

**Challenges of activating Algeria's economic diplomacy and stakes of security problem in Africa**

تحديات تفعيل الدبلوماسية الاقتصادية الجزائرية ورهانات الإشكال الأمني في إفريقيا

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**Abstract :**

*Algeria has been working hard in recent times, especially after the collapse of its revenues from the global hydrocarbon markets, to direct its investments towards the African continent, which are promising markets for Algerian commodities, given the opportunities that the economic geography provides in front of it in terms of favorable opportunities for intra-regional investments with the countries of the continent. From the African continent there are many threats of a security nature, and the challenges that are problematic for achieving any effective investments in the continent without avoiding the effects of the security and instability prevailing on the continent.*

*Therefore, this study attempts to delve into the problem of the Algerian investment trend in the African continent in light of the security threats in the region, with the aim of showing the opportunities offered by geography for the Algerian investment trend towards Africa, and the most important security threats in the Sahel region, which impose multiple precautions on intra-Algerian-African investments.*

**Keywords:** Security threats, intra-investment, economic threats, security threats in Africa, Algeria and the African continent.

**ملخص:**

تعمل الجزائر جاهدة في الآونة الأخيرة وخاصة بعد انهيار عائداتها من الأسواق العالمية للمحروقات على توجيه استثماراتها صوب القارة الإفريقية، والتي تعتبر أسواق واعدة أمام السلع الجزائرية بالنظر إلى ما تتيحه الجغرافيا الاقتصادية أمامها من فرص مواتية للاستثمارات البينية مع دول القارة، غير أنه من جهة أخرى تنبعث من القارة الإفريقية العديد من التهديدات ذات الطابع الأمني، والتحديات التي تمثل إشكالية أمام تحقيق أي استثمارات ناجعة بالقارة دون تجنب تأثيرات اللأمن والاستقرار السائد بالقارة.

وعليه تحاول هذه الدراسة الخوض في إشكالية التوجه الجزائري للاستثمار في القارة الإفريقية في ظل التهديدات الأمنية، قصد تبيان ما تتيحه الجغرافيا من فرص أمام التوجه الاستثماري الجزائري نحو إفريقيا، وأهم التهديدات الأمنية بمنطقة الساحل الإفريقي، والتي تفرض محاذير متعددة على الاستثمارات البينية الجزائرية الإفريقية.

**كلمات مفتاحية:** التهديدات الأمنية، الاستثمارات البينية، التهديدات الاقتصادية، التهديدات الأمنية في إفريقيا، الجزائر والقارة الإفريقية.

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# **Challenges of activating Algeria's economic diplomacy and stakes of security problem in Africa.**

**Hafiane abdelwahab**

## **I- Introduction:**

The success of any intra-investment - according to economic studies - is linked to the factors of suitability of the geographical, human and ideological data for the intra-investment trends, while security threats, on the other hand, constitute a concern for the intra-international investments, due to the risk factors they impose on the flexibility of foreign trade, the transfer of capital, and the factors of production which is in line with the Algerian investment orientation towards the African continent. At a time when economic geography offers many opportunities for this endeavour, many threats emerge from the African continent that constitute the core problem of investment in the African continent, due to the challenges it poses to investments and Algerian national security.

Accordingly, this study comes to delve into the problems facing the Algerian approach to investment in the African continent, from security threats and challenges, as well as the mechanisms adopted by it to achieve stability in the African continent, to achieve intra-trade in light of the stability of the investment climate in the region.

### **I.1 Study problematic:**

To what extent can Algeria exploit its African depth to achieve beneficial inter-investments, in light of the security threats emanating from the region?

## **II. Algeria and Africa, a geopolitical view:**

The success of any intra-investment, according to economic studies, is linked to factors appropriate to the geographical, human and ideological data of the intra-investment trends. From this point of view, Algeria has an important strategic location in addition to the geographical and human advantages.

### **II.1 Geographical and Human Privacy:**

1. Algeria is the largest African country in terms of area, in addition to the coastal extension estimated at 1,200 km, unlike Niger and Mali, which are located in a closed area without sea views, surrounded by seven countries (Morocco, Western Sahara, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Libya, and Tunisia). It is also characterized by climatic and terrain diversity that allows human life to flourish, despite the fact that the majority of Algeria is located in the desert, which is characterized by difficult climate, which is the case with most of the Sahel countries. (Fanack, 2018)

This is in addition to human power, as Algeria is considered the first in the Sahel region with about 40 million people, and young people constitute the majority group by about 70%, in addition to religious, ethnic, and linguistic homogeneity - the unity of religion, language and ethnicities -, as the majority of Algerians are Muslims who follow one sect, ethnically We notice Berbers and Arabs in it. For linguistically, we notice that it has two national languages, namely the Arabic language and the Amazigh language. This sectarian and linguistic homogeneity gives Algeria greater spiritual and ideological stability, as it links it to its coastal depth (the geocultural dimension). (The origin of the population of Algeria, 2018)

### **II.2 Algeria's position on the African level:**

Algeria has a strategic position of great importance, with multiple dimensions, the most important of which are: (Nacer Bouaalam, 2016, pp. 56-57)

**A-The geohistorical dimension of Algeria's regional position:** The geohistorical dimension emerges through regional cooperation, as well as the devotion of the principle of

## **Challenges of activating Algeria's economic diplomacy and stakes of security problem in Africa.**

**Hafiane abdelwahab**

Africa to Africans. This is what appears in Algeria's African affiliation. So, history, the size of relations, and the permanent African orientation in its foreign policy are the most prominent example of Algeria's historical position on the African continent, especially in the African Sahel region.

**B- The geo-cultural dimension of Algeria's regional position:** it is represented in religion, language, ideology, and especially the presence of the Tuareg as an ethnic extension of Algeria in the Sahel region.

**C- The geo-economic dimension of Algeria's regional position:** This dimension is evident in Algeria's efforts to develop the Sahel region in particular and Africa in general. Perhaps the "NEPAD initiative" is the best example of this, and Algeria's work on many occasions is to be added to clearing the debts of the helpless Sahel countries, including the states of Niger and Mali.

**D- The geosecurity dimension of Algeria's regional position:** It depends on regional cooperation to confront existing security threats, especially since their nature and source require intensification of efforts and regional cooperation. Perhaps the Joint Operational Staff Command Committee is the most prominent example of Algeria's realization of the necessity of strengthening regional efforts, as well as strengthening the pattern of mutual security dependence within the "regional security complex", given that security concerns are common, as no country can confront them alone.

**E- The geopolitical and geostrategic dimension of Algeria's regional position:** In addition to the distinguished location in terms of area, environmental and geographical diversity, there is the geopolitical extension of Algeria in the Sahel, given that the Sahel is a strategic depth and a vital extension of Algeria, and this can be realized through the concept of geostrategy as it is concerned with the study with the study of the natural environment, to analyze or understand political and economic issues with international considerations, and this study includes the location of the state, leading to determining its strategic position, whether in war or in peace or studying political borders, and what these borders bear in terms of cultural and social data between neighboring peoples.

And based on the position of Algeria, the Sahel region represents a strategic depth for Algeria, based on data and factors of connection, communication and status, which Algeria represents in the region, in terms of understanding the fragile security environment as well as in possessing the keys to resolving the crises and threats in which most countries in the region are floundering, and this is according to the approaches Soft and smart. That is why Algeria enjoys a strategic importance as a bridge of communication, a meeting point between Europe and Africa, and between the "Arab Maghreb" and the Middle East, and a vital passage for many international ways of communication by land, sea and air. From a geographical and regional point of view, its location is characterized by its effective and influential dimensions at the global level.

The importance of Algeria's strategic location revolves around: (Elhadi Kathe, 2009, p. 24)

\*-\* The Mediterranean Axis: Algeria has been throughout history a part of the world's active civilizations in the region, and is still currently benefiting from the abundance of strategic economic advantages of the Mediterranean region, and one of the main axes of international exchange, and one of the most important sensitive areas in world politics.

## **Challenges of activating Algeria's economic diplomacy and stakes of security problem in Africa.**

**Hafiane abdelwahab**

- **The African axis:** Algeria extends deep into the African coast, as it connects North Africa with the Sahel region, which is supported by means of communication and links with neighboring African countries. The effectiveness of this axis increased after the completion of the African Unity Road, which revitalized commercial and human relations. These elements constituted the leading role of Algeria at the level of developing countries in the political and economic fields and thus determined its regional weight.

- **Algeria as a transit country (attracting clandestine immigrants):** The geographical location of Algeria and its proximity to European countries made it a transit country for African clandestine immigrants to reach European countries (the European dream), As it is considered among the largest countries exporting immigrants, but it is also a country incubating a huge number of people fleeing from wars, killings, poverty, and terrorism in Africa and some Arab countries; This is due to the strategic geographical location of Algeria and the expansion of its land borders, which increased the revival of the immigrant phenomenon increasingly, especially for individuals coming from the Sahel countries, as they consider Algeria their preferred destination, especially after the exacerbation of security and economic turmoil that their countries have known, as they resort to infiltrating through many points, researchers about stability; as they are concentrated in southern cities -especially Tamanrasset- and western and even central cities coming from Niger, Mali, Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria, Benin, Congo, Liberia, and Ivory Coast. (Selma Kouider, 2018)

In addition to the transit of immigrants, we find the drug trade, which is still one of the most important security threats facing the security of Algeria, and threatens countries in the region as well as the social fabric of those countries and the health of their citizens; The financial proceeds of drug trading have provided criminal groups with the means necessary to corrupt, influence and undermine the foundations of the legitimate economy, and drug trading is often linked to trading in firearms using the various methods used by traders, and it has been noted that drug trading and smuggling by sea has increased through Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania towards the Spanish and Portuguese coasts. These are areas where maritime interception and law enforcement capabilities are weak. (Report of the 14th Meeting of Heads of National Drug Enforcement Agencies in Africa, 2004, p.5)

### **III. Obstacles to the Algerian investment orientation towards Africa:**

The investment orientation in the countries of the African continent faces many obstacles and problems related to the security threats emanating from the region, as well as the economic challenges posed by the international investments of the major countries, which seek to link the economies of Africa to the capitalist economy, dominate their markets and maintain their consumption pattern.

The problem of insecurity is one of the main threats to intra-African investments, as a result of the growing phenomenon of terrorism, organized crime, human trading, kidnappings of international nationals, and ransom demands, as well as encroachment on investment structures.

## **Challenges of activating Algeria's economic diplomacy and stakes of security problem in Africa.**

**Hafiane abdelwahab**

### **III 1. The fragility of the state and the exacerbation of crises in the African Sahel countries:**

Bari Bozan and Arnold Weaver A.Wiver see that the central cause of security problems is the failure and fragility of "post-colonial" or new African states on the political and economic levels. (Khelfa Nassir , 2018, p. 486)

In view of this saying, it is certain that the fragility of these countries in terms of security and economy cannot guarantee effective inter-African investments between them, whether in terms of securing economic investments, nor in terms of securing industrial buildings or international trade routes, which constitutes a clear challenge to intra-African investments. .

1. African crises, including the security crisis in Libya, have contributed to the proliferation of weapons outside official frameworks, as the estimates of the program of the Higher Institute of International Studies in Geneva -in a report- indicate that there are about 100 million light weapons on the African continent, and 80% of the existing weapons are illegal, originating from the predominant foci in Africa. (Mustapha Sahraoui, Karuri Kholoud, 2019, p. 19)

From this standpoint, the African continent is a hotbed of renewed crises that prevent stability in the region, while intra-regional investments require an appropriate and safe economic environment.

### **III.2 The terrorist phenomenon and the targeting of oil installations:**

The conditions of instability and security tensions in the African Sahel region have contributed to the growth of the phenomenon of terrorism, and the proliferation of terrorist groups that have found a suitable haven for their activities in the region, given that the geography of the Sahel provides possibilities for activity in light of the absence and fragility of control and oversight mechanisms, due to several factors that make fragile Sahel states unable to monitor their borders, especially with the breadth and breadth of the border.

1. Two types of armed operations have grown in this region: the first is ground operations targeting oil vehicles and gas pipelines; the second is naval operations related to piracy in the Gulf of Guinea in general, and in the coasts of Nigeria and Benin in particular; These activities have emerged since the emergence of the Niger Delta Liberation Movement in 2006. (Karim Maslouh, 2014, p. 203)
1. The kidnapping of foreigners and Algerian citizens is considered a threat to Algerian investments in African countries, similar to the kidnapping of Algerian diplomats in the city of "Gao" in northern Mali, which led Algeria to evacuate its diplomats from Libya after receiving confirmed information about an attempt to kidnap them by Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, as well as attacks on sensitive investment facilities even inside Algerian territory, where terrorist groups resorted to destroying everything that symbolizes the

## **Challenges of activating Algeria's economic diplomacy and stakes of security problem in Africa.**

**Hafiane abdelwahab**

sovereignty of the state, and inflicting the greatest damage and destruction on the Algerian state; Such as: (Zakaria Boden, 2015, pg. 107).

- El-kaeda in the Maghreb's attack on the invading base "Tiguentourine" on January 16, 2013, in which about 650 hostages were taken, and the operation ended with the liberation of the hostages, the elimination of 29 terrorists who carried out the operation, and the arrest of 3 others; In addition to the killing of 41 hostages of different nationalities by the kidnapping group.
- Targeting the gas pipeline from the Hassi Messaoud base to the north of the country on January 29, 2013 in the province of Bouira; The attack targeted the workers assigned to guard the pipeline with the aim of detonating it.
- The attack on the "Iboudrar" region of Tizi-Ouzou on April 19, 2014, which left 13 dead and wounded, for which El-kaeda in the Islamic Maghreb claimed responsibility through a message sent by "Droudkal".

### **III. 3 Global interest in African markets:**

The African market is considered a consumer market par excellence in the eyes of the global powers, and it is linked to its vital interests such as the United States of America, China, Turkey and the European Union, which imposes challenges and competition for Algerian goods in African markets, in front of quality goods and international brands; What explains the global interest in African markets is the development by many countries of the world of approaches to invest in the countries of this continent.

2. In this regard, France - according to its historical association with the continent within the framework of the colonial movement- is considered an area of influence for it, as it always tries to formulate a strategy for the region -especially with regard to the petroleum areas- through the Joint Organization of the Saharan Regions in January 1958, it also sought to develop intra-trade with the majority of countries in the center of the continent and increase French investments. (Khelfa Nassir, 2018, p. 482)
3. The United States of America has also worked to strengthen its presence in the African continent as a whole, not just the Sahel region, as an embodiment of the project for the new American century that appeared in 1997, funded by the Bradley Company, and produced by American thought barrels, whose members include Donald Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney, the elite of the US military-industrial complex and the giant oil companies. (Khelfa Nassir, 2018, p. 482)
4. Therefore, this international competition for investment in the African continent imposes a fierce competition in front of the Algerian investment orientation towards Africa, while the Algerian-African trade exchange reached 3.5 billion dollars in 2018. (With Africa ,2018)
5. China is considered the first investor in Africa with a value of 36 billion dollars annually, and the total Chinese investments in Africa amount to more than 400 billion dollars, and the trade exchange between China and Africa amounts to 190 billion dollars, which

## **Challenges of activating Algeria's economic diplomacy and stakes of security problem in Africa.**

**Hafiane abdelwahab**

exceeds the volume of trade exchange of the continent with the United States of America, India and France combined. (New French in Africa, 2018)

### **IV. Mechanisms for securing Algerian investment orientation towards Africa:**

Algeria is taking many measures at different levels to playing a pivotal role in establishing security and stability in the African Sahel region, and African countries in general, with the aim of advancing the aspirations of the African continent in achieving a safe climate for investments and inter-south-south trade; This part of the study will be devoted to discussing all of these mechanisms in terms of security, economy and diplomacy.

#### **IV.1 Security Cooperation as a Mechanism for Countering Security Threats to Investment in Africa:**

Algeria adopts, through security measures towards the African continent, an approach based on creating an appropriate investment climate in the countries of the continent, based on mutual security dependence as a strategic choice for security, due to security concerns and threats emanating from the Sahel region, which could have a significant impact on its national security.

Algeria has realized that the solution must be collective and at the same time multidimensional, as Algeria has adopted a security approach to regional security cooperation between neighboring countries to securitize and achieve stability and calm. This approach is based on the regional security complex led by Algeria, in which it participates with the concerned countries, and the Afripol mechanism to combat transnational organized crime. The Algerian-African mutual security credits can be limited to:

##### **IV.1.1 Security interdependence -Algerian-African- within the framework of field states (CEMOC):**

6. The field countries consist of 4 African Maghreb and Sahel countries, namely: Algeria, Mauritania, Mali, and Niger. This strategy seeks to address common security challenges in the Sahel and is a broad approach that includes terrorism, organized crime and poverty; It is based on the logic of linking security and development. (Kat Samir, 2018. p. 217)
7. The strategy of the field states adopts three basic pillars: political, diplomatic, military, operational, and financial. (Kat Samir, 2018. p. 217)
8. Among the most important things that highlight the idea of interdependence between neighboring countries are the following: (Radwan Jribi, 2011, p. 17)
  - Participate in its awareness of the magnitude of the threats surrounding it, which are spread in the Sahel region in general.
  - The need to consolidate the dynamic of continuous cooperation.
  - Consultation on issues of concern to security, stability and development of the region, and confronting the many and different threats.
  - Desire to put in place mechanisms and mechanisms of security cooperation to achieve and establish regional security among the countries in the field.

## **Challenges of activating Algeria's economic diplomacy and stakes of security problem in Africa.**

**Hafiane abdelwahab**

- Countries unite in their endeavor to contain threats using several patterns and frameworks.
- The worsening security situation and the spread of asymmetric threats that do not recognize national borders, in addition to the inability of many countries (the failure to secure regions to become a source of stability), in addition to the problem of securing borders.

### **IV.1.2 Algerian-African security interdependence within the framework of AFRIPOL:**

9. AFRIPOL was established in light of the security conditions and developments in the African continent and the Sahel region, especially (terrorism and organized crime), and sought to develop this mechanism to confront these threats within a regional security cooperation framework. According to its statute, Afripol refers to it as: “a mechanism for police cooperation between the member states of the Union, and it derives its legal personality through the African Union countries, it concludes agreements in accordance with the rules and procedures of the Union, and acquires and disposes of movable and immovable property, in accordance with the aforementioned procedures”. as well as carrying out legal proceedings. (Statute of the African Union Mechanism for Police Cooperation, p. 03)

AFRIPOL has been entrusted with the tasks of supporting police cooperation between African countries through the exchange of information and good practices in the field of combating transnational organized crime and terrorism. In addition to mutual technical assistance, it acts as a liaison with the Police Strategic Support Team, which was recently established within the Peace Support Operations Section of the African Union Department of Peace and Security, in the areas of planning, mobilization and deployment of law enforcement and police officers in peace support operations. led by the African Union. (Statute of the African Union Mechanism for Police Cooperation, p. 03)

### **IV.2 Economic development as a mechanism to confront security threats to investment in Africa:**

From the economic point of view, as a measure to secure its investments with the countries of the African continent, Algeria adopts an economic approach based on the basic principle of security and development. From the perspective of this approach, development cannot be achieved without establishing security, and by the same logic, effective investments cannot be achieved in light of the prevailing instability in the African Sahel region. Considering that the lack of security in the African Sahel countries is the main reason for the catastrophic failure of their systems to achieve comprehensive and balanced development, which has resulted in serious scourges such as extreme poverty, underdevelopment and the growth of organized crime.

10. Accordingly, the requirement of achieving development is considered one of the basic demands that the Sahel countries lack due to conflicts, internal conflicts, and the increasing



## **Challenges of activating Algeria's economic diplomacy and stakes of security problem in Africa.**

**Hafiane abdelwahab**

civil wars, which have confused development projects and political institutions due to the increasing spending on armaments to combat these phenomena. Thus, the failure of development in the coastal countries has become among the concerns that present themselves strongly in neighboring countries. Therefore, Algeria hastened to advance development in the Sahel region and made the development dimension an essential factor in its security approach by: (Amal Ch, p. 14)

- Providing financial aid.
  - Supporting African development programs and projects (the march of the African Union, African programs for economic development).
  - Supporting the "NEPAD" initiative to eradicate forms of backwardness and ignorance and to contain terrorism.
11. The circumstances of Algeria's adoption of the security approach in cooperation with the Sahel countries are due to a set of circumstances that imposed themselves in reality, represented in: (Mhand Barkouk, 2008, p. 7)
- Long-term wars and armed conflicts that affected the stability of the region, especially the Mali and Libya crises of 2011.
  - Manifestations of crime and terrorism (new security threats).
  - The repercussions of clandestine immigration and the emergence of the refugee problem.
  - The deterioration of living conditions and poor infrastructure, which plunged the coastal countries into heavy debts.
12. Through the foregoing, it can be said that there is a correlation between the variables of "security" and "development", given that development is liberation from poverty and the provision of all objective conditions to ensure a decent life for people, and guarantee their basic needs and demands; Thus, linking security and development is a necessary requirement for stability. (Abozaid , Ahmed Mohamed ,2012, p10)
13. Robert-maknamar linked the variables of security and development by saying: "Security is development, and without development there is no security; developing countries that do not develop in reality cannot remain safe". The African Union also referred to the close relationship between stability and development, as the presence of one reinforces the other, and the absence of either causes the fragility of the other. (Sulayman Abd Allah Elharbi, 2008, p. 17)
14. Based on what has been mentioned, development means providing all the basic needs for building and developing the state, and it also means "liberation from need", as there is a great link between the state's ability to satisfy the basic needs of individuals and the security that the state enjoys, which is what makes development and security an essential issue to achieve stability. On the contrary, poor living conditions and lack of development threaten the security of individuals and the security and survival of the state, which is the reality of the African Sahel countries that witness frequent conflicts and armed tensions,

**Challenges of activating Algeria's economic diplomacy and stakes of security problem in Africa.**  
**Hafiane abdelwahab**

and thus they neglect "human security" and "development" in light of the increasing interest in securing the entity of the state. (Abozaid, Ahmed Mohamed, 2012, p11)

15. Within the framework of Algeria's continuous endeavor to pay attention to the affairs of the African continent, especially the neighboring African Sahel countries, and to assist it economically by supporting development projects in its call for a comprehensive approach based on "security and development", within a coordinating framework that devotes the efforts of the countries of the Sahel region aimed at eliminating all forms of Transnational security threats. Evidence of this is the Algerian material and financial assistance to the Sahel countries in order to achieve development, and push them to progress and prosperity on the economic and social levels to support cooperation among them. (Ahmed Debeli, 2010, p. 6)
16. Therefore, "achieving development" is one of the dimensions on which the Algerian security approach is based in the African Sahel region, after realizing the importance of this dimension in creating and building security and stability - if we do not say the basic aspect in the formation and formulation of the approach itself - and for this reason Algeria took on It has the task of assisting the neighboring countries of the African Sahel as a political and economic cost that must be paid, by calling for a comprehensive security approach to development as a basis for achieving stability, by supporting and adopting various development projects in the region, which made Algeria's role pivotal in activating development projects aimed at eliminating Terrorism and transnational organized crime. (Kawi Bouhannia, 2018)
17. In addition to the development projects carried out by Algeria to advance development in neighboring countries, it has also worked to establish projects aimed at developing southern Algeria, which is adjacent to conflict areas and hotbeds of tension that witness the endless exodus of many refugees, who have become a threat to the security of the population of southern Algeria. To avoid this, the Algerian government sought to develop the southern states by setting up development projects simultaneous with development projects in neighboring countries. (Kawi Bouhannia, 2018)

Based on the foregoing, it is clear that Algeria's developmental approach towards Africa aims to create a suitable climate for investment in the continent based on two inseparable variables, because security can only be achieved through development, and development is only achieved through the existence of security. Therefore, cooperation between Algeria and the Sahel countries in various fields -even if it is the responsibility of Algeria- is aimed at advancing the economic and political level of this region, to eliminate the manifestations of state failure and the lack of national and individual security, which caused the spread of all manifestations of terrorist and criminal threats, which had a significant impact on All levels of security, and achieving security makes the wheel of development move forward in light of

## **Challenges of activating Algeria's economic diplomacy and stakes of security problem in Africa.**

**Hafiane abdelwahab**

peace, security and stability of the situation, away from acts of violence, coups and armed conflicts.

### **V. Conclusion:**

It is clear to us that the Algerian investment orientation in the African continent faces many security threats, and challenges that could pose risks to intra-investments and to Algerian national security, which makes Algeria pursue many mechanisms in order to establish peace and peace in the African continent in terms of creating an African environment conducive to international investments.

Accordingly, these mechanisms are based mainly on the military and security dimensions, due to the nature of security threats prevailing in the African continent in general, and the African Sahel region in particular, but we must refer to the following recommendations to support the mechanisms adopted in order to secure the Algerian investment orientation in Africa:

- Activating local development projects in the southern border regions, to make them a locomotive for investment orientation towards African markets.
- Improving financing and encouraging African trade and institutionalizing parallel exports, to restore lost opportunities for the national economy as a result of smuggling and tax evasion.
- Creation of information networks for trade (providing information on African markets); It allows economic operators and international investors to get an idea of the products required in the African markets, and the patterns of economic and legal transactions prevailing in them.
- Abolition of barriers and facilitation of trade, by dealing professionally with the need for investment in the countries of the continent, taking into account the maintenance of Algerian national security from the threats emanating from neighboring countries.

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**Challenges of activating Algeria's economic diplomacy and stakes of security problem in Africa.**  
**Hafiane abdelwahab**

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