



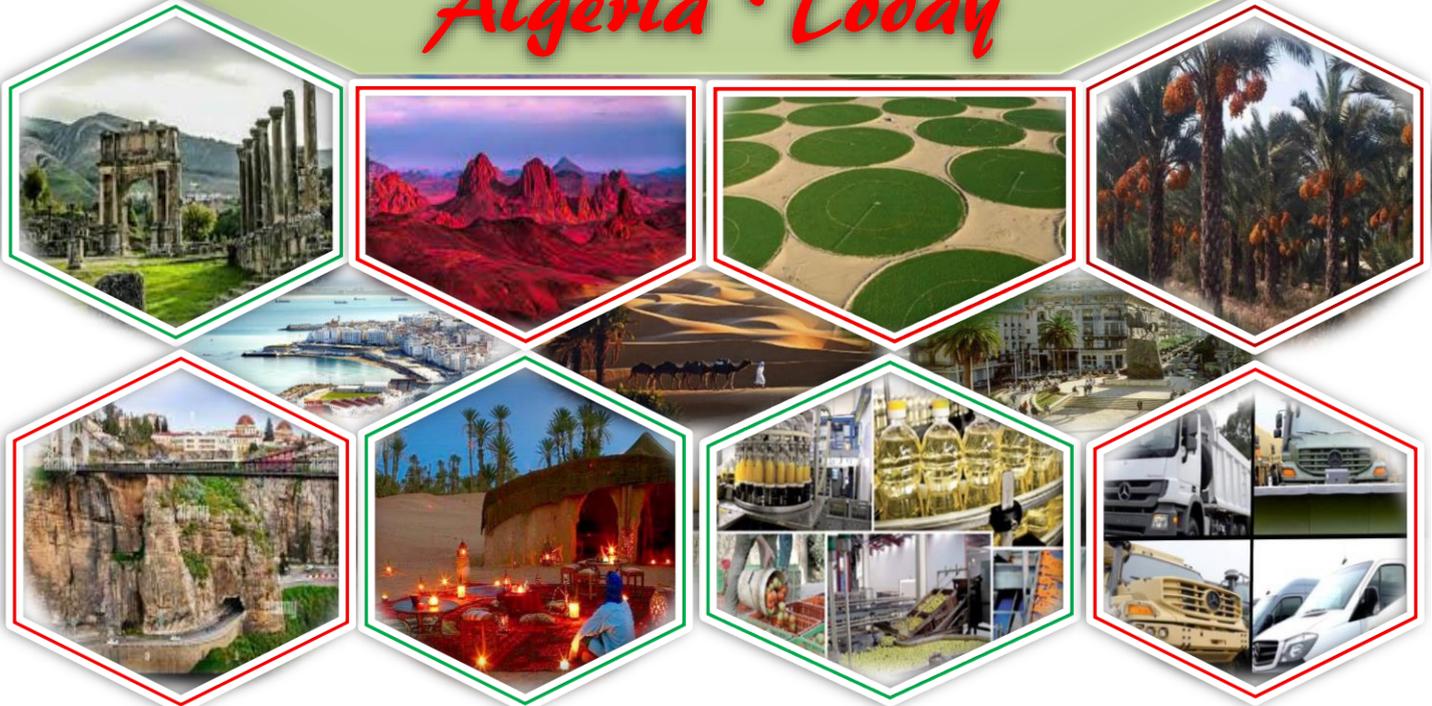
Embassy of Algeria to Finland



Monthly Newsletter



Algeria Today



*N° 07
April 2023*

Peace, reconciliation in Mali: Guterres welcomes President Tebboune's



In a report sent on the 4 April 2023, to the UN Council of Security, UN Secretary-General Mr. Antonio Guterres welcomed the personal commitment of President of the Republic Abdelmadjid Tebboune, to promoting peace and stability in the Republic of Mali. In this regard, Mr. Antonio Guterres praised the direct involvement of President Tebboune in the efforts aimed at revitalizing the process of the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, the outcome of Algiers process.

He particularly underlined that the President of the Republic had successively received in January and February 2023 delegations representing all the Malian parties signatories to the Agreement of Algiers, namely the Government and the political-military movements. In light of these developments, UN Secretary-General commended Algeria's leadership, in its double capacity as the leader of the international mediation and the chair of the agreement's follow-up committee, by shedding light on its initiatives to overcome the current deadlock in the agreement implementation process which remains, according to the UN Chief, the privileged instrument to promote sustainable peace and reconciliation in Mali.

It is important to note that the Secretary General's report came in anticipation of a meeting of the Security Council on the situation in Mali, scheduled for 12 April 2023. In this regard, and besides the developments related to the political transition in the country and the on-going restructuring of MINUSMA, the emphasis of the Council's fifteen members will be placed, in all likelihood, on the current difficulties in the implementation of the Algiers Agreement.

The Speaker of the People's National Assembly calls for qualitative leap to enshrine Africa's right to global governance



The Speaker of the People's National Assembly Mr. Brahim Boughali called Monday 3 April 2023, in Abidjan (Ivory Coast), to make a "qualitative leap" that enables Africa to exercise its right to global governance and impose its agenda.

Speaking at the opening of the ordinary annual session of the National Ivorian Assembly, Mr. Boughali insisted on the necessity of "choosing the partnerships by making sure to respect the interests of the African peoples in order to enable them to fully benefit from their wealth."

"We must accompany the evolutions of the current international situation in order not to marginalize once again the African continent," he said.

The African countries "will be better prepared by enshrining democracy, governance and the rule of law, by respecting the peoples' specificities and by involving all the vital forces, notably young people and women," he pointed out, saying he is convinced that "the parliamentary bodies will be mobilized to accompany this strategic move."

As regards the relations between Algeria and Ivory Coast, Boughali affirmed that they are "based on trust and respect," stressing the need to exploit "the countries' capacities and assets to achieve further integration". Mr. Brahim Boughali, has been received on Tuesday 4 April 2023, along with other parliament speakers, by President Alassane Ouattara of the Ivory Coast.

Foreign Policy

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and National Community Abroad on work visit to Nouakchott



The Minister of Foreign Affairs and National Community Abroad, Ahmed Attaf began on Monday 24 April 2023, a working visit to Nouakchott (Mauritania), as part of the enhancement of relations of brotherhood, cooperation, and coordination between the two countries.

At the beginning of his visit, Mr. Attaf held talks with his Mauritanian counterpart, Mr. Mohamed Salem Ould Merzouk, a working session focused on bilateral relations and prospects for continuing efforts to strengthen cooperation in various vital areas and intensify consultation and coordination on developments in the situation on the regional and continental levels.

The two Ministries discussed the level of progress of the implementation of joint projects, led by the road linking Tindouf to Zouerate (Mauritania), given its strategic importance.

At the end of bilateral talks, the two FM's signed a memorandum of understanding on political consultations to establish "a sustainable mechanism for strengthening political coordination between the two brotherly countries."

Mr. Attaf hands over message from President Tebboune to President Mohamed Bazoum of Niger



The Minister of Foreign Affairs and National Community Abroad, Mr. Ahmed Attaf, arrived in Niamey, Niger, on Thursday 25 April 2023, for a working visit.

The head of the Algerian diplomacy was received in audience by President Mohamed Bazoum to whom he handed over a message from the President of the Republic, Mr. Abdelmadjid Tebboune.

Mr. Attaf also held a working session with his Nigerien counterpart. The discussions between the two leaders culminated in important guidelines and decisions for the implementation of crucial projects for Niger, such as the achievement of a "photovoltaic power plant for the production of electricity, the encouragement of the emergence of agri-food industry hubs, the building of a vocational training centre, the Opening of a representation of the Algerian Company of Fairs and Exports (SAFEX) and a branch of the Bank of Algeria in Niamey".

The two sides also agreed on the schedule of the next meetings of the Grand Joint Commission, the Bilateral Border Committee and the Algerian-Nigerien Business Council.

Mr. Attaf received by the Malian Head of State and President of the transition in Mali



The Minister of Foreign Affairs and National Community Abroad, Mr. Ahmed Attaf was received, Wednesday 24 April 2023, during his working visit to Bamako, by the Malian Head of State and President of the transition in Mali, Colonel Assimi Goïta, to whom he handed a written message from the President of the Republic, Mr. Abdelmadjid Tebboune.

The two sides seized the opportunity to discuss the different dimensions of Algerian-Malian relations, stressing the significant number of cooperation projects and the solidarity programmes in various areas.

They also underlined the importance of the coming bilateral events in supporting the economic partnership between the two countries, and the deepening of the mutual political understanding.

The two sides also tackled the ways to overcome the difficulties hindering the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, the outcome of Algiers Process, as well as the means to revive the bilateral mechanisms of security cooperation, or even the multilateral ones, such as the Joint Operational Staff Committee (CEMOC), to deal with the terrorist threats.

Minister Attaf holds meetings in Bamako with officials involved in the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement



As part of his working visit to Bamako, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and National Community Abroad, Ahmed Attaf, held meetings on the 24 April 2023, with officials concerned by the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali resulting from the Algiers process. These meetings took place with representatives of Malian movements signatories of the Agreement in 2015, members of the group of international mediation, as well as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), Wane al-Ghassim.

They come in the context of efforts made by Algeria, as leader of the international mediation and chair of the Monitoring Committee for the implementation of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali from the Algiers process (CSA).

Intervening in the wake of talks held by the Minister Attaf with the Malian authorities, these meetings were an opportunity to intensify consultations and exchange views and analysis with the Malian parties and with international partners on ways to overcome the current obstacles that hamper the completion of the peace process and reconciliation in this brotherly country. The meetings held with Government officials and signatory movements affirm the commitment of all parties to respect the Algiers Agreement, as well as their will to adhere seriously to the steps taken by Algeria in order to establish and strengthen confidence between the Malian parties and ensure the rapid resumption and consensus of the activities of monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of the Agreement.

For their part, the members of the international mediation and the UN representative expressed their full support for the efforts constantly made by Algeria to support the security and stability of the Republic of Mali, expressing their aspirations to continue their action, under the leadership of Algeria, to promote the goals of peace, reconciliation and sustainable development in this country to help lay the foundations of peace in the region.

Public banks: President Tebboune orders to speed up capital opening



President of the Republic Abdelmadjid Tebboune ordered to speed up the opening of the capital of public banks according to an expertly studied, scientific method that spurs change from the old way of governance, which is based now on the administration instead of economic efficiency.

Concerning the progress of the opening of the capital of public banks, President Tebboune insisted on the principle of transparency in the financial reform and the need to adapt to international changes in the field, a pillar of the economy.

The head of State also ordered the acceleration of the opening of Algerian banks abroad, making sure the related procedures are based on a new and effective approach.

The president of the Republic gave instructions to "catch up the delay for the launch of the housing bank, by reducing the time limit set for its coming into effect."

Finance: Instructions to achieve digitalization within six months



President of the Republic Abdelmadjid Tebboune, in a Council of Ministers meeting he chaired on Sunday 2 April 2023, gave instructions to the Ministers of Finance and Digitalization to achieve the digitalization of the domains, taxes, and customs within a maximum period of six months for the first stage before its generalization.

President Tebboune also ordered the Ministry of Finance to establish, "immediately and urgently," an Algerian data bank to help the different State services in the performance of their duties, by ensuring more efficiency.

In this respect, he called for resorting to the best Algerian experts and international research departments.

Investment: Series of measures to facilitate bank loans, fight bureaucracy

The Minister of Finances, Mr. Laziz Faid, said Tuesday 4 April 2023 that his sector had taken a series of measures on granting bank loans to promote investments and fight bureaucracy. The statement was made at a plenary session of the People's National Assembly (lower house of Parliament), devoted to the examination of the monetary and banking bill.

The Minister tackled "bureaucracy in banks, the strict conditions for granting of loans and the share of financing that are not conducive to investment."

"The commercial banks, especially the state-owned banks, which finance the economy and investments have granted loans estimated at more than DZD11,000 billion by the end of 2022, 75% of which were meant to investments and 55% to the private sector."

According to the instructions of the Finance Ministry, the duration for the processing of loan applications have been reduced to a maximum of one month.

Although oil market sends positive signals, caution is still required



The Minister of Energy and Mines, Mr. Mohamed Arkab said on Monday 3 April 2023, at the end of the 48th meeting of the OPEC Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMMC), that "Despite positive signals from China, market conditions require caution. Uncertainties around global economic growth could lead to a slowdown in oil demand. The oil market is largely supplied while commercial inventories have returned to their highest level in two years.". This videoconference meeting discussed conditions and prospects for short-term developments in the global oil market and compliance with voluntary commitments to limit the production of countries in the Declaration of Cooperation for January and February 2023. Based on "the monthly data presented to us, we are satisfied that OPEC + member countries have fully achieved their production level required, under the decision taken on 5 October 2022 to reduce our global supply by 2 million barrels per day. We also discussed recent developments observed on the international oil market and its short-term prospects." Between May and December 2023, Algeria will voluntarily reduce its production by an additional 48,000 b/d, the Minister said.

Monetary and banking bill aims to modernize banking system



The Minister of Finance, Mr. Laziz Faïd presented on Monday 3 April 2023, before the People's National Assembly (Lower House) the bill on monetary and banking that aims to modernize the banking system to ensure a favorable climate for economic operators.

Mr. Laziz Faïd said that «this bill aims to modernize the banking system to adapt to current and future developments, including in its technological component to ensure a favorable climate for economic operators.»

Moreover, this bill is "a new milestone that follows a series of reforms initiated by Algeria, especially since it includes effective measures in terms of facilitation and speed of financial transactions.

The Minister recalled that the bill is part of the 54 commitments of the President of the Republic on major reforms of financial governance in Algeria.

Despite "reforms of the banking system in Algeria, the latter faces major challenges and suffers from inadequacy which requires the continuation of reforms to adapt to the mutations and changes in the local and international banking system, " the Minister of Finance continued.

Assembly of trucks: Company representing brands Volvo and Renault Trucks files application for approval

The Minister of Industry and Pharmaceutical Production, Ali Aoun said Thursday 13 April 2023, in response to a question from MP Mr. Abdelouahab Yakobi (MSP party) on "the reopening of the truck plant Swedish Volvo and +Renault Trucks + in the region of Meftah (Blida), with a production capacity of 2500 trucks per year, closed since 2019 " that "the company representing those two brands has applied for approval at the Ministry for consideration to obtain approval for the assembly of trucks in Meftah (province of Blida) " .

"The application for approval will be considered under the conditions stipulated by Executive Decree 22-384 setting the conditions and procedures for the exercise of the activity of dealers of new vehicles and following the order when registering on the digital platform," he said, assuring that there is "no decision taken by these services concerning the closure of the plant."

Baddari launches project to manufacture first electric car Made in Algeria



Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Mr. Kamel Baddari launched Monday 17 April 2023, in Algiers, the project for the manufacturing of the first electric car Made in Algeria by experts from the Industrial Technology Research Centre (CRTI).

Mr. Baddari said that “the first prototype of the electric car Made in Algeria is practically ready,” pointing out that “the operation of designing the structure, the battery and the engine has been finalized by young Algerian experts.”

In this regard, he said that the finalized prototype of this car will be launched “as soon as possible,” stressing CRTI’s role which consists in “proposing a finished prototype to the construction companies and accompanying them in the manufacturing operation of the first 100% Algerian electric car.”

Minister Baddari welcomed the results of the scientific researches made by CRTI, affirming that these results will enable “being in tune with the current researches and developments, in order to meet the national needs.”

In this regard, Minister Baddari insisted on the need to “value the innovations of the Centre’s experts by the manufacturers when placing the product in the market, in order to encourage the Algerian experts to make further efforts for the consolidation of the position of scientific research and the technological innovation.”

The Minister insisted on the importance of “involving the startups and academics in the execution of such projects.”

Algeria-EU: Twinning project between DGT, French, Swedish counterparts



A twinning project between the Directorate General of Taxes (DGI), the Directorate General of Public Finances (DGFIP) of France and the Swedish Tax Agency was launched on Thursday 27 April 2023, with a view to improving the DGI's performance in international taxation and mobilising new tax resources through cooperation.

The launch ceremony, held at the International Convention Centre of Algiers, was supervised by the Minister of Finance, Mr. Laaziz Fayed, who emphasized the importance of the project, which is part of the support programme of Algeria-European Union partnership priorities.

The twinning will help in the adoption of the best practices in terms of international tax system, revenue control and wealth tax.

Mr. Laaziz Fayed said "the implementation of the programme for the modernization of the tax administration according to a strategic vision based on an increase in ordinary tax revenues, the improvement of business climate, strengthening investment and combating tax fraud and evasion is contingent on the availability of modern tools, the acquisition of working mechanisms and the administrative skills."

Hydrocarbons: SONATRACH announces six discoveries in Q1 2023



The group SONATRACH said on Tuesday 11 April 2023 it had made six hydrocarbon discoveries, through its own efforts, during the first quarter of 2023.

Two oil and gas discoveries have been made in Amguid Messaoud basin while drilling BRM-1 and BMD-1 wells "with the rates of 5699 barrels of oil a day and 170461 m3 of gas per day in the first well, and 4856 barrels of oil a day and 255912 m3 of gas per day in the second well".

The findings, according to SONATRACH, confirm the "significant potential of oil and gas in the region of Touggourt, east of the field of Hassi Messaoud.

In addition, oil and condensate gas discoveries were also made in two wells drilled in the Berkine basin.

The first well, called HAM-1bis, "has a gas production rate of 129048 m3 per day and 239 barrels of condensate a day from a reservoir, and 1905 barrels of oil per day and 137484 m3 of gas a day from a second reservoir."

The second, called SAISW-1, "has a rate of 3117 barrels of oil a day and 219336 m3 of gas per day."

Another discovery of condensate gas was made in the region of Ohanet, Illizi basin, during the drilling of the KARS-3 well where the production rate is 336930 m3 of gas a day and 1504 barrels of condensate a day.

In Oued Mya basin, in the southeast of Hassi R'mel field, a discovery of oil and gas was also made during the drilling of LGL-2 well.

Opening of three Algerian banks in France, Africa, making progress



The opening process of Algerian bank branches abroad, starting by a bank in France and two others in Africa, is making progress, Finance Minister Laziz Faïd told the People's National Assembly (lower house of Parliament) on Tuesday 4 April 2023.

Mr. Faïd said "the opening of public banks abroad, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and France, has geostrategic purpose, both at the political and the economic levels."

The project, he noted, was planned in the Government's programme, adding that the Exterior Bank of Algeria (BEA) was taking the required steps for the creation of a branch in France, in addition to the opening of two banks in Africa (Senegal and Mauritania) by four public banks, namely the National Bank of Algeria (BNA), the Popular Credit of Algeria (CPA), the Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development (BADR) and the Exterior Bank of Algeria (BEA).

The bank branch to be opened in France will be named the International Exterior Bank of Algeria, he said, adding that the relevant authorization will be obtained in the first half of 2023.

A bank will be established in Mauritania under the name of the Algerian Union Bank and is expected to be launched at the latest in September 2023.

Another bank will be opened in Senegal and will be named the Algerian Bank of Senegal. It will be operational in the first half of 2023.

Bellara steel complex: 320,000 tonnes of iron, by-products exported in Q1 2023



The Algerian-Qatari Steel (AQS) Complex of Bellara, in Jijel, exported during the first quarter of current year 320,000 tonnes of ferrous products against 100,000 tonnes during the same period a year earlier, the company's Assistant Director General Mr. Sofiane Chaib Setti said on Wednesday 12 April 2023.

"Compared to 2022, the company has made a positive difference of 240,000 tonnes in terms of production and of USD160,000 million in terms of financial revenue," said the official, adding that "the company, which has recently started production and exportation, has managed to place the Algerian products in the international markets thanks to its executives."

He also said that these export operations come within the framework of the general policy of the country's top authorities aimed at diversifying the exports and reducing the dependence on hydrocarbons.

Preparations underway to export electrical energy by sea to Europe



The Minister of Energy and Mines, Mohamed Arkab stressed on Tuesday 11 April 20223 that preparations and studies were underway for the export of electricity by sea to Europe.

The Minister said that "Algeria has become a major hub in the production of electricity, with 25,000 megawatts produced, which makes it one of the leading countries in the Mediterranean basin in the production of electricity."

He added that "preparations, studies, and steps are underway with European partners for the export of electricity to Europe and ensure the success of this operation."

"The electrical energy for export to Europe will be produced by natural gas but also by the future solar power plants, which will play a key role in the export of clean energy to Europe," he said.

Regarding the project of the gas pipeline from Nigeria, through Niger and Algeria to reach Europe, Mr. Arkab stressed that the studies on this line are "at a very advanced stage", stressing that only 1,800 of 4,000 kilometers remain to achieve this line, divided between the three countries.

"The construction of this important pipeline will boost cooperation between African countries in the field of energy," said the Minister of Energy and Mines.

In addition, he said that gas exploration operations in Algerian territorial waters of the Mediterranean basin are underway and are conducted by Sonatrach, as part of the development program of the group, in coordination with foreign partners.

Algeria receives the original certificate of inscription of "Raï: Popular song of Algeria" at UNESCO



The Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and National Community Abroad, Mr. Amar Belani, received Thursday 27 April 2023, in Algiers a certificate inscribing "Raï, a popular folk song from Algeria," on UNESCO's representative list of intangible cultural heritage of humanity, handed over to him by the UN System Resident Coordinator in Algeria.

This inscription, will reinforce the list of Algeria by a tenth element after those of Ahellil of Gourara, of the nuptial costume of Tlemcen including 'Khit er rouh', of sbuâ, annual pilgrimage to the zawiya Sidi El Hadj Belkacem, of Rakb Sidi Cheikh (Fantasia) in El Bayadh and of the Sebeïba in the oasis of Djanet etc.

Japan Olive Oil Competition: Gold, silver medals for Algeria



Algeria has won gold and silver medals at Japan International Olive Oil Prize (Joop 2023), organized in April in Tokyo, and whose results were unveiled on Tuesday, the winners said on Wednesday 12 April 2023.

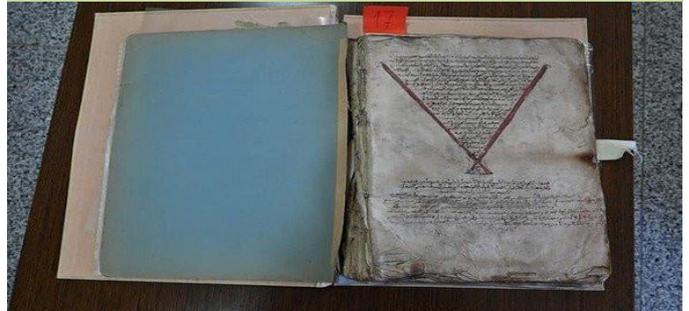
In a competition marked by the participation of 21 countries, the gold medal for the best olive oil in the world went to the brand "Baghlia" produced in the east of Boumerdes while the silver medal was snatched by the brand "Dahbia" from northern Djelfa.

Mr. Kiared Hamid, the Manager of "Baghlia," created in 1997, said that it is the company's second international prize, after the bronze medal obtained in an international contest on olive oil quality, organized in Los Angeles (USA).

"Baghlia" is also the holder of about thirty medals obtained in the past ten years in international tasting contests, including 10 gold medals.

"Dahbia" obtained on Tuesday 11 April 2023 the 13th distinction of its kind at the national and international levels, according to the brand's owner Mr. Hakim Allileche who underlined that he is always looking for quality standards in the olive oil extraction process.

Algeria recovers rare Islamic manuscript dating back to 1659



The Algerian authorities have succeeded in recovering a rare Islamic manuscript dating back to 1659 which the colonial authorities seized in 1842, after an attack by the French army against the Emir Abdelkader in the mountains of Ouarsenis," said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and National Community Abroad on Wednesday 5 April 2023 in a statement.

"The Algerian authorities, which highly appreciate this nationalist surge that honors the members of our community abroad, welcome their high nationalist spirit and their attachment to the history of their country and the heritage of their great forefathers. They also recalled that the recovery of this manuscript and its repatriation to the country are part of the tireless efforts and continuous steps that the highest authorities of the country have also made in order to restore all the Algerian heritage looted, for the sake of preserving and safeguarding the national memory".

“El-Ad El-Akssi Lilkhinjar” play at International Monodrama Festival of Carthage

The Algerian play ““El-Ad El-Akssi Lilkhinjar” (The countdown of the Dagger) was selected to take part in the 5th International Monodrama Festival of Carthage (Tunisia) from 2 to 5 May 2023, according to a statement of the head of the theatrical association “El Sitar and producer of this play.

The decision was taken by the committee in charge of the selection of works for the festival, by taking into consideration several criteria, notably the artistic high level, the depth of the theatrical text and the good staging.

This new edition will be marked by the participation of about twenty works produced by theatrical companies from several countries, like Algeria, Iraq, Lebanon, Egypt, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Italy as well as Tunisia, the guest country of this cultural event.

Lasting 30 minutes, this play features a simulation of the tragedy “Machbet” (King of Scotland) by William Shakespeare, based on the perpetual struggle between good and evil.

Heritage Month: African Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition inaugurated in Algiers



The exhibition of African intangible cultural heritage was inaugurated on Tuesday 18 April 2023 at the Palais de la Culture Moufidi-Zakaria in Algiers, on the occasion of the official launch of the festivities of the Heritage Month (18 April-18 May). The exhibition presents elements of the cultural heritage of 27 African countries classified on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of UNESCO.

The Algerian intangible heritage is represented by all the elements listed by UNESCO, including the Ahellil of Gourara (poetic and musical genre emblematic of the Zénètes of Gourara listed in 2008), the Chedda of Tlemcen (bridal costume listed in 2012), the Imzad (international dossier registered in 2013 on behalf of Algeria, Mali and Niger), Rakk Sidi Cheikh (2013), the Sebeïba Festival in Djanet (2014), the Sbuâ of Timimoun (2015), the water measurers (kiyaline el-ma/2018), couscous (joint dossier/2020) and Raï (2022)

The exhibition also highlights the Congolese Rumba (2021), the Cape Verdean Morna (2009) and the Seychelles Moutya (a dance of resistance to servitude and social injustice endured by former slaves).

Among the heritage items on display is also the "Gélédé oral heritage" jointly inscribed between Benin, Togo and Nigeria in 2008 and cultural spaces from Mali, Nigeria and Guinea as well as dances from different countries such as Kenya and Zimbabwe.

Several practices related to music and the making of musical instruments were presented on this occasion such as the Balafon (Burkina Faso), the Aka pygmies (Central Africa) and other musical genres from Uganda, Ethiopia and Mozambique.

The three-day exhibition also offers a journey into the intangible heritage of Africa in various fields, discovering African traditions, social practices, rituals, festivals, events.

