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# The Time-Honored Friendship: A History of Vietnamese-Algerian Relations (1946-2015)

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# The Time-Honored Friendship: A History of Vietnamese-Algerian Relations (1946-2015)

## Abstract

In 1958, the newly established Democratic Republic of Vietnam initiated a top secret program to ship a “large quantity” of submachine guns disguised as commercial goods to Algeria to assist the *Front de libération nationale* in its struggle for independence from French colonial rule. In 1973, Algeria leveraged its position as the host of the fourth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement to issue a draft resolution requesting that all member nations pledge diplomatic support to the Việt Cộng, contribute to Vietnam’s post-war reconstruction, and demand the wholesale withdrawal of foreign troops from the Southeast Asian nation. At the close of 2015, Vietnam and Algeria celebrated the first commercial oil flow from the joint Vietnamese-Algerian Bir Seba oil project, located in the Algerian Sahara.

Despite such events indicating that there exists a long and rich history of Vietnamese-Algerian relations, there has been no scholarship documenting it. Responding to this gap in scholarship, this project, “The Time-Honored Friendship,” pieces together the history of Vietnamese-Algerian relations from the beginning of the Indochina War in 1946 to the present day. In doing so, it proposes that the relationship can be divided into three distinct eras: anti-colonial solidarity (1946-1962); socialist, anti-imperial brotherhood (1962-1986); and joint ventures in economic liberalization (1986-2015). Corresponding with these three proposed eras of Vietnamese-Algerian engagement, this project is divided into three main sections. The first section, “The Era of Anti-Colonial Solidarity (1946-1962),” argues that the Vietnamese and Algerian people understood each others’ struggles against French colonial rule as extensions of their own and supported each other accordingly. Acts of solidarity were not merely initiated at the state level by political elite, but were also overwhelmingly driven from the grassroots during both the Indochina and Algerian wars of independence. The second section, “The Era of Socialist, Anti-Colonial Solidarity (1962-1986),” asserts that having both secured their formal independence from France, Vietnam and Algeria were eager to engage with one another through official bilateral relations. They premised their official relationship on their common adherence to the socialist creed and on supporting each other in securing economic sovereignty from the neo-colonial West. The third section, “The Era of Joint Ventures in Economic Liberalization (1986-2015),” details the drastic turn in the Vietnamese-Algerian relationship from being premised on revolutionary struggle against colonialism in all its forms to being premised on mutual economic growth through foreign investment, increased bilateral trade, and technical cooperation for the sake of reaching parity with the developed world. Rather than collaborating to fend off the corrupting influences of the West, the two nations came to embrace liberalization, and worked together to navigate a post-Cold War capitalist order. The conclusion entreats scholars of all disciplines to both build on this project’s findings and to explore how other formerly colonized peoples around the world, united in common oppression under distant European powers, engaged with each other in the quest for a more nuanced trans-regional scholarship.

## Keywords

Algeria, Vietnam, decolonization, Third World, socialism, Algerian War, First Indochina War, Vietnam War, development, East Asian Area Studies, History, International Relations, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Humanities, Heather J Sharkey, Sharkey, Heather J

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The Time-Honored Friendship: A History of Vietnamese-Algerian Relations (1946-2015)

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## Introduction

In 1946, after several months spent fruitlessly negotiating for the unification of the three French administrative territories of Tonkin, Annam, and Cochinchina that constitute today's Vietnam, the future President of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Hồ Chí Minh, braced himself for war against the French metropole. Speaking to his friend, American journalist David Shoенbrun, on the eve of his departure from Paris, Ho forecasted the trajectory of the impending Indochina War with astonishing accuracy:

It will be a war between an elephant and a tiger. If the tiger ever stands still, the elephant will crush him with his mighty tusks. But the tiger will not stand still. ...He will leap upon the back of the elephant, tearing up huge chunks from his side, and then he will leap back into the dark jungle. And slowly the elephant will bleed to death. That will be the war of Indochina.<sup>1</sup>

The very next day, the High Commissioner for Indochina, General Georges Thierry d'Argenlieu, approved the formation of an independent Cochinchina—tantamount to a formal declaration of war to Ho and his communist independence coalition, the Việt Minh.<sup>2</sup> The subsequent eight-year-long David and Goliath struggle, in which the Vietnamese fended off the French Far East Expeditionary Corps and its more sophisticated weaponry, superior training, and American military support, emboldened aspiring anti-colonial revolutionaries around the world to mount their own insurrections against their colonial oppressors.<sup>3</sup> In particular, the Việt Minh's stunning victory over the French in the 1954 Battle of Điện Biên Phủ, in which crude

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<sup>1</sup> "French Involvement in Vietnam and Điện Biên Phủ," video file, 26:06, Youtube, posted by Periscope Film, May 21, 2015, accessed November 7, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XWY9KbIXpdI>.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Miller and Dennis D. Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five Year War, 1940-1975* (New York City, NY: Enigma Books, 2013), 53.

<sup>3</sup> "French Involvement in Vietnam," video file.

Vietnamese cannons killed over fifteen-hundred French soldiers and obliterated French hubris in the process, inspired the Algerian revolutionaries of the incipient Front de libération nationale (FLN) to initiate its own seven-year war against the French.

Điện Biên Phủ's impact on the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962) is undeniable. Only three months after the Việt Minh's victory, the FLN issued its call for a sovereign Algerian state and launched armed revolts across Algeria. Ben Youssef Ben Khedda, an FLN leader and the future head of the provisional government of the Algerian Republic (GPRA), wrote in 1989:

Hồ Chi Minh's army inflicted a humiliating defeat on the French Expeditionary Corps at Dien Bien Phu. The defeat of France was a powerful incentive to all who thought immediate insurrection the only possible strategy... All other considerations were set aside, and direct action became the overriding priority.<sup>4</sup>

Yet despite clear linkages between the Vietnamese and Algerian wars of independence and in spite of tremendous evidence of the two nations' strong anti-colonial brotherhood scattered around the world, no scholar has written a comprehensive history of Vietnamese-Algerian relations. Responding to this gap in scholarship, this project, "The Time-Honored Friendship," pieces together the history of Vietnamese-Algerian relations starting from the beginning of the Indochina War to the present day. In doing so, it proposes that it can be divided into three distinct eras: Anti-colonial solidarity (1946-1962); socialist, anti-imperial brotherhood (1962-1986); and joint ventures in economic liberalization (1986-2015).

While temporal and financial constraints to this project precluded opportunities for archival research in France, Algeria, and Vietnam, "The Time-Honored Friendship" was able to

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<sup>4</sup> Alain Ruscio and Barry Smerin, "Điện Biên Phủ, Symbol for All Time: The Fall of the French Empire," *La Monde Diplomatique*, July 2004, accessed November 7, 2015, <https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/155/25981.html>.

rely on a number of publicly available, digitized databases to paint a broad historical overview of the two nations' evolving relationship. In particular, the project relies extensively on the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) for English-translated primary documents originally published between 1946 to 2004. Initially established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration in 1941 as the Foreign Broadcast Monitoring Service for the purposes of monitoring, translating, and analyzing propagandistic broadcasts beamed at the United States during World War II, the reconfigured FBIS expanded its operations to cover all foreign mass media transmitted via radio, television, and print upon its transfer to the Central Intelligence Agency in 1947. In 1974, FBIS became one of the first direct services that the U.S. intelligence community provided to the American people, with journalists, scholars, and other researchers benefitting tremendously from its broad selection of foreign news reports, provided by over twenty stations around the world and translated from over fifty languages. In cooperation with Dartmouth College Library, the Library of Congress, Tufts University, and Yale University, the Readex Microprint Corporation re-published all full-text FBIS daily reports from 1941 through 1996 in a Web-based edition. The remainder of the reports are available in CD-ROM format.

With FBIS reconstituted as the Open Source Center in 2004, a limited rendition of reports were collected and published by the U.S. Department of Commerce National Technical Information Service-operated World News Connection, which this project also relies on for primary sources from 2004 to 2013. As World News Connection contains only a limited number of relevant reports, and as the Open Source Center terminated public access to its newer reports as of December 31, 2014, this paper also utilizes English-language news articles published between 2009 and 2015 from the online editions of newspapers referenced in FBIS daily reports,



such as the official newspaper of the Communist Party of Vietnam, *Nhân Dân*, and *VietnamPlus*.<sup>5</sup>

“The Time-Honored Friendship” also relies on the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Digital Archive for Algerian and Vietnamese government documents during the Algerian War of Independence and the Cold War. To contextualize these primary resources, it also utilizes respected texts in Vietnamese and Algerian history, such as John Ruedy’s *Modern Algeria*, Robert Miller and Dennis D. Wainstock’s *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-Five-Year War*, and David Elliot’s *Changing Worlds: Vietnam’s Transition from Cold War to Globalization*.<sup>6</sup> Approximately six-hundred primary sources were collected and categorized in a spreadsheet to identify major trends in the two nations’ relations. From the aggregate sources, approximately two hundred and twenty sources were utilized to construct a coherent narrative of the relationship. Owing to previously enumerated constraints and to gaps in primary sources, “The Time-Honored Friendship” does not claim to be an exhaustive history of Vietnamese-Algerian relations. Rather, it aims to lay the groundwork for richer academic discourse on the two nations’ relationship.

Corresponding with the three proposed eras of Vietnamese-Algerian engagement, this project is divided into three main sections, each of which are prefaced by several pages of Vietnamese and Algerian history for contextualization. The first section, “The Era of Anti-

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<sup>5</sup> Steven Aftergood, "CIA Cuts Off Public Access to Its Translated News Reports," Federation of American Scientists, last modified January 8, 2014, accessed December 5, 2015, <https://fas.org/blogs/secretcy/2014/01/fbis-wnc/>.

<sup>6</sup> This paper draws specifically from the Wilson Center collections the Second Asian-African Conference, the Algerian Revolution and the Communist Bloc, and the Cold War International History Project; Joseph E. Roop, "Early Beginnings," in *1941-1947* (Langley, VA: Central Intelligence Agency, 1969), accessed December 5, 2015, <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/books-and-monographs/foreign-broadcast-information-service/1-FBIS-Early-Beginnings.pdf>; Nick Okrent, Lauris Olson, and Joe Holub, "Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) Daily Reports 1941-1974 Added," University of Pennsylvania Libraries, last modified March 3, 2010, accessed December 5, 2015, <http://www.library.upenn.edu/news/713>.

Colonial Solidarity (1946-1962),” is divided into two sub-sections on engagement during the Indochina War and during the Algerian War of Independence. It argues that the Vietnamese and Algerian people understood each others’ struggles against French colonial rule as extensions of their own and supported each other in accordance with this understanding. Acts of solidarity were not merely initiated at the state level by political elite, but were also overwhelmingly driven from the grassroots during both the Indochina and the Algerian wars of independence. The second section, “The Era of Socialist, Anti-Colonial Solidarity (1962-1986),” asserts that having both secured their formal independence from France, Vietnam and Algeria were eager to engage with one another through official bilateral relations. They premised their official relationship on their common adherence to the socialist creed and on supporting each other in securing economic sovereignty from the West. The section is further divided into two sub-sections: Vietnamese-Algerian relations during the Vietnam War (1962-1975), which was defined by Algeria’s unyielding support for the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, more commonly referred to as the Việt Cộng, and post-war relations (1975-1986), wherein the two nations signed a series of cooperative agreements to support Vietnam’s post-war reconstruction and to eliminate both nations’ dependence on the developed world. The third section, “The Era of Joint Ventures in Economic Liberalization (1986-2015),” details the drastic turn in the Vietnamese-Algerian relationship from one premised on revolutionary struggle against colonialism in all its forms to one premised on mutual economic growth through foreign investment, increased bilateral trade, and technical cooperation for the sake of reaching parity with the developed world. Rather than collaborating to fend off the corrupting influences of the West, the two nations came to embrace liberalization, and worked together to navigate a post-Cold War capitalist order. The conclusion entreats scholars of all disciplines to both build on this

project's findings and to explore how other formerly colonized peoples around the world, united in common oppression under distant European powers, engaged with each other in the quest for a more nuanced trans-regional scholarship.

## The Era of Anti-Colonial Solidarity (1946-1962)

### Context

#### *Vietnam*

When French admiral Charles Rigault de Genovilly initiated the French conquest of Vietnam in 1858, the Vietnamese were no strangers to colonial subjugation. After a thousand years of Chinese colonialism from 110BC to 990AD, peasants from northern Vietnam, Tonkin, and its central region, Annam, ousted their oppressors following a sustained period of revolt. Regular sparring between dynastic powers and warlords characterized the landscape of present-day Vietnam, and especially its southern region, Cochinchina, which was also host to a large number of French Catholic missionaries, who were routinely expelled upon perceptions of threat by local dynastic powers and thus regularly required the assistance of the French Empire—establishing French presence in the region as early as the seventeenth century.<sup>7</sup>

Eager to follow in the footsteps of his esteemed uncle, Napoleon III, the emperor of France's Second Republic, sought to increase his domestic and international prestige by declaring the Second Republic the most privileged defender of the Roman Catholic faith, thereby enabling French colonial expansion to Vietnam. France joined forces with the British in the Second Opium War upon news of China's brutal torture and execution of French Missionary Father Auguste Capdelaine. Upon the war's conclusion with the Treaty of Tientsin in 1860, Admiral Charles Rigault de Genouilly, who commanded the French naval division during the war, turned his ships southward to Đà Nẵng, in Annam in November 1857 to respond to the execution of two Catholic missionaries by the emperor of the Vietnamese Nguyễn Dynasty.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Robert Miller and Dennis D. Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five Year War, 1940-1975* (New York City, NY: Enigma Books, 2013), 6.

<sup>8</sup> Miller and Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five*, 8-9.

While Saigon and Cochinchina soon fell entirely under French control in 1859, pacification proved a particularly taxing endeavor for the French due to Vietnam's terrain, climate, and poor sanitation. Moreover, despite their deep historical enmity, Annamese and Chinese forces set aside their differences and formed a united front against the French with the help of the Black Flag Mercenaries, a group of rebel bandits under Chinese command. In spite of this, the fall of the Second Republic following the disastrous Franco-Prussian War of 1870, and a five-year constitutional void that left French colonial expansion efforts in limbo from 1870 to 1875, negotiations with the Chinese in 1885 yielded the cessation of Tonkin and Annam, which joined Cochinchina to form French Indochina in 1887.<sup>9</sup>

When future French president Paul Doumer arrived in French Indochina in 1897 as its newly appointed Governor-General, Vietnam was a complex mosaic of small territories and provincial kingdoms. Doumer swiftly initiated reforms to consolidate French control over the region—establishing an administrative government modeled after the French metropole, initiating public works programs that laid the colony's physical infrastructure, and erecting a legal system that reigned in kings and emperors while protecting French property owners. The burden of financing these reforms, however, fell disproportionately on the poorest of Vietnamese. Thus, as the Doumer reforms laid the foundations of the modern Vietnamese state, they also sowed the seeds of an emergent Vietnamese nationalist movement, with early leaders like Phan Bội Châu mounting small-scale insurrections challenging French rule. The French colonial administration, however, had little incentive to reform in response to local grievances, as it benefitted from the emergent Indochinese rubber industry, which was also built on the

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<sup>9</sup> Miller and Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five*, 8-11.

exploitation of poor Vietnamese. It instead further fanned nationalist sentiments by responding to any and all uprisings with an iron fist.<sup>10</sup>

In the years leading up to World War II, French rubber wealth slowly percolated into some Vietnamese pockets, sending future nationalist revolutionaries to France for work and study, where they became acquainted with the Marxist-Leninist creed and united with other colonized subjects of the French Empire.<sup>11</sup> French Indochina's role as a mere secondary theater during World War II, the French metropole's swift defeat by the Germans, and the occupation of French Indochina by sympathetic Japanese forces from 1940 to 1945 enabled the emergence of a formidable Vietnamese nationalist movement. In the spring of 1941, the young socialist revolutionary Nguyễn Sinh Cung, who would later be known as Hồ Chí Minh, formed the League for the Independence of Vietnam, or the Việt Minh. The nascent group's goals were to overthrow both the Japanese and French and to establish a Communist revolutionary government to rule over a unified Vietnam.<sup>12</sup>

With France's prestige as a major colonial power at stake, and with nationalist sentiments on the rise following France's humiliating World War II defeat, President Charles DeGaulle and his administration were determined to hold onto their imperial possessions. However, prior to DeGaulle's appointment of General Philippe Leclerc and Admiral Georges Thierry d'Argenlieu as head of the French Army in Indochina and as High Commissioner of Indochina, respectively, Hồ Chí Minh proclaimed the independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) in Hanoi. While Ho believed that he secured an agreement with the Special Envoy of France, Jean

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<sup>10</sup> Miller and Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five*, 14-19.

<sup>11</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Krim Speech at May 4 Banquet," May 5, 1960, Foreign Broadcast International Service Daily Reports, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service Daily Reports.

<sup>12</sup> Miller and Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five*, 20-29.

Sainteny, in 1946 for French recognition of the DRV as a free state within the French Union (with the Việt Minh exercising complete authority over Annam, Tonkin, and Cochinchina), Paris signaled otherwise. The day after Ho's departure from failed negotiations in Paris, d'Argenlieu encouraged the proclamation of the Republic of Cochinchina in Saigon—initiating the Indochina War.<sup>13</sup>

The ensuing seven-year conflict, known to the French as the Indochina War and to the Vietnamese as the Anti-French Resistance War (1946-1954), while primarily concentrated in Tonkin, engulfed the entirety of present-day Vietnam and spilled into the neighboring French protectorates of Laos and Cambodia. Pitting colonized subjects from across the French Empire against one another, the war was defined by asymmetry—the Việt Minh fighting a guerilla war against conventional French forces. Led by General Võ Nguyên Giáp, the People's Army of Vietnam's spectacular victory over the French in the Battle of Điện Biên Phủ (1946) ended the war—the terms Vietnam's fate negotiated at the 1954 Geneva Conference, which also involved the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The resultant Geneva Accords arbitrarily divided Vietnam into a northern zone controlled by the Việt Minh and a southern zone controlled by the former Nguyễn dynasty emperor, Bảo Đại (who appointed the controversial Ngô Đình Diệm as Prime Minister, to his demise). United Nations-supervised free elections were to determine the fate of Vietnamese reunification within two years.

Vietnam remained divided following the free elections, and peace between North and South Vietnam proved incredibly precarious as the North Vietnamese government, or the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV), made reunification a national priority and as the pro-Hanoi National Liberation Front (NFLSV), known to pro-Saigon onlookers as the Việt Cộng,

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<sup>13</sup> Miller and Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five*, 36-54.

made its ascent. A militant communist political organization that rose in South Vietnam following the Geneva Accords, the NFLSV and its army, the People's Liberation Armed Forces of South Vietnam (PLAF), mounted an armed guerilla insurgency against the Diệm Government, thereby initiating the Vietnam War, which embroiled the north and south in a brutal and internationalized conflict for another twenty years (1955-1975).<sup>14</sup>

### *Algeria*

The area forming present-day Algeria and its indigenous population known as the Kabyles fell under the control of numerous dynastic and imperial forces from antiquity to the mid twentieth century. Invaded and “Arabized” by the Banu Hilal and the Banu Sulaym, nomadic Arabs from Egypt who conquered the North African countryside in the late eleventh century, Algeria came under Ottoman suzerainty in the sixteenth century—the Barbary pirate-turned Ottoman naval commander Hayreddin Barbarosa conquering the entire area between the cities of Constantine and Oran in 1518.<sup>15</sup> Three centuries of Ottoman control over Algeria came to an abrupt end when, under the command of War Minister Count Louis de Bourmont, French colonial forces were met by an inadequately equipped and poorly organized Algerian defense, seized the present-day Algerian capital of Algiers, and deported the Ottoman establishment in 1830. While the French justified their invasion of Algiers on the pretense of the infamous fly-whisk incident of 1827, France's true motivations lay in King Charles X's urgent need to

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<sup>14</sup> Miller and Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five*, 55-118.

<sup>15</sup> John Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins and Development of a Nation* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1992), 10, 16-17.



consolidate his eroding power base and his desire to compete with Great Britain as the world's preeminent imperial power.<sup>1617</sup>

France's pacification of Algeria extended from the 1830's to the beginning of the twentieth century—the new colony transforming into what historians consider to be the archetype of a settler colonial regime through a complex web of interactions between the French metropole, French and European settlers (*colons*), and the native population by the 1870s. Pacification efforts were met with tenacious resistance from the native population—the ferocity of which would later serve as potent fodder for an emergent Algerian nationalist movement. Most notable were the two campaigns of jihad from 1835 to 1837 and from 1839 to 1847 waged by twenty-five-year-old 'Abd al-Qadir, who managed to lay the foundations of an Algerian state and win the loyalty of native populations by rallying them around common opposition to the French as “infidel” forces. However, despite formidable resistance from the local population, France proceeded to conquer the territory of present-day Algeria in piecemeal—the last piece of the Algerian puzzle, southern Oran, falling to French control in 1903.<sup>18</sup>

Overwhelming brutality against Arabs and Kabyles alike, systematic expropriation of native resources, and the destruction of native ways of being characterized France's conquest and colonial rule over Algeria. By the Algerian War's commencement in 1954, Algeria's colon population had increased to nearly one million and was comprised of European proletariat from Spain, Italy, and southern France, who were either forcibly deported by their respective governments or were encouraged to migrate abroad due to population pressures. A series of

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<sup>16</sup> In response to a heated confrontation about France's outstanding debts to the Algerian state, the Ottoman provincial ruler of Algiers, Hussein Dey, struck the long-time French consul at Algiers Pierre Duval thrice with a peacock fly whisk—an egregious affront to French pride.

<sup>17</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 46-51.

<sup>18</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 51-59.

ordinances issued by the French colonial government degraded native collective land rights and facilitated Algeria's rural colonization by *colons* and large corporations looking to capitalize on untapped foreign markets. These ordinances, according to historian John Ruedy, were "the most important single factor in the destructuring of [a] traditional society" that was ninety-five percent agricultural. With Algerians' civil and political inferiority to *colons* institutionalized in the colonial legal system, almost three million hectares of Algerian land were transferred to French control by 1954, over six-hundred thousand natives were disappeared between 1861 and 1872 alone, less than five percent of all Algerian children were attending any kind of school in 1870, eighty-six percent of Algerian men and ninety-five percent of Algerian women were illiterate by the war's inception (despite France's "civilizing mission" serving as justification for its sustained presence in Algeria), and widespread famines decimated the native population.<sup>19</sup>

While such marginalization and systematic violence united Algerians around a common plight, and while years of colonial oppression produced thousands of martyrs who fueled the colonized imaginary, the first traces of an Algerian nationalist movement were incubated in France, where privileged Algerians, like the Vietnamese who benefited from rubber wealth, were first exposed to nationalist and Marxist-Leninist ideologies that would define the movement's identity. This nascent nationalism percolated into the larger native population only in the 1930s, as previously fragmented sectors of native Algerian society joined forces with its political elite for the first time to challenge colonial dominance. Mobilizing around their new identity as a politically active population, Algerians marched through the streets crying "Vive les Soviets!" and leaders began to speak about organizing a united opposition movement against the French

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<sup>19</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 69-71, 93,115.

Empire, with various organizations like the Algerian Muslim Congress, the Parti du Peuple Algérien, and the Parti Communiste Algérien rising prior to the war of independence.<sup>20</sup>

1954 marked the inception of both the Algerian War and the Front de libération nationale (FLN), established by the Revolutionary Committee for Unity and Action (CRUA) and led by a leadership committee of six colonels in charge of six military districts (*wilayas*). These colonels coordinated their movements with three exiled members of the Organisation Spéciale, a secret paramilitary organization aimed at preparing an Algerian insurrection against the French, which included future president Ahmed Ben Bella. Emboldened by the tremendous French defeat at Điện Biên Phủ, the FLN launched armed revolts throughout Algeria in November 1954—its tactics growing increasingly more gruesome as it aimed to draw international attention to the conflict by targeting densely populated urban areas and by using women to carry out terror operations. While initially dismissive of the Algerian insurrection, the French government became increasingly convinced of the situation's untenability. Thus, in 1959, President Charles de Gaulle pronounced the necessity of self-determination for the Algerian people, only to the settler colonialists' indignation and to the FLN's weariness.

Though negotiations between the French government and the FLN went through several stages of trial and error beginning in May 1961, only to be complicated by the creation of the Organisation de l'Armée Secrète (OAS), which was launched by vengeful *colons*, and which targeted Muslim and French citizens alike. Only when the FLN and OAS drew a truce was an end to the Algerian War brokered and codified within the Évian Accords, which called for an *Algérie algérienne*, or an Algeria for Algerians. At the conclusion of a referendum in Algeria in July 1962, in which six million Algerians cast ballots, Algeria obtained its independence

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<sup>20</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 138-144.

following nearly a decade of brutal war and over one hundred years of colonial subjugation. Suddenly, the victorious FLN was tasked with the development of a modern Algerian identity and state.<sup>21</sup>

## Findings

### *Indochina War (1946-1954)*

As many political movements around the world are conceived, youth kindled the first sparks of anti-colonial solidarity between Algeria and Vietnam. In the spring of 1948, a student organization known as the League of Algerian Democratic Youth delivered a message to the youth of Vietnam assuring them that their freedom and equality was imminent, and that the solidarity between their two peoples would only expedite its arrival. The League expressed its knowledge of the Vietnamese's "gallant fight against French aggression and [their sacrifices] which have won admiration from the world."<sup>22</sup> Indeed, Algerians closely followed the Vietnamese struggle as their own.<sup>23</sup> The Algerian newspaper *Politique* praised the Vietnamese victory at Hòa Bình in a 1952 editorial affectionately titled "Our Victorious Battle in Hoa Binh."<sup>24</sup> Algerian people reportedly "received with great jubilation" reports of the cease-fire agreement at the 1954 Geneva Conference, and they sent countless "emissaries and petitions in

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<sup>21</sup> Christopher Hitchens, "A Chronology of the Algerian War of Independence," *The Atlantic*, November 2005, accessed December 5, 2015, <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2006/11/a-chronology-of-the-algerian-war-of-independence/305277/>.

<sup>22</sup> Memorandum by Viet Nam News Agency, "Message from Algerian Youth," May 2, 1948, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 5, 2015, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>23</sup> Memorandum, "Krim Speech at May 4 Banquet."

<sup>24</sup> Memorandum by Voice of Nambo, April 17, 1952, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 5, 2015, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

protest against the war in Indochina” according to the Soviet Bloc’s clandestine broadcast, *Voice of National Independence and Peace*.<sup>25</sup>

Beyond written expressions of solidarity were concerted efforts by both the Algerians and the Vietnamese to sabotage the French colonial war effort, which united the two peoples, separated by over ten-thousand kilometers, in a common struggle against a common oppressor. France, weary of sending citizens directly from the metropole to fight in French Indochina, relied heavily on the French Far East Expeditionary Corps to subdue the Vietnamese. Aggrieved that the force was comprised of entire regiments of Algerian men, the Algerian Communist Party issued a forceful condemnation of what it perceived to be an attempt by the French Government to “bring two oppressed peoples against each other by making Algerian youth and Viet Nameese youth kill each other” upon the departure of the Eighth Algerian Calvary at the port city of Mers El Kébir on March 30<sup>th</sup>, 1949. While the party also appealed to all Algerians to participate in the fight against French imperialism in Vietnam by vociferously demanding that France open negotiations with the Việt Minh, regarding Hồ Chi Minh’s government as the only legitimate representative of the Vietnamese people, it did not predict the unprecedented degree of solidarity that formed between the clashing Algerian and Vietnamese forces abroad just a few months later.<sup>26</sup>

During the September 1949 Battle of Biên Hòa in southern Vietnam, the Việt Minh’s Vietnamese National Army captured eight North African soldiers in the French Far East Expeditionary Corps as prisoners of war, and, in a demonstration of its solidarity, released and

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<sup>25</sup> Memorandum by Voice of National Independence and Peace, "Maghrib Jubilant over Indochina Truce," June 23, 1954, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>26</sup> Memorandum by Voice of South Viet Nam, "Use of Algerians Decried," April 11, 1949, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 6, 2015, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

invited them to join its newly formed Free North African Brigade. In an open letter issued by the Vietnamese National Army addressed to other North African soldiers in the French Far East Expeditionary Corps, the eight released soldiers stated, “After 2 weeks of contact with the Viet Nameese population and Army after having been treated by the Viet Nameese as friends, our eight compatriots clearly say there was no reason for North African and Viet Nameese youths to kill each other.” Reporting that the French arrested the eight men immediately upon their arrival at the Phước Hòa Plantation, “horribly” tortured them, drove one to commit suicide that night while murdering the remaining seven survivors the following day in another letter, the Vietnamese National Army excoriated the French as “dogs [who] were afraid of the voice of truth” and who “choked the voice of truth as they...choked the voices of more than 50,000 men, women, old men, and old women in Constantine on May 8, 1945, and as they had choked the voice of very many patriots whom they killed under the Tunisian, Algerian and Moroccan skies.” The Vietnamese National Army proceeded to issue an even more passionate call for North Africans to join forces with the Vietnamese as a united front against their common colonial oppressor by joining the Free North African Brigade:

All these dead must be revenged. We must take revenge for our 30,000 compatriots who were killed by the French in Constantine! We must take revenge for our eight compatriots who were killed by the French colonialists in Bienhoa! This is what our courageous compatriots in North Viet Nam have done by joining the Free North African Brigade. This is what you, friends, will do by joining us so as to have the honor to stand beside

your friends who are fighting courageously in the Free North African Brigade...in South Viet Nam. Friends, the hour for action has rung!<sup>27</sup>

The Ho government wasted no opportunity to use the brigade, which continued to expand well into the last years of the Indochina War, as both a propaganda tool to aggravate the French and to recruit more colonized subjects of the French empire to its anticolonial struggle. In the summer of 1952, the Ho Government's radio program, *Voice of Nambo*, broadcasted news of a celebration held on the occasion of eight French and North African prisoners' liberation. The program highlighted testimonies from two liberated soldiers: One Algerian and one Frenchman. The Algerian soldier, Omanu Rada, hailing from the Third Regiment of Algerian Rifleman, expressed his gratitude to the Vietnamese National Army and to the people of Vietnam for their compassionate treatment and their unconditional liberation:

In the name of my comrades who are liberated today with me, I...express my gratitude to the Government and the people of Vietnam who have liberated us unconditionally. I also thank the godmothers of war and the Command of the Western interzone because we have received from them attentive care. We promise to struggle against the war in Vietnam and to demand the recall of the French Expeditionary Corps. We will also struggle for the independence of our country. Why have I come to Vietnam? Quite simply because I was misled by the French colonialists. During our captivity in Vietnam the people and the troops have helped us considerably. We were treated as real friends, and we will never forget it. When we return to our country, we will unite with the people

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<sup>27</sup> Memorandum by Voice of South Viet Nam, "N. Africans Urged to Join Ho's Forces," November 27, 1949, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

of our country to struggle against the French colonialists who are the enemies of the Algerian and Vietnamese peoples.<sup>28</sup>

Such a chain of events speaks to the Hồ Government and the Vietnamese people's understanding of the Indochina War not just as a national struggle for independence, but also as the first major struggle in a long succession for the liberation of colonized people around the world. Thus, rather than successfully pitting the colonized against each other, the French Empire had inadvertently sown the seeds of militant anti-colonial solidarity on enemy turf.

As the Vietnamese and Algerians slowly fractured the colonial edifice abroad, Algerian trade unions launched a campaign to sabotage the French war effort at home. Pursuant to a resolution passed by the World Congress of Supporters of Peace in 1950, twenty-five hundred dock workers of the major port city of Oran unanimously refused to load ships carrying arms bound for the French Far East Expeditionary Corps in Vietnam in 1952.<sup>29</sup> The dock workers and the people of Oran's endurance of widespread arrests, hunger, and retributive brutality at the hands of French authorities for six years served as powerful and inspiring imagery for the Vietnamese people. Irrespective of the strikes' efficacy, they served not just to curtail French aggression in Vietnam, but also to increase awareness of solidarity among the colonized.<sup>30</sup> The Vietnamese broached the valiant efforts of the dock workers of Oran against the French military enterprise for decades—attributing their victory to “the effective solidarity of the oppressed peoples,” with the strike as its apogee.<sup>31</sup> In an emotional address to seven-hundred

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<sup>28</sup> Memorandum by Voice of Nambo, "Freed POW's Laud Viet Minh Treatment," June 3, 1952, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>29</sup> Memorandum, "Dockers' Refusal," April 29, 1952, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>30</sup> Ahmed Aabid, "la grève historique des dockers d'Oran" [The History of the Oran Dockers Strike], socialgerie, last modified February 13, 2010, accessed December 8, 2015, <http://www.socialgerie.net/spip.php?article182>.

<sup>31</sup> Memorandum by Voice of National Independence and Peace, "Maghrib Jubilant over Indochina."



representatives of blue- and white-collar workers in Hanoi following the end of the Indochina War, the President of the Vietnam General Confederation of Workers, Hoàng Quốc Việt, described the dockers of Oran as “[preferring] to live in want than to load arms for warships bound for Indochina.”<sup>32</sup> Moreover, touched by the dock workers’ valiant efforts, North Vietnamese citizens drafted letters to them and Oran’s inhabitants during Algeria’s own war for independence. Eight-hundred manual laborers and four hundred representatives to the Hanoi Congress of Industrial Emulation Workers sent a letter to their counterparts abroad, pledging that they would “forever remember the dockers of Algiers who preferred to endure famine and unemployment for 6 years rather than [to] load arms for Vietnam for the French colonialists.”<sup>33</sup>

#### *Algerian War (1954-1962)*

Almost immediately upon the conclusion of the Indochina War, Hồ Chí Minh’s Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) began to build the foundations of the modern Vietnamese state, with reciprocation of Algeria’s solidarity efforts as one of its foreign policy priorities. As articulated by Prime Minister Phạm Văn Đồng in 1958 and 1959, the DRV maintained several broad foreign policy objectives: “Constantly enhancing solidarity, unity of mind, mutual assistance, and cooperation with the brother socialist countries in accordance with proletarian internationalism”; “strengthening and developing friendly relations with nationalist countries” (and particularly those in Africa and Asia); contributing actively to global peace and international cooperation; and winning the support and approval of other peoples around the

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<sup>32</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Hoang Quoc Viet Addresses Labor Groups," November 29, 1954, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 5, 2015, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>33</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Message of Support for Algeria," April 4, 1957, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

world for the DRV's goal of "consolidation of the north and the struggle for national reunification."<sup>34</sup>

DRV officials consistently highlighted the Algerian liberation struggle, an issue that straddled several of the DRV's stated foreign policy objectives, as a special area of concern. Speaking to the DRV's enduring commitment to Afro-Asian solidarity on the fifth anniversary of the first Afro-Asian Conference in 1960, more commonly known as the Bandung Conference, Minister of Culture Hoàng Minh Giám stated:

The Vietnamese people wholeheartedly and resolutely support the national independence struggles of Asian and African countries, especially the valiant and hard fight of the brother Algerian people and [the] rising national liberation movement in Africa.<sup>35</sup>

Moreover, Prime Minister Phạm declared the Vietnamese people's unyielding support of "the heroic struggle of the Algerian people to liberate their country from enslavement by the French imperialists," in a report to the eighth session of the Vietnamese National Assembly in 1958.<sup>36</sup> Phạm reiterated Vietnam's support of Algeria in a similar report to the National Assembly's eleventh session in 1959.<sup>37</sup>

The DRV put its foreign policy of solidarity with its Algerian comrades into practice through a combination of advocacy, material support, cultural diplomacy, and other gestures of friendship. Throughout the course of the Algerian War of Independence, the National Assembly

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<sup>34</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "On Foreign Policy," April 18, 1958, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast Information Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Pham Van Dong Reviews Foreign Policy," December 23, 1959, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>35</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Hanoi Meeting Marks Bandung Anniversary," April 19, 1960, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>36</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "On Foreign Policy."

<sup>37</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Pham Van Dong Reviews."

issued several resolutions in protest of French aggression in Algeria, reaffirming in its 1957 resolution that the Vietnamese people “always bear in mind the support given [to] them from the Algerian people during Vietnam’s past War of Resistance” and urge that the French Government “end its aggressive war against Algeria and consult with the genuine representatives of the Algerian people so as to settle the Algerian question peacefully on the basis of recognition of the Algerian peoples’ rights.”<sup>38</sup> However, in the face of France’s doggedness over maintaining its dwindling colonial empire, and therefore the unlikelihood of a peaceful settlement to the Algerian War, the DRV’s official policy of “contributing actively to peace and international cooperation” came to be interpreted as providing the Algerian resistance with material support in their goal of a peaceful Algeria free from French oppression. In the summer of 1958, the DRV’s General Military Party Committee and Ministry of Defense initiated a top secret program to ship a “large quantity” of Tulle submachine guns to the Algerian people by disguising them as commercial goods aboard a Polish vessel. The Vietnamese National Army captured the weapons, 9mm submachine guns known as MAT-49s, in large quantities from the French during their war for independence, especially during the Battle of Điện Biên Phủ, and stored and preserved them in the Bach Mai district of Hanoi.<sup>39</sup> This act of militant solidarity both symbolically and tangibly linked the Algerian and Vietnamese struggles against French colonialism—the sheer sensitivity and delicateness of the operation indicative of the high degree to which the DRV regarded the Algerian struggle as its own.

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<sup>38</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Resolution on Hungary, Algeria, Egypt," January 29, 1957, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>39</sup> Memorandum, "Excerpt from 'Ordnance: Chronology of Historical Events, Volume I,'" June 23, 1958, 110524, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC, accessed December 7, 2015, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/110524>.

The DRV was one of the first and only governments to recognize the FLN-led provisional government of the Algerian Republic (GPRA), established on September 19<sup>th</sup>, 1958—welcoming official delegations of GPRA representatives to Hanoi with open arms in exercise of this recognition.<sup>40</sup> Just days after its establishment, on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, a special committee of the DRV National Assembly, the Committee for the Struggle for the Independence of the Algerian People, sent a congratulatory message to the GPRA, enthusiastically welcoming its establishment as a victory and “heartily [hoping] that the Algerian people will score many other victories in their struggle for the independence of Algeria and for the defense of peace.”<sup>41</sup> Just two days after on September 25<sup>th</sup>, the National Assembly officially proclaimed its recognition of the GPRA as the legitimate representative of the Algerian people.<sup>42</sup> Prime Minister Phạm promptly sent the following congratulatory message to the Premier of the provisional government, Ferhat Abbas, reaffirming the DRV’s understanding of the Algerian struggle as its own:

The government of the DRV and the Vietnamese people have constantly followed with sympathy and admiration the heroic struggle of the brother Algerian people for the just cause of independence and liberty of the Algerian nation. The Vietnamese people firmly support that struggle and consider every victory of the Algerian people as their own victory. They welcome with joy the founding of the Republic of Algeria and the formation of the new government which you preside over. That historic event constitutes not only a new and blazing victory of the Algerian people over colonialism, but also an

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<sup>40</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 174.

<sup>41</sup> Memorandum by Voice of Vietnam, "Message to Liberation Front," September 25, 1958, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 10, 2015, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>42</sup> Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic, "List of Recognitions of the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic (GPRA)," table, 121604, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC, accessed December 9, 2015, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/121604>.

important victory of the invincible and growing forces of national liberation and peace of African and Asian countries and of the world over aggressive imperialism. While expressing our best wishes for the final victory of the Algerian people, we are convinced that the friendship and solidarity between our two peoples, which have been tempered in our common struggle against colonialism, will further develop and strengthen with each passing day.<sup>43</sup>

All of Hanoi's dailies widely circulated Phạm's congratulatory message throughout the DRV. Among them were the official organ of Ho's Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV), *Nhân Dân*—which wrote that the statement “[flattened] all barriers set up by [the] French colonialists”—the Vietnam Labor Youth Union's *Tiền Phong*, and the Vietnam Democratic Party's *Độc Lập*, arousing widespread excitement among the North Vietnamese public. In particular, *Nhân Dân*, as the *de facto* mouthpiece of the DRV, commented extensively on the Algerian War's developments through propagandistic editorials that lambasted the French as barbarous aggressors and that advocated for the Algerian resistance throughout the course of the war.<sup>44</sup> For example, in response to French allegations that settling the “Algerian problem” was outside of the United Nations' mandate as an “internal affair” of France, *Nhân Dân* insisted that the United Nations regard Algeria as a sovereign nation, intervene in the Algerian War as an international conflict, and force France to open negotiations with the GPRA as the legitimate

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<sup>43</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Premier's Message Recognizing Algeria," September 25, 1958, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 11, 2015, Foreign Broadcast Information Service; Memorandum by AFP, "DRV Recognizes Republic of Algeria," September 26, 1958, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 10, 2015, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>44</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Hanoi Press Support," September 27, 1958, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

representative of the Algerian people.<sup>45</sup> In support of the FLN's call to boycott DeGaulle's referendum on Algeria's independence in 1961, the daily blasted the vote as "a trick device to maintain the rule and ill-gotten interests of the French colonialists in Algeria" and as "nothing but sugar-coated poison." It called instead for the French government to immediately negotiate the terms of a ceasefire agreement with the GPRA and to provide guarantees of the Algerians' right to self-determination.<sup>46</sup>

Within just a few months of officially recognizing the GPRA, the DRV invited a number of Algerian delegations to Hanoi "to strengthen the friendship and solidarity which have been uniting the Vietnamese and Algerian peoples in their struggle for freedom, peace, and social progress." In December 1958, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs invited the GPRA's Minister of Armaments and Provisions, Mahmoud Chérif, and the Minister of Social Affairs, Youssef Ben Khedda, to the DRV for an official friendship visit. Greeting the Algerian delegation at Hanoi's

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<sup>45</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "France Must Negotiate with Algeria," February 4, 1957, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>46</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nhan Dan Hits Algerian Referendum," January 8, 1961, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast Information Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nhan Dan: Negotiation Key to Algeria," May 12, 1956, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nhan Dan Urges French-Algerian Peace Talks," October 31, 1956, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 5, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "France Must Negotiate with Algeria," February 4, 1957, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 5, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nhan Dan: Algerian War Must Be Ended," February 7, 1957, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 5, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nhan Dan Backs Algerian Front's Proposal," June 21, 1957, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 10, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nhan Dan Welcomes Resolution on Algeria," December 12, 1957, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 10, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nhan Dan Scores SVN Troops in Algeria," April 6, 1958, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nhan Dan Mocks De Gaulle Algeria Policy," June 7, 1958, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nhan Dan Lauds Algerian Freedom Front," November 1, 1960, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, December 29, 1960, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

Gia Lam airport—which has tremendous significance as one of the two logistics bases that supported French operations during the Battle of Điện Biên Phủ—the CPV’s political theorist, Trường Chinh, set the tone for the visit by expressing the Vietnamese people’s “warmest sympathy” with the Algerians. His speech highlighted the extent to which the DRV regarded the Algerian and Vietnamese struggles as fundamentally intertwined by insisting that the Algerian independence movement was a constant encouragement to the Vietnamese people in their struggle for sovereignty from neocolonial forces.<sup>47</sup> At a reception held for the Algerian visitors later that day, which was attended by Prime Minister Phạm Văn Đồng, Vice Chairman of the National Assembly Standing Committee Tôn Quang Phiệt, Chairman of the Vietnam Committee for Algeria’s Independence Xuân Thủy, the leading members of political parties and mass organizations across the DRV, and diplomatic envoys, Trường Chinh reiterated his sentiments. His declaration that the “Vietnamese people [will] support the Algerian people’s armed resistance actively and by all possible means until final victory,” suggested that the DRV continued to covertly supply the Algerian resistance beyond its initial shipment of Tulle submachine guns the previous summer.<sup>48</sup>

In the span of their four-day visit, Chérif and Ben Khedda were received by President Hồ, himself; toured a number of historic monuments, scenic sites, and factories in Hanoi; and met with several of the DRV’s political bodies, including the Vietnam Fatherland Front, the Vietnam Committee for Algeria’s Independence, and the Vietnam Asian-African Solidarity Committee. So monumental was the visit that over ten thousand representatives of the Vietnamese people

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<sup>47</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Airport Speeches," December 13, 1958, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>48</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Trường Chinh's Reception," December 14, 1958, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 18, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

gathered in Hanoi's People's Theater to welcome the Algerian delegation. Jointly addressing the rally, Xuân Thủy and Chérif condemned the "U.S. imperialists" for aiding and abetting the French during both the Vietnamese and Algerian wars for independence; urged the United Nations to take a firmer stance against French aggression; blasted President De Gaulle as intensifying his predecessor's "policy of colonial conquest" and his elections as a "grotesque comedy" as "elementary electoral freedoms were stifled in Algeria"; and proclaimed the inevitability of the triumph of the colonized over the colonizer. The audience's thunderous applause reportedly interrupted Chérif every time he spoke.<sup>49</sup> The visit culminated in a joint communiqué announcing the strengthened state of the Vietnamese-Algerian relationship, recounting the numerous acts of solidarity between the two peoples leading up to the friendship visit, and pledging the DRV's full support for the Algerian people in their national liberation struggle.<sup>50</sup> Chérif and Ben Khedda were subsequently presented with military honors and, upon bidding farewell to the delegation, Trường Chinh expressed that "the solidarity which formerly united the Algerian and Vietnamese peoples under the same colonial domination has now become even stronger."<sup>51</sup>

Just four months after Chérif and Ben Khedda's visit, the DRV's National Defense Ministry invited a nine-member Algerian military delegation led by Secretary of State Major Omar Cussedik to Hanoi. After attending a reception hosted by President Hồ and attended by Vice Minister of National Defense Nguyễn Văn Vĩnh and the Assistant General Chief of Staff of

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<sup>49</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Hanoi's Welcome," December 15, 1958, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>50</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Communiqué on Algerian Delegation Visit," n.d., Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>51</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Delegation Leaves," December 16, 1958, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.



the Vietnam People's Army, Brigadier General Hoàng Văn Thái, and following a ceremonial gift exchange, the delegation was sent off with military honors at a farewell party hosted by the DRV's Ministry of National Defense.<sup>52</sup> In May 1959, just a few days after the military delegation's departure, the DRV received another Algerian delegation led by Vice President and GPRA Foreign Minister Belkacem Krim with as much fanfare, if not more, as during Chérif and Ben Khedda's visit. Krim and his delegation informally dined with luminaries of the Indochina War, including President Hồ, General Võ Nguyên Giáp, and Deputy Prime Minister Phạm Hùng, were shepherded around to various heritage sites, and attended meetings with prominent DRV politicians, including the President of the Vietnam Fatherland Front, Tôn Đức Thắng, who warmly greeted the delegation as "messengers of the heroic Algerian people who are marching in the van in the struggle for national independence in Africa."<sup>53</sup> So warm was the Vietnamese welcome that Krim proclaimed at a banquet given by General Giáp in his honor:

It seems to us that entering beflagged Hanoi today we are entering liberated Algiers. Seeing these ardent people greeting us with so much sincerity all along our way and addressing to us in such a warmhearted manner their message of sympathy; seeing these children and these youths, whose looks expressed better than shouts and gestures all their joy at welcoming us, our delegation is living today on Vietnamese soil the hours we will

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<sup>52</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian Military Delegation Arrives," April 16, 1959, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Ho Reception for Algerians," April 18, 1959, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian Delegates," April 22, 1959, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>53</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Informal Dinner Given by Ho," May 5, 1960, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Talks with Heads of Committees," May 5, 1960, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 19, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

live in Algeria tomorrow. . .Dear friends: Our fight is one, our solidarity could not but be spontaneous. When the Algerian workers and dockers refused to load war materials destined for the French Expeditionary Corps in Vietnam, when the Algerian students at the French universities and the Algerian workers living in France joined their Vietnamese brothers and colleagues in meetings, protests, and mass actions against the war in Vietnam, while the daily military events in Indochina were followed with remarkable regularity in Algeria, it was quite a sign that the Algerian people felt that this liberation war in Vietnam was their own.<sup>54</sup>

Following an exchange of grandiose expressions of solidarity between the Algerian and Vietnamese representatives, nearly ten thousand representatives of the DRV of all genders, classes, nationalities, and religious affiliations welcomed Krim and his delegation—a tremendous display of the DRV’s solidarity with the Algerian people. Extolled by the ever expressive Xuân Thủy as “fighters returning from the front and brothers back from a long journey,” the delegation was presented with a number of treasures. Among them were a silk embroidery stitched with the words “May Algeria be free and independent,” an album of photographs recording various movements in Hanoi in support of the Algerian people, and a collection of songs written by Vietnamese composers in praise of Algeria’s heroic fight against their common French oppressor.<sup>55</sup>

The DRV continued to support the Algerian people through smaller, variegated expressions of solidarity. These ranged from hosting a friendly football match between the

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<sup>54</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Krim Speech at May 4 Banquet," May 5, 1960, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>55</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Civic Reception in Hanoi," May 5, 1960, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

Vietnamese People's Army and the FLN's national team (which the Vietnamese dismally lost 5-0) in 1959 to advocating for the start of an international campaign to support the Algerian people in their struggle for independence in 1960 to organizing a large rally in Hanoi in celebration of a resolution by the Asian-African People's Solidarity Council demanding that the French government immediately hold negotiations with the GRPA in 1961.<sup>56</sup> The National Assembly also adopted a resolution announcing the DRV's formal support of the FLN, committing Vietnam to sustained support of the Algerian people in their struggle for strict implementation of the Évian Accords, and proclaiming the Vietnamese people's conviction that the Algerian people will triumph in the end.<sup>57</sup> So strong the Vietnamese-Algerian relationship became that the GPRA included the DRV in a list of governments worthy of being consulted prior to making major decisions in 1960.<sup>58</sup>

While the DRV exercised solidarity with the Algerian people as official policy throughout the course of the Algerian War, expressions of solidarity at the grassroots level exceeded those at the level of the State in both scope and poignancy. Spontaneous demonstrations of solidarity from the people substantiated proclamations by Algerian and Vietnamese political elite that each other's struggles were extensions of their own—with the

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<sup>56</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian Football Team," November 5, 1959, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian Football Players," November 8, 1959, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerians Entertained," November 19, 1959, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum, "Enlarged Conference," January 11, 1960, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Hanoi Rally Supports Cairo Resolutions," February 9, 1961, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>57</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Support of FLN," June 21, 1962, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>58</sup> Letter by Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic, "Report from the General Secretary, 'Our Diplomatic Action,'" November 8, 1960, 121599, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC, accessed December 7, 2015, Wilson Center Digital Archive.

legendary spirit of the Oran dock workers continued by mass organizations of all strata of North Vietnamese society. In the summer of 1956, the Vietnam Fatherland Front (an umbrella group of pro-government, Communist mass organizations), the Vietnam Youth Federation, the Vietnam Women's Union, the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor, and the Vietnam Peace Committee voiced concerted messages of support for Algeria. For example, the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor demanded that "the French government negotiate with the genuine representatives of the Algerian people so as to suitably solve the Algerian problem" in a public statement, and the Vietnam Women's Union noted that "like the Vietnamese people's struggle for peace and national unity, the Algerian people's liberation struggle also aims at shattering the war plots and at bringing happiness to their children."<sup>59</sup> Similarly, in 1957, the Vietnam Peace Committee, the Vietnam Fatherland Front, the Vietnam Committee for Asian Solidarity, the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor, the Vietnam Peasants National Liaison Committee, the Vietnam Youth Federation, the Vietnam Women's Union, the Vietnam Labor Youth Union, the Vietnam Students Union, the Liaison committee of Vietnamese Patriotic and Peace-Loving Catholics, the Hanoi Buddhist Representatives Committee, the North Vietnam Evangelical Church, the Cao Đài sect, the Vietnam-China Friendship Association, the Vietnam-Soviet Friendship Association, the Vietnam Journalists Association, the Vietnam Literary and Art Workers Association, the Vietnam Medical Workers Association, and the Preparatory Committee for the Founding of the Hanoi Tradespeople's and Industrialists Union signed a joint statement commending the United Nations General Assembly for issuing a resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire to the Algerian War and for France to open negotiations with the

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<sup>59</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Support for Algeria," June 23, 1956, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 5, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

GPRA.<sup>60</sup> Even more impressive, over five-hundred and fifty Buddhist and Cao Đài priests unanimously adopted a resolution in Hanoi demanding that the French Government negotiate a ceasefire with the Algerians and free Algerian detainees in the spring of 1957.<sup>61</sup> That the Algerian War would be regarded as an issue of concern within religious circles speaks to its gravity as an issue within the DRV's politics and society at large.

Similar to the nature of anti-colonial solidarity in Algeria during the Indochina War, youth and labor organizations were at the forefront of solidarity efforts. In 1956, three-hundred DRV student representatives expressed their solidarity with Algerian students by passing a resolution demanding that France end its aggressive war in Algeria and that it respect Algerians' right to self-sovereignty through a peaceful resolution to the conflict.<sup>62</sup> Three-hundred student representatives met again the following year during the International Youth and Students Day of Solidarity and Struggle against Colonialism, the President of the Vietnam Students Union, Lê Quang Toán, delivering a speech on the day's historical significance and on the struggle of Algerian students abroad.<sup>63</sup> Just three months later, the Vietnam Students Union, in conjunction with the Vietnam Youth Federation, invited a five-member delegation of the General Union of Algerian Moslem Students led by Mohamed Khemisti on a two-day friendship visit to the DRV, during which delegates from both Vietnam and Algeria repeatedly emphasized that they would

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<sup>60</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Groups Hail UGA Resolution," February 21, 1957, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 5, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>61</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Support for Algerians," March 2, 1957, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 5, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>62</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Students Express Support for Algerians," August 21, 1956, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 5, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>63</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Youth Congress," February 22, 1957, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 5, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

stand side-by-side with each other, in spite of the physical distance that divided them.<sup>64</sup> Over four-hundred youth representatives from Haiphong, the DRV's most important seaport, held a meeting to welcome the Algerian delegates and to deliver a heartfelt letter expressing their conviction that "though still encountering difficulties and hardships [sic], the Algerians will surely win final victory."<sup>65</sup> The same delegation returned again in the fall of 1958.<sup>66</sup> Similarly, the Vietnam Workers Party's Central Committee invited a delegation of the Communist Party of Algeria, led by its First Secretary Larbi Bouhali, to visit Hanoi in May 1961.<sup>67</sup>

Youth and labor organizations regularly organized commemorative days and weeks of action and solidarity in the DRV throughout the course of the Algerian War, which facilitated some of the most impressive displays of North Vietnamese solidarity with the Algerian people. In April 1957, the Vietnam Organizing Committee of the first International Week of Action and Solidarity with the Algerian Workers appealed to individuals across Vietnam to unite in common opposition to French aggression in Algeria and invited the Secretary of the General Union of Algerian Trade Unions, Ouahdjine Idriss, to undertake a twenty-five-day friendship visit to Vietnam.<sup>68</sup> Thirty-thousand citizens gathered in front of the Hanoi People's Theater and an additional forty-thousand around loudspeakers stationed across Hanoi to listen to Idriss's

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<sup>64</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian Student Delegation," July 2, 1957, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 10, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>65</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian Delegates' Tour," July 8, 1957, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>66</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian Visitors," September 25, 1958, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 10, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>67</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian CP Delegation," May 4, 1961, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian Communists Feted by DRV Party," May 16, 1961, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>68</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "DRV Group Appeals for Algerian War End," March 25, 1957, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 5, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

remarks.<sup>69</sup> Soon after, in the largest organized demonstration of Vietnamese-Algerian solidarity yet staged, three thousand and two hundred Hanoi professors sent to a letter to their fellow Algerian instructors and pupils abroad, stating, “Our present path is leading us to a bright future. Vietnam has won a victory in her struggle for national liberation. Algeria will surely triumph in the liberation of her Fatherland.” Eight hundred laborers and four hundred delegates to the Hanoi Congress of Industrial Emulation Workers also wrote to Algerian laborers, stating that they would forever remember the valiant efforts of the dockers of Oran, who endured famine and unemployment for six years to support the Vietnamese people. Seventy thousand citizens of Hanoi followed in the workers’ footsteps, writing in another letter that the Algerian struggle is the Vietnamese struggle.<sup>70</sup> South of Hanoi in Nam Định province, over thirty thousand people signed a petition urging France’s peaceful cessation of the Algerian War and its recognition of the Algerian people’s right to sovereignty—eighteen thousand government workers gathering the following day in a mass demonstration of support for the Algerian cause. The National Liaison Committee of Vietnamese Peasants, representing ten million individuals, wrote to their fellow peasants abroad, “Every misfortune that occurs to you makes us indignant. Your successes will stimulate us to actively build North Vietnam and [to] struggle for national unity.”<sup>71</sup>

As Vietnamese women collected signatures in support of the Algerian people’s struggle, a theatrical group collected over three hundred thousand Vietnamese dong to cover the travel costs of a group of Algerian youth to the Sixth World Festival of Youth and Students. Ten thousand mine workers presented Idriss with gifts that they made by hand from coal upon his

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<sup>69</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian Solidarity Week Observed," April 7, 1957, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>70</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Letter for Algerian People," April 8, 1957, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>71</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Message of Support for Algeria."

visit to the Cẩm Phả mines. Additionally, the mine workers adopted their own resolution to protest French barbarism in Algeria and to call upon the French Government to release Algerian detainees and to recognize Algeria's sovereignty, while collecting tens of thousands of signatures among themselves in support of the Algerian people.<sup>72</sup> Meanwhile, meetings and photo exhibitions were held across the DRV in support of Algeria, with all of Hanoi's periodicals printing special issues dedicated to the cause. The biweekly *Tiền Phong* increased its distribution thirteen-fold as young people scattered its special issues throughout North Vietnam's streets.<sup>73</sup> Finally, in perhaps the most eccentric act of solidarity that week, four hundred medical and pharmaceutical students sent slogans written in their own blood, stating "Algerian [sic] must be peaceful," to unknown reception in Algiers.<sup>74</sup>

However impressive these acts of solidarity were, they were only a "first step of a broad, persistent, and active movement of [the Vietnamese] people in support of the brotherly Algerian people," as the Chairman of the Vietnam General Confederation on Labor and head of the Organizing Committee of the Week of Action and Solidarity, Hoàng Quốc Việt stated in a message to Idriss.<sup>75</sup> In tacit recognition of this statement, Vietnamese activists sustained their solidarity efforts well into the twilight of the Algerian War. On March 30<sup>th</sup>, 1958, North Vietnamese workers, school children, university students, government employees, and other citizens of the DRV raised over 1.49 million dong (approximately 7.529 million francs) to

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<sup>72</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Papers Support Algeria," April 8, 1957, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 5, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>73</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Message of Support for Algeria"; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Papers Support Algeria"; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian Week Supported throughout DRV," April 10, 1957, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>74</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Papers Support Algeria."

<sup>75</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Vietnamese Pledge Support for Algerians," April 24, 1957, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.



support the Algerian people by working overtime, selling newspapers, printing special publications, setting up pop-up shops, and holding art performances, among other activities for the Algeria Solidarity Day All over Africa and Asia.<sup>76</sup> Moreover, all of Hanoi's dailies published commemorative editorials, reports, news items, photos, drawings, and poetry on the same day.<sup>77</sup>

For the Day of Solidarity with the Algerian People, on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1960, a civic meeting of over one-thousand individuals that was sponsored by the Vietnam Committee for Algeria's Independence, the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor, and the Vietnam Students Union and that was attended by leaders of the National Assembly, such as Deputy Prime Minister Phan Kế Toại, passed a resolution expressing the Vietnamese people's full support for the Algerian liberation struggle and their united opposition to the "colonialist war in Algeria and the repression of national liberation movements in Africa."<sup>78</sup> Finally, in the Algerian War's last days, Vietnamese activists organized one last drive for the Algerian struggle, the Month of Support for the Algerian People and People of Other Countries Struggling for National Independence, which ran from September 25<sup>th</sup> to October 25<sup>th</sup>, 1962. The month witnessed individuals of all strata of North Vietnamese society converging in support of their embattled Algerian brethren—the DRV's National Bank opening a special account for the occasion, which collected over eight hundred and fifty thousand dong for the Algerian cause. Responding to nationwide calls for Vietnamese laborers to do "extra hours of work for Algeria," young men and women sold books and newspapers in Hanoi's streets; children collected scrap paper, iron, and broken bottles for sale; women opened canteens to sell local delicacies; stores rebranded their

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<sup>76</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Fund for Algeria," July 2, 1958, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 10, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>77</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Hanoi Observes Algerian Solidarity Day," March 3, 1958, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>78</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Meeting Marks Algerian Resistance," May 3, 1960, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed May 3, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

goods with names, such as “Algerian copper” and “Algerian medicines”; members of an agricultural co-op organized a day to collect and sell firewood; commemorative cultural and sporting events were held; and hospital patients, “unwilling to be outdone by the people outside,” contributed money by their bedsides.<sup>79</sup>

If the Algerian War united North Vietnamese from all walks of life in common solidarity with their Algerian comrades abroad, then the advent of Algerian independence united the DRV’s citizens in a collective celebration of a monumental victory of the colonized over their colonial oppressors. News of the Algerian victory dominated the covers of Hanoi’s newspapers, which dedicated special articles and editorials to the first celebration of the National Day of the Democratic People’s Republic of Algeria. The ever vocal *Nhân Dân* wrote with much embellishment, “The success [of the Algerian people] has brought to a collapse the colonial system of French imperialism, thus dealing a hard blow at the imperialist forces. It has strongly stimulated the peoples of Africa and the world in their self-liberation struggle.” It went on to praise and to recount the time-honored relations between the Vietnamese and the Algerian people, who were irrevocably linked in a struggle against a common enemy. Jubilant over news of the Algerian victory, North Vietnamese citizens gathered *en masse* to express their wholehearted and enduring support—an expression that lent credence to Algerian President Ben Bella’s conviction that “the bonds of friendship between [the] two peoples will be consolidated still further in the future.”<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, “Vietnamese Raise Funds for Algeria,” October 8, 1962, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum, “Imperialism in Africa Destined to Fail,” December 1, 1962, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>80</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, “Press Celebrates Algeria’s National Day,” November 1, 1962, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, “Ben Bella Note,” October 19, 1962, Foreign

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Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed November 12, 2015, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

## The Era of Socialist, Anti-Imperial Brotherhood (1962-1986)

### Context

#### *Vietnam*

Fighting an ideological war against the Soviet Union, the United States was eager to engage in Vietnam out of fear that the former French colony's fall to communism would have a "domino effect" on the rest of Southeast Asia. Following the Indochina War's conclusion, France was in haste to disengage from Vietnam, transferring responsibility for the training and organization of the South Vietnamese Army to the United States in 1955, and thereby setting the stage for the United States' entanglement in an over twenty-year war that still haunts it to the present day. With a pro-Hanoi insurgency brewing in the South, the Cold War superpower aligned itself with the staunchly anti-communist Ngô Đình Diệm, who, refusing to recognize the terms of the Geneva Accords, declared himself President of the Republic of Vietnam in 1955 and immediately became preoccupied with suppressing the communist forces. While the insurgency killed more than four hundred South Vietnamese officials in 1957, it ultimately found eighty percent of its networks in South Vietnam destroyed between 1956 and 1960, its propaganda machine cut off from the peasant masses, and thousands in its ranks and its sympathizers either jailed or secretly executed by the regime.<sup>81</sup>

In 1959, the tide of the Vietnam War shifted sharply in favor of the insurgency when the DRV adopted a resolution to "liberate" South Vietnam by force. By way of the Hồ Chí Minh trail, a logistical system that ran through Laos and Cambodia to channel manpower and material support from North to South Vietnam, the DRV facilitated the rise of the newly formed NFLSV

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<sup>81</sup> Miller and Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five*, 122-128, 141; University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Department of English, "A Vietnam War Timeline," Modern American Poetry, accessed January 10, 2016, <http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/vietnam/timeline.htm>; "The Watergate Story," The Washington Post, accessed January 10, 2016, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/special/watergate/timeline.html>.

by secretly sending back communist militants who had taken refuge in the north following the Geneva Conference. Operating on a strategy of terror, the NFLSV proceeded to kill an additional fifteen hundred South Vietnamese soldiers and five hundred civilians.<sup>82</sup>

As the Vietnam War escalated, quashing the insurgency through limited engagement became a top foreign policy priority for the Kennedy Administration. From Kennedy's commitment to guerilla and counterinsurgency warfare stemmed a host of programs to curb the NFLSV's home field advantage. One of the most notorious was Operation "Ranch Hand," an herbicidal warfare program executed by the U.S. Air Force, through which an estimated twenty million U.S. gallons of "tactical use" chemicals were sprayed over South Vietnam to deprive the NFLSV of food and vegetation cover, but to doubtful effect. As the operation was conducted with little consideration of its long-term consequences, an estimated three million South Vietnamese developed exposure-related illnesses and birth defects, with almost four hundred thousand individuals presently affected.<sup>83</sup>

U.S. involvement in the Vietnamese theater escalated sharply after Kennedy's assassination in 1963 and the subsequent rise of the Johnson Administration. The infamous Gulf of Tonkin Incident of 1964, in which three North Vietnamese PT boats allegedly fired at an American warship in international waters, served as pretext for the the Vietnam War's "Americanization"—lending credence to the DRV's assertion that the Vietnam War was not a civil war, but instead a war against American imperialist forces.<sup>84</sup> Following Congress's approval of the Tonkin Resolution, which issued a blank check to President Johnson to "take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against [the] forces of the United States and to

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<sup>82</sup> Miller and Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five*, 129-130, 141

<sup>83</sup> Miller and Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five*, 147, 162.

<sup>84</sup> University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Department of English, "A Vietnam War Timeline," *Modern American Poetry*; Miller and Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five*, 187.

prevent further aggression,” the United States committed to joint warfare in the South Vietnamese theater—American troop levels peaking at 540,000 in February 1969.<sup>85</sup> While these troops fought a guerilla war against the NFLSV in South Vietnam, which decimated American forces, as they were unfamiliar with both the jungle terrain and unconventional warfare, Johnson initiated Operation “Rolling Thunder” in North Vietnam, subjecting civilians to three years of sustained bombing raids to coerce the DRV to cease its support for the southern insurgents.<sup>86</sup>

The United States faced immense criticism for its involvement in the Vietnam War not just from the DRV and the international community, but also from American citizens, themselves. Young people organized anti-war protests in campuses across the nation, and the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. himself condemned the United States as “the greatest purveyor of violence in the world.”<sup>87</sup> However, as the United States was too mired in the fog of war to be discouraged by such criticism and too encouraged by the gains it made against the NFLSV in 1967, its first real incentive to withdraw only came in 1968 with the Têt Offensive.<sup>88</sup> On the Têt holiday, or Vietnamese New Year, North Vietnamese and NFLSV forces launched concerted attacks in dozens of key South Vietnamese cities and provinces, including its capital, Saigon, in a fantastic display of military might and logistical prowess. While American troops eventually quashed the insurgents and recaptured most areas within the span of a few days, the United States was caught off-guard and its losses were the highest since the war began—the communist forces ultimately winning a psychological battle against the United States. The Paris Peace Talks thus began in May of that year.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Miller and Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five*, 164-168.

<sup>86</sup> Miller and Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five*, 172-188.

<sup>87</sup> University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Department of English, "A Vietnam War Timeline," *Modern American Poetry*; Miller and Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five*, 181-186.

<sup>88</sup> Miller and Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five*, 188.

<sup>89</sup> Miller and Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five*, 195-198; University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Department of English, "A Vietnam War Timeline," *Modern American Poetry*.

With the peace talks in progress and with the sustainability of continued American engagement in Vietnam questioned, the Nixon Administration announced a policy of “Vietnamization” in 1969, in which the U.S. military gradually shifted the burden of defeating the communists onto the South Vietnamese Army while instituting phased troop withdrawals. At the same time, Nixon also authorized a fourteen-month bombing campaign in Cambodia to destroy communist supply routes and base camps without the knowledge of both Congress and the American people. Heightening public outrage over the U.S. military’s massacre of hundreds of unarmed civilians in the South Vietnamese village of Mỹ Lai in 1968, the killing of four student antiwar protesters at Ohio’s Kent State University, and the *New York Times*’s publication of the Pentagon Papers in 1971 increased the imperative of a swift end to the war. As such, U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and the head of the Communist Party of Vietnam, Lê Đức Thọ, began holding secret talks in 1970, resulting in the Paris Peace Accords of 1973, which ended the superpower’s direct participation in the conflict and instituted a ceasefire between North and South Vietnam.<sup>90</sup>

When awarded the 1973 Nobel Peace Prize with Kissinger for ending the Vietnam War, Thọ declined, stating that a “true peace” did not yet exist in Vietnam. Indeed, South Vietnamese president Nguyễn Văn Thiệu almost immediately violated the cease-fire after its enactment—North Vietnam reticently sending more troops southward to support the NFLSV. As the Watergate scandal and a war-fatigued Congress incapacitated Nixon and his successor Gerald Ford, South Vietnam’s economic and political conditions rapidly deteriorated, allowing the

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<sup>90</sup> University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Department of English, "A Vietnam War Timeline," *Modern American Poetry*; R.W. Apple Jr., "25 Years Later; Lessons from the Pentagon Papers," *The New York Times*, June 23, 1996, accessed January 10, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/1996/06/23/weekinreview/25-years-later-lessons-from-the-pentagon-papers.html?ref=pentagonpapers>.

NFLSV and North Vietnamese forces to defeat the Saigon regime after a mere fifty-five days.<sup>91</sup> Thus, with the unconditional surrender of then-South Vietnamese president Dương Văn Minh, Saigon fell to communist forces in 1975—an agonizing chapter in Vietnamese history coming to a close as the star of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (PRGRSV) replaced the red and yellow striped flag of Diệm’s Government of Vietnam.<sup>92</sup>

Vietnam underwent tremendous changes following the war’s conclusion. While it was initially planned that North and South Vietnam would retain separate administrations for a period of time before their reunification under a single government, reunification was ultimately expedited. An enlarged National Assembly united in July 1976 to elect Phạm Văn Đồng as Prime Minister of the newly established Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV), with Hanoi as its capital.<sup>93</sup> As the new government moved to stimulate both post-war economic recovery and a socialist transition in the south, it also embarked on a massive campaign to collectivize farms and factories; to establish control over the urban economy by confiscating all property owned by the Saigon government, foreign capital, and “bourgeois” property; to introduce the dong as the new currency; and to repopulate the decimated countryside through the formation of “New Economic Zones,” or urban population centers, which would both cultivate underdeveloped lands and provide new sites for Vietnam’s industrial development.<sup>94</sup>

Thousands of South Vietnamese perished while performing hard labor in the New Economic Zones, and communist forces sent over a million former South Vietnamese military

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<sup>91</sup> Miller and Wainstock, *Indochina and Vietnam: The Thirty-five*, 231-236.

<sup>92</sup> William Duiker, *Vietnam since the Fall of Saigon*, updated ed., Southeast Asia Series 56a (Athens, OH: Ohio University Center for International Studies, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 1989), 3.

<sup>93</sup> University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Department of English, "A Vietnam War Timeline," *Modern American Poetry*

<sup>94</sup> Duiker, *Vietnam since the Fall*, 13-19.



officers, government workers, and government supporters to “reeducation camps” as a means of both revenge and indoctrination—over one hundred and fifty thousand dying in the process.<sup>95</sup> Moreover, from the late 1970s to the early 1980s, severe political repression and desperate economic conditions forced millions of South Vietnamese to flee the country in crude boats for unsanitary and crowded refugee camps in Indonesia and Malaysia—creating an international humanitarian crisis that saw many die at sea during storms or by pirates. The Sino-Vietnamese War of 1979—a brief border conflict between China and Vietnam following the latter’s invasion and occupation of Cambodia in 1978—motivated the SRV to collectively punish its ethnic Chinese population, the Hoa people, who comprised the overwhelming majority of those who fled and who, for centuries, dominated the South Vietnamese economy as merchants and bankers. Thus, in the absence of its “petty bourgeois” class, the SRV continued with its socialist revolution and its reconstruction efforts while dependent on the Soviet bloc and other socialist allies for political, military, and economic support.<sup>96</sup> Furthermore, Vietnam’s “two camp” thesis, which posited that the global balance of power was divided between the forces of socialism and U.S.-led imperialism, underpinned the nation’s domestic and foreign policies until the rise of the reform-oriented General Secretary of the CPV, Nguyễn Văn Linh in 1986.<sup>97</sup>

### *Algeria*

After several years of warfare, Algeria teetered on the verge of collapse. While the flight of ninety percent of Algeria’s European settler colonial population, as well as its Jewish

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<sup>95</sup> Duiker, *Vietnam since the Fall*, 11-13; Anh Do and Tran Phan, "Camp Z30-D: The Survivors," Dart Center for Journalism & Trauma, last modified March 1, 2002, accessed January 10, 2016, <http://dartcenter.org/content/camp-z30-d-survivors>.

<sup>96</sup> Duiker, *Vietnam since the Fall*, 58-69; Carlyle A. Thayer, "Vietnamese Foreign Policy: Multilateralism and the Threat of Peaceful Evolution," in *Vietnamese Foreign Policy in Transition*, ed. Carlyle A. Thayer and Rames Amer (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 2.

<sup>97</sup> Thayer, "Vietnamese Foreign Policy: Multilateralism," in *Vietnamese Foreign Policy in Transition*, 1-2.

population, was a victory for native Algerians, these *colons* formed the backbone of most of the nation's social and economic structures, which had been molded over thirteen decades of French control to meet the needs of the occupation. Thus, as the *colons* acted out their despair at the war's conclusion by destroying vital infrastructure—such as schools, communication facilities, and hospitals— they also took with them the great majority of the professional, technical, and managerial expertise needed for Algeria's national reconstruction, as well as a crippling amount of the economy's private capital. Thus, Algeria's gross national product contracted by thirty-five percent between 1960 and 1963. Worse, up to seventy percent of the nation's active male labor force was unemployed or underemployed a year after the nation's independence, resulting in overwhelming internal migration to coastal cities, which was also facilitated by the war's mass destruction of agricultural capital. Therefore, while Algeria had won its political independence from France, this independence proved incredibly precarious as the nation remained dependent on its colonial oppressor for financial and technical assistance during its early years of statehood.<sup>98</sup>

With the nation in such a state of disarray, strong political leadership and a painful process of national consolidation were imperative to laying the foundations of a truly independent Algeria. Algeria was ideologically torn between two competing national visions: A socialist state led by the revolution's leaders versus one built around a multiparty political system and a market-based economy. Moreover, further political instability stemmed from opportunistic clans that vied for control of the nation.<sup>99</sup> After successfully buying off and defeating a series of military leaders in battle, the founding member of the Organisation Spéciale and CRUA member,

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<sup>98</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 195, 212; Baghat Korany, "From Revolution to Domestication: The Foreign Policy of Algeria," in *The Foreign Policies of Arab States: The Challengers of Change*, ed. Baghat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, 2nd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), 113-114.

<sup>99</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 197.

Ahmed Ben Bella, and his Tlemcen group ascended to power—passing a constitution in 1963, which consolidated the role of president as head of state, government, and the armed forces; instituted the FLN’s formal supremacy as Algeria’s exclusive legal party; and established Algeria as a socialist state, Arabic as its official language, and Islam as its official religion.<sup>100</sup> Under the regime’s policy of *autogestion*, a decentralized program of self-management through which Algerian workers directly controlled one-fourth of the country’s farmland (in addition to several hundred factories and service establishments), Algeria secured its reputation as a Third World and socialist leader.<sup>101</sup> However, while Ben Bella acquired immense international prestige in his two years of presidency, he isolated himself politically on the domestic front. His former ally and Minister of Defense, Houari Boumediene, ousted him in a bloodless coup in June 1965 following accusations of his “monopolizing power and manipulating divisions against and within the army to exclude the colonel and his supporters.”<sup>102</sup>

Under Boumediene’s twelve years of political leadership, Algeria underwent dramatic changes—moving down what John Ruedy describes as “a state-capitalist road that gave highest priority to the hydrocarbon sector and heavy industry” while further rising as a leader in Third World politics.<sup>103</sup> Maintaining a firm grip over his party and government, Boumediene and his circle virtually eliminated all meaningful political participation in the country by weakening the FLN and dismantling Algeria’s elective body, the National Assembly, through his “adjustment revolution.”<sup>104</sup> Operating under the world view that developing countries must unite to halt neocolonialism, or economic and political arrangements instituted by developed countries to

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<sup>100</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 197-200; Korany, "From Revolution to Domestication," in *The Foreign Policies of Arab*, 110.

<sup>101</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 199-200.

<sup>102</sup> Korany, "From Revolution to Domestication," in *The Foreign Policies of Arab*, 110.

<sup>103</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 196.

<sup>104</sup> Korany, "From Revolution to Domestication," in *The Foreign Policies of Arab*, 110, 126; Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 196, 209.

exercise de facto control over former colony countries, Boumediene progressively nationalized major sectors of the Algerian economy. Among them were major portions of the mining sector in 1966, large-scale manufacturing firms in 1968, and the hydrocarbon industry from 1970 to 1971.<sup>105</sup> Algeria immensely benefitted from a hydrocarbon sector already developed by private French firms, with SONATRACH, its national oil corporation, becoming the tenth largest oil company in the world by 1987.

Oil revenues increased from \$1,050 million in 1973 to \$4,100 million in 1974 alone, and greatly facilitated Algeria's development—the gross domestic product growth rate reaching an absolute high of 10.8% in 1978.<sup>106</sup> Algeria's initial goal was to concentrate on developing its hydrocarbon sector, from which revenues would provide the capital to develop other industries. However, as its attempts at an agriculture revolution failed and as other its industries struggled to develop, Algeria had effectively become a rentier state—the capital-intensive nature of the hydrocarbon sector leaving large numbers of the Algerian workforce unemployed. Thus, almost entirely fueled by its hydrocarbon sector, the Algerian economy was extremely vulnerable to fluctuating global commodity prices.<sup>107</sup>

On the one hand, the United States was Algeria's biggest trading partner in the hydrocarbon sector—purchasing half of Algeria's total petrol and gas exports by the late 1970s, and even playing a hand in building a large refining complex at Arzwo port in 1978. On the other hand, Algeria, as an active member of the Afro-Asian Group and a founding member of both the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement, demonized the superpower as the Third World's

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<sup>105</sup> Korany, "From Revolution to Domestication," in *The Foreign Policies of Arab*, 122.

<sup>106</sup> Korany, "From Revolution to Domestication," in *The Foreign Policies of Arab*, 114-115.

<sup>107</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 216-223.

biggest threat.<sup>108</sup> Algeria promoted a militant anti-colonial and development-centric interpretation of non-alignment, which entailed “the exercise of full and complete sovereignty over natural resources” and a new world order in which both developed and developing countries were placed on a level playing field in terms of political power. A staunch supporter of Cuba, North Korea, the NFLSV, the Palestinians, and all peoples seeking independence from their colonial usurpers, Algeria lobbed its strongest attacks against the United States as a neocolonial aggressor.

In Algeria's view, the world was split not between East and West—or between nations that embraced capitalism versus those that embraced communism, under the American and Soviet view—but instead between “imperialist” states and the developing countries that they exploited.<sup>109</sup> With this philosophy, Algerian foreign policy under the Boumediene regime, as articulated in a 1975 military publication, endorsed the defense of national independence and the refusal of any form of foreign intervention; the elimination of foreign bases and the refusal of political blocs and military alliances; active solidarity with national liberation movements and democratic and progressive forces; and effective participation in the struggle against underdevelopment and foreign economic exploitation and domination. Though Algeria generally prioritized its relations with Third World countries above all others in its foreign policy, regions of special concern were the Arab world and Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as all socialist nations. Moreover, Algiers was host to the fourth summit of the Nonaligned Group (a group of states that declined alignment with both the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War) in

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<sup>108</sup> The Afro-Asian group sponsored the Bandung Conference of 1955; Korany, "From Revolution to Domestication," in *The Foreign Policies of Arab*, 134.

<sup>109</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 211; Korany, "From Revolution to Domestication," in *The Foreign Policies of Arab*, 137.

1973, which a record seventy-five nations attended—attesting to Algeria’s standing as a Third World leader.<sup>110</sup>

Boumediene’s death in 1978 and his subsequent replacement by his Minister of Defense, Chadli Bendjedid, ushered in a new era of Algerian affairs marked by initially modest liberalizing reforms to Boumediene’s socialist, anti-imperial national vision. While constitutional amendments in 1979 and 1980 placed only modest checks on presidential power, the 1989 constitution introduced more drastic changes—removing the government’s identification with socialism and introducing the germ of multipartism to Algerian politics. As the eighties were characterized by economic hardship due to declining global oil prices, Bendjedid’s Algeria pursued more congenial economic relations with its former enemies, such as the United States and France, though without abandoning its relationships with its more radical allies, such as Cuba and Vietnam. More generally, Algeria disengaged from global politics to focus on domestic reforms.<sup>111</sup>

### Findings

In a special 1976 editorial marking the fourteenth anniversary of Algeria’s independence, *Nhân Dân* praised the Algerian people’s heroic resistance against colonial oppression under the French, Algeria’s successful national development, and its active contributions to the non-aligned movement. Expressing the Vietnamese people’s desire for the “friendship and militant solidarity between the two countries [to] be developed unceasingly,” the communist daily quoted Algerian President Hồ uari Boumediene, who stated, “In the past, our two countries were bound together in the struggle for the just cause. In this current new stage, Algeria and Vietnam will

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<sup>110</sup> Korany, "From Revolution to Domestication," in *The Foreign Policies of Arab*, 112-137.

<sup>111</sup> Korany, "From Revolution to Domestication," in *The Foreign Policies of Arab*, 111, 134.

continue to unite to fight for the complete victory of the just cause of the world.”<sup>112</sup> Indeed, with the two former French colonies both becoming independent nations by 1962, the era of anti-colonial solidarity had effectively come to an end—replaced by a new era of bilateral relations centered on Vietnam and Algeria’s common adherence to the socialist creed and on their common opposition to the United States as the embodiment of neo-imperial and neocolonial despotism.

Whereas grassroots solidarity efforts defined the Vietnamese-Algerian relationship during the era of anti-colonial solidarity, the two nations were eager to engage with each other through official bilateral relations following independence. Vietnam and Algeria worked relentlessly to secure each other’s autonomy from neocolonial subjugation—both states believing that economic independence from the developing world was key to maintaining their self-sovereignty. Moreover, sharing common membership in various Third World groups, most notably the Afro-Asian Group (which organized the Bandung Conference of 1955), the Group of 77 (a loose coalition of developing countries), and the Non-Aligned Movement (see pg. 44), the two nations shared nearly identical foreign policies. Vietnamese-Algerian relations reached their zenith during this new era. That being said, as Vietnam was incapacitated from war and as Algeria ascended to the international fore as a Third World leader, Algeria’s efforts to assist the Vietnamese in their anti-imperial struggle and their post-war recovery defined relations during this era.

This phase of Vietnamese-Algerian relations, the era of socialist, anti-imperial brotherhood, is sub-divided into two sections: Vietnamese-Algerian relations during the Vietnam War (1962-1975), defined by Algeria’s unyielding support for the DRV and the NFLSV, and

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<sup>112</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nhan Dan Marks Anniversary," July 5, 1976, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed July 5, 1976, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

post-war relations (1975-1986), wherein the two nations signed a series of cooperative agreements aimed at supporting Vietnam's post-war reconstruction and eliminating both nations' dependence on the developed world.

### *Relations during the Vietnam War (1962-1975)*

Even as the Vietnam War quickly escalated to unfathomable proportions—North Vietnam dealt over three hundred and seventy million U.S. dollars' worth of physical destruction and approximately one thousand casualties per week during Operation Rolling Thunder's three years alone—the DRV was dogged in its efforts to maintain its fraternal relations with Algiers.<sup>113</sup> The war-torn nation hailed the Algerian people's progress in “overcoming many difficulties, rapidly healing the wounds of war caused by colonialism, and recording important achievements in the struggle to consolidate national independence and build a prosperous country.” Algeria, in the DRV's eyes, was a stalwart example not just for other struggling Third World nations, but also as an ideal to which it itself aspired.<sup>114</sup> Continuing to regard Algerian successes as Vietnam's own, North Vietnamese dailies and mass organizations issued public statements of admiration for their Algerian comrades, and DRV and NFLSV organizations paid frequent visits to Algiers to maintain their relationship in spite of tremendous logistical challenges.<sup>115</sup> Hanoi

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<sup>113</sup> *Appraisal of the Bombing of North Vietnam (through 1 January 1968)* (n.p.: Texas Tech University, n.d.), 32, Vietnam Virtual Archive.

<sup>114</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Hanoi Meeting," November 1, 1964, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 10, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Leaders Greet Algerian Counterparts on Independence Day," July 4, 1974, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 10, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>115</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nhan Dan Commentary," October 31, 1964, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 10, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Other Press Comment," November 1, 1964, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 10, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "DRV Greets Algerian Trade Unions," March 24, 1965, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 10, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Liberation Press Agency, "LPA Reports on PLAF Delegation's Visit to



was particularly keen to attend all major Algerian anniversaries, with Vietnamese delegations delivering speeches on the Algerian War's significance during its tenth and twentieth anniversaries—evidence of the special place that the Algerian struggle occupied in the North Vietnamese psyche.<sup>116</sup> Moreover, the DRV continued to advocate on Algeria's behalf while it was engaged in its own war. *Nhân Dân* issued a scathing condemnation of the “U.S. imperialists” for provocatively sending warships into Algerian waters following the North African nation's severance of diplomatic ties with the United States and Britain and its nationalization of five subsidiaries of the American Exxon and Mobil oil companies in protest of the superpower's role in the 1967 War.<sup>117</sup>

The DRV's persistent efforts to maintain the Vietnamese-Algerian relationship were motivated by Algeria's vigorous support for the DRV and the NFLSV during the Vietnam War. Reciprocating the North Vietnamese people's ardent support for the Algerian War effort and regarding the Vietnam War as a manifestation of the socialist Third World's struggle against imperialism, the Algerian people closely followed its developments—Algerian papers printing articles and editorials condemning American aggression.<sup>118</sup> In 1965, the Algerian newspaper

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Algeria," January 4, 1971, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 10, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Ben Bella Statement," April 28, 1965, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 10, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>116</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Delegation Departs for Algerian Anniversary," October 23, 1964, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 10, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Delegation to Algeria," October 31, 1964, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 10, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Democratic Republic of Vietnam," November 1, 1964, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 10, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Liberation Press Agency, "PRG Leaders Greet Algerian Counterparts on Insurrection Day: Tho, Phat Greetings," October 31, 1974, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 10, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>117</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "U.S. Provocations against Algeria Protested," September 15, 1967, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>118</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Foreign Protests," April 28, 1965, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

*Alger Ce Soir* affirmed the Algerian people's support for the NFLSV and their "determination to struggle shoulder to shoulder with the heroic fighters of South Vietnam," also grandiosely proclaiming that "No plot, no weapon, no tactics and no general of the Pentagon can save U.S. imperialism from its present straits in Vietnam."<sup>119</sup>

As other Algerian periodicals issued statements condemning the United States' use of chemical weapons in South Vietnam, the Algerian government began its campaign of sustained advocacy for Hanoi by issuing a special communiqué in 1965 expressing its solidarity with the DRV and demanding the United States' immediate withdrawal from South Vietnam—the intensity of Algeria's demands only growing as the Vietnam War progressed.<sup>120</sup> Only a year later, President Boumediene sent a passionate message of support to Hồ Chí Minh in response to the Vietnamese leader's appeal to twenty-four friendly countries to denounce American aggression in South Vietnam, stating:

The Algerian people, like all other people who aspire to peace and are anxious to preserve their freedom and dignity cannot remain indifferent to the frightful tragedy...which the brotherly Vietnamese people have been plunged into for more than twenty years now. Algeria, in more than one capacity, finds its own image in the heroic fight of your people who preceded it on the path of struggle for national liberation and who are continuing today the fight for freedom. For the struggle waged by the patriots of South Vietnam is actually a war of liberation, mobilizing a whole people animated by the NFLSV and drawing its force and energy from the irresistible will of the Vietnamese to

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<sup>119</sup> Memorandum by New China News Agency, "Paper Notes U.S. 'Failure,'" April 24, 1965, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>120</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nhan Dan Article," February 20, 1965, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

put an end to foreign domination. That is why the Algerian people reaffirm their total and permanent support to the patriotic struggle of the Vietnamese people and express their sympathy and solidarity with the DRV in the severe trial which it is going through, but of which it will come out victorious because its cause is just and its fight legitimate.

In the same letter, Boumediene expressed his conviction in the “unquestionable proof” that the NFLSV was the legitimate representative of the South Vietnamese people.<sup>121</sup> So strong was this conviction that Boumediene expressed that support for the NFLSV’s political agenda would become a political program for Algeria following a visit from Trần Hoài Nam, head of the NFLSV mission in Algeria, in 1967.<sup>122</sup> Furthermore, in a 1968 message to the NFLSV on its anniversary, Boumediene stated that Algeria would spare no efforts in supporting the Vietnamese people’s just cause against the forces of American imperialism for “the cessation of aggression, the withdrawal of foreign troops from Vietnamese territory, [and] the recognition of the NFLSV as [the] sole authentic representative of the people of South Vietnam.”<sup>123</sup> In other words, unconditional and unending support for the DRV and the NFLSV became an Algerian foreign policy priority—the Algerian president stating in a joint communiqué with the NFLSV in 1970, “Concerning the Viet Nam question, Algeria has no other policy than that of [its] Vietnamese friends.”<sup>124</sup> Vietnam continued to thank Algeria for its “honorable stand on the

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<sup>121</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian President Replies to Ho's Letter," March 1, 1966, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Message of Thanks from Algerian Leaders," July 17, 1967, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>122</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Boumediene Ready to Support NFLSV Program," September 18, 1967, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>123</sup> Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "Boumediene Speech on Revolution Anniversary," November 1, 1967, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>124</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nhan Dan Article Hails Algeria's 8th Anniversary," July 5, 1970, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

Vietnam War” and for its material assistance to the DRV and the NFLSV well into the eighties, though its levels of assistance were unspecified.<sup>125</sup>

Algeria’s grandiose expressions of support for the communist forces continued until the end of the Vietnam War.<sup>126</sup> Algeria became a prominent advocate for its Vietnamese allies, as militant solidarity with the communist forces became one of its top foreign policy priorities. The Third World leader even utilized its bilateral relations with other friendly peoples to issue joint communiqués of support for the DRV and the NFLSV. Among these actors were the Italian Communist Party (1964), the People’s Republic of China (1965), the Islamic Republic of Mauritania (1967), and the Republic of Iraq (1970).<sup>127</sup> For example, President Ben Bella and the

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<sup>125</sup> Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "PRGRSV Ambassador Holds Press Conference in Algiers 16 Apr," April 16, 1975, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service;

<sup>126</sup> Memorandum, "Algerian War Veterans Delegation Arrives in Hanoi," March 12, 1975, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by New China News Agency, "Boumediene Assures DRV of Full Solidarity," July 24, 1965, New China News Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian Foreign Minister," August 14, 1965, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian Leader Sends Message to Hồ Chi Minh," November 10, 1965, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum, "Boumediene Address," December 18, 1965, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "U.S. Provocations against Algeria Protested," September 15, 1967, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian Revolution Day," November 2, 1967, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "Envoy to Algeria Comments on War, Talks," September 24, 1968, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "DRV-Algerian Joint Communiqué on Bouteflika Visit," August 9, 1971, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Letter by Liberation Press Agency, "LPA Commentary Hails Algerian National Day," October 13, 1971, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>127</sup> Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "Italian CP, FLN Issue Joint Communiqué," October 21, 1964, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Boumediene Message to Ho Hails Bombing Halt," November 14, 1968, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Mohamed Yala and Enlai Zhou, "Memorandum of Conversation from the Meeting between Premier Zhou Enlai and the Algerian Ambassador Mohamed Yala," August 6, 1964, 118723, Cold War International History Project (CWIHP), Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC, accessed January 11, 2016, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/118723>.

first premier of the People's Republic of China, Zhou Enlai, issued a joint communiqué in 1965 not only affirming the two nation's support of the South Vietnamese people, but also asserting that "active solidarity" with them is "an imperative duty for the peoples who love peace and freedom."<sup>128</sup> Following through with this call for "active solidarity," Algeria established a committee to investigate American war crimes in South Vietnam in 1966 comprised of representatives from all Algerian national organizations—among them, the Council of the Revolution, the Executive Secretariat, the National Assembly, the Federation of Algerian Workers, the Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, and the National Federation of Algerian Students.<sup>129</sup>

As one of the first countries to recognize the NFLSV and the PRGRSV as the sole legitimate representative of the South Vietnamese people, as well as to establish diplomatic relations with them, Algeria leveraged its position as the host of the fourth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in 1973 to successfully advocate for the PRGRSV's full membership within the Non-Aligned Movement.<sup>130</sup> PRGRSV foreign minister Nguyễn Thị Bình expressed the South Vietnamese people's immense gratitude for Algeria's efforts to secure its membership—the PRGRSV delegation further honored upon its arrival to Algiers with a special reception hosted for its historic visit. The delegation, led by Chairman of the Consultative Council of the NFLSV,

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<sup>128</sup> Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "Chou En-Lai, Ben Bella Issue Joint Communiqué," April 1, 1965, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Chou En-lai-Ben Bella Communiqué," Apr While Algeria expressed its solidarity with the DRV and the NFLSV by advocating on their behalf, Algeria expressed its solidarity with its Vietnamese allies by joining for.il 2, 1965, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>129</sup> Memorandum by Belgrade Tanyug, "Boumediene Interviewed Prior to Yugoslav Visit," October 2, 1966, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>130</sup> Memorandum by Liberation Press Agency, "LPA Commentary Hails Algerian National Day," October 13, 1971, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

Nguyễn Hữu Thọ, was received with a “booming” twenty-one-gun salute and a warm welcome from President Boumediene himself, who ascended the airplane stairway for an affectionate embrace. Among Algeria’s other grandiose expressions of militant solidarity with the South Vietnamese people, the Algerian delegation to the summit introduced a draft resolution requesting all member nations to pledge diplomatic support to the NFLSV, to contribute to Vietnam’s reconstruction, and to demand the wholesale withdrawal of foreign troops from Indochina.<sup>131</sup> So strong was Algerian support for the PRGRSV during the summit that the Saigon administration accused the Algerian delegation of “[adopting] an attitude improper to its role [as] the host of an international conference.”<sup>132</sup>

While Algeria frequently expressed its solidarity with the DRV and the NFLSV by advocating on their behalf, it also used its international standing to amplify the voices of its Vietnamese allies through joint advocacy statements. In 1971, a delegation of the Algerian government, led by Foreign Minister Bouteflika, paid a visit to the DRV at Hanoi’s invitation. Following talks with the DRV Foreign Minister, Nguyễn Duy Trinh, the two delegations issued a joint communiqué serving as “new proof of the fruitful development of the friendly relations between the two countries,” according to *Nhân Dân*.<sup>133</sup> The two sides jointly condemned the

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<sup>131</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nhan Dan Hails Vietnam-Algeria Militant Solidarity," August 10, 1971, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>132</sup> Memorandum by Liberation Radio, "PRGRSV Lists Delegation to Algiers Nonaligned Meeting," August 29, 1973, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Liberation Press Agency, "Nguyen Thi Binh Received by Algeria's Boumediene," September 3, 1973, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Liberation Radio, "PRGRSV's Welcome in Algiers Symbolizes 'World Support,'" September 7, 1973, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam Press, "Algeria's Pro-DRV Resolution Belies Nonaligned Attitudes," September 3, 1973, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Liberation Press Agency, "Nguyen Huu Tho to Pay Official Visit to Algeria," September 9, 1973, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>133</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nhan Dan Hails Vietnam-Algeria."

“U.S. imperialists,” who, in the process of implementing their policy to “Vietnamize” the war and intensifying military aggression in Laos and Cambodia to dismantle the Hồ Chí Minh trail, were playing with fire—threatening the war’s expansion to the rest of Southeast Asia while simultaneously impinging on the DRV’s sovereignty. Moreover, claiming that the United States was purposefully blocking all progress at the Paris Peace Conference and scheming of ways to coerce the Vietnamese people into accepting their terms, Bouteflika and Trinh affirmed:

...[The] Vietnamese people, strengthening their national unity and enjoying the solidarity of the fraternal countries and [their] friends in the world, are more determined than ever to carry out the testament of their venerated President Hồ Chi Minh, exercise to the full their right as master of their destiny, persevere in and intensify their war of resistance against the U.S. aggression and for national salvation, till its final victory, namely the liberation of the south, the defence and building of the socialist north and the eventual reunification of the fatherland by peaceful means.

According to the joint communiqué, the only honorable exit from Vietnam was for the United States to accept the PRGRSV’s terms as a “logical and reasonable proposal which has the sympathy and vigorous support of large sections of public opinion in the world and even in the United States,” and to immediately set a firm deadline for the withdrawal of all U.S. and satellite, troops with the utmost of respect for the South Vietnamese people’s right to self-determination.<sup>134</sup>

Moreover, Algeria and Vietnam, having developed nearly identical foreign policies through years of militant solidarity with each other and through their shared membership in various Third World groups, frequently convened to express their support for all peoples

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<sup>134</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "DRV-Algerian Joint Communiqué on Bouteflika."

struggling against the forces of colonialism, neocolonialism, and imperialism. The two nations were particularly invested in the plight of the Palestinian people, writing in the same 1971 communiqué:

Standing side by side on the same front of the anti-imperialist struggle, the Vietnamese people and the Algerian people deeply approve and firmly back the struggle of the Arab people, particularly the Palestinian people, against U.S. imperialism and its lackeys, the Israeli aggressors, and for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Arab countries and the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people. They support the valiant struggle of the Palestinian people against the manoeuvres [sic] of the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen to stamp out the Palestinian resistance.”<sup>135</sup>

Continuing the spirit of the mass organizations whose solidarity efforts defined the Vietnamese-Algerian relationship during the era of anti-colonial solidarity, Algerian mass organizations held events in support of the Vietnamese war effort. In 1966, a week of solidarity with the people of Vietnam was held to mark the sixth anniversary of the NFLSV’s founding, which included several festivals, celebrations, and protests; a photographic exhibition held by the youth branch of the FLN; a statement from Boumediene himself aired on both radio and television; a statement on findings from the Algerian Committee of Investigation into U.S. Crimes in Vietnam; and an appeal from the General Union of Algerian Workers (which orchestrated the iconic Oran dock workers strike of 1952) to all Algerians to prove their “total solidarity with and support for the people of Vietnam and their venerable front” by participating in the festivities. As the general secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs received the DRV ambassador to Algeria, confirming to him the nation’s unconditional support for the Vietnamese

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<sup>135</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "DRV-Algerian Joint Communiqué on Bouteflika."



people and its deep indignation at the United States' war crimes against Hanoi's civilian population, several hundred Algerian civilians demonstrated in front of the U.S. Embassy in Algiers in protest of "the criminal war waged by the United States in Vietnam." Entering the embassy garden, the protestors handed the U.S. ambassador a protest note written on the behalf of the Algerian people and addressed to President Johnson.<sup>136</sup> Later that week, a mass meeting in Algiers saw more than one thousand Algerian workers, students, and women chanting "Johnson is the murderer!" "Yankees go home!" "Down with U.S. imperialists!" and "Long live Vietnam!" and saluting Tấn Hoài Nam, member of the permanent delegation of the NFLSV in Algeria, with shouts of "U.S. imperialism will certainly be defeated!" and "The heroic Vietnamese people will certainly win!"<sup>137</sup>

Having participated alongside men in the Algerian War of independence as their revolutionary equals, and eager to continue their involvement in the developing state's affairs, Algerian women were eager to express their solidarity with their oppressed Vietnamese sisters abroad by hosting mass events and friendship visits of their own. In 1963, a delegation of Algerian women headed by the female deputy major of Oran, Louahala Khira, paid a friendship visit to Hanoi—Hanoian women of all walks of life holding a mass meeting to welcome them. Upon receiving warm words of praise from the President of the Hanoi Women's Union, Nguyễn Khoa Diệu Hồng, Khira expressed the Algerian women's indignation at the United States' imperialist war in Algeria and their warm support for the heroic struggle of South Vietnamese

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<sup>136</sup> Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "Vietnamese Solidarity Week," December 17, 1966, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "Group to Investigate U.S. Crimes in Vietnam," December 20, 1966, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>137</sup> Memorandum by New China News Agency, "Meeting Plays U.S. Imperialism in Vietnam," December 22, 1966, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

women fighting for self-liberation—assuring the audience that “[Algeria has] been keenly [following] the developments of the situation in South Vietnam” and of its wholehearted support. In 1967, the National Union of Algerian Women followed up with its own mass rally in Algiers for International Women’s Day under the theme of “Solidarity with the People of Vietnam.” With a delegation of NFLSV women headed by Van Thanh Pham as the guests of honor, President Boumediene, himself, attended the rally and saluted the “struggling sisters of the NFLSV” with a speech expressing Algeria’s commitment to “solidarity with the Vietnamese people...who are struggling to eliminate colonialism and all local agents like the Saigon administration who collaborate with it.” To the Algerian president, for Algeria, as a stalwart member of both the Third World and its anti-colonialist forces, to not unite with the Vietnamese people would be a betrayal of its mission and revolutionary past.<sup>138</sup> Thus, while Vietnam and Algeria’s eagerness to engage through official state-level relations defined the era of socialist, anti-imperial brotherhood, the militant and grassroots solidarity of the previous era continued to underpin the two nations’ relationship.

Following the Vietnam War’s conclusion, Algeria was adamant in continuing its vigorous support for the NFLSV and the PRGRSV—becoming an aggressive advocate for the peaceful implementation of the Paris Agreements. Sending a message to the leaders of the PRGRSV on the fifth anniversary of its founding, Boumediene expressed his outrage over South Vietnamese president Nguyễn Văn Thiệu’s violation of the cease-fire, acerbically stating:

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<sup>138</sup> Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "N. Vietnam Group Attends Women's Day Rally," March 8, 1967, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "Boumediene Speech," March 8, 1967, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

By respecting the Paris agreement, the PRGRSV has proved that it wants to reach a solution which is in accordance with the aspirations of the population of South Vietnam. On the other hand the Saigon administration continues to violate the terms of the agreement and to hinder any measure directed at enabling the population of South Vietnam to freely express its choice.<sup>139</sup>

Foreign Minister Bouteflika echoed Boumediene's sentiments in a message to his PRGRSV counterpart, Nguyễn Thị Bình, in 1975, lamenting that, despite only two years having passed since the Paris Peace Accords' signing, conditions in South Vietnam were only deteriorating due to the Saigon administration's "systematic sabotage of the Paris agreement with the aim of depriving the Vietnamese people of the fruits of their victory, perpetuating the partition of Vietnam and maintaining neocolonial domination in South Vietnam through a regime that serves foreign interests." Vehemently denouncing the Saigon administration's attitude, as well as that of its aider and abettor, the United States, Bouteflika pledged Algeria's "avowed solidarity and...indefectible pledge to always stand side by side with the Vietnamese and Indochinese peoples" and their just calls for national independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. While pledging to support its Southeast Asian ally, Algeria also demanded strict implementation of the "honorable" political and military provisions of the agreement, as the only one capable of restoring peace and guaranteeing security to the fractious region in the spring of 1975.<sup>140</sup> Furthermore, in receiving Foreign Minister Bình the following month during her visit to Algiers,

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<sup>139</sup> Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, June 10, 1974, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>140</sup> Memorandum, "Foreign Minister's Reply to DRV's Nguyen Duy Trinh," March 6, 1975, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 11, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

Boumediene pledged continued political and material support to the South Vietnamese people.<sup>141</sup> However, while Algeria extended a helping hand to the war-aggrieved South Vietnamese people, it also fiercely advocated for those who had “destroyed [Vietnam to] first of all have the obligation to pay their debt incurred [as] a result of aggression by paying war indemnities”—Boumediene articulating this demand in a 1974 speech in Hanoi.<sup>142</sup>

Commensurate with the scale of Algeria’s support for the DRV and the NFLSV during the Vietnam War, the pomp surrounding Boumediene’s first official visit to the DRV after its conclusion was immense. On his arrival at Gia Lâm Airport, which was bedecked with Vietnamese and Algerian flags and red streamers bearing inscriptions hailing the militant solidarity between the Vietnamese and Algerian peoples, Boumediene was warmly embraced by DRV Prime Minister Phạm Văn Đồng, as the Hanoi Young Pioneers presented bouquets to the delegation.<sup>143</sup> Tens of thousands of Hanoians lined the streets on the way to the presidential guest house, waving flowers and flags as Boumediene’s motorcade drove by—eager to catch a glimpse of the Algerian president and his entourage.<sup>144</sup> At a banquet later that evening, President Tôn Đức Thắng nostalgically recounted the time-honored Vietnamese-Algerian friendship, praising the Algerian people for their “brilliant” achievements in building a progressive and prosperous country that became a leader in the crusade against imperialism and colonialism in all its forms and thanking Boumediene and his delegation for the “warm and vigorous support to the

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<sup>141</sup> Memorandum by Liberation Press Agency, "Boumediene Receives Nguyen Thi Binh," April 3, 1975, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>142</sup> Memorandum, "Boumediene Speech," March 8, 1974, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>143</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "6 Mar Grand Welcome Meeting," March 6, 1974, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>144</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Airport Arrival Reported," March 5, 1974, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

Vietnamese people's fight against US aggression and their struggle in [their] new stage."<sup>145</sup>

Upon learning about Boumediene's visit, Chairman of the Consultative Council of the NFLSV Nguyễn Hữu Thọ and Chairman of the PRGSV Huỳnh Tấn Phát also sent a heartfelt joint message to the Algerian president, recounting the numerous instances of support that the Algerian people had given to the communist forces of South Vietnam:

We are proud to have an undaunted friend who had, for a century, waged a persistent struggle for independence and freedom as the fraternal Algerian people. We are also very proud to have a close friend—Your Excellency President Houari Bounedienne—who has been leading the heroic Algerian people in their tireless fight for an independent Algeria endowed with [an] advanced economy and culture, and who is the vanguard fighter in the struggle against imperialism and old and new colonialism. For years now, having the same fate, and fighting against the common enemy, the Vietnamese people and the Algerian people with deep sentiments for each other have supported and encouraged each other since the hard days of the struggle against the French colonialist aggressors. Since then, the militant friendship between our two peoples has been unceasingly consolidated and developed. The people, Revolutionary Council, National Liberation Front Party and Government of Algeria under Your Excellency's leadership have always reserved very precious assistance and support for the South Vietnamese people... We highly value the sympathy and strong support of the Algerian people and government to the just stand of the National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government at the Algiers summit conference in the past as well as at the diplomatic conference on

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<sup>145</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Ton Duc Thang Banquet Speech," March 6, 1974, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

humanitarian international laws in Geneva at present. We engrave in our minds the heartfelt sentiments and warm welcome rendered last year by Your Excellency, the Algerian Revolutionary Council, National Liberation Front Party, Council of Ministers and people to the NFL and PRG delegation on its friendship visit to beautiful and heroic Algeria. We consider that as a glorious embodiment and new development of the very fine militant solidarity between our two nations.<sup>146</sup>

After signing a joint communiqué condemning the Saigon administration and the United States for violating the terms of the Paris Agreement and articulating their common world view, Boumediene toured a museum exhibition on the Battle of Điện Biên Phủ and the wreckage site of an American B-52 bomber downed by North Vietnamese forces in 1972. The Chairman of the Administrative Committee of Hanoi, Dr. Trần Duy Hưng presented Boumediene with a fragment of the aircraft—a poignant end to the Algerian president's three-day friendship visit as a token of Vietnam and Algeria's more than twenty-one years of militant, anti-colonial solidarity.<sup>147</sup>

#### *Post-War Relations (1975-1986)*

Jubilant about the Vietnamese people's victory over the United States, their ideological enemy, Algeria and Vietnam continued to advocate for nations fighting against imperialism and colonialism in all its forms around the world in the post-war era. In an address to a large rally held in honor of General Giáp's 1976 visit to Algiers, during which a moment of silence was

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<sup>146</sup> Memorandum by Liberation Press Agency, "Tho-Phat Message to Boumediene on His DRV Visit: Greetings Message," March 8, 1974, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>147</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "VNA Carries Text of Joint Communiqué on Boumediene's Visit," March 8, 1974, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Visit to Museum, Defense Ministry," March 6, 1974, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

observed for the recently deceased Chinese Premier, Zhou En-Lai, Bouteflika stated that to remain faithful to the spirit of the Algerian and Vietnamese revolutions, the two fraternal nations must support all peoples around the world in their struggle for independence and self-determination. Algeria would be responsible for shielding Africa from the “hellish resources of colonialism and imperialism” while Vietnam would carry the torch of the Third World revolution across Asia.<sup>148</sup> However, while performing these regional responsibilities, the two nations continued to take all opportunities to issue joint political statements in support of all peoples around the world struggling against American exploitation. For example, in 1976, the two nations converged to denounce the “aggressive and criminal manoeuvres of the U.S. imperialists and the South Korean puppet clique aggravating tension in Korea.”<sup>149</sup> Moreover, a joint communiqué issued in 1980 broadcasted their concern about the advent of increased instability in the Middle East, which they attributed to “imperialist intervention and Zionist expansionism.”<sup>150</sup>

The two nations also continued to come to each other’s aid during the Western Sahara conflict (an ongoing dispute between Morocco and the Algeria-backed Polisario Front of the Sahrawi people over the latter’s independence and sovereignty over the Western Sahara) and the Sino-Vietnamese War of 1979. Though Algeria was extremely hard pressed to remain neutral in the Sino-Vietnamese War, as both Vietnam and China were its dear, strategic allies, it eventually

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<sup>148</sup> Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "Bouteflika, Giap Speat [sic] at Rally," January 9, 1976, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>149</sup> Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "SRV Culture Minister Leaves After 2-Day Visit," May 15, 1979, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Korea Central News Agency, "Nguyen Duy Trinh Writes to Bouteflika on Korea," June 18, 1976, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>150</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Joint Communiqué," December 21, 1980, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

abandoned its meek appeal for a peaceful resolution to the conflict to stave off an opportunity for the imperialist forces to “turn the situation to account in order to divide the peoples of the area and insure its interests are safeguarded” in favor of openly advocating for the Vietnamese side. Thus, as the French General Confederation of Labour and the General Union of Algerian Workers issued a joint communiqué condemning the Chinese for their armed encroachment on Vietnam’s territory and national sovereignty as “inexcusable,” the new Algerian Foreign Minister, Seddik Benyahia, solemnly stated that Algeria, “steadfast in its principles, [sided] with the Vietnamese people.”<sup>151</sup>

While political advocacy in the Third World arena underpinned Vietnam and Algeria’s relationship throughout the era of socialist, anti-imperial brotherhood, cooperative agreements and mutual economic development especially defined their relations in the post-war era. Due in part to Vietnam’s desperate need for assistance in rebuilding its war-torn society, the shift in the Vietnamese-Algerian relationship from one defined by militant solidarity to one defined by solidarity on the economic front stemmed from Algeria’s development-centric interpretation of non-alignment. This interpretation emphasized that economic unity among Third World nations was fundamental to their absolute independence from neocolonial agents, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

In 1974, Boumediene convened an extraordinary session of the United Nations General Assembly on energy and development, which produced a passionate statement further

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<sup>151</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nguyen Duy Trinh Receives Algerian Charge 15 February," February 16, 1979, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "PRC, SRV Urged to Solve Conflict Peacefully," February 24, 1979, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, March 24, 1979, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Gromyko, Jaroszewicz, Others," April 8, 1979, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.



elaborating on Algeria's perspective on non-alignment. The statement emphasized that Third World liberation was impossible when, while the developing world produced the overwhelming majority of the world's raw resources, the developed world monopolized nine tenths of them. Therefore, through existing economic and political arrangements, the riches of the Third World were only strengthening its colonial and neocolonial oppressors at the expense of its own development—widening global inequality and entrapping developing countries within a system of perpetual economic subjugation to the developed world. *Nhân Dân* hailed the extraordinary session in a special commentary the following day as one of monumental importance, and called for widespread adoption of the statement's call for unity of action among the non-aligned nations to withhold raw materials from the developed world:

The Third World continues to be maintained in backwardness and serves as a supplier of cheap manpower and raw materials. It continues to be the victim of the extremely unfair international trade and financial policy of the imperialists, the aim of which is to cast the danger of inflation onto the peoples of the Third World...It is the offensive revolutionary high tide that is taking place throughout the world and is gradually...destroying imperialism and colonialism, headed by the U.S. imperialists. A new front—the economic front—which is armed with a new weapon—the raw materials weapon—has been opened...As part of the consolidated strength of the world revolutionary movement, the economic front will certainly help—on the basis of unity of action of non-aligned countries—to strengthen the solidarity of the Third World peoples with the peoples of the socialist countries and other progressive forces.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Memorandum, "Nhan Dan Hails UN Assembly Session on Energy, Development," April 9, 1974, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

Boumediene elaborated further on the Algerian perspective the following year in a mass meeting in celebration of May Day and the victory of the Vietnamese people, emphasizing the imperative of Algeria, as a leader of the Third World, to work for another aim: Putting an end to the “economic trusteeship and exploitation that still exists in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.”<sup>153</sup>

Achieving absolute independence from the developing world thus formed the cornerstone of Algeria’s relationship with the newly united Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The Third World leader’s first lines of action were to deliver life-saving humanitarian aid to the war-afflicted South Vietnamese people, to provide the economic assistance necessary for the nation’s post-war reconstruction, and to recruit other friendly nations to pay their dues to the Vietnamese reconstruction effort.<sup>154</sup> Algeria became the first nation to deliver aid to the PRGRSV, signing a humanitarian aid agreement with Foreign Minister Nguyễn Thị Bình just shortly after Boumediene’s May Day address.<sup>155</sup> The first aid shipment was then delivered to Saigon the following month to much fanfare, arriving in Boumediene’s private plane and presented to the South Vietnamese Red Cross by a delegation of the Algerian Red Sickle Association, which expressed its “deep emotion and enthusiasm” at having the honor of delivering the first aid shipment ever to the “newly liberated” city of Saigon and Algeria’s intention to cooperate with the Republic of South Vietnam in its national reconstruction, just as it did during its “fierce fight against the American imperialists.”<sup>156</sup> The aid package included rations of food, clothing, shelter,

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<sup>153</sup> Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "President Boumediene Delivers May Day Speech to Nation," May 1, 1975, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>154</sup> Memorandum, "Boumediene Speech."

<sup>155</sup> Memorandum by Liberation Press Agency, "Mme Binh Arrives in Algiers, Meets Boumediene," June 8, 1975, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nhan Dan Greets Algerian Independence Anniversary," July 5, 1975, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>156</sup> While the Algerian Red Sickle Association is likely an offshoot of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, no further information is available on it.

and medicines to assist the South Vietnamese people in coping with the initial aftermath of the war.<sup>157</sup> Just a few months later, Algeria shared its immense hydrocarbon wealth with the South Vietnamese people by sending an oil tanker to the Port of Nhà Bè, where the representative of the South Vietnam Finance and Economic Commission, Nguyễn Văn Ngữ, hosted a reception to receive the vessel's captain and sailor and to express the PRGRSV's sincere gratitude for the Algeria's devoted assistance to its people.<sup>158</sup>

Two years later, a delegation of the Vietnamese Ministry of Public Health paid a visit to Algiers at the invitation of the Algerian Ministry of Health, touring a number of medical establishments in an exchange of technical expertise. After meeting the Algerian Minister of Health, Omar Boudjellab, who affirmed that “[to help] Vietnam heal the wounds of war and to help in national reconstruction is a duty of all freedom- and justice-loving people,” the Vietnamese delegation and the Health Institute of Algeria signed a protocol on the supply of medical equipment for a laboratory and consultation room to South Vietnam to treat its war-afflicted population.<sup>159</sup> Eleven tons of medical equipment for Vietnamese war invalids arrived in Saigon the following month on the behalf of the Algerian Ministry for War Veterans, as the Vice-Minister of Foreign Trade and Envoy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Nguyễn Văn Đài, secured further pledges from Boumediene to assist Vietnam in its national reconstruction.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Memorandum by Liberation Press Agency, "Algerian Red Sickle Delegation Arrives 26 Jun," June 27, 1975, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Liberation Press Agency, "Red Cross Receives Gifts from Algerian Delegation," June 28, 1975, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Liberation Press Agency, "Delegation Ends Visit," June 30, 1975, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>158</sup> Memorandum by Liberation Press Agency, "Algerian Oil Tanker Docks at Nha Be 14 Aug," August 15, 1975, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>159</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Health Delegation Visits Algeria, Signs Protocol," February 6, 1977, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>160</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian Medical Aid," March 26, 1977, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International

Moreover, while delivering its own humanitarian assistance to Vietnam, Algeria also advocated for the United States to pay war reparations—the Vice Chairman of the Algerian National Assembly, Djelloul Malaika, asserting:

This is a responsibility of an [sic] historic and legal character which has also a moral significance—a responsibility that the U.S. Government cannot evade... There has been in the history of the U.S. no event with so broad, deep, and lasting an impact on the political and moral life of all walks of life of the American people as the Vietnam War... Now that the Vietnamese people, victim of the U.S. war, are striving to overcome the consequences of this war, the U.S. contribution to healing the wounds of war and to reconstruction in Vietnam is evidently an appropriate action.<sup>161</sup>

While Algeria was at the head of the international effort to rebuild Vietnam, it also sought cooperative agreements with Hanoi to develop both nations' resistance to reliance on Western development institutions. Prior to the war's end in 1974, Prime Minister Phạm Văn Đồng paid a visit to Algiers at Boumediene's invitation with the aim of examining opportunities for further cooperation between the two countries, leading to the creation of the Commission of Vietnam-Algeria Economic, Scientific, and Technical Cooperation.<sup>162</sup> The Commission had its first meeting in Algiers in the fall of the same year, and its second and third were held in 1980

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Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algeria's Boumediene Hosts Vice Minister of Trade," April 5, 1977, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>161</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian Official Comments on U.S. War 'Responsibility,'" June 21, 1977, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>162</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Pham Van Dong Speech," April 4, 1974, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Communiqué on Visit," April 6, 1974, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "VNA Report on Economic-Technical Cooperation Pact with DRV," April 6, 1974, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

and 1982 to review developments in cooperation between the two countries, and especially in the area of public health, in an effort to “tighten further the friendship and cooperation between Vietnam and Algeria.”<sup>163</sup>

While the Commission’s meetings were relatively infrequent, Vietnam and Algeria regularly pursued opportunities to enhance economic cooperation outside of them. Just months after the Commission’s establishment in 1974, DRV Minister of Foreign Trade Phan Anh and Algerian Minister of Trade Layachi Yaker signed an agreement providing an “extended range of exchanges of industrial and agricultural products” and technical training to Vietnam in hydrocarbon production.<sup>164</sup> Another agreement in 1975 established cooperation between the two nations in post and telecommunications technology.<sup>165</sup> Moreover, Algeria negotiated an “overall agreement for cooperation” with the PRGRSV, opening up “a new page in friendship and cooperation between the two countries.” While these agreements ultimately folded with North and South Vietnam’s reunification in 1976, Algeria and the newly established Socialist Republic of Vietnam quickly brokered a new agreement on economic, scientific, and cultural cooperation during Vice President Nguyễn Hữu Thọ’s 1978 visit to Algiers at the invitation of Algerian Minister of Commerce Mohammed Hajj Ya’la. The agreement marked what an accompanying

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<sup>163</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Trade Delegation Visits Algeria 18-23 Sep," October 5, 1978, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Foreign Trade Minister Visits Algiers Trade Fair," August 25, 1982, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "CSSR, SRV Foreign Trade Ministers End Visits," August 30, 1982, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Meeting with Pham Van Dong," February 25, 1982, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>164</sup> Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "Trade Cooperation Agreement Signed," September 24, 1974, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>165</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "VNA Reports DRV Telecommunications Agreement," June 22, 1975, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

joint communiqué on the visit referred to as “a new stage in the development of Vietnamese-Algerian friendship”—opening doors for joint ventures in offshore oil exploration in Vietnam with Algerian technical assistance.<sup>166</sup>

Upon Boumediene’s death in 1978 and the subsequent ascendance of the pro-western, liberal Chadli Bendjedid the following year, cooperation between the two nations accelerated as the Vietnamese-Algerian relationship shifted from one premised on anti-imperial and anti-colonial Third World solidarity to one premised on practically navigating a world order dominated by capitalism and free enterprise. After paying a floral tribute to the late Boumediene on his official friendship visit to Algeria in 1980, General Giáp, in his capacity as the SRV’s Defense Minister, and Bendjedid issued a joint communiqué affirming their determination to “strengthen solidarity and friendship and broaden culture, economic and technological cooperation” with the aim of “[assisting] in the building of a prosperous and happy life for the two peoples.”<sup>167</sup> Vietnam and Algeria exchanged specialists and other technical expertise to achieve this effect, with bilateral economic cooperation extended through a long-term trade agreement following the visit of the Vietnamese Minister of Foreign Trade and Chairman of the Commission on Vietnam-Algeria Economic, Scientific, and Technical Cooperation, Lê Khắc, to Algeria in 1983.<sup>168</sup> Moreover, talks on the promotion of cooperation in planning and agricultural

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<sup>166</sup> Memorandum by Liberation Press Agency, "Mme Binh Arrives in Algiers"; Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "PRGRSV Foreign Minister Concludes Visit," June 14, 1975, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "SRV's Nguyen Huu Tho Meets with Officials," September 26, 1978, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by El Moudjahid, "Vo Dong Giang Interviewed on Internal, External Problems," September 28, 1978, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>167</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algeria Final Stop on Vo Nguyen Giap's Africa Trip: Details of Visit," December 21, 1980, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Joint Communiqué."

<sup>168</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Vietnamese Foreign Trade Minister Arrives on Visit," May 18, 1983, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian Prime Minister Receives SRV Envoy,"

production in Algiers in 1984 and in heavy and light industry, petroleum production, veteran care, public health, finance, education, and scientific cooperation the following year reinforced this new long-term agreement until the end of the era of socialist, anti-imperial brotherhood in 1986.<sup>169</sup>

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May 29, 1983, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Trade Minister Ends Visit," June 2, 1983, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

<sup>169</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Vo Van Kiet, Delegation Hold Talks in Algeria," October 12, 1984, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Vo Van Kiet Concludes Visit to Algeria," October 17, 1984, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service; Memorandum, February 19, 1985, Foreign Broadcast International Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 12, 2016, Foreign Broadcast International Service.

## The Era of Joint Ventures in Economic Liberalization (1986-2015)

### Context

#### *Vietnam*

The scale of post-war devastation in Vietnam and the failure of the nation's leaders to stimulate economic recovery threatened to unhinge the Vietnamese socialist project just a few years after the reunification of the North and South in 1976. While, according to Vietnamese economist Bùi Tất Thắng, the country was most in need of economic recovery measures, the improvement of labor skills among the Vietnamese populace, and boosts to agricultural and consumer goods production to remedy the poverty and destruction that nearly three decades' worth of conflict wrought on the country, the Communist Party of Vietnam instead adopted a Soviet model of central economic planning—concentrating national resources on heavy industry to extend the socialist revolution to the Western-oriented South. Lasting from 1975 to 1985, the CPV's ten-year experiment in central economic planning failed to develop Vietnam's battered economy in any meaningful way, and ironically yielded virtually no significant improvement in its heavy industry sector. As such, Vietnam remained a backward agricultural economy that produced annual yields insufficient to sustain the nearly eighty percent of the population and the seventy percent of the labor force whose livelihoods depended on agriculture and other related sectors. Famines became a fixture of Vietnam's social landscape.

Thus, Vietnam's economic condition continued on its downward spiral. As Vietnamese leadership resorted to importing tons of food annually for its people's survival, national debt came to equal the annual national income by the early eighties, and the state relied almost completely on the Soviet Union and other Eastern European nations to float the economy.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Thayer, "Vietnamese Foreign Policy: Multilateralism," in *Vietnamese Foreign Policy in Transition*, 2.



Meanwhile, quality of life in Vietnam plunged as unfathomable inflation reduced real incomes, forcing the Vietnamese people to grapple with major shortages in daily necessities, such as food, consumer goods, and access to education and healthcare facilities.<sup>171</sup>

Despite the clear failure of the Vietnamese socialist experiment, party hardliners such as General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPV Lê Duẩn and his enforcer of party orthodoxy, Lê Đức Thọ, were quick to stifle all attempts at domestic reform.<sup>172</sup> However, several factors ultimately converged to challenge the socialist model in the 1980s. First, political and economic reforms in the communist pacesetters of China and the Soviet Union, championed by Deng Xiaoping and Mikhail Gorbachev respectively, helped legitimate liberalization measures in the eyes of Vietnamese leaders. As the Soviet Union became too engrossed in its own domestic restructuring efforts to continue to financially support socialist regimes around the world, the legitimacy of the Vietnamese leadership in the eyes of the common citizen, which was contingent on the economy's health, was imperiled.<sup>173</sup> Moreover, the Soviet Union's eventual collapse provoked anxieties among party leadership that it would be the next socialist state to fall at the hands of "hostile forces" from the West, which would only take advantage of its internal weaknesses to expedite the process.<sup>174</sup> Thus, the only means to political legitimacy and to the preservation of Vietnam's integrity was in national reform. Second, the spectacular economic growth of several newly industrialized nations in Southeast Asia, and particularly the emergence of the Four Asian Tigers, of whom Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Singapore were members, provided an alternative model of development that was easier for Vietnamese leaders

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<sup>171</sup> That Thang Bui, "After the War: Years of Economic Development in Vietnam," *NIRA Review*, Spring 2000, 21-22, accessed March 1, 2016, <http://www.nira.or.jp/past/publ/review/2000spring/06thang.pdf>.

<sup>172</sup> David W.P. Elliot, *Changing Worlds: Vietnam's Transition from Cold War to Globalization* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012), 31-32.

<sup>173</sup> Elliot, *Changing Worlds: Vietnam's Transition*, 41, 48-49.

<sup>174</sup> Thayer, "Vietnamese Foreign Policy: Multilateralism," in *Vietnamese Foreign Policy in Transition*, 15-17.

to stomach in comparison to Western capitalism. Third was the timely death of Lê Duẩn and the subsequent exit of Lê Đức Thọ, themselves, from party leadership just before the Sixth Party Congress of 1986—the biggest obstacles to the economic reforms that would transform Vietnam into a socialist command economy to a globally integrated market economy with socialist orientation.<sup>175</sup>

In an ironic twist, the North's struggle to impose its economic model on the South, which ultimately survived socialist transformation through remittances and care packages of consumer goods from South Vietnamese in the diaspora, ultimately yielded Vietnam's complete "Southernization."<sup>176</sup> The bulk of the liberalizing reforms were drafted at the Sixth Congress, which, in addition to dismantling the state's central planning apparatus, passed measures to eliminate onerous state subsidies; to diversify ownership of publicly owned assets; to stimulate development of the private sector; to enact policies to integrate Vietnam into the global and regional economies, to catalyze Vietnam's foreign trade activities; to encourage direct foreign investment in Vietnam; to strategize on how to make best use of national resources for the development of production and commodity exchange; to reform not just economic policy, but also the administration to facilitate economic transition; to strengthen state management and macro regulation; and to combine economic growth with equitable social development.<sup>177</sup> While the effects of these Đổi Mới, or "renovation," reforms took several years to manifest, they ultimately yielded stable growth and remarkable improvements across all sectors of the Vietnamese economy to the tune of an average annual GDP growth rate of 8.9%, with inflation stabilizing at an annual rate of 10.9%. The percentage of poor households, measured by

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<sup>175</sup> Elliot, *Changing Worlds: Vietnam's Transition*, 39-40, 49.

<sup>176</sup> Elliot, *Changing Worlds: Vietnam's Transition*, 40-43.

<sup>177</sup> Bui, "After the War: Years," 23.

Vietnamese poverty standards, declined from 28% in 1993 to 19.3% in 1996, and the increase of per capita GDP by 1.6 times against the pre-Đổi Mới 1985 figure facilitated mass social transformations across Vietnam. For example, by 2007, the majority of households had electrical power, the postal system covered ninety percent of the country, and mass media reached nearly all rural areas.<sup>178</sup> Achieving a growth rate comparable to that of the Four Asian Tigers during their take-off period in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as China's in the 1980s and 1990s, Vietnam was celebrated internationally as an economic success story. In just over a quarter of a century, it transformed from being one of the poorest countries in the world, with a per capita income of approximately USD \$100 in 1986, to a middling-income country, with a per capita income of over USD \$2,000, by the end of 2014.<sup>179</sup>

Now regarded as one of Southeast Asia's most promising emerging markets, Vietnamese leaders have placed creating a more attractive investment climate at the forefront of the domestic policy agenda. Upon taking office in 2007, current Prime Minister Nguyễn Tấn Dũng promised to "pull the country out of backwardness" by encouraging greater direct foreign investment in the nation, which would serve as the lifeblood of its economic development. Identifying convoluted bureaucracy, systemically insufficient infrastructure, pervasive corruption, and labyrinthine administrative procedures as the largest deterrents to foreign investment, the Vietnamese government embarked on Project 30, a plan to recapture investors by reducing compliance costs for businesses and citizens by thirty percent and by building a more efficient, simplified, and transparent administrative process. While Project 30 is still in its early stages of implementation,

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<sup>178</sup> Bui, "After the War: Years," 23.

<sup>179</sup> "Vietnam Overview," The World Bank, last modified 2016, accessed March 9, 2016, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/vietnam/overview>.

it appears promising thus far, with Dũng approving a package of two hundred and fifty-eight administrative reforms in 2010.<sup>180</sup>

Such reforms are not just the result of Vietnam's economic liberalization, but also of the nation's accompanying abandonment of the "two camp" thesis that drove its foreign policy during the era of socialist, anti-imperial brotherhood in favor of a foreign policy of "[diversification] and [multilateralization of] economic relations with all countries and economic organisations" to accelerate economic development and to stabilize domestic affairs. Emboldened by the same trajectory of events that enabled its liberalization experiments, the CPV Standing Committee secretly adopted Resolution no. 2 in 1987, which initiated the strategic readjustment of Vietnam's national security policy. Several other resolutions, each bolder than the next, followed the landmark 1987 resolution, including Resolution no. 13 (1988), which established Vietnam's "multi-directional foreign policy" orientation, and a modification to said resolution just three years later in 1991, through which Vietnam resolved that it would seek to become "friends with all countries."

Regarding the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as its gateway to substantive engagement with the rest of the world, Vietnam moved to swiftly end its occupation of Cambodia, a move which earned it pariah status among the international community. The withdrawal set the stage not just for Vietnam's membership in the regional body, but also for the nation to embark on a campaign to normalize its relationships with China and the rest of East and Southeast Asia from late 1991 to early 1992. Vietnam's ASEAN membership in 1992 conferred it tremendous economic benefits to the tune of a total foreign direct investment of USD \$1.4

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<sup>180</sup> Matthew G. Schwarz, "Project 30: A Revolution in Vietnamese Governance?," editorial, The Brookings Institution, last modified September 2010, accessed March 1, 2016, <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2010/09/vietnam-schwarz>.

billion by ASEAN states by 1994; the establishment of positive working relationships with the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and the world's three major economic centers of Europe, North America, and East Asia; and the expansion of Vietnam's diplomatic ties to from twenty-three non-communist states in 1989 to one hundred and sixty-three states by 1997. Continuing the momentum of the 1990s, Vietnam continues to strengthen its existing diplomatic relationships and seeks new relationships with nations in emerging markets to expand its economic reach.<sup>181</sup>

### *Algeria*

Algeria, like Vietnam, underwent dramatic economic changes in the eighties and nineties following the death of President Houari Boumediene in 1978 and the rise of his successor, the liberal former Minister of Defense, Chadli Bendjedid. Rather than these changes yielding tremendous development progress and social transformation as they did in Vietnam, they exacerbated existing cleavages within Algerian society, which came to plague the nation with years of civil strife—the effects of which are still felt to the present day. Boumediene's economic legacy fundamentally brought into question the validity of the nation's development strategy, which like Vietnam's was modeled after the Soviet Union, and was thus focused on expanding state-owned industry at the expense of addressing pressing societal needs. By the time Bendjedid took office in 1979, the Algerian economy had shown little improvement from its initial post-war state. Save in three or four privileged northern towns, the basic industries in which Boumediene invested failed to create jobs in the numbers anticipated; geographic disparities in wealth distribution between rural and urban areas only grew during his twelve years in office. While

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<sup>181</sup> Thayer, "Vietnamese Foreign Policy: Multilateralism," in *Vietnamese Foreign Policy in Transition*, 1-3.

Boumediene obsessively invested in the creation of new state-owned industries, he paid little attention to developing industries that were actually vital to the well being of Algerian society, including agricultural and consumer goods production—deficits of which resulted in their mass importation. This tremendously wasted foreign currency reserves and threatened future economic growth. With the economy in such a state of disarray, Bendjedid and his circle of advisors worked to make existing institutions of state capitalism more responsive to both economic forces and societal needs through a series of decentralizing and deconcentrating reforms under the theme of “Toward a Better Life.”<sup>182</sup>

But while Bendjedid expended great efforts to reform the economic system, global forces beyond the state’s control plunged Algeria into a state of chaos. The new government concentrated on completing ongoing heavy industry projects, rather than starting entirely new ones like the Boumediene regime did; launched parliamentary and party investigations on state companies to expose widespread corruption and mismanagement; systematically broke down overgrown public corporations like SONATRACH, which constituted “almost a state within a state” in it of itself, into smaller corporations; and placed renewed focus on agriculture, social infrastructure, and light industry, while relaxing existing state austerity measures. However, these efforts were rendered nil as state debt swelled with the growing import bill for food, capital goods, and consumer goods; as total external debt stood at USD \$14.8 billion by 1984; and as the price of crude oil plunged in 1985 from USD \$30 to below USD \$10 a barrel. With ninety-eight percent of the country’s foreign exchange revenues stemming from hydrocarbon sales at the time, the Algerian economy had no safeguard against the global oil glut—President Bendjedid even warning in a 1986 speech that the plunge in oil prices could result in upwards of a loss of

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<sup>182</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 231-233.

eighty percent of the country's revenues.<sup>183</sup> Indeed, as global oil prices plummeted, Algeria's GDP growth rate also plunged into the negative, resulting in double-digit inflation that worsened in the 1990s, the unemployment rate climbing to twenty-five percent, and shortages of basic commodities becoming a fixture of of Algeria's social landscape.<sup>184</sup>

While Bendjedid enacted more drastic liberalizing reforms in the 1990s at the International Monetary Fund's behest—transforming state corporations into *entreprises publiques économiques* managed by independent boards of directors and cutting the banking system from the Banque Central d'Algérie in 1988—the economy continued to flounder. External debt wracked up from the state's large-scale import of basic goods rose from USD \$26.7 billion in 1989 to USD \$28.7 billion in 1994, amounting to 67.8% of GDP, all the while a poor security situation, mistrust of legal frameworks, and difficult bank credit policies repelled foreign investment in Algeria's economy.<sup>185</sup> Thus, while Algeria still bore a deep-seated mistrust of Western financial institutions as neocolonial agents, it accepted a structural adjustment loan project from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1994. While a combination of the structural adjustment project and the 2003 discovery of the fifth largest natural gas reserves in the world in Algeria facilitated the nation's macroeconomic growth by the late nineties and into the beginning of the twenty-first century, the benefits of this growth did not percolate into the lives of everyday Algerians, who suffered from unemployment rates of upwards of thirty-two percent in 2003—a percentage of which young people ages sixteen to twenty-four disproportionately represented. Furthermore, as a result of unequitable economic growth, attributable to the austerity measures conditioned by the loan, real income fell thirty-five

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<sup>183</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 233-235, 245; Korany, "From Revolution to Domestication," in *The Foreign Policies of Arab*, 104.

<sup>184</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 246.

<sup>185</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 246-247, 271.

percent from its level in 1993, and approximately forty percent of Algerians were living beneath the national poverty line by 2001.<sup>186</sup>

With the Bendjedid government unable to deliver on its promise of “a better life” to the average Algerian, considerable social unrest bubbled among the general populace—coming to a head on university campuses as disillusioned leftist groups, Kabyles unhappy with Algeria’s Arabization measures, and Islamic fundamentalists aired out their grievances on the national scene. Of these movements, the Islamists gained the most traction, as young people, more educated than their parents yet denied upward mobility, plagued by disproportionate unemployment rates, and bereft of official mechanisms to voice their opposition to the current state of affairs, turned to mosques as the only fora of political expression.<sup>187</sup> As early as 1979, militant Islamists clashed with Kabyles and leftists on university campuses, and by 1982, they demanded repeal of the National Charter and called for the institution of an Islamic government. Alarmed by the strength of the movement, Bendjedid’s administration made a number of concessions to the Islamists—the 1984 Family Code severely abrogating women’s rights and the 1986 National Charter declaring Algeria an Arab and Muslim state, to the outrage of Kabyle nationalists.<sup>188</sup>

The constitution of 1989, which introduced pluralism into the Algerian political system, gave Islamists the ability to formally participate in national politics for the first time under a coalition of Islamist groups named the *Front islamique du salut* (FIS).<sup>189</sup> Despite an overwhelming proliferation of parties following the constitution’s enactment, with fifty-one political parties emerging between 1989 and 1991 alone, the FIS dominated local and provincial

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<sup>186</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 270-274.

<sup>187</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 241.

<sup>188</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 239-244.

<sup>189</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 250-251.



elections across the nation to the unease of the establishment politicians of the FLN.<sup>190</sup> While the threatened FLN-dominated legislature, under the leadership of Prime Minister Mouloud Hamrouche, instituted sweeping changes in election law to forestall the Islamists' political progress, the Islamists ultimately succeeded in dominating the 1990 elections. Viewing Bendjedid, who remained committed to seeing his liberalization program to full term, as enabling an impending Islamist takeover, the military ousted the president in a bloodless coup in January 1992 and annulled the elections, which were widely regarded as the freest in Algeria's history, to the public's consternation.<sup>191</sup> To fill the presidential void, the High State Council, comprised of five establishment officials led by one of the original founders of the FLN itself, Mohamed Boudiaf, was established in January 1992, and immediately moved to dismantle the FIS as an organization. The ensuing violent crackdown initiated a spiraling cycle of violence that resulted in Boudiaf's assassination and the nation's plunge into a bloody civil war—the violence of which carried well over into the new millennium.<sup>192</sup>

Having run on a platform of economic growth, security, and national reconciliation, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, was tasked with the tremendous duties of resolving an eight-year long civil war that cost nearly one hundred thousand deaths and of repairing an economy that failed to provide even the barest essentials to the Algerian people upon his election as president in 1999. While his solution to the brutalities, the Law of Civil Concord, was met with outrage from Islamists over its “unbalanced language” that held them solely responsible for the violence and with despair from affected families, who were offered no political recourse, an astonishing 98.6% of Algerians voted in favor of it through a referendum,

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<sup>190</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 260.

<sup>191</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 250-257.

<sup>192</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 258-265.

signaling their overwhelming desire to return to peace after a near-decade of hostilities.<sup>193</sup> However, while the Law of Civil Concord put an official end to the civil war, and while Bouteflika officially enacted amnesty policies for former Islamist insurgents, considerable societal cleavages remain due to the absence of a full-fledged truth and reconciliation process, and persistent security issues plague the nation. While the Arab Spring failed to materialize in Algeria, disillusioned citizens have increasingly taken to the streets through thousands of demonstrations, protest marches, hunger strikes, and even self-immolations to pressure the government to live up to its responsibility to provide public goods through transparent means. Moreover, inter-regime conflict between Bouteflika—now in his fourth term in office and plagued with health complications—and the state security apparatus, challenges the stability of Algeria's political future.<sup>194</sup> With the government continuing to rely almost completely on its hydrocarbon sector for rents as global oil prices again prove exceedingly volatile, Algeria's national forecast looks grim.<sup>195</sup>

### Findings

In June 1986, a delegation of Algerian statesmen and representatives of mass organizations, including the General Union of Algerian Workers, paid homage to the General Secretary of the CPV Central Committee Lê Duẩn—Vietnam's top decision maker following Hồ Chí Minh's death in 1969, who presided over the reunification of North and South Vietnam and their socialist transformation. Led by member of the Political Bureau and head of the Secretariat

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<sup>193</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins*, 274-277.

<sup>194</sup> Amel Boubekeur, "Algeria's New Era," *Foreign Policy*, April 16, 2014, accessed March 9, 2016, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/04/16/algerias-new-era/>.

<sup>195</sup> "Algeria Overview," The World Bank, last modified 2016, accessed March 9, 2016, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/algeria/overview>.

of the FLN Central Committee, Mohamed Chérif Messaadia, the delegation left a heartfelt message articulating the meaning of Lê Duẩn's legacy to the Algerian people:

On behalf of President Chadli Bendjedid and all FLN party members, I wish to extend to the Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee, to all party members and Comrade Le Duan's comrade-in-arms, our deep grief over the death of the man who had fought for his own country which was also for freedom, progress and human dignity all over the world...<sup>196</sup>

Thus, with the death of the CPV's foremost party hardliner and the rise of the liberal Bendjedid in Algeria just a few years prior, four decades of a relationship founded on revolutionary struggle against colonialism, and later neocolonialism, came to an end. The ensuing era of Vietnamese-Algerian relations, the era of joint ventures in economic liberalization, was stripped of the radical idealism that underpinned the eras of anti-colonial solidarity and socialist, anti-imperial brotherhood. As the two nations normalized relations with the ideological enemies they once held in common and adopted market-oriented reforms in the backdrop of a disintegrating socialist order, they projected their changing national orientations onto their relationship. Therefore, the crux of the time-honored friendship in the new era no longer lay in a common struggle for self-sovereignty and against neocolonial infiltration, but instead in the achievement of mutual economic growth through foreign investment, increased bilateral trade, and technical cooperation. While the era of socialist, anti-imperial brotherhood also emphasized mutual economic development as a means of defense against repeated subjugation by the West, development cooperation in the new era departed from the previous in

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<sup>196</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Mourning in Algiers," July 14, 1986, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 3, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

being motivated by both nations' desire to catch up with the industrialized world, rather than to combat its corrupting influence.

Attributable to the massive political and economic changes undergoing in both nations following the death of Boumediene, the global oil glut, and the death of Lê Duẩn, Vietnamese-Algerian relations underwent a period of relative silence in the latter half of the 1980s, which was ultimately broken by first official visit of Vietnamese President Võ Chí Công to Algiers in 1990. While met with the same enormous fanfare upon his descent at Boumediene Airport and touring the same revolutionary sites across Algeria as his predecessors, Công adopted a markedly distinct tone during his visit that was indicative of a major shift in Vietnamese-Algerian relations.<sup>197</sup> Greeted by Bendjedid and his political entourage upon his descent, Công declared:

I am very pleased to visit beautiful Algeria for the first time. It is a country with an ancient civilization and with glorious traditions of the solid struggle for independence and freedom...My visit to Algeria comes at a time when the situation in our two regions and in our two countries is witnessing deep changes. I am confident the exchange of views between His Excellency President Chadli Bendjedid, our Algerian officials, and me will succeed in consecrating foundations, creating new possibilities for widening bilateral cooperation in various fields and will elevate relations to a higher level.<sup>198</sup>

Absent from ensuing discussions between Công and Bendjedid were the grandiose expressions of brotherly, anti-colonial solidarity that underpinned the official friendship meetings of the previous era. While the two leaders continued the tradition of affirming their commitment to the time-honored friendship, to the "common struggle of the Nonaligned

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<sup>197</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Further on Activities," May 28, 1990, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 3, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>198</sup> Memorandum by Algiers Domestic Service, "Arrives in Algiers 26 May," May 26, 1990, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

Movement” and to the struggles of the Palestinian and Sahrawi people for self-determination, they replaced the ideological leitmotif of the previous eras with more practical discussion on areas in which the two nations could cooperate for their mutual benefit.<sup>199</sup> Tellingly, among the major topics of discussion during Công’s visit were the settlement of debts that Vietnam owed to Algeria for financing its post-war reconstruction, increasing bilateral trade between the two nations, and initiating a program to exchange technical experts in order to facilitate each other’s economic development. With Bendjedid instructing all Algerian agencies concerned with managing Vietnam’s debt to “exhibit a tender attitude when resolving [the] issue” and extending the term of debt payment by a further five years, the two nations signed a memorandum of understanding on strengthening economic, financial, and commercial cooperation following talks between representatives of the Algerian Ministry of Economy and the Vietnamese Finance Ministry. Such cooperation entailed “increasing the volume of trade exchanges between the two countries and...the setting up of joint youth cooperatives specializing in handicrafts, school stationary, and sports equipment,” as well as exchanging specialists and machineries in such areas to promote job creation in both countries.<sup>200</sup>

Since Công’s visit, subsequent high-level and ministerial meetings began to deal strictly with matters concerning bilateral trade and economic cooperation, with vestiges of the anti-imperial rhetoric that underpinned nearly every meeting of the past era now only selectively evoked during events commemorating the Vietnamese-Algerian friendship. Just a year after

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<sup>199</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "VNA Reports Vo Chi Cong's Visit to Algeria," June 2, 1990, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>200</sup> Memorandum by Algiers Television Service, "Economic Cooperation Accord Signed," May 31, 1990, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service; Memorandum by Hanoi Domestic Service, "Hoang Quy on Cooperation with Libya, Algeria," June 12, 1990, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

Công's visit, an Algerian delegation led by the Minister of Employment, Mohamed Kara-Amar, held working sessions with the Vietnamese minister of construction; the president of the Vietnam-Algeria Joint Committee for Economic, Cultural, Scientific, and Technical Cooperation; and a delegation of other Vietnamese government officials to discuss opportunities to further consolidate and expand social and economic cooperation between the two nations. That year, a delegation of Algeria's state-owned electricity and natural gas distributor, Sonelgaz, also held working sessions with leading officials from the Vietnamese Ministry of Energy in Hanoi, signing a memorandum stipulating that the corporation would share its expertise on rural electrification through a jointly sponsored seminar for Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian participants.<sup>201</sup>

Similar agreements on economic, scientific, and technical cooperation proliferated in the new era. Among them were an accord on cooperation in the areas of culture and information exchange, an agreement on encouraging direct foreign investment and protection, a protocol on double taxation avoidance for Vietnamese and Algerian businesses working in each other's countries, and another agreement on healthcare and education cooperation.<sup>202</sup> In 1986, the Vietnam-Algeria Joint Committee signed two protocol agreements on strengthening bilateral cooperation through the exchange of specialists.<sup>203</sup> In the same year, a Vietnamese delegation led by Vice-President Nguyễn Thị Bình and comprised of Vice Foreign Minister Nguyễn Dy Niên,

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<sup>201</sup> Memorandum by Voice of Vietnam, "Do Muoi Receives Algerian Employment Minister," May 15, 1991, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Algerian Energy Industrial Team Visits 25-27 Jul," July 30, 1991, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>202</sup> Memorandum by Voice of Vietnam, "SRV Radio Previews Vietnam-Algeria Relations Prior to the Algerian President Visit," October 10, 2000, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>203</sup> Memorandum by Algiers Radio, "Two Protocols Sighed [sic] with Vietnamese Delegation," June 30, 1994, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

Minister of Public Health Nguyễn Trọng Nhân, Vice-Minister of Agriculture and Food Industry Thiên Luân, and Vice-Minister of Commerce Mai Văn Dâu, conducted a four-day official friendship visit to Algeria in 1994 with the purpose of “consolidating and strengthening the relations of friendship and cooperation between the two countries,” and specifically of “[studying] the possibility of cooperation between Vietnam and [Algeria] in economic, trade, cultural, and social fields, and to exchange experiences in national construction.” The friendship visit culminated in the signing of several agreements on economic, trade, cultural, science, and technology cooperation—Algeria specifically requesting for Vietnam to lend its expertise in agricultural production to reduce its reliance on food imports.<sup>204</sup>

Such exchange of technical expertise formed the crux of the two nations’ bilateral relations until the end of the century—the first exchange occurring just after the fall of Saigon, when Algeria trained fourteen Vietnamese workers to develop the war-torn nation’s fledgling hydrocarbon industry as part of a larger humanitarian assistance package. By 1986, Algeria and Vietnam hosted sizable populations of foreign specialists and laborers from each other’s nations, with Vietnam having sent one thousand workers and engineers to build and develop Oran University in 1985. A combined five hundred Vietnamese lecturers in Algerian universities and healthcare professionals also expanded the Vietnamese expatriate community in Algeria.<sup>205</sup>

While the expatriate community ultimately contracted by the mid-nineties, their presence was

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<sup>204</sup> Letter by Vietnam News Agency, "Vice President Nguyen Thi Binh Arrives in Algeria," February 22, 1994, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service; Memorandum by Voice of Vietnam, "Nguyen Thi Binh on African, French Visits," March 16, 1994, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service; Letter by Vietnam News Agency, "Received by Vice President," February 24, 1995, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>205</sup> Memorandum by Voice of Vietnam, "SRV Radio Previews Vietnam-Algeria"; "Co-operation between Vietnam and Middle East-North Africa: An Overview," *Nhan Dan*, October 31, 2013, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/politics/external-relations/item/2112902-co-operation-between-vietnam-and-middle-east-north-africa-an-overview.html>.

pronounced—attacks on Vietnamese workers during the Algerian Civil War across the country indicating their widespread geographic distribution. In 1994, two Vietnamese individuals, a trade councilor from the Vietnamese Embassy in Algeria and a lecturer in engineering, were murdered in two separate attacks—the first aboard an Air France jetliner in Algiers at the end of his tour of duty and the second in Sidi Bel Abbès, near the northwestern port city of Oran. The third attack, which involved the murder of a Vietnamese lecturer from Tiaret University in 1995, occurred over three hundred kilometers southwest inland from Algiers.<sup>206</sup> Maintaining a significant presence in Algeria to the present day, Vietnamese workers now support Algerians in oil and gas mining and in the construction of the East-West Highway Tunnel (a USD \$11.2 billion public works project connecting the cities of Algiers, Constantine, Oran, Tlemcen, and Sétif that is regarded as one of the largest in the world), among other domains.<sup>207</sup> Third-party contractors employed an estimated one thousand and two hundred Vietnamese workers in 2010.<sup>208</sup>

With the official end of the Algerian Civil War and the improvement of the Vietnamese economy following the turn of the century, Vietnam and Algeria demonstrated heightened political will to diversify and intensify their economic relations—President Trần Đức Lương lamenting in an interview with *Nhân Dân* that “the current economic cooperation between

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<sup>206</sup> Memorandum by Hong Kong AFP, "Spokesman Condemns Killing in Algiers Hijacking," December 27, 1994, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service; Memorandum by Voice of Vietnam, "Hanoi Reports Condemnation of Algiers Hijacking," December 29, 1994, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service; Memorandum by Algiers Radio, "Vietnamese National Assassinated in Tiaret," June 12, 1995, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>207</sup> "Vietnamese Experts Meet to Remember Algeria," *Nhan Dan*, November 2, 2010, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/politics/external-relations/item/31302-.html>; "East-West Highway, Algeria," *roadtraffic-technology.com*, last modified 2016, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.roadtraffic-technology.com/projects/eastwesthighway/>.

<sup>208</sup> "Strengthening Cooperation between Vietnam and Eurasian Economic Union, Algeria, Portugal and Bulgaria," *Nhan Dan*, May 29, 2015, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/politics/editorial/item/3381302-strengthening-cooperation-between-vietnam-and-eurasian-economic-union-algeria-portugal-and-bulgaria.html>.



Vietnam and [Algeria was] disappointing given [its] potential and the excellent political relations which exist between [the two nations].”<sup>209</sup> Viewing each other as gateways to larger regional markets in Asia and Africa, the two nations were eager to eliminate barriers to greater economic exchange.<sup>210</sup> Thus, they signed a significant number of cooperative agreements to facilitate greater trade between them in the following decade—among them, a protocol on greater cooperation between their foreign ministries during Foreign Minister Nguyễn Văn Ngân’s visit to Algeria in the summer of 1999, as well as an agreement on the avoidance of double taxation for corporations conducting business in both countries during President Lương’s official visit to Vietnam at the end of that year.<sup>211</sup> Vietnam and Algeria went on to sign an agreement on agricultural cooperation in 2004, and further agreements on judiciary assistance in trade, civil, and criminal affairs; cooperation between the Vietnamese and Algerian ministries of justice, sports, aquaculture, and veterinary medicine; and cooperation on the protection and quarantine of agricultural products following the visit of Lương’s successor, Nguyễn Minh Triết, to Algeria in 2010.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "SRV President Reviews Algeria, India Visits," December 2, 1999, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>210</sup> "Vietnam Sees Algeria as Key Partner in Africa," *Vietnam+*, April 14, 2010, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.vietnamplus.vn/vietnam-sees-algeria-as-key-partner-in-africa/18369.vnp>; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Discusses Bilateral Cooperation," February 24, 1995, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service; Memorandum by Voice of Vietnam, "Vietnamese President Concludes Official Visit to Algeria," December 7, 1999, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>211</sup> Memorandum by Voice of Vietnam, "Algerian President Receives SRV Deputy Foreign Minister," June 2, 1999, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service; Memorandum by Voice of Vietnam, "Vietnam, Algeria Issue Statement on Visit," December 7, 1999, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>212</sup> "PM Okays Vietnam-Algeria Agricultural Cooperation Agreement," *Nhan Dan*, November 5, 2009, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.vietnamplus.vn/pm-okays-vietnamalgeria-agricultural-cooperation-agreement/14211.vnp>; "Vietnam Sees Algeria as Key Partner."

Statesmen from both nations also regularly hosted working sessions with the hope of encouraging greater Vietnamese-Algerian economic cooperation. Aiming to further encourage private actors to invest and conduct business in each other's nations, Luong met with Algerian and Vietnamese businesspeople directly during his 1999 friendship visit to Algiers—outlining Vietnam's major policies toward and expressing its great will to create a favorable environment for joint ventures and foreign investment.<sup>213</sup> In 2005, National Assembly Chairman Nguyễn Văn An held meetings with the Algerian ministers of small and medium-sized enterprises, tourism and handicrafts, and foreign affairs, which culminated in the signing of a ten-point cooperation agreement to boost parliamentary cooperation and thereby create a legislative mechanism for enhanced economic cooperation between the two nations.<sup>214</sup> In 2009 and 2010, Algerian National People's Assembly Chairman Abdelaziz Ziari also held working sessions in Hanoi with various high-level officials, such as the Vietnamese construction minister, the chairman of the Vietnamese National Assembly's Economic Committee, representatives from the Ministry of Industry and Investment Promotion, and the chairman of the Vietnam-Algeria Joint Committee with the aim of “[increasing] exchanges, cooperation and sharing of development experiences between the two countries and parliaments.”<sup>215</sup> During Triết's visit to Algeria in 2010, the Vietnamese President and Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia also attended the Vietnam-Algeria Business Forum in the capital, where they discussed prospects for trade and investment cooperation and agreed that both Algerian and Vietnamese governments, ministries, and business

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<sup>213</sup> Memorandum by Voice of Vietnam, "Vietnam, Algeria Issue Statement"; Memorandum by Voice of Vietnam, "Vietnamese President Concludes Official."

<sup>214</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Vietnam Assembly Chairman Visits Algeria to Boost Cooperation, Agreement Signed," December 12, 2005, World News Connection, United States Department of Commerce, National Technical Information Service, <http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:3570/wnc/article?id=30677494>; "Algeria Keen to Boost Ties with Vietnam," *Vietnam+*, December 2, 2009, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.vietnamplus.vn/algeria-keen-to-boost-ties-with-vietnam/14895.vnp>.

<sup>215</sup> "Algerian Legislative Leader Ends Vietnam Visit," *Vietnam+*, January 23, 2010, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.vietnamplus.vn/algerian-legislative-leader-ends-vietnam-visit/16214.vnp>.

communities should “act as vanguard forces” in the promotion of bilateral trade and in bolstering economic and investment ties.<sup>216</sup> Moreover, the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry announced in 2005 that it was building a website ([www.vinafrica.com](http://www.vinafrica.com)) to facilitate e-trade transactions between Vietnam and African countries, which, in addition to Algeria, included South Africa, Egypt, Morocco, Angola, Tanzania, Senegal, Benin, and Libya. However, as of the time of this writing, no website has yet materialized.<sup>217</sup>

While trade between Algeria and Vietnam remains modest, the fruits of the economic agreements brokered and the high-level meetings facilitated between them in the 2000s yielded impressive gains in their commercial exchange. In 2000, the total worth of Vietnamese exports to Algeria barely exceeded an abysmal USD \$5 million, but by 2011, exports to the North African nation exponentially increased to USD \$153 million following the enactment of several cooperative agreements, as well as the establishment of the Vietnam-Algeria and Algeria-Vietnam Friendship Associations, as well as the Algeria-Vietnam Friendship Parliamentarians Group.<sup>218</sup> Bilateral trade levels then increased from USD \$209 million in 2012 to USD \$284 million in 2013 to approximately USD \$370 million in 2014. Moreover, the two nations declared their ambition to raise bilateral trade levels to USD \$1 billion by 2020—initiating more cooperative projects in agriculture, aquaculture, and infrastructure development to expedite the

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<sup>216</sup> "State President Wraps up Algeria Visit," *Vietnam+*, April 15, 2010, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.vietnamplus.vn/state-president-wraps-up-algeria-visit/18418.vnp>.

<sup>217</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Vietnam Launches Website to Boost E-Trade with African Countries," July 18, 2005, World News Connection, United States Department of Commerce, National Technical Information Service, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:3570/wnc/article?id=32237015>.

<sup>218</sup> "Nhan Dan," *Vietnamese, Algerian Businesses Talk Trade Online*, June 26, 2012, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/business/item/560302-.html>; "Vietnam Always Appreciates Algeria's Support," *Nhan Dan*, October 26, 2012, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/politics/external-relations/item/765502-.html>.

process. Vietnam also declared its intention to send up to two thousand additional skilled workers and technicians to work in Algeria by the same deadline.<sup>219</sup>

With Algeria now the third largest African importer of Vietnamese goods after South Africa and Egypt, Vietnamese export revenues account for most of the revenue from Vietnamese-Algerian trade. Vietnam's primary exports to the North African nation include rice, coffee, pepper, seafood, and manufactured goods (garments, footwear, and electronic parts). The Southeast Asian nation reported accruing only a paltry USD \$2.4 million in import revenue from Algeria in 2014, which primarily came from machinery and other equipment, spare parts, medicine, and ores and minerals.<sup>220</sup> Moreover, following Laos and Malaysia, Algeria ranks third on a list of forty-eight countries most attractive to Vietnamese investors, who had initiated over three hundred and seventy investment projects overseas to the tune of USD \$5.1 billion as of 2009.<sup>221</sup> Such asymmetry in the Vietnamese-Algerian economic relationship is reflective of Algeria's overwhelming reliance in its hydrocarbon industry and the consequent underdevelopment of its other economic sectors. Recognizing Vietnam's relative economic strength, Algeria views the Southeast Asian nation as a model of sustainable development—the Algerian weekly “Young Africa” hailing Vietnam's open-door policy in 2010, and the Director General of the Algeria National Investment Development Agency, Ferrouki Lyes, expressing his

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<sup>219</sup> "Algeria's 60th Independence Day Marked in Hanoi," *Nhan Dan*, November 5, 2014, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/politics/external-relations/item/2914302-algeria%E2%80%99s-60th-independence-day-marked-in-hanoi.html>; "Strengthening Cooperation between Vietnam"; "Viet Nam, Algeria Set \$470m Trade Target for 2015," *Viet Nam News* (Hô Chi Minh City), January 7, 2015, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://vietnamnews.vn/economy/264897/viet-nam-algeria-set-470m-trade-target-for-2015.html>; "PM Dung Meets with Spanish, Algerian Ambassadors," *Vietnam+*, September 23, 2009, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.vietnamplus.vn/pm-dung-meets-with-spanish-algerian-ambassadors/12985.vnp>; "Vietnam, Algeria Aim for 1 Billion USD in Two-Way Trade by 2020," *Nhan Dan*, December 16, 2014, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.vietnamplus.vn/vietnam-algeria-aim-for-1-billion-usd-in-twoway-trade-by-2020/69555.vnp>.

<sup>220</sup> "Vietnam Always Appreciates Algeria's"; "Vietnam's Exports to Algeria on the Rise," *Nhan Dan*, May 6, 2015, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/business/item/3323902-vietnam-s-exports-to-algeria-on-the-rise.html>.

<sup>221</sup> "VN Investors Raise Overseas Profile," *Vietnam+*, July 14, 2009, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.vietnamplus.vn/vn-investors-raise-overseas-profile/10994.vnp>.

belief that “Vietnam can be a role model for Algeria’s development” during the 2013 Vietnam-Algeria Business Forum in Algiers.<sup>222</sup>

As commercial trade between Vietnam and Algeria burgeoned in the new millennium, a new partnership emerged between Algeria’s state-owned oil corporation, Sonatrach, and the Vietnam Oil and Gas Group, more commonly referred to as PetroVietnam. With Vietnam aiming to enter the front lines of global crude oil exploitation, and with Algeria dependent on foreign investment in its hydrocarbon sector to reduce its debt and to finance its national infrastructure projects, PetroVietnam won a USD \$21 million joint contract with Sonatrach and Thailand’s PTT Exploration and Production Company to extract oil and gas in Algeria’s Bir Seba oil field, located in Touggourt province.<sup>223</sup> Following a law on oil and gas production that was adopted in 1991, Algeria opened its massive hydrocarbon reserves to foreign investors—dividing its southern region into oil and gas blocks and launching four international invitations to tender for their exploration between 2001 and 2004.<sup>224</sup>

Operating for the first time in Algeria, PetroVietnam initiated the Bir Seba oil project’s exploratory phase in the summer of 2003.<sup>225</sup> In the summer of 2015, the installation of a

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<sup>222</sup> "Algerian Weekly Praises Vietnam's Economic Policy," *Vietnam+*, July 14, 2010, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.vietnamplus.vn/algerian-weekly-praises-vietnams-economic-policy/20811.vnp>; "Vietnamese, Algerian Businesses Seek to Foster Partnerships," *Nhan Dan*, October 21, 2013, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/business/investment/item/2092902-vietnamese-algerian-businesses-seek-to-foster-partnerships.html>.

<sup>223</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Vietnam Taps More than 19 Million Tonnes of Oil, Gas in 2002," January 2, 2003, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service; Memorandum, "Southeast Asia Snapshot 30 Jan 12," January 30, 2012, World News Connection, United States Department of Commerce, National Technical Information Service, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:3570/wnc/article?id=39983072>; Memorandum by Algeria Press Service, "APS Reports Oil, Gas Main Sectors Drawing Foreign Direct Investment in Algeria," January 13, 2004, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service; Memorandum by Voice of Vietnam, "Vietnam, Algeria Sign \$21-million Deal for Oil-Gas Exploration, Exploitation," July 11, 2002, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>224</sup> Memorandum by Algeria Press Service, "APS Reports Oil, Gas Main."

<sup>225</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "VNA Reviews Major Events in Vietnam During the Week Ending 15 August," August 16, 2003, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

gathering system for the project, and therefore the commencement of the project's extraction phase, was inaugurated to much fanfare. Attending the ceremony with Algerian Prime Minister Abdelmalek Sellal, Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyễn Tấn Dũng described the project as “a symbol of the successful partnership between Vietnam and Algeria, which [will contribute] to the promotion of the traditional friendship and sound co-operation between the two countries, and [pave] the way for both sides to expand their collaboration to other fields.” So enthusiastic were both governments that the two leaders agreed to allow Sonatrach and PetroVietnam to collaborate in the exploitation of other Algerian oil fields, as well as those in Vietnam's continental shelf and those in third countries—presiding over the signing of a contract between both companies immediately after the ceremony.<sup>226</sup> In December 2015, the Bir Seba oil project saw its first commercial oil flow, with the joint-venture tapping one million barrels as of November 4. With the project amounting to a total capital of US \$1.26 billion, the companies aim to increase oil production to forty-thousand barrels a day by early 2020.<sup>227</sup> Thus, the Bir Seba oil project and its derivative ventures form the hallmark of the Vietnamese-Algerian relationship and will extend the life of the time-honored friendship by at least several more decades.

While economic cooperation formed the centerpiece of Vietnamese-Algerian relations in the new era, the two nations also sought other opportunities for collaboration in order to further reify their time-honored friendship. As stated previously, National Assembly Chairman Nguyễn Văn An's visit to Algeria in 2005 yielded a ten-point cooperation agreement between the

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<sup>226</sup> "Bir Seba Project - a Symbol of Vietnam-Algeria Co-Operation: PM," *Nhan Dan*, June 2, 2015, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/politics/external-relations/item/3390902-bir-seba-project-%E2%80%93-a-symbol-of-vietnam-algeria-co-operation-pm.html>.

<sup>227</sup> "PetroVietnam Welcomes First Flow of Oil in Algeria's Bir Seba Field," *Nhan Dan*, December 11, 2015, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/business/companies/item/3862502-petrovietnam-welcomes-first-flow-of-oil-in-algeria%E2%80%99s-bir-seba-field.html>.

Algerian and Vietnamese legislatures that committed them to conducting periodic meetings and consultations of views to better coordinate their positions on international issues and to promote cooperation in other areas of concern.<sup>228</sup> In 2013, the Algeria-Vietnam Friendship Parliamentarian Group, chaired by FLN parliamentarian Lahcen Maaloum, was also founded at an official ceremony to facilitate such cooperation.<sup>229</sup> Moreover, in 2012, Algeria and Vietnam signed agreements on judicial assistance in civil and commercial matters, with Algeria agreeing to train Vietnamese judges and prosecutors. Algeria also orchestrated a working visit of officials from the Central Steering Committee of Judicial Reform of Vietnam to Algeria in the fall of that year to study the organization and operation of the North African nation's courts, its investigation and procuracy agencies, as well as its judicial reform process.<sup>230</sup> Furthermore, the two nations agreed to extensive cooperation in the realm of information and communications. In 2000, their respective news agencies, Vietnam News Agency and Algiers Domestic Service, signed an agreement to boost professional cooperation and mutual understanding between the two peoples by establishing official channels to exchange news reports and photographs. Upon the 2011 visit of the Algerian Minister of Post, Information, and Communications, Moussa Benhamadi, the two nations also signed a number of agreements to collaborate in state management of telecommunications investment in each other's economies and to cooperate in the development of more advanced information and communications technologies.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Vietnam Assembly Chairman Visits."

<sup>229</sup> "Algeria-Vietnam Parliamentarian Group Founded," *Nhan Dan*, February 1, 2013, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/politics/external-relations/item/948502-.html>.

<sup>230</sup> "Meeting Marks Vietnam-Algerian Diplomatic Ties," *Nhan Dan*, October 25, 2012, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/politics/external-relations/item/763502-.html>; "Vietnam, Algeria Increase Judicial Co-Operation," *Nhan Dan*, November 22, 2012, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/politics/external-relations/item/817602-.html>.

<sup>231</sup> "Telecom Opportunities Sought in Algeria," *Nhan Dan*, September 21, 2011, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/politics/external-relations/item/318702-.html>; Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "VNA Signs Cooperation Agreement with Algerian News Agency," October 16, 2000, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

Traces of the militant solidarity that defined the previous two eras of the Vietnamese-Algerian relationship continued to manifest through their defense cooperation. Receiving a delegation of the Vietnam People's Army in 2000, the Algerian Chief of General Staff, Mohamed Lamari, affirmed, "The Algerian government and army always give priority to Vietnam in their foreign policy." The two delegations toured military establishments around the country before discussing measures to strengthen their cooperation. Similarly, the Vietnamese Defense Minister Lt. General Phạm Văn Trà received the Algerian Minister of War Veterans, Mohamed Chérif Abbas, in Hanoi the following year on a working visit, with Minister Abbas conferring President Bouteflika's Boudjahidine Armed Forces "Friendly Order" to Trà as a token of the nations' time-honored friendship.<sup>232</sup> With meetings of this nature occurring on a near-annual basis, the Vietnam News Agency announced that the Vietnamese and Algerian defense sectors would commit to increasing exchanges and strengthening cooperation in military medicine, military training, and military communications following a meeting between the Algerian general secretary of defense and the General Political Department of the Vietnam Peoples Army.<sup>233</sup> Vietnam and Algeria, largely under the political stewardship of the Algerian ambassador to Vietnam, Naceur Boucherit, also commemorated the time-honored friendship

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<sup>232</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "SRV Army Delegation Visits Algeria 10 Oct," October 15, 2000, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service; Memorandum by Voice of Vietnam, "SRV Defense Minister Holds Talks with Algerian War Veterans Minister," May 17, 2001, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed March 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>233</sup> Memorandum by Voice of Vietnam, "Algerian General Visits Vietnam," February 24, 2005, World News Connection, United States Department of Commerce, National Technical Information Service, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:3570/wnc/article?id=32049762>; Memorandum by Xinhua, "Xinhua: (Special for CAFS) Vietnam, Algeria Vow to Strengthen Military Exchanges," December 3, 2008, World News Connection, United States Department of Commerce, National Technical Information Service, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:3570/wnc/article?id=33090415>; "Military Delegation Visits Algeria," *Vietnam+*, November 12, 2009, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.vietnamplus.vn/military-delegation-visits-algeria/14376.vnp>.



through the establishment of the Vietnam-Algeria Friendship Junior High School, which was erected in 1985.<sup>234</sup>

Moreover, in the spirit of the numerous photo exhibitions and film screenings hosted in celebration of each other's cultures during the previous two eras of the Vietnamese-Algerian relationship, as well as the friendly matches that brought men from both nations together in times of war, Algeria and Vietnam continued to collaborate in the arts and sports. In 1999, Algerian and Vietnamese filmmakers co-produced the movie *Bong Sen (The Lotus)*, the story of a North African soldier fighting in the Indochina War who defects from the French Foreign Legion and joins the Việt Minh during the Battle of Điện Biên Phủ upon falling in love with a beautiful Vietnamese guerilla and witnessing growing abuses against the Vietnamese people.<sup>235</sup> Moreover, while the football matches that the two armed forces played during Algeria's War of Independence were never revived, Algeria became an enthusiastic importer of the Vietnamese martial art of Vovinam—excelling in regional and international Vovinam tournaments and hosting the ninth annual National Vovinam Championships in 2011. So enthusiastic were Algerians about Vovinam that Algeria organized the first African Vovinam Championship in 2012, in which it ranked first with twenty-five medals.<sup>236</sup>

With bilateral trade rapidly increasing and the Bir Seba oil project taking off, Vietnam and Algeria are committed to further tightening their relationship. Lamenting that the

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<sup>234</sup> "Vietnam Values Ties with Middle East, North Africa," *Nhan Dan*, November 3, 2013, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/politics/external-relations/item/2119102-vietnam-values-ties-with-middle-east-north-africa.html>; "Algerian Diplomat Receives Friendship Decoration," *Nhan Dan*, September 24, 2009, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.vietnamplus.vn/algerian-diplomat-receives-friendship-decoration/13003.vnp>.

<sup>235</sup> "Vietnam Always Appreciates Algeria's"; Ronald Gilliam, "The Lotus (Bông Sen)," The Center for Southeast Asian Studies, last modified February 10, 2008, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.cseashawaii.org/2008/02/bong-sen/>.

<sup>236</sup> "Vovinam Festive Days in Algeria," *Vietnam+*, March 21, 2010, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.vietnamplus.vn/vovinam-festive-days-in-algeria/17638.vnp>; "Vovinam Championship Closes in Algeria," *Nhan Dan*, January 30, 2011, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/sports/events/item/110602-.html>.

Vietnamese-Algerian friendship had still yet to meet its potential, Prime Minister Dũng and Prime Minister Sellal took concrete steps toward encouraging enterprises from both nations to heighten their cooperation in mining, heavy and light industries, energy, telecommunications, information technology, construction, consumer goods production, agro-fishery, oil and gas, renewable energy, metallurgy, finance, banking, and agriculture to achieve their goal of raising bilateral trade to US \$1 billion by 2010 during Dũng's official visit to the North African nation in late 2015. Dũng also urged Vietnamese firms to seek greater investment opportunities in Algeria and to import more Algerian oil and gas products.<sup>237</sup> This productive visit, as well as subsequent agreements initiated in the past few years that include a memorandum of understanding for both sides to cooperate in judicial information sharing, management of records, execution of criminal judgments, and training from 2016 to 2017; an agreement on maritime transport enacted in 2011 to facilitate bilateral trade; as well as pledges from both nations to support each other in multilateral and regional affairs, indicate that the future of the two nations' relations will only grow more expansive in the coming decade.<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> "PM Calls on Algerian Firms to Invest in Vietnam," *Nhan Dan*, June 1, 2015, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/politics/external-relations/item/3387702-pm-calls-on-algerian-firms-to-invest-in-vietnam.html>; "PM Concludes Official Visit to Algeria," *Nhan Dan*, June 2, 2015, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/politics/external-relations/item/3391602-pm-concludes-official-visit-to-algeria.html>; "PM Hosts Algeria-Vietnam Friendship Association's President," *Nhan Dan*, June 2, 2015, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/politics/external-relations/item/3391302-pm-hosts-algeria-vietnam-friendship-association%E2%80%99s-president.html>; "Vietnam, Algeria to Build on Long-Standing Friendship," *Nhan Dan*, June 2, 2015, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/politics/external-relations/item/3389402-vietnam-algeria-to-build-on-long-standing-friendship.html>.

<sup>238</sup> "Vietnam, Algeria Increase Judicial Co-Operation," *Nhan Dan*, November 22, 2012, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/politics/external-relations/item/817602-.html>; "Vietnam, Algeria Sign Judicial and Maritime Accords," *Nhan Dan*, May 27, 2012, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/politics/external-relations/item/516102-.html>.

## Conclusion

In reconstructing the history of relations between Algeria and Vietnam from 1946 to 2015, “The Time-Honored Friendship” has demonstrated that while separated by over ten-thousand kilometers, the two countries were inextricably bound by their common oppression under French colonial rule. Deeply felt by laypeople, just as much as Vietnamese and Algerian intelligentsia and statesmen, anti-colonial solidarity collapsed the physical distance separating the two populations and knitted together their struggles for independence in a broader movement to dismantle colonialism during the era of anti-colonial solidarity. During the final years of the twentieth century, as the Indochina War and the Algerian War of Independence gained legendary status in Third World mythology, and as Vietnam and Algeria subsequently became leaders in the Third World movement during the era of socialist, anti-imperial brotherhood, the bonds of friendship between the two nations not just grew tighter, but also evolved in response to changing domestic and international orders. Even as the ideologies that bound together Algeria and Vietnam fell apart in the late eighties—as a socialist “new world order” proved unfeasible and the Third World movement began to lose its momentum—and as the two nations underwent backbreaking domestic turmoil, the bonds between the two nations proved enduring and malleable. The birth of Vietnam and Algeria’s relationships as allies in a common struggle against colonial oppression evolved into a partnership where the two battered nations would assist each other in navigating an international system governed by the dual forces of capitalism and free enterprise. No longer bound together by ideology, but instead by long-term joint projects in economic liberalization, the time-honored friendship is projected to remain enduring.

Though evidence of a strong Vietnamese-Algerian relationship is memorialized in each nation’s embassies, is carefully preserved in archives around the world, and is even available for

public use in databases like the Foreign Broadcast Information Service, there is no other English-language scholarship that reconstructs this dynamic trans-regional history. The egregiousness of this gap in scholarship is only compounded by trans-regional studies becoming increasingly *en vogue* over the past several years and by widespread recognition among historians of Algeria of the influence that the Indochina War had on the Algerian War of Independence. The extent of trans-regional scholarship involving either Algeria or Vietnam explores the evolution of each nation's relationship with their former colonial oppressor, France; the neo-imperial power that would supplant the French as their new common enemy, the United States; and the Communist world leaders, the Soviet Union and China.

However, the majority of the histories of Vietnam and Algeria's foreign relations are circumscribed by regional boundaries, in spite of watershed moments in history like the Bandung Conference that proved, even before globalization's takeoff in the 1980s, individuals from far reaches of the world were collaborating in dynamic ways. Bearing in mind the vibrancy of the Afro-Asian solidarity movement, as well as the Third World movement at large, one could argue that the lack of a truly trans-regional scholarship on relations between Latin American, Asian, and African nations is in it of itself ahistorical. While "The Time-Honored Friendship" focused solely on relations between Vietnam and Algeria, the primary sources it utilized hinted to an even more expansive network of relationships between nations not typically associated with one another in English-language scholarship. For example, with both nations leading the global anti-colonial struggle, Algeria viewed supporting the peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America in opposing imperialism and old and new colonialism as a "sacred duty." Moreover, Vietnam, under President Nguyễn Hữu Thọ, signed a number of joint agreements on economic and cultural cooperation with Angola, Ethiopia, Guinea, the Congo, Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique,

Benin, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, and Madagascar in 1978 following the leader's official friendship visits across the African continent.<sup>239</sup>

A substantial body of literature exists on the Third World as a movement, with much scholarly attention paid to political figures, such as Kwame Nkrumah, Fidel Castro, Gamal Abdul Nasser, and Jawaharlal Nehru. However, this body alone is insufficient for comprehending the full scope of the alliance among the movement's member nations. Not captured by scholarship examining the Third World movement's activities at the levels of the United Nations and inter-regional bodies, like the Non-Aligned Movement summits, are the cooperative agreements, friendship visits, and humanitarian assistance undertaken by individual nation states that reinforced Third World-ism as a whole.

Having illuminated the scope of relations between Vietnam and Algeria, "The Time-Honored Friendship" invites scholars to expand on its findings in order to fully appreciate the scope of solidarity efforts between the two peoples. Moreover, in demonstrating the Vietnamese-Algerian relationship's strength and the sustained efforts of the two nations to collapse the geographic, cultural, and linguistic boundaries that separate them, it entreats scholars to explore how other colonized, Third World people overcame barriers to assist each other in their quest for total sovereignty from colonial and neocolonial control. Recognizing this, historians of formerly colonized nations must look beyond physical boundaries to understand the full scope of their subjects' foreign affairs and to capture the richness of global politics. The world is much smaller than we think, and our scholarship must reflect this.

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<sup>239</sup> Memorandum by Vietnam News Agency, "Nhan Dan Commentary"; Memorandum by Hanoi Domestic Service, "Nguyen Huu Tho Interview," November 9, 1978, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Intelligence Agency, accessed January 1, 2016, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

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