

The Roles of Algerian economic diplomacy in activating African integration pathways: implementing the African Union agenda 2063 as a model

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Abstract:

This study aims to evaluate the efficacy of Algerian economic diplomacy in realizing the African Union Agenda 2063's ambitions, scrutinizing its roles and initiatives within this framework, and discerning the key structural economic projects launched to bolster regional integration and expedite growth and development across the African continent. It also sheds light on the prospects and impediments intertwined with these endeavors.

Utilizing statistical methodologies to assess Algeria's adherence to these aspirations, and adopting a role-centric approach to elucidate

the functions Algerian diplomacy has assumed regionally, as well as a comparative analysis to evaluate the relative effectiveness of Algeria's performance at the African level, the analysis substantiates that Algeria has demonstrated commendable proficiency in fulfilling the seven aspirations of the Agenda 2063, with an accomplishment rate surpassing 50% as per the extant statistics.

Predominantly, the Algerian strategy has been oriented towards security aspects, underpinned by an array of structural projects with a cohesive dimension, thereby hastening the integration trajectory within its African milieu. This endeavor is directed at harnessing the investment prospects and openness proffered by these developmental schemes, ultimately serving the national economic interests.

Keywords: Algerian Economic Diplomacy; African Union Agenda 2063; Regional Integration

Introduction:

The African Union's Agenda 2063 is a transformative blueprint for Africa's economic and social development. This ambitious vision, spanning 50 years, seeks to achieve a unified, prosperous, and peaceful

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Africa led by its own citizens. The plan outlines key projects and programs deemed essential for achieving continent-wide growth and sustainable development.

Recognizing the importance of Agenda 2063, Algeria has actively pursued this vision through various structural projects and infrastructure development initiatives aimed at facilitating seamless integration into the broader African economic landscape.

This study specifically addresses the following research question:

- To what extent does Algerian economic diplomacy contribute to the implementation of the aspirations of the African Union Agenda 2063?

To answer this question, the main hypothesis tested is:

- Algerian economic diplomacy's effectiveness in implementing the 2063 Agenda is measured by its ability to implement integrated development projects, with regional dimensions to play a significant and influential role in Africa.

This study uses a two-pronged approach to assess the effectiveness of Algerian economic diplomacy in relation to Agenda 2063:

– **Statistical Analysis:** Statistical methods are employed to evaluate Algeria's performance in achieving the key aspirations outlined in Agenda 2063. This quantitative approach provides objective data on Algeria's progress towards specific goals.

– **Role-Based Analysis:** A role-based approach is used to examine the specific functions Algeria fulfills within the broader African context through its economic diplomacy efforts. This qualitative analysis sheds light on Algeria's contributions, and its strategic approach to regional integration.

– **Comparative analysis:** Measuring the relative effectiveness of Algerian diplomacy compared to other African countries.

To address this problem, we will rely on the following plan:

– **Chapter I:** will explore the recent shift in Algerian diplomacy towards Africa, with a specific emphasis on the economic strategy.

– **Chapter II:** will discuss the aspirations of the African Union Agenda 2063 as a basis for building regional integration capacities.

– **Chapter III:** will examine the contributions of Algerian economic diplomacy to achieving the goals of Agenda 2063 by evaluating its effectiveness and emphasising the potential opportunities. This section

will provide a comprehensive understanding of Algeria's role in advancing Agenda 2063.

Chapter I: Algerian diplomacy and its regional repositioning in Africa: the priority of the economic determinant

5- Algerian diplomacy and the adaptation paths to global changes

Algeria is undergoing a significant transformation in its foreign policy, characterised by a strategic effort to adapt to the evolving dynamics of the global landscape. This commitment to the international community manifests in several key areas. For instance, Algeria actively participates in NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue, and advocates for the resolution of low- and medium-intensity conflicts in Libya, Mali, and Yemen through inclusive political dialogue. Leveraging its experience and expertise in this domain, Algeria is willing to serve as a facilitator in these conflicts. Additionally, Algeria has implemented free trade agreements with Arab and African nations (GZALE and ZLECAf). Recognising the need to address contemporary challenges, the country seeks to revise its existing Association Agreement with the European Union. Moreover, Algeria has re-engaged with the World Trade Organization, exploring the possibility of membership, and actively leverages existing regional and sub-regional platforms such as the African Union, 5+5 Cooperation, CEMOC, the Trans-Saharan Counter Terrorism Initiative, and Afripol. The country aims to revitalise these partnerships by adopting innovative approaches.⁽¹⁾ This multifaceted engagement aligns with Algeria's comprehensive strategy to reassert its position on the continental, regional, and even global stages. Notably, economic considerations have become a central focus of this new diplomatic strategy, reflecting the recognition that economic development is a key driver of Algeria's international engagement.

Algeria's diplomatic presence at the continental level reflects its prioritisation of Africa, a natural consequence of geographical proximity, shared borders, and intertwined security concerns. Following independence, Algeria's foreign policy supported decolonization movements throughout Africa. However, the internal conflicts of the 1990s, often referred to as the "black decade," Algeria refocused its efforts on promoting a counterterrorism agenda. By

sharing its expertise in combating extremism and resolving conflicts, Algeria has established itself as a model for other African nations.

Furthermore, Algeria's commitment to African security extends beyond counterterrorism. It actively fosters collaboration and trust-building among African law enforcement agencies to tackle transnational criminal activities, recognising the interconnected security challenges across the continent. Another significant aspect of Algeria's foreign policy within the African Union (AU) is the promotion of economic cooperation. Algeria primarily achieves this through bilateral agreements with specific African states, it also recognises the vital importance of fostering trans-regional commerce. This entails increasing the scale and quality of trade and economic interactions among African nations within the continent. ⁽²⁾

6- The economic determinant as a driver for Algerian diplomacy's orientation towards Africa

In recent years, economic considerations have become a cornerstone of Algeria's foreign policy. This shift developing external trade and attracting foreign direct investment as key drivers of wealth creation and job opportunities. Consequently, the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has assumed a more prominent role in economic policy. Its primary responsibilities now include promoting Algerian products in international markets, and encouraging FDI. While this approach presents a complex challenge, it signifies Algeria's strategic focus on economic growth through international engagement. ⁽³⁾

Algeria's economic diversification policy leverages its strategic location to drive sectoral reforms. Algerian diplomacy has marked a shift towards prioritising economic advancement. This aligns with the practices of major nations that integrate diplomatic and economic efforts. The approach serves a dual purpose: fostering economic growth, and adapting to global challenges. Frequent high-level visits by heads of state and diplomats, often accompanied by business delegations, exemplify Algeria's proactive stance in seeking investment opportunities. ⁽⁴⁾

The establishment of the Algerian Agency for International Cooperation for Solidarity and Development (AACISD) in February 2020 signifies a strengthened economic focus in Algeria's foreign policy, particularly towards Africa. This agency is "**a public institution with a special character, having legal personality and financial**



autonomy, placed under the guardianship of the Presidency of the Republic".⁽⁵⁾ The agency's establishment was announced by President "Abdelmadjid Tebboune", in his speech during the African Union Heads of State and Government Summit held in Addis Ababa on February 9, 2020, signifying its primary focus towards the African continent.

This agency holds priority status among Algerian public institutions. Its unique distinction lies in direct oversight by the Presidency of the Republic, reflecting the state's commitment to fostering international South-South Cooperation (SSC), aligned with the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union's 2063 Agenda.

The establishment of this agency can be understood within the context of Algeria's political reform or modernisation efforts. This alignment is further bolstered by Algeria's leading position in Africa and the Arab world on the 2019 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) implementation index, as reported by the German NGO "Bertelsmann Stiftung" and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (ranked first in Africa and the Arab world, and 53rd globally in terms of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals). Leveraging this dynamic, Algeria appears to be reordering its foreign policy agenda to prioritise joint development projects tailored to the capabilities of partner countries within the African continent.⁽⁶⁾

Chapter II: the African vision and 2063 aspirations: building empowerment elements for regional integration:

3- Agenda 2063 as a Strategic Framework for Growth and Development: A Reading of Aspirations and Leading Projects

Subtitle:

The African Union's Agenda 2063, titled "The Africa We Want" serves as the continent's strategic blueprint for achieving inclusive and sustainable development. Building upon the Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance movements, it actively pursues unity, self-determination, freedom, progress, and collective prosperity. Recognising the need to move beyond the struggles against "Apartheid" and secure political independence. Agenda 2063 prioritise inclusive social and economic development, continental and regional integration, democratic governance, peace, and security. These objectives aim to reposition Africa as a dominant player on the global stage.⁽⁷⁾



Agenda 2063 builds upon a review of Africa's progress towards unity and renaissance between 1963 and 2013. This 50-year strategic vision, aims to lead the continent toward integration, unity, and sustainable development by 2063. It integrates Africa's past achievements with its future aspirations. The Agenda outlines seven core aspirations (refer to figure 1), each with subsidiary goals and specific objectives for their realisation. Here is a brief overview of these aspirations and their goals: (8)

– **Aspiration 1: Building a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development**, to eradicate poverty and enhance levels of development on the continent

– **Aspiration 2: united and integrated continent, guided by the principles of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance**: to achieve political and economic unity and bolster the continent's capabilities.

– **Aspiration 3: Africa built on the principles of governance, democratic norms, respect for human rights, and the rule of law**: which strengthen democratic values and enhance the state's role.

– **Aspiration 4: Creating a peaceful and secure Africa**: to promote stability, peace and enhance structures for maintaining collective African security. **Aspiration 5: Pan-Africanism cultural unity and values**: to achieve comprehensive and entrenched African cultural unity, affirm cultural and religious diversity as a source of strength.

– **Aspiration 6: Self-development leadership for Africa with the help of youth and women**: Strengthen peoples' centrality, nurture their individuals, promote gender equality, and empower youth participation.

– **Aspiration 7: Africa as a global, united, and influential power**: Africa is poised to become a resilient, harmonious, and influential global power, playing a substantial partner in world affairs.

Agenda 2063 embodies a critical recognition: Africa's development hinges on self-reliance. The shortcomings of past development plans, characterised by numerous initiatives yet limited progress, underscore this reality. Africa remains one of the world's poorest regions, grappling with underdevelopment, conflict, and instability. Agenda 2063 seeks to address these pervasive challenges by emphasising "Africa's self-

development." This comprehensive framework aspires to guide the continent towards a renaissance.

Figure (1): The aspirations of the African Union's Agenda 2063.



Source: Prepared by the researcher.

Figure (1) shows the seven aspirations of the African Union's Agenda 2063. These aspirations aim to prioritise the need to accelerate economic and social development efforts. Together, they constitute an integrated strategic plan aimed at addressing the structural imbalances that the continent suffers from at the political, economic, social, and cultural levels.

By 2063, the African Union's agenda envisions a fully integrated Africa, occupying its rightful position on the global stage. This transformation will be manifested in the well-being of its citizens, a flourishing economy, and a unified, diverse population. A culture of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, and the rule of law will prevail. Peace and security will flourish, and women will enjoy an elevated status. A vibrant cultural renaissance will sweep across the continent.⁽⁹⁾

Agenda 2063's practical implementation hinges on several flagship projects. These 15 projects act as cornerstones to accelerate Africa's economic growth and development, while strengthening its common identity through celebrating its history and cultural diversity. Notable projects include the African Continental Free Trade Area, an integrated high-speed train network, the formulation of an African commodities strategy, the establishment of an annual African Economic Forum,

addressing cybersecurity concerns, and the creation of African financial institutions. ⁽¹⁰⁾

4- Determinants of successful implementation of the 2063 agenda aspirations

The successful realisation of Agenda 2063 hinges on a set of critical factors: ⁽¹¹⁾

– **Leadership and political commitment:** effective leadership with vision is crucial in all fields and at all levels. Historical development efforts emphasise the importance of political leadership characterised by vision, dedication, and competence.

– **Capable development state:** the state plays a central role in the development process through its ability to create effective and accountable institutions, develop clear developmental visions, and establish coherent action plans.

– **Participation, inclusion, and empowerment of citizens:** Agenda 2063 requires full participatory ownership by all stakeholders, especially youth and women. This empowerment will fuel genuine socio-economic transformation.

– **A results-based approach:** measurable goals with robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are essential. Agenda 2063 balances a general framework with a common set of objectives while acknowledging Africa's diversity.

– **Revitalising strategic planning and ensuring effective interface among national plans, regional initiatives, and Agenda 2063:** effective coordination between national development plans, regional initiatives, and Agenda 2063 requires integrated planning at continental, regional, and national levels across short-, medium-, and long-term horizons.

– **Making Agenda 2063 an integral part of the African Renaissance:** the values of African unity and renaissance provide a solid foundation for Agenda 2063, offering an opportunity to break free from the syndrome of "always coming up with new ideas but no significant achievements".

– **Africa taking charge of its global narrative:** Africa must take charge of its narrative and brand to ensure that it reflects the continent's realities, aspirations, priorities, and position in the world.

These factors collectively form the bedrock for transforming Agenda 2063's objectives into tangible results. Notably, Africa has made significant strides in adopting development strategies. Most countries possess national visions aligned with regional frameworks like Agenda 2063, aiming to improve living standards and address socio-economic needs.

The first continental report on Agenda 2063 implementation reveals an overall achievement of 32% against the 2019 targets. This analysis highlights variations across aspirations. Africa performed best in Aspiration 4, "A Peaceful and Secure Africa", scoring approximately 48%. Existing peace and security mechanisms and enhanced capabilities likely contributed to this progress. Aspiration 2, "An Integrated Continent, Politically United", achieved a score of 44%, reflecting the collaborative efforts of member states in operationalising initiatives, like the African Continental Free Trade Area. Furthermore, Aspiration 6, "An Africa Whose Development is People-Driven", reached a commendable 38% due in part to the effective implementation of the African Charter on the Rights of the Youth, exceeding 77% of the target set for 2019.

On the other hand, Aspiration 1, "A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development", scored a low 29%. Similarly, Aspiration 3, "An Africa with Good Governance, Democracy, and Human Rights", achieved a mere 16%. This lackluster performance can be attributed to factors such as prevalent corruption, inadequate accountability mechanisms for leaders, and restricted press freedom. Furthermore, Aspiration 5, "An Africa with a Strong Cultural Identity", achieved a concerningly low score of 12%. This disparity highlights the need to prioritise the integration of indigenous African culture, values, and languages into primary and secondary school curriculums. By fostering cultural appreciation and identity from a young age, Africa can empower its citizens and strengthen its cultural foundation. ⁽¹²⁾

Chapter III: Analysis of the strategic approach to Algerian economic diplomacy's performance in light of Agenda 2063: Incentives for continental integration and the regional role.

1- Analysing the performance of Algerian diplomacy in implementing the 2063 aspirations

Algeria stands out as a key architect of the African Union's Agenda 2063, the blueprint for an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa. Algerian diplomacy has actively collaborated with member states and AU bodies to realise the agenda's seven aspirations and 14 key projects. Algeria was among the first nine countries to submit its national progress report on the Agenda's initial ten-year plan. Furthermore, Algeria actively participated in the AU's reform process launched in 2016, aiming to enhance its effectiveness and address emerging global challenges. ⁽¹³⁾

Algeria's commitment to Agenda 2063 is demonstrably strong. The country integrated the Agenda's aspirations and goals into its national development strategy. This adherence was further solidified by Algeria's submission of its first interim report, detailing progress made during the first decade (2013-2023) of the Agenda's implementation. The report assessed achievements and progress towards Africa's developmental goals. The official site of the African Union Development Agency/NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD) provides detailed figures on Algeria's national efforts.

Table (1): Algeria's performance in implementing the aspirations of Agenda 2063 (2019- 2021).

	Aspirations	achievement rate 2019	achievement rate 2021
Aspiration 1	building a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development	59	52
Aspiration 2	a united and integrated continent, guided by the principles of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance	56	46
Aspiration 3	africa built on the principles of governance, democratic norms, respect	21	94

	for human rights, and the rule of law		
Aspiration 4	Creating a peaceful and secure Africa	100	67
Aspiration 5	pan-Africanism cultural unity and values	0	0
Aspiration 6	Self-development leadership for Africa with the help of youth and women	75	38
Aspiration 7	africa as a global, united, and influential power	44	52
Overall score		58	53

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the data from the official website of the African Union Development Agency

<https://nepad.org/agenda-dashboard-v2>

Data suggests that Algeria has achieved notable progress in implementing Agenda 2063 aspirations. Scoring between 58% in 2019 and 53% in 2021, Algeria positions itself among the top ten African countries in fulfilling the Agenda's goals. An interesting observation is the shift in focus areas across these periods. While Algeria achieved a perfect score 100% for enhancing peace and security in 2019, this focus dipped to 67% in 2021, suggesting a potential shift in priorities.

Conversely, promoting good governance, democracy, and human rights received a considerably higher score in 2021 94% compared to 2019 21%. Algeria's performance in areas like "enhancing development paths based on the African peoples' efforts" also exhibited fluctuations. Scoring 75% in 2019, performance dipped to 38% in 2021.

Finally, Algeria received a score of 0% for "an Africa with a strong cultural identity". This can likely be attributed to the lingering effects of colonialism, which may have overshadowed indigenous cultures, and weaknesses within the African educational system.

To assess Algeria's overall performance in implementing Agenda 2063 across the two years, the arithmetic mean of the 2019 and 2021 scores for each aspiration can be calculated. This will provide a single numerical value representing Algeria's average performance. The formula for calculating the arithmetic mean is as follows:

Arithmetic mean of the percentages = (Percentage 01 + Percentage 02 + Percentage 03...) / Total number of percentages



Table (2): The average performance of Algeria in implementing the aspirations of Agenda 2063

Aspirations	The arithmetic mean of the performance (%)
Aspiration	55.5
Aspiration	51
Aspiration	57.5
Aspiration	83.5
Aspiration	0
Aspiration	56.5
Aspiration	48
average overall score	50.28

Source: Prepared by the researcher.

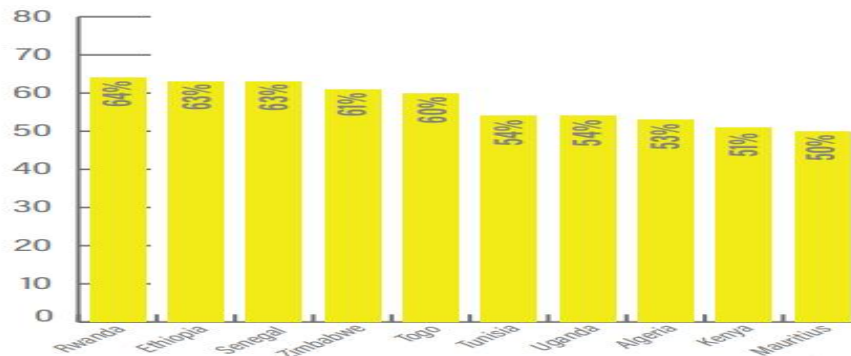
Based on data, Algeria's average performance across the seven Agenda aspirations is approximately 50.28%. This score suggests a sustained commitment to the plan's goals. A noteworthy observation is Algeria's increasing focus on "security dimensions". With an average score of 83.5% in this area, Algeria demonstrates a strong commitment to maintaining continental peace and security. This focus likely reflects the importance Algeria's diplomacy places on addressing security concerns, particularly in conflict zones like the African Sahel.

Beyond security, Algeria recognises the importance of strengthening the "African state". This includes establishing democratic mechanisms, promoting good governance values, and protecting human rights. These elements are considered fundamental to achieving lasting continental peace. The internal fragility of many African states has highlighted the risk they pose to regional stability, shifting them from guarantors of peace to sources of insecurity. Finally, Algeria prioritise self-driven development in Africa. This focus is evident in its efforts to empower youth and women, and its emphasis on achieving economic growth and sustainable development at the continental level. Numerous development and structural projects underscore this commitment, alongside the desire to unify the African voice.

While Algeria exhibits progress in implementing Agenda 2063, as evidenced by its ranking among the top ten African nations, a more nuanced analysis reveals room for improvement. Data from the NEPAD Agency indicates that several countries outperform Algeria.

Conspicuously, Rwanda, Ethiopia, and Senegal occupy the top three positions with performance percentages of 64%, 63%, and 63% respectively, compared to Algeria's 53%.

Figure (1): The top ten African nations in implementing the African Union's Agenda 2063



Source: African Union Development Agency, AUDA-NEPAD Annual Report, South Africa, Midrand, 2022, p.3.

Rwanda achieved a perfect score 100% in Aspirations 3 and 4, which focus on good governance, democracy, human rights, and a peaceful Africa. Additionally, Rwanda demonstrates a strong performance 81% in Aspiration 2, emphasizing Integrated Continent, Politically United. Ethiopia also demonstrates remarkable progress, achieving a perfect score 100% in aspiration 5, 73% in aspiration 1 and 64% in aspiration 7. Senegal's performance merits attention. It achieved a perfect score 100% in Aspirations 4 and 5, mirroring Ethiopia's focus. Furthermore, Senegal's strong performance 94% in Aspiration 3 highlights its commitment to good governance and human rights.

Algeria can potentially enhance its performance in implementing Agenda 2063 by learning from the experiences of Senegal, Rwanda, and Ethiopia. These countries have achieved strong performances in their respective focus areas. Algeria could analyze and study the strategies and initiatives they implemented to develop its approach to economic diplomacy. Additionally, exploring opportunities for collaboration with these countries would allow for an exchange of best practices.

Furthermore, undertaking a more comprehensive analysis that considers internal and external factors is crucial. Understanding what helped these countries succeed will provide valuable insights for

Algeria. This analysis can help refine its economic diplomacy and accelerate progress in achieving Agenda 2063 goals. However, it is essential to remember that while these countries offer valuable lessons, Algeria must adapt these learnings to its specific context.

2- Structural projects as a lever for enhancing regional integration

Algeria actively leverages its economic diplomacy to accelerate regional integration, a key priority within Agenda 2063's vision of a prosperous and integrated Africa. This commitment is materialised through a series of major development projects that extend the action program of the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD):

– **The Trans-Saharan Road Corridor (TSR):** The Trans-Saharan Highway is one of the oldest infrastructure projects in Africa, the TSR aligns with the African Union's program for infrastructure development. This continental program aims to connect African capitals through a comprehensive road network. Encompassing nine major roads, the program seeks to enhance development, promote economic and social integration, and boost trade and communication across the continent.

The TSR network connects six countries (Algeria, Chad, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Tunisia) and facilitates trade by linking major ports on the Mediterranean and Atlantic Seas. The Algiers-Lagos corridor, exceeding 4,500 kilometers in length, is a critical route according to the report of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD 2022). Algeria has demonstrably contributed to the TSR's development. The country constructed a 1,400-kilometer paved road section stretching from El-Goléa to the Niger border via Tamanrasset. While roughly 10 kilometers near the In Guezam border remain unpaved, Algeria has also built a 280-kilometer section on the Malian branch, with only 200 kilometers left to connect to the Malian border at Timiaouine. ⁽¹⁴⁾

The Trans-Saharan Road Corridor (TSR) holds significant strategic value for Algeria. Beyond Strengthening regional integration, the TSR serves as a crucial axis for accessing Algeria's southern oil and gas resources. Furthermore, it acts as a vital gateway to desert areas bordering Mali and Niger, facilitating trade and transportation. This corridor functions as a lifeline for delivering essential supplies to Algeria's southern regions and serves as a primary transit route for

goods moving towards neighboring countries and Central Africa. Economically, the TSR fosters trade by connecting major cities like Ghardaia, El Oued, and Tamanrasset, ultimately linking them to Timiaouine, a key point roughly 2,000 kilometers south of the capital, Algiers. ⁽¹⁵⁾

– **Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline (TSGP)**: is a significant pan-African development project designed to bolster Europe's gas security. Envisioned as a 4,128-kilometer pipeline, the TSGP would transport an estimated 20 to 30 billion cubic meters of natural gas annually. The pipeline's route would traverse three countries: Nigeria (1,037 kilometers), Niger (841 kilometers), and Algeria (2,130 kilometers). Project costs are estimated at \$10 billion for the pipeline itself, with an additional \$3 billion needed for developing gas infrastructure in Nigeria. The governments of Algeria, Niger, and Nigeria initially targeted project completion by 2015. ⁽¹⁶⁾

However, the project was put on hold until 2022 due to unforeseen circumstances. The recent global energy crisis, triggered by the Russo-Ukrainian War and subsequent disruptions to Russian gas supplies to Europe, has revived interest in the TSGP. The project's implementation holds the potential to significantly impact the social and economic development of the regions it traverses. Expected benefits include providing access to natural gas, creating employment opportunities, and enhancing regional energy infrastructure.

Therefore, Algeria's security approach extends beyond Africa to encompass the Mediterranean Sea also, it serves as Algeria's maritime gateway, facilitating all commercial exchanges and hosting gas pipelines connecting its energy fields to Europe, particularly Italy and Spain. This economic aspect aligns with the concept of energy security. Algeria shares a common interest with Europe in securing energy export routes. Europe's dependence on external energy sources, including those from Algeria, underscores the importance of this shared objective. While not currently under direct threat, these energy supply routes remain vulnerable to security risks. ⁽¹⁷⁾

– **African Fiber Optic Backbone Trans-Saharan (BTS)**: is a key initiative within NEPAD's 2010-2015 Infrastructure Action Plan (PICI), that aims to accelerate social and economic diversification in participating countries by providing high-bandwidth internet access and establishing an alternative data gateway to Europe via Algiers. This

infrastructure will also facilitate the efficient operation and management of vital infrastructure along the Trans-Saharan route.⁽¹⁸⁾

Algeria recognises the critical role digital connectivity plays in fostering regional integration. While the TSR strengthens trade ties, the BTS project focuses on enhancing data and information exchange among participating nations, deepening their communication networks. These combined efforts highlight two key aspects of Algeria's economic diplomacy in recent years.

Firstly, Algeria actively contributes to the realisation of the African Union Development Agency's objectives, including those outlined in Agenda 2063. These contributions help dispel stereotypical views of Africa and promote its reintegration and development within the global economy.

Secondly, Algeria recognises the potential benefits of engaging in regional initiatives. By spearheading significant infrastructure projects, Algeria paves the way for its own re-entry into the African economic sphere and access to promising markets, ultimately serving its national economic interests.

A report by the African Union Commission and AUDA-NEPAD underscores Algeria's continued efforts towards achieving developmental goals in Africa and supporting existing structural projects aligned with Agenda 2063 aspirations. Algeria's active involvement extends to prominent current initiatives such as the high-speed African rail network, multimodal transport linkages for economic development, the presidential initiative for infrastructure support in Africa, the virtual PIDA Information Center, and programs to enhance the African healthcare system.

These projects embody Algeria's articulation of an Afrocentric development paradigm. This paradigm prioritise a collaborative approach, emphasising shared interests and Strengthening equitable opportunities for all African nations. Integral to this vision, is the recognition of the need for targeted development assistance. By supporting less developed countries in improving their infrastructure and implementing key projects, Algeria aims to cultivate an environment conducive to enhanced intra-African trade.⁽¹⁹⁾

These projects emphasise that African integration remains a major priority for Algerian economic diplomacy. Algeria actively engages with various leading programs within AUDA-NEPAD's new strategic



directions outlined in the 2063 vision framework. This engagement involves mobilising necessary resources for project implementation and contributing meaningfully to relevant discussions. Furthermore, Algeria's commitment extends to adopting a comprehensive and continental approach. Its efforts encompass infrastructure development, promoting developmental projects, focusing on information and communication technology, and ensuring health security across the continent.

Conclusion:

The African Union's Agenda 2063 stands as a bold and visionary blueprint for Africa's economic and social transformation. This ambitious plan seeks to realise a prosperous, peaceful, and unified Africa by 2063. Articulated through seven core aspirations, Agenda 2063 outlines a practical roadmap for achieving these goals, driven by Africans themselves. A key distinction from previous development frameworks lies in its operational approach. Each nation is responsible for documenting its progress towards fulfilling the aspirations, with oversight and evaluation provided by the African Union Commission and AUDA-NEPAD. This transparent and accountable mechanism fosters the pragmatic realisation of Agenda 2063's goals.

The adoption of Agenda 2063 marks a strategic shift towards addressing Africa's long-standing development and peace challenges. Recognising the need for a recalibrated approach, African leaders have prioritised growth, development, regional integration, good governance, and human rights as the pillars propelling the continent towards these strategic milestones.

The successful implementation of Agenda 2063 hinges on several critical elements. Strong political leadership, the establishment of effective institutions, and participatory governance across all sectors of society are fundamental. Equally important is the harmonisation of Agenda 2063 with national development strategies to ensure alignment and coordinated efforts. Reports indicate that continental performance towards achieving Agenda 2063's goals has been moderately satisfactory, reflecting a general commitment to these strategic priorities.

Algeria's economic diplomacy actively promotes the aspirations of Agenda 2063. The country has embarked on a development journey for Africa by accelerating regional integration. Algeria's leadership in

implementing large-scale infrastructure projects, such as the Trans-Saharan Highway, Gas Pipeline, and Fiber Optic network, exemplifies its commitment to this vision. These projects contribute to a constructive shift towards a more integrated Africa, aligning with the broader goal of a self-reliant, prosperous, and unified continent.

Algeria's proactive engagement in these projects extends beyond continental integration. It also reflects the country's ambition to spearhead Africa's capacity-building efforts, enhance collaboration within the South-South cooperation framework. Furthermore, Algeria stands to benefit economically from the increased trade activity and partnerships reinforced by these initiatives, strengthening its domestic economic fabric through investments in recipient nations.

Algeria's performance in implementing the African Union's Agenda 2063 surpasses the 50% mark according to the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), placing it among the leading nations in achieving the plan's seven aspirations. This achievement reflects Algeria's strong commitment and momentum towards deepening regional integration with its African partners.

A cornerstone of Algeria's approach is its emphasis on leveraging economic diplomacy for continental benefit. Security is a particular focus, as Algeria recognises the importance of stability, conflict mitigation, and good governance reforms for sustaining Africa's growth and development.

Building on this success, Algeria actively pursues the completion of other critical projects, including Phase II of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) and the PICI program. These strategic frameworks create an enabling environment for Algeria to capitalise on the economic and integration opportunities presented by infrastructure development.

The successful implementation of large-scale infrastructure projects like those spearheaded by Algeria presents significant opportunities for Africa. These projects serve as the foundation for commercial activity by facilitating the flow of goods and people across borders. This enhanced connectivity boosts greater coordination and cooperation among African nations, accelerating collective efforts towards achieving the goals of Agenda 2063, including sustainable development and economic growth for a prosperous Africa.

Evidence suggests that Algerian economic diplomacy remains in its nascent stages. Consequently, its effectiveness in establishing a prominent regional role within the continent appears limited. Policymakers must cultivate this strategic tool into a proactive form of economic diplomacy capable of tackling critical issues plaguing African nations, especially those bordering its borders. Significant challenges threaten to impede progress. Africa currently faces the lowest levels of regional integration globally. Fragile infrastructure, political instability, widespread poverty, corruption, and weak governance structures pose major obstacles, especially in the Sahel region. These hurdles could derail Africa's ambitions under Agenda 2063, potentially leading to outcomes similar to past development initiatives. However, the country exhibits noteworthy progress in fulfilling the goals of Agenda 2063. This is reflected in Algeria's ranking among the top ten African nations for successful implementation, substantiated by the realization of many of the mentioned integrative projects.

Algerian economic diplomacy must adopt a more offensive strategy based on identifying major priorities through working within a multilateral framework, namely "collective regional economic diplomacy," to address the continent's challenges. The dubious capacity of some African nations to fulfil their obligations towards implementing the aspirations outlined in Agenda 2036 necessitates, as a preliminary step, a comprehensive understanding of the inherent nature of these challenges. This understanding is crucial for formulating practicable and implementable reforms by individual countries and African Union entities.

The enhancement of the security environment and the capabilities of underdeveloped states, alongside infrastructure development, remain the cornerstone strategies for implementing Agenda 2036. Algeria is actively pursuing the development of a development model explicitly tailored for Africa. This model entails engaging in diverse security initiatives to resolve conflict and build Regional Security. Moreover, Algeria has provided financial aid and cancelled the debts of many underdeveloped African countries. Furthermore, it has endeavoured to achieve deeper integration within Africa through participation in various large-scale infrastructural projects with a regional integration



dimension. These projects prioritise infrastructural improvement, particularly within Sahelian countries.

These strategies form a comprehensive roadmap for the effectiveness of Algerian economic diplomacy in Africa.

Drawing from the analysis, several strategic recommendations can be formulated to empower Algerian economic diplomacy in overcoming identified hurdles and propelling Agenda 2063 forward:

- Algeria can strengthen its economic diplomacy by actively engaging with diverse regional economic blocs across Africa. Expanding connections and fostering stronger affiliations with other African nations will create a more unified front for development.

- Algeria should prioritise investments in infrastructure projects and joint ventures undertaken with neighboring African nations. These investments, pursued under the frameworks of NEPAD and Agenda 2063, should be undertaken with a clear focus on safeguarding Algeria's national economic interests.

- Integrating trade diplomacy as a core component of economic diplomacy can significantly broaden Algeria's commercial prospects within Africa. Leveraging border transit points to establish free trade zones can further incentivize trade and economic activity.

- By enhancing the operational effectiveness of its economic diplomacy frameworks and directing these efforts strategically towards Africa, Algeria can solidify its participation in the continent's economic landscape. This focus will not only accelerate Algeria's own economic transformation but also contribute to the broader goals of Agenda 2063, fostering a more prosperous and integrated Africa.

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