



Door 2

## ALGERIA'S MAIN EVENTS CHRONOLOGY

**I**ts independence reconquered, Algeria was faced with an immense challenge: foundation of a nation. A real laboratory, it didn't choose the simplest way. Identity issues, civil strife, struggles for power, the appearance of fundamentalism, the ravages of the planned economy, the Islamist insurrection... Algerians suffered greatly, but they never cess advancing. Enormous events have recognized Algeria since the revival of the notions of a modern State; we will try to analyze the political and constitutional chronology in Algeria.

### THE INDEPENDENCE: THE PROSPECTS FOR THE FOUNDATION OF STATE

**1962:** On March 18, negotiations and signing of *the Evian's agreements*, followed by the proclamation of a cease-fire the next day. The independence of Algeria is subject to referendum on April 8<sup>th</sup> in France and July 1<sup>st</sup> in Algeria, with a very large victory of "yes". On July 5<sup>th</sup>, proclamation of Algeria's Independence. On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, Ahmed Ben Bella, supported by the General Staff of the People's National Army (PNA) under the command of Colonel *Houari Boumediene*, was invested at the head of the government.

**1963:** The Constitution was adopted by referendum on September 8<sup>th</sup>. On September 15<sup>th</sup>, *Ben Bella* was elected first President of the Algerian Republic and gave his first scores of the dictatorship. *Hocine Ait Ahmed* opposes Ben Bella's policy, contrary to democratic principles: he creates the Front of the Socialist Forces (FSF/FFS) and enters in dissidence in Kabylie.

**1965:** Putsch of *Boumediene* against Ben Bella on 19 June. The Constitution is repealed in July. The ordinance of 10 July 1965 created the Revolution Council and suspended the constitution and all the State's institutions.

**1971:** Nationalization of hydrocarbons on 24 February. It is also the beginning of "the agrarian revolution" and the "socialist management of enterprises".

**1976:** Colonel *Houari Boumediene*, like all the other presidents, will have a Constitution; it was approved by referendum on November 27<sup>th</sup> and preceded by a National Charter approved by referendum on June 27<sup>th</sup>. As a single candidate in the running, *Boumediene* was elected President.

**1978:** Death of *Boumediene* on December 27<sup>th</sup>.

**1979:** Colonel *Chadli Bendjedid* was nominated as successor of *Boumediene* and elected on February 7<sup>th</sup> as a single candidate for the presidency of the Republic. He released Ben Bella from prison.

**1980:** On the 20<sup>th</sup> of April Kabylie rises: it is the "Berber spring", for a rule of law and the recognition of the Amazigh identity. The demonstrators are brutally repressed.

**1984:** Re-election of *Chadli Bendjedid* on 12<sup>th</sup> January, the adoption of some legal reforms such as Code of Personal Status and Family Code.

### THE REVOLT: THE NECESSITY FOR REAL POLITICAL & CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

**1988:** Algiers rising: From October 4<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>, youth occupied the capital's streets and unleashed against the symbols and property of the State. The repression was fierce and leads to the death of 500 youth; many more will be arrested and tortured in secret police stations and detention centers. *Chadli Bendjedid* was re-elected in December and promised reforms.

**1989:** The era of reform began with the adoption by referendum on February 23<sup>rd</sup> of a new Constitution, regime liberalization, and establishment of the multi-party system. Leaders in exile return to Algeria, such as *Hocine Ait Ahmed* and *Ahmed Ben Bella*. Several parties emerged, including the Islamic Salvation Front (ISF/FIS), led by *Abassi Madani* and *Ali Belhadj*.

**1990:** Opening of the media field and appearance of new private newspapers. Launch of the first economic reforms. First local elections won by the FIS.

### THE BLACK DECADE: THE PRICE OF IMPROVISATION

**1991:** The FIS calls for an unlimited strike in June. Prime Minister *Mouloud Hamrouche* resigns and is replaced by *Sid Ahmed Ghozali*. The first round of parliamentary elections took place on December 26<sup>th</sup>, cessation of the electoral process by the Army after the FIS victory with 47%% of the vote.

**1992:** The FIS called on January 2<sup>nd</sup> to a historic march claiming the pursuit of the elections. On January 11<sup>th</sup>, *Chadli Bendjedid* dissolved the National People's Assembly, and then resigned after being deposed by a group of military. *The High State Committee* (HSC) called the opponent *Mohamed Boudiaf*, exiled in Morocco, he was appointed as a president of the HSC. The FIS dissident; already there were dozens of dead. A state of emergency was introduced on February 9<sup>th</sup>, followed by the dissolution of the FIS. On June 29<sup>th</sup>, *Boudiaf* was assassinated in Annaba live on television by his bodyguard. *Ali Kafi* was appointed President of the High State Committee (HSC).

**1993:** The state of emergency was extended indefinitely on February 7<sup>th</sup>. An estimated 15,000 people were killed in one year.

1994: General *Liamine Zeroual* was appointed as a Head of State on January 30<sup>th</sup> by the HSC. Emergence of the *Armed Islamic Groups* (AIG), of which the ex-FIS stands out.

**1995:** Signature of a "*National Contract*" to make end to the violence, by the main opposition forces gathered, under the care of the *Sant' Egidio Community of Rome*. The authority rejected the contract.

**1996:** Further revision of the Constitution, reinforcing the powers of the President. The text approved by referendum on November 13<sup>th</sup>. On November 16<sup>th</sup>, the presidential elections; *Liamine Zeroual* won 61%% of the vote. The participation rate was high (75.6%% of the votes), despite the call for a boycott from the opposition signatories of Rome Contract.

**1997:** Massacres of civilian populations were perpetrated in many parts of the country. The Islamic Salvation Army (ISA) announced on September 24<sup>th</sup> a truce negotiated with the Government. The *Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat* (SGPC) continued to spread terror. Legislative elections were held in June. The *National Democratic Rally* (NDR) of *Zeroual* won the elections. A generalized fraud was denounced. Police repression was fierce. Several thousand people have disappeared because of the all-safe policy.

**1998:** In September, *Liamine Zeroual* announced his resignation and the holding of an early presidential election.

### ANEW ERA TOWARDS A DEMOCRATIC TRANSFORMATION

**1999:** *Abdelaziz Bouteflika* won the presidential elections on April 15<sup>th</sup>, after the withdrawal of the other six candidates, who denounced a massive fraud. The attacks and violence continue despite the cessation announced on June 6<sup>th</sup> by the AIS of its criminal activities. The law about "civil concord" was approved by referendum on September 16<sup>th</sup> by more than 98%% of the votes. It paves the way for impunity.

**2001:** Another Berber spring took place in April in Kabylie after the assassination of a young man in a gendarmerie. People rising; results: 126 youth were assassinated by the order forces.

**2002:** Tamazight was recognized as a national language but not official. On October 10<sup>th</sup>, the FLN won the majority of the municipal and departmental assemblies during local elections. The participation rate was 50%% outside of Kabylie, where the protest movement of "the aarchs" (Kabyle tribes) called for a boycott.

**2003:** On May 5<sup>th</sup>, *Abdelaziz Bouteflika* dismissed his Prime Minister *Ali Benflis*, who -two months later- announced his candidacy for the 2004 presidential elections. In July 2<sup>nd</sup>, the two leaders of the Islamic Salvation Front (dissolved), *Abassi Madani* and *Ali Belhadj*, sentenced in 1992 to 12 years in prison were released.

- 2004:** Presidential elections tainted by fraud and won by *Abdelaziz Bouteflika* on April 8th.
- 2005:** A Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation was approved by referendum to more than 97%% of the vote on September 29<sup>th</sup>; it prohibits any prosecution against perpetrators of the crimes committed during the Black Decade, which resulted 200,000 killed people. A law against truth and justice, for the protection of criminals on both sides of the conflict.
- 2007:** Legislative elections on May 17<sup>th</sup>, the three parties of the Presidential Alliance supporting President *Bouteflika* retain an absolute majority.
- 2008:** After months of rumors, *Abdelaziz Bouteflika* announces the revision of the Constitution which forbids him to run for a third term. The revision was adopted by the Parliament with absolute majority.
- 2009:** *Bouteflika* was re-elected in April with 90%% of the votes of a ballot boycotted by the opposition and tainted with fraud.
- 2010:** The *Sonatrach Company* is splashed by a major scandal of corruption, its leaders jailed and tried for economic crimes. In February, the director of National Security *Ali Tounsi* was assassinated in his office by his vice.
- 2011:** On January 5<sup>th</sup>, riots broke out in some cities of the country, concomitant with the revolts in Tunisia and Egypt. They are quickly repressed and suppressed. The Government decides to lower the prices of oil and sugar to mask the real reasons for the rioter's anger. Calls for March in Algiers were unsuccessful and were prevented. The authority spends the whole year trying to buy social peace through billions of subsidies and other small business creation aids. On April 15<sup>th</sup>, the Government submitted a series of laws to the National People's Assembly as political reforms: law on political parties, electoral law, association's law and the Information Code, without any progress in terms of openness or freedom.
- 2012:** Beginning of completion of the political & legal reforms mainly related to the organic laws of the elections, political parties, the municipality and the wilaya, announced by the Government. Three Islamist parties conclude an alliance for the legislative elections, the Movements of *Society for Peace* (MSP), *El Islah* and *Ennahda*, in March. In May, the FLN, the former single party, remains the first party of Algeria and even consolidates its advance to the legislative whereas the prognoses gave the Islamist parties winners.
- 2013:** Disappearance of the President of the Republic due to an illness for a period of more than a month, public opinion was worried and protests the media blackout, opposition voices call for the implementation of Article 88 of the Constitution.
- 2014:** In February, the army was tearing by media interposed on a support to a fourth term for *Abdelaziz Bouteflika*, whose health state was much degraded. In March, at 45 days of the presidential, the President announces on television his candidacy for a 4<sup>th</sup> term. That was the first time he spoken in public since his return to Algeria in July 2013.
- In April, Presidential elections were held, *Abdelaziz Bouteflika* reelected President of the Republic for a fourth term, Not surprisingly, he won in the first round with about 81%% of the vote. Less than 2009, the participation rate officially reaches 51.7 %%, but does not exceed 38%% in Algiers while it is close to 22%% in Kabylie. While it is undeniable that the President maintains support among population, the result was strongly disputed by *Ali Benflis* (credited with 12%% of the vote) who denounces "a massive fraud" and announces his involvement in political life. These elections have created great controversy.
- 2015:** The President of the Republic announced a constitutional revision, he invited the public opinion to contribute, consultations on the revision of the constitution began, both political formations and personalities participated, these consultations resulted in a draft revision which amends so many constitutional provisions. A very tough economic situation, the decline in hydrocarbon revenues due to falling prices, austerity procedures are launched by the government to reduce the risks, these procedures were incarnated in the finance law 2016, which affected the purchasing power of citizens.
- 2016:** The draft constitutional revision was adopted among the absolute majority of the Parliament members in two chambers united, despite attempts to boycott mobilized by the opposition. Major reform workshops are being prepared by the Government, including draft legislation at the parliamentary level, amendments to the texts according to the new constitutional provisions, including the texts of the organic laws relating to the functioning

of the two Houses of Parliament and the relationship with the Government, the electoral system and the High Authority for Election Supervision established by the Constitution.

**2017:** On May 17<sup>th</sup>, legislative elections were held, the FLN and the RND dominate the majority of the APN seats, a new Government was set, led by *Abdelmajid Tebboune*, who was sacked three months later with many other ministers, and replaced by *Ahmed Ouyahia*, the former Prime Minister tried to combat the integrity between politics and dirty money, in November 23<sup>rd</sup>, municipal and local elections took place, there were dominated by the ruling parties.

**2018:** Big controversies about presidential elections, conflicts between many political forces about the actual president successor, while the President is still sick.

**2019:** Preparations for the presidential elections after calling the electorate by the President of the Republic, many personalities attempt to candidate, then the announcement of *Bouteflika's* candidacy for a fifth term, presidential elections will be held on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

### THE NEW ALGERIA IN PROGRESS: THE BEGINNING OF HIRAK & THE STRIKE FOR DEMOCRACY

**February** - On February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019, thousands of people demonstrate in Algiers and several other cities in the first major protests against *Bouteflika's* candidacy in a presidential election set for April. The ailing 82-year-old has already been in power for 20 years and is rarely seen in public after a 2013 stroke.

**March** - As daily protests grow, and 1 million people march in Algiers and other cities, *Bouteflika* tries to mollify his opponents by promising a new constitution after his re-election, followed by a new vote in which he would not stand.

**April** - The presidential election, initially scheduled for April, then for July, is postponed indefinitely. Street protests prompt President *Bouteflika* to resign; he announces that he will step down after street protests, having earlier postponed presidential elections because of political turmoil. Army chief *Ahmed Gaid Salah* steps in, using a televised speech to urge *Bouteflika* to resign, which he does on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. While crowds cheer his departure, they demand more changes. Protesters again fill the streets on April 5<sup>th</sup>, calling for other regime stalwarts to step down too. They include the Council of Nations chief, *Abdelkader Bensalah*, who is on April 9<sup>th</sup> named interim president. Opposition parties refuse to confirm his nomination. *Bensalah's* office calls the presidential election for July 4<sup>th</sup>. Another official targeted by protesters, constitutional council chief *Tayeb Belaiz*, quits on April 16.

**May and June** - With no let-up in the weekly Tuesday and Friday protests, the authorities begin detaining senior figures, including many *Bouteflika* allies and top businessmen, on corruption charges. Those arrested include *Bouteflika's* younger brother Said, who had acted as de facto regent as the President ailed, the once-untouchable intelligence chief *Mohamed Mediene*, his successor *Athman Tartag*, *Louisa Hanoune workers party's leader* and two former prime ministers *Ahmed Ouyahia* and *Abdelmalek Sellal*. Army chief *Gaid Salah*, who has emerged as the key powerbroker since *Bouteflika's* departure, rejects protesters' demands and calls for dialogue, insisting on May 22<sup>nd</sup> he has no political ambitions himself. The constitutional council announces on June 2<sup>nd</sup> that the July presidential election cannot go ahead because it has rejected the only two candidates, both of them little known. There are more protests, with calls for the army chief to resign too.

**July** - as tens of thousands continue to march, undeterred by summer heat or the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan. On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, the interim President proposes a "neutral" national dialogue, without the involvement of the state or the military. His mandate expires on July 9<sup>th</sup>. The next day army chief *Gaid Salah* reaffirms the army's support for him. *Bensalah* charges a "dialogue and mediation" body on July 25<sup>th</sup> with carrying out consultations to prepare for a presidential election.

**August** 2<sup>nd</sup>, protesters call for "civil disobedience" for the first time. On August 8<sup>th</sup>, the army chief says the protest movement's basic demands have been met, saying that the objective is now the presidential election. On August 16<sup>th</sup>, demonstrators turn out in the capital in large numbers for the 26<sup>th</sup> consecutive Friday of protests.

**September** - At *Gaid Salah's* urging, the interim President *Abdelkader Bensalah* announces that the election will now be held in December 12<sup>th</sup>, angering the protesters who immediately reject the

coming vote. At the first major trial for former senior officials, both *Said Bouteflika* and *Mediene* are given 15-year jail sentences, cementing the army's position as the most powerful part of the ruling hierarchy. A new electoral authority, *National Independent authority for Elections* (NIAE), was created in mid-September in charge for the organization and surveillance of the elections.

**November** - As the election campaign officially starts, the number of protesters begins to rise again and the police start cracking down on demonstrations against the coming vote. Protesters hang bags of garbage in spaces reserved for election materials and a court holds rapid trials to sentence people to months in prison for disrupting campaigning.

**December** - A court sentences the two former prime ministers to 15 and 12-year prison terms days before the election, which the protesters continue to reject. The five candidates announced by *Mohamed Chorfi*, head of the electoral authority, on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019 are: former prime minister under *Bouteflika*, *Abdelmadjid Tebboune*, former prime minister under *Bouteflika*, *Ali Benflis* former culture minister *Azzedine Mihoubi*, former tourism minister *Abdelkader Bengrina*, head of the El Moustakbal Front *Abdelaziz Belaïd*. On December 12<sup>th</sup>, the presidential elections took place, while protesters calling for boycott with slogans describing it as "an election with the gangs" and as an "election organized by a corrupt power which is a trap for idiots". Preliminary results showed that former Prime Minister and Minister of Housing *Abdelmadjid Tebboune* won the election in the first round, leading his nearest opponent (*Abdelkader Bengrina* of the Islamist El Binaa party) by over 40%% of the valid votes. The official estimate of the turnout of just under 40%% of eligible voters was the lowest of any Algerian presidential election held since independence, primarily due to boycotts by citizens and political parties alike. The Rally for Culture and Democracy RCD estimated the turnout five times lower, at 8%. The low turnout, as well as the relatively high number of spoiled ballots out of those who did participate, was seen as a continuation of the pro-democracy protests that preceded the resignation of *Bouteflika*, as all approved candidates in the election were seen as members of the political establishment. On December 23<sup>rd</sup>, Army Chief *Ahmed Gaid Salah* died Monday morning in the military hospital of Algiers after a heart attack at 79 years old; His death comes less than a week after *Abdelmadjid Tebboune* was sworn in as the country's new president, on December 19<sup>th</sup>. *Gaid Salah* was present at *Tebboune's* inauguration and was considered to be close to the leader. *Tebboune* declared an exceptional full week of mourning, in an indication of *Gaid Salah's* importance. He kept his promise to save the blood of Algerians during a tough period, his military funeral was marked as the hugest at the countries' history after *Houari Boumediens* one. President *Tebboune* announced that the head of land forces, *General Said Chengriha*, would take over as acting chief of staff of the armed forces.

**January**, In the first week of January 2020, the new President elected in the mostly boycotted election, *Abdelmadjid Tebboune*, appointed *Abdelaziz Djerad* as prime minister and the rest of his cabinet mostly consisting of ministers of the previous government, under *Bensalah* as acting president. On January 15<sup>th</sup>, 13 detainees held in *El-Harrach* prison since March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 started a hunger strike, with the aim of getting a fair trial. Their cases had rested frozen for 10 months and their court appearances were scheduled for March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020, by the pursuit of the crisis in Libya president *Tebboune* was invited by *Angela Merckle* to Berlin Conference, then the Algerian Diplomacy started to refresh again after years of disappearance, many Foreign Ministers of many countries decided to visit Algeria as main actor in the region, which is considered a great addition to Algeria

**February**, close to the anniversary of the first protests on 16 and 22 February 2019, President *Tebboune* signed a decree pardoning several thousand prisoners, also a decree considering the February 22<sup>nd</sup> as a National fist for the Coalescence of people with his Army.

#### ⊕ QUESTIONS:

- TRANSLATE THE UNDERLINED TERMS INTO ARABIC.
- GIVE AN ABSTRACT (IN ARABIC) TO THE TOPIC.