

## The Popular Movement in Algeria (Causes and Consequences)

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### Abstract

*Algeria has witnessed an important popular movement since the beginning of 2019 in response to the announcement of former Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika his candidacy for a fifth term. Due to the health condition that the president suffers from after suffering a stroke, the movement has been affected by several factors, including political, which included a popular demand for free and fair elections and change the system of government in the country. Also, many Algerian political elites felt that power in the country has become the monopoly of Abdelaziz Bouteflika, in addition to the economic reasons that revolved around the deepening state of administrative and financial corruption, high unemployment rates and economic decline. Also, the social and psychological reasons focused on the absence of civil rights and freedoms, in addition to the psychological collapse and social repression and the alienation of the Algerian citizen as a result of the repressive policies of the ruling regime. It did not provide citizens with the simplest requirements for a decent living, and thus this movement resulted in the emergence of several results, including the resignation of Abdelaziz Bouteflika, changes in power and the formation of a National rescue body. This body runs the affairs of the country until new elections are held to form a government to lead the country in the next stage.*

**Keywords:** Algeria, Hirak, Abdelaziz Bouteflika

### INTRODUCTION

Several years after the outbreak of the Arab Spring revolutions that swept the countries of the Middle East and North Africa, these revolutions moved to Algeria and Sudan, in both countries. The peoples of these countries sought to bring about changes in the nature of the political system that caused many political and humanitarian crises, deterioration of economic conditions and the absence of civil life on the one hand, and on the other hand. The movement in both countries sought to build state institutions based on democratic foundations that enjoy political legitimacy. As for Algeria, the candidacy of Abdelaziz Bouteflika for a fifth term was one of the most important reasons that led to the ignition of the movement.

**The importance of the study:** The importance of the research is to shed light on the political, economic and social reasons that made the Algerian and Sudanese citizens go out to demonstrate in rejection of the deterioration of the situation in the country. It also shows the results that resulted from the movement.

**The problem of the study:** The problem of the study lies in the search for the nature of the popular movement in Algeria, and from this main problem several questions branch, including the following:

What are the economic, social and political reasons for the popular movement in Algeria?

How have psychological and cultural reasons affected the popular movement in Algeria?

What are the results of the popular movement in Algeria?

**Third: Research Hypothesis:** The hypothesis of the study is that the deterioration of the political and economic conditions was the main reason for the outbreak of the popular movement in Algeria.

**Four. Research Methods:** The historical method has been adopted, which must be used to study the nature of the popular movement in Algeria. Also, the analytical and descriptive approach has been used to present and

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interpret the real reasons that led to the popular movement in Algeria and to know the results that resulted from the movement.

**Fifth. Research Structure:** The study was divided into an introduction and a demand, the first requirement focused on: the reasons for the popular movement in Algeria, while the second requirement dealt with the results that resulted in the movement.

The research also included a conclusion as a summary of the most important findings of the researcher.

**The First Requirement:** the reasons for the popular movement in Algeria

1- Political reasons: The candidacy of Abdelaziz Bouteflika for a fifth presidential term is one of the most important reasons that led to the establishment of the popular movement, and the reason for this is due to the crisis health situation suffered by President Abdelaziz Bouteflika. He suffered a stroke in 2013, which inabled him to manage the affairs of the country for the next stage on the one hand, and the low level of social life for the Algerian citizen and the rampant corruption in all state institutions on the other hand(Hamadouch, 2019).

This movement was preceded by a peaceful struggle characterized by extreme caution for fear of turning this protest into an armed confrontation between demonstrators and security forces and for fear of the return of the specter of civil war. So, Abdelaziz Bouteflika announces presidential elections in order to absorb public anger, and the date of these elections was set for March 11, 2019. Also, Abdelaziz Bouteflika declared himself a candidate for Algeria for a fifth presidential term, and parties loyal to the ruling party began Like the Democratic Rally Party in preparing to run in the election race. Then the feelings of the Algerian people were provoked, realizing that there is a kind of survival of the same person in power for life. This was clearly shown by the actions of officials by organizing honoring ceremonies in which President Abdelaziz Bouteflika is absent due to illness and his inability to attend those celebrations(Tayfour, 2019).

Hence, the movement began to increase little by little, whenthe protesters uprooted the image of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, which was pasted on the façade of the municipality in the state of Khenchela, and the headquarters of the ruling party, to express their anger at the ruling elite(Moghaddam & Mustafa, 2019). Also, a large number of organizations and unions joined the movement, which began demanding the rejection of the fifth term of President Bouteflika This behavior played a major role in creating a new reality, which was represented in the fall of the ban on demonstrations, which was imposed since 1992 due to the occurrence of the Black Decade War(Zamel, 2021).

In addition to the joining of a large number of unions to the popular movement, political and financial corruption had an important role in igniting the movement, as the president's illness made him unable to run the affairs of the country. So, political decision-making in Algeria is limited only In the hands of the institution of the presidency, and specifically Bouteflika's advisors, and his brother "Said Bouteflika" (6) who was serving as an adviser in the Presidency of the Republic. He took the opportunity of Bouteflika's illness, and deliberately made political decisions and appointed officials, and manipulated the popular electoral will, and amended the constitution. Them. he came to pass the electoral mandate the fifth to President "Bouteflika" by force, despite the people's disapproval of that. This led to the wide opening of the field for political and administrative corruption, which caused destruction in the Algerian state on the one hand, and also abolished the role of the legislative institution and turned it into a consultative institution and dominated its decisions .

The movement has been adhering to its demands more, then realized. "Bouteflika " must leave power, but in a roundabout way, and decided to abandon the candidacy for the fifth term, but on the condition of staying in power until the time of the expiration of his fourth term, without any constitutional basis on that. He held a national seminar to choose a new president, and supervise the transitional phase, ignited the anger of the masses(Al Jazeera Center for Studies, 2019).

In another context, the political system resorted to circumventing the demands of the demonstrators by remaining the same symbols of the former political regime. They are put in the transitional phase, for example, referring Prime Minister "Ahmed or Yahya" after he resigned and replacing him with Interior Minister "Noureddine Bedoui" and creating the position of Deputy Prime Minister represented by the former Foreign

Minister " Ramtane Lamamra ". This duo undertakes the tasks of facilitating the affairs of the post of Prime Minister, so these actions indicate political connotations more than being legal. They reflect the point of agreement that resulted from the meeting of the symbols of the political system before the announcement of "Bouteflika" in a statement not to nominate him and make many amendments related to members of the government. On the other hand Bouteflika's work is to establish a proactive phase in order to ensure his influence in the future political system (Hamza Abdelkader, 2019).

### **Economic Reasons**

The rentier nature of the Algerian state led to the concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling elite and the spending of a small part of it on the groups of Algerian society in the absence of clear accountability and monitoring, which led to an increase in the phenomenon of unemployment and poverty and its roots in the reality of Algerian society. Its high percentages are due to the monopoly of the ruling regime on power and the unfair distribution of wealth, and preventing the emergence of new young elites competing with them on the political arena, even if they are. So this elite is closely related to the political system. In addition to the failure that remained continuous for political and economic reforms and development projects, rents are what regulate the relationship between society and the Algerian political system, instead of being one of the incentives to achieve political and economic openness. It turned into an obstacle to development, especially in the absence of mechanisms for developing and diversifying the economy, and not relying on policies other than the energy sector in order to raise economic growth rates (Rahmouni, 2019).

This deteriorating economic situation has affected the Algerian citizen, especially the young groups, and the people have come to see the government as the reason for the deterioration of the economic situation and that it is unable to manage the next stage. All these economic transformations with political dimensions have become a burden on the Algerian citizen, including the increase in unemployment and high prices. Living and illegal immigration. Also, the austerity policy adopted by the government prompted the Algerian citizen to go out on February 22, 2019 to demand radical change (Moghaddam & Mustafa, 2019).

**Social Reasons:** - The Algerian citizen lived since obtaining independence in 1962 and getting rid of the French colonialism a tragic reality, in terms of the policy followed, as the Algerian political system since it was formed was based on the philosophy of exclusivity in power and monopoly, even if there was pluralism, it is pluralism only formality. This view led to the practice of political tyranny and depriving the citizen of the most basic necessities of living, as well as dealing with citizens on the basis of social degrees. This is what made all the time a subservient and subject people to authority, but the matter changed on February 22, 2019, as the Algerian people broke all the shackles of fear and went out in massive demonstrations demanding their rights (Zamel, 2021).

**Psychological Reasons:** more than one generation was exposed to a state of psychological collapse and social repression, from a political system that did not provide the Algerian citizen with the minimum requirements for a decent living. Corruption and unemployment spread in all sectors of society, in addition to the exposure of the Algerian citizen in the nineties to terrorism and violent extremism, which resulted in hundreds of thousands of people. Then, thousands of those who have been lost, in fact, are difficult stations experienced by the Algerian citizen as it instilled frustration and despair in the same frustration and despair of the ruling regime, and in this way the individual loses the status of citizen within his homeland (Bahloul, 2024).

**The Political Alienation of the Algerian Citizen:** The absence of citizenship and the attempt to detract from the rights of individuals or attack them. It led to the creation of a state of political alienation within the Algerian citizen, as citizenship has an important role in activating the most important process of change and reform, which is to conduct the electoral process in all transparency, in order to choose the competent candidate. Therefore the Algerian citizen has become unlike the peoples of other countries, as he began to feel alienated and apathetic and he is inside his country. The most important topics are raised around him, represented by political reluctance, in multiple forms, such as the phenomenon of non-acceptance to engage in political parties, non-attendance of political seminars, and non-acceptance of voting in the elections. Moreover, the Algerian citizens have headed towards isolation, losing the sense of belonging to the homeland and the lack

of full desire to participate in political issues because they are sure that the outputs and results of the elections are decided. This alienation was clearly demonstrated by electoral abstention and ridicule of the existing political situation (Bovenik & Ramadan, 2021).

### **Third: The Results of The Popular Movement**

1- The resignation of Abdelaziz Bouteflika: - After two months of the continuation of the continuous popular protests in Algeria, and finally culminated in this movement the resignation of President "Abdelaziz Bouteflika. After he failed to convince the people to stay in power, he had no choice but to respond to the will of the Algerian people. Those people demanded the activation of Article (102) of the Constitution (Zamel, 2021), and decided "Bouteflika" Submit his resignation on January 2, 2019 (Hamid, 2019).

2- The army took over the management of the political scene and organized presidential elections on December 12 (Sanjar, 2019), which led to the victory of "Abdelmadjid Tebboune" as president of Algeria (Omar & Al-Zawawi, 2020).

### **CONCLUSIONS**

It can be said that the popular movement in both Algeria, which has increased significantly since 2019, confirms the importance of this phenomenon that swept the Middle East and North Africa. The popular movement also showed that there is a response of the peoples of both countries to the difficult economic, political and social conditions, as well as the aspirations of the peoples of these countries to radical changes in the political and economic system. By analyzing the reasons that led to the outbreak of the movement, and tracking its development, we realize that these movements have influences and led to the resignation of Abdelaziz Bouteflika due to the institution's bias on the side of the Hirak.

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