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Algeria Summary 18 August 2025

Algeria's relations with France hit a new low after France's president Emmanuel Macron (2017-present) on 6 August calls for "greater firmness" in his government's approach to Algeria and cancels visa exemptions for Algerian officials. Agence Nationale Pour la Valorisation Des Ressources En Hydrocarbures (ALNAFT) (national development hydrocarbon agency) head Samir Bekhti says on 15 August that the country is on the verge of sealing major agreements with United States (US)-headquartered energy giants, Exxon Mobil, and Chevron, to develop its vast gas reserves. Algeria and Italy hold an intergovernmental meeting on 23 July, agreeing to cooperate on the fight against terrorism and migration control, while companies from both countries sign deals in sectors including energy and telecommunications.

Algerian ties with France hit new low

Algeria's relations with France hit a new low after France's president **Emmanuel Macron** (2017-present) on 6 August [called](#) for "greater firmness" in his government's approach to Algeria and cancelled visa exemptions for Algerian officials. Macron reportedly told his prime minister, **Francois Bayrou**, in a letter that the growing difficulties France is facing in terms of migration and security with Algeria necessitated a tougher stance. Macron further said that Algeria would be notified that a 2013 French-Algerian visa waiver agreement for diplomatic and service passport holders is being suspended, [noting](#):

"Algerian authorities have chosen to not respond to our calls over the past months to work together. From now on, we have no choice but to adopt a stance of great firmness."

Macron also instructed France's interior minister, **Bruno Retailleau**, to ask countries in the **Schengen** zone, which permit passport-free travel between their borders, to help implement the tighter visa policy, notably by consulting France for the issuance of short-stay visas for the Algerian officials in question and the passports covered by the 2013 agreement. Macron added further:

"France must be strong and command respect. It can only receive this from its partners if it shows them the respect it demands from them. This basic rule also applies to Algeria."

In response to Macron's letter, Algeria's foreign ministry said in a [statement](#) on 7 August that France was not taking responsibility for its own role in the deterioration of bilateral relations and that it was "France, and France alone, that initiated such a request". The ministry further noted that Algeria would implement reciprocal measures on French diplomats. The ministry added that France is making threats to escalate its diplomatic dispute and Algeria will not succumb to it.

Macron's statements represent a surprising escalation of his stance toward Algeria, following a period in which he favoured quiet diplomacy to repair the long-running rift. Algerian-French relations have been increasingly strained since July 2024 when Macron recognised **Morocco's** sovereignty over the disputed **Western Sahara**. Morocco claims complete sovereignty over the Western Sahara, while Algeria backs the **Sahrawi** population's right to self-determination and backs the separatist **Polisario Front** armed group. France became the second permanent **United Nations Security Council (UNSC)** member, after the **United States (US)** in 2020, to support Morocco's position.

While France's recognition of Morocco's autonomy plan has been a source of a major diplomatic crisis between Algeria and France, relations have been strained for decades given France's colonial past. Recent tensions have also been fuelled by disputes over security cooperation and migration, with France saying it has struggled to get Algeria to accept its deported citizens (*see ARC Briefing Algeria*

Apr 2025 & May 2025). Algeria's imprisonment of Franco-Algerian author, **Boualem Sansal**, and French football journalist, **Christophe Gleizes**, has only worsened the crisis.

For France, a poor relationship with Algeria has major economic, security and social repercussions as trade is extensive and about 10% of its 68 million population has a connection to Algeria. While Algeria would also be impacted by its declining relations with France, the country feels more emboldened to take aggressive measures against France since the country is far less important to its economy than a few years ago. Algeria's exports in 2023, mostly in energy (oil and gas), reached a substantial [\\$7.2 billion](#) in 2023, with an average annual growth of 8.1% over the previous five years. However, this trade has been overshadowed by Algeria's deepening energy ties with **Italy**, **Spain**, and other **European** partners seeking to diversify away from **Russian** gas. As a result, Algeria has greater room to manoeuvre diplomatically without fearing severe economic fallout from antagonising France.

This shifting trade landscape not only reduces Algeria's dependency on its former colonial power but also strengthens its bargaining position in Europe's broader energy and geopolitical calculations. However, declining relations are not expected to impact gas exports in the short term, as energy trade remains governed by long-term contracts. A local source asserted that relations between the two countries is expected to "*deteriorate further*" at least in the short to medium term, particularly because "*Algeria can really be stubborn, especially with France*".

Algeria nears deals with Exxon and Chevron in shale gas production

Agence Nationale Pour la Valorisation Des Ressources En Hydrocarbures (ALNAFT) (national development hydrocarbon agency) head **Samir Bekhti** said in an [interview](#) on 15 August that the country is on the verge of sealing major agreements with US-headquartered energy giants, **Exxon Mobil** and **Chevron**, to develop its vast gas reserves, including shale gas for the first time. Bekhti said most of the technical aspects have already been settled, and while commercial terms are still under negotiation, they are close to being finalised. He further said that the involvement of two major US players "*sends a strong signal*" of Algeria's growing appeal.

Speaking on developments, both Chevron and Exxon stressed the opportunities they see in Algeria - Chevron [said](#) in a statement on 15 August that Algeria holds a "*world-class petroleum system with the potential for significant oil and gas resources*". Exxon also said that in line with the heads-of-agreement (HOA) signed in May 2024, it will continue to work with Algerian state-owned energy giant **Sonatrach** to unlock the country's "*unconventional resources*".

Algeria is [looking](#) to shale gas to boost state revenue and ensure long-term supply, despite hydrocarbons, which form the backbone of the domestic economy, making up more than three-quarters of exports. Government efforts to diversify the economy have been limited and rising domestic energy demand from a population of 47 million adds further pressure, making new investment crucial. But in a major positive for Algeria, its investment advantages are clear. A well-developed gas network and proximity to **Europe**, where it has three pipeline connections, make Algeria a major attraction for foreign companies, and a far more convenient supplier than distant gas exporters like **Qatar** that send liquefied natural gas (LNG) via ships. Globally, Algeria also ranks third in recoverable shale resources, only behind **China** and **Argentina**, and even ahead of the US, whose export model Algeria seeks to imitate. Speaking on the matter, Bekhti [said](#) that while it took the US took about 15 years to build its shale boom, Algeria could do it faster due to its existing the infrastructure, facilities and pipeline network. He also said that in areas near facilities, projects could move from data collection to production within two or three years.

However, several [key challenges](#) remain. Shale production outside the US has been notoriously difficult, often hindered by water shortages, geology or unattractive legal terms. Algeria also faces cost concerns, as most shale reserves lie deep in the southern desert, far from major population centers. Local opposition is another risk and earlier attempts in 2016 stalled after protests over water contamination fears. Despite this, momentum is building. Last year, Sonatrach signed preliminary agreements with Exxon and Chevron for projects in the **Ahnet** and **Berkine** basins, while Chinese energy giant, **Sinopec**, [signed](#) a deal with Sonatrach in July to exploring another shale-rich area.

Concurrently, ALNAFT is also working to attract wider investment, with a new licencing round planned for early 2026. Algeria's June tender process, the first in more than a decade, awarded licences to giants such as **Italy's Eni**, **France's TotalEnergies** and **QatarEnergy**. As Bekhti stressed, Algeria is focused on bringing in partners with real experience, whether European, Chinese or American. If managed correctly, the strategy could finally unlock the full potential of Algeria's unconventional resources.

Italy and Algeria boost cooperation with new security and business deals

Algeria and **Italy** [held](#) an intergovernmental meeting in Rome on 23 July, agreeing to cooperate on the fight against terrorism and migration control, while companies from both countries signed deals in sectors including energy and telecommunications. Italy's prime minister **Giorgia Meloni** (2022-present) hosted Algerian President **Abdelmadjid Tebboune** (2019-present) for the July meeting after Italy's foreign minister **Antonio Tajani** visited Algeria in March. Meloni [told](#) a press conference following the meeting that relations between the two countries have reached "*a level of intensity and solidity that had never been achieved before*". Tebboune also expressed his "*confidence*" in what was achieved at the summit and said the signed agreements pave the way for a "*strategic partnership that reflects the depth of our relations*".

The two governments [signed](#) 13 agreements in total, including commitments to cooperate against terrorism and its financing, though specific threats were not detailed. A major focus was migration, with a new plan to coordinate search-and-rescue operations for migrants attempting the dangerous sea crossing from North Africa to Europe. Meloni's government was elected in 2022 on a mandate to curb irregular migration to the country.

Business deals were also a key part of the meeting, with Italian submarine cable company, **Sparkle**, a unit of **Telecom Italia**, reaching a preliminary agreement with **Algerie Telecom** to build a new subsea cable linking the two countries. Italian energy giant Eni last month also deepened its cooperation with Algeria's Sonatrach, signing an additional agreement alongside a recent \$1.3 billion contract to develop hydrocarbons

Algeria is Italy's top trading partner in **Africa**, with bilateral trade close to €14 billion (\$16.3 billion) and Italian investments worth €8.5 billion (\$9.9 billion). Meloni made Algeria one of her first international trips in January 2023, to discuss building a strategic partnership amid Italy's efforts to wean off **Russian** energy supplies following the invasion of **Ukraine**, making it one of Italy's most important gas suppliers. Meloni has largely succeeded in building on her predecessor, **Mario Draghi's** (2021-2022) successful efforts to boost Algerian energy supplies to Italy and strengthen bilateral relations. For both sides, the summit underscored a pragmatic alliance, with Italy gaining a reliable energy and security partner on its southern flank, while Algeria deepens its economic ties with Europe beyond hydrocarbons.

Planner

- 2025 **(Algeria)** Algeria and **France** to suspend 2013 French-Algerian visa pact
- 2025 **(Algeria)** Algeria set to reach deal with **United States (US)**-headquartered **Exxon and Chevron**
- 2026 **(Algeria)** National assembly elections 2025

Chronology

- 18 Aug 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *Times Live*. A magnitude 5.8 earthquake strikes Algeria's northeastern **Tebessa Province** with no casualties reported thus far;
- 17 Aug 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *Algeria Press Service*. State-owned hydrocarbon development agency, **Agence Nationale pour la Valorisation des Ressources en Hydrocarbures**, and **United States (US)**-based **Occidental Petroleum** sign two agreements to conduct studies on the hydrocarbon potential of two exploration blocks;

13 Aug 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *Algeria Press Service*. President **Abdelmadjid Tebboune's** decision to allow accredited online press to publish public procurement advertisements takes effect, replacing the exclusive reliance on print media;

12 Aug 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *Algeria Press Service*. Algeria rejects a temporary procedure proposed by **France** concerning access for Algerian officials to restricted areas of **Paris** (France) airports for delivering or retrieving diplomatic pouches;

9 Aug 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *Morocco World News*. A **French** judge issues an international arrest warrant against **Salaheddine Selloum**, a former first secretary at the Algerian embassy in **France**, for his alleged role in a terrorist conspiracy linked to the kidnapping of **Amir Boukhors**, known as **Amir DZ**, an Algerian YouTuber and political refugee in France;

6 Aug 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Herald*. Local companies are preparing to participate in the **4th Intra-Africa Trade Fair** in **Algiers (Algeria)**, aimed at boosting their market presence under the **African Continental Free Trade Area**;

5 Aug 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *AA*. Algeria's **United Nations (UN)** envoy **Amar Bendjama** denounces **Israel's** actions in **Gaza** as "*genocide*," citing famine, blocked aid and violations of international law, while urging immediate humanitarian access and a ceasefire;

3 Aug 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *AL 24 News*. Energy ministry confirms that Algeria will increase oil production by 11,000 barrels per day (bpd) from September after **OPEC+** voted to collectively increase production by 547,000 bpd from the same month;

3 Aug 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *Algeria Press Service*. President **Abdelmadjid Tebboune** receives **Swiss** ambassador **Pierre-Yves Fux** for a visit in Algiers;

2 Aug 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *Reuters*. **United States (US)** President **Donald Trump** reaffirms support for **Morocco's** sovereignty over **Western Sahara**;

1 Aug 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *Middle East Monitor*. **United States (US)** President **Donald Trump** implements a 30% tariff on Algerian exports to the US;

31 Jul 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *AL 24 News*. Energy minister **Mohamed Arkab** meets with **Saudi** ambassador **Abdullah Bin Nasser Al Bussairy** to discuss expanding cooperation and investment in energy, mining, renewable energy, and seawater desalination;

30 Jul 2025 **Bordj Badji Mokhtar (Algeria)** *Algeria Press Service*. **People's National Army (PNA)** reports that two terrorists surrendered to military authorities in Bordj Badji Mokhtar;

29 Jul 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *Algeria Press Service*. **United States (US)** senior advisor for Africa **Massad Boulos** says his visit to Algeria marked the beginning of collaboration aimed at fostering a more prosperous future for both nations and the wider region;

29 Jul 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *Morocco World News*. **Morocco's** King **Mohammed VI** once again affirms his stance that his country's commitment to safeguarding its sovereignty over the southern provinces in **Western Sahara** should not be interpreted as enmity toward Algeria;

27 Jul 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *Algeria Press Service*. President **Abdelmadjid Tebboune** meets with **United States (US)** senior advisor for Africa, **Massad Boulos**, who is leading a high-level US delegation to Algiers;

26 Jul 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *Algeria Press Service*. Foreign trade and export promotion minister **Kamel Rezig** represents Algeria at the **United Nations Food Systems Summit Stocktake (UNFSS+4)**;

23 Jul 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *Business Live* President **Abdelmadjid Tebboune** and **Italian** prime minister **Giorgia Meloni** agree to co-operate to fight terrorism and control migration during an intergovernmental meeting in **Rome** (Italy);

22 Jul 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *Algeria Press Service*. Algeria and **Italy** reaffirm their strong political ties to enhance their partnership, emphasised during President **Abdelmadjid Tebboune**'s visit to Italy;

21 Jul 2025 **Bamako (Mali)** *APA News*. **Algeria**'s President **Abdelmadjid Tebboune** voices deep concern over the security situation in Mali and the wider **Sahel**, warning about the presence of "*foreign mercenaries*" along Algeria's southern border – a potential reference to **Russian** paramilitary group **Wagner**;

20 Jul 2025 **Algiers (Algeria)** *Algeria Press Service*. **Zimbabwe**'s President **Emmerson Mnangagwa** concludes an official visit, signing several agreements and memorandums of understanding with President **Abdelmadjid Tebboune** aimed at strengthening bilateral cooperation across multiple sectors;

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