

Navigating the Periphery: Algeria's Foreign Policy and U.S. Relations

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Abstract: This article examines Algeria's position on the periphery of U.S. foreign policy from independence to the present. It analyzes the historical, ideological, and strategic factors shaping this distance and argues that Algeria gradually transformed this peripheral position into a deliberate foreign policy doctrine of strategic hedging, combining anti-hegemonic principles with pragmatic, multi-vector engagement to preserve sovereignty.

Mots-clefs : relations algéro-américaines, politique étrangère, périphérie, couverture stratégique, non-alignement

Résumé : Cet article examine la position périphérique de l'Algérie dans la politique étrangère des États-Unis depuis son indépendance jusqu'à aujourd'hui. Il analyse les facteurs historiques, idéologiques et stratégiques qui ont façonné cette distance et montre que l'Algérie a progressivement transformé cette position périphérique en une doctrine délibérée de couverture stratégique (*hedging*), combinant des principes anti-hégémoniques et un engagement pragmatique et diversifié afin de préserver sa souveraineté.

The concept of marginality, often associated with exclusion and powerlessness, can assume a more intricate meaning when viewed through a postcolonial lens. For thinkers such as bell hooks, marginality is not merely imposed; it can also be claimed as a space of resistance and agency¹. Algeria's trajectory illustrates this dynamic: its experience of colonial marginalization under French rule shaped a post-independence foreign policy defined by the rejection of subordination and external domination, a strong attachment to sovereignty, strategic non-alignment, and pragmatic engagement. Thus, the legacies of colonial subordination were transformed into a source of strategic agency in navigating relations with major powers after independence.

Despite its natural resources and strategic position between North Africa and the Mediterranean, Algeria has often occupied a peripheral place in U.S. foreign policy. Bilateral relations have been marked by distance, ambiguity, and recurrent missed opportunities. This raises a central question: to what extent is the enduring distance between Algeria and the United States shaped by Washington's strategic choices, and how far does it reflect a calculated, long-term strategy of autonomy preservation pursued by Algiers?

Much of the existing literature focuses primarily on U.S. strategic preferences, often portraying Algerian–American relations through a lens of American neglect. Within U.S. foreign policy studies, Algeria rarely appears as a primary case study, with scholars prioritizing other regional allies. When the relationship is analyzed, it is typically described as asymmetric. For example, Professor Azzedine Layachi argues that U.S. policy in the Maghreb has long been structured around a regional hierarchy, privileging strategic partnership with Morocco over deeper engagement with Algeria². Similarly, Professor Yahia H. Zoubir suggests that this structural preference has constituted a persistent obstacle to closer ties, as Algiers views the special U.S.–Morocco relationship as undermining its regional interests³.

This prevailing narrative often frames Algeria's peripheral position in U.S. strategic thinking as a one-sided condition imposed by Washington, overlooking the deliberate agency through which Algerian statecraft transformed structural distance into a strategic asset. This article addresses this gap in the literature by reconceptualizing Algeria's approach, showing how it leveraged distance from Washington to develop a long-term strategy of autonomy preservation, best

¹ HOOKS, 1990, 416.

² LAYACHI, 1990, 16.

³ ZOUBIR, 2011, 02.

understood through the frameworks of non-alignment 2.0⁴ and hedging theory⁵. This article contends that Algeria's posture reflects a gradual effort to institutionalize this distance, using it to maximize strategic freedom and flexibility across shifting international orders.

In this framework, non-alignment 2.0 constitutes a strategic doctrine centered on autonomy, while hedging constitutes the mechanism through which it is pursued. According to Professor Cheng-Chwee Kuik, hedging is a risk-contingent strategy in which states pursue non-alignment through multi-alignment, leveraging diverse partnerships to preserve autonomy while avoiding domination⁶. During the Cold War, Algeria's policy was publicly articulated as classical non-alignment, a declared neutrality between blocs. This was demonstrated by its early admission to the Non-Aligned Movement (1961) and membership in the United Nations (1962). Its pragmatic economic diversification was further signaled by joining OPEC in 1969. However, despite this declared neutrality, Algeria maintained a *de facto* tilt toward the Soviet bloc for strategic support while simultaneously establishing pragmatic economic relations with U.S. companies in the early 1960s. After the Cold War, this posture evolved into a more flexible and deliberate doctrine: non-alignment 2.0. Algeria transformed its approach into a calculated strategy of multi-vector hedging. This modern doctrine is defined by the cultivation of diversified partnerships with major powers to maximize strategic benefit and preserve autonomy under persistent structural asymmetries. Thus, what began as a necessary balancing act within a bipolar world evolved into a conscious, long-term strategy to navigate asymmetric power and preserve sovereignty in a multipolar order.

Colonial foundations of marginalization

French colonization entrenched Algerian distrust of external domination and fostered a strong attachment to sovereignty. Colonial rule marginalized Algerians economically, politically, and culturally, with the *Code de l'Indigénat*⁷ formalizing racialized exclusion and denying political rights. Yet within this imposed condition, paradoxical spaces of resistance emerged. As Historian James McDougall notes, colonial constraints created “new liminal areas for speech and action [...] not 'free' spaces of liberty, but spaces of lesser constraint, where voices in exile could formulate radical demands, constituting themselves as representatives of the people apparently reduced to silence⁸”.

⁴ KHILNANI et al., 2012. The term “non-alignment 2.0” was popularized in a 2012 policy report arguing that, in a multipolar international system, strategic autonomy requires avoiding formal alliances while engaging pragmatically with all major powers. Rather than neutrality, the doctrine emphasizes flexibility, diversification of partnerships, and autonomy preservation under conditions of structural asymmetry.

⁵ STILES, 2018, 12. Hedging is defined as “a strategy common to states and other actors that may be willing to commit to substantial agreements involving such fundamental issues as security and human rights but also want to protect themselves from too open-ended or permanent a commitment.”

⁶ KUIK, 2025, 13, 16.

⁷ MERLE, 2004.

⁸ MCDUGALL, 2006, 50.

In the decades preceding the Algerian war of independence, these spaces became fertile ground for nationalist formation. Barred from metropolitan institutions, Algerian activists constructed exile networks, clandestine structures, and international channels to circumvent colonial barriers. From this peripheral vantage, the FLN (National Liberation Front) articulated demands otherwise impossible within the colonial system: complete independence and revolutionary rupture. The colonial experience taught that integration into systems controlled by dominant powers risked subordination; that autonomy required distance from hierarchy; and that security lay in diversified, rather than singular, external relations. These lessons, shaped by anticolonial struggle and validated by its outcome, were institutionalized in the political consciousness that would guide Algeria's post-independence leadership.

From imposed marginalization to deliberate posture

The revolutionary generation that assumed power after independence carried forward lessons from the anticolonial struggle. As Professor James Ciment observes, "The revolution partially radicalized those elements of the lower middle class who eventually took power under Ben Bella and Boumediene, turning them toward a strongly anti-Western foreign policy⁹". This orientation, however, was not merely ideological; it also reflected a calculated assessment of how a peripheral posture could preserve autonomy within an asymmetric system. The question for Algeria's leaders was not whether to engage major powers, but on what terms and at what cost.

Algeria possessed several attributes that could have attracted American interest, large hydrocarbon reserves, a strategic Mediterranean position, and revolutionary prestige. Kennedy's support for Algerian independence¹⁰ and his 1963 invitation to Ben Bella opened a pathway toward partnership. Yet Ben Bella's decision to travel directly to Cuba immediately after his visit to the United States¹¹ was a calculated demonstration of strategic compartmentalization. It signaled that while Algeria was willing to engage pragmatically with Washington and other Western powers and institutions, its primary political identity and revolutionary solidarity remained firmly rooted in the Global South. This decision stands out against regional contrasts. Tunisia's Habib Bourguiba embraced Western alignment as a modernization strategy¹², while Morocco's King Hassan II deepened ties with Washington as a counterweight to France¹³. Algeria's leaders rejected this model of Western integration,

⁹ CIMENT, 1997, 104.

¹⁰ Senator Kennedy noted that Algeria had ceased to be an exclusively French problem, and a month later he called on the administration to use the good offices of Bourguiba and the King of Morocco to work out Algerian independence within the framework of North African interdependence, GALLAGHER, 1963, 108.

¹¹ Ahmed Ben Bella flew directly to Cuba after his visit to the United States, at a moment of heightened tension between Cuba and Washington, *LE MONDE*, 8 October 1962.

¹² Habib Bourguiba framed postcolonial alignment with the Western bloc as a pragmatic strategy for modernization, despite the absence of U.S. support during Tunisia's independence struggle. BEN REJEB, 2013, 44.

¹³ King Hassan II deliberately abandoned Mohammed V's policy of non-alignment to cultivate a strategic partnership with the United States as a counterweight to France, DAMIS, 1986, 08.

viewing it as a betrayal to Algeria's revolutionary ideals. The United States, in turn, favored the more pro-Western orientation of Tunisia and Morocco, thereby validating the very asymmetric landscape that Algeria's chosen peripheral posture was designed to navigate.

In the years following independence, Algeria leveraged the diplomatic space afforded by its peripheral position to become a hub of Third World resistance, hosting headquarters of the African National Congress, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and several African liberation movements. As Algerian-American activist Elaine Mokhtefi observed, Algeria was "avowedly Third World and an outspoken critic of the colonialist and imperialist West¹⁴". In line with this orientation, Algeria offered diplomatic platforms and material support to revolutionary movements, including American ones. For instance, Algeria hosted the international section of the Black Panther Party in 1970, providing the organization and its leaders with both material and moral support¹⁵. Then, in 1972, Algiers granted asylum to American fugitives Roger Holder and Cathy Kerkow, who had hijacked Western Airlines Flight 701. They framed the act as a protest against the Vietnam War and racial injustice in the United States, as well as an attempt to secure the release of activist Angela Davis¹⁶. These maneuvers were deemed worthwhile: Washington, preoccupied with Vietnam and detente, was unlikely to retaliate, while Algeria's revolutionary image flourished globally and domestically. These were not mere ideological gestures but calculated acts of diplomatic maneuvering. Algeria demonstrated how a state on the periphery could leverage that position to carve out a sphere of autonomous action, challenging hegemonic interests while simultaneously benefiting from its perceived low priority.

Having already hosted the Fourth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in Algiers in 1973, Algeria's challenge to global hierarchies reached its peak when President Houari Boumediene addressed the United Nations in 1974 on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. He declared that:

At the Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Governments of Non-Aligned Countries [...] the system which now governs international relations was contested and the passive role so often arbitrarily assigned to the overwhelming majority of peoples was rejected. [...] The *raison d'être* of non-alignment is the defense of just causes against any and all forms of political hegemony and economic domination¹⁷.

Algerian media hailed Boumediene as "the president of the non-aligned¹⁸", and his meetings with President Nixon and Secretary of State Kissinger reinforced

¹⁴ MOKHTEFI, 2018, 164.

¹⁵ Ibid, 108.

¹⁶ Ibid, 147-148.

¹⁷ *Ministère de l'Information – Direction de la Documentation et des Publications*, 1975, p. 193. This speech was delivered at the United Nations General Assembly during its Sixth Special Session, at the 2208th plenary meeting, on Wednesday, 10 April 1974, at 10:30 a.m. in New York. The text of the speech is preserved in official Algerian archives produced by the Algerian government and was translated from Arabic into French then English.

¹⁸ "EL MOUDJAHID," *Meeting Between Nixon-Boumediene*, April 12, 1974.

Algeria's claim to speak on behalf of the developing world¹⁹. By mobilizing international institutions to articulate Third World interests, Algeria sought to transform its peripheral status into symbolic power. Although this effort failed to restructure global power relations, it affirmed its revolutionary identity, strengthened transnational solidarity networks, and positioned Algiers as a central voice in North–South debates.

However, during the Cold War, Algerian leaders prioritized commitment to the Third World and a strategic tilt toward the Soviet bloc over the immediate benefits of integration into the U.S.-led international order. This posture came at a significant cost. Algeria forfeited access to foreign investment, technology transfer, and key markets at a moment when the national economy urgently required all three. The socialist model eventually underperformed, and hydrocarbon revenues proved insufficient to sustain both domestic development and revolutionary activism. Adopted within the constraints of Cold War bipolarity, this strategy of distance meant that non-alignment, in practice, generated new forms of dependency, most notably on the Soviet Union, and later Russia, across key military, industrial, and technological sectors. These dynamics left a lasting imprint on Algeria's political economy and shaped the structural limits of its relationship with Washington.

Pragmatic non-alignment: Algeria's Cold War strategic calculus

Algeria's post-independence non-alignment was articulated through an anti-imperialist lens, which in practice resulted in a pronounced tilt toward the Soviet Union. While Algerian leaders publicly rejected bloc politics and claimed strategic neutrality, their political and military partnerships often suggested otherwise. This ideological distance from the West culminated in Algeria severing diplomatic relations with the United States in 1967 following the Arab-Israeli War, an act of solidarity with the Arab cause that underscored its ideological and strategic alignment. However, from early in their relationship, both countries demonstrated a willingness to compartmentalize, prioritizing tangible interests, particularly in the economic sphere, despite periods of political distance or diplomatic rupture. For instance, as early as the 1960s, Algeria established contracts with American companies to supply oil to the U.S. market²⁰. These exchanges can be understood as an early form of multi-directional engagement, signaling Algeria's openness to diverse economic partners while preserving political and ideological autonomy. Despite these limited economic ties, Algeria remained outside the circle of preferred American allies in the Maghreb, with some observers noting that its privileged Soviet relations led the U.S. to view Algeria as "an enemy"²¹. This Cold War pattern of political estrangement combined with selective, interest-based cooperation would endure, shaping the contours of bilateral relations for decades.

¹⁹ KESSEIRI, 2005, quotation from *El Moudjahid*, 5-6 janvier 1975, cited in Radia Kesseiri, *Ideologised Foreign Policy, and the Pragmatic Rationale: The Case of Algeria under Houari Boumedienne, 1965-1978* (thèse), 2005.

²⁰ OFFICE OF THE HISTORIAN, 1969. "Algeria's Sonatrach signed a contract with American company El Paso Natural Gas in 1969 to supply liquefied natural gas to the American market."

²¹ AÏT-HAMADOUCHE, 2007, 154.

Influenced by figures such as Fidel Castro and Gamal Abdel Nasser, Algeria's post-independence leadership also adopted similar ideological orientations, which further facilitated Soviet support. American officials were aware of this strategic partnership with the USSR. Indeed, U.S. intelligence assessments noted that the Soviet Union, despite having offered little support during Algeria's war of independence, moved rapidly afterward to cultivate influence, recognizing Algeria's strategic importance and regional potential²². This shift materialized in concrete forms of assistance. For instance, between 1963 and 1964, the Soviet Union extended approximately \$231 million in economic credits and \$235 million in military grants and loans, contributing directly to the foundations of Algeria's state-building efforts and the development of its military capacity²³.

This strategic convergence deepened notably under Boumediene. As scholar Constantin Katsakioris notes, shared ideological convictions between the 1960s and 1980s profoundly shaped Algeria into a socialist state²⁴. However, characterizing Algeria as a "pro-Soviet" state overlooks critical nuance. Even American officials acknowledged that Algeria's commitment to sovereignty prevented it from becoming a Soviet satellite²⁵. Rather than submission and alliance, Algeria practiced a strategic exploitation of superpower rivalry. Soviet assistance, particularly in the military and industrial sectors, came with fewer political conditions than Western alternatives. For Algeria, this represented a pragmatic calculation: partnership with the USSR offered a path to nation building without the neocolonial constraints linked to alignment with Western powers.

The absence of viable alternatives reinforced this orientation. In the early 1960s, U.S. assistance to Algeria was limited to humanitarian aid, including medical teams, mobile clinics, and approximately \$40 million in food relief²⁶. Washington also largely deferred Algerian affairs to France, signaling lack of interest in challenging French influence. This disengagement created a strategic vacuum that the Soviet Union readily filled, establishing dependence on Eastern Bloc institutions that would shape Algeria's relations with the West for decades.

Consequently, the apparent contradiction between Algeria's non-aligned rhetoric and its Soviet partnership can be interpreted as a form of strategic synthesis. Algerian non-alignment was not conceived as neutrality in the sense of equidistance, but rather as a framework centered on anti-imperialism and the pursuit of national development without political subjugation. From this perspective, cooperation with the Soviet Union was not a deviation from non-alignment, but its pragmatic expression. At the same time, limited economic engagement with the U.S. suggests an early capacity to compartmentalize political alignment and economic interest. Thus, Cold War-era patterns of engagement and selective cooperation laid the groundwork

²² CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY, 1971.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ KATSAKIORIS, 2024, 510–515.

²⁵ OFFICE OF THE HISTORIAN, 1969.

²⁶ OFFICE OF THE HISTORIAN, 1962.

for Algeria's later multidirectional hedging in a multipolar international system, establishing a durable logic of selective, interest-based engagement that would define its statecraft for decades.

The end of the Cold War and missed opportunities

The end of the Cold War created an opening for a fundamental recalibration of Algerian–American relations. With the Soviet Union in decline and the ideological foundations of Algeria's Eastern orientation fading, conditions seemed favorable for rapprochement with the U.S. A notable opportunity emerged with the Iran hostage crisis, which began on November 4, 1979, when Iranian students detained 52 American diplomats for 444 days²⁷. Algeria played a central mediating role between Tehran and Washington, culminating in the Algiers Accords of January 19, 1981, which secured the hostages' release and facilitated the return of billions of dollars in frozen Iranian assets²⁸. This episode hinted at the potential for deeper diplomatic engagement.

President Chadli Bendjedid's rise to power was viewed by Washington as a gradual departure from rigid Third-Worldism toward greater openness to the West. This shift was reflected in the loosening of Soviet ties and interest in acquiring American military equipment²⁹. Bendjedid's April 1985 state visit to the United States, along with reciprocal diplomatic gestures, suggested a shared willingness to expand cooperation beyond economic relations³⁰. Yet obstacles quickly emerged. Internal FLN opposition, wary of U.S. intentions given Washington's unwavering support for Morocco notably regarding the Western Sahara conflict, and the persistent refusal to authorize sophisticated military equipment sales, blocked rapprochement³¹. Had the United States been willing to offer Algeria access to advanced arms and diplomatic parity with Morocco, it might have broken the cycle of distrust. Its failure to do so, prioritizing alliance stability over strategic innovation, underscores how entrenched positions on both sides rendered sustained partnership fundamentally unworkable.

This stalemate reveals a critical dynamic. For Algeria, a meaningful strategic partnership remained unattainable so long as the United States continued to privilege its regional rival, Morocco. For Washington, relations with Algeria have long been characterized by ambiguity, with Algiers persistently perceived as belonging to an opposing strategic camp³², a perception that endured well beyond the end of the Cold War and offered little incentive to reconsider a long-standing and reliable alliance with

²⁷ FARBER, 2005, 12.

²⁸ ROBERTS & BOUKAILA, 2018, 394.

²⁹ CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY, 2016.

³⁰ "Ronald Reagan at the State Dinner for President Chadli Bendjedid of Algeria, April 17, 1985," The American Presidency Project, accessed June 6, 2025.

³¹ CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY, 1986. The United States has privileged relations with Morocco, long described as a friend and trusted ally by American officials. The first treaty signed by the U.S. with an Arab, Muslim, and African state was with Morocco in 1786, "The Moroccan-American Treaty of Friendship." The U.S. has also long provided political, economic, and military support for Morocco, as well as support for its autonomy plan for Western Sahara despite adopting a publicly neutral position to avoid backlash from other involved parties. ZUNES, S., AND J. MUNDY, 2010.

³² DAGUZAN, 2015.

Rabat. As a result, enduring ideological mistrust on both sides continued to structure and constrain the bilateral relationship.

The Algerian Civil War and post-Cold War stagnation

The early 1990s marked a renewed phase of distance between Algeria and the United States. Tensions emerged during the Gulf War, when President Bendjedid advocated a political resolution rather than military intervention, a stance widely supported by Algerian public opinion³³. This distance deepened after Algeria descended into civil war following the military's cancellation of the electoral process in January 1992 to prevent the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) from taking power. While Western governments, including the United States, largely remained on the sidelines, interpreting this posture solely as American indifference overlooks Algeria's own role in deliberately enforcing diplomatic insulation during the conflict.

During this period, the United States intervened directly in crises in the Balkans, Somalia, and Haiti, making its non-interference in the Algerian crisis particularly striking. Yet this contrast reflected Algerian choices as much as American priorities. The Algerian government consistently rejected any external involvement, including U.S. proposals for mediation, framing the crisis as a matter of national sovereignty³⁴. This stance presented Washington with a clear calculation: intervening against the wishes of a sovereign government entailed high risks and limited strategic payoff, especially given France's already prominent role.

This episode reflects both the calculated logic and the significant costs of a rigid doctrine of non-engagement. By rejecting foreign involvement during its most severe internal crisis, the Algerian regime demonstrated its willingness to leverage its peripheral status, even at the price of profound isolation, to safeguard regime autonomy. Algeria's resulting isolation, therefore, was not merely a byproduct of American disinterest, but also the deliberate outcome of a sovereign strategy that extended a longstanding practice of using the periphery as a protective buffer against external interference.

Post 9/11 overtures and persistent distance

With the stabilization of the domestic security situation, the 2000s marked Algeria's gradual re-emergence on the international stage, accompanied by renewed efforts to improve relations with the United States. President Abdelaziz Bouteflika sought to leverage the September 11 terrorist attacks by framing Algeria and the United States as shared victims of terrorism, presenting counterterrorism cooperation as a potential foundation for partnership³⁵. However, these overtures failed to produce

³³ YAHIA H. ZOUBIR, "Reactions in the Maghreb to the Gulf Crisis and War," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 15, no. 1 (1993): 83–103. A telephone conversation between Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid and U.S. President George H.W. Bush, August 8, 1990, George Bush Library, Telcons archives.

³⁴ JOHN LANCASTER, "Hundreds of Algerians Reportedly Burned Alive in Holy Month Scourge," *Washington Post*, January 7, 1998. Algerian Foreign Ministry summoned U.S. Ambassador Cameron Hume to protest a U.S. State Department statement urging protection for civilians.

³⁵ ABDELAZIZ BOUTEFLIKA, lecture at the Baker Institute for Public Policy, 2001.

substantive transformation due to incompatible expectations. American officials viewed Algeria's leadership as resistant to meaningful concessions and constrained by a rigid political system that limited even presidential authority³⁶. U.S. diplomatic assessments characterized Algerian officials as "a prickly, paranoid group to work with"³⁷, reflecting frustration with a bureaucratic and military establishment that fiercely guarded sovereignty and approached American initiatives with deep suspicion.

This gap between perception and policy manifested in fundamentally different visions of partnership. Washington sought a proactive regional ally willing to participate in counterterrorism operations across the Sahel. By contrast, Algeria offered only limited, defensive cooperation, primarily in the form of bilateral intelligence sharing and border security coordination. Algiers also rejected the U.S. end-use monitoring (EUM) requirements mandated under the Arms Export Control Act, viewing such inspections as infringements on national sovereignty³⁸. Moreover, Algeria does not host American military bases on its territory³⁹. Algeria's constitutional commitment to non-interference in other states' internal affairs further constrained the interventionist regional role Washington envisioned⁴⁰. For Algiers, participation in U.S.-led regional security missions risked producing the subordination that its post-independence foreign policy consistently sought to avoid.

These decisions were not isolated diplomatic actions but expressions of a deeper strategic logic. In recent years, Algeria's approach had consolidated into a doctrine of institutionalized hedging. This shift reflected a strategic calculus: that a deeper alliance with the United States posed greater risks than the security benefits such cooperation would deliver. From this perspective, a full security partnership risked increasing U.S. leverage, entangling Algeria in external conflicts, and undermining its diversified external relationships. This pattern of behavior rested on core principles: the primacy of national interests and sovereignty, strategic diversification through engagement with multiple powers, and selective cooperation aimed at preserving autonomy rather than fostering dependence. The war in Ukraine illustrates this strategy in practice.

³⁶ One of the biggest examples of this was Bouteflika's attempt to reform the Algerian hydrocarbon law in 2000 to grant foreign companies majority control, a shift from the existing 49%-51% split favoring Algerian national company Sonatrach. This attempt faced major criticism in Algeria from different political fractions who opposed the reform. More about this: HOCINE MALTI, 2012.

³⁷ Wikileaks leaked report prepared by THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN ALGIERS, February 2008.

³⁸ End-Use Monitoring is a U.S. government process of regular checks to verify that exported arms are used as intended and not diverted to unauthorized users or purposes. Algeria rejected this process according to Wikileaks documents dated April 26, 2005, titled: Exchange between General Ahmed Senhadji and the American Ambassador Richard W. Erdman.

³⁹ U.S. Army Africa's commanding general Maj. Gen. David R. Hogg announced in an interview to Army.mil while on a visit to Algeria on December 28, 2010, that the U.S. did not have military bases in Algeria.

⁴⁰ For example, the Obama administration wanted Algeria to have a bigger role in the Sahel, especially in Mali; however, Algeria refused. More about this: GEARAN, A., 2012. The Algerian constitution previously prohibited deploying military forces abroad. However, the 2020 constitutional amendment marked a shift from Algeria's traditional non-interventionism: Article 91(2) now authorizes the president to send troops overseas with approval from two-thirds of Parliament.

Algeria maintaining its relations with Russia reflects not ideological alignment but a calculated effort to preserve a critical military partnership while capitalizing on European demand for Algerian gas⁴¹. Although this balancing act drew scrutiny from U.S. lawmakers⁴², the Biden administration's decision to avoid punitive measures underscores both Algeria's peripheral position within U.S. strategic priorities and Washington's limited leverage, conditions that Algiers has continued to exploit to its advantage.

In conclusion, Algeria's post-independence leadership pursued a doctrine oriented toward resisting entrenched global power hierarchies, even at the expense of closer relations with the United States. In contrast to the alignment strategies adopted by Morocco and Tunisia, Algeria cultivated a different form of power: agency derived from strategic non-integration. This approach suggests that a peripheral position, when consciously managed, can function as a source of power rather than weakness. Although the ideological intensity of non-alignment and Third-Worldism has diminished over time, their core principles have endured through pragmatic adaptation. Revolutionary commitments were preserved through strategic reinterpretation; the peripheral position once imposed by colonial exclusion was reframed as a strategic space for maneuvering. This evolution subscribes to non-alignment 2.0: a shift from Cold War neutrality toward a modern hedging strategy that navigates an asymmetric international system by establishing relations with diverse partners while preventing any single power from exercising dominant influence.

Algeria's posture of distance thus emerges not as diplomatic isolation, but as a disciplined doctrine of anti-hegemonic hedging. Its main advantage lies in the strategic flexibility it affords, enabling Algeria to balance principles with interests, cooperating with the United States on counterterrorism and energy while maintaining military ties with Russia and expanding relations with China. Therefore, rather than rejecting or fully embracing Washington, Algeria pursues a strategy of selective multi-engagement without substantive concessions, transforming a structural condition into a durable instrument of sovereign agency. This approach is rooted in Cold War-era practices of compartmentalizing political alignment and economic engagement, practices systematically adapted into the comprehensive hedging strategy that now characterizes Algerian foreign policy. In addition to maintaining economic and diplomatic relations with the U.S., Algeria's recent pursuit of BRICS membership exemplifies this doctrine in action: by seeking to join the bloc, Algeria continues its decades-long practice of diversifying partnerships. As President Tebboune framed it, this would allow Algeria to "move away from the attraction of the two poles⁴³", a direct echo of Boumediene's non-aligned vision adapted for the contemporary era.

⁴¹ FAWZY, M., 2022.

⁴² ZOUBIR, Y. H., AND H. EL SHEHABY, 2022. Senator Marco Rubio and Representative Lisa McClain called for sanctions against Algeria for its continued Russian cooperation through the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA).

⁴³ LYNDIA HANNA, "Algeria Wants to Join: What to Know About BRICS," *TSA*, November 8, 2022.

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