



## Algeria - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Friday 9 May 2014

### Treatment of returnees including risk of serious harm

No information on treatment of returnees could be found among sources available to the RDC.

The *United States Department of State* in a publication released in February 2014, commenting on events of 2013, notes that:

“The law prohibits torture, but nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and local human rights activists alleged that government officials sometimes employed torture and abusive treatment to obtain confessions. Government agents can face prison sentences of between 10 and 20 years for committing such acts, and some individuals were tried and convicted. There were no reported cases of prosecution of security service officials during the year. The government maintains internal lists of prosecutions and convictions of security officials. Local and international NGOs asserted that impunity was a problem” (United States Department of State (27 February 2014) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2013, Algeria*, Section 1c Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, p.3).

A report issued in April 2014 by *Amnesty International* states:

“Safeguards against torture in Algerian law are currently woefully inadequate” (Amnesty International (13 April 2014) *Pre-election clampdown exposes ‘gaping holes’ in human rights record*).

In January 2014 a publication released by the *Governance and Social Development Resource Centre* points out that

“Algeria faces a diverse range of interrelated security threats. Key drivers of conflict and potential drivers of conflict are Islamist terrorist groups, trafficking and kidnapping, protests, tensions in the Sahrawi camps in Tindouf, and a range of economic and political factors.

□ Islamist groups: Both (AQIM) Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, and MUJAO (Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa) are active in Algeria. AQIM has split into northern cells and southern cells, with the former sticking more closely to its jihadi origins and the latter increasingly turning to criminal activity.

□ Trafficking and kidnapping: Algeria and the wider region are affected by organised crime. Drug and arms trafficking, as well as cigarette and fuel smuggling, are a significant problem. Kidnapping for ransom, which is a major source of funding for Islamist groups, has also been on the increase in the region.

□ Protests: Protests continue on a daily basis and are generally motivated by a lack of basic services and unemployment. The regime has taken steps to appease protestors, which has prevented the protests from escalating in the same way that they did in other countries in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region” (Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (January 2014) *Conflict Analysis of Algeria*, p.4).

The *Bertelsmann Stiftung* in January 2014 point out in a report that:

“In terms of security, Algeria remains in a vulnerable situation, as it is surrounded by countries either undergoing deep political changes, electing Islamist governments, or experiencing conflict. The situation in Mali has already had violent ramifications for Algeria with the attack on the In Amenas gas plant in January 2013. Islamist terrorism and cross-border crime in the Sahel region still pose threats to Algeria’s stability. However, the Algerian army is well equipped to deal with the security situation, and geo-strategically, Algeria is now a key player in the region, to whom international powers are now focusing attention” (Bertelsmann Stiftung (1 January 2014) *BTI 2014, Algeria Country Report*, p.3).

A report issued in April 2014 by *Think Security Africa* states that:

“Algeria’s core national defence priority is curtailing the activities of extremists...” (Think Security Africa (April 2014) *Security Briefing, Algeria*).

The *United States Department of State* in April 2014 notes that:

“Within Algeria, al-Qa’ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) remained the most active terrorist threat. AQIM attacked Algerian security forces, local government targets, and westerners in the Sahel, operating primarily in the mountainous areas east of Algiers and in the expansive desert regions near Algeria’s southern border” (United States Department of State (30 April 2014) *Country Reports on Terrorism 2013: Algeria*).

*Reuters* in May 2014 states:

“Algerian government forces have killed 10 Islamist militants in an operation in the south of the country, the state news agency APS said, where authorities are concerned about an influx of arms and fighters from neighbouring Mali and Libya. Violence and militant attacks are rarer since Algeria ended its decade-long 1990s war with armed Islamists, but the North African branch of al Qaeda and other militants are still active, especially in the south where desert borders are porous” (Reuters (6 May 2014) *Algerian troops kill 10 militants in south - state media*).

In May 2014 *Magharebia* notes:

“Days after al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) claimed responsibility for the deadly attack on soldiers in Kabylie, Algerian troops on Monday (May 5th) killed ten terrorists near the Malian border” (Magharebia (7 May 2014) *Algeria confronts terror threat*).

## References

Amnesty International (13 April 2014) *Pre-election clampdown exposes ‘gaping holes’ in human rights record*  
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United States Department of State (27 February 2014) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2013, Algeria*

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

#### Sources Consulted

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BBC News

Electronic Immigration Network

European Country of Origin Information Network

Freedom House

Google

Human Rights Watch

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

International Crisis Group

IRIN News  
Lexis Nexis  
Minority Rights Group International  
Online Newspapers  
Refugee Documentation Centre E-Library  
Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database  
Reliefweb  
Reuters  
United Kingdom Home Office  
United States Department of State  
UNHCR Refworld

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