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STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF ALGERIA AT THE TWENTY-EIGHTH MEETING OF THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

Stockholm, 2 and 3 December 2021

Mr. Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen

I have the honour and pleasure to express the Algerian delegation's deepest appreciation to Sweden, and in particular to Ambassador Ulrika Funered and all her staff, for its excellent Chairmanship and the optimal organization of our work both in Vienna and here in Stockholm, where we are surrounded with every possible attention. My congratulations and thanks go also to the Polish Chairmanship of the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation Group – a tenure that has been notable for its rich programme of thematic meetings and new initiatives to strengthen the OSCE Mediterranean Partnership under the expert leadership of Ambassador Adam Hałaciński.

Algeria looks forward to working with North Macedonia, which will chair the Mediterranean Partnership next year.

Mr. Chairperson,

Our thematic meetings in the course of 2021 have allowed us to address numerous challenges facing the Mediterranean region, such as climate change and the various forms of transnational organized crime, particularly drug trafficking, terrorism, corruption, arms trafficking and trafficking in human beings. These trafficking flows feed off one another, also in terms of their financing, and they have proved to have direct negative effects on stability and development in the countries of the region. To these challenges must henceforth be added the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Unfortunately, the problem is greater on the southern fringe of the Mediterranean, where threats to the peace and security of the peoples who inhabit it are a daily reality. We are currently very concerned about threats to peace and security. Our meeting in this Scandinavian region, which has campaigned so much for international peace and security – notably in the Mediterranean – and the forthrightness of the three distinguished ladies who inaugurated our meeting, Ann Linde, Margareta Cederfelt and Helga Schmid, encourage me to express myself just as frankly in lamenting the violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Palestine and Western Sahara, where the rights of the Palestinian and Sahrawi peoples are flouted, violated and trampled underfoot by the occupying States, namely, by Israel and Morocco, respectively.

It is impossible to continue holding forth on the benefits brought by the Abraham Accords if the concept and approach chosen essentially perpetuate the illegal occupation of territories colonized by force

and in violation of relevant United Nations resolutions. These agreements have definitively put paid to the Arab Peace Initiative.

In 2002, at the Arab League summit in Beirut, the Arab Heads of State or Government approved the peace plan presented by Saudi Arabia, which offered Israel the opportunity to secure peace and security for its people. The plan held out the prospect of simultaneous recognition of Israel by all the Arab States in exchange for a solution based on two separate States living side by side in peace and security. This offer of comprehensive and lasting peace for all the peoples in the Middle East was disdainfully rejected by Israel, which clearly prefers to conclude separate agreements so as to sow division among the Arab nation.

I wish to lament here the loss of life – generally of innocent civilians, including many children – and the torture and inhuman or degrading treatment suffered by prisoners and human rights activists. We all know that occupied Palestine is the only place on earth where children are tried by military tribunals and have heavy sentences imposed on them. I personally cannot forget the horror conveyed by the images showing the young Ms. Ahd Tamimi grappling with soldiers from the Israeli occupation army. I should explain at this point that Algeria does not recognize the State of Israel and that we are against Zionism because it is a world view based on expansionism and apartheid in violation of international law. Some media outlets dependent on the purse strings of lobbyists try to discredit Algeria when it speaks and to blacken the image of our country by giving to believe that we use the expression “Zionist entity” because we reject the Jewish religion and that we are, consequently, anti-Semites and racists, indeed proponents of hatred.

Allow me to recall here a historical fact that is absolutely undeniable: as an Arab-Berber people, the Algerians are Semites. All the descendants of Shem are Semites, be they Jews, Christians, Muslims or even atheists. Semitism is not contingent on any religion. In fact, you could say that Algeria is anti-racist by virtue of its historical DNA. We are proud of having combated apartheid. We were quite alone at the start of our struggle against this most abject manifestation of racism. It was Algeria that brought about the exclusion of the apartheid regime from the United Nations. And I am especially proud of having witnessed the dissolution of the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid in 1990 following the release of Nelson Mandela and the end of that regime so unworthy of humanity.

There is an urgent need to put the peace talks between Palestinians and Israelis and between Sahrawis and Moroccans back on their United Nations rails. Letting these situations fester and allowing war to be waged between the protagonists will ultimately destabilize, nay destroy – directly or indirectly – the entire Mediterranean region.

I do not wish to assume the role of Cassandra: playing the prophet of doom is not in the Algerian tradition. However, the recent escalation in our region shows that, under the guise of normalization, Israel and Morocco intend to support each other so as to continue flouting international law.

I cannot remain silent here about the recent acts of blatant hostility and aggression undertaken by Morocco against Algeria with the support of Israel. I shall limit myself to citing the four most recent ones:

- The first act of aggression was the espionage carried out under the Pegasus operation: Amnesty International has informed us that some six thousand telephones of Algerian officials were hacked, including those of all the ambassadors. I can tell you that we feel our privacy to have been violated and, at the same time, we ask ourselves what is the point of this childish spying, given that Algerian diplomacy is one of the easiest to read and predict, since our positions respect international law.

- The second act of aggression was the murder, on 1 November of this year, that is, on the very day of our national holiday, of three Algerian long-distance lorry drivers who were transporting commercial products in Mauritania.
- The third act of aggression was the political, diplomatic, logistic and financial support rendered to secessionist organizations that have been declared terrorist organizations in Algeria.
- The fourth act of aggression was Morocco’s purchase from Israel of Harop unmanned aerial vehicles, more commonly known as “Kamikaze drones” on account of their lethal capabilities, each one being able to carry up to 20 kg of explosives.

These are serious acts – ill-considered, impulsive and irresponsible acts that are unworthy of a neighbouring country with a common destiny. Choosing aggression is evidence of weakness and impotence. Building peace – true peace – demands bravery, courage and a sense of the heartbeat of history.

Algeria reiterates its commitment to peace and security for its own people and for all the peoples in the region and beyond. It joins and supports all those who have urged respect for international law.

Algeria expresses the hope that the Finnish Chairmanship of the OSCE Ministerial Council in 2025 will provide, 50 years on, an opportunity to reaffirm the Helsinki principles.

I thank you for your kind attention.