

**Message from Ambassador for Special Supplement on the occasion of 66th
Anniversary of the Republic Day on 26th January 2016**

I take this opportunity to convey my greetings to my fellow citizens in Algeria and my Algerian brothers and sisters on this 66th anniversary of India's Republic Day.

2. On this day in 1950, India promulgated the Constitution. While the final draft of the Constitution, perhaps the largest written one in the world, was produced by the Constituent Assembly, under the able leadership of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, whose 125th birth anniversary is being celebrated, it were the people of India who solemnly resolved to provide themselves, justice, liberty, equality and fraternity, as is evident from the Preamble of the Constitution. The Constitution is a living document and is amendable, following the needs of the changing environment. It is also a proof of the wisdom of our forefathers, with the successful functioning of Indian democracy over the last six decades. We congratulate ourselves on this occasion of having such leaders with a foresight.

3. India and Algeria have very close historical relations which have been strengthened over for the period of five decades. Last year saw further strengthening of these relations. We had bilateral consultations at Foreign Office level in May 2015, closely followed by Ministerial-level Joint Commission. Coinciding with this India participated as the Guest of Honour in the 48th Algerian International Trade Fair with about 80 Indian companies showcasing their products and the Indian Pavilion, aptly named as "Salaam-Namaste" was greatly appreciated by Algerian Prime Minister and Indian Minister of Commerce & Industry.

4. There have been a string of visits of delegations from both sides. Algerian Minister of Justice visited India in September to attend a private conference of the Chief Justices of Supreme Courts from various countries. Algerian Commerce Minister, H.E. Mr. Bakhti Belaib attended the India-Africa Trade Ministers meeting in October 2015. H.E. Mr. Abdelkader Messahel, Minister of African Union, Arab and Maghreb Affairs

represented H.E. President Bouteflika at the 3rd India-Africa Summit meeting held on 29th October 2015. Algeria also attended the first India-Arab League Ministerial meeting held in Bahrain on 20th January 2016. 5. On the commercial front, while there was a slight downturn in our trade volume, given the economic scenario, I am sure this is a temporary phase and once the situation improves, we would reap the benefits of our participation in the International Trade Fair and the decisions taken under the Ministerial Joint Commission. India and Algeria have also set up a Joint Working Group on pharmaceuticals where India has considerable expertise and Algeria is the 2nd largest market in the continent.

6. On the cultural front, a number of troupes visited Algeria from India. Two cultural troupes performed at the Fairgrounds during the 48th Algerian International Trade Fair. Recently, we had a Bhangra troupe which visited five vilayas in five days and enthralled Algerian audiences with their colourful performances.

7. India continues to provide training under India Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme where about 40 Algerians benefit every year. In a nutshell, the cooperation between India and Algeria is going up.

8. I once again take this opportunity to congratulate my fellow citizens in Algeria and all Algerians on this occasion of the 66th anniversary of India's Republic Day.