

Joint real estate policy as a mechanism for Algerian–Tunisian cooperation in border areas

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Abstract:

The fields of partnership and cooperation between Algeria and Tunisia are diverse, encompassing the economic, social, cultural, and political sectors, all converging toward the objective of promoting the development of both countries, particularly with regard to the development and upgrading of border regions .Both states strive to establish partnerships and conclude agreements aimed at fostering growth in these regions, which are often less developed than urban centers. Whether long-standing or recent, this cooperation has extended to multiple domains, notably the real estate sector, including industrial, touristic, agricultural, cultural, and forest real estate .It also covers the exploitation of water resources, as well as roads, public works, urban development, and mining activities, among others.

In line with this cooperation, numerous projects have been planned, some already implemented and others still in progress. Despite the efforts made by both parties, many challenges persist in achieving the intended development objectives

Keywords: Border regions; Algeria–Tunisia Cooperation; Real Estate; Development; The 2024 roadmap.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The border regions between Algeria and Tunisia represent strategic spaces for economic, social, and cultural interaction. Cooperation in these regions encompasses multiple sectors, including housing, urban planning, agriculture, energy, transport, and real estate. Despite numerous initiatives over the decades, development in these regions remains uneven, raising questions about the effectiveness of bilateral frameworks in promoting sustainable growth.

This article addresses the following problematic: **how can Algeria and Tunisia enhance the development of border regions through effective cooperation across multiple sectors, and what role can the real estate sector play as a model of such collaboration?**

The study adopted a descriptive and analytical approach, aiming to outline the key aspects of cooperation between Algeria and Tunisia, along with its legal, economic, and social dimensions. More specifically, the research focused on examining official texts, bilateral agreements, and institutional frameworks to gain a clearer understanding of the actual dynamics of real estate cooperation. In this regard, special attention was given to the role of such cooperation in promoting the development of border regions and assessing the tangible outcomes achieved so far within this context.

The objectives of this study are to clarify the frameworks of Algeria–Tunisia cooperation, to analyze the contribution of the 2024 Roadmap in structuring development projects, and to examine how real estate projects illustrate the potential and challenges of bilateral collaboration in border regions.

The article's problem will be addressed through three topics as follows:

- Border regions Development as a National Priority
- Joint Development Initiatives by Tunisia and Algeria before the 2024 Roadmap
- Roadmap for the Development of Border regions 2024

2. Border regions Development as a National Priority

Border regions are strategic spaces that intersect geographic, security, and economic dimensions of the state. Despite the significant potential these regions hold in terms of natural resources and geographic location, they often face structural challenges such as weak infrastructure, relative isolation, and limited economic dynamics, which restrict their effective integration into national development plans.

The importance of this chapter stems from the urgent need to establish integrated development policies that respond to the needs of local populations and enhance cooperation with neighboring countries, particularly along the Algerian–Tunisian border. This chapter focuses on examining the general framework of bilateral cooperation, the development strategies adopted, and the priorities of development projects aimed at achieving economic and social stability and promoting sustainable development in these regions.

2.1. General Framework of Algeria–Tunisia Cooperation in Border regions

Border-areas are generally known as geographic spaces in proximity to fixed borderlines. Inside these areas significant socio-economic effects are felt due to the existence of borders. However, it is not easy to define the border-areas accurately as there has not yet been any specific methodologies or technologies developed on the geographical demarcation of a cross-border area. In practice, border-area demarcation varies from country to country. It is usually subject to the kinds of problems or targets that the designers intend.¹

Cooperation between Tunisia and Algeria in the field of **border area development** represents the outcome of a deeply rooted historical and geographical relationship, which has evolved over several stages since independence. This cooperation has gradually developed through various agreements and joint programs aimed at promoting economic and social

development in the border regions. From a historical perspective, this cooperation can be traced through bilateral agreements and treaties that laid the foundations for collaboration in multiple fields such as investment, infrastructure, and energy. From a geographical perspective, the Algeria–Tunisia border is characterized by unique natural and human features, including diverse terrains, natural resources, and key crossing points, making it a strategic hub for integrated development and interregional connectivity.

2.1.1. Historical Framework

Border-areas are generally known as geographic spaces in proximity to fixed borderlines. Inside these areas significant socio-economic effects are felt due to the existence of borders. However, it is not easy to define the border-areas accurately as there has not yet been any specific methodologies or technologies developed on the geographical demarcation of a cross-border area. In practice, border-area demarcation varies from country to country. It is usually subject to the kinds of problems or targets that the designers intend.

Cooperation between Algeria and Tunisia has followed a gradual and evolving path since independence. It began with agreements of friendship and good neighborliness, focusing particularly on economic and investment aspects, while also strengthening cooperation in energy, tourism, and other sectors ².

Numerous agreements and programs have been concluded between the two countries, notably the Residence Agreement of 1963, the Agreement on the Establishment of a Joint Committee between the Algerian and Tunisian Governments aimed at economic, cultural, scientific, and technical cooperation in 1970, the Treaty of Friendship and Good Neighborliness in 1970, the Treaty of Brotherhood and Concord in 1983, along with many other treaties concerning economic, investment, and development aspects. ³

The agreements—exceeding one hundred since independence—have constituted a solid foundation for strengthening relations and expanding prospects for bilateral cooperation. These agreements and programs have also included the development, upgrading, and promotion of border regions between the two countries ⁴.

Among the most significant milestones of this cooperation was the 18th session of the High Joint Commission in 2010, which enabled the signing of a cooperation protocol between Algeria’s National Agency for Investment Development (ANDI) and Tunisia’s Foreign Investment Promotion Agency (FIPA) ⁵.

Recently, Algeria–Tunisia cooperation has aimed at establishing the **2024 roadmap** to promote the sustainable development of border regions, with a focus on strategic projects in the fields of roads, water resources, and real estate investment. This framework has enabled policy coordination between the two countries and the identification of development priorities according to the needs of local populations, while enhancing economic and social integration and encouraging cross-border investments. This phase has also represented an important step toward achieving balanced development and regional solidarity along the shared border.

2.1.2. Geographical Framework

The border regions include several governorates and their affiliated municipalities ⁶, which can be illustrated in the table below :

Table 1. Algerian–Tunisian Border Provinces and Their Municipalities.

Border regions	Border Provinces	Number of Border Municipalities / Total	Border Municipalities
Eastern Coast	El Tarf	08 / 24	Bougous, Ain El Assel, Ez Zitouna, Bouhadjar, Ain Kerma, El Ayoun, Essouarakh, Raml Souk
Eastern Tell	Souk Ahras	05 / 26	Ain Zana, Haddada, Lakhzara, Ouled Moumen, Sidi Fredj
High Plateaus –	Tebessa	10 / 28	Bir El Ater, Negrine, Kouif, Bekkaria, El

East			Ouenza, Oum Ali, Ain Zerga, El Meridj, El Houidjebet, Safsaf El Ouesra
South – East	El Oued	03 / 30	Taleb Larbi, Douar El Ma, Benn Guecha
South – East	Ouargla	01 / 21	El Borma

Source: National Forum. (2018). Border Regions. Paper presented at the National Forum on Border Regions, October 13-14, 2018. Official website of the Ministry of the Interior, Local Authorities, and Urban Planning. Retrieved on July 13, 2025, from: <https://www.interieur.gov.dz/images/ANAAT.pdf>

The border between Algeria and Tunisia extends for about **965 km** kilometers⁷ and encompasses geographically diverse regions from north to south, which directly affects the type of development and cooperation between the two countries:

The **National Spatial Planning Scheme (SNAT)**⁸ identifies nine (09) border regions:

- Eastern Coastal Border Region
- Eastern Tell Border Region
- Western Tell Border Region
- High Plateaus – East Border Region
- High Plateaus – West Border Region
- South – East Border Region
- Great South – East Border Region
- Great South Border Region
- South – West Border Region

With regard to the **border regions adjoining Tunisia**, four main typologies are distinguished⁹:

a. Coastal and Eastern Tell Border Region

Located in El Tarf Province, this zone is characterized by high population density and a relatively well-developed provision of facilities and services. It benefits from strong accessibility to the Mediterranean coast, facilitated by an established network of road and railway infrastructure.

b. Mountainous Border Region

Situated in the provinces of El Tarf and Souk Ahras (Majerda Mountains), this area is defined by rugged slopes that restrict accessibility. It suffers from structural isolation, low demographic density, and insufficient equipment and basic infrastructure. Its border position constitutes an additional constraint, reinforcing its seclusion. Cross-border exchanges remain weak and are generally limited to pastoral or forestry-related activities.

c. High Plateaus Border Region:

Found in Tebessa Province, this region is one of the most densely populated border zones. It encompasses a cluster of urban centers and municipalities, including Tebessa, Bir El Ater, and Ouenza, forming a relatively consolidated settlement system.

d. Southern Desert Border Region:

Extending over a vast territory with very low population density, this zone is marked by extreme spatial isolation due to the immensity of the southern territories. It consists of a dispersed, archipelago-like network of small settlements. Traditional caravan trade and irregular migration are common practices. Despite these challenges, the region holds significant strategic value owing to its geographic position and considerable economic potential.

2.2. Strategy for Algeria–Tunisia Cooperation in Border Area Development

Border regions represent both a challenge and an opportunity for regional development. On the one hand, they often suffer from structural deficiencies, isolation, and weak economic dynamics, which hinder their integration into national development plans. On the other hand, their geographical position as interfaces with neighboring countries, particularly along the Algerian–Tunisian border, provides them with unique potential to foster cross-border cooperation, enhance economic exchanges, and strengthen regional stability.

2.2.1. Challenges Facing Border regions

The national border regions are currently facing specific challenges in regional planning, which are reflected in:

- Delays in development dynamics,
- Lack of public facilities, basic infrastructure, and services,
- Isolation and poor connectivity,
- Distance from urban centers,
- Insufficient transport infrastructure,
- Shortage of production bases and equipped activity zones,
- Weak organization of supply chains,
- Significant migration across the southern borders.

2.2.2. Factors Behind the Focus on Border Area Development

The border **regions** between Algeria and Tunisia represent important strategic points due to their geographical location and direct connection between the two countries, as well as the opportunities they provide to promote economic and social development, and to support regional integration and stability. Accordingly, these **regions** receive special attention in development planning and joint cooperation programs, and the factors justifying this focus will be outlined below ¹⁰:

a. Direct Geographical Connection

Border regions are directly connected to the neighboring country, making them hubs for economic, social, and cultural exchange. Promoting development in these regions facilitates the movement of goods and people, making the borders safer and more stable.

b. Specific Development Needs

Border regions are often remote or less developed compared to major urban centers, requiring targeted development programs to reduce economic and social disparities.

Developing infrastructure and public services in these regions improves living standards and limits irregular migration to large cities.

c. Enhancing Security and Stability

Developing border regions helps improve border security by engaging local populations in economic and social development, reducing security risks such as smuggling or border disputes.

d. Promoting Economic and Regional Integration

Improving production, trade, and investment capacities in border regions enhances economic integration between the two countries. Industrial zones, logistics centers, and joint markets can be established, creating employment opportunities and increasing cross-border economic exchange.

e. Utilizing Shared Natural Resources

Some resources, such as water, agricultural land, and forests, extend across the border, requiring joint coordination for sustainable management.

2.2.3. Land Use in Border Area Development

The border regions between Algeria and Tunisia are considered highly strategic due to their geographical location and close connection between the two countries. These regions offer significant opportunities for promoting economic and social development, supporting regional integration, and ensuring stability. Land (real estate) plays a central role in this context, as it is used to develop various vital sectors. Allocating and directing land toward targeted projects can achieve sustainable and balanced development in border regions¹¹.

a. Environment

– Allocating land for the creation of protected regions and natural parks preserves biodiversity and ensures the sustainable use of natural resources.

– Land can also be used for water and soil management projects that are environmentally friendly.

b. Tourism

- Developing land for tourist centers, hotels, and recreational regions promotes cross-border tourism and creates job opportunities for local populations.
- Exploiting natural and historical sites attracts visitors and enhances cultural exchange.

c. Agriculture and Farming

- Using land for sustainable agriculture and local crop cultivation supports food security and increases economic output in border regions.
- Joint projects can be established to manage agricultural lands and improve productivity.

d. Industry

- Creating industrial and logistics zones in border regions encourages investment and increases cross-border economic activities.
- Supporting processing industries adds value to local products.

e. Urban Development and Infrastructure

- Allocating land for small urban centers, schools, hospitals, and road networks improves living standards and strengthens connectivity between border municipalities.

f. Roads and Transportation

Transport services in the region between Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and Libya suffer from weakness, mainly due to the absence of road and railway links between Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco, as well as between Libya and Tunisia. This situation is further aggravated by the use of outdated trucks and structural weaknesses in the freight transport sector.

Conversely, maritime transport through ports shows greater efficiency and plays a crucial role in promoting economic integration among the countries of the region¹².

- Using land to build border roads and transport networks facilitates the movement of goods and people, enhancing economic integration between the two countries.

– Infrastructure development supports tourism, industry, and agriculture.

g. Water and Natural Resources

– Land can be used to manage water resources, such as dams and irrigation networks, ensuring water security.

– Land-use planning helps utilize water sustainably to support various sectors.

h. Energy and Gaz

– Allocating land for energy and gas production facilities provides energy for economic projects in border regions.

– Supporting renewable energy projects and energy transport contributes to sustainable development and reduces dependence on limited internal resources.

2.3. Critical Analysis

2.3.1. Evaluation of the General Framework

Although the development of border regions is considered a national priority in both Algeria and Tunisia, this emphasis has often remained more rhetorical than practical. Strategic plans, including the National Spatial Planning Scheme, reflect official awareness of the importance of these regions. However, translating this awareness into effective implementation has been limited due to weak coordination between central and local authorities and the absence of a unified development vision that considers the geographic and economic specificities of border areas.

2.3.2. Gap Between Planning and Implementation

Experience shows a clear gap between strategic planning and field implementation in border regions. Despite numerous development programs, these areas still suffer from insufficient basic infrastructure, poor connectivity, and limited productive investment. This highlights weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, as well as the reliance on fragmented sectoral approaches rather than an integrated

territorial approach capable of generating sustainable development dynamics.

2.3.3. Border Location as an Untapped Opportunity

The border location could have been leveraged as a driver for economic integration rather than perceived solely as a security vulnerability. However, policies remain cautious and limited, restricting the potential of joint initiatives, especially in real estate investment, logistics services, and local trade. Consequently, the prioritization of border development has yet to be translated into an effective strategy capable of transforming the borders into integrated and productive spaces.

3. Joint Development Initiatives by Tunisia and Algeria before the 2024 Roadmap

The border between Tunisia and Algeria extends over 1,034 kilometers, passing through several Tunisian and Algerian governorates. This border is characterized by important crossing points that facilitate economic and human exchange between the two countries¹³.

There are numerous efforts in the field of real estate aimed at developing border regions. Two examples can be highlighted: one in the field of roads and the other in the field of water resources, both considered as forms of real estate.

3.1. Strategic Road Projects in Algeria-Tunisia Border Regions

Infrastructure development in border regions plays a crucial role in fostering economic integration and regional connectivity. Among the most ambitious initiatives in this regard is the so-called "Project of the Century," a highway linking Algeria's western and eastern borders, which exemplifies both the challenges and potential of large-scale transportation projects in North Africa.

3.1.1. The Project of the Century (A Highway Linking Algeria's Borders with Tunisia and Morocco)

The highway begins at Algeria's closed border with Morocco and extends to its border with Tunisia. In mid-2023, the completion of the highway was announced. The project's completion was delayed, as it was

originally scheduled to be finalized by 2012. Algeria had initiated the construction of this highway at the beginning of the new millennium, dubbing it the "Project of the Century," with a total cost exceeding 13 billion USD¹⁴.

Thanks to this massive achievement, Algeria now possesses the longest road network on the continental level according to international standards, spanning 141,000 kilometers, including 9,000 kilometers of expressways. This has called for the activation of road maintenance networks and ensuring that roads remain suitable for vehicle traffic¹⁵.

The highway serves as a vital artery for the economy and regional development, making it essential to conduct preliminary studies for future road projects and to respect completion deadlines, as they are fundamental to the success of new planned projects¹⁶.

The final section of this highway connects the city of Derran, located in the far east of Algeria, to the Tunisian border over a distance of 84 kilometers. The highway was initially supposed to be completed by 2012; however, delays occurred due to technical and administrative challenges. The project also sparked a corruption scandal known as the "Scandal of the Century," which concluded in 2015 with judicial rulings imposing prison sentences and fines on those involved.

The "Project of the Century" facilitates increased trade with Tunisia and ensures smooth mobility of people between the two countries. The highway is part of an economic and trade integration plan established by the Arab Maghreb Union, which was intended to link Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia by land. However, disagreements between Algeria and Rabat, along with the closure of their shared land border since 1994, have prevented the full realization of this plan¹⁷.

3.1.2. Trans-Saharan Highway (RTS) Corridor

The RTS corridor is the oldest transcontinental road corridor in Africa. It began with the efforts of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (CEA) in 1962 to improve transport across the Sahara and promote

continental integration. Construction work started in the early 1970 in Algeria and extended to Tunisia, alongside the establishment of the Joint Committee for the Follow-up of the Trans-Saharan Highway (CLRT) in 1966 to monitor the implementation of the road network in the member countries: Algeria, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, and Tunisia ¹⁸.

The corridor connects a road network across the six countries and links the main ports: the ports of Algiers and Gabès on the Mediterranean, and the port of Lagos on the Atlantic.

Key functions of the corridor for the Tunisia-Algeria border:

- **Enhancing Connectivity and Infrastructure:** Facilitates the movement of people and goods and improves access to markets.
- **Developing Bilateral Trade:** Increases trade in agricultural and industrial products and reduces transportation costs.
- **Promoting Local Economic Development:** Creates opportunities for logistics centers, joint markets, and employment.
- **Facilitating Movement and Transportation:** Improves safety and efficiency and reduces delays at border crossings.
- **Encouraging Cross-Border Cooperation:** Strengthens joint policies in transport and customs and supports collaborative projects in trade, agriculture, energy, and tourism.

In short, the RTS transforms the Tunisia-Algeria border from merely a dividing line into an **economic and connectivity hub**, supporting local development, trade, and social stability in the border regions.

3.2. Cooperation in the Field of Shared Surface and Groundwater Resources

Water resources represent a strategic asset for neighboring countries, particularly in arid and semi-arid regions. Effective management and cooperation over shared surface and groundwater resources are essential to ensure sustainable development, prevent disputes, and promote equitable access. Tunisia and Algeria have engaged in collaborative efforts to manage their shared water resources, although challenges remain due to environmental and climatic pressures.

3.2.1. Regarding Shared Surface Water Resources

Tunisia and Algeria share the waters of several transboundary rivers, notably the Medjerda River, which accounts for 37% of Tunisia's surface water and 22% of its renewable water resources. To improve access to this shared resource, the two governments established a joint technical committee for water resources planning and management, including the exchange of information and data management, as well as monitoring water use, pollution, and environmental conditions¹⁹.

3.2.2. Regarding Shared Groundwater Resources

The North-Western Sahara Aquifer System covers over one million square kilometers, of which 700,000 km² are in Algeria, 80,000 km² in Tunisia, and 250,000 km² in Libya. It includes two of the main aquifers in the region: the Continental Intercalaire Basin and the Terminal Complex Basin. The three countries sharing this system have worked jointly to assess their water resources and to enable their effective and sustainable management and utilization.

3.2.3. Disputes over Water Resources between Tunisia and Algeria

According to an investigative report published on the Kitiba website Algeria's unilateral policy in building dams, particularly the Wadi El-Kebir Dam, without coordination with neighboring Tunisia, allegedly led to deterioration of the water situation in border regions. This situation supposedly requires urgent intervention to achieve balance and equity in the use of shared water resources and to prevent environmental and economic damage in these regions. The recent drought affecting both countries exacerbated the situation, reducing agricultural yields and livestock production²⁰.

However, the aforementioned investigative report did not rely on precise data. The Wadi El-Kebir Dam has not been completed in the Souk Ahras governorate. Regarding the Medjerda River, whose source is in Algeria and flows into Tunisia, its utilization is governed by a bilateral agreement signed by both countries, and the border was demarcated in 2009.

Therefore, the issue is not related to Algeria's unilateral dam construction or the exploitation of shared resources, but rather to the drought experienced by both countries in recent years ²¹.

3.3. Critical Analysis

3.3.1. Evaluation of Previous Initiatives

Joint initiatives between Algeria and Tunisia prior to 2024 were diverse, particularly in the fields of transportation and water resources. However, they lacked a comprehensive coordinating framework to ensure alignment and continuity. Major strategic projects, such as cross-border highways, were launched, yet the absence of an integrated vision limited their balanced developmental impact on border region.

3.3.2. Limited Local Impact

Despite the economic significance of the implemented projects, their impact on improving the living conditions of local populations has been limited. This is mainly due to the focus of these projects on national or regional objectives rather than local needs, with insufficient involvement of local stakeholders in planning and implementation, weakening the sense of ownership and sustainability at the community level.

3.3.3. Governance and Shared Resources Challenges

The management of shared resources, especially water, has emerged as a major point of tension in bilateral cooperation. Media reports highlighted disputes over the use of transboundary rivers. Although bilateral agreements exist, the lack of transparency and regular data exchange has intensified debates, demonstrating the need for more effective institutional mechanisms to govern cross-border resource management.

4. Roadmap for the Development of Border regions 2024

At the beginning of 2024, 26 agreements were signed during the closing session of the High Joint Committee (the Algeria–Tunisia Bilateral Committee for the Promotion and Development of Border regions) held in

the Algerian capital. These agreements covered 16 ministerial sectors, including: Veterans Affairs, Education, Culture, Social Affairs, Interior, Trade, Transport, Tourism, Labor, Industry, Vocational Training, Youth, Sports, Housing and Digitalization, as well as Energy and Investment ²².

During the closing of the first session of the bilateral committee, the Algerian Minister of Interior, alongside his Tunisian counterpart Mr. Kamel Feki, stated:

"We express our satisfaction with the outcomes of this session, which led to the adoption of a roadmap with clearly defined axes, including tangible and realistic projects that fall within the core of current priorities "²³.

3.3. General Content of the Roadmap

The content of the 2024 Roadmap included agreements across multiple ministerial sectors as follows:

- a. Cooperation protocol in the field of veterans' affairs and their rights.
- b. Framework agreement for cooperation in educational research between the National Institute for Educational Research in Algeria and the International Center for Trainer Training and Pedagogical Innovation in Tunisia.
- c. Cooperation protocol in the field of vocational training.
- d. Twinning agreement between the National Institute specialized in Arts and Printing Industries in Algeria and the Sectoral Center for Training in Printing Arts in Tunisia.
- e. Cooperation agreement in the field of culture.
- f. Cooperation agreement in the field of youth and sports.
- g. Cooperation protocol in housing, urban planning, and city development.
- h. Cooperation agreement in the field of digital transformation.
- i. Executive program for the cooperation agreement in social welfare for 2024–2026.

- j.** Memorandum of Understanding for the creation of a bilateral committee for the development and promotion of border regions.
- k.** Executive program in consumer protection and quality control of goods and services for 2024–2025.
- l.** Agreement on mutual recognition of conformity certificates.
- m.** Cooperation agreement in logistics and multimodal transport.
- n.** Executive program for the cooperation agreement in traditional industries for 2024–2045.
- o.** Memorandum of Understanding in the field of tourism.
- p.** Twinning agreement between the Higher School of Social Security in Algeria and the National Institute of Labor and Social Studies in Tunisia.
- q.** Twinning agreement between the National Institute for Occupational Hazard Prevention in Algeria and the Institute of Occupational Health and Safety in Tunisia.
- r.** Twinning agreement between the National Labor Institute in Algeria and the National Institute of Labor and Social Studies in Tunisia.
- s.** Executive program for the cooperation protocol in metrology between the National Office of Legal Measurement in Algeria and the Tunisian Central Laboratory for Testing and Analysis for 2024–2026.
- t.** Memorandum of Understanding between the Algerian Institute for Standardization and the Tunisian National Institute for Standards and Industrial Property in the field of technical cooperation.
- u.** Executive program for the cooperation protocol in industrial property between the National Algerian Institute of Industrial Property and the National Institute for Standards and Industrial Property of Tunisia for 2024–2026.
- v.** Memorandum of Understanding between the Algerian Port Services Group and the Tunisian Directorate of Commercial Ports for cooperation between Annaba Port and Rades Port.

- w. Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation between the Algerian National School of Maritime Studies and the Mediterranean Institute for Training in Maritime Professions in Tunisia.
- x. Cooperation agreement between the National Agency for the Development and Rational Use of Energy in Algeria and the National Energy Control Agency in Tunisia.
- y. Memorandum of Understanding in the field of investment promotion between the Algerian Investment Promotion Agency and its Tunisian counterpart.

The 2024 Roadmap demonstrates a comprehensive and multi-sectoral approach to cross-border cooperation, covering regions from social welfare, education, and culture to infrastructure, energy, and investment. This breadth reflects a strong institutional commitment to integrated development. However, the challenge remains in translating these agreements into effective and timely implementation, ensuring that the potential benefits reach local populations along the border.

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Preface on the first requirement and the issues to be addressed.

3.4. Cooperation on Real Estate in Border regions

In the framework of bilateral cooperation, the management and regulation of real estate in border regions constitute a critical aspect of the roadmap between the two countries. Understanding the provisions related to these properties is essential for ensuring legal clarity and fostering cross-border development.

3.4.1. In the Field of Urban Planning and Housing

Order No. 100 of 2024, dated 02 February 2024, was issued regarding the approval of the Protocol of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Tunisia and the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria in the field of housing, urban planning, and city development. Article One of this order states the following: "The Protocol of Cooperation signed in Algeria on October 4, 2023, between the

Government of the Republic of Tunisia and the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria in the field of housing, urban planning, and city development, attached to this order, is hereby approve²⁴ .

3.4.2. Regarding the Development of Border regions in General

Order No. 129 of 2024, dated March 4, 2024, was issued regarding the approval of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Tunisia and the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria to establish a bilateral committee for the development and promotion of border regions. Article One of this order states:

"The Memorandum of Understanding signed in Algeria on 4 October 2023, between the Government of the Republic of Tunisia and the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria to establish a bilateral committee for the development and promotion of border regions, attached to this order, is hereby approved ²⁵ .

3.4.3. Memorandum of Understanding in the Field of Tourism (Tourism Real Estate)

No order has yet been issued by the Tunisian or Algerian authorities to approve this agreement, despite its signing during the aforementioned bilateral committee meeting. Under this memorandum, it was also agreed to train Algerian trainees in tourism, hospitality, and fisheries at the Tourism School in Ain Draham and the tourism training centers in Tabarka,

Exchange training programs between the governorates of Ouargla and Tataouine in the fields of energy and petroleum (from the Algerian side), and services, hospitality, and tourism (from the Tunisian side) ²⁶ .

3.4.4. Memorandum of Understanding between the Port Services Group of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria and the Directorate of Commercial Ports of the Republic of Tunisia

This agreement concerns cooperation between the Port of Annaba and the Port of Rades. No order has yet been issued by the Tunisian or Algerian authorities to approve this agreement, despite its signing during the aforementioned bilateral committee meeting.

3.4.5. Cooperation Agreement between the National Agency for the Development and Rational Use of Energy in Algeria and the National Agency for Energy Control in Tunisia

No order has yet been issued by the Tunisian or Algerian authorities to approve this agreement, despite its signing during the aforementioned bilateral committee meeting.

3.4.6. Memorandum of Understanding in the Field of Investment Promotion between the Algerian Investment Promotion Agency and the Tunisian Authority

No order has yet been issued by the Tunisian or Algerian authorities to approve this agreement, despite its signing during the aforementioned bilateral committee meeting.

3.4.7. Joint Projects in the Real Estate Sector According to the 2024 Roadmap

The 2024 Roadmap emphasizes the strategic importance of joint projects in the real estate sector to promote sustainable development and cross-border cooperation between Tunisia and Algeria. These projects cover several key areas, including forest management, agricultural investment, transportation infrastructure, and economic land utilization, aiming to optimize resources and improve the livelihoods of border populations.

a. Forested Land:

Establishment of a joint system for prevention, early warning, and intervention to mitigate forest fires²⁷.

b. Agricultural Land Investment and Rural Development:

The Roadmap also included "a study on the creation of a Tunisian-Algerian company for exhibitions, responsible for organizing a number of annual fairs in the border governorates," contributing to "generating commercial activity" along the border strip. Furthermore, it aims at "developing value chains" in areas such as medicinal and aromatic plants, prickly pear cultivation, olive tree plantations, red and white meat production, dairy products, and vegetables prepared for drying and

preservation. The plan also includes "establishing a joint free exchange zone" in the Taleb Al-Arabi and Hazoua areas, ensuring that agricultural land in the border regions is utilized in a guided, profitable, and planned manner ²⁸.

c. Roads and Railways (State Public Property):

Within the framework of "reducing the isolation" of border populations, the governors of Tebessa and Kasserine proposed studies by specialized committees on the re-utilization of the land transport line connecting Tebessa to the city of Kasserine, as well as reviving the railway line between Constantine and Haidra in Tunisia via Tebessa.

d. Economic Land Exploitation:

The governors of Souk Ahras and El Kef agreed on "studying the project to establish a joint economic activity zone," particularly since Souk Ahras has an economic activity zone in the city of Sidi Farj, which is in the final stages of completion on an area of 50 hectares containing sixty subdivisions ²⁹.

3.5. Critical Analysis

3.5.1. Value of the New Roadmap

The 2024 Roadmap represents a qualitative shift in Algerian–Tunisian cooperation, adopting a comprehensive multi-sectoral approach with clearly defined, tangible projects addressing current priorities. This framework reflects a strong political will to move from ad hoc cooperation to structured collaboration, particularly regarding the development of border regions.

3.5.2. Implementation Challenges

Despite its ambitious scope, the success of the roadmap depends on overcoming traditional implementation challenges, such as weak institutional coordination, complex administrative procedures, and the lack of periodic evaluation mechanisms. Delays in legal ratification of certain

signed agreements may also negatively affect progress and reduce practical effectiveness.

3.5.3. Real Estate as a Test for Roadmap Success

The real estate sector represents a critical test of the 2024 Roadmap's effectiveness, as it intersects with housing, investment, agriculture, tourism, and infrastructure development. If joint real estate projects are implemented within a coherent legal and developmental framework, they could transform border regions into economic hubs. Conversely, persistent coordination weaknesses may leave these projects largely symbolic, with minimal real developmental impact.

4. CONCLUSION

The Algerian–Tunisian border extends across numerous coastal, inland, and desert provinces, such as El Tarf, Souk Ahras, Tebessa, and El Oued, creating several points of connection between the two countries due to their geographical continuity. This applies both to land property and to shared surface and groundwater resources, resulting in many areas of overlap and interaction between Algeria and Tunisia.

For decades, both countries have concluded joint agreements aimed at achieving balance and cooperation in the use of land and natural resources. Accordingly, several projects have been planned, some of which have already been implemented, while others remain under development.

The study revealed that the Algerian–Tunisian border constitutes a strategically significant geographical zone, rich in natural and real estate resources that could serve as a strong foundation for economic integration between the two countries. However, the multiplicity of bilateral agreements has not been sufficient to achieve the intended development goals, mainly due to weak institutional coordination and the absence of effective follow-up mechanisms. Additionally, there is a lack of harmonized legal frameworks governing the use of border lands, as current legislation in both countries remains fragmented. Inadequate infrastructure and limited real estate investment have perpetuated developmental disparities between

border regions and major urban centers. Despite joint efforts, security, environmental, and financial challenges continue to hinder the full effectiveness of bilateral development programs, particularly in remote areas.

The most important recommendation is to intensify official visits to border regions to directly observe the harsh living conditions of residents in both countries and to jointly plan practical and sustainable solutions. There should be a focus on strengthening infrastructure in border regions of both countries so that it can serve as a foundation for development programs. Increasing meetings and consultations between the competent authorities of both states—at both the central and local levels—is essential to discuss planned strategies, unify perspectives, and ensure continuous coordination. Furthermore, allocating a substantial annual financial framework to stimulate development in these regions and encourage local populations to participate actively in supporting the joint development programs between Algeria and Tunisia is crucial.

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