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Security Council**

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Agenda item 19

**Implementation of the Declaration on the
Granting of Independence to Colonial
Countries and Peoples**

**Security Council
Fifty-ninth year**

**Letter dated 17 August 2004 from the Permanent
Representative of Algeria to the United Nations addressed
to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to request you to arrange for the circulation of the letter dated 27 July 2004 addressed to you by the President of Algeria, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, a copy of which is attached, as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 19, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abdallah **Baali**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex to the letter dated 17 August 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Algeria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Since the resignation of your Personal Envoy for Western Sahara, Mr. James Baker, there have been persistent reports in certain circles about various steps, initiatives and suggestions in relation to the question of Western Sahara and the development of Algerian-Moroccan relations.

I must say first that I deeply regret the resignation of Mr. James Baker, who was committed to finding a satisfactory settlement to a problem that has persisted for some 30 years. I particularly regret it because Mr. Baker succeeded in promoting his solution to the point of making suggestions that were unanimously approved by the Security Council and, with the good will of the two parties to the conflict, Morocco and the Frente Polisario, could have resulted in a final settlement.

The purpose of my letter is to clarify once again the Algerian position regarding the problem of Western Sahara and also bilateral Algerian-Moroccan relations. Algeria continues to regard the question of Western Sahara as a problem of decolonization, which as such has already been taken up by the United Nations and should be resolved through the exercise by the Saharan people of their right to self-determination. Algeria's position is therefore based on international law and reflects Algeria's commitments as a Member of the United Nations. Since this conflict involves the Saharan people and the occupying Power, that is to say Morocco, any settlement must necessarily be reached by agreement between these two parties. We therefore regard any attempt to place the problem of Western Sahara in an Algerian-Moroccan context as purely delaying tactics, because Algeria cannot and will not replace the Saharan people in determining their future.

With regard to bilateral relations between Algeria and Morocco, I can assure you once again, first of our sincere desire to develop and expand them as much as possible, and secondly that we are placing no preconditions on this development. Moreover, we believe that there is no reason for the question of Western Sahara to interfere in our relations with Morocco, since Algeria has no direct part in this conflict, and, as I reiterated above, Algeria conducts itself in this matter merely as a Member of the United Nations concerned about respect for and the application of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Having thus clarified the Algerian position on these two points, which seem to be giving rise to some speculation, I ask you to accept, Sir and dear friend, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Abdelaziz Bouteflika