For the period between 28 September and 4 October 2017, there were 81 critical incidents, resulting in 12 deaths and 651 arrests. 554 of the arrests related to Sub-Saharan African immigrants and Algerian nationals attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea. The human and social category was the most critical this week, accounting for 41.98% of the total incident pool. Security and defense and criminality followed closely with 23.46% each.

Seven Islamic insurgents were killed this week in Bejaia and Jijel as sweeping operations continued across the country. Security sources revealed that more than a thousand soldiers were mobilized in the forested mountains separating the provinces of Bejaia and Jijel, in pursuit of an Al-Qaeda group. The capture of one of the insurgents allowed the army to locate the rest of the group and neutralize six of them in Bejaia’s el-Kseur municipality. In Bouira, it has been determined that the six-member group the army had been chasing has recently vowed allegiance to Jund al-Khalifa, an offshoot of the Islamic State.

An important quantity of explosives and weapons was seized in seven provinces, including Tamanrasset, Bejaia and Tizi Ouzou. Meanwhile, in Bordj Badji Mokhtar, an arms cache containing war-grade weaponry was discovered. In this context, and in the wake of the Tiaret attack, the Chief-of-Staff of the army has ordered the beefing up of border controls in the southeast and the south, in order to counter weapon smuggling.

Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia has decided to resume hydraulic fracking to exploiting shale gas in Tamanrasset, in a bid to stimulate the Algerian economy. Consequently, the In Salah-based committee against shale gas extraction has reorganized, and warned the government that it will resume the protest action it started in 2014 if this measure materializes.

At least five people were killed in floods in the provinces of Djelfa, M’Sila and Sidi Bel-Abbes. On the social front, the situation has not eased this week. In M’Sila, protesters clashed with the police after a man died in custody in Chebilia. Additionally, unemployed activists started protests in Ouargla and Tebessa, and two housing rallies took place in Constantine and Oran.

The FLN crisis continued to make the headlines. In Bouira, dozens party members held a protest to demand a complete overhaul of the candidate lists for local elections. In Illizi, a former member denounced that a former convict was registered as a candidate. The leadership of the party has yet to make a statement on this issue.

After violent images of the civil war were broadcast on national television, several opposition parties denounced an attempt by the regime to “manipulate the population”. The broadcast stirred controversy, as the gruesome images of dead bodies and people lamenting the loss of their loved ones evoked bad memories for hundreds of thousands of terrorism victims.
Significant Events: 28 September - 4 October 2017

**Algeria Weekly Report**

**Bouira:** 28 Sept. - 4 Oct. 2017: Islamic State offshoot unit chased by the army.

**Bejaia:** 29 Sept. - 1 Oct. 2017: Six Islamic militants killed in el-Kseur.

**Jijel:** 29 Sept. 2017: Islamic insurgent killed, another captured.

**Djelfa:** 29 Sept. 2017: A woman and her two children die in flood hitting the city.

**M’Sila:** 2 Oct. 2017: Protests clash with police after death of local man in custody.

**Bejaia:** 29 Sept. - 1 Oct. 2017: Six Islamic militants killed in el-Kseur.

**Jijel:** 29 Sept. 2017: Islamic insurgent killed, another captured.

**Adrar:** 29 Sept. 2017: Arms cache containing war-grade weapons discovered in Bordj Badji Mokhtar.

**Tamanrasset:** 3 Oct. 2017: The Anti-fracking movement of In Salah is reorganized, warning the government against resumption of shale gas extraction.

**Bejaia:** 29 Sept. - 1 Oct. 2017: Six Islamic militants killed in el-Kseur.

**Jijel:** 29 Sept. 2017: Islamic insurgent killed, another captured.

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**M’Sila:** 2 Oct. 2017: Protests clash with police after death of local man in custody.
**FLN election list protested in Illizi and Bouira**

A group of FLN members staged a protest on 1 October outside the party headquarters in Bouira to denounce the province election list. The protesters called for the departure of the local head of the party, accusing him of registering non-FLN “opportunists”, to the detriment of the true militants.

In Illizi, according to a disgruntled former member of the National Liberation Front (FLN) in the southern province, the ruling party picked an ex convict to represent the party in Illizi in the upcoming local elections, which is forbidden by law. The instigator called on President Bouteflika to set up an investigation commission to enquire about “corrupt officials”.

**Opposition parties condemn graphic images of terrorism broadcast on national TV**

Opposition parties Jil Jadid, Culture and Democracy Rally (RCD) and the Social Movement for Peace (MSP) have all condemned the "graphic and disturbing" images and scenes from the civil war that were shown on national television to celebrate the 12th anniversary of the adoption of the Charter for Peace and Reconciliation. The said images caused immense outrage among Algerian nationals, who were shocked by the violent nature of the broadcast, which included images of dead and mutilated bodies of children, and bodies riddled with bullets. MSP parliamentarian Abdelrazak Makri said that was done to “terrorize and intimidate the population, and to keep it silent in the face of the increased cost of living, and economic reforms that are leading us to an uncertain future." Sofiane Djilali, the President of Jil Jadid, has stated "This process is despicable, as it aims to frighten the population and maintain the regime in place. Through this broadcast, the regime is sending a clear message to the Algerians: You either keep us, or face the reemergence of terrorism." RCD MP Fetta Sadat has followed suit, and said that the broadcast is "blackmail" against the people, and a way to maintain the status quo. Several other members of opposition parties also condemned the broadcast, claiming its goal was to manipulate the population into keeping the regime in power.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia said "We need to preserve the memory of terrorism victims. The broadcast's goal was to pay tribute to all the Algerians who went through this difficult ordeal."

**MAK leader submits Kabylie independence request at the UN**

Ferhat Mehenni, the leader of the Movement for the Self-Determination of Kabylie, has introduced an independence request at the United Nations. The memorandum, a 350-page document, is composed of ten chapters detailing his plan to "liberate Kabylie from Algeria". The Algerian government has imposed a zero tolerance policy towards all protests and events held by MAK, in an effort to stop the movement’s momentum. MAK grew considerably in the past few years, and counts more than 5,000 members, as against just 200 in 2008.

**Human & Social**

**Illegal immigration: 554 arrested countrywide**

This week, 318 Algerian nationals were apprehended off the coasts of Annaba, Oran, Chlef, Skikda, Ain Temouchent and El Tarf, confirming the increasing trend of sea crossing attempts. Furthermore, 236 undocumented Sub-Saharan Africans were arrested in Tiemcen, Adrar, Bechar, Laghouat, Ouargla, El Oued and Tindouf.
Outrage as official instruction banning illegal immigrants from using public transport in Mostaganem

Saleh Debouz, the lawyer and President of the Algerian League for the Defense of Human Rights (LADDH) has denounced a "racist" instruction coming from the Transport Authority of Mostaganem, ordering public and private transporters not to let "illegal immigrants" use their services. "Has the Algerian government become racist?" asked Saleh Debouz, who accuses government officials of using the security, economic and political crises in Algeria to justify the crackdown on illegal immigration "in violation of international law".

Rumor: Hundreds of immigrants dropped off in the Sahara Desert after being captured

According to the Superior Council of the Malian Diaspora (CSDM), hundreds of undocumented Sub-Saharan African immigrants who were arrested nationwide are being "dropped off by the authorities at the Malian border in Tamanrasset, without any assistance". CSDM claims having interviewed a number of returning immigrants, who revealed that basic human rights were violated during their deportation.

Anti-Shale Gas committee resumes activities, protest action likely

The committee in opposition the exploration and exploitation of shale gas in southern Algeria, which led a protest action in late 2014 and early 2015 in Tamanrasset, has reorganized activities after Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia announced the resumption of hydraulic fracturing in the region. The committee published a statement warning the PM and his cabinet that local residents have the same stance concerning the issue. A protest is expected to take place in the next few days in In Salah.

Amnesty International calls for "lifting civil freedoms restrictions" ahead of 5 October march in Bejaia

Amnesty International has urged the Algerian government to lift "the restrictions on civil freedoms", one day ahead of the 5 October march in Bejaia, which will commemorate the social uprisings of 1988. "Amnesty International will participate in this peaceful march in order to provide its support to the Algerian League for the Defense of Human Rights, and to call on the Algerian authorities to provide more freedom to the population" said Hassina Oussedik, the director of the Algerian branch of the NGO.

Bejaia port authorities file complaint against Cevital workers support committee

The General Director of the port of Bejaia has decided to file a complaint against the Committee to support Cevital Workers. The GD of Bejaia port has accused committee spokesman Mourad Bouzidi of defamation after he accused him of "suspicious management of the port", calling him an "enemy of the nation" in light of the blockage of dozens of shipping containers belonging to the company Cevital. "This complaint is a breach of freedom of speech", claims Bouzidi. The complaint was lodged a few days after a port official took the blame for holding off the shipping containers by resigning, allowing the unblocking of 16 containers.

Case of typhoid reported in Azeffoun

A case of typhoid was reported in the region of Azeffoun, province of Tizi Ouzou, as a result of the contamination of a water source in the area. The patient was...
hospitalized in the village of Achouba. The health services are conducting an investigation.

**Truck driver tries to hit unemployment protesters in Ghardaia**

A group of unemployed protesters who were holding a peaceful protest in Ghardaia outside the HQ of construction company Cosider, have been targeted by an unidentified truck driver, who tried to plow into them. One protested was wounded and hospitalized. Subsequently, dozens of protesters took the city hall of Metlili, in the same province, to demand an investigation and the arrest of the truck driver, who they claim works for Cosider.

**Oran resident doctors go on unlimited strike over insecurity**

The resident doctors at the Oran hospital have gone on unlimited strike on 3 October, in an effort to demand security reinforcements in following a number of assaults targeting the local medical staff. The strikers denounced the "lax" attitude of the administration, which they claim has yet to react to the numerous assaults in the gynecology, surgery, ENT, psychiatry and cardiology wards.

**Floods leave five people dead in Djelfa, Msila and Sidi Bel Abbes**

Heavy downpour in the provinces of Djelfa, M'Sila and Sidi Bel Abbes have left at least five people dead on 28 and 29 September. In Djelfa, a woman and her two daughters, an 18-month old and a five-year old, were washed away. Her bodies were found on 30 September in el-Mdjabra municipality. The civil protection has evacuated hundreds of people who live in the most affected areas.

**Middle-schoolers close Ait Yahia Moussa city hall in Tizi Ouzou**

On 28 September, a group of middle schoolers in the municipality of Ait Yahia Moussa, province of Tizi Ouzou, shut down the local city hall to denounce the lack of school transport services, which they claim is preventing dozens of students from attending classes.

**National road 75 closed by Bejaia villagers**

The residents of several villages in the municipality of Amizour closed the national road 75 on 2 and 3 October using large objects. The protesters demanded access to clean water and electricity, and urged the local authorities to build a primary school.

**More than ten tons of spoiled meet seized in Tiaret and Boumerdes**

The police in Tiaret and Boumerdes seized a quantity of 3.4 tons and 6.6 tons of spoiled meat respectively in province-wide operations recently launched after several citizen complaints. The local health authorities have vowed to reinforce safety checks at slaughter houses and butcher shops.

**Boumerdes tap water contaminated**

Residents of Zemmouri, in the province of Boumerdes, have reported that their drinking water is contaminated by "unidentified polluting substances". Lab tests revealed that the water was indeed contaminated. The residents called on the local authorities to intervene urgently.

**Protest held by the Collective of the Families of the Disappeared prevented by the police**

Dozens of members of the National Coordination of Families of the Disappeared staged a protest in central Algiers on 30 September, in order to protest the Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation, which allows Islamic insurgents to obtain amnesty if they surrender. The police put an end to the protest, and arrested at least 18 members of the coordination.

**Housing protests hit Oran and Constantine**

Hundreds of beneficiaries of social housing in the region of Ain el-
Beida, in Oran province, have staged a sit-in protest on 30 September to demand access to electricity and gas. The protesters urged the authorities to solve the issue before winter starts.

In Constantine, dozens of residents of the old neighborhood, located in Larbi Ben M'hidi street, took part in a rally outside the governor's office to demand "urgent rehousing" due to the "precarious conditions they are currently living in". The protesters have objected to recent social housing lists that allegedly included families they called "less deserving of rehousing".

**School bursars to start two-day strike**

The commission of school bursars has decided to start a two-day strike on 2 and 3 October to denounce socio-economic issues and demand a salary raise, as well as a better professional grading system. This strike is likely to have a snowball effect in the education sector, as many other unions are likely to follow suit.

**Former army draftees hold rally in Bejaia**

Army draftees from the period between 1992 and 1996 gathered outside the military headquarters in Bejaia on 30 September to stage a protest to demand compensation for the six years they remained in service, despite being drafted only for the compulsory military service of 18 months. A representative of the protesters claims that 14,000 people are in this situation.

**Protesters clash with police in M'Sila**

A group of protesters skirmished with policemen on 2 October in the region of Chebilia, province of M'Sila. The protesters stoned the local police station after the death of a man in custody. The police retaliated by using tear gas, wounding at least two protesters. "We are asking for details on the circumstances of his death" said one of the local residents who partook in the protest. An investigation has been launched.

**Security**

**Seven armed militants killed in Jijel and Bejaia, two others captured**

Six Islamic insurgents were killed in the region of el-Kseur, province of Bejaia. The first militant, killed on 29 September, was identified as Abu Brahim, who joined the insurgency in 2004. Five others were killed on 1 October. In total, six Kalashnikov machine guns and four rounds of ammunition were seized. During the same operation, a bomb-making workshop, two homemade bombs, ten detonators and 400 grams of explosives were seized. In Jijel’s Emir Abdelkader municipality, an armed militant was killed on 29 September. A Kalashnikov machine gun and a quantity of ammunition were seized.

Additionally, an armed insurgent known as "Yaakub" surrendered to the army on 29 September, during a sweeping operation in the province of Skikda. Yaakub, who is described as dangerous by the Ministry of Defense, is going to benefit from amnesty, in exchange for much needed intelligence on the operations of the AQIM group he used to be part of. The information he has provided allowed the capture of another armed militant known as "Anes" in the region of Emir Abdelkader, in Jijel province, on 29 September. The insurgent joined Islamic group GIA in 1993 during the civil war.

**Army intensifies sweeping operation in Bouira as six-strong IS group is still being chased**

On 28 September, the army intensified its counter-terrorism operations in the forest of Errich, which is based in Bouira’s Ain Turk and Ath Laaziz municipalities, in a bid to neutralize a group of six
remaining members of Jund al-Khalifa, one of the Islamic State offshoots in Algeria. This comes after a clash that occurred on the same day between the army and the insurgents, who are said to have recently joined the IS-linked group. The national gendarmerie has also deployed hundreds of officers in the area to protect the local population.

**Large quantity of war-grade weapons and explosives seized in various provinces**

In Tamanrasset province, the army seized a Kalashnikov machine gun and a quantity of ammunition on 28 September. On the same day, an automatic rifle was intercepted in Tizi Ouzou. In the southern border town of Bordj Badji Mokhtar, the army discovered a cache containing 16 war-grade weapons on 29 September, including a grenade-launching rifle, a sniper rifle, five Kalashnikov machine guns, six Simonov semi-automatic rifles, three repeating rifles and four grenades.

On 30 September and 1 October, two insurgent hideouts and a homemade bombs were found during a combing operation in the province of Skikda. Another army unit in Tamanrasset found a machine gun and 376 live bullets during a routine operation on 30 September. In Khemchela, seven rifles were intercepted and in Bejaia, two homemade bombs and two explosive belts were found on 2 October. On the 3 October, an insurgent hideout was destroyed in Boumerdes.

**Weapon traffickers and terrorism supporters arrested in several provinces**

On 27 September, five individuals were apprehended in the provinces of Bouira, Batna and Oum el-Bouaghi in the possession of three unregistered hunting rifles and 26,550 rounds of ammunition. In Biskra, two individuals were apprehended on 28 September in the possession of two unlicensed weapons. In Tizi Ouzou, two terrorism supporters were nabbed on 29 September for providing supplies to insurgents based in the Kabylie region.

**Criminality**

**Contraband smuggling: 38 arrested, large quantity of goods seized nationwide**

This week, 38 contraband smugglers were apprehended in Adrar, Tamanrasset, Tindouf, Biskra and Bechar. In total, a Kalashnikov machine gun, 83,000 liters of fuel, 3.15 tons of flour, over 14,000 liquor bottles, 14.3 tons of tobacco, 24,300 packs of cigarettes, six power generators and six jackhammers were seized and eight trucks were intercepted.

**Drug trafficking: 17 arrested, over 300 kilograms of kif seized**

Eleven drug traffickers were nabbed in the provinces of Constantine, Mascara, Naama, Tlemcen, Bechar and Tlemcen. In total, 671 kilograms of treated kif and 11,157 psychotropic pills were seized in the said provinces and in Tamanrasset.

**Hijacking gang dismantled in Bouira, four arrested**

In the province of Bouira, four individuals part of a hijacking gang active along the road linking Bouira and Sour el-Ghozlane, were apprehended on 29 September. The suspects hijacked dozens of motorists in the last few weeks. Upon their arrest, a quantity of treated kif, a dozen swords and other bladed weapons were seized.

**Money counterfeiters and vehicle traffickers captured in Tlemcen**

Three money counterfeiters, including an Algerian, a Cameroonian and a Spanish national, were apprehended in the province of Tlemcen on 30 September in the possession of fake 1,000 and 2,000 dinar bills. Moreover, an international vehicle trafficking network composed of seven members, was apprehended on 1 October in the province of Tlemcen. The gang was active in Algeria and France.
PM Ouyahia approves resumption of shale gas exploitation

Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia has voiced his intention to amend the hydrocarbon laws, in order to attract foreign investors. One of the measures that the PM approved is the resumption of exploration and exploitation of shale gas in the South. Such operations were suspended after residents of In Salah, in Tamanrasset, started a protest movement against it.

Customs yet to release external trade figures

Customs have been criticized after not releasing the yearly report detailing the statistics and figures pertaining to the operations of the external trade, for the first five months of 2017. In the past few years, said report used to be made public in the month of September.

Dinar continues free fall against US Dollar on official market

The Algerian dinar kept losing value this past week against the US dollar on the official market. As of 3 October, the dinar traded at 113.50 against the US dollar and 132.83 against the euro. On the black market, the euro remains above the 200 dinar barrier, despite a lack of demand.

Council of Ministers approves 2018 finance bill, prices of fuel and cigarettes to increase

On 4 October, the Council of Ministers has approved the 2018 finance bill proposed by Ahmed Ouyahia. If the parliament votes in favor of the bill, which is the most likely scenario, it will come into force on 1 January 2018. The bill provides an average increase of 18% in fuel prices, and a rise in taxes on tobacco and alcoholic drinks. Moreover, the government is seeking to impose a wealth tax, which will be applied on citizens earning more than 50 million dinars a year (420,000 US dollars).

However, given the magnitude of the informal economy in Algeria, experts claim that this plan will be difficult to implement.
Political

The turmoil inside the FLN is likely to continue until the local elections take place. This assessment is based on the fact that the leadership of the party seems reluctant to intervene in the election candidate list scandal. As such, the protest that took place in Bouira may have paved the way for members in other provinces to stage similar actions in the next few days. This crisis has the potential to destabilize the party in the next election, allowing the RND to maintain the momentum it gained in the legislative elections earlier this year.

Security

Counter-terrorism efforts will continue in several provinces, with special focus on Bouira, Bejaia, Jijel, Tamanrasset and Adrar. After several insurgents turned themselves in to the authorities, AQIM and IS leaders have been moving to other provinces in order to prevent the security forces from ambushing them.

In the Deep South, similar operations will be conducted to mitigate weapon smuggling from Libya and Mali. Security sources indicate that Al-Qaeda groups in the two neighboring countries are trying to infiltrate Algeria to attack oil facilities, and possibly undermine the new plans to resume shale gas extraction in the South. In 2015, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb warned the Algerian government against hydraulic fracking, threatening attacks against southern oil and gas facilities.

Economy & Social

While Shale gas extraction is likely to stimulate the economy, the social backlash it will trigger is seen as a real threat to the social and political stability. The protest action started in 2014 in the town of In Salah, province of Tamanrasset, drew about 4,000 people from all walks of life, and from various provinces. Abdelmalek Sellal, who was prime minister at the time, suspended the project due to the escalations. Now that the anti-shale gas committee reformed, protests are likely in the near future.

Unemployment protests have taken place in Ouargla and Tebessa, at a time when the government still refuses to unfreeze recruitment in the public service. ANEM, the national employment agency, is under a lot of pressure in dozens of provinces due to the increasing unemployment rate. In the next few weeks, those protests are likely to expand to other cities in both the North and the South.
## Forecast of Events 2017
### Algeria Weekly Report

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<td>30 Nov - 1 Dec 2017</td>
<td>Mawlid Al-Nabi (Prophet’s Birthday) - Sunni</td>
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<td>1 Jan 2018</td>
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<td>5 Jul 2018</td>
<td>Independence Day</td>
<td>National holiday - widespread business closures</td>
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* Muslim holidays are often determined by local sightings of lunar phases; dates given are approximate.
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