

# Algerian Economic Diplomacy in the Context of the Global Trade War: Integrating SWOT and Task Force Strategies to Strengthen Its African Positioning

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## Abstract

*This study aims to analyze the qualitative transformation of Algerian economic diplomacy amid the intensifying global trade war and its profound geo-economic challenges. The world is experiencing a redefinition of economic power balances, compelling Algeria, as a rising regional power, to reconstruct its diplomatic tools on more flexible and forward-looking foundations. The central premise of this research is that the integration of SWOT analysis and Task Force methodology constitutes a practical approach for restructuring Algerian economic diplomacy, transforming it from a traditional model into a strategic mechanism capable of responding effectively to major continental changes. Our analysis demonstrates that SWOT facilitates the identification of strengths (geographical location, natural resources, African reach), weaknesses (logistical infrastructure gaps, delayed financial reforms), opportunities (AfCFTA momentum), and threats (geopolitical instability and trade wars). Task Force methodology complements SWOT by translating diagnostic insights into actionable economic and diplomatic initiatives, ensuring coherent and targeted execution. The research confirms that Algeria, through economic diversification and strategic foresight, is capable of converting current global challenges into sustainable opportunities, asserting a proactive and ethical role in Africa. The study concludes that smart economic diplomacy based on analysis, institutional coordination, and operational effectiveness is essential for building a competitive and resilient national economy.*

**Keywords:** *Algerian Economic Diplomacy, Global Trade War, SWOT Analysis, Task Force Methodology, African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).*

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## Introduction

Over the past two decades, the international system has experienced an unprecedented state of geopolitical fluidity and strategic volatility. Relations among states are no longer governed solely by traditional binaries of alliance and conflict, but are increasingly shaped within a complex space where security, economic, technological, cultural, energy, and environmental considerations intersect. Trade, investment, and global value chains have thus become central instruments in reshaping geopolitical power balances. The escalation of trade disputes among major powers, particularly the tensions between the United States and China, has exposed the fragility of the multilateral trading system and highlighted the strategic nature of the economy as a new arena of international competition.

Within this changing context, states especially those seeking to enhance their regional and international standing are increasingly required to redefine their diplomatic and economic tools on more flexible foundations. Managing bilateral relations or participating in multilateral frameworks is no longer sufficient to safeguard national interests or achieve long-term development objectives. Rather, there is a growing need to adopt analytical and operational approaches capable of accommodating the increasing complexity of the international environment, where economic considerations are intertwined with security, political, and technological dimensions within a single network of interdependence and competitive rivalry.

In this regard, the African continent has gained growing importance as one of the most dynamic geoeconomic spaces in the contemporary world. Owing to its natural resources, rapid demographic growth, and expanding emerging markets, Africa has become a focal point of intensified international competition among global and regional powers seeking to consolidate their economic and investment presence. The launch of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) represents a decisive institutional turning

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point in the continent's economic integration process, through the creation of a vast unified market aimed at enhancing intra-African trade, attracting investment, and developing regional value chains. However, despite the promising opportunities it offers, this transformation simultaneously imposes significant challenges related to the ability of African states to position themselves effectively within this new competitive framework and to align their national policies with the requirements of continental integration.

Within this complex regional and international context, Algeria emerges as a regional actor possessing multiple strategic assets, including its geographical location linking North Africa to Sub-Saharan Africa, its natural and human resources, and its diplomatic tradition grounded in principles of sovereignty, non-interference, and balanced cooperation with partners. This strategic capital, combined with pressures arising from volatility in energy markets and transformations in the global trading system, has prompted Algeria to adopt a renewed vision of economic diplomacy based on diversifying partnerships, expanding its African presence, and reducing excessive dependence on hydrocarbons by strengthening productive sectors, investment, and trade.

However, the transition from vision to action raises a central question regarding the capacity of traditional economic diplomacy tools to respond to the challenges of an international environment characterized by uncertainty, accelerated change, and overlapping levels of decision-making at the local, regional, and international scales. Classical approaches that merely describe or diagnose reality often fail to provide effective implementation mechanisms capable of translating declared strategies into tangible outcomes. Hence emerges the need for integrated analytical models that combine strategic diagnosis with structured institutional implementation, enabling the management of resources, opportunities, and risks within a dynamic framework capable of adapting to continuous geoeconomic transformations.

From this perspective, this paper proposes an integrative approach that links the SWOT matrix as a tool for analyzing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within Algeria's economic and diplomatic environment with the Task Force approach as an organizational and operational mechanism aimed at transforming strategic analysis outcomes into practical initiatives led by specialized and institutionally interconnected task forces.

This concept carries particular analytical significance, as its historical roots lie primarily in military and organizational fields that relied on temporary task forces as a mechanism for rapid mobilization in the face of urgent threats and high-risk environments. Its transfer to the domains of public policy and economic diplomacy reflects a qualitative shift in strategic governance patterns, whereby the logic of operational readiness, unity of command, and interdisciplinary integration is redeployed within a civil-institutional context aimed at accelerating decision-making, reducing coordination gaps among governmental and non-governmental actors, and transforming strategic vision into measurable and assessable implementation pathways.

Accordingly, task forces are not viewed merely as procedural tools, but as flexible governance frameworks reflecting the state's capacity for institutional adaptation within a volatile and highly competitive geoeconomic environment.

This integration is thus considered not only a methodological option, but also a practical response to the requirements of a phase marked by intensifying international competition within the African space and the need for a smart economic diplomacy based on the principle of balanced cooperation and mutual gains, without undermining national sovereignty or the rights of partners. Accordingly, this study seeks to contribute to the academic debate on the role of economic diplomacy in contexts of trade conflict and geoeconomic competition by presenting an analytical-operational model that demonstrates how Algeria can strengthen its positioning within the African economic system and transform the challenges associated with the global trade war and shifts in the international system into strategic opportunities that support its development objectives and consolidate its role as a regional actor committed to building partnerships based on a "win-win" principle within the framework of sustainable African integration.

*Research Problem*

Building on the geoeconomic transformations highlighted in the introduction particularly the growing strategic role of trade and investment in reshaping international power balances the central problem of this study emerges from the existing gap between the strategic diagnosis of the international economic environment and the institutional capacity to translate this diagnosis into effective, executable policies and initiatives within an African context characterized by intensifying international competition and expanding opportunities for continental integration under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

While the traditional literature on economic diplomacy provides advanced analytical tools for identifying opportunities and threats in the external environment, it often remains limited in explaining how states move from the level of strategic assessment to that of organized institutional action. From this perspective, the core research problem revolves around the following question:

How can Algerian economic diplomacy enhance its positioning within the African space amid the global trade war by integrating strategic analysis tools with institutional implementation mechanisms capable of delivering tangible and sustainable economic outcomes?

*Sub-questions:*

From this main problem stem several interrelated sub-questions that the study seeks to address, including:

- First, what is the nature of the transformations brought about by the global trade war in the structure of the international economic system, and how have these transformations affected patterns of competition within the African continent?
- Second, to what extent does the SWOT approach allow for an accurate diagnosis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing Algerian economic diplomacy within the AfCFTA framework?
- Third, how can the Task Force approach function as an organizational and implementation mechanism capable of translating the results of this diagnosis into executable and evaluable economic and diplomatic policies and initiatives?
- Fourth, what are the limits and potential of this integrative model in supporting Algeria's economic diversification path and strengthening the principle of balanced partnership within the African space?

*Hypotheses:*

In light of these questions, the study is based on a set of scientific hypotheses that constitute its analytical framework. The first hypothesis assumes that economic diplomacy has become a central instrument in managing contemporary geoeconomic competition and is no longer merely a technical extension of foreign policy. The second hypothesis posits that, despite its importance in strategic diagnosis, the SWOT matrix remains insufficient on its own unless it is integrated with an institutional mechanism capable of transforming analysis into organized executive action.

The third hypothesis suggests that adopting an integrative model combining SWOT and the Task Force approach enables Algeria to enhance the effectiveness of its economic presence in Africa by improving institutional coordination, accelerating decision-making, and increasing the efficiency of resource and opportunity utilization within the AfCFTA framework.

**Objectives of the Study:**

Based on this problem framework, the study aims to achieve a set of interconnected scientific and practical objectives. On the one hand, it seeks to develop a theoretical–analytical framework that links the concepts

of economic diplomacy, strategic analysis, and institutional implementation within the context of contemporary geoeconomic competition. On the other hand, it aims to present an applied model illustrating how Algeria can employ this methodological integration to strengthen its positioning within the African continent, support its economic diversification trajectory, and consolidate the principle of cooperation based on mutual gains. The study also seeks to provide analytical tools that can be utilized by policymakers and institutions involved in planning and implementing external economic policies.

#### *Significance of the Study:*

The significance of this study lies in the fact that it goes beyond a purely descriptive treatment of economic diplomacy to offer an interpretive and applied approach that connects levels of strategic analysis with levels of institutional implementation. It contributes to bridging a gap in the literature, which often separates the analysis of the international environment from the study of decision-making and implementation mechanisms. The study is particularly relevant in the Algerian and African contexts, as it provides an analytical framework for understanding how AfCFTA can be leveraged as a tool for strengthening economic sovereignty and balanced development, rather than being viewed merely as an open market for external competition.

#### **Methodology:**

Methodologically, the study adopts a descriptive–analytical approach to deconstruct the concepts of economic diplomacy and the transformations associated with the global trade war, supported by a comparative analysis to assess Algeria’s position within the African landscape. The SWOT matrix is employed as a diagnostic tool for analyzing the internal and external environment, while the Task Force approach is used as an interpretive and implementation-oriented model to examine mechanisms of institutional coordination and the transformation of strategies into practical policies.

#### *Previous Studies:*

| Author(s) & Year         | Research Gap / Relevance  | Key Findings   | Methodology  | Research Objective / Problem   | Study Title   |
|--------------------------|---|--|--|--|---|
| Ameur & Boudjelal (2025) | Does not provide an operational framework to turn strategy into execution; supports need for Task Force integration | Algeria’s strategic advantages (geo, energy, political ties) position it well regionally, but institutional constraints reduce effectiveness | Descriptive-analytical review of policy documents and trade data     | To analyze Algeria’s economic diplomacy in the face of global geopolitical and economic changes, especially via AfCFTA | Algerian Economic Diplomacy Towards Africa  |
| Source / Link            |   | <a href="https://asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/266036">https://asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/266036</a>  |  |  |   |
| Fares & Lemmouchi (2024) | Limited operational implementation model; lacks mechanisms for institutional execution                              | Algeria has made progress on regional integration and economic diplomacy linkages, especially in infrastructure                              | Mixed methods: quantitative trade data + comparative policy analysis | Evaluate Algeria’s role in implementing AU Agenda 2063 through economic diplomacy                                      | The Roles of Algerian Economic Diplomacy in Activating African Integration Pathways |

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|                          | Source / Link  | <a href="https://dspace.univ-batna.dz/items/f0d272e2-5532-47fd-a4ea-eeaf802814c3">https://dspace.univ-batna.dz/items/f0d272e2-5532-47fd-a4ea-eeaf802814c3</a> |  |   |   |
| Aouaichia & Allag (2023) | Conceptual but lacks strategic tools for implementation                    | Shows positive correlation between economic diplomacy efforts and socio-economic development indicators   | Quantitative survey using SPSS on academic respondents | Examine how economic diplomacy interacts with “purple economy” goals for national development | Algerian Economic Diplomacy and the Purple Economy  |
|                          | Source / Link  | <a href="https://asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/223260">https://asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/223260</a>   |  |   |   |
| Larab & Bencheikh (2023) | Focused on tools, but not on systematic execution structures               | Commercial diplomacy enhances market access and competitiveness   | Analytical review of trade instruments and case data   | Explore how commercial diplomatic tools promote competitiveness and investment                | Role of Commercial Diplomacy in Enhancing Algerian Economy’s Attractiveness within AfCFTA |
|                          | Source / Link  | <a href="https://asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/213987">https://asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/213987</a>   |  |   |   |
| Qarah & Lammouchi (2023) | Identifies constraints but does not propose a holistic execution framework | Findings emphasize the need for competitiveness and institutional reform for effective engagement   | Political economy and comparative analysis             | To assess the shift in Algerian economic diplomacy toward AfCFTA and economic competitiveness | New Orientation of Algerian Economic Diplomacy Towards AfCFTA                             |
|                          | Source / Link  | <a href="https://journals.univ-batna.dz/index.php/arsd/article/view/3047">https://journals.univ-batna.dz/index.php/arsd/article/view/3047</a>                 |  |   |   |

Recent literature on Algerian economic diplomacy in the African context points to a growing interest in analyzing the geoeconomic transformations imposed by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the repercussions of a turbulent global trading system on the strategies of states with transitioning rent-based economies.

In a study by Ameer & Boudjelal (2025), Algerian economic diplomacy is examined from an analytical–descriptive perspective that focuses on the geopolitical and energy advantages possessed by Algeria. The study concludes that these assets provide Algeria with an objective potential for regional positioning; however, it remains confined to the level of general strategic diagnosis, without moving toward the level of executive tools capable of translating political vision into measurable economic outcomes within the African space.

On the other hand, Fares & Lemmouchi (2024) adopt a comparative analytical approach linking Algerian economic diplomacy to the African Union’s Agenda 2063, focusing on the role of infrastructure and regional economic integration in strengthening Algeria’s presence within continental integration pathways. Despite the interpretive value of this study in highlighting the relationship between political vision and developmental stakes, it treats the state as a homogeneous unit in decision-making and implementation, overlooking internal institutional complexities and intersectoral coordination mechanisms among ministerial departments and economic bodies factors that are decisive for the success or failure of any economic diplomacy strategy in practice.

As for Qarah & Lammouchi (2023), the study adopts a political economy perspective to analyze the shift in Algerian economic diplomacy toward AfCFTA, with a focus on competitiveness and institutional reform

as prerequisites for effective integration into the unified African market. This study is distinguished by its theoretical depth in linking the external dimension of economic diplomacy to the internal structure of the national economy. Nevertheless, it remains confined to a macro-institutional analytical framework, as it fails to provide an operational model explaining how these reforms can be activated through flexible executive structures capable of rapid response to geoeconomic changes and global trade wars.

In a parallel context, Larab & Bencheikh (2023) attempt to shed light on the role of trade diplomacy in enhancing the attractiveness of the Algerian economy within the AfCFTA space by analyzing trade promotion tools and diplomatic support for investment. The importance of this study lies in its shift from general political discourse to the level of practical instruments. However, its approach remains partial and fragmented, as it focuses on specific tools without integrating them into a comprehensive strategic framework that links strategic diagnosis, decision-making, institutional implementation, and continuous performance evaluation.

Accordingly, a cross-cutting critical reading of these studies reveals a central research gap represented by the absence of an integrative model linking strategic diagnosis and operational execution in the context of Algerian economic diplomacy. While existing literature succeeds in describing the regional environment, identifying comparative advantages, and diagnosing institutional constraints, it does not provide a practical mechanism explaining how these elements can be translated into coordinated, multi-level action plans that are measurable and evaluable. From this standpoint, the present study seeks to bridge this gap by proposing a methodological integration between the SWOT matrix as a tool for diagnosing the internal and external strategic environment, and the Task Force mechanism as a dynamic executive framework that enables the transformation of analytical results into activated economic and diplomatic policies, subject to key performance indicators (KPIs), and capable of adapting to the logic of “economic defense” in an international environment characterized by escalating trade wars, the politicization of global value chains, and the reconfiguration of influence within the African continent.

## Section One: Theoretical and Analytical Framework of Economic Diplomacy in the Context of the Global Trade War

### *1. Structural Transformation of the International Trading System: From Liberalism to Geo-economics:*

Since the second decade of the twenty-first century, the international trading system has undergone a qualitative shift from the logic of institutional liberalism based on market liberalization and efficiency maximization toward a geo-economic logic that reappropriates economic instruments to serve the geopolitical and strategic objectives of major powers. This transformation has been clearly manifested in the escalation of trade disputes, particularly U.S.–China tensions, which have extended beyond tariffs to encompass global supply chains, advanced technology, and national industrial policies (Farrell & Newman, 2019; Evenett & Fritz, 2022).

Contemporary literature confirms that modern trade wars are no longer episodic events but have become a structural feature of international political economy, reflecting competition over control of value flows, knowledge, and technology (Baldwin, 2020). In this context, developing countries face dual pressures: integrating into global markets to sustain growth rates, while simultaneously protecting their economic sovereignty from excessive dependence on dominant powers.

Within this framework, Africa emerges as a rising geo-economic space not merely as a promising consumer market, but as a zone of strategic repositioning for international powers seeking to diversify supply chains and mitigate geopolitical risks. This reality renders economic diplomacy a pivotal tool for African states, including Algeria, in redefining their position within the transforming global trading system (UNCTAD, 2023).

## 2. *Economic Diplomacy: Evolution of the Concept and Contemporary Analytical Dimensions*

In classical literature, economic diplomacy is defined as the use of foreign policy tools to promote a state's economic interests through trade negotiations, investment attraction, and the building of bilateral and multilateral economic partnerships (Berridge, 2015). More recent literature, however, has expanded this definition to include a governance and strategic dimension, whereby economic diplomacy is no longer confined to representing commercial interests but has become a mechanism for managing the interaction between industrial, trade, financial, and technological policies at both national and international levels (Rana, 2022; Bayne & Woolcock, 2021).

Neumann (2023) introduces the concept of proactive economic diplomacy, which does not merely react to external shocks but seeks to shape the environment of interests itself through the construction of economic alliances, the direction of cross-border investments, and participation in setting the rules governing regional and international trade. This transformation positions economic diplomacy as a central component of national development strategies, rather than a mere extension of traditional foreign policy.

For rent-based or semi-rent-based economies such as Algeria, economic diplomacy acquires an additional dimension by supporting economic diversification strategies and reducing reliance on natural resource exports through expanding the base of trade partners, enhancing regional integration, and attracting long-term productive investments (World Bank, 2023).

## 3. *The Global Trade War and Its Implications for African Economies:*

Reports by the World Trade Organization indicate that the escalation of trade restrictions and protectionist measures since 2018 has led to a cumulative slowdown in global trade growth, with uneven impacts on developing countries and emerging markets (WTO, 2023). In the African context, three main channels of impact can be identified:

1. **Global Value Chains (GVCs):** African countries integrated into global supply chains have been adversely affected by the relocation strategies of multinational corporations and reduced dependence on trade-conflict zones (Baldwin & Freeman, 2022).

2. **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Flows:** Geopolitical uncertainty has led to volatility in investment flows, with investors favoring stable regional environments and strong institutional frameworks (UNCTAD, 2023).

3. **Market Access Conditions:** The proliferation of technical standards and non-tariff barriers has limited many African countries' ability to fully exploit export opportunities.

Conversely, some scholars argue that these transformations open a strategic window for Africa by strengthening regional integration and building internal value chains that reduce dependence on volatile external markets (AfDB, 2024).

## 4. *AfCFTA as a Strategic Framework for Geo-economic Positioning:*

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) represents one of the most significant economic and political projects on the African continent in the twenty-first century. It aims to unify the markets of 55 African countries within a large free trade area to facilitate the movement of goods, services, capital, and skilled labor. The initiative was formally launched at the African Union Summit in Addis Ababa in 2012 as part of the broader agenda to enhance African economic integration and reduce dependence on external markets (African Union, 2012).

The agreement was signed in March 2018 in Rwanda and entered into force in January 2021 following sufficient ratifications. AfCFTA seeks to create a unified continental market of more than 1.3 billion consumers, with a combined potential GDP exceeding USD 3 trillion, focusing on boosting intra-African

trade, reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers, and enhancing the competitiveness of African exports in global markets (UNECA, 2018; World Bank, 2020).

The agreement also serves as a key lever for achieving regional integration and political stability by reducing African countries' economic dependence on external powers, thereby strengthening economic sovereignty and enabling fair and sustainable utilization of Africa's natural and human resources. AfCFTA constitutes a strategic tool for Algerian economic diplomacy, providing a framework for expanding Algeria's economic and trade influence in Africa through investments in energy, infrastructure, and intra-African trade (UNECA, 2021).

Despite challenges related to implementation such as infrastructure deficits, divergent customs policies, and production capacity gaps AfCFTA represents an unprecedented opportunity to enhance African economic integration and realize a strategic vision grounded in sustainable development, economic justice, and South–South cooperation (Mlambo, 2020).

### *5. Linking AfCFTA to Strategic Analysis of the African Market:*

The entry into force of AfCFTA does not merely represent a legal shift in the structure of intra-African trade; it marks the beginning of a new phase in reengineering the African market as a unified competitive strategic space, where economic relations move from limited exchange toward long-term geo-economic positioning. Within this continental framework, national markets are no longer independent units of analysis but components of a regional system in which value chains intersect and comparative advantages are redefined according to regional specialization and productive integration (UNECA, 2018).

Accordingly, strategic analysis of the African market requires a shift from descriptive readings of supply and demand indicators to a multidimensional systemic approach integrating economic, political, and sovereignty-related dimensions. World Bank reports indicate that AfCFTA could increase intra-African trade by more than 50% within the first decade of implementation, provided that logistical infrastructure is completed and customs procedures and technical standards are harmonized rendering transport, energy, and cross-border connectivity strategic determinants of continental competitiveness alongside prices and production costs (World Bank, 2020).

In this context, Algeria's positioning within the African market acquires heightened strategic significance due to its geographic location as a gateway between the Mediterranean and the African Sahel, and its historical political capital in Africa, which can be translated into effective economic influence through investments in cross-border logistics corridors, energy, and industrial and commercial services. Consequently, AfCFTA should not be viewed as a neutral trade framework, but as a sovereign competitive arena in which states' capacities to protect economic interests, enhance regional presence, and redirect trade and investment flows in line with developmental priorities are tested (Mlambo, 2020).

Given this structural complexity, it becomes imperative to adopt strategic analysis tools capable of systematically unpacking African market dynamics under AfCFTA. Here, the SWOT matrix emerges as a useful entry point for diagnosing the internal strengths and weaknesses of Algerian economic diplomacy against the external opportunities and threats imposed by an open continental space particularly in relation to regional competition, regulatory standards, and risks of trade imbalances.

## Axis Two: SWOT Analysis of Algerian Economic Diplomatic Performance within the African Space

### *1. Historical Overview of the SWOT Matrix:*

The scientific roots of the SWOT matrix (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) go back to the development of strategic thinking in American management schools during the 1960s, in the context of the search for analytical tools linking an organization's internal environment to surrounding external transformations. The initial conceptual foundation of this framework is attributed to the work of researchers at the Stanford Research Institute (SRI), foremost among them Albert Humphrey, who led

between 1960 and 1970 a research project funded by major corporations such as IBM and General Electric, aimed at developing a model that would help senior management align strategic planning with long-term institutional performance (Humphrey, 2005).

In its early stages, the model evolved from an initial formulation known as SOFT Analysis (Satisfactory, Opportunities, Faults, Threats), before being reformulated into the now-familiar SWOT framework, reflecting a shift in strategic thinking from evaluating past performance to anticipating future competitive positioning in environments characterized by uncertainty and rapid change (Gürel & Tat, 2017).

With the rise of modern strategic management schools in the 1980s and 1990s, particularly in Porter's work on competitiveness and competitive advantage, SWOT acquired a broader analytical dimension. It was no longer merely a descriptive tool, but rather an integrative framework enabling the linkage of an organization's internal resources with industry determinants and the wider geo-economic environment (Porter, 1985). This transformation contributed to the integration of the matrix into governmental strategic planning and public policy-making methodologies, not only business management.

In contemporary literature, SWOT has been re-employed in fields extending beyond the traditional institutional framework to include public policies, regional development, and economic diplomacy. It is used to analyze states' positioning within international economic systems and global value chains, by assessing elements of sovereign strength, structural weaknesses, geo-economic opportunities, and threats related to international competition and geopolitical risks (Ghazinoory, Abdi, & Azadegan-Mehr, 2011).

In this sense, the SWOT matrix is no longer a purely technical administrative tool, but has become a multi-level strategic diagnostic approach used in analyzing national policies, regional integration strategies, and states' positioning in the global economic system, particularly in the context of countries seeking to enhance their economic and diplomatic presence in highly competitive regional spaces such as Africa.

Second: Methodological Linkage between SWOT, Task Force, and KPIs (Prelude to the Integrative Framework)

Based on this conceptual framing of SWOT as a strategic diagnostic tool, its main limitation emerges in that it remains a static analytical framework focused on describing the existing situation without, in itself, providing executive mechanisms or monitoring tools to ensure the translation of diagnosis into measurable results. From here arises the methodological gap between strategic analysis and executive performance governance, a gap that becomes even more pronounced in complex domains such as economic diplomacy, where considerations of sovereignty, geo-economic competition, and the multiplicity of institutional actors intersect (Gürel & Tat, 2017; OECD, 2018).

## *2. Institutional Strategic Analysis: SWOT Matrix as a Tool for Structural Diagnosis:*

In light of the preceding analysis of the determinants of Algerian economic diplomatic performance within the African space whether at the level of the institutional framework, tools of trade and investment interaction, or patterns of regional presence in continental economic initiatives the need emerges to reassemble these elements within a condensed diagnostic framework that highlights the interactive dynamics between internal factors and external pressures. Accordingly, this study at this stage adopts the SWOT matrix as an analytical tool capable of consolidating the various variables addressed in this axis into a unified interpretive structure. This structure provides a balanced presentation of the strengths underpinning Algerian economic diplomacy, the weaknesses limiting its effectiveness, the opportunities offered by the transforming African environment, and the geo-economic and political threats that may affect its regional positioning trajectories.

This transition from descriptive analysis to integrative diagnosis constitutes a fundamental methodological step that paves the way for a deeper reading of the logic governing Algeria's strategic choices within the continent, and provides an analytical foundation that later helps explain trends of economic and diplomatic

interaction in the context of regional competition and the reconfiguration of economic power balances in Africa.



### *Axis Three: The Task Force Matrix*

#### *1. Historical Overview of the Task Force Concept:*

The conceptual origins of the term Task Force trace back to the military and organizational fields in the first half of the twentieth century, where it was used to describe temporary formations created specifically to carry out missions of a strategic or operational nature in environments characterized by complexity and uncertainty. The institutional use of the concept became particularly prominent during World War II, when armies especially American and British forces relied on flexible, multi-armed units to coordinate joint operations across land, sea, and air, thereby enabling faster decision-making on the battlefield (Murray & Millett, 2000).

With the end of the war and the emergence of the modern state with its complex administrative apparatus, the concept gradually shifted into the governmental and civilian spheres. It came to refer to multidisciplinary work teams tasked with addressing complex public issues such as economic reform, crisis management, and development planning. This shift contributed to consolidating the administrative dimension of the concept as a mechanism based on the integration of expertise, horizontal coordination among organizational units, and a focus on outcomes rather than formal procedures (Mintzberg, 1979; Galbraith, 2014).

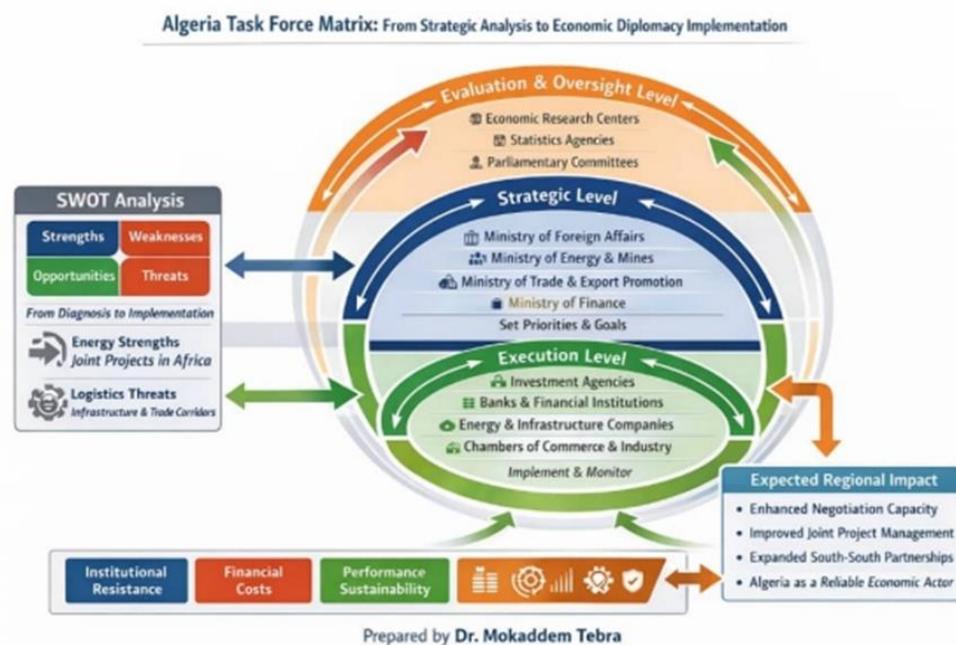
Within the development of strategic management and project management literature during the 1970s and 1980s, the Task Force concept was re-framed within models of high-performance teams and flexible organizational structures. It was regarded as an institutional tool for rapid response to dynamic environments and unstable markets, particularly in sectors characterized by cross-organizational and cross-border activities (Project Management Institute [PMI], 2021).

In the contemporary context, the concept has acquired a new dimension within the field of economic diplomacy. International organizations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) refer to Task Forces as coordination platforms that bring together ministries of

foreign affairs, trade, investment, and finance, along with private sector representatives, with the aim of aligning foreign policies with national economic objectives and strengthening presence within global value chains (OECD, 2018).

## 2. From Diagnosis to Action: The Task Force Approach as an Executive Governance Mechanism:

The Task Force approach has evolved in public administration and governance literature as a response to the need for flexible, multi-sectoral mechanisms capable of addressing complex issues that exceed the mandate of a single entity. OECD studies (2021) indicate that specialized task forces are among the most effective tools for managing cross-sectoral policies, particularly in the areas of trade, investment, and regional development.



In the context of economic diplomacy, this approach allows for:

- Coordination of policies among the ministries of foreign affairs, trade, energy, finance, and transport;
- Mobilization of non-governmental actors, such as chambers of commerce, financial institutions, and the private sector;
- Acceleration of decision-making processes in the face of external shocks or sudden investment opportunities.

Accordingly, integrating the results of SWOT analysis within a Task Force structure grants the state the ability to move from the level of strategic diagnosis to that of intelligent operational management, which constitutes the core of contemporary economic diplomacy.

### 1. Algeria's Position within This Theoretical Framework:

Based on this conceptual construction, Algerian economic diplomacy can be viewed as a test case for a model of integration between structural analysis and institutional implementation within an African context characterized by increasing international competition.

Algeria's success in strengthening its positioning within the AfCFTA does not depend on the abundance of resources or political discourse alone, but rather on its ability to:

- Build effective institutional coordination mechanisms;
- Direct its external investments toward sectors that generate regional value added;
- Preserve the win–win partnership principle as an ethical and strategic foundation of its African relations.

This perspective constitutes the theoretical basis from which the paper proceeds to analyze the integration of SWOT and Task Force as a practical approach to enhancing Algerian economic and diplomatic effectiveness amid the global trade war.

## 2. *The Integrative Framework (SWOT / Task Force / KPIs):*

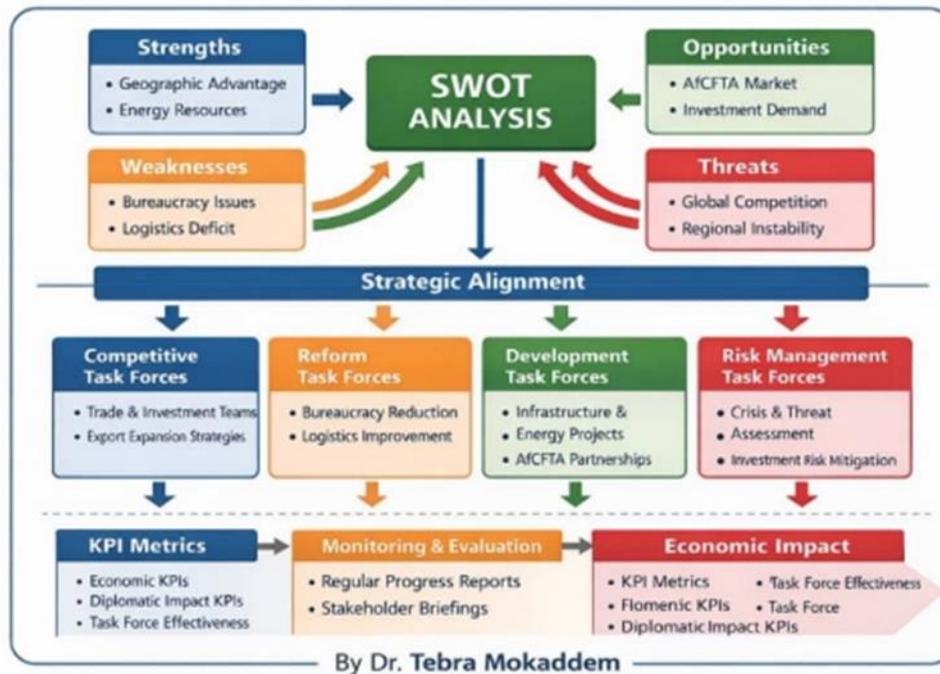
In light of what has been presented in the previous two axes regarding the structural analysis of Algerian economic diplomacy performance within the African space, it becomes evident that the scientific value of strategic diagnosis is not confined to describing the environment or classifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats alone, but rather to the capacity of this diagnosis to be transformed into an executable mechanism subject to measurement, accountability, and evaluation. From this standpoint, the study moves from a static analytical reading to a dynamic operational construction by integrating three complementary methodological layers: the SWOT matrix as a strategic diagnostic tool, the Task Force structure as an institutional framework for activation and implementation, and the system of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as a mechanism for control and continuous evaluation.

This transition from analysis to activation embodies a theoretical logic based on a central hypothesis that strategies which are not translated into clear implementation units and specific measurement indicators remain confined to political discourse or abstract planning, without transforming into tangible economic impact in the fields of trade, investment, and regional integration. Accordingly, the Task Force concept is not viewed in this context as a mechanism with military connotations, but rather as a flexible institutional format derived from modern governance and strategic project management literature, enabling the pooling of diplomatic, economic, logistical, and financial expertise within multidisciplinary work teams guided by measurable objectives.

The inclusion of the KPI system within this integrative framework reflects the study's adoption of an approach that links performance with evidence-based public policy, whereby the outputs of strategic analysis are transformed into quantitative and qualitative indicators, such as the growth of intra-African trade exchanges, the evolution of Algerian direct investments on the continent, the time required to conclude economic agreements, and the level of Algeria's integration into regional value chains.

Thus, the proposed integrative framework represents a meeting point between the state's sovereign vision of protecting and enhancing its economic security and the requirements of economic justice and the win–win logic in its relations with African partners, through the construction of an economic diplomacy model that does not merely defend national interests, but seeks to create shared value based on mutual development, the strengthening of continental logistical and commercial infrastructure, and the consolidation of Algeria's position as a pivotal actor in reshaping African economic architecture.

On this basis, the following framework provides a representation of this methodological interconnection between diagnosis (SWOT), institutional activation (Task Force), and measurement and evaluation (KPIs), allowing the full trajectory of strategic decision-making to be traced from the level of analysis to the level of tangible economic and diplomatic impact.

**INTEGRATED MODEL OF SWOT ANALYSIS AND TASK FORCE INITIATIVES**

In this context, integrating the Task Force logic within the SWOT framework makes it possible to move from the level of diagnosis to the level of structured institutional activation, through the creation of multidisciplinary teams comprising representatives from the foreign affairs, trade, investment, transport, and energy sectors. This ensures a horizontal treatment of strengths and weaknesses, as well as a rapid response to opportunities and threats in dynamic regional and international environments (Mintzberg, 1979; Galbraith, 2014).

However, the executive dimension alone is not sufficient to ensure the effectiveness of this integration unless it is supported by an objective performance measurement system. Here, the role of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) emerges as a monitoring mechanism that links abstract strategic objectives to field-level outcomes subject to quantitative evaluation, whether in terms of the evolution of intra-trade volumes, foreign direct investment flows, or the number of activated economic agreements within the African space (Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

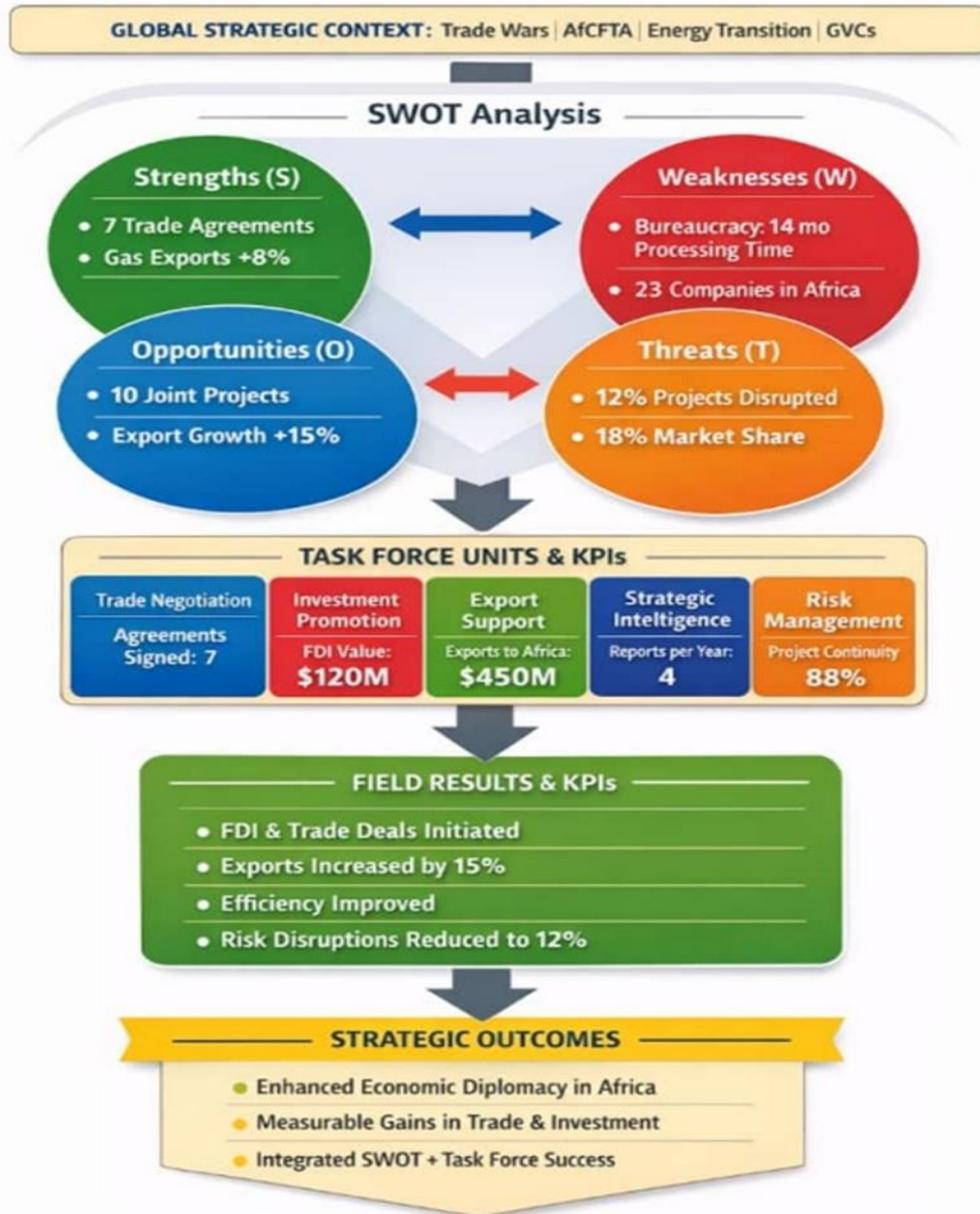
Accordingly, this complementary model based on SWOT/Task Force/KPIs does not merely diagnose the position of Algerian economic diplomacy within its African environment, but establishes the logic of an integrated strategic cycle that begins with analysis, moves to executive coordination, and ends with continuous performance evaluation. This enables the transformation of the sovereign vision into policies that are executable and controllable, within an international environment characterized by intensified competition over resources, intertwined commercial interests, and the increasing politicization of economic instruments in international relations (OECD, 2018; Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

## Results:

The analysis of the SWOT matrix integrated with the Task Force reflects the strategic effectiveness of Algerian economic diplomacy in Africa, taking into account quantitative and qualitative performance indicators (KPIs), as follows:

## Algerian Economic Diplomacy in Africa: Integration of SWOT, Task Force, and KPIs

Prepared by Dr. Mokaddem Tebra



### 1. Performance of Strengths:

Geographical location: Enables Algeria to act as a bridge between Europe and North, West, and Central Africa, which has allowed it to strengthen energy trade and connect regional transport corridors.

KPI: Number of logistics agreements signed with West and Central African countries over 3 years = 7 agreements.

Historical and political capital: Algeria's participation in supporting African liberation movements contributed to building political trust with African partners.

KPI: Level of diplomatic trust, joint cooperation indicator (number of joint projects in Africa) = 12 projects.

Energy resources: As a major producer of gas and oil, Algeria has leveraged this advantage to enhance its economic influence on the continent.

KPI: Increase in natural gas exports to Africa by 8% over 3 years.

### *2. Performance in Addressing Weaknesses:*

Institutional fragmentation and bureaucracy: Slowed the implementation of cross-border projects.

KPI: Processing time for a trade agreement (from signing to implementation) = 14 months, compared to the target  $\leq 12$  months.

Weakness of the Algerian private sector in Africa: Represents an opportunity not yet fully exploited.

KPI: Number of Algerian companies active in the African market = 23 companies, with a target of increasing this to 35 within 5 years.

Skills gap: Shortage of specialists in economic negotiation and project management.

KPI: Number of training programs implemented = 5 training programs, with a target of recruiting 50 experts in international negotiation.

### *3. Exploiting Opportunities:*

AfCFTA Agreement: Opened a common market of more than 1.3 billion consumers.

KPI: Number of new joint projects = 10 projects; share of Algerian exports = 15% of the continental target.

Global investment shifts: Enabled the redirection of FDI toward joint projects with Algeria.

KPI: Value of foreign direct investment in Africa = USD 120 million.

### *4. Confronting Threats:*

International competition: Algeria competes with South Africa, Egypt, and Nigeria.

KPI: Algeria's share of African energy markets = 18%, with a target of reaching 25% within 5 years.

Political instability in some African countries: Affected the continuity of certain cross-border projects.

KPI: Percentage of projects affected by instability = 12%, with a plan to reduce it to  $\leq 5\%$  through risk management units.

## **Conclusion of the Study:**

In light of global geopolitical transformations, the trade wars of the past decade, the reconfiguration of energy policies and markets, and multiple geo-economic crises, the importance of economic diplomacy emerges as a strategic tool for protecting national sovereignty and achieving sustainable development. The study revealed that Africa, despite its vast wealth, has long been a target of external exploitation and resource plundering, while its peoples continue to suffer from poverty and economic imbalances. In this context, it has become imperative to adopt integrated national strategies that redraw the balance of

economic power and enable African states particularly Algeria to assert their strategic and economic influence away from dominant exploitative economies.

The research results showed that Algeria, through its economic and diplomatic policies, is working to strengthen its presence on the African continent through an integrated combination of SWOT and Task Force. Diagnosing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats allows for the formulation of precise strategies, while multidisciplinary Task Force units translate these strategies into tangible practical reality, reflecting the state's ability to move from planning to execution with flexibility and efficiency. The pivotal role of KPIs is highlighted in measuring the effectiveness of these plans, ensuring monitoring of implementation and continuous improvement, which reinforces the principle of fairness and shared development (Win–Win) in economic relations with African partner countries and makes cooperation based on mutual and sustainable interests.

It must be emphasized that the concept of Task Force, although inspired by military structures, does not aim at militarization, but at protecting the national economy as a symbol of prosperity. The economy has become the most important arena for defending national sovereignty, not traditional weapons alone. Hence, the strength of this integration between SWOT and Task Force lies in providing dynamic executive tools to confront complex economic and geopolitical risks, including challenges arising from international competition, volatility in energy and commodity prices, and regional conflicts.

The study also revealed the importance of logistics infrastructure in supporting Algeria's economic influence in Africa. Reliance on intra-African trade, improvement of transport and energy networks, and linking ports and logistics hubs create strategic levers to increase exports, attract joint investments, and enhance regional economic integration. Specialized Task Force units enable the monitoring of these projects and the regulation of performance through precise KPIs, ensuring that strategic opportunities arising from regional agreements such as AfCFTA are not lost, and transforming Algeria into a regional hub for trade and investment.

The study further confirms that integrating SWOT with Task Force represents an innovative model of applied strategic planning that combines precise diagnosis with executive flexibility, enabling efficient exploitation of economic and political opportunities while reducing the impact of threats, whether internal such as bureaucracy or external such as international competition. This approach enhances Algeria's capacity to lead joint African projects and achieve fair sustainable development based on economic justice and mutual interest, practically translating the Win–Win principle in its economic and diplomatic relations with African partner states.

In conclusion, the study affirms that the success of Algerian economic diplomacy does not rest on resources alone, but on the state's ability to transform strategic analysis into a flexible execution plan that is measurable and subject to continuous review. The integration of SWOT and Task Force, supported by performance indicators, provides a practical mechanism for protecting the economy, enhancing sovereignty, and redrawing maps of regional influence in Africa away from dependency and exploitative international competition, enabling Algeria to become a model to be emulated in promoting development, stability, and regional integration based on justice and shared interest.

### **Recommendations:**

- *Strengthening institutional execution mechanisms through specialized Task Forces:*

Algeria should develop multidisciplinary task forces covering trade negotiation, investment promotion, export support, and economic and geopolitical risk management. This integration between SWOT and Task Force is an effective tool for translating strategic diagnosis into practical, measurable, and monitorable plans. Accurate KPIs should be activated to monitor performance and measure the strategic impact of each project, ensuring implementation in line with economic and political development objectives.

- *Focusing economic diplomacy on the Win–Win principle:*

Cooperative strategies with African countries should be adopted on the basis of economic justice and mutual benefit, away from exploitative logic. This approach enables Algeria to build sustainable economic alliances, strengthen its position in intra-African trade markets, and ensure that all parties benefit from cooperation and regional integration projects.

- *Developing national and regional infrastructure and logistics:*

The study recommends investing in transport, energy, and port networks and linking them to joint economic projects in Africa to ensure sustainable trade expansion and increased competitiveness. This infrastructure should be designed to support Algerian influence in Africa and achieve regional economic integration, while considering environmental sustainability and economic efficiency principles.

- *Focusing on intra-African trade and enhancing economic integration:*

Policies should be developed to encourage Algerian exports to African markets and to leverage AfCFTA to reduce tariff barriers and enhance the movement of goods and services. Programs should also be activated to support Algerian SMEs in exploring African markets, with financial and training incentives to ensure their success.

- *Risk management and strategic foresight:*

Specialized units within Task Forces should be established to monitor economic and geopolitical threats, including global price volatility, international competition, and regional instability. KPIs should be used to assess response speed and effectiveness, ensuring the continuity of economic projects despite unstable conditions.

- *Enhancing human capacities and strategic training:*

The study recommends establishing advanced training programs in international negotiation, strategic analysis, and management of major economic projects to ensure the availability of qualified personnel capable of efficiently managing Task Force teams and achieving national objectives.

- *Integrating technology and digital transformation in managing economic diplomacy:*

It is recommended to employ digital analytics tools, geographic information systems, and artificial intelligence in market monitoring, opportunity assessment, and project implementation follow-up, enhancing Algeria's ability to make accurate strategic decisions and reducing reliance on slow traditional methods.

- *Continuous evaluation and review of economic policies:*

A mechanism for periodic review of policies and plans should be adopted based on KPI results and strategic reports, ensuring the state's ability to rapidly adjust plans in response to changes in the African or international environment and to achieve sustainable development and economic and political stability.

- *Enhancing multilateral cooperation and effective economic diplomacy:*

The study recommends expanding economic partnerships with African and international institutions while highlighting Algeria's leadership role in promoting joint projects, reflecting its investment of natural and human wealth for the benefit of the African continent, and contributing to building a strong reputation for Algeria as a reliable economic and regional actor.

These recommendations directly translate the research results and analysis into practical, implementable, and monitorable plans, emphasizing the importance of integrating SWOT, Task Force, and KPIs to ensure the promotion of economic justice, protection of sovereignty, and increased Algerian influence in Africa.

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