

**People's Democratic Republic of Algeria**

**Embassy of Algeria in the Republic of Namibia**



# Press Review

**18<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

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## Algerian Embassy in Windhoek

18<sup>th</sup> June 2020

### ECONOMIC NEWS

#### **Mermouri outlines Algeria's roadmap for socio-economic recovery in post-corona virus era**

*ALGIERS* - The minister of Tourism, Craft Industry and Family Labour, Hacene Mermouri, outlined, at an Arab Tourist Ministers meeting on Wednesday, Algeria's roadmap to achieve a socio-economic recovery during the post-corona virus period.

In his address at an emergency special session of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Arab Tourism Ministers Council meeting, held by videoconference, the minister mentioned Algeria's tax facilities "taken to assist the various economic actors during the corona virus pandemic, such as deferring payment and monthly or annual tax return."

He cited "special short-term financial measures taken by the Bank of Algeria, and which allow banking institutions to increase their financing capacity to fund economic enterprises affected by the corona virus pandemic."

He said Algeria has developed a roadmap for the recovery of the national economy, giving priority to activities affected by the spread of the Covid-19, preserving jobs and restoring confidence during the post-pandemic period.

In his speech, the government representative stressed the importance of continuing dialogue with the various actors, ensuring the recovery of the tourism industry, finding solutions that can preserve jobs and reflecting on the post-corona virus era.

#### **Gas sales, purchase: Sonatrach, Tunisian STEG renew contract until 2027**

*ALGIERS* - national Oil Company Sonatrach and Tunisian electricity and gas company STEG have agreed to renew their natural gas sales and purchase agreement for eight years, until 2027, Sonatrach said in a statement.

The two partners made "an amendment to the contract on the purchase and sale of natural gas, from 3 March 1997, for an eight-year renewal of the contract (until 2027), with the possibility of a two-year extension," the statement said.

Sonatrach and the STEG have also agreed to "increase the contractual volume by 20% from 2025, in order to ensure the expected increase in consumption in this strategic market."

Through the agreement, Sonatrach will "consolidate its position as Tunisia's main supplier of natural gas, in a highly competitive market," and the STEG will "secure its supply of natural gas," according to the statement.

The two companies welcomed the outcome of these negotiations and the signing of the amendment, the statement concluded.

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### **Chiali: Need to develop railway network to boost national economy**

*ALGIERS* - Minister of Public Works and Transport Farouk Chiali said on Wednesday in Algiers that Algeria needs to develop the railway network, in parallel with road network to boost the national economy.

The "economic growth requires the development of roads and means of transport," the minister said to members of the Lower House's Finance and Budget Committee, meeting to review the draft budget regulation bill 2017.

The rail and road transport networks "must be complementary, both in terms of construction and their extension to the different regions of the country and this in the service of a harmonious economic development," he said.

### **New law on hydrocarbons: drafting of implementing texts completed, says Arkab**

*ALGIERS* - The Ministry of Energy has completed the drafting of the implementing texts relative to the new Law on Hydrocarbons, which is expected to attract more foreign investors, said Energy Minister Mohammed Arkab on Thursday.

"These texts will soon be submitted to the Government, the Council of Ministers and the two chambers of Parliament for approval," said the Minister before the members of the Finance and Budget Committee of the National People's Assembly (APN- Lower House), as part of the review of draft bill on 2017 Budget Regulation.

These new texts which will complete the Law on Hydrocarbons approved late 2019 will constitute a comprehensive legal basis in a view to attract foreign investors, in compliance with international standards.

Under this Law and its implementing texts, Algeria ambitions to boost its oil and gas output, said the minister, stressing that tangible alternatives were needed in order to encourage hydrocarbon investments within a period not exceeding seven years.

Arkab said that the exploited surface of the national mining domain in the hydrocarbon sector does not exceed 38% of its total area estimated at 1.5 million km<sup>2</sup>, which requires more investment in the unexploited areas.

With international oil companies hesitating to come in Algeria because of the legal system, it was necessary to adopt a new hydrocarbon law that would prompt foreign investments, added Arkab.

Since last January, a significant number of memoranda of understanding have been concluded with major oil companies, he said.

Sonatrach in cooperation with the National Agency for the Development of Hydrocarbon Resources (ALNAFT) has launched "separate" investment studies in several oil and gas fields

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and deposits across the country, which previous law, particularly in the section on taxation, was not attractive for investments.

Citing Sonatrach's priorities during the next stage, the minister said that the Company eyes to expand its upstream and downstream activities as it will prospect for, extract and exploit the petroleum resources in the unexploited areas like Naâma, Tindouf and Illizi. It also plans to conduct mega projects in the petrochemical industry.

### **Desertec project: Consultations on launch of solar power plant projects**

*ALGIERS* - Consultations are underway with officials at the German "Desertec" initiative on the launch of solar power plant projects, Minister of Energy, Mohamed Arkab, announced Thursday in Algiers during a meeting at the Lower House's Finance and Budget Committee on the review of draft bill on 2017 Budget Regulation, the minister said that Sonelgaz has indeed started consultations with the German side on solar power plant projects.

The talks encompass the operational and legal aspects.

Last April, Sonelgaz signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the "Desertec" initiative to develop a common vision of cooperation.

The first stage of this cooperation includes detailed technical studies of Algeria's solar energy capacities, in addition to the training of Algerian specialists in this field.

"Desertec" initiative will be part of the implementation of Algeria's national energy transfer strategy, added the minister

### **World Day to Combat Desertification: 11.5 million trees planted since January 2020**

*ALGIERS* - Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Cherif Omari said in Algiers on Thursday that as part of the National Reforestation Plan (PNR) more than 11.5 million trees were planted since the beginning of 2020, on an area of 23,000 hectares.

The minister chaired a national meeting on the fight against desertification, alongside Deputy Minister for Saharan Agriculture and Mountains Fouad Chahat and Deputy Minister for Sahrawi Environment, Hamza Al Sid Chikh.

The National Reforestation Plan placed under the slogan "a tree for each citizen" aims at preserving and enhancing the forest cover and, therefore, contributing to the fight against desertification.

The meeting which has been attended by experts, managers and agents from the Directorate General of Forests (DGF) is part of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought 2020 (UNCCD): Food. Feed. Fibre.

This year's slogan demonstrates "the importance of food and the requirements of sustainable

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development amid the growing deterioration of natural capacities," said the minister who recalled that Algeria "very early realized the impact of desertification, which led to take the measures likely to fight against this phenomenon through the revival of the post-independence reforestation program, including the Green Barrier in the 70s".

### **FOREIGN POLICY NEWS**

#### **President Tebboune expresses relief to King Mohamed VI after successful surgery**

*ALGIERS* - President of the Republic Abdelmadjid Tebboune has sent a message to the Sovereign of Morocco, King Mohamed VI, in which he expressed his relief after the successful surgery he underwent recently.

"Your Majesty, King and dear brother, I learned with immense relief the news of the successful completion of your surgery. On this occasion, I can only thank God Almighty, for His grace, praying that He will grant you a speedy recovery and preserve you from all evil," wrote President Tebboune.

"Your Majesty, Please accept my sincere wishes for health and the expression of my feelings of consideration and esteem," the president of the Republic added.

#### **Covid-19: President Tebboune urges developing countries to defend their peoples' aspirations**

*ALGIERS* - President of the Republic Abdelmadjid Tebboune urged Wednesday the developing countries to carry out their role as defender of their peoples' aspirations and basic rights in the light of the major foreseeable changes in the architecture of the international relations, as a result of the unprecedented repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In his video conference speech at the China-Africa extraordinary Summit on the solidarity against Covid-19, President Tebboune said that the current crisis of the new coronavirus "isn't only a health crisis because of the challenges imposed by its unprecedented repercussions at the socio-economic levels and which augur major changes in the architecture of the international relations."

"This situation will certainly have a great impact on the global governance system in the future," affirmed President of the Republic reiterating, in this regard, the importance of implementing "a multilateral action system enabling the nations and peoples to express their aspirations, raise their concerns and strengthen their role in the face of nascent challenges."

In this respect, he stressed the urgent need to establish "the foundations of a world order where developing countries will have their proper role, as an essential player in the consolidation of the international peace and security and as defender of the aspirations, ambitions and basic rights of their peoples."

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This equation will help achieve the expected objectives at the service of the development, stability and descent living in Africa and in the world, he said.

While broaching the relations between Africa and China, President Tebboune pointed out that these relations have reached, in the last few decades, phases rich in solidarity and cooperation, welcoming the continuation of this solidarity and mutual support with the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic.

For its part, he added, “Algeria was among the first countries to express its full solidarity with China in the face of this difficult situation while calling that the evaluation of the situation by the international community be objective and far from any politicization.”

### **Western Sahara: Spain must work to end colonialism**

*BRUSSELS* - Deputies of the European Parliament called Wednesday the Spanish Government, in a letter sent to the Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, to speed up the decolonization process in Western Sahara and assume its historical and legal responsibilities towards the Sahrawi people.

The European MPs said in a letter that the recent decision of the Supreme Court which establishes that the fact of being born in Western Sahara before 1975 doesn't give the right to the Spanish nationality of origin, is “another denial from Spain towards its legal and historical responsibility and of its occupation for several years of Western Sahara which was its 53<sup>rd</sup> province and which had representatives in the legislature (Curtis), before being deliberately divided by Madrid and illegally given to Morocco,” as part of Madrid agreements of 14 November 1975.

The letter broached the historic decision of the International Court of Justice in 1975 which judged that Morocco doesn't have any sovereignty over the territory of Western Sahara, which was reaffirmed by the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs in 2002, in a different form, i.e. that “Madrid's arrangement didn't transfer the sovereignty of Western Sahara and didn't grant to any of the signatories the status of the administering power, a situation that Spain can't transfer unilaterally because it contradicts with the legal and political reality.”

The European MPs expressed their strong condemnation of this decision, which “reflects the clear political intentions against the Sahrawi people and the decolonization issue of Western Sahara,” demanding that “the Prime minister takes the responsibility of this phase and takes all the measures to respond to it, starting with the efforts aimed at establishing high-level diplomatic relations with the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) and the granting of the Spanish nationality to the descendants of the former Spanish colony (Western Sahara)...”

### **Bendouda attends extraordinary meeting of ISESCO Culture ministers**

*ALGIERS* - Minister of Culture Malika Bendouda on Wednesday took part in an extraordinary meeting by videoconference bringing together Culture ministers of the member countries

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of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), the ministry said in a statement.

The minister outlined her department's initiatives to "boost cultural activity on the various digital media during the current pandemic of Corona virus, such as virtual conferences and artistic events."

Malika Bendouda also mentioned the mechanism put in place to support Algerian artists and cultural actors who have suspended activities due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

During the meeting, the minister of Culture made proposals to "develop cultural cooperation between (ISESCO) member countries," according to the statement.

### **Arab Women Committee Meeting: Krikou emphasizes Algeria's efforts to face Covid-19 pandemic**

*ALGIERS* - Minister of National Solidarity, Family and Women's Affairs emphasized Wednesday, in a video conference ministerial meeting of the Arab Women's Committee on the effects of the corona virus on women, the efforts made by Algeria to face this pandemic thanks to the decisions taken by President of the Republic Abdelmadjid Tebboune.

In her speech, the minister underlined that "Algeria made sure, during this pandemic, to take a series of prevention measures for the citizens," adding that "since the beginning of this global health crisis, President of the Republic took sovereign decisions guaranteeing prevention measures to contain the spread of this pandemic."

Among these measures, the minister cited the reduction of the number of employees in public companies and administrations and the placement of paid leave pregnant women and women with young children as well as the chronically ill persons.

Concerning the health awareness measures, she said that "the government implemented an awareness prevention plan to fight against his pandemic by mobilizing monitoring teams at the Health Ministry," as well as media awareness links on all the websites of private and public companies and administrations, in addition to awareness-raising campaigns organized in collaboration with the civil society."

"Algeria has experienced a broad surge of solidarity during this health crisis, which shows the cohesion of the society's members to overcome these difficult moments, through individual or collective donations from citizens," she underlined.