



S-300 PMU-2 air defense system in southern Algeria (2020).

Source: Jack Glodel, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:S-300PMU2_-_Algeria.jpg Attribution: CC BY-SA 4.0

Algeria Seeks More Active Regional Military Role, with Russian Assistance

By Lucas Winter
OE Watch Commentary

In June 2021, the chief of staff of Algeria’s armed forces, Said Chengriha, attended the IX Conference on International Security in Moscow. Chengriha’s presence in Moscow appears to signal a further deepening of military cooperation between Russia and Algeria. While in Moscow, according to a scoop by the Paris-based news website *Africa Intelligence*, Chengriha signed a \$7 billion dollar deal for a squadron of Mig-29 M2s and other advanced Russian equipment.

“... I want to reiterate the Algerian people’s eternal gratitude to the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation for the support they provided to our national army in developing our defensive capabilities ...”

According to an analyst cited in the accompanying article from the Moroccan news website *Hespress*, Russian-Algerian military cooperation is likely to deepen. From the Russian perspective, the article argues, there is a desire to “join the club” of countries with military deployments in the western Mediterranean, most importantly Turkey and the United States. Citing anonymous sources, the article’s

author claims that Russia is exploring establishing a permanent military presence in the Algerian port of Oran. In turn, the author argues that Algerian interest in deeper military cooperation with Moscow stems from concerns over Morocco’s alliance with the United States as well as political instability and the presence of foreign troops in both Libya and the Sahel.

Since its independence in 1962, Algeria has followed a strict policy of non-intervention beyond its borders. Algeria’s new constitution, which was approved by voters in late 2020 and ratified earlier this year, includes a clause allowing the Algerian military to deploy abroad, as noted in the accompanying excerpt from the Qatar-aligned daily *al-Araby al-Jadid*. Foreign troop deployments in Libya and the Sahel, it is believed, are at least partially behind this potential change in Algerian military posture. In late June, the Algerian military carried out military maneuvers along the border with Libya. It may not be long before Algerian troops are deployed across the country’s vast desert borders.

Source: “Army chief Chengriha turns to the Sahel after mammoth Russian shopping trip,” *Africa Intelligence* (Paris-based news website), 7/1/2021. https://www.africaintelligence.com/north-africa_diplomacy/2021/07/01/army-chief-chengriha-turns-to-the-sahel-after-mammoth-russian-shopping-trip.109676958-art

Chief of staff Said Chengriha has travelled to Moscow to clinch an astronomical arms deal, worth up to \$7bn. In discussions with the Russian defence minister, he also outlined a possible Algerian intervention in the Sahel, starting with Mali...

Continued: Algeria Seeks More Active Regional Military Role, with Russian Assistance

Source:

(The success of the ‘African Lion’ exercises push Algeria to military cooperation with Russia),” *Hespress.com* (Moroccan news website), 25 June 2021. <https://tinyurl.com/3a4tnsd9>

نجاح مناورات “الأسد الإفريقي” يدفع الجزائر إلى التنسيق العسكري مع روسيا

In what appears to be a response to the American movements in the desert, Russia, Algeria’s strategic ally, is preparing to establish a military base on the outskirts of the Algerian-Moroccan border, according to sources from Morocco’s eastern neighbor. The sources claim that there are “Russian and Algerian movements to establish a permanent base for the Russian naval forces in Oran.” The Russian side seeks to forcefully join the club of countries in the western Mediterranean, where a number of international and regional powers are concentrated, especially with the Turkish and American deployments in North Africa. Moscow does not want to miss more opportunities in a region experiencing permanent and unstable ripples and changes... Regarding the implications of Chengriha’s visit to Moscow, political analyst Hicham Motad pointed out that... [it] “comes in the context of the escalation of the crisis in the south of the country, bordering Mali, and the border crisis with the eastern neighbor of Libya.” He added that from a strategic point of view, this visit indicates “the extent to which Algeria seeks to save the reputation of its army by renewing and strengthening the bonds of friendship and cooperation between the People’s National Army and the Russian Armed Forces, especially in light of Algeria’s regional isolation and its decline in the regional balance of military forces.” Politically, Chengriha’s rush to meet with Russian military officials falls within the framework of the Algerian military apparatus’s endeavor to respond to the strong alliance between [Morocco’s] Royal Armed Forces and the US Army, especially after the great success achieved by the African Lion maneuvers. This in addition to the great fear that dominates ideological thought in the Algerian military,” Motad added.

Source:

(Algerian military commander: We seek regional military supremacy),” *al-Araby al-Jadid* (Qatar-aligned daily), 23 June 2021. <https://tinyurl.com/ymt6hfhz>

قائد الجيش الجزائري: نسعى للتفوق العسكري في المنطقة

“I want to reiterate the Algerian people’s eternal gratitude to the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation for the support they provided to our national army in developing our defensive capabilities,” [Chengriha] said. The Algerian army has begun to consider the possibility of participating in foreign military operations, after the new constitution included an article that allows for this, based on national security considerations.

In recent years, Algeria has directed a large budget to be spent on the army, armament, and development of the military arsenal. In 2018, it amounted to about \$13 billion. It was used to finance deals for the purchase of aircraft, submarines, and defensive and offensive systems, in addition to developing technological means for monitoring and electronic warfare. Joint military manufacturing projects for tanks and vehicles were also funded.



China’s cyber policy appears to have three vectors —peace activist, espionage activist, and attack planner— that dominate China’s cyber policy. Some are always hidden from view while others are demonstrated daily. Three Faces of the Cyber Dragon is divided into sections that coincide with these vectors.

<https://community.apan.org/wg/tradoc-g2/fmso/m/fmso-books/195610/download>