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Algeria Efforts Supporting the Palestinian Issue Through Arab Summit Conferences (1979-1988)

Abstract

The Palestinian issue is one of the most complex and longest historical conflicts that the contemporary Arab world has known. Algeria has made efforts to support the Palestinian cause through Arab summit conferences and sessions of the Palestinian National Council (1979-1988). It is one of the most important Arab and Islamic issues, given the religious, national, and humanitarian dimensions that Palestine represents for the Arab nation. The Algerian people, as part of this nation, have placed Palestine and its people at the heart of their concerns and feelings, despite the geographical distance. This broad Arab interest in the Palestinian cause has been embodied in numerous summits and Arab conferences held to find a solution. From this perspective, this research paper aims to highlight Algeria's positions and efforts in supporting the Palestinian cause, through its constant presence and prominent role in all Arab summit conferences held for the Palestinian cause, as well as the sessions of the Palestinian National Council, particularly the nineteenth session hosted by Algeria, where the establishment of the State of Palestine was announced.

Keywords: Algeria, Palestinian Issue, Arab summits, Palestinian National Council

Cezayirin 1979-1988 Yılları Arasındaki Arap Zirve Konferansları Aracılığıyla Filistin Meselesini Destekleme Çabaları

Öz

Filistin sorunu, çağdaş Arap dünyasının tanık olduğu en karmaşık ve en uzun süreli tarihsel çatışmalardan biridir. Cezayir, Arap zirve konferansları ve Filistin Ulusal Konseyi oturumları (1979-1988)



aracılığıyla Filistin davasını desteklemek için çaba sarfetmiştir. Filistin'in Arap ulusu için temsil ettiği dini, ulusal ve insani boyutlar göz önüne alındığında, bu konu Arap ve İslam dünyasının en önemli meselelerinden biridir. Cezayir halkı, bu ulusun bir parçası olarak, coğrafi uzaklığa rağmen Filistin ve halkını endişe ve duygularının merkezine yerleştirmiştir. Filistin davasına yönelik bu geniş Arap ilgisi, bir çözüm bulmak için düzenlenen çok sayıda zirve ve Arap konferansında somutlaşmıştır. Bu bakış açısıyla, bu araştırma makalesi, Filistin davası için düzenlenen tüm Arap zirve konferanslarında ve Filistin Ulusal Konseyi oturumlarında, özellikle de Filistin Devleti'nin kurulmasının ilan edildiği Cezayir'in ev sahipliği yaptığı on dokuzuncu oturumda, Cezayir'in sürekli varlığı ve öne çıkan rolü aracılığıyla Filistin davasını destekleme konusundaki tutum ve çabalarını vurgulamayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Cezayir, Filistin Sorunu, Arap zirveleri, Filistin Ulusal Konseyi

Introduction

This study carries multifaceted significance, offering substantial contributions across several academic domains. Firstly, it enriches historical documentation and revisionism by providing a focused and comprehensive account of Algeria's often-understated yet crucial role in Arab diplomatic efforts concerning the Palestinian issue. By meticulously analyzing specific Algerian interventions, proposals, and diplomatic maneuvers within Arab summit conferences and Palestinian National Council sessions, this research aims to refine existing narratives and potentially challenge conventional interpretations of this pivotal period (1979-1988). Therefore, the research offers valuable insights into understanding Algerian foreign policy, illuminating the principles and operational modalities that underpin its consistent commitment to national liberation and self-determination. It demonstrates how a core ideological tenet, namely unwavering support for the Palestinian cause, translated into concrete diplomatic strategies and sustained engagement at the highest levels of inter-Arab cooperation. In Addition , by examining Algeria's interactions with other Arab states within the summit framework, the study sheds light on the complex dynamics of inter-Arab relations, revealing patterns of alignment, disagreement, and the inherent challenges in forging a unified Arab front on critical political matters. Fourthly, while not a direct conflict resolution study, it indirectly contributes to conflict resolution studies by analyzing diplomatic endeavors aimed at resolving a protracted conflict. Understanding the strengths and limitations of past diplomatic efforts can inform and shape future strategies for regional peace and stability. Finally, the study holds paramount historical significance by contextualizing the announcement of the State of Palestine. Its specific focus on the 19th Palestinian National Council session, hosted by Algeria, provides a detailed account of Algeria's facilitative role in this

watershed moment, underscoring its agency in a pivotal event for Palestinian statehood aspirations. This study posits the central hypothesis that Algeria exerted sustained and strategically significant diplomatic pressure within Arab summit conferences and Palestinian National Council sessions during the period of 1979 to 1988. This pressure was consistently directed towards advocating for a comprehensive and internationally recognized solution to the Palestinian issue. The hypothesis further asserts that Algeria's diplomatic efforts culminated in its instrumental role in the declaration of the State of Palestine during the 19th Palestinian National Council (PNC) session, which it notably hosted in Algiers. This overarching hypothesis, therefore suggests four key dimensions of Algerian engagement: that its involvement was not episodic but characterized by sustained engagement; that its efforts were not merely performative but held strategic significance, aiming for tangible outcomes; that Algeria's advocacy extended beyond symbolic support to actively pursue concrete steps towards statehood and rights for the Palestinian people; and finally, that its hosting of the 19th PNC was more than a logistical arrangement, but rather an instrumental role that actively shaped the pivotal outcome of the declaration of the State of Palestine.

This research will primarily employ a qualitative research methodology, utilizing a historical and descriptive analytical approach to thoroughly investigate Algeria's role. The methodological framework will encompass several key strategies. Central to the data collection will be archival research, involving an extensive examination of primary sources. This includes official communiqués, resolutions, and declarations issued from pertinent Arab Summit Conferences, such as Amman (1980) and Fez (1982), along with records from Palestinian National Council sessions, with a particular emphasis on the pivotal 19th session. Access to diplomatic archives, where available, and published collections of official documents will be crucial for this endeavor. Complementing archival efforts, content analysis will be systematically applied to speeches, interventions, and official statements made by Algerian representatives during these conferences and sessions, enabling the identification of recurring themes, rhetorical strategies, and consistent policy positions. Furthermore, the study will incorporate comprehensive secondary source analysis, reviewing academic literature, scholarly articles, authoritative books, and reputable journalistic accounts that delve into Algerian foreign policy, the historical trajectory of the Palestinian issue, and the dynamics of inter-Arab relations within the specified period. Finally, where applicable and accessible, biographical and memoir analysis of key Algerian, Palestinian, or Arab political figures

from the era will be conducted to gain deeper insights into their perspectives and the intricacies of behind-the-scenes negotiations. The central research problem addressed by this study is to ascertain and analyze the nature and extent of Algeria's diplomatic and political efforts in supporting the Palestinian cause, specifically within the framework of Arab summit conferences and Palestinian National Council sessions during the period of 1979-1988. This period is particularly salient due to its dynamic political landscape, marked by significant regional shifts and evolving international perceptions of the Palestinian question. The problem seeks to move beyond a general acknowledgment of Algerian support to a detailed examination of its practical manifestations, strategic objectives, and perceived impact within the multilateral Arab diplomatic arena.

1. The Historical Depth of Algerian-Palestinian Relations

Before addressing Algeria's stance and role in supporting the Palestinian cause through Arab summits and sessions of the Palestinian National Council—and the resulting effects on Algerian-Palestinian relations—it is necessary to review the historical depth of relations between the two countries. This will allow us to highlight the most significant changes brought about by these conferences and councils in the relationship between the two brotherly peoples.

Palestine has always held a distinguished position in the heart of the Arab world in general, and Algeria in particular, throughout the ages. The Palestinian cause has represented the central issue in the life of the Algerian people and remained so even during their most difficult times, such as the period of French colonialism (1830–1962). The Algerian position toward Palestine and its people has been shaped by religious and historical dimensions (Ahmed Yaghi, 1983). The historical depth of relations between the two countries dates back many centuries. For Algeria, Palestine is not merely a geographic location; it is history itself. Algerians are distinguished from other Arabs by a national dimension that has reinforced their stance and attachment to the Palestinian cause, as well as their ongoing presence in supporting it since the beginning of the conspiracy against Palestine (Maqri, 2013). The roots of this conspiracy go back to the aftermath of World War I, during the period of French occupation of Algeria. At that time, the Arab world was divided into zones of foreign influence, primarily to protect the colonial interests of Britain and its rival, France. Britain, driven by expansionist colonial ambitions, seized Palestine and other Arab countries. Simultaneously, the West supported and endorsed the Zionist plan to establish a national homeland for Jews in Palestine. This broad Western support was an attempt to atone for the sins committed against European Jews, who had been persecuted for centuries (Rabie, 1995). To implement this idea and Western conspiracy, the British government issued the Balfour Declaration in 1917,

expressing Britain's sympathy with the idea of establishing a national home for Jews in Palestine, without consulting the Palestinian people or seeking the opinion of Arab leaders at the time. In 1921, Britain obtained the mandate over Palestine from the League of Nations, which opened the door for European Jews to immigrate and settle in Palestine (Rabie, 1995). It is worth noting that Algeria—without boasting—was among the first Arabs to discover, notice, and warn against the Zionist danger before the issuance of the infamous Balfour Declaration. In 1914, Omar Racim, the Algerian artist (Noueihid, 1980) wrote in "Dhu al-Fiqar" newspaper warning of the Zionist danger: *"The agreement between the leaders of the conquering Arabs and the people of the land with the leaders of the Jews is impossible, for it is an acknowledgment of Jewish leadership. No one but Arabs has the right to own that land, nor should any flag but that of Islam fly over it, as long as there is Arab blood in veins and a Muslim spirit in bodies"* (Nassar, 1978, p. 402). Similarly, Al-Bashir Al-Ibrahimi wrote, addressing all Muslims, Arabs and non-Arabs, urging them about the importance and status of Palestine: *"O Muslims! Palestine is Muhammad's trust with us, Omar's responsibility in our care, and Islam's covenant upon our necks. If the Jews take it from us while we are united, then surely we are losers"* (al-Ibrahimi, 1987, p. 504).

The engagement of Algerians with the Palestinian cause has encompassed various segments of society, including writers, authors, poets, and journalists. Anyone following the cultural movement in Algeria will clearly recognize that these Algerian intellectuals have always sought to strengthen ties with the broader Arab East. Every development in the Palestinian issue has elicited a reaction among Algerians. For example, after the bloody events between Arabs and Jews over the Wailing Wall in 1929, Mohamed Saïd Zahiri (Chorfi, 2009) appealed to Algerian Muslims, asking them for help and financial aid to heal the wounds of the afflicted Palestinians.

Algerians were also deeply shocked by the United Nations General Assembly's partition decision in 1947. They expressed their rejection of this partition through public festivals organized by parties and associations in protest against the injustice and oppression suffered by their Palestinian brothers. Moreover, some Algerians even volunteered to fight in the 1948 war (Hammoudi, 2002-2003). When the Algerian Revolution broke out on November 1st, 1954—which was essentially a continuation of the 1948 war—it revived the determination of all Arabs, especially the Palestinian people, who celebrated the Algerian revolution more than any other Arabs. The support was reciprocated: despite the tragedy the Palestinian people were enduring,

they did not hesitate to fulfill their duty towards the Algerian revolution (Maqri, 2013). Palestinians collected financial donations, organized demonstrations and festivals to aid and support their Algerian brothers. Ahmed Tawfiq al-Madani confirmed this in his memoirs, stating: *"I received a financial aid from Amin al-Husseini at the beginning of the revolution, an amount of two hundred Egyptian pounds, as aid from struggling Palestine to struggling Algeria..."* (Almadani, 1988, p. 125). Similarly, the Palestinian activist Salah Khalaf, known as Abu Iyad, confirmed that Palestinians formed a committee called the *"Aid Committee for the Algerian Revolution"* after the outbreak of the Algerian revolution, and everyone contributed according to their ability (Khalaf, 1995). Palestinians did not stop at this; some, despite the harsh siege imposed on them, managed to reach the battlefields in the Algerian mountains as fighters, doctors, and nurses. They fought side by side with their Algerian brothers against French colonialism. This Palestinian stance stemmed from their belief that the Algerian revolution remains the inspiration for their own struggle to this day. This close cooperation and exchange, as well as the mutual stances and reactions between the Algerian and Palestinian peoples during their most difficult times, truly reflect and translate the depth and rootedness of relations between the two countries. Both parties have treated each other's cause as their own, considering the victory of one as the victory of the other, and vice versa.

2. Algeria's Support for the Palestinian Cause Through Arab Summits

Algeria has expressed its positions on the Palestinian cause at all Arab summits. These positions have varied depending on the decisions of each summit: Algeria would support the summit when its resolutions matched the level of challenge required by the Palestinian issue, be reserved if the summit's decisions were marked by hesitation or ambiguity, and would abstain and refuse to participate in any conference that excluded representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

In response to the dangers posed by the Camp David Accords, the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council called on the Arab nation to stand united to prevent the implementation of the Camp David decisions. Arab leaders and kings were invited to convene an Arab summit to discuss the military, economic, and political consequences of the Camp David Accords, which were seen as harmful to the Arab nation and the future of the Palestinian cause. Based on this Iraqi call, the ninth Arab summit was held in Baghdad from November 2 to 5, 1978 (Mena'a, 2009). The most important decision at the Baghdad summit was to confront the new Arab strategic imbalance caused by Egypt's withdrawal from the Arab ranks. This was to be achieved by providing financial aid to support the PLO and the steadfastness of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories, as

well as supporting the frontline states on the northern and eastern fronts for ten years, while still hoping that Sadat would reconsider his stance. However, Sadat insisted on continuing his path after signing the peace agreement with Israel on March 26, 1979 (Mena'a, 2009). Consequently, Arab foreign ministers, in implementation of the Baghdad summit decisions, held an emergency meeting in Baghdad from March 27 to 31 of the same year. They decided to immediately withdraw Arab ambassadors from Egypt, boycott the Egyptian regime, suspend political and diplomatic relations and economic aid to the Egyptian government, move the Arab League headquarters from Egypt to Tunisia, and relocate the Arab Organization for Industrialization outside Egypt. Algerian-Egyptian relations were not resumed until November 24, 1988 (Djamel, 2008). During the tenth Arab summit held in Tunis from November 20 to 23, 1979, Algeria strongly defended the Palestinian cause as the core of the Arab-Israeli Conflict (Alahnaf, 1979). Most of the decisions at this summit, attended by all Arab kings and presidents except Egypt, focused on the Palestinian issue. The final statement of the summit emphasized that regaining Arab rights in Palestine is a pan-Arab responsibility and that any solution must be accepted only through an Arab summit convened for this purpose (Mena'a, 2009). Similarly, Algeria actively participated in all preparations for the eleventh Arab summit scheduled to be held in Amman, Jordan, playing a prominent role both at the level of the seven-member committee and the foreign ministers' meetings to ensure the success of the summit. However, Algeria ultimately did not participate in the summit, which was held from November 25 to 27, 1980, in Amman, due to the PLO representatives' refusal to attend.

Regarding Algeria's non-participation in this summit, President Chadli Bendjedid stated in his address to the nation: *"How can I convince the Algerian people to participate in a conference concerning the Palestinian cause when those most concerned—the representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization—do not participate?"* (Amimour, 2012, p. 352).

He continued: "Our decisions are Algerian decisions, made based on the firm principles of the Algerian revolution, reflecting the will of our people and taking into account all fundamental aspects of the issues at hand. Summit conferences are not merely occasions for taking pictures, exchanging smiles, and issuing statements that please everyone" (Amimour, 2012). President Bendjedid made a similar statement in a press interview with Fouad Matar, special envoy of *Al-Mustaqbal* magazine, saying that Algeria's decision not to participate in this summit was taken only after the Palestine Liberation Organization decided not to attend. Therefore, Algeria will never

adopt the policy of the "empty chair," whether in Arab or international meetings. Bendjedid emphasized that the primary role of the Arab summit conferences is to defend the Palestinian cause, and that these summits exist for this purpose. Hence, discussing the Palestinian issue in the absence of the Palestinians themselves is impossible. Algeria's political line on this matter is clear and irreversible.

Algeria also participated actively in the Third Islamic Summit Conference held in Taif, Saudi Arabia, from January 24 to 28, 1981, attended by more than 38 kings, presidents, and heads of government. At this conference, the Palestinian cause received significant attention from the participants, who committed to mobilizing all material and human resources to confront the Zionist challenge and to reject and nullify any settlement attempts that do not consider the restoration of the Palestinian people's usurped national rights and do not guarantee the liberation of Jerusalem and all occupied Arab lands. In a press interview given by President Chadli Bendjedid to *International Relations* magazine in November 1981, he affirmed that there is no solution to the Middle East crisis while ignoring the resolution of the Palestinian people's issue. He said that it might be possible to remove the name of Palestine from the map, but it can never be erased from hearts. For this reason, Algeria has always insisted that achieving lasting peace in the Middle East is futile without addressing the stolen Palestinian cause and the plight of its people deprived of their land and homeland.

After the failure of all previous attempts by the Arab League and the accumulation of developments and issues that represented a significant change in the strategy of the Arab-Israeli conflict, holding an Arab summit became necessary to study the prevailing situation in the Arab East. Among the issues addressed were the first Gulf crisis and the resulting divergent Arab viewpoints, the marginalization and isolation of Iraq as the largest Arab power supporting the eastern front, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, and its cleansing of Palestinian resistance pockets (Mena'a, 2009). The importance of the summit lay in its affirmation of a peace strategy to resolve the Palestinian cause. It was also significant because, for the first time in the history of Arab summits, it achieved Arab consensus on a peaceful political solution to the issue, away from any military action as had been the case in previous conferences.

However, while the summit was important for the peace project, it also had a grave negative impact whose effects remain visible in the Arab world to this day. This negative aspect was the summit's entrenchment of broad Arab recognition of Israel and its acceptance of Israeli demands that had long been sought before the issuance of the Khartoum Resolutions, which included

coexistence and peace with the Arabs. Unfortunately, once Israel was recognized by the Arabs, it reneged on those demands and replaced the Khartoum three "No's"—no recognition, no negotiation, no peace—with a new set: no recognition, no negotiation, no peace with the Palestine Liberation Organization, and added a fourth "No": no establishment of a Palestinian state (Mena'a, 2009). Thus, the tables turned dramatically. It is not surprising that the front of steadfastness and challenge retreated from its position and accepted peace with Israel, as all Palestinian factions welcomed and endorsed the idea, including the Palestinian National Council and the Palestine Liberation Organization. Their chairman stated: "Our agreement with the decisions of the Fez summit was not from a position of weakness but from a position of strength, and the Arab peace project represents the minimum Palestinian demands."

It is worth noting that during the summit, a seven-member Arab committee was formed, including Algeria, Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and Morocco, alongside the Palestine Liberation Organization. Its task was to tour the permanent members of the UN Security Council to garner support and endorsement for the Arab peace project. After the generally positive outcomes of the Fez summit, Yasser Arafat traveled to Algeria to express his gratitude for Algeria's absolute commitment throughout the summit's proceedings, praising Algeria's effective role and its consistent, supportive, and firm stance on the Palestinian cause. He also acknowledged that Algeria met all the political, military, and financial demands of the Palestinian resistance (al-Ibrahimi, 2014). Unfortunately, only eight days after the announcement of the joint Arab position in Fez, the Zionist army committed horrific massacres against Palestinian refugees in the Sabra and Shatila camps under the watchful eyes of some Arab countries. In response, Algeria summoned the ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council on September 20 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and informed them of the efforts it expected from their governments (al-Ibrahimi, 2014). Amid the Iran-Iraq war, the Arab League Council in Tunisia decided at the end of its emergency session on 20/09/1987 to hold an extraordinary Arab summit in Amman—the twelfth Arab summit—dedicated to studying regional developments from November 8 to 11, 1987. Despite Algeria's efforts to create a positive atmosphere for the summit, something unexpected happened: instead of addressing the Palestinian issue and the broader Middle East conflict, the summit focused on the Iraq-Iran conflict, neglecting the Palestinian situation (al-Ibrahimi, 1987). It even went

further by announcing the formation of a strange Jordanian-Syrian alliance against the PLO, which declared the following (al-Ibrahimi, 1987).

- Denunciation of the PLO and non-recognition of its legitimacy.
- Abandonment of the demand for establishing a Palestinian state and denial of the very idea of a Palestinian people¹.

3. Algeria's Support for the Palestinian Cause Through Palestinian National Council Sessions

Algeria left no avenue unexplored in seeking a solution that would guarantee the rights of the Palestinian people. This stance is a fixed principle of its foreign policy, rooted in its revolutionary and liberation experience, and has been consistently advocated by Algeria in various sessions of the Palestinian National Council.

Algeria's hosting of the sixteenth session of the Palestinian National Council from February 14 to 22, 1983, can only be explained by its pioneering role regarding the Palestinian cause. At the end of this session, the Council approved what became known as the "Algiers Platform," from which Palestinians derived a spirit of unity and the principle of prioritizing internal affairs over external ones, emphasizing military fieldwork over political struggle—especially since the image of the "*children of the stones*," who bewildered Israeli authorities, was still vivid (Alkayali, n.d). The least that can be said about the Algiers session is that it solidified Palestinian unity. This was confirmed by Khaled Fahoum, President of the Palestinian National Council, who said at the opening: "I am one hundred percent certain that there will be no split or division within the PLO, and Mr. Yasser Arafat will emerge from this session stronger and more steadfast." The most important decision was the necessity of uniting all Palestinian resistance factions under a single leadership and establishing the Palestinian National Liberation Army (al-Ibrahimi, 1987). On the sidelines of the sixteenth session, Abu Jihad, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, praised Algeria's active role and great support for the Palestinian people and fighters, especially after their withdrawal from Beirut. He affirmed that every Palestinian fighter knows that their Algerian brothers stand with them in heart and spirit against the Zionist enemy threatening the entire Arab region.

Holding this session in Algeria at that particular time was a strong blow to the Zionist entity, which claimed that after its invasion of Lebanon and the Palestinians' exit in 1982, it had ended the PLO for good. Algeria's stance, rooted in the principles of the November 1954 Revolution, did not go unnoticed by Israel, which is known for retaliating for the death of one Israeli by executing

dozens of Arabs. Israel's response to Algeria's position was to blow up a Palestinian ship in the port of Annaba, which served as a warning to the Algerian leadership (al-Ibrahimi, 1987). Given that Arab solidarity is essential for the Palestinian cause's victory, President Chadli Bendjedid saw no alternative but to summon Arafat to reaffirm that Algeria's goal remains preserving the unity of the resistance, coordinating efforts, and rejecting futile individual initiatives. He reminded Arafat of two meetings held in Algeria in January and April 1983, which brought together the three main PLO factions (Fatah, the Popular Front, and the Democratic Front), but these meetings yielded no results (Alzebiri, 2015). In the same meeting, Bendjedid proposed to Arafat the necessity of reaching an agreement among Palestinians in Algeria to preserve the PLO's national line, emphasizing the importance of Syrian-Palestinian relations (al-Ibrahimi, 1987). He also called for holding the seventeenth session of the Palestinian National Council, which took place in Amman on November 22, 1984, under the patronage of King Hussein of Jordan, who opened the session with a speech highlighting the foundations of Palestinian-Jordanian dialogue. The most important point was: *"The international position supports regaining the occupied territories through a Palestinian-Jordanian formula... If you adopt this international proposal, we are ready to proceed with you... If, on the other hand, you believe the PLO should act alone, we say: God bless you, and you have all our support and endorsement... Whatever your decision, it will remain respected by us"* (al-Ibrahimi, 1987). This session was held based on Algeria's proposals and legitimized the Palestinian-Jordanian (40) initiative, ultimately leading to the signing of a Palestinian-Jordanian agreement by King Hussein and Yasser Arafat on February 11, 1985, to coordinate efforts for resolving the Palestinian issue. After nearly a year since the Tunis attack, in spring 1986, the United States carried out a brutal raid on Libya, leaving many victims. At the end of 1986, the US announced a boycott of Beirut in response to the kidnapping of Americans (Mena'a, 2009). Algeria, for its part, did not stop at condemning these blatant attacks but took internal and external action. Internally, it implemented several security measures, including holding a second meeting of the Political Bureau on October 7, after the first meeting that followed the attack, and decided to tighten security due to the presence of Palestinian camps in Algeria. Israel accused Algeria of allowing Palestinian fighters to launch operations against Israel from its territory.

Based on repeated warnings from Algerian intelligence, according to its head Lakhal Ayat, Algeria decided to move Palestinian forces from the border area of Tebessa to the southern region

of El Bayadh in anticipation of any Israeli attack. These forces remained there until 1991, when Yasser Arafat agreed to negotiate autonomy with Israel (Tamalet, 2006). Externally, Algeria condemned these Israeli attacks the next day at the United Nations, denouncing the extermination of the Palestinian people even in the farthest places where they sought refuge. Algeria emphasized that the significance of this aggression lies in the urgent need for “Arab solidarity against the common enemy,” and that such criminal acts would only fuel discord (45). It also considered this an affront to the sanctity of the Maghreb region in general and Tunisia in particular. (Qaram, 2008). On October 10, 1986, the President of the Republic paid an official visit to Tunisia as an expression of Algeria’s solidarity with its sister country Tunisia. During this visit, he also met with several Palestinian leaders, including Yasser Arafat, Abu Iyad, and Abu Mazen. In another development, Algeria agreed to Arafat’s proposal to hold an emergency Arab summit, on the condition that the summit be held in Tunisia—the place of the aggression—so that it would carry a special significance, and that the agenda of this summit be dedicated solely to the Israeli aggression against Tunisia and the Palestine Liberation Organization. President Chadli Bendjedid announced his initiative calling for Palestinian unity during the session of the National Organization of the Mujahideen. The announcement of this initiative on this particular occasion and during this national event had a deep meaning and significance: it aimed to raise awareness among the conference members, especially the Organization of the Mujahideen, about the great importance of the national unity of both Algeria and Palestine alike. This appeal was specifically directed by President Chadli to the Palestinian factions, warning them against continuing to tear apart the unity of their revolution. At the same time, he expressed his country’s readiness to host a conference bringing together all Palestinian factions to address their most important problems and emerge with a unified leadership.

The importance of this Algerian initiative lies in the context in which it was announced. It coincided with some new developments in the political arena of the region, which also worked to narrow the gap between the Palestinian factions. Among these developments, to mention but a few, was the Jordanian regime’s expulsion of some Palestinian officials from Jordan, including Abu Jihad. Then there was King Hassan II’s meeting with Shimon Peres in the Moroccan city of Ifrane on July 21, 1986. The most significant development was the tour conducted by George Bush, the U.S. Vice President, to the region. All these developments pointed in one direction: working towards creating a settlement between Jordan and Israel under American sponsorship and Egyptian and Moroccan support.

Conclusion

Least not last, we can say that this study shows Algeria's efforts in supporting the Palestinian cause during the period (1979-1988) through Arab summit conferences and sessions of the Palestinian National Council, revealing several significant results that confirm Algeria's pivotal and profound role in this vital issue. This period confirmed that the Palestinian cause has always been a top priority within Algerian foreign policy, transcending geographical dimensions to become a national and humanitarian issue firmly rooted in Algerian consciousness. This support was manifested in: Active role in Arab summits: Algeria's role was not limited to attending Arab summit conferences; it extended to playing a leading and active role in shaping unified Arab positions regarding the Palestinian cause, advocating for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, and supporting their political and struggle options. Supporting for the Palestinian National Council: Algeria provided unlimited political and logistical support to the Palestinian National Council, which is considered the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Algeria's hosting of the nineteenth session of the Palestinian National Council in 1988 was a historical turning point, culminating in the declaration of the establishment of the State of Palestine, reflecting the Palestinian leadership's confidence in Algeria's central role and its ability to provide the appropriate environment for such a historic decision. Realism in dealing with the issue: Algeria's approach to efforts to resolve the Palestinian issue during this period reflected a strategy that balances adherence to constants and support for the Palestinian struggle, with adopting political realism to ensure tangible progress. This approach allowed Algeria to be an effective and influential mediator in regional and international forums. Embodiment of the principle of "the Palestinian cause in Arab priorities" the study demonstrated how Algeria, through its continuous commitment and constant presence in all forums...

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