positive indicator of progress and prosperity. The historical-analytical approach was also employed to examine specific historical milestones that provide concrete examples to support our research with real-world evidence and analyze them in a way that can be applied in the future. This approach also aimed to understand the crisis of state-building in Africa in general, and in Algeria in particular, through a historical analysis of events.

Furthermore, the structural-functional approach was utilized as a model for modern state-building, encompassing the structures and functions that enable a state to achieve stability and continuity. The institutional approach was also employed to examine the nature, structure, and functions of various state institutions in Africa, and specifically in Algeria, in order to reveal their role in institutional reform and the state-building process. To address the central question, the study was divided into three main sections:

- 1-The fundamental characteristics of African states
- 2-The role and functions of institutions in supporting the foundations of the state in Africa
- 3- The Algerian model of comprehensive development and building a state based on institutions.

1-The Strengths of African Nations

The African continent is often known as the "cradle of civilization," boasting a rich tapestry of cultures, resources, and resilience. However, it is a continent that has long faced challenges ranging from poverty and conflict to lagging development and weak infrastructure. Yet, amidst these challenges lie immense potential and opportunities for achieving development on all fronts.

1.1-Natural Resources

Who among us doesn't know that the African continent is rich in natural resources, including various minerals such as gold, diamonds, petroleum, natural gas, platinum, uranium, cobalt, copper, and iron ore, in addition to agricultural products like cocoa, coffee, timber, fruits, and sugarcane? Other resources include:

*Water: Africa possesses numerous rivers and significant water resources.

*Arable Land: The African continent holds the top position globally in terms of arable land. Furthermore, the recent reclamation of arid desert lands and their connection to extensive water networks allows for the cultivation of all seasonal fruits out of season.

*Forests: Africa possesses a wealth of forests, a significant asset for processing industries and timber production (the tropical forests of Central Africa).

*Immense fish stocks, particularly in the Atlantic Ocean (Senegal, for example). Therefore, natural resources are among the most important factors in shaping the future global power map and influencing the rise and fall of African and global powers. An African country's ability to secure its natural resources—whether for its own industries, export, or to meet its people's needs—positively contributes to raising its standard of living and ensuring its survival.

On the other hand, we see the great powers scrambling for the wealth and resources of the African continent to increase their global influence and maintain their leadership. Consequently, these great powers are now seeking to control the African continent, viewing it as a virgin land rich in various minerals, oil, and energy. This has made Africa an open arena for competition among the great powers, who exploit it as a winning card to achieve global leadership and dominance. Conversely, they seek to weaken African countries through various means, whether by leveraging international laws, employing flexible, long-term strategic policies, offering generous economic deals, or providing humanitarian aid. All of these are fundamental aspects of manipulating the resources of African nations.

1.2-Economic Resources

The African continent is rich in all the elements necessary for economic development. The marketing of oil and natural resources is considered Africa's primary wealth, upon which the economies of these countries depend, regardless of the specific sources of wealth, such as gold, silver, fisheries, agriculture, timber and its derivatives, etc.

Africa ranks first globally in reserves of the following natural resources: 25% of global gold production, 50% of global platinum, 26% of global cobalt, and 40% of global diamonds, in addition to phosphates, chromium, manganese, bauxite, vanadium, and chlorine. It also ranks second globally in oil and gas reserves, holding 12% of the world's oil reserves and 10% of its natural gas reserves¹.

Therefore, access to natural resources, especially oil and rare earth elements, is essential for major powers to maintain their industrial and military dominance. The struggle between the great powers revolves around securing a large share of African oil. This competition reflects a race for global leadership and prestige, aiming to remain at the top of the global power hierarchy. Simultaneously, it involves maintaining control over weaker nations and creating a form of dependency.

African countries, therefore, reap enormous profits from the high prices of natural resources, particularly oil. Despite their political weaknesses, they are the ones who determine who has the right to exploit their oil resources. Economic strengths, then, are a major indicator and contributor

to the progress and prosperity of African nations. The remaining question is: who distributes the wealth and revenues within African countries? Is there a fair distribution that allows African people to live with dignity, like those in European countries? This leads us to a pivotal question: how astute is the leader, ruler, or president of the country? And what are the reasons for the decline in these countries' economies, the failure to manage economic development, and the exacerbation of social backwardness amidst the changing international economic order?.

1.3-Human and Cultural Resources

Most African countries are rich in human capital and cultural diversity, which varies across the continent's regions. This is a positive indicator of a plentiful workforce.

However, the problem lies in the quality of these populations and the extent of their intellectual and mental dependence. The lack of qualifications and resources, including education and upbringing in various fields, is the greatest obstacle preventing African nations from developing. This leads them to become dependent on other countries, meaning their loyalty to foreign nations outweighs their loyalty to their own. This is the primary reason they fall into the trap of dependency.

Furthermore, the problem of opposition expressed by African populations against the prevailing regimes, whose existence is linked to the very existence of the state, creates a gap between the people and their governments. This leads to states questioning not only their rulers but also their very existence and institutions, rendering them illegitimate and causing internal disintegration. This, in turn, creates job insecurity, where individuals feel that everything they have achieved is liable to be undone or disregarded at any moment. Furthermore, the human element, if properly developed by nations, becomes the primary driver of all state functions. If neglected, it becomes the weakest link, making employees susceptible to bribery or blackmail to leak sensitive information within the commercial and economic institutions upon which nations depend. A prime example is the 1997 US Congressional report, based on findings from the CIA, FBI, and military intelligence, that commercial espionage supported by foreign governments poses a direct threat to the prosperity and competitiveness of the American economy. The accused countries were China, France, Japan, the United Kingdom, Mexico, Russia, South Korea, and Taiwan².

The United States, as the world's largest economic power, fears for its prosperity and development from this espionage and the advancement of artificial intelligence. Imagine, then, the plight of weaker African nations. These examples illustrate the active role of pirates and private investigators working for their countries, who are considered among the international actors who amplify their countries' economic power. Major commercial companies rely on gathering information from their competitors, especially regarding the nature of products, the commercial strategies followed, marketing plans, prices, and commercial control, while simultaneously weakening any prominent commercial and economic companies. The best evidence of this is what France and its institutions are doing against some Algerian products that have taken over European markets in general and French markets in particular (coral products).

2-The Role and Functions of Institutions in Supporting the Foundations of the State in Africa

Most literature on democratic transition has typically focused on institutional factors, such as political processes and the choices of various actors, in explaining regime change. Indeed, there is no debate about the importance of institutions in the transition to and consolidation of democracy. Many scholars have focused on this issue, including Samuel Huntington and Francis Fukuyama, who agree that the absence of effective and strong political institutions in some developing countries undermines the political system, leading to the failure of democratic governance and political disintegration.

2.1-The Role of the Political Leader

Much has been said about the role, functions, and limits of the state, sparking considerable debate among thinkers. Some believe the state's role is limited, while others argue for the necessity of the state fulfilling all functions and roles, including comprehensive management of its resources. Still others advocate for a combination of these two perspectives to avoid the harm that can result from either one. With the advent of globalization, the concept of the state and its traditional role have changed. A state may become incapable of managing its resources and performing its functions, which will lead to a loss of its standing and complete collapse, relegating it to a sub-state status amidst the rapid changes of the international system. This is where the importance of political leadership comes in, to escape the predicament of collapse. Such leadership is characterized by political acumen, shrewdness, wisdom, insight, creative and innovative thinking, and strong political will. This is known as state reconstruction, a process aimed at breaking free from the cycle of underdevelopment and moving towards growth—that is, building a modern state that aligns with international standards.

The impact of political leadership on state-building is evident in the formation of its institutions, whether from scratch or, if these institutions are corrupt, they must be reformed. This is done to create harmony among the state's components and elements at the military, political, economic, cultural, and security levels, among others.

Reconstruction lies in the nature of the prevailing ideology in the country, as well as the customs and traditions of the state or region, and the nature of the material and economic reality upon which the state and its people are based.

The skill of the ruler or political leader lies in achieving positive economic outcomes without compromising the ideology and customs of their people, and in guiding them toward a successful path of comprehensive development.

The importance of the political leader is also highlighted in establishing a sound plan based on well-studied strategies, implemented with discipline by the country's elite. This elite must possess a strong will, a deep sense of patriotism, and a love for serving their country, thus forming the foundation upon which the supreme leader relies. Therefore, the intended outcome of reconstruction is primarily economic reform, as God Almighty says in Surah Quraysh: {He who fed them against hunger and secured them against fear}³. Hunger is the root cause of insecurity, and thus, the people of Africa must be fed and freed from deprivation, and wealth must be distributed justly. All of this could achieve a qualitative leap in economic development.

The political leader then focuses, secondly, on the second axis, which is security and political stability. For the economic strategy to succeed, the environment must be secured both internally and externally. Internally, this involves encouraging increased investment, and externally, it involves marketing. Political stability provides a fertile environment for investment growth, creating a favorable atmosphere for work, continuity, further investment, and the planning of major projects that transcend national borders⁴. This is the positive aspect. On the negative side, the state-building process can be hampered by the bureaucracy, intransigence, and authoritarianism of rulers. The growing power and authority of institutions and leadership, coupled with weak oversight and state institutions, will negatively impact economic success, ultimately creating a gap between the rulers and the ruled. This will inevitably lead to political violence and disobedience, prompting a renewed search for legitimacy and legality for the political system, thus perpetuating a vicious cycle.

Therefore, the intervention of the supreme leader to purge institutions of authoritarianism and bureaucracy is crucial for the successful economic and political reconstruction of the state. This involves strengthening oversight mechanisms for political, administrative, and military officials, thereby fostering social and political harmony between rulers and the ruled and moving away from the old paternalistic system. This leads us to what is termed political wisdom, as well

as combating bribery, nepotism, and administrative abuse; removing unqualified individuals from sensitive positions in the state; focusing on justice and equality among peoples; upholding human rights and women's rights; integrating women into political life; globalizing trade; implementing economic reporting policies; and establishing special economic zones and financial centers.

It also encompasses competing with and marketing local products in comparison to Western products; preserving the dignity of citizens abroad; overcoming external challenges; gaining influence within international organizations and human rights organizations; and maintaining international standing (such as the United Nations, UNICEF, UNESCO, etc.).

All of this falls under one category: gauging the strength of the political leader in overcoming crises and their ability to build a cohesive state with strong institutions that allow the African nation to embark on a prosperous development path and elevate the country to the highest levels.

2.2-The Role of the Military

The strength of any nation is measured by its military capabilities, whether in terms of the quality and size of its armed forces, the modernization and quantity of its weaponry, the qualifications of its military elite, military planners, and decision-makers, or the degree of harmony between military and political power and the aspirations of its people, ensuring they are not subjected to a dictatorial military regime in its old sense.

Therefore, the military institution is the backbone of any nation-building project, particularly in Africa, especially given the competition among nations for the continent's resources. The strength of the army is intrinsically linked to the strength of national sovereignty. Strong armies rely on gathering as much information as possible about adversaries, who in turn seek to destroy them by any means. Therefore, the army must be vigilant and astute, developing and training competent personnel to protect the state both internally and externally, using well-studied methods and strategies. This includes training the army according to a military doctrine that safeguards the country, wards off external dangers and threats, confronts aggression, prevents wars and armed conflicts, and maintains national security. A prime example of this is during Gorbachev's era when Russia agreed with the United States on several arms disarmament treaties to demonstrate good faith and secure financial aid. The result was a decline in the capabilities of the Russian army, which subsequently suffered from collapse and disarray. Later, Putin prioritized the military establishment. A month after assuming the presidency, in April 2000, he signed the document outlining the military doctrine of the Russian Federation.⁵ During this period, Putin was able to rebuild the military and position it as a competitive player in the global arms market.

Therefore, the military institution is considered the second most effective element after the supreme political leader in the country. It is the backbone upon which all state institutions and functions rest. Protecting the state and its institutions creates internal and external security, which allows for a regular development process in all areas.

However, if this institution exploits its power and imposes its control over the other state institutions, creating monopolistic institutions to reinforce central military authority, then we are faced with Ibn Khaldun's saying: "Tyrants bring invaders." The opposite of what we discussed earlier will occur: there will be no law, no central authority, no human rights, and no comprehensive development. Consequently, we will be faced with a dictatorial, barbaric military regime, which will ultimately lead to the demise of that state. The simplest example is what happened in Sierra Leone in 1991. The state completely failed. King Chiam established authoritarian military institutions to consolidate his power and impose his central authority on the Lele tribes along the Kaskai River, plunging Sierra Leone into a bloody civil war that lasted for ten years (1991-2001). This is a model of a failed state due to the legacy of authoritarian institutions, not because of its geography or culture⁶.

Thus, tyranny destroys institutions, weakens the economy, and sows discord among the people, thus paving the way for foreign ambitions. This is an idea Ibn Khaldun explained in his Muqaddimah, stating that injustice and tyranny lead to the collapse of civilization and the

instability of society, making the state vulnerable to disintegration and weakening its defenses against foreign invaders⁷.

2.3-The Role of Informal Institutions

Despite the existence of some institutions independent of the state, the role of political institutions is manifested in the harmony between peoples and societies and their systems of governance, as well as in the separation of the roles of the state and the executive branch—in other words, state decentralization. This element is lacking in African countries, and some politically aware populations strive to achieve it, employing all political tools, including parties, civil society, and some international actors, to cultivate a sophisticated political model within African societies.

The failure to achieve sustainable development, social justice, political wisdom, good governance, civilizational progress, and modernization stems from several reasons⁸:

- The expansion of the state's role in the economy and society.

- The attempt to control society through various repressive administrative, political, and economic methods.

- The absence and low rate of political participation due to the paralysis of political parties that fail to fulfill their role or to educate African populations, as well as the absence of national media that provides an accurate picture of its people, enabling them to keep abreast of political and international events, understand their rights and responsibilities towards their state, and engage in political life rationally, thus allowing them to build a civilized civil society.

Among the reasons is the resort of some political and social movements to acts of political violence and protest targeting the state and its symbols. Also contributing are manifestations of political and administrative corruption within state apparatuses and institutions, and the dominance of bureaucracy in the political process⁹.

Herein lies a fundamental problem: the erosion of the state's legitimacy and legality. This can lead either to the overthrow of the ruling regime or to the reform of its institutions due to their illegitimacy.

Therefore, the conclusion we have reached is the need to build a civil society using civilized methods. This, in turn, enables us to establish legitimate state institutions that function in a decentralized manner, allowing African peoples to participate in decision-making, keep pace with political life, and build a modern, high-level African state. Without forgetting the role of international actors and non-governmental organizations, the structures and processes occurring within states are no longer the sole determinants of political, economic, and social dynamics in the modern world. Many international issues cannot be contained within national borders, such as environmental issues, health, terrorism, transnational crime, drugs, and migration and its associated harms. The increasing influence of governmental organizations, civil society, multinational corporations, and terrorist networks in determining the location of power within the state, on the one hand, and this calls into question the legitimacy of the state, on the other¹⁰.

There is conceptual ambiguity between civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as they are often considered synonymous. Civil society is a network of societies independent of the state, linked to each other on international issues, and influenced by political events of common interest, leading to qualitative shifts in public policy. Similarly, NGOs are independent of the state and also influence state policy. The state, in turn, is active within civil society, as it forms the basis for other networks. What concerns us in this research is its positive role in building a state governed by the rule of law and subject to international norms, and demonstrating the extent of its negative role if it is not properly utilized by states. In other words, if there is no communication with the state and it remains completely independent of the state in Africa.¹¹

Civil society and non-governmental organizations are an effective tool in what is called democratic transition, such that removing decisions from the independent level of the

nation-state to the level where they are no longer subject to the control of democratically elected parliaments does not produce democracy at the multilateral level, since political, social, economic and trade decisions can be ratified within the African state by the head of state and his institutions and between his people and his elected parliaments. However, if decision-making is transferred to international competencies at multilateral levels, the African state may be exposed to another problem outside the scope, as it is negotiated by bureaucracies and ratified by parliaments and regional blocs, if there is no doubt about the legitimacy of the results¹² (the European Parliament and its Commission and intervention in the affairs of Mediterranean countries, for example).

The role of civil society in building the foundations of a civil state is not limited to linguistic concepts defined in international law, which can be applied arbitrarily and are applicable to each African country individually. Rather, it involves cultural terms acquired from the very core of a country's traditions and specifically employed within its context, taking into account prevailing ideologies, without infringing upon the rights of peoples and minorities. This framework must be acceptable within that intellectual context; otherwise, these values will become hollow and meaningless in that country.

Civil society encompasses all voluntary activities undertaken to achieve the shared interests and goals of its participants. It includes numerous non-governmental and non-profit organizations such as professional associations, charities, religious organizations, human rights groups, and others¹³.

It is considered a tool for addressing the problems of the state in its traditional sense, reducing its central role, and identifying obstacles to the establishment of a modern state—obstacles that state structures have been unable to overcome. In other words, it involves building a civil society that replaces the state and fulfills its role in supporting the poor and distributing resources. This effectively restructures a parallel state within the central state, privatizing its various sectors for international actors. All of this contributes to and assists the central state in making its decisions more effectively, regularly, and in a timely manner. It also prevents foreign powers from tarnishing its reputation and obstructing its political, economic, or operational plans. This point is considered highly positive for African countries in achieving comprehensive growth and prosperity. Civil society and international actors are considered valuable assets, complementing the shortcomings and aspirations of the state both domestically and internationally.

Addressing the shortcomings of the state and being fully informed of international events by governmental or non-governmental bodies forms a solid structure within the bodies and institutions of the African state, which makes it difficult to penetrate and creates a good climate for it in light of a well-studied internal and external environment that allows it to change itself for the better over a long period of time. Consequently, the automatic reform of central state institutions will be automatic, one after the other, so that they perform their functions dynamically and continuously in the best possible way.

3-Algeria's Model of Comprehensive Development and State-Building

Algeria, the gateway to Africa, occupies a strategically important location and possesses significant geopolitical importance. Napoleon Bonaparte aptly observed that "geography controls and directs the politics of nations," and André Julien described Algeria as "the mother of colonies".

Given its wealth of resources and its geostrategic position, Algeria serves as a link between multiple and intersecting axes in Africa, leading the continent at the regional level. It is difficult to develop any economic, political, or security project without its participation. Algeria is a crucial hub for cooperation with the African continent, and its leadership role has been evident since its long-standing, calm, and balanced diplomacy. This is further demonstrated by its pioneering experience in addressing terrorism in its security and political dimensions, and its political and

economic reforms both domestically and internationally. Algeria takes pride in the legacy of its revolution (the November 1, 1954 Revolution) and has earned international respect through its commitment to just causes worldwide¹⁴, most notably the Palestinian cause and the plight of vulnerable African nations.

3.1-Political, Constitutional, and Security Reforms

The most difficult period Algeria experienced after independence was the security breakdown and the country's descent into internal conflict during the Black Decade. This period was extremely challenging, but for the wisdom of some seasoned politicians, such as former President Liamine Zeroual, who presented the Civil Concord Project in 1996, a project later completed by the late former President Abdelaziz Bouteflika with the National Reconciliation. This demonstrated to the world Algeria's role in dealing with this then-complex and unprecedented phenomenon on the international stage. Algeria transitioned from a phase of national tragedy to one of peace and national reconciliation, serving as a lesson to the world in combating terrorism and addressing security issues.

The issue of corruption and authoritarianism in Algeria during the era of the late President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, who monopolized the presidency for 20 years, was a prominent one. He granted broad political powers to the executive branch and deliberately ignored public accountability. This was compounded by propaganda disseminated through the media, portraying a democratic Algeria as on a path of flourishing development. This was achieved by promoting foreign investment, economic projects, and lucrative trade exchanges. However, this only served to create opportunities for opportunistic, authoritarian figures, who were then considered the leading businessmen in Algeria. The protection afforded by the political and security apparatus contributed to the greed of private interests and increased opportunities for the wealthy, all within a context of weak institutions. This created a vast array of economic opportunities for this oligarchic class, to the point where corruption became commonplace, and the rulers and their cronies felt no qualms about plundering and looting¹⁵.

The standards of democracy and good governance in Algeria were shrouded in secrecy and ambiguity, preventing the Algerian people from discerning their true nature, especially given the financial abundance and economic prosperity they enjoyed, particularly during Bouteflika's second term (2004-2009). During the period from 2009 to 2014, the scandals perpetrated by high-ranking state officials and the regime's cover-up of their actions, along with the misleading of public opinion, became public knowledge. Adding insult to injury was the extent of the local looting gangs' connection to international corruption networks, to the point that they sold out Algeria for a pittance. Examples include the Sonatrach scandal, the Italian company Eni and its Algerian subsidiary Saipem, and the East-West Highway scandal.

Investigations conducted by military security services revealed the existence of foreign lobbies stealing Algerian funds with the assistance of high-ranking state officials. Large bribes were paid to government officials to secure infrastructure projects in various sectors across Algeria, costing the treasury over \$13 billion. Seven foreign companies (France, China, the United States, Italy, Japan, Spain, and Canada) were implicated in the Sonatrach and East-West Highway cases, facilitated by a French lobby headed by Pierre Falcon.¹⁶

This, along with several subsequent corruption cases involving high-ranking officials during the latter part of the rule of the late President Bouteflika, who was incapacitated and in poor health, allowed his inner circle and some family members to seize power behind the scenes. This situation fueled numerous demands for political reform in Algeria and attempts to overthrow this corrupt regime, driven by popular forces and massive protest groups known as the Hirak movement.

The fact that Bouteflika remained president despite his illness revealed that he was merely a figurehead, with key political decisions being made on his behalf. Said Bouteflika, the president's brother, was accused of embezzling public funds and plotting to seize the presidency from his brother along with his clan. The president and his entourage became scapegoats for the

dysfunctions of a state plagued by corruption, inefficiency, and the suppression of truth through media control. Indeed, Bouteflika's presidency was marked by serious corruption scandals¹⁷.

At the time, Amar Saïdani (then head of the National Liberation Front party in 2014) attacked General Toufik (head of the Department of Intelligence and Security), accusing him of opposing the president's directives and disrespecting the rule of law, and suggesting his resignation. Following this, one of ToufikMediene's right-hand men, General AbdelkaderAïtArabi (nicknamed Hassan), was arrested¹⁸.

This point or stage was the turning point that revealed the true nature of the Algerian regime at that time and clarified the picture further for the Algerian people, who were very interested in political issues and followed events closely. Consequently, Algeria entered a transitional phase that demonstrated the extent of its people's awareness and their demand for comprehensive political reforms and the replacement of the ailing president, whose illegitimacy was evident in the last term due to the dominance of his entourage and his forced candidacy for a new term, without an election campaign or addressing the people. As a result, the Algerian people began to take to the streets in demonstrations, seeking to strip the corrupt political and military leadership, the generals, and the intelligence and security experts of the political legitimacy that enabled them to control the state, and seeking to appoint civilians to institutional positions, and seeking an independent civilian authority in which the state is considered a space for expressing the ideological orientations of society. The integration of civil society organizations and the acquisition of legitimate representatives through free elections that guarantee the transfer of power, as well as the separation of powers and the independence of the judiciary, led Algeria into a transitional phase headed by the then President of the Council of the Nation, AbdelkaderBensalah, after speeches by the Chief of Staff of the Army, Gaid Salah, who insisted on activating Article 102 of the Algerian Constitution, which enabled the President of the Council of the Nation to lead the country for 45 days, i.e., until new elections.

After all the crises and internal problems that occurred in Algeria during the latter part of President Bouteflika's term, Algeria escaped the looming threat of the Arab Spring, which had devastated Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya. For Algerians, it was a positive lesson, pulling their country out of the cycle of despair it had been trapped in. The courage and patriotism of its men shone through, thanks to the integrity of the military leadership and its elite, who restructured the relationship between the General Staff and the Department of Intelligence and Security (DRS). The DRS subsequently gained immense influence over all state institutions and the loyalty of the Algerian people, who began chanting "Brotherhood" in their demonstrations. This period later led to new elections, which were won by the current president, AbdelmadjidTebboune (an independent candidate), despite his membership in the National Liberation Front (FLN) party, due to the rift between him and the corrupt previous government.

This marked the most significant transitional phase Algeria has witnessed, moving towards a sound democratic path and fundamental political reforms. The roles of a seasoned political leader, the military establishment, and civil society were all prominent.

We will examine the most important reforms implemented by President AbdelmadjidTebboune, particularly in the political, security, and constitutional spheres, both domestically and internationally, with a special focus on economic reforms.

The beginning of President AbdelmadjidTebboune's term was extremely difficult due to the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, which plunged Algeria and the world into a state of health insecurity and severely strained the public treasury. Adding to this was the legacy of the old, corrupt regime. President Tebboune began his term with a reform agenda comprising 54 commitments, promising the Algerian people that he would fulfill them in the near future. Among the most important were: a comprehensive review of the constitution; a revision of the legal framework for elections; a complete overhaul of the state and all its branches and republican institutions; ethical conduct in politics and public life and the strengthening of good governance;

reforming, modernizing, and ensuring the independence of the judiciary; freedom of the press; strengthening participatory democracy; building a civil society; and affirming and reinforcing national cohesion (by preserving national identity, Islam, Arabism, Amazighity, etc.).

He thus aimed to sever ties with the remnants of the previous corrupt regime. Simultaneously, he adopted the slogan "New Algeria" as the guiding principle for building and reforming the country at all levels. President Tebboune faced several challenges at the time, including working swiftly to address the demands of the Hirak movement, confronting the economic crisis, putting an end to political and administrative corruption and treason, and reforming the corrupt and paralyzed institutions. In the previous regime, any suspicious move by officials would inevitably lead to imprisonment and punishment (as was done with senior officials before), with the aim of building a strong state through its institutions, governed by the rule of law, and whose source of legitimacy is the Algerian citizen, thereby restoring the freedoms suppressed by the exiled regime, succeeding in the transition from an export economy to a diversified real economy, and restoring Algeria's diplomatic image and standing among nations.¹⁹

3.2-Economic and Social Reforms

President Abdelmadjid Tebboune launched several important projects, including: supporting national production in the agricultural, industrial, and service sectors; strengthening the role of local communities in the economy; implementing grassroots projects such as improving the business climate; modernizing agriculture; promoting intellectual, cultural, and artistic production to serve economic growth; combating corruption; and enhancing public services. Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the decline in energy prices at the beginning of his term, he managed to stay on track and maintain the cohesion of all his institutions without succumbing to external pressures. His social policies focused on youth and the general public, developing a systematic plan to address their problems and needs, such as employment, housing, social justice, and creating investment opportunities (micro-enterprises), etc. His social policies were characterized by prudence and a closer connection with the people and youth, with him acting as a father figure and uncle. This led young people to affectionately call him "Uncle Tebboune" due to the strong social bond between him and his people, making him beloved by his supporters.

He possessed a long-term vision and strategic planning, both in international politics and in social development within Algeria. Tebboune did not seek to strengthen one institution at the expense of another, nor to weaken one institution at the expense of another. Rather, he ensured that each fulfilled its role completely while respecting national sovereignty²⁰. This is a positive indicator for the advancement of the Algerian state. Tebboune reconciled the state's civilian institutions with the historical influence of the military in political life, creating a harmonious and cohesive environment between them. This balance is not merely a stance but the fruit of a scientifically systematic and historically informed strategic plan, grounded in a culture of dialogue and respect for all branches of the state.

External powers exerting pressure on Algeria were exploiting the issue of the Algerian regime, portraying it as a military and dictatorial system, to tarnish its international reputation. They also used the issue of Algerian identity, attempting to create divisions within the Algerian people (the Amazigh minority, the BeniM'zab issue in Ghardaia, and the stateless population in the Sahara).

President Tebboune succeeded, on the one hand, in uniting his people, and on the other hand, in creating harmony between civilian and military institutions, which are indispensable in any country. These institutions, in turn, have made tremendous efforts in developing elites, strengthening Algeria, and preserving its security and integrity.

Thus, all these reforms have given the Algerian state a global standing and prestige, earning it international respect and making it a topic of global discussion, particularly in international forums. Its non-permanent membership on the Security Council has demonstrated to the world its

leading role in defending just causes, and it has acted as a champion for weak and vulnerable nations internationally.

Domestically, it has also demonstrated the effective utilization of its resources, reliance on domestic production in various sectors, and the achievement of self-sufficiency, all through Algerian expertise, thus eliminating the dependency and import problems that characterized the previous regime.

President AbdelmadjidTebboune has brought about a gradual transformation in the Algerian economic and social fabric, facing several challenges that require time to fully realize his project. He has demonstrated his mastery and desire to establish solid democratic foundations that are consistent with the norms of Algerian society. He is perhaps the most suitable man for the future, as his continued rule will enhance Algeria's gains and herald a new phase in the country's modernization, placing the national interest above all else. He is adept at combining power with vigilance, tradition with modernity, continuity with reform. Therefore, a third term will undoubtedly be a continuation of his mission to serve the nation.²¹

Conclusion

In conclusion, by studying the Algerian model of state-building, it can be said that establishing and maintaining a state of institutions at the highest levels requires several efforts, starting with official institutions such as the presidency, represented by the head of state, their capabilities, achievements, and support base—military, economic, and political. This also includes the optimal utilization of the state's resources and wealth, not to mention the awareness, competence, and international aspirations of the people. If these are sound, everything will succeed; if they are corrupt, everything will fail.

Furthermore, it is essential to activate the role of civil society and non-governmental actors, in addition to avoiding external threats and the interference of major powers in the affairs of any state. Any young, developing state is exposed to international problems from major powers as it enters the arena of competition. Therefore, it must prepare the external environment. Consequently, every African state must escape the specter of dependency and formulate political and economic strategies that rely on self-sufficiency and its national production, while also securing the internal environment and eliminating ethnic conflicts and inter-state problems. These reforms are merely a prelude to ensuring its survival, which will later allow it to take off and reach the level of a firmly established state of institutions.

The African context reveals that institutional weakness is a prominent problem in Africa and a major contributing factor to state failure. While states exist on the continent, they are often fragmented, ineffective, and unstable. Many African states that have sought more democratic forms of governance have suffered from a long history of persistently poor performance of state institutions. The continuation of individual rule for decades, often accompanied by sham elections to legitimize their hold on power, has further diluted and eroded national state institutions. Therefore, many scholars argue that attempting to build a democracy on institutions inherited from a former colonial power, a waning authoritarian regime, or even a previous quasi-democratic system (a façade democracy) is often doomed to failure.

This is because effective state institutions are a prerequisite for transition processes, institutional building, and the consolidation of democracy. The process of building democracy cannot be completed unless it is supported by institutional mechanisms and initiatives. Therefore, to contribute to consolidating and sustaining democratic values in Africa in general and in Algeria in particular, it is essential to establish institutions of good governance, such as the civil service, electoral systems, media outlets, labor unions, courts, human rights legislation, and other local institutions. Similarly, special attention must be paid to preserving existing democratic institutions (the legislative, executive, and judicial branches), ensuring they play crucial political roles, and preventing them from falling under the tutelage and control of unconstitutional forces. Their failure

to implement policies and guarantee progress hinders genuine democratic transition and impedes the process of building a modern state.

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