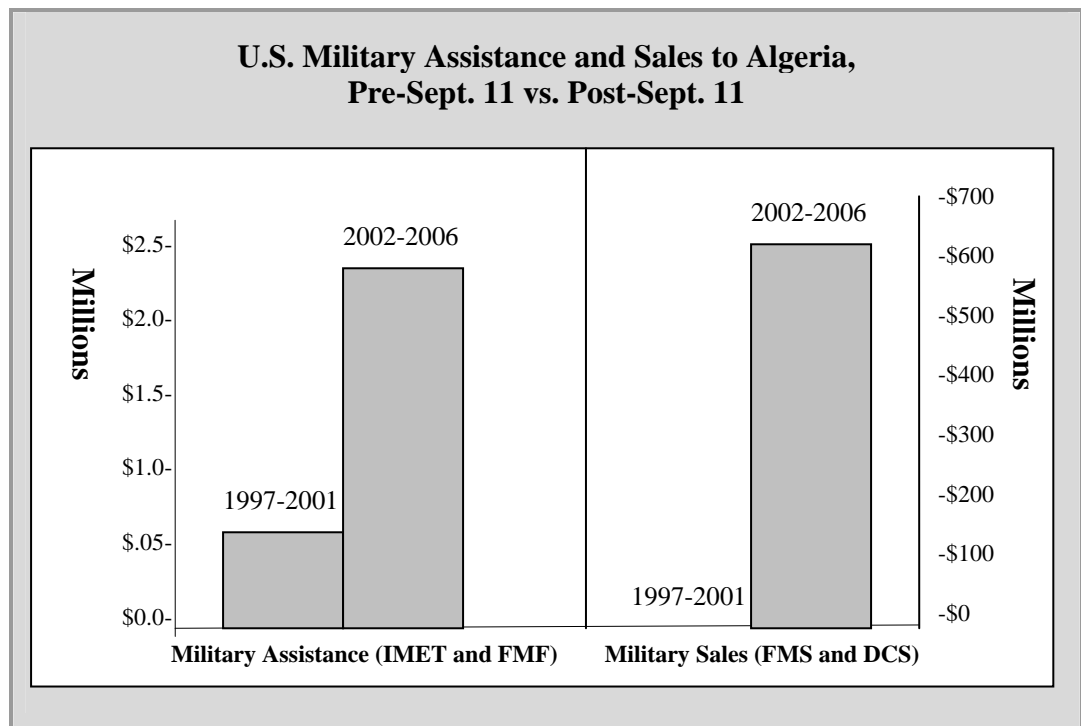




ALGERIA

Background

The People's Democratic Republic of Algeria achieved independence from France in 1962 after more than a decade of violent resistance led by the National Liberation Front (FLN). The FLN, a secular and socialist political party that ruled with the support of the military, was the only legitimate political party in Algeria for the first 30 years of independence.



The collapse of the oil market, a cornerstone of Algeria's economy, led to violent anti-government protests in 1988. To ease the widespread unrest, the government adopted a revised constitution in 1989 that allowed for the formation of alternative political parties. However, Algeria's first experience with political pluralism was tragically short-lived. When the newly formed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS)—an amalgamation of several different Islamist opposition groups—looked as though they would sweep a vast majority of parliamentary seats in the 1992 national elections and upset the status quo, the military stepped in. The military canceled the elections, deposed then president Chadli Benjedid, and declared a state of emergency that remains in effect today. In retaliation, armed Islamist groups formerly associated with the FIS began a cycle of political violence and terrorism aimed at the government and its supporters. Their campaign of terror lasted throughout the 1990s. Over 100,000 people were killed during the violence, which included horrific massacres of civilians by both the Islamist groups and the government-backed militias. Thousands more were disappeared by the Algerian security forces.

The systematic violence came to an end when a moderate armed group, the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), declared a unilateral ceasefire in 1997. Two other groups, the Islamic Armed Group (GIA) and the Salafist Group for Call and Combat (GSPC) have continued attacks on civilians, despite a dwindling domestic base, and these two groups are the current targets of Algerian anti-terrorism efforts. Since current President Abdelaziz Bouteflika took office in 1999, the violence has subsided considerably and an amnesty for guerilla combatants has been instated in an attempt to move past the tumultuous past. Bouteflika's 1999 election was so plagued with accusations of electoral fraud that all six other candidates dropped out of the race on the eve of the election. Algeria's first free and fair democratic presidential election, sanctioned by international observers, took place in April 2004 when Bouteflika received an overwhelming majority of the votes. Although observers conceded some flaws in the election, the process was considered by and large an improvement, and the military remained neutral throughout the proceedings.

The U.S. State Department's 2005 Human Rights Report concluded that, although terrorist groups continued to commit human rights abuses in Algeria, the government had taken "several important steps" towards improving the human rights situation. The 2004 presidential elections were praised as demonstrating a "marked improvement towards a more free and transparent electoral process." The military made strides against domestic terrorist groups and reduced the number of civilian deaths as a result of terrorism. Instances of security forces using torture against detainees and arbitrarily detaining citizens significantly decreased over previous years. However, in the instances in which such abuses did take place, members of the security forces generally escaped punishment. Corruption remains widespread in all branches of the government and regulations to punish corrupt officials are often unimplemented. Corruption probes have been launched into suspected corrupt members of the judiciary. Although the judiciary is theoretically an independent branch of the government, in practice, it remains heavily influenced by the executive branch.

No political disappearances have occurred since 2002, and 2005 saw the end of an 18-month-old process designed by the government to compensate families of the several thousand persons who disappeared during the civil war. Although indemnities were paid to several families, the process was criticized for being impartial and non-transparent. The government also refused to conduct thorough investigations into disappearances that may have led to the prosecution of military or government officials, and also impeded the investigations of local and international NGOs.

The Emergency Law —instated by the military in 1992— has not yet been repealed, meaning that the government retains broad power to restrict certain rights and exert certain control over the country. The powers allocated to the government by the state of emergency allowed the government to increase restrictions freedom of speech and of the press during 2005. The government has deported and imprisoned journalists for defaming government officials or for covering sensitive topics. Additionally, all newspapers are printed by the government and all advertising is conducted by a government advertising agency; as a result, public criticism of the government has decreased. The government also actively monitors the communications of its citizens, particularly those who are journalists, members of the political opposition or human rights groups, or alleged members of terrorist organizations. Freedom of assembly is "sharply curtailed" by the government. Demonstrations are forbidden in the capital city of Algiers, and public meetings, including for the purpose of practicing a religion other than Islam, require a permit issued by the government.

The U.S. State Department's terrorism report noted that in 2005, the "fundraising, terrorist recruiting, and other support activities of al-Qaida and affiliated persons and groups in South Africa, Nigeria, and

across the Trans-Sahara region remained a serious concern.” GSPC continues to operate in Algeria, conducting attacks against the government of Algeria and its citizens. Designated a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the State Department, the GSPC is a splinter group of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), one of the principal Islamist militant groups that fought against the government during the Algerian civil war. The GSPC has recently allied itself with al-Qaida, and has begun adapting its tactics to those favored by insurgents in Iraq, including roadside bomb attacks.

After years of concerted counterterrorism efforts, the government estimates that GSPC has only 800 members within Algeria, compared with the estimated 30,000 terrorists that operated in Algeria during the civil war. Government operations have also driven GSPC members and other militants out of urban areas and as a result, they now operate in rural areas or the unsecured swaths of the Algerian border within the Sahara desert. The U.S. military is currently embarking on a long-term initiative to counter what it sees as a growing terrorist presence in the predominantly Muslim regions of Africa, facilitated by ungoverned stretches of border and desert terrain. The Pentagon hopes to train thousands of African troops in counterinsurgency tactics and cross-border cooperation and communication as part of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative (TSCTI), which includes Algeria, as well as Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Nigeria, Morocco and Tunisia.

Algeria is active in a variety of regional and international organizations including the African Union (formerly Organization of African Unity) and the United Nations. During the past five years, Bouteflika has actively pursued increased engagement with the international community and has worked to improve Algeria’s unstable and war-torn image through numerous diplomatic visits abroad. Bouteflika’s historic visit to the White House in July 2001 marked increased interest in a stronger diplomatic and security relationship between the two countries. This growing relationship has been bolstered since Sept. 11, 2001, by Algeria’s support of the global “war on terror.” President George W. Bush has publicly praised Algeria as a partner both in the war on terror and in spreading democracy; former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld became the first Pentagon chief to visit Algeria when he stopped in the country during a February 2006 trip to North Africa.

U.S. Military Assistance Prior to Sept. 11, 2001

Algeria did not report any imports of major conventional weapons systems from the United States to the UN Register of Conventional Arms between 1990 and 2001.

Although it was not prohibited from receiving U.S. military assistance, Algeria did not receive Foreign Military Financing (FMF) funds from the United States between fiscal year 1990 (FY 90) and FY 01. U.S. military assistance to Algeria predominantly came in the form of International Military Education and Training (IMET) funds during this period. The amount of IMET provided to Algeria was varied, as the situation in Algeria was extremely unstable for much of the 1990s. The United States provided \$175,000 in IMET funds to Algeria in FY 91, but after the dissolution of the national parliament in 1992 combined with the onset of political violence, IMET aid was drastically reduced until the end of the 1990s. Starting in FY 98, IMET funds were increased to pre-1992 levels. Throughout the 1990s, the United States hoped that training and security sector reform provided to the Algerian military through IMET would help improve concerns of human rights abuses by security forces.

Algeria was also the recipient of several arms transfers between 1990 and 2001, importing just over \$16.7 million in Direct Commercial Sales (DCS) and \$2.72 million in Foreign Military Sales (FMS)

during this period. However, FMS stopped in the mid-1990s. Algeria received no defense articles through the Excess Defense Articles (EDA) program between FY 90 and FY 01.

U.S. Military Assistance Since Sept. 11, 2001

Algeria has been fighting its own internal battle against terrorism for years, and was quick to express its support for the United States and its war on terrorism after Sept. 11. For these reasons, the U.S. State Department considers Algeria to be a “front-line state” in the war on terrorism. Algeria has increased information sharing with the United States and has worked with European countries to combat terrorist networks in addition to domestic terrorist groups, such as the GSPC, which is allied with al-Qaida. In 2002, Algeria hosted an African Union summit on terrorism and an international conference on crime and counterterrorism. Although Algeria condemns international terrorism, it considers the groups on the U.S. list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations that operate within the Palestinian territories to be conducting legitimate armed resistance and not acts of terrorism.

In the first four years after Sept. 11, 2001, Algeria received more than ten times the total amount of military assistance it received in the previous twelve years. Although FMS has been minimal, totaling only \$9,000 in sales of non-lethal supplies, substantial DCS has been concluded with the United States in the past four years. Licensed DCS totaled over \$350 million between FY 02 and FY 05 and consisted of aircraft spare parts, radar systems and other military electronics, and riot control chemicals. About \$17 million more in DCS is projected during FY 06 and FY 07, but no FMS is slated for those years.

The FY 02 Foreign Operations budget request included \$200,000 in IMET for Algeria, which represented an increase over pre-Sept. 11 levels of IMET funding. However, when the budget was passed, Algeria only received \$67,000, and Congress altered the regulations to require that any funding for IMET aid to Algeria follow regular notification procedures — a stipulation that is also placed on Indonesia and Guatemala due to human rights concerns. However, growing U.S.-Algerian relations led to a substantial increase in IMET in FY 03 and FY 04 and the notification requirement was dropped from the Foreign Operations budget in FY 05. Algeria is slated to receive \$743,000 and \$850,000 for IMET in FY 06 and FY 07, respectively. Although not prohibited from receiving FMF, Algeria did not receive any FMF between FY 02 and FY 05, and none has been requested for either FY 06 or FY 07.

The United States has provided Algeria with several sources of counterterrorism training and funding. Algeria is a beneficiary of the Regional Defense Counterterrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP) and received \$200,000 in FY 05, with \$100,000 budgeted in both FY 06 and FY 07. Algeria was also one of roughly a dozen countries to receive at least \$10 million in military assistance through the new Section 1206 authority in the FY 06 defense budget. Since FY 05, Algeria has also received funding to expand its counterterrorism capabilities through the Foreign Operations budget’s Anti-Terrorism Assistance program (NADR-ATA), which is part of the Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining, and Related Activities account. Algeria received \$482,000 from this account in FY 05 and, although no NADR-ATA funding was requested in FY 06, \$575,000 has been requested for FY 07.

The U.S.-Algerian military relationship has recently been bolstered. The United States and Algeria launched a Joint Military Dialogue in May 2005, increasing direct military contacts between the two

countries. Algeria has hosted U.S. naval visits and participated in a series of joint naval exercises. Additionally, Algeria has been included in the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative (TSCTI), which is an expanded version of the Pan-Sahel Initiative launched in 2003. The TSCTI began in 2005 and is designed to greatly augment the region's indigenous capacity to effectively fight terrorism. For example, in March 2004, newly-trained and armed Chadian soldiers reportedly killed 42 Islamic fighters in the country's northern highlands. TSCTI commenced in June 2005 with Operation Flintlock, which trained 3,000 African soldiers from nine different countries alongside U.S. forces in skills ranging from basic marksmanship to human rights law. In FY 07, the TSCTI was added to the Foreign Operations budget as a regular something or other and funded with \$7.2 million from the NADR-ATA account, and \$16.8 million from the Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) account. The Section 1206 authority from the Operations and Maintenance title of the defense budget may also contribute funding to the TSCTI in FY 07.

U.S. Military Assistance and Sales to Algeria, FY 90 - FY 08					
	IMET	FMF	DCS	FMS	EDA
1990	\$144,000	\$0	\$1,049,000	\$74,000	n/a
1991	\$175,000	\$0	\$1,372,000	\$414,000	n/a
1992	\$150,000	\$0	\$1,311,000	\$300,000	n/a
1993	\$137,000	\$0	\$368,000	\$1,710,000	\$0
1994	\$56,000	\$0	\$2,774,000	\$220,000	\$0
1995	\$74,000	\$0	\$9,055,000	\$6,000	\$0
1996	\$75,000	\$0	\$20,000	\$0	\$0
1997	\$61,000	\$0	\$37,000	\$0	\$0
1998	\$126,000	\$0	\$375,000	\$0	\$0
1999	\$124,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2000	\$115,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2001	\$121,000	\$0	\$368,000	\$0	\$0
1990-2001	\$1,358,000	\$0	\$16,729,000	\$2,724,000	\$0
1997-2001	\$547,000	\$0	\$780,000	\$0	\$0
2002	\$67,000	\$0	\$0	\$6,000	\$0
2003	\$612,000	\$0	\$119,000	\$3,000	\$0
2004	\$719,000	\$0	\$77,881,000	\$0	\$0
2005	\$0	\$0	\$276,063,000	\$0	\$0
2006	\$823,000	\$0	\$243,368,000	\$0	\$0
2002-2006	\$2,221,000	\$0	\$597,431,000	\$9,000	\$0
2007	\$840,000	\$0	\$37,933,000	\$0	\$0
2008	\$700,000	\$0	\$175,052,000	\$0	n/a

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