

**Speech of H.E. Ambassador Merzak BELHIMEUR on the occasion of the *Raising flag Ceremony*,
Algerian Embassy, 05 July, 2022**

**Excellencies Ambassadors, High commissioners, and Head of diplomatic missions,
Excellency, Ambassador Ian McConville, Chief of Protocole,
Dear fellow citizen, Mr. Nasser Bensaidi, Pd of the Algerian Community Association,
Dear Fellow Algerians,
Guest and Friends.**

Let me thank all of you, for your presence here, for the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the independence of Algeria.

Like all official institutions in Algeria and abroad, the Algerian embassy in Canberra will raise the National flag on that occasion, to commemorate that historical day and to pay tribute to the martyrs who gave their lives for the liberation of our country.

Dears Friends and guests

As you know, on July 5, 1962, 60 years ago, the Algerian people celebrated with joy and enthusiasm the end of 132 years of colonial occupation, after a struggle of seven and half years which started on 1st November 1954.

Due to the severe social and economic background prevailing in Algeria at these times, the decision to launch the war has been considered by many as audacious and risky and with no chance of success.

Algeria was, indeed, a settlement colony of France, with a population of European origin constituting practically 10% of the total population (one million out of 10 million). That minority was in full control of all the economic, social, and administrative spectrum. The Algerians, for their part, were not even considered as citizens but as subjects with no right whatsoever.

Finally, against all those skeptical predictions of failure, the Algerian struggle for freedom has been successful and opened the way to independence.

Beyond this positive result on the liberation of the country, the fight for independence has had other positive consequences at another levels.

Allow me, please, to mention some of them.

Firstly, the impact of the Algerian revolution was instrumental to the reconfiguration of the African geopolitical landscape in the 50th-60th. It played a catalyzing role in the decolonization process of the African continent.

For example, at the start of the war, only 5 African countries were independent. By the end of the war, more than 30 African countries have gained their independence, mainly former French colonies.

Secondly, the various debates which took place at the UN between 1954 to 1961, on the issue of self-determination of the Algerian people helped the General Assembly to finalize and adopt the Resolution 1514 which provide a *modus operandi* to the implementation of the right for self-determination for the countries still under colonisation.

That Resolution was adopted, during the same session in 1961 than the one recognizing the right of self-determination for the Algerian people, (Resolution 1573).

It is that close connexion and interaction between the Algeria' process of independence and the Resolution 1514 which explains the permanent support of Algeria to the right of self-determination to the Western Sahara and the Palestinian peoples.

Thirdly, the struggle of national liberation has deeply influenced the external policy of the newly born Algerian State. Since the early days of its independence, Algeria's international action is committed to peaceful prevention and resolution of conflicts which arise between countries.

Based on principles of non-interference in the affairs of others countries and the mutual respect of all parties 'positions and interests, this *goodwill diplomacy* of Algeria contributed to the solution of several problems between neighboring countries or internal conflicts, like the *Iran-Iraq border agreement* in 1975, the peace agreement between *Ethiopia and Eritrea* in 2000, the "*Ta'if Agreement*" that ended the civil war in Lebanon, and more recently, the "*Algiers peace Accords*" in 2015, which concluded the negotiations between the government of Mali and the rebels groups in the north of the country.

Furthermore, Algeria is member of the non-aligned movement since its creation in 1961 et has always been guided by its principles. In line with that position, it has always shown a suspicion against any military or political alliance whatsoever and refused to get involved in any of them. That position of non-alignment has not changed since then and is, till now considered as the cornerstone of the Algerian external policy.

Having in mind the uncertain times the international community is going through presently, Algeria is on the opinion that, while insisting on the respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity, any bilateral dispute should be resolved peacefully through political dialogue and negotiations.

I thank you