

The Economic Diplomacy and its Role in Encouraging Investment

- The Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a model -

الدبلوماسية الاقتصادية ودورها في تشجيع الاستثمار

- وزارة الشؤون الخارجية الجزائرية نموذجا -

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Abstract :

Economic diplomacy is considered one of the most important modern strategies that encourage investment through the resources of the State, the government and institutions in order to promote the initiatives that support the growth of the economy, increase trade, encourage investments and cooperate in bilateral and multilateral trade agreements. All these actions should be taken done according to the foreign policy goals.

Keywords : Economic diplomacy, foreign policy, Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International cooperation, trade agreements.

ملخص:

تعتبر الدبلوماسية الاقتصادية من أهم الأساليب التي تعمل على تشجيع الاستثمار، وهذا من خلال استخدام مؤسسات الدولة للموارد الحكومية لتعزيز بناء و نمو الاقتصاد، من خلال زيادة التجارة، وتشجيع الاستثمارات، والتعاون في اطار الاتفاقيات التجارية الثنائية والمتعددة الأطراف، وهذا كله من خلال استخدام الاقتصاد لتعزيز أهداف السياسة الخارجية. الكلمات المفتاحية: الدبلوماسية الاقتصادية، السياسة الخارجية، وزارة الشؤون الخارجية الجزائرية، التعاون الدولي، الاتفاقيات التجارية.

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Introduction:

Diplomacy is no longer confined to classical definitions relative to the management of relations between countries, but it has turned into an influential factor in planning internal and external political, economic and social issues, and establishing relations between States on new bases in terms of priorities and objectives, and striving to preserve the interests of each of them. In addition to maintain equality among States. It also and open the way to growth and development of all countries taking into account, various considerations as diversifications, and the multiplicity of economic and political systems ⁽¹⁾, and achieve economic projects.

The principles of balance were formulated in the past by thinkers and political jurists. The big companies are the ones who set the concepts and intellectual frameworks for today's world. This kind of situation makes the political borders transcendent to economic activities according the several interests. Recently, Political conflicts have become stained with a strong economic perspectives ⁽²⁾

On this basis, the subject of the study is the economic diplomacy and its role in encouraging investment, the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a model. The research question is:

What is meant by economic diplomacy? And how does it encourage foreign investment in Algeria? In this context, how did the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs contribute to achieve economic diplomacy?

A. The concept of economic diplomacy

In this section of study, we will define the concept of economic diplomacy and explain its elements

1. Definition of economic diplomacy and its elements

In this sub-section, we will discuss the definition of economic diplomacy and then study its basic elements

1.1. Definition of economic diplomacy

Economic diplomacy emerged as a new concept since the Great Depression crisis in the United States, and it acquired a gradually broader role after World War II ⁽³⁾, until it reached its current status as an umbrella for diplomacy related to the economic aspect practiced by various formal and informal diplomatic parties. Economic diplomacy is defined as: "the total external economic activities of the government and the business of the country". ⁽⁴⁾

It is defined also as: "the use of diplomatic methods and strategies through economic, political, commercial, financial and technical means in order to achieve its goals, provide guarantees for securing foreign economic interests, and achieve development in the national economy, as well as international economic decision-making". ⁽⁵⁾

It is a bilateral or multilateral international friendly activity, in which international parties (people, States, and organizations) use their economic capabilities in political or economic influence ⁽⁶⁾, or political power to achieve economic benefits. It aims to promote the country's economic ⁽⁷⁾, through different mechanisms. For instance treaty or agreement that contribute to the achievement of different goals by the main actors as governments, countries, non-governmental organizations, the economic and commercial institutions and businessmen. The Economic diplomacy is also known as ⁽⁸⁾: "the use of government resources to enhance the growth of the economy of any country by increasing Trade, encourage investments, cooperate in bilateral and multilateral trade agreements and also use the economy to further foreign policy objectives ⁽⁹⁾

1.2. Elements of economic diplomacy

The economic diplomacy consists of three following elements:

1.2.1. Using political influence

Using political influence and relationships to enhance international trade and investment in order to improve market performance and reduce costs and risks of cross-border deals.

1.2.2. Using economic assets

Using economic assets and relations to increase and enhance the mutual benefits of cooperation and politically stable relations and economic security by focusing on structural policies and bilateral trade and investment agreements. The Economic diplomacy also includes the use of diplomatic skills with economic tools to develop the country's economic, political and strategic goals. It also includes building international alliances to help countries recovering from financial crises. It entails persuading the leaders of host governments to implement policies and measures most likely to boost their economies and provide jobs for their people, even if the reforms have political costs ⁽¹⁰⁾

1.2.3. Promoting a good political climate

Promoting a good political climate to facilitate and achieve goals through multilateral negotiations in the field of supranational organizations such as the World Trade Organization, economic cooperation and development ⁽¹¹⁾

1.3. Forms of economic diplomacy and its tools

In this sub-section, we will explain the forms of economic diplomacy and its various tools

1.3.1. Forms of economic diplomacy

There are many forms of economic diplomacy, according to the number of parties that carry out this economic and financial activities. The level of economic diplomacy may be bilateral, regional, collective, or multilateral.

1.3.1.1. Bilateral economic diplomacy

Bilateral diplomacy constitutes to promote economic diplomacy including financial transactions between the two countries, official trade, investment treaties, or other topics that affect economic relations. Bilateral economic diplomacy is still the easiest technique that makes clarifying the results of economic cooperation an issue. It tends to keep national interests of the parties ⁽¹²⁾

However, this diplomacy has a negative aspect, because it preserves the benefits of the strong party in the negotiations who can exploit the weaker party more easily due to its weakness and need for the agreement. So, the party finds himself forced to concede some advantages and some privileges to the stronger party (these treaties are called treaties of compliance or unequal treaties) ⁽¹³⁾, or vice versa, which is to corrupt leaders in developing countries is where corruption and bribery are rampant ⁽¹⁴⁾

There are many positive sides of these bilateral deals as they contribute significantly to strengthening the more complex agreements concluded at the regional or global level, and bilateral. The economic diplomacy is of great importance in defining regional or multilateral rules that can be applied in similar cases. For example, the rules that govern economic disputes between the United States and Japan are resorted to in the disputes of other countries ⁽¹⁵⁾

1.3.1.2. Regional economic diplomacy

The regional dimension of economic diplomacy is increasingly important. Although economic agreements at this level are most of the time politically motivated, they quickly provide many open markets for countries that are geographically close in levels of economic development

and similar political priorities. For the business sector, entering regional markets is an alternative for global markets when capabilities are weak, and this is the beginning of the path of competition ⁽¹⁶⁾

Also, regional agreements may be a source of strength for the regional state that joins it when it conducts international negotiations, and therefore it has a great influence in international negotiations, and in its ability to open international markets, but whatever the incentive is for concluding regional agreements, the biggest one may be achieving growth. In the national industries, as a result of the ability of these countries to compete with each other and thus the establishment of trade in regional free markets ⁽¹⁷⁾

1.3.1.2. Collective economic diplomacy

The collective level of economic diplomacy concern mainly States .It is slightly different then regional economic diplomacy, or multilateral economic diplomacy .In collective economic diplomacy the geographical factor is not the only criterion to adopt an economic policy, or have an economic level resort to it. So, it has a special form, such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Group of Seven, the Group of Eight, the Commonwealth Organization and other international economic groupings ⁽¹⁸⁾

This level of collective economic diplomacy achieves two goals: the first is that the parties participating in this diplomacy prefer to meet in a forum, when national governments of they try to find solutions, and provide consensus among each other on a specific economic goal, whether it is local or international, through a process of a voluntary cooperation undertaken by these governments.

As for the second objective, it is to enable governments that have similar economic orientations to design the outlines, so that they can then advance in the broader multilateral fields. For example: agricultural services and agreements within the framework of "GATT" and the World Trade Organization.

1.3.1.3. Multilateral economic diplomacy

Multilateral economic diplomacy includes the economies of all countries. Consequently, reaching agreement within the framework of multilateral diplomacy is really difficult, as multilateral economic diplomacy seeks to integrate multiple systems to operate within the framework of one coordinated pattern such as the systems of the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the economic activity of the United Nations. In addition to many other organizations specialized in the economy. We must say that multilateral economic diplomacy has contributed to the development of many legal rules that govern international economic relations, especially in the nineties of the last century ⁽¹⁹⁾

There has been great progress in this field, mainly in trade and the environment, such as the dispute settlement mechanism within the framework of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982. However, there are many different views in the international scene between governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations concerning certain matters related to economic diplomacy. As well as the differences between developed and developing countries on the same issue. The underdeveloped countries complain that multilateral diplomacy puts them in a weak position in the global economy.

Likewise, developed countries adhere to the arguments of the increasing violation of international rules by developing countries (such as human rights, child labor, and social conditions for work) in their domestic policies as a reason for refusing to allow the products of developing countries to enter their markets. Despite the fact that the economic benefits achieved from multilateral

diplomacy, the economic risks resulting from it are very great, as a result of linking markets to each other, which paves the way for the transmission of crises to other countries ⁽²⁰⁾

1.3.1.4. Tools of economic diplomacy

It can be said that the economic diplomatic activity practiced by any country within the general framework of its foreign policy is one of the most important tools of international political engagement ⁽²¹⁾, especially since its purpose is to support the goals of this policy, whether these goals are connected to the economic, military, or propaganda aspects, for example the soft policy style practiced by China in the world, which relies mainly on economic diplomacy by 32%, with cultural diplomacy by 30% ⁽²²⁾

The economic tools as a means of foreign policy occupied an important place in contemporary international relations. Such importance comes from two factors. First, foodstuffs are important issues that concern contemporary governments, as their power depends on their ability to solve these problems ⁽²³⁾

The second factor is the increase in economic interdependence between countries and the importance and priority of economic tools as a means of foreign policy

1.3.1.5. Tariffs

It is considered as one of the most important and oldest economic tools. The tariffs are imposed for various purposes ⁽²⁴⁾. They may be imposed as a means of obtaining financial revenues when the country is suffering from financial problems as a way to obtain revenues that contribute to supporting the State's general budget ⁽²⁵⁾

The customs tariff may be imposed as a means to protect national products, as the imposition of the customs tariff on imported goods will increase their price and limit their competition to local products. The customs tariff may also be imposed as a means of retaliation against a country. For instance the imposition of customs tariffs on materials imported from a particular country will indirectly limit imports from it and put obstacles in front of its products.

1.3.1.6. Currency regulations

Currency regulations mean that the government itself supervises the money that is spent abroad, whether for the purchase of goods or services or for tourism and investment.

Governments usually resort to imposing monetary restrictions to protect their balance of payments, which is the annual aggregate statement that depicts the country's revenues from abroad and the country's payments abroad ⁽²⁶⁾

1.3.1.7. Economic embargo

Economic embargo is considered as a tool of foreign policy, to not export a specific commodity to certain countries for political or economic reasons. The ban may be total or a comprehensive ban on exporting the commodity, or partially which prevent the export of the commodity at a certain percentage, for example, the partial ban imposed by the Arab countries Oil producing on the export of oil to United States and some western countries during the Arab-Israeli war in 1973.

1.3.1.8. Boycott Country

Boycott means refusing to import goods produced by a particular country or company. It is imposed either for economic or political factors, but it is often imposed for political considerations, such as the Arab countries boycotting Israel and the foreign companies ⁽²⁷⁾

1.3.1.9. Economic integration

Economic integration is a tool of foreign policy through which countries achieve some economic gains and face the various challenges. The economic integration may be a step towards political integration, as was the case when the European Common Market was established; Its founders expected that economic unity would lead to political unity, but the principle of national sovereignty and the large expansion of market as a mere economic unit prevented the realization of these expectations.

1.3.1.10. Freezing or nationalizing assets

Freezing assets is an economic procedure to achieve a political goal. This procedure means freezing or nationalizing the assets of a foreign country within the territory of the country that resorts to such a form of economic measures. Freezing means not allowing a foreign country to use its assets and within the territory of the country that took the freezing action until it responds to the political or economic demand required. For an example United State freezing of Iranian assets during the hostage crisis in the American embassy in Tehran in 1979 ⁽²⁸⁾

1.3.1.11. Devaluation of the local currency

Reduction is an economic measure used by the State to encourage its exports to other countries. The devaluation of the currency leads to a decrease of the price of local products which increase the demand for them ⁽²⁹⁾

1.3.1.12. Foreign aid

Foreign aid was first used by the powerful countries in the international community, especially western countries. The developed countries considered that foreign aid as an effective way to limit the communist expansion in developing countries since the mid-sixties. The rich developing countries began to use foreign aid as a means to achieve various external goals ⁽³⁰⁾

1.3.1.13. Technical assistance

Countries with limited financial resources resort to technical assistance as a tool of foreign policy. The countries providing technical assistance and expertise in various fields like agriculture, health, industry, and education, as a result of its lack of financial resources. They also gave the availability of expertise and technical capabilities to Israel. Some states used technical assistance as a tool as a foreign policy strategy, especially in African and Latin American countries ⁽³¹⁾

B. The role of the Algerian ministry of foreign affairs

In this second section, we will discuss the role of the Algerian ministry of foreign affairs in the field of investment promotion. In addition to ministerial body, ambassadors, and heads of consular posts, as well as the role of each of the Directorate of Promotion and Support of Economic Exchanges and the Office of Information and Promotion of Investments and Exports.

2. The ministry, ambassadors and heads of consular posts

In this sub-section, we will discuss the role of each of the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a government and ministerial body, as well as ambassadors and heads of consular posts.

2.1. The ministry and ambassadors

The article 14 of Presidential Decree No. 02-403 of November 26, 2002, specifying the powers of the ministry of foreign affairs, stipulates that: "The ministry of foreign affairs, in the field of bilateral cooperation, is responsible for coordinating all actions aimed at arousing interest. participation, defining and implementing it and collecting the contribution of all agents and dealers who would participate in the promotion of economic, financial, commercial, cultural, social and scientific cooperation with foreign governments.

It encourage the partnership with foreign dealers, as well as in encouraging foreign investments in Algeria ⁽³²⁾

The article 3 of Presidential Decree No. 02-406 of November 26, 2002, defining the powers of the ambassadors of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, stipulates that: "The ambassador is charged in particular with the following:

assisting national stakeholders, including institutions, media and non-governmental organizations, in their relations with foreign partners ⁽³³⁾

Also the article 9 stipulates that "the ambassador also works to develop economic relations and promote trade exchanges and partnership with the institutions of the country of accreditation". ⁽³⁴⁾

2.1.1. Head of consular posts

Article 15 of Presidential Decree No. 02-407 of November 26, 2002, defines the powers of the heads of consular posts of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, as follows: "The head of the consular post works to develop economic, commercial, cultural and scientific relations between Algeria and other institutions within its jurisdiction ⁽³⁵⁾

He encourages, through exploration and promotion work, the establishment of partnership relations between the Algerian economic operators and the dealers of the country of residence.

Article 16 also stipulates that: "The head of the consular post shall ensure that the economic agents within his competence are regularly aware on national or international event or exhibition organized by Algeria. For this purpose, he provides them with the necessary assistance". ⁽³⁶⁾

2.1.2. The Directorate of Promotion and Support of Economic Exchanges and the Office of Information and Promotion of Investments and Exports

In this sub-section, we will discuss the role of both the Directorate of Promotion and Support of Economic Exchanges, and the Office of Information and Promotion of Investments in encouraging investment.

2.1.3. The Directorate of Promotion and Support of Economic Exchanges

The Directorate of Promotion and Support of Economic Exchanges assures the communication with the ministerial departments and the various national institutions and bodies supporting the development of the economy .It also coordinates its actions at the international level and accompanying Algerian institutions to integrate foreign markets.

The Directorate is vested with different powers and operates according to the new approach adopted by the public authorities that aims to diversify national economy and to avoid dependence on hydrocarbons and promoting and attractiveness of foreign investments ⁽³⁷⁾

The article 14 of Presidential Decree No. 19-244 of September 11, 2019, includes the organization of the central administration of the ministry of foreign affairs, as follows: "The Directorate for the Promotion and Support of Economic Exchanges is charged with the following:

- Upgrading Algeria's international trade exchanges.
- Contribute to the implementation of the policy of supporting and promoting non-hydrocarbon exports
- Providing information and economic analyzes necessary to enter foreign markets and supporting the efforts of Algerian institutions.
- Preparing circumstantial memorandums in the field of international trade addressed to the concerned companies, institutions, agencies and ministries ⁽³⁸⁾. In this context, the Directorate of Promotion

and Support of Economic Exchanges includes two sub-directorates; the first is the Sub-Directorate for Analysis and Management of Commercial Information, which is charged with the following:

- Developing a commercial information network and data banks
- Creating a portal on foreign trade of national stakeholders, Algerian diplomatic and consular representations, and every interested party
- Gathering statistical data and information related to foreign trade for the benefit of foreign partners.
- Developing means of transmitting information (39)

The second directorate is the sub-directorate for promoting commercial exchanges which is charged with the following:

- Revitalizing programs for the valuation and promotion of foreign trade exchanges which aim mainly to develop an non-hydrocarbon exports
- Putting in place effective commercial mechanisms, tools and means to support Algerian exporting enterprises, in coordination with the commercial and economic interests of the Algerian embassies (40)

2.1.4. The Office of Information and the Promotion of Investments and Exports

The Minister of Foreign Affairs announced the establishment of a media office in the ministry that is responsible for receiving Algerian dealers and exporters to facilitate their operations and provide them with useful information. Economic as a central and pivotal structure for economic diplomacy, as well as the establishment of an interactive network for those charged with economic and trade affairs at our diplomatic and consular missions around the world.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs also revealed the setting up of a portal for economic diplomacy on the Ministry's website, and the launch of a special training program on economic diplomacy for the benefit of diplomats involved in the annual movement. These procedures will be extended in the future to include all diplomats in the Ministry. He also called on the heads of diplomatic and consular representations abroad to redouble their efforts and prepare periodic reports on the procedures taken to promote our national products and attract foreign investments. Such actions will enable the central administration to follow up and actually evaluate their performance in this field.

These measures mainly aim to coordinate works with State institutions in charge of all aspects, provide necessary informations to economic dealers. The diplomatic body must cooperate and work to face challenges and achieve goals.

It is necessary to reinforce effective collective efforts required to win the battle of building a strong, diversified and integrated economy into the global economy. The minister stressed the need to develop the banking network, especially the establishment of branches in Europe and Africa to support economic dealers..

As well as opening new relations with our neighbors to develop intra-trade; organizing exhibitions of national production periodically in the countries of the region. In addition to organizing special study days in Europe, Asia and America about the potential of the Algerian market and investment opportunities, as well as organizing trade missions to target markets to raise exports outside the hydrocarbon sector and enhance our incomes in foreign currency ⁽⁴¹⁾

In this regard, the Office of Information and the Promotion of Investments and Exports, located at the headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dedicated specially to Algerian

economic operators, including members of the national community abroad who are active in export operations or partnerships with foreign dealers.

In this context, the main missions of the office are:

- Receiving Algerian economic operators at the Ministry's headquarters, in order to provide them with available information and documents on regulatory texts of the hosted countries, access to foreign markets, International tenders, partnership proposals, economic missions and exhibitions abroad...etc.)
- Providing data to those in charge of economic and commercial affairs in diplomatic and consular missions around the world through easy, direct and fast communication.
- Accompanying them to export their products or services
- Organizing training courses, seminars, study days, forums and economic missions in cooperation with the ministerial sectors and concerned bodies.
- Reinforce connection with the ministerial sectors as well as the institutions, agencies and embassies accredited in Algeria regarding matters connected to the ministry of foreign affairs.

Conclusion

Finally, we conclude that economic diplomacy is an essential factor that encourages foreign investment in Algeria. This reality is confirmed by the various State institutions, especially the national agencies that operate at the international level. In this context, the Algerian ministry of foreign affairs contributed as an institutional, national model to achieve these goals through opening and reinforcing mutual relations with our neighbors to develop inter-trade, and organizing exhibitions of national production regularly thought regional countries.

In addition to organize special information days in Europe, Asia and America about the potential of the Algerian market and investment opportunities, as well as trade missions to target markets to raise exports outside the hydrocarbon sector and enhance our incomes in foreign currency, Besides paving the way for Algerian economic operators, including members of the national community abroad active in export operations or partnership with foreign dealers.

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