

Essay on the future of Polish and Algerian relations

Since the beginning of times, people had always a particular feat, whatever civilization they belonged to, wherever they lived, whatever the time or era, they were always curious and tried to explore the unknown, from neighboring places to the most remote ones, despite not knowing what or who to expect ! For better or worst, they possessed an insatiable instinct, the ever pushing forward force that is the need to know has always been anchored in the human mind since its creation. And when they eventually connected and met with new other people from these other areas, again for better or worst they would always perpetuate that connection and those relations as if to never look back. They would remain strongly attached to where they originated but would still be fascinated about the new place and people and search for ways to trade, gain prosperity and look forward to new opportunities to bring back where they lived. And in this regard, the relations between Poland and Algeria, and their respective people is no exception. Although not as rich and longstanding compared to relations between other countries, however there's been constant positive exchanges, since 1962 and the official establishment of their diplomatic relations, with Poland being among the first nations to recognize Algeria's sovereignty and independence. Even ! quite impactful during difficult times, indeed these two nations in particular played an important role as members of the non-aligned movement in contributing to the de-escalation of the cold war confrontation between the western US led bloc and eastern Soviet led bloc when it was at its peak and was really endangering the stability of the world with the looming threat of nuclear WWII ! **This essay hails the efforts of promoting friendly & fruitful relations between both nations and their people and is meant to be a tribute dedicated to that.** Worth noting also that informal contacts varying in forms predate way before the official establishment of diplomatic relations which some of them will be mentioned further down, as a constant reminder of where Algerian Polish relations come from, in order to determine what is the field of possibilities for their future relations. In this regard, it can definitely develop furthermore in a multitude of fields such as culturally, economically, as well as diplomatically. Either by enhancing what's already in place or even exploring whole new inexistent aspects so far.

Perhaps the first field where cooperation could be certainly enhanced is economic exchanges, as the endeavour for prosperity as a common and shared objective has often been the strongest of incentives for pursuing relations. This could be massively beneficial for both parties as Energy first and foremost, plays a key role in any country's stability and growth regardless if it is an importer or rather an exporter. Poland has diversified its oil and gas sources for example in 2021 : **Russia (\$5.47B), Saudi Arabia (\$1.97B), Nigeria (\$887M), Kazakhstan (\$690M), and Norway (\$612M)** for crude oil, and **Qatar (\$1.03B), Russia (\$652M), United States (\$473M), Sweden (\$266M), and Nigeria (\$199M)** for petroleum gas (The observatory of economic complexity), as for natural gas, imports from Russia (Pipeline), historically the main provider have been halted since April of 2022 due to the combination of both conflict in Ukraine as well as the decision from latter to impose new rules for so called unfriendly countries. This benefited largely US

LNG imports which were made possible by the expansion of receiving capacity at the **Świnoujście LNG terminal** which accounted for a quarter of **PKN Orlen** imports as well as pipelines from new suppliers in **Norway** and **Lithuania** accounted for more than 50%, the rest being western and southern European neighbors interconnectors (PKN Orlen official website statement in march 2023). This is an efficient policy that prevents growing too dependant on one provider, but perhaps extremely costly when it comes to energy imports from overseas, and one way to solidify this policy is to massively shortcutting those long distances (crossing the Atlantic for USA imports, and crossing the Suez canal for gulf countries imports through the mediterranean and up to the north Atlantic) for some of its energy imports as it's way shorter (**up to thousands of Kilometers**) from Algeria (**Arzew** and **Skikda refineries** for example) and would translate in reduced costs of **billions of dollars annually**. It can be done in two ways, from northern atlantic or even through the black sea, then through Ukraine (as a way to support its reconstruction when the conflicts ends hopefully soon), Romania, Bulgaria and Greece benefiting Poland's network in the region, further enhancing or creating jobs in the transportation and logistics sector which is in sync with the purpose of the north-south highway "**Via Carpathia**" and the "**rail-2-sea**" railway connecting **Gdansk** to the black sea through Romania. To push it even further a joint venture can be launched between **PKN Orlen and Sonatrach** (each country's biggest manufacturer and distributor of petroleum products, both state owned making agreements easier to negotiate), clearly enjoying expertise and experience from both sides , additionally creating job opportunities for both Polish and Algerians.

This could also be an opportunity to solidify the maritime trade routes between the two nations such as Gdansk-Algiers (biggest ports in both countries respectively), exchanging goods and primary commodities, such as wheat which Algeria has imported ever more quantities from **Poland (275M)** from 2020 as resort from heavily overrelying on France (652M) as the main supplier (The observatory of economic complexity). The same principle should apply for other agricultural products. There could be technological and knowledge exchange sharing experiences about production & growing food in extreme weather conditions (freezing temperatures in Poland and hot ones in Algerian desert) for long term capabilities, auto-sufficiency, exports and trade.

Another significant way to cooperate would be through public and private investments. For instance Poland's economy is perhaps the most robust in Europe and among top ones in the world as it is the only economy than didn't face backlash of the worldwide 2008 crisis (intrestingly enough Algeria due to its strict foreign investment policy and cautiousness didn't suffer much as well), addionaly recovering quickly from the Covid19 Pandemic and even remarkably and effectively replaced it reliance on Russian gas while other european nations are hardly catching up ! Subsequently Poland constitute the ideal candidate in term of risk management for Algeria to invest in government treasury bonds for example, which is key for long term mutual benefits for both nations' economies as Poland would also gain a boost allowing it to finance much needed ongoing infra

projects, sustain its social health and educating system and even compensate for the budgets they need to allocate for the different EU funding programs.

Another sector that is not only worth being explored but actually exploited is digital techs and computing science. As an engineer myself speaking from personal experience working for a company where I had the privilege to work closely with Polish colleagues as well as getting to know them on personal level and being good friends with recurrent contacts even after we all have left the company in question. From that I can attest the limits of us collaborating in several key aspects and projects are only the limits of our own imagination. Polish companies could very much compete with their European counterparts with an edge in the race of gaining important contracts, using a strategy consisting on relying on the skills of their already qualified Polish engineers in code development and delegate DevOps operations to specialized Algerian subcontractors or vice-versa depending on each specific case. Most importantly this field allows a seamless cooperation due to its standardization just as Mathematics are the same everywhere in the world, computing science techs are the same wherever you go, from Asia, to South America to the US, and to Poland and Algeria! Another factor pushing this direction is that this sector is growing for both nations and each year there's an increasing demand in their local markets, for example also instead of both sets of companies (both Poland's and Algeria's) resorting to companies from European neighbors (France, Germany ...) that impose much higher prices for often the same quality of work or even lower (again from personal first hand experience), both Polish and Algerian companies and contractors could resort to each other in these circumstances for better prices with higher quality, just as mentioned above, same tech everywhere, just the dedication that varies!

Final sector from the economical view, military and defence cooperation is key for long term sustained security, as contributing to the security of each continent benefits greatly its neighbors. The key aspect resides in my opinion in Naval military ship building, as Algeria often resorts to either France or Germany for manufacturing Fregate class ships, it could turn to Poland for future orders, following the diversifying source policy and in turn it would help support Poland's aspiration to become a strong industry in this strategic sector as **Deputy Prime Minister Jacek Sasin** expressed in past June of this year (tvpworld.com). And in turn it would support Algeria in its endeavour to better control its Mediterranean borders, limiting sub-Saharan refugees' numbers crossing illegally to Europe, prevent piracy acts on maritime roads (although generally secure and free from such acts but we know that cautiousness is never unwelcomed).

All above key economic aspects would impose Poland among regional European leaders and place it in a favorable spot in the face of the emerging markets of African countries through Algeria (the regional North African power), hence achieving **The Intermarium** as once conceived by **Chief of State and First Marshal of Poland Józef Piłsudski**, and supported by major modern day plans such as the **Three Seas Initiative**.

Economics aside, there's even more to discuss as indeed the Polish and Algerian people & states share so incredibly much ! The most important of the lot is perhaps the common conservative values of respect of the family nucleus and respect towards society, values deeply anchored and instilled through religion as well, Catholic Christianity in Poland and Islam in Algeria. However definitely not in opposition to a youthful vision from both sides, attached to its legacy while simultaneously resolutely turned towards the future and progress. Besides, Polish Christians that are maybe unaware of this fact would be nicely surprised by the high standing that Jesus holds within the Islamic culture and faith, and by Muslims in Algeria particularly. Another deeply shared feature is our similar history, both countries and nations were former continental powers, then both proceeded to suffer from colonialism and numerous invasions throughout history and both had to fight & struggle to regain independence. In addition to initiatives already set, two interesting initiatives could potentially signal a strong coming together for both nations in recognizing such similar history. The first one being named after two historical resistant martyr figures, one from each country, as an example of the name: **"The Jerzy Popiełuszko - Ahmad Zabana Initiative"** as a symbol and a tribute of both countries sacrifices, and could be celebrated during each country's national independence day and on both embassies in Algiers and Warsaw. The second initiative, could be dedicated to the Algerian and Polish WWII prisoners that were held together at **Stalag II-B and Stalag VIII-C Nazi POW camps operated in Czarne and Żagań**, respectively, as a manner to commemorate the significant efforts from both sides in freeing not only themselves but also the world from the powers of the Axis, as the Polish motto says **"For our freedom and yours"**.

From a cultural perspective, there's certainly many things worth mentioning too, as stated early in the introduction, Polish & Algerian contacts predates long before official relations began. For instance through literature with **Nowid's poem** addressed to the **Emir Abd el-Kader** where he expressed his affinity with the latter's ideas in his work **"Call to the intelligent, warning to the indifferent"**. We also find similarities throughout the history of our respective literatures, in key heroic figures, possibly our equivalents in some kind of the Robbin Hood. There are several, naming just a few doesn't do them justice, but for the purpose of keeping it short we can name **Jerzy Janoszik**, and **Arezk El-Bachir**. Putting into place concours and competitions involving literature through already existing or new student programs would certainly durably solidify such cultural similarities.

Likewise in another key aspect of culture, we have lots in common through sport, particularly Football and when we speak about that how not to bring up the illustrious **Stefan Żywotko** and his magnificent career at the **club of JSK**, largely contributing to making it the greatest club in Algerian football and one of the greatest in Africa. As a son of the region this is a particular source of pride, something I didn't miss bringing it during discussions with my dear Polish friends and colleagues.

And this could and should serve as an inspiration because again we can mutually benefit from that, as Polish football is still not at the level of european top 5 leagues but new

generations are emerging leading to the same phenomenon that happened with Belgium for example with multiple talents across all European top clubs and top leagues and building a national team reaching the advanced stages of international competitions ! however Polish football federation needs to capitulate on that. Algeria constitutes an important pool of talents from all Africa and often France, Spain and Italy are the most benefiting from it. There's certainly room to work in terms of academies, exchanging coaching camps, friendly competitions for all different levels (from youth levels to professional senior) with scouting involved.

The last two key points and maybe the most decisive ones for long term relations are Education and Tourism. Because from the consequences of both combined depends the positive evolution of all what's been previously enumerated, hence the success of it.

It is paramount to put in place conventions between both countries' top universities, especially in scientific research fields matching exactly the subjects related to both nations' cooperating ambitions like computing science and digital techs as mentioned above, agriculture and biology of marine farming, both renewable and fossil energy, water resource preservation (Algeria possesses some of the largest underground water reserves in the world) as the world is set to experience global water crises in the coming decades (from 2030 on), naval industry, health and medicine, finance and economics, even law and geopolitics as legislation and policy are the backbone for enabling a suitable environment for economic exchanges. Similarly, conventions should be put into place between recognized by state tourism agencies, and possibly moderately set visa quotas allocated to travelers. I had the privilege with my close friends to visit recently Ghardaia in the Algerian south, a jewel of tourism with a worldwide reputation, and we had the pleasure to actually meet Ukrainian tourists with whom we shared common activities. They actually happen to live in Warsaw (they've been brought by their friend, an Algerian university professor after he initially invited them to a conference about new construction materials that respect environment, as a clear evidence for what this section advocates for in terms Education & Tourism combined impact). Just like we spotted countless other nationalities, so there's definite room for Polish travelers too. The reverse track could also be exploited, France for multiple reasons is the first destination for Algerians (which constitutes a huge weight in billions of euros on their tourism revenue), but from personal experience (friends that visited Poland through AIESEC Algeria, and numerous other testimonies), it's widespread knowledge among Algerians that visited both France and Poland, that they overwhelmingly favor the latter and consider it to be far more beautiful, having a share from that market (working class Algerians able to afford tourism) would assuredly benefit Poland's economy and vice-versa.

As this essay comes to an end, but human relationships and by extension nations' relations shall remain and endure the test of time. If correctly explored and exploited the outcome of Polish & Algerian partnerships hold the potential to durably impact on a large scale for decades to come, but to what extent? only the future will tell us, and the future is continuously made today in the present, so let's leave no stone unturned, as mentioned at the beginning, we should follow our irrepensible instinct of looking forward !