

# **The organisation of the forces of repression**

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## Abstract

The strategy of the Algerian Generals to bar the Islamists' path and maintain their own power since the country's independence led Algeria down the path to genuine civil war. This report describes developments in the repression instigated by the army and the security services from 1990 to 2004.

This report distinguishes five main stages in the conduct of the war led by the 'leading' Generals:

— The first stage, in 1990 and 1991, consisted in trying to prevent, through different kinds of manipulations, FIS Islamists from gaining power through elections;

— The second step, from the coup of January 1992 to the beginning of 1994, aimed at ensuring political parties, trade unions, the 'independent' press and all security forces (the army, police, gendarmerie) followed the 'leading Generals' option of eradication. It consisted in eliminating or breaking all Islamist opposition through violence, through a combination of brutal crackdown and manipulation of the Islamist violence which was gaining ground;

— This policy having been only partly successful, the next stage (from March 1994 until the beginning of 1996) was bloodier: in order to 'cut the population from Islamist groups' a brutal repression was imposed on the civilian population by the army and its secret services (DRS) ('enforced disappearances' and the creation of militias were used during this period), while autonomous Islamist groups were decimated or suborned to the service of the ruling authorities through manipulation and infiltration;

— The fourth stage, from the beginning of 1996 to 1998, consisted in consolidating the Generals' power through terror (including in the form of large-scale massacres) exerted, under the DRS leadership, by security forces and the 'Islamist groups' henceforth largely controlled by the services;

— In a fifth stage, from 1999 to 2004, the authorities focused on gaining international legitimacy while maintaining a level of violence preventing the emergence of any democratic and peaceful alternative, through the activities of its security forces, militias and 'Islamist' groups which had been manipulated and controlled. In order to carry out the repression, the authorities built a powerful police, military and para-military apparatus with at its core the political police body, the very powerful Military Security (which became the DRS in September 1990). After recalling the main stages of the war, this report presents the organs of repression and their evolution. It subsequently proposes a summary of the repressive methods used by the security forces, characterized at the same time by wide resort to clandestine techniques of psychological action (infiltration, disinformation, manipulation and creation by the army of armed Islamist groups, etc.) and by the deployment of classic state terrorism tools (systematic torture, thousands of killings and large-scale massacres, enforced disappearances, etc.).

This presentation is obviously too succinct to give a full account of the multiple facets of these years of fire and blood. But it is also limited by the deliberate opacity maintained by the Algerian authorities in the conflict and by the law of silence that it has been imposing up to this day (through terror and threats) on the population and on most political actors. Thus, some of the hypotheses put forward in this report may one day be partially refuted by new revelations. However, the information available (in books by actors and journalists, news stories, non-governmental organizations' reports on human rights abuses and especially testimonies by the victims of the repression and former members of the security forces, which support and complement one another) still allows one to interpret this tragedy in a way that can be said, undoubtedly, to essentially comport with what actually occurred.

## Introduction: The central role of the army and its services

### The Military Security apparatus at the heart of the regime

In independent Algeria, the strength of the Military Security apparatus (MS) lay in the human and material resources at its disposal and its omnipresence at the political and economic levels. The MS is, as two experts on Algeria wrote in 1998:

“Outside the oil industry sector, the only institution that truly functions... Tightly covering the society, controlling an important part of external trade, appointing many high-level civil servants including ambassadors, infiltrating the media, the police, state-owned companies, political parties and Islamist armed groups suspected of being behind several attacks and repeatedly carrying out dirty tricks, it misinforms and manipulates the public opinion as well as the presidents by submitting deliberately erroneous or falsely alarmist reports<sup>1</sup>...”

Throughout the 1980s, President Chadli strove to weaken the ‘services’ and take control over them, but did not meet great success. In November 1987, still under the influence of General Larbi Belkheir, Chadli overhauled the MS. The use of the term MS was officially abandoned, and it was split into two distinct bodies: the DGPS (*Délégation générale de la prévention et de la sécurité*, General Prevention and Security Delegation), which comprised external intelligence and counter-espionage services, became a ministerial delegation under direct authority of the presidency; while the DCSA (*Direction centrale de la sécurité de l’armée*, Central Directorate for Army and Security, the other branch of the former MS, in charge of monitoring military personnel and protect its infrastructures) was integrated into the Ministry of Defence.

### The reorganisation of the MS from September 1990

In July 1990, the post of Minister of Defence was created, *de facto* stripping the Head of State of all his prerogatives as the head of the army. In September of the same year, this Minister – General Khaled Nezzar – gained authority over the unified secret services renamed ‘*Département de renseignement et de sécurité*’ (Intelligence and Security Department) (DRS)<sup>2</sup>. This operation partly aimed at separating the President from intelligence sources and giving ‘leading’ military officials entire control over the ‘Services’.

General Mohamed Médiène, aka ‘Tewfik’ then integrated this group of leaders by becoming the chief of DRS (a position he still held in September 2004). Larbi Belkheir and Khaled Nezzar placed Colonels Kamel Abderrahmane<sup>3</sup> and Saïdi Fodhil<sup>4</sup> at the helm of

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<sup>1</sup> José GARÇON and Pierre AFFUZI, “L’armée algérienne: le pouvoir de l’ombre”, *Pouvoirs*, n°86, September 1998, Seuil, Paris, p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> To this date, DRS is still often called ‘Military Security’ (MS). Both terms are used in this document.

<sup>3</sup> Kamel Abderrahmane, who started his career in the ground forces and was chief of section during the siege of October 1998, made a dazzling ascent thanks to the protection of General Médiène. He remained director of DCSA from September 1990 until May 1996 (he was promoted General in 1993). He was subsequently appointed commander of the 2<sup>nd</sup> military region (Oran, West), and remained in this post until August 2004, when he became head of the fifth military region (Constantine, East).

<sup>4</sup> Saïdi Fodhil, also a former member of the ground forces (and former military intelligence official), was demoted in July 1994 (at the instigation of Smaïl Lamari) to be appointed commander of the 4th military region (he was replaced at the helm of DDSE by General Rachid Laalali, aka Attafi);

DCSA (*Direction centrale de la sécurité de l'armée*, Central Directorate for Army Security) and DDSE (*Direction de la documentation et de la sécurité extérieure* Directorate for Documentation and External Security) respectively. The third Directorate, DCE (*Direction du contre-espionnage* Directorate for Counterespionage), was directed by Colonel Smaïn Lamari (appointed General at the end of 1992), aka 'Smaïn', an old hand in the services (he was still in this post in September 2004). The hegemony of the army and DRS was thus reinforced to the detriment of the Head of State.

President Chadli forcibly 'resigned' on 11 January 1992, in violation of the Constitution, after the army cancelled the elections won by the FIS, and was replaced by a 'High State Committee' headed by Mohammed Boudiaf. A state of emergency was proclaimed in February 1992. Boudiaf, who attempted to gain autonomy over the Generals, was assassinated in June; the country then slowly tipped into violence.

The following parts of this report will firstly recall the objectives of the different stages of the military leaders' repressive policy from 1990 until today (first part), before outlining the different security forces mobilized for the repression (second part). We will then turn to the analysis of the methods used (third part).

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## I. The objectives of repression: the main stages of war

“Democracy was not convenient for us. With violence, we were in a position of power. We were the power. Under terror, we were the mayors, we were the *wali*... We had all the power”

Abdelkader Tigha, former DRS Chief sergeant from 1991 to 1999<sup>7</sup>.

### **1990-1991: Breaking the Islamist movement and keeping it out of power**

From the end of 1990, while the Head of State still had legal means available (to dissolve Parliament, propose an amendment to the Constitution, arrest radical elements and so on) to prevent the FIS from imposing an Islamist theocracy on the country, whether by elections or force, the pair of Belkheir and Nezzar secretly elaborated a subversive plan which, on the contrary, used Islamist violence to break the FIS and, more widely, to gag all popular protest movements. The existence of this secret plan was to be known only much later, under the name of ‘Nezzar Plan’, as it was General Nezzar himself who revealed it in its memoirs published in Algiers in 1999<sup>8</sup>.

This plan consisted at first (early 1991) in intensifying secret practices to watch and weaken the FIS (telephone-tapping its leaders, tailing operations, intensifying divisions within the party — salafists/djazaarists, etc. — neutralisation of leaders through political takeover or corruption and so on), while pretending to be negotiating with the party’s leaders. In parallel, the FLN (the former single party) was supported through the granting of subsidies and better access to the media. The DRS also put in place a disinformation strategy to tarnish the image of the FIS and keep its members away from sensitive posts: dissemination of false statements attributed to the FIS, calls to take up arms (outdoing actual statements, already radical),

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<sup>7</sup> Abdelkader Tigha, personal notes. In post from 1993 until August 1998 at the CTRI in Blida (a former DRS unit which played, as we shall see, a major role in the ‘dirty war’), the former chief sergeant Tigha, disagreeing with his superiors and feeling his life was in danger, chose to leave Algeria in December 1999. After a long and difficult journey from Syria to Thailand (where he was detained from February 2000 until September 2003), he reached Jordan and later, in December 2003, the Netherlands where he was detained until September 2004, while his political asylum claim was being reviewed. Starting in August 2001, Tigha gave several testimonies in the international press on the very serious human rights abuses by the DRS he said to have witnessed (see in particular: NORD-SUD EXPORT, “Les révélations d’un déserteur de la SM”, 21 September 2001; Arnaud DUBUS, “Un ancien militaire algérien révèle les circonstances du rapt et de l’assassinat des trappistes français en 1996. Les sept moines de Tibehirine enlevés sur ordre d’Alger, *Libération*, 23 December 2002; Interview with Abdelkader Tigha for the documentary by Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, *Services secrets: révélations sur un « vrai-faux enlèvement »*, « 90 minutes », Canal Plus, 1 December 2003).

Abdelkader Tigha also wrote detailed ‘notes’ about his experience within the DRS, which were shown to us; his information widely supports other testimonies from dissident members of the army and the police (some anonymous, others not) and as such appears particularly credible, although, of course, it can only be validated by independent investigations, which are impossible at the moment in Algeria. One has to keep this precaution in mind when considering these ‘notes’, which we often quote in this report.

<sup>8</sup> This “Mémoire sur la situation dans le pays et point de vue de l’Armée nationale populaire” drafted in December 1990 is also reproduced in the collective book *Algérie, arrêt du processus électoral. Enjeux et démocratie* (Publisud, Paris, 2002, p. 131-149), that General Nezzar published in July 2002, reproducing, with many annexes, the ‘defense report’ prepared by his advisers to answer charges of torture filed against him in Paris by three Algerian victims of torture, on 25 April 2001.

publication of images and speeches showing the extremists as illiterate, etc. While some major FIS leaders repeatedly made statements hostile to democracy, seen as ‘ungodly’ according to their conservative vision of Islam, DRS manipulations exaggerated them to give an image of all Islamist supporters as a shadowy and dangerous conglomerate seeking the institution of a ‘totalitarian theocracy’<sup>9</sup>.

Repression – the FIS main leaders and hundreds of Islamists were arrested and detained in June and July 1991 – was led by the DRS which adopted a new structure, the Operational Command Post (PCO). Created in June 1991, this coordinated its actions with the police and gendarmerie. Through these manipulations and repression, the Generals hoped to stir up the small minority of Islamist radicals opposed to the moderate FIS members and frighten the population with horrors allegedly committed in the name of Islam. This plan was further facilitated by the fact that many FIS leaders never dissociated themselves clearly from the radicals’ violence.

But this plan was to be taken further and included, well before the Coup of January 1992, a fully-fledged campaign to exacerbate violence of extremist groups (among which several hundred young activists returning from the *jihād* in Afghanistan, dubbed ‘the Afghans’) and, by breeding widespread confusion, to attribute it to the FIS. To do so, radical members were recruited by the Services to become their local Emirs in urban neighbourhoods and Islamist networks advocating violence were infiltrated and encouraged, or even made up from start to finish (the DRS even put into place at this time some fake Islamist underground resistance movements).

Doing so, the Generals were getting ready for a possible war of eradication, through a policy of unhindered deterioration. To win it meant waiting until conditions were ripe for the elimination of the Islamist movement (and of any opposition) and for the granting of all powers to the Generals. This very occasion was given to them by the FIS winning the first turn of the December 1991 legislative elections.

### **1992-1993: rallying the military and civil society behind the Generals’ anti-Islamist option.**

In early January 1992: Colonel Smaïn Lamari, number two of the DRS, tightened his control over intelligence services through the creation of an ‘Analysis and Documentation’ unit, working outside the knowledge of the ANP. He gathered his executive officials and guaranteed them that the FIS would never come to power. This meant that it would be destroyed: “I am ready and determined to eliminate three million Algerians if necessary to maintain the order threatened by the Islamists”, he said in May of the same year in a meeting at the police command<sup>10</sup>.

The army then had a clear objective: to behead what was left of the political staff of the FIS, to eliminate those Islamist leaders who were best informed and least likely to be manipulated, to deport its activists and supporters to camps in the South and to bring the Islamists into disrepute. From the start, the army chiefs decided to reinforce their struggle through the deployment of a security machinery of an essentially military and police nature. The state of emergency was proclaimed in February 1992 and search and arrest operations were carried out with some success. From March 1992 “Colonel Kamel Abderrahmane [head

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<sup>9</sup> Mohamed LAMARI, “L’enjeu de 1991-1992 était de préserver le régime républicain pour que l’Algérie ne soit pas un régime théocratique totalitaire”, *Le Soir d’Algérie*, 9 January 2003.

<sup>10</sup> Statement witnessed by the former Colonel Mohammed Samraoui, who was then in charge of the DRS ‘Research and Analysis Service’ (SRA) and who worked directly with Colonel Smaïn Lamari (Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang, op. cit.*, p. 162).

of the DCSA] gave the instructions [...] to not bring the extremists ‘beyond rehabilitation’ to justice<sup>11</sup>” and instead to eliminate them. Indeed at the time people who had been arrested and detained were released because no charges could be brought against them, something that those in charge of the repression disapproved of as ‘laxness’<sup>12</sup>.

In April 1992, the DRS took control over the police and in September 1992, as we shall see, the ‘Centre for Conduct and Coordination of Anti-subversive Actions’ (CCC/ALAS) was created, and the hard core of the repressive forces, composed of the ‘special forces’ regiments, the army and the main operational units of the DRS and the gendarmerie, were put under the command of General Mohamed Lamari. In October, special justice tribunals were operating; exception and arbitrariness ruled. Abuses by the DRS and the police added up: collective arrests, torture, murders and so on.

At the same time, everything was being done to repress and radicalise Islamist protests. The former Colonel Samraoui noted that there could not have been a better way to make young people join the armed struggle<sup>13</sup>: On 20 January 1992, a law was promulgated which banned meetings near mosques, triggering a cycle of protest/repression; roundups became increasingly frequent, carried out arbitrarily and often sparing previously identified extremists; mass deportations to camps in the South increased to a maximum the feeling of injustice and fuelled violent anger within the population; some terrorist acts attributed to the Islamists (such as the bomb attack at the Houari-Boumediene airport, on 26 August 1992, which killed 9 people and injured dozens) were most probably supported or organised by the SM – no serious investigation, disappearing evidence, etc. The young Second Lieutenant Habib Souaïdia, freshly brought into the army’s special forces engaged in counter terrorism, noted a year later:

“Everything went on as if, despite the severe losses we incurred, the Generals limited our action on purpose to keep the terrorists active. We would often get orders which blocked us from finishing an operation or eliminating a group we were pursuing<sup>14</sup>.”

In early 1993, mainly in the region of Algiers, armed Islamist groups started to gain ground both in urban and rural areas. The police and gendarmerie locked themselves in their quarters<sup>15</sup>, while the army intervened massively and savagely against the Islamist strongholds:

“From 1993, the orders were strict: no prisoners. And the wounded ought to be finished off<sup>16</sup>.”

Despite the deployment of forces –tanks in cities, shelling in rural areas, napalm of forests to destroy refuges, etc. -, the command seemed to lose control of the situation in some areas. And many policemen and civil servants, as well as civilians, were murdered by armed Islamist groups.

However, many were also killed upon the initiative of...the DRS, with a view to ‘motivate the troops’. While a ‘loyalty reward’ plan was set up in the army (pay increase, distribution of different kinds of bonuses...), the DRS chiefs used Islamist groups already infiltrated and controlled<sup>17</sup> and clandestine death squads (see below) to assassinate members of the army and the police (in particular those elements deemed ‘dubious’) — the murders were

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 199.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 200.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 141.

<sup>14</sup> Habib SOUAÏDIA, *La Sale Guerre, La Découverte*, Paris, 2001, p. 185.

<sup>15</sup> Abdelkader TIGHA, notes.

<sup>16</sup> Captain Hacine Ouguenoune, aka “Haroun”, conversation with Jean-Paul CHAGNOLLAUD, *Confluences Méditerranée*, nr. 25, 1998.

<sup>17</sup> See on this issue the very rigorously documented pages by Lounis AGGOUN and Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, *Françalgérie, crimes et mensonges d’États*, op. cit., especially p. 318-324 and 406-408.

attributed to the Islamists and responsibility claimed by the 'GIA' (Armed Islamic Group) starting in late 1992. These crimes created an atmosphere of suspicion and revenge which encouraged soldiers to take part in the repression, as Samraoui noted, highlighting the major role of this policy in the escalation of death in the following years:

“Indeed, at the time, their fear, with Generals Larbi Belkheir and Khaled Nezzar in the forefront, was that part of the army and the police would refuse to follow them in their policy of Islamism ‘eradication’, or even rebel against them. Their calculation was, most probably, that once this danger was put aside through universal rallying – a matter of a few months, at the most —, the manipulated Islamist groups would only need to be eliminated for good (after using them to eliminate those which were not manipulated) for everything to be solved.. But their criminal plan got out of hand and set off an uncontrollable spiral of horror: its instigators obviously did not foresee that the hatred towards the population they fostered among the young officials in the DRS, the police and the ANP’s special forces would lead to such large scale violence and crime that it could only be managed through relentless horror and manipulations, at the cost of thousands of deaths<sup>18</sup>.”

In order to definitively muzzle all elite opposition to the explosion of State terrorism, from spring 1993 intellectuals, political leaders, journalists, doctors... became in turn victims of attacks (always attributed by the official propaganda to Islamist armed groups and although they were backed by some leaders of the former FIS, they were most probably carried out at the initiative of the DRS). Moreover, in late 1993, the DRS created bogus counter-terrorist groups (such as OSRA and OJAL) supposed to have emanated from the ‘republican’ civil society, but which were in reality only labels to ‘camouflage’ the murders of Islamist supporters by DRS agents<sup>19</sup>.

The FIS – deliberately associated with the GIA – was presented in the press as the assassin “of intelligence and culture”. The *fatwa* declared by the Islamists against some civil society members who had supported the military coup arrived just when needed and could be use as an alibi for this campaign of terror. It had the expected results: most of the intellectuals in Algeria and in Europe remained silent, and many of them brought their unconditional support to the regime’s repressive policy.

Violence by armed extremist groups, whether manipulated or not, justified the abuses in the fight against terrorism; it gave the Generals the opportunity to rein in the true democrats (“The objective, for the army’s top command, is to make everybody feel unsafe, ‘bunker’ their lives and limit their expression<sup>20</sup>”) and to make the population, as well as the army, adhere to their anti-Islamist policy.

But the war was dirty and repression fierce. In many urban neighbourhoods, it fostered a movement of support towards the Islamists armed struggle, although it was also at times imposed through coercion. Thousands of young people joined the underground resistance and manipulations of all kinds reached such a high level that management of the violence slipped out of the hands of the security services.

### **1994-early 1996: Outburst of State hyper-violence**

From March 1994, the fight against terrorism was raised to another level: the aim was to make the population who voted for the FIS regret its political choice, while involving it in the war. The government benefited from unexpected support of the ‘international community’: after having promised in April to provide one billion dollars to Algeria, the IMF accepted in May to reschedule part of its external debt (at an estimated \$ 27.5 billion), and on 1 June,

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<sup>18</sup> See Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang, op. cit.*, p. 149.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 202-204.

<sup>20</sup> Abdelkader TIGHA, notes.

upon a pressing request from France, the Paris Club in turn signed “an agreement to reschedule Algeria’s debt by five billion dollars<sup>21</sup>”. Thanks to this fantastic economic breath of oxygen, the ‘Janvieriste’ Generals acquired considerable means to strongly increase state-sponsored terror.

Thousands of people were illegally arrested, systematically tortured in police stations or gendarmeries, and especially in DRS centres (the CTRI, see below), most of them were murdered. Smaïn Lamari asked the CTRI not to leave any trace<sup>22</sup>. Any suspect ought to be killed. Arrests took place day and night. The motto was ‘to terrorise terrorism’<sup>23</sup>.

A collective punishment strategy was put in place, as former DRS Captain Ouguenoune, aka ‘Haroun’, explained:

“To destroy the terrorists’ base and keep the people away from the Islamists, to make ‘fear switch sides’<sup>24</sup>”, the military and the police kill the suspects’ relatives<sup>25</sup>.”

This was confirmed by former Colonel Samraoui, who considered that Prime Minister Rédhha Malek’s statement:

“Expressed in a straight forward manner the new ‘Janvieriste’ programme: since the Islamists had not been successfully isolated from the population (their ‘natural habitat’), the population had to be isolated from the Islamists! Thus began the great massacres in the suspected former FIS fiefdoms, mainly in the region of Algiers – massacres which went underreported<sup>26</sup>.”

This strategy was accompanied by disappearances, summary executions, seizures of money and valuable objects but also by destruction of houses suspected of having sheltered armed groups.

The population was pushed to request weapons, an initiative that was encouraged at the time by the creation of armed state militias. By collaborating with gendarmes and the military who used them as DRS intelligence agents, they took the population in hand and privatised the war: problems were solved through weapons and in impunity.

The conflict became less and less understandable, confusion increased, and the lethal fury went on. In the course of the year 1995, by dint of eliminations and infiltrations, the DRS managed to make its agents – DRS officers pretending to be Islamists, or former Islamists who switched sides – gain effective control over most armed groups. Former Chief Sergeant Abdelkader Tigha for instance, revealed that GIA terrorists were often hosted at Blida’s CTRI:

“We cared for terrorists at our place; they spent nights at the infirmary. We gave them food and then brought them to civilian hospitals, before sending them back in the underground resistance<sup>27</sup>.”

In early 1996, almost all real opponents had been eliminated, the Islamist resistance against the military Coup was definitively discredited in the eyes of the national and international public opinion alike, and the Generals had obtained the support of Western countries (particularly thanks to the campaign of terrorist attacks in France carried out by the

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<sup>21</sup> Lounis AGGOUN and Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, *Françalgérie, crimes et mensonges d’États*, *op. cit.*, p. 377-378.

<sup>22</sup> Abdelkader TIGHA, notes.

<sup>23</sup> “Mounir, Le témoignage d’un officier”, *Le Monde*, 16 September 1994.

<sup>24</sup> According to the words of Prime Minister Rédhha Malek on 16 March 1994.

<sup>25</sup> Captain “Haroun”, “Ils soupçonnent la Sécurité militaire”, *Der Spiegel*, 12 January 1998.

<sup>26</sup> Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang*, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

<sup>27</sup> Abdelkader TIGHA, notes.

DRS using manipulated GIA Islamists)<sup>28</sup>. But the power struggle between the groups at the head of the country and their policy of terror were once again taking a heavy toll on the population.

### **1996-1998: building the Generals' power through terror, or the scorched earth policy.**

The clans in power reached a settlement: the pro-eradication Generals (Belkheir, Nezzar, Médiène, Lamari, etc.) wanted President Liamine Zéroual and his adviser General Mohamed Betchine to go, as they were suspected of making secret agreements with the FIS political leaders. May their side be heard: only the hard core of the military power must manage the country.

From early 1996, in order to weaken the presidential group but also to force civilians (including those from the region in the South of Algiers) to leave their villages, those in charge of repression widely resorted to the 'technique' of mass massacre, practiced by those called 'slaughterers' by the population (members of the special forces and DRS-controlled Islamist groups). Hundreds of thousands of people fled the massacre sites, cramming slums in the suburbs of the capital. Massacres succeeded one another, entire neighbourhoods or villages were attacked by bloodthirsty hordes, until the dramatic killings at the end of 1997. In October 1997, AIS negotiated with the DRS a unilateral truce, but this did not improve the situation.

However, DRS-controlled groups were used against the civilian population until President Liamine Zéroual resigned in September 1998. Anticipated presidential elections were announced to take place in April 1999. Massive fraud brought the army's candidate, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, to power.

### **1999-2004: maintaining diffuse terror, strengthening support from the international community**

A law of 'civil concord' granting shorter prison sentences for armed groups members who surrendered, provided they had not committed rapes or blood crimes, was approved in a referendum organised on 16 September 1999 (and flawed as usual). The few thousand armed men who 'surrendered' (released without trial in fact, which made the reintegration into the army of infiltrated DRS elements easier) made President Bouteflika say in June 2004, in total defiance of reality, that:

"Civil Concordia contributed to the re-establishment of safety and a return to age-old values of tolerance and dialogue of the Algerian people, hence facilitating a continuous widening of freedoms<sup>29</sup>".

In November 1999, the murder of Abdelkader Hachani, number three of the former FIS and key interlocutor for a solution to the crisis, definitely removed any chance for political solution to the conflict.

Torture, threats and murders decreased but still continued; racketeering, foul crimes and occasionally ambushes and massacres by 'Islamist groups' (when tensions occurred between the clans in power and in order to show their harmful potential) killed at least one hundred to two hundred people every month from 2000 to 2003 (and still at least fifty per month in 2004.)

The security forces did not hesitate to brutally quash any protest against injustice and misery. In April 2001, following provocations from the authorities, Kabylia flared and over

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<sup>28</sup> Lounis AGGOUN and Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, *Françalgérie, crimes et mensonges d'États*, *op. cit.*, p. 434-459.

<sup>29</sup> Memorandum presented by President Bouteflika at the 30th G8 Summit on 8 June 2004.

one hundred people were killed.

The population was kept in fear and the military power presented itself more than ever as the only protection against 'Islamist fundamentalism'. Since 11 September 2001, the 'Islamist threat' was turned into revenue; it guarantees unconditional support from Western states and aid, including in arms. The state of emergency, never repealed until today, prevents any substantial concession which could lead to democracy and the Rule of Law.

## II. Organs of repression

Progressively in 1992 and 1993, all of the army and a good part of the police and gendarmerie, i.e. over 300,000 men in total, engaged in the fight against terrorism. But in practice, repression was mainly led by a small part of the troops: the army's special forces, the special units of the police and gendarmerie and the Military Security agents (DRS). The war led by the latter was a secret war, made up of disinformation, manipulations, torture and murders.

Whereas the - unwritten - instructions organising the repression stemmed from 'conclaves' made up of the most influential Generals, chiefs of military regions and chiefs of units, it was in effect principally the DRS which, even before the start of the war in 1992, was in charge of the coordination of the repression, both 'official' (with the Centre of Command of the Anti-subversive action coordinating the army's special forces) and clandestine. The DRS chiefs had the information, elaborated strategies and, as they did not possess their own strike force – outside the GIS (Special Intervention Group) and the BMP (Military Police Battalions) – they used the staff of the army, the police and the militias according to their needs and objectives.

Before outlining the different structures used for repression, it is important to briefly introduce its main actors.

### The main actors

Since 1990 (and up to this day, fourteen years later), one can consider that effective power in Algeria is essentially concentrated in the hands of a handful of Generals, some of whom hold official functions and others not.

General-Major **Larbi Belkheir**, born in 1938, was the regime's mastermind during the 1980s. Former Secretary-General of the Presidency (1979-1986), then chief adviser to the President of the Republic (1986-1991), General-Major since 1991, this man held immense powers. In October 1991, he held the position of Minister of the Interior and supervised the conduct of the legislative elections and the organisation of the subsequent coup. He played a major role in the conduct of mass repression first directed against the FIS activists and supporters, in the dissolution of this party, and in the choice of Boudiaf as new President. Following the assassination of the president in June 1992, General Belkheir officially retired from political life (he resigned from his functions as Minister of the Interior) only to come back in April 1999 as President Bouteflika's chief of staff (a position he still holds as of September 2004).

In fact, he never stopped actively and directly participating in the organisation of power in Algeria<sup>30</sup>. As many testimonies prove, General Belkheir acted as the link between the civilian and military power. He could rely on the loyalty of the men he himself placed in the government, parties, the Central Bank and the services. He was considered by many observers as the 'godfather' of the system, benefiting throughout these years from unflinching and crucial support from the big names in French politics, both left and right-wing.

General-Major **Khaled Nezzar**, born in 1937, the other 'king-maker', was commander of the ANP's ground forces at the time of the riots in October 1988, against which he led a bloody repression (over five hundred killed). He was appointed straight afterwards as ANP Chief of Staff, and one month after the sweeping victory of the FIS in the July 1990 local

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<sup>30</sup> Read on this subject Lounis AGGOUN and Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, *Françalgérie, crimes et mensonges d'États*, *op. cit.*

elections, he became Minister of Defence, a position that had been reserved since 1965 for the President of the Republic. In (almost) total harmony with Belkheir, Nezzar became the ultimate decision-maker within the government. He played an important role in the dismissal, in June 1991, of the pro-reform Prime Minister Mouloud Hamrouche, and subsequently became, during the coup of January 1992, a member of the High State Committee, the collegial presidency organ directed by Mohamed Boudiaf. In July 1993, he retired from his ministerial functions but remained in the High State Committee, which was dissolved in January 1994.

Since this date, General Nezzar no longer has any official functions, but together with Larbi Belkheir, he exerted significant influence throughout the 1990s: he supported the appointment of the Generals who have been leading the war since 1992, he had the ears and his own networks at the head of the army and the secret services. Since 1999, his influence on the effective power is thought to have greatly decreased.

The army corps General **Mohamed Lamari**, born in 1939, was Chief Commander of the ANP's ground forces between 1989 and April 1992. He also played a key role in the organisation of the putsch of January 1992, having been shunned by President Boudiaf who did not consider him as showing enough respect for his authority, he made a strong comeback after the latter's assassination in June 1992. With the support of General Nezzar, he took in September 1992 the head of the structure for the coordination of counter-terrorist elite troops after advocating in favour of its creation (CCC/ALAS, see below) and found himself in possession of substantial material and human resources and therefore with extraordinary powers of repression. He became ANP Chief of Staff in July 1993, a position he held until his ousting in August 2004 and which put him at the forefront of the 'fight against terrorism' throughout the years of 'dirty war'. He put the army at the service of two leaders of the special services, Generals Mohamed Médiène and Smaïn Lamari, thus reinforcing their powers.

Major-General **Mohamed Médiène** (aka 'Toufik'), born in 1939, a discrete man, trained in the USSR within the KGB, has been at the head of the DRS since September 1990 (until today). He has considerable weight in the political-military system and he was the main organiser, with his deputy Smaïn Lamari, of the 'special operations' in the war which started in 1992 (manipulation of Islamist violence, creation of death squads, organisation of enforced disappearances, etc.). He exerts, through his networks, a powerful influence over the media, political parties, business lobbies and the different branches of the army. Some observers consider him today as the most powerful man in the government, on an equal footing with Larbi Belkheir, or even in a position to replace him at the head of the effective power.

Major-General **Smaïn Lamari** (aka 'Smaïn'), right-hand man of Toufik, is since September 1990 (and up to this day) the chief of the Directorate for Counter-espionage (DCE), the main branch of the DRS. Working in the dark – nobody had seen his picture before early 2001 – 'Smaïn' has been since 1992 the prime operational responsible for clandestine activities carried out by the DRS, directly controlling the main centres of detention, torture and extra judicial executions, including the six CTRI (DRS branches in each military region, see below) and those of the police, as well as the DRS-controlled Islamist groups. Both a man of action and intelligence-gathering skills, he has the reputation, according to many observers, to make up the most twisted plans to better repress and manipulate. He is since 1985 the preferred interlocutor of the French DST.

Whereas these five men are the pillars of the repression led by the army and the special forces, many others – the chiefs having placed their supporters at every sensitive posts – have played an important role (see annex). Especially worth mentioning is General Kamel Abderrahmane, head of the DCSA (Central Security and Army Directorate), the other main branch of the DRS, from September 1990 until March 1996. And General Brahim Fodhil

Chérif, number two in the fight against terrorism led by the ANP's special forces<sup>31</sup>. And Colonel M'henna Djebbar, a close relation of Smaïn Lamari, head of Blida's CTRI from 1990 to 2003 and responsible for large -cale torture and murders; and Colonel (General since July 2003) Athmane Tartag, aka 'Bachir', head of the CPMI in Ben-Aknoun from August 1990 until March 2001, who also widely resorted to torture.

These men's influence and their alliances fluctuated in the course of this bloody period, but the strength of this small circle of decision-makers lays undisputedly in their ability to remain united on the main objective, i.e. the preservation of their political, military and economic power.

### **The organisation of the DRS (Department of Intelligence and Security)**

At the time it was reconstituted in September 1990 under the name 'DRS' (with its seat at the Delly-Brahim barracks, in the Western suburbs of Algiers), the former SM was reorganised as we have seen in three main directorates, under the direction of General Mohamed Médiène, aka "Tewfik" (still in this position today):

— The Directorate for Counter-espionage (DCE), headed by Colonel Smaïn Lamari (up to this day), with its headquarters on avenue Ahmed-Ghermoul in Algiers ('Ghermoul Centre');

— The Central Directorate of Army Security (DCSA), headed by Colonel Kamel Abderrahmane (until May 1996);

— The Directorate for Documentation and External Security (DDSE), headed by Colonel Saïdi Fodhil; it did not play any role in the fight against terrorism, even more so that its first director was in a disagreement with the other heads of the DRS about the conduct of the war (he was removed from his post in July 1994, and was assassinated – by them, according to all available information<sup>32</sup> — two years later); from July 1994 (headed by General Hassan Bendjelti, then by General Rachid Laalali, aka "Attafi", a supporter of Smaïn Lamari, still in this position in 2004), the DDSE used its agents overseas to survey and intimidate opponents in exile.

#### *The Directorate for counter-espionage (DCE)*

The main mission of the DCE, in contradiction with its official name, is to survey and infiltrate the population. It comprises several services and under-directorates, which seemed to have been given different names and mandates throughout the years. Secret by definition, this organisation is only known, in a fragmented manner, through the revelations made by military dissidents, such as the former Colonel Mohamed Samraoui and the former Chief Sergeant Abdelkader Tigha.

At the beginning of the war, Samraoui mentions within the DCE, the special role of the Service for Research and Analysis (SRA, which he directed from March 1990 until June 1992) and of the Main Operations Center (CPO). These two structures complemented one another: The SRA collected information for the DCE, which in turn gave orders to the CPO.

\* The SRA (Service for Research and Analysis), located since 1991 at the 'Antar Center', is in charge of five main missions:

- *Internal security*, "This means controlling political parties and mass organisations

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<sup>31</sup> Appointed General in July 1993, he was Assistant Commander of the CCC/ALAS from 1992 to 1995, Chief of Staff of the Gendarmerie National from March 1995 to July 1997, then head of the Department for employment-preparation at the Staff Headquarters until February 2000, then Commander of the first military region (Blida-Alger), until August 2004, when he was removed.

<sup>32</sup> See in particular Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang*, op. cit., p. 277 sq.

(trade unions, student unions...), controlling the press, and ‘centres of interest’ (justice, ports, airports, hotels...), participating in the administrative activities of the *wilayas* (the equivalent of French departments), the *dairas* (the equivalent of sub-prefectures) and the communes; and also designing prospective analysis needed for commandment decisions and preparing the activities of operational services<sup>33</sup>;

- *Counter-espionage* deals with foreigners, diplomatic staff and foreign companies and enterprises;

- *Economic prevention* deals with the fight against economic criminality and everything related to labour issues (trade unions, strikes ...) and with the management of ‘preventive security assistants’ put in place in each State institution;

- *Prospecting and authorization enquiries* is used to appoint personalities to high level State functions;

-*Monitoring of the press.*

\* The CPO (Main Operations Center), called ‘Antar Center’ (located in Ben-Aknoun, in Algiers’ Western suburbs, near the zoological park), is in charge of the illegal activities of the DRS (surveillance, tailing, secret searches, abductions, interrogations, false evidence, infiltrations, set-up of armed Islamic groups...) <sup>34</sup>. The CPO is also a major torture centre <sup>35</sup> (of members of the security services, soldiers and civilians). It was headed from 1990 until May 1992 by Commander Amar Guettouchi, then by Colonel Farid Ghobrini and since 1995 by Colonel Kamel Hamoud.

\* The CTRI (Territorial Research and Investigation Centres) are branches of the DCE in each of the six military regions. They are the product of the fusion, in March 1993, of the ‘CRI’ (Regional Investigation Centres, under the authority of the DCE) and the ‘CMI’ (military Investigation Centres, under the authority of the DCSA). From 1994, these centres (in particular those of Oran, Constantine and Blida) have played a deciding role in the organisation of the fight against terrorism. Not only did they set up their agents in administrations, public services and companies, but they controlled every counter-terrorist unit at the operational level.

The CTRI were led to infiltrate and manipulate the GIA and the AIS and to participate in the creation of militias. They played a major role in arrests, torture and elimination of tens of thousands of civilians (especially between 1994 and 1998). We shall see that their activities were supported by other DRS structures: the Judicial Police Service, the Gendarmerie, the PCO and the GIS.

\* The PCO (Post of Operational Command), Samraoui explained, was:

“Created in 1991 in Aïn-Naâdja, as the state of siege was declared; first named basic Operations Commandment, the PCO dealt from the coup of January 1992 with the coordination of the repression activities of the different security services— DRS, DGSN and National Gendarmerie; placed under the authority of Colonel Smaïl Lamari, it is located since April 1992 in the Chateauneuf barracks<sup>36</sup>”.

The PCO regrouped all the judicial police brigades of the country, those of Algiers’ harbour and international airport, as well as regional judicial police services (see below the section devoted to the role of the police) and it collaborated with the CTRI and the special

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<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>35</sup> ALGERIA-WATCH and Salah-Eddine SIDHOUM, *Algérie, la machine de mort. Un rapport sur la torture, les centres de détentions secrets et l’organisation de la machine de mort*, October 2003, <[www.algeria-watch.org](http://www.algeria-watch.org)>.

<sup>36</sup> Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang, op. cit.*, p. 316.

troops.

This service, endowed with unmarked vehicles and substantial technical resources, was composed of the following sections: visual surveillance and tailing section (the PCO monitors the evolution of agents on the ground, records and films their contacts with their recruiting agent); locksmith section (used for searches ...); secret photography section; telephone tapping section; protection section (protection from all contact with an agent).

As they work with the DRS, the Gendarmerie and the police were led to carry out round-ups, arrests and resort to torture. Smaïn Lamari freed all men at the post of command from all existing legal rules; they had carte blanche.

This new service allowed the Directorate for Counter-espionage not only to carry out larger repression operations and to collect intelligence, but also to teach gendarmes and police officers arbitrary arrests and torture. The use of torture was made widespread since 1992 in all police stations and gendarmeries. The PCO was officially 'dissolved' in the summer of 1998, at the time of the visit by the UN panel, but it remains a police centre.

\* The ONRB (National Office for the Repression of Banditry), created in April 1992 at the initiative of General Larbi Belkheir, was the first centre for management of anti-subversive action. Theoretically under the authority of the Police Command (DGSN), it was in fact under the control of the DCE, thus strengthening in effect the control of the police by the DRS. Located in Châteauneuf, it was also considered to be the first torture and execution centre. Its nickname was 'El Akhira', which can be translated as the Beyond or Hell. .

It was constituted of special police units ('ninjas' wearing blue uniforms), the gendarmerie and GIS members, and dealt with secret operations amongst others (creation of fake underground resistance, infiltration of armed groups, creation of groups of real Islamists but controlled by DRS members, etc.).

The objective behind the creation of the ONRB was – according to former Colonel Samraoui – to make the international public opinion believe “that the fight against Islamic extremism was not led by the services and by the army, but by the police<sup>42</sup>”. It was dissolved three months after its creation (although the word ONRB or 'brigades for the repression of banditry' continued to be used subsequently to name the PCO and its branches). All its chiefs (including police Superintendent Tahar Kraâ, seconded by Superintendents Mohamed Issouli and Mohamed Ouaddah) continued to 'operate' at the PCO – placed under direct control of General Smaïn Lamari.

In September 1992, a new centre for the management of anti-subversive struggle was created (the Centre for Conduct and Coordination of Anti-Subversive Action), although officially under the authority, as we shall see, of the army (which however did not weaken the central role of the DCE, much less 'official').

#### *The Central Directorate for Army Security (DCSA)*

The mission of the DCSE, second directorate of the DRS, is in principle specifically

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<sup>37</sup> Voir notamment Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang, op. cit.*, p. 277 sq.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>40</sup> ALGERIA-WATCH et Salah-Eddine SIDHOUM, *Algérie, la machine de mort. Un rapport sur la torture, les centres de détentions secrets et l'organisation de la machine de mort*, octobre 2003, <[www.algeria-watch.org](http://www.algeria-watch.org)>.

<sup>41</sup> Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang, op. cit.*, p. 316.

<sup>42</sup> Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang, op. cit.*, p. 208.

military: it is to protect the army's personnel and infrastructures. In fact, under the direction (from 1990 to 1996) of Colonel Kamel Abderrahmane, the DCSA often occupied a competitive position vis à vis the DCE in the implementation of clandestine operations of repression, especially from January 1992. The main DCSA structures are:

\* The CPMI (Main Military Investigation Centre, located in Ben-Aknoun) was headed from 1990 to March 2001 by Colonel Athmane Tartag, aka 'Bachir'. It was first used, after the Coup of January 1992, to watch and repress the 'dubious members' of the different army corps: many army members suspected of supporting the FIS were arrested, tortured and liquidated there. According to the MAOL, some CPMI members created, in early 1992, a death squad ('Unit 192'), in charge of the elimination of 'refractory' officers. It widened its activities from 1993 to include the elimination of civilians (see below). Pursuing this hidden policy, it played an essential role in the manipulation of the FIS by setting up Islamist core groups in the border areas and later created armed groups from scratch<sup>43</sup>. The CPMI was also one of the main centres for the elimination and torture of opponents<sup>44</sup>.

\* The CMI (Military Investigation Centres), branches of the CPMI in the six military regions were merged in March 1993 with the Research and Investigation Centres (CRI) of the DCE:

\* The BPM (Military Police Battalions): the 90th (Béni-Messous) and 91st BPM (Blida), known under the name 'red berets', were created respectively in 1990 and 1991 (which explains their name; others were created later). They were used by the DCSA Command to extend its power by taking part in different security and order operations. They became famous on several occasions for their brutal and violent methods<sup>45</sup>.

#### *The Press and Documentation Service*

Also known as 'Communication and Dissemination Centre' (CCD, located in the Belaroussi Centre), this service is under direct authority of the head of the DRS General Mohammed Médiène, and is in charge of media control: censorship, publication of statements, articles to publish. It was directed by Colonel Djillali Meraou, aka 'Salah', until its assassination on 19 February 1995, he was then replaced by Colonel Tahri Zoubir, aka Hadj Zoubir or El-Hadj, who was himself replaced in December 2001 by Colonel Faouzi. Thanks to networks in Algeria and agents in the different national daily newspapers, the CCD, benefiting from large resources and informed about methods of opinion conditioning, was able to promote in a very efficient way the official interpretation of the conflict: the right struggle of the army against Islamic barbarism.

It is composed of four services: Exploitation and Manipulation (recruitment and management of agents); Operational Support (arrest and processing of potential agents); Support and Control (media control); Analysis and Processing (Analysis and processing of information and media strategy).

#### *The Special Intervention Group (GIS)*

The GIS was created in 1987 based on the model of the French GIGN, with military supervision and police staff. Its mission was rather offensive in character<sup>46</sup>. From June 1991, it participated in counter-terrorism activities and its human resources were increased (about 300 men). GIS intervention brigades were set up near sensitive spots around the country: in Boufarik near the air base, in Algiers and in Blida. According to the former Second-

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>44</sup> ALGERIA-WATCH and Salah-Eddine SIDHOUM, *Algérie, la machine de mort, op. cit.*

<sup>45</sup> Habib SOUAÏDIA, *La Sale Guerre, op. cit.*, p. 182.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

Lieutenant Habib Souaïdia:

“These men received commando training in the EATS in Biskra. There, they were supervised by North-Korean instructors [...] [who] taught them [...] a Korean martial art called Kuk Sool. [...] Whoever could master [this combat technique] could easily kill with bare hands<sup>47</sup>.”

Its men were present in every police station and in every military barracks of some importance. In each CTRI, a GIS unit of about 50 men wearing black outfits and carrying specific weapons supported the Judicial Police Service during the curfew in urban counter terrorist operations (attacks, arrests, ‘cleaning’ of the bodies of assassinated persons thrown in front of their homes or in other places). The DRS units could call upon this body at any time of the day and night. It possessed its own vehicles (armoured Toyotas) and heavy and sophisticated weapons<sup>48</sup>.

### **The repression forces within the ANP (Popular National Army)**

#### *The military regions*

The heads of the six military regions were part of the small group of high-level decision-making officials. Containing the wide majority of the Algerian population, the three northern military regions have an indisputable political importance. The 1st military region, the most strategic one, comprises Algiers, Kabylia and Mitidja; its headquarters is in Blida and it covers around 60% of the army. The headquarters of the 2<sup>nd</sup> military region (West) is in Oran, and the 5<sup>th</sup> region’s (East) is in Constantine. Among the three Southern regions, the 4<sup>th</sup> (South-East, headquarters: Ouargla) has a particular weight: this is the oil (black gold) region, the stake of power. The 3<sup>rd</sup> one (South-West, HQ: Béchar), facing the Moroccan ‘enemy’, is also important; lastly, the 6th region (HQ: Tamanrasset) controls the deep South.

The Ground Forces Command (CFT), Air Force Command (CFDAT) and Naval Forces Command (CFN) were created in 1986. Only the first two played a significant role in the repression since 1992. Their units are under the authority of the head of each military region, but, as a way to prevent military coups, they only received orders from the ANP’s chief of staff.

#### *The Ground Forces Command (CFT, located in Aïn-Naâdja)*

The ground forces are the framework of the ANP, it was made up in the early 1990s of 160,000 men, on top of which came a major part of the conscripts, around 185,000 men<sup>49</sup>. Its different corps (special troops, gendarmerie, motorised infantry, armour, artillery, transport units and so on) were not all involved in the same way in the ‘dirty war’.

However, it is almost impossible to recreate a precise organizational chart of the forces which were in principle placed under the command of the CFT. First, this is because information on this subject remains secret and further because responsibilities and structures evolved throughout the years. Lastly and above all, it is because such a chart does not really exist.

The ‘decision-makers’ doubled the official chains of command with secret chains of command (in reality largely controlled by the DRS chiefs, Mohamed Médiène and Smâïn Lamari), both to guarantee impunity for those responsible for illegal repression and to remove the risk of opposition to illegal orders from legalistic officers.

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<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>48</sup> Abdelkader TIGHA, notes.

<sup>49</sup> Nicole CHEVILLARD, “Algérie: l’après-guerre civile”, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

For these reasons, the information provided below only deals with the general outline of the involvement of the different segments of the ANP in repression and state terrorism since 1992, which was established in an almost certain manner.

\* The para-commandos of the special troops (a few thousand men only) played a major role alongside the DRS units, the police and the Gendarmerie, in the fierce repression unleashed against the civilian population since 1992, and especially from 1994. Their activities were coordinated by the Centre for Conduct and Coordination of Anti-subversive Actions (CCC/ALAS), created in September 1992 and placed under the command of General Mohamed Lamari (see below).

\* The regular troops were mostly used for closure and combing operations prior to the interventions by the special troops and the DRS units. Poorly trained and equipped, its members were the main victims of the lethal ambushes by Islamist armed groups, whether independent or DRS-controlled.

\* The Gendarmerie first functioned, from January 1992, in a rather autonomous manner for the maintenance of public order (its area of activities focused mainly on town suburbs and rural areas, leaving urban centres to the police), but it was quickly integrated into the different structures set up during the counter-terrorist campaign. Between 1990 and 1995, its members multiplied by three to reach 80,000 men. The gendarmes commonly resorted to torture on their premises and participated to several arrest and reprisal operations. They were also in charge, after each execution or massacre, of picking up the bodies and burying them anonymously, according to the former Chief Sergeant Tigha, from the CTRI in Blida.

Moreover, the Gendarmerie was also endowed with 'special' units, the GIR (Rapid Intervention Groups). In the region of Algiers, the GIR 1 (located in Chérâga) and the GIR 2 (located in Réghaïa) played a particularly active role in the repression<sup>50</sup>

\* The Republican Guard, headed from 1991 to February 2000 by Major-General Dib Makhlof. Its mission, in principle, is to protect the President's residence. However it was also used for search and arrests operations, in collaboration with members of the DRS and of the militias<sup>51</sup>.

#### *The Air Defence Command (CFDAT, located in Cheraga)*

The air force has helicopter combat units, equipped with rocket launchers and infra-red vision systems to operate at night, which played an important role throughout the war. The Bouafrik airbase, headquarter of the GLAM (military air liaison group), which was kept in a permanent state of alert, played a key role (it was used amongst other to transport thousands of deportees to the camps in the South in 1992).

According to 'Malik', an air force officer who surrendered in 1997:

"The air force is involved in this war, in particular its operational squads of MI 17 and MI 8 helicopters stationed in Blida. This is how in the search and arrest operations and the bombings on Mitidja, Chlef or Laghouat, the air force played an essential role. The aim was to do away with the Islamist armed resistance, but also to make it a lesson for the population hostile to the authorities, even if that meant eradicating whole sections of it."<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Habib SOUAÏDIA, *La Sale Guerre, op. cit.*, p. 87.

<sup>51</sup> See the testimonies on the disappearances: <[www.algeria-watch.org/mrv/2002/liste\\_disparitions/disparitions\\_liste\\_a.htm](http://www.algeria-watch.org/mrv/2002/liste_disparitions/disparitions_liste_a.htm)>.

<sup>52</sup> "Malik", "C'est l'armée qui massacre", testimony collected by Algeria-Watch in early 1999, <[www.algeria-watch.org/farticle/aw/awtermalik.htm](http://www.algeria-watch.org/farticle/aw/awtermalik.htm)>.

*The special troops and the Centre for Conduct and Coordination of Anti-subversive Action  
(CCC/ALAS)*

The ‘special troops’, an army within the army, essentially composed of specifically trained paratroopers, played, as we have mentioned, the most important role in the ‘official’ repression.

Deeming the management of the fight against terrorism by the Gendarmerie, the police and the GIS to be insufficiently efficient, General Mohamed Lamari carried out in effect a “real internal power coup within the army<sup>53</sup>” and imposed on his peers, from September 1992, the constitution of a real armed corps specialised in anti-guerrilla struggle: the Centre for Conduct and Coordination of Anti-subversive Actions (CCC/ALAS, most commonly referred to as CCLAS or CLAS), under the command of General Mohamed Lamari and his right-hand man, General Brahim Fodhil Chérif (and from 1993 General Saïd Bey<sup>54</sup>).

Former Second-Lieutenant Habib Souaïdia, who was himself then a member of one of the regiments of the CCLAS (the 25<sup>th</sup> RR), explained in his book:

“The CCLAS was composed of five elite units in charge of combat: the 25th reconnaissance regiment (25th RR), under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Daoud, the 18th airborne regiment (18th RAP, later renamed 18th RPC) of Hassi-Messaoud, commanded by Colonel Alaymia; the 12th paratroopers regiment (12th RPC) of Biskra, commanded by Colonel Athamnia; the 4<sup>th</sup> RAP (which later became RPC) based in Laghouat, which came under the command of Major Tlemçani (who was until then number 2 of the EATS); and the 90<sup>th</sup> military police battalion (9th BPM), the ‘red berets’ commanded by Colonel Bendjenna. From early 1993, these 5 regiments were redeployed in the region of Algiers. Units belonging to the DRS and several logistical units were also under the authority of the CCLAS and assisted the special forces regiments. In total, the CCLAS was made up [initially] of about 6,500 men, including 3,500 for the special forces only<sup>55</sup>.”

According to former Colonel Samraoui, the CCLAS also had at its disposal the “Gendarmerie’s Rapid Intervention Group (GIR) and elements of the DCSA in charge of supervising and directing combing, arrest and neutralisation operations<sup>56</sup>”. Souaïdia also specified that it exercised its control over “the Gendarmerie and other army components part of the ‘regular’ troops: the Ground Force Command, (CFT, under the direction of General Gaïd Salah, which controlled the different units of the Ground Forces: infantry, armour, transmissions, artillery, etc.) the Air Force Command (CFA), the Air Defence Command (CFDAT) and the Naval Forces Command (CFN)<sup>57</sup>”. The personnel of the CCLAS steadily increased subsequently:

“Starting in 1995, the five initial special forces regiments were strengthened by several new units specifically created, such as the 1st RPC (Tébessa), the 5th RPC (Djidjel), the 85<sup>th</sup> BPM (El-Harrouch) and the 93<sup>rd</sup> BPM (Oran)<sup>58</sup>.”

In March 1993, six ‘Anti-Subversive Operational Centres’ (COLAS) were created, as structures of the CCLAS in the first military region (region of Algiers and surrounding areas),

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<sup>53</sup> Nicole CHEVILLARD, “Algérie: l’après-guerre civile”, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

<sup>54</sup> In May 1994, General Saïd Bey was appointed chief of the 1st military region (Centre). In September 1997, considered in this regard as directly responsible for the non-intervention of the army in the great massacres in the region of Algiers, he was ‘sanctioned’ by President Zéroual and sent on a posting in Brussels, as military attaché. After this golden ‘purgatory’, on 24 February 2000, he took the helm of the 5th military region (Constantine), until August 2004, when he took the command of the 2<sup>nd</sup> military region (Oran).

<sup>55</sup> Habib SOUAÏDIA, *La Sale Guerre, op. cit.*, p. 71.

<sup>56</sup> Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang, op. cit.*, p. 192.

<sup>57</sup> Habib SOUAÏDIA, *La Sale Guerre, op. cit.*, p. 72.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 184.

the most populated region of the country. The setting up of these tight control structures rigorously followed the precepts of the so-called ‘modern warfare’ doctrine (or ‘revolutionary warfare’) which was theorised and carried out in Algeria by the French army during the war of independence.

The six COLAS supervised the local activities of the police, the Gendarmerie, an ANP section and later of militias<sup>59</sup>. Its heads directly reported to the ANP Chief of Staff Mohamed Lamari.

The COLAS closely collaborated with the CTRI of Blida, a unit of the DRS (DCE) at the level of the 1st military region. The CTRI defined the targets to engage and could keep the nature of the missions secret. For instance, as was related by Abdelkader Tigha, for some night operations, the CTRI informed the relevant operational sector of the time and the place where the teams would come out. The operational sector instructed those units located close by not to intervene; this was in order to avoid ‘blunders’ from taking place and for the CTRI not to disclose the intended objective (according to Tigha, this scenario was notably used during the massacres perpetrated in the outskirts of Algiers in Autumn 1997, by ‘Islamist’ groups controlled and supervised by the DRS).

From 1993 the army, thanks to the CCLAS, was omnipresent. It was the pillar of the repression led against the Islamists and the civilian population, but it did not yet have its own intelligence service. The DRS possessed the security intelligence, controlled the strategy and the numerous manipulations. Thus, its chiefs never lost their actual supremacy over the army. And the military worked closely with the DRS units. Smaïn Lamari (DCE) and Kamel Abderrahmane (DCSA) were in permanent contact with Mohamed Lamari and his high-level officers.

### **Repression forces within the police**

The Judicial Police was in principle under the authority of the General Directorate for National Security (DGSN), under the jurisdiction of the Interior Ministry and not of the Defence Ministry. However, from April 1992, with the creation of the National Office for the Repression of Banditry, it was in effect transferred under the control of the DCE, which also used its police stations as torture centres (the most infamous centres then in Algiers were the central police station and those of Cavaignac and Chateauneuf, headquarters of the PCO). Below are two significant policemen’s testimonies, collected in 1998:

“One of our jobs was to cut off the electricity [...] One of our men destroyed the power supply system, putting twenty to thirty houses in complete darkness. We were in charge of surveying the area, but not of acting. The Military Security entered and came out after a while [...] After they left, we cleared the premises. Sixteen bodies were there, all slaughtered<sup>60</sup>...”

“The policemen ought to know nothing about the GIA. During the fight we had with these groups, we managed to arrest some of their members. We were told that specialists would be in charge of the investigation and that we were not in charge of the case anymore. In reality, the order came from the SM and we do not know where they took the persons we had arrested. [...] The members of the SM came at night to pick up the suspects we had arrested. The chief of the Security told me that he could not do anything against the military, that they had the power and that he could only execute orders<sup>61</sup>.”

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<sup>59</sup> ALGERIA-WATCH and Salah-Eddine SIDHOUM, *Algérie, la machine de mort, op. cit.*

<sup>60</sup> Policeman quoted by John SWEENEY, “Atrocités en Algérie: “Nous étions les meurtriers qui ont tué pour l’État” *The Observer*, 11 January 1998.

<sup>61</sup> Kamel B., police officer, “À propos de terrorisme...”, testimony collected by Algeria-Watch between mid-1998 and mid-1999.

In the rural areas, the Judicial Police was supported by military outposts, whose main task was to surround villages. In many occasions it also collaborated with the Gendarmerie and the army, with the CTRI (in Blida, the Judicial Police had an ‘exploitation’ office – for questioning – a ‘treatment’ room – for torture – and jails) and even committed massacres upon order of the DRS (especially from 1994), according to the testimony of former Chief Sergeant Abdelkader Tigha about the CTRI of Blida:

“Whereas the judicial police arrested people during the day, at their workplace, at home or in the street, the night-time operations were joint CTRI-Police operations, or in the case of mass arrests, joint operations with the GIS with the participation of military units (such as the 40th mechanised infantry division) and the special forces (such as the 18th RPC). [...] These collective killings became routine work for the service [the CTRI of Blida]. The police too – each territorial centre gave orders to the police in its area of competence – acquired experience and started to execute people. The morning after, it met the families who came to complain about the disappearance of their children, the same killers recorded disappearances<sup>62</sup>.”

The members of the judicial police in charge of these operations, as Tigha explained, were famous killers, who had neither conscience nor no soul. The judicial police services also intervened in prisons to recruit Islamists as double agents, again according to Tigha:

“The Judicial Police Service was the only service authorised to enter every prison. The main objective was to enrol an important number of former Islamist prisoners [...] to make them work for the benefit of the CTRI. At the civilian prison in Blida, microphones were installed in all the detention rooms with the complicity of the local justice. [...] The situation in the prison was monitored from a CTRI station. [...] When there were some suspects, the CTRI would send requests to the judicial authorities for the transfer of the detainees to the CTRI (such requests were never opposed by the judicial authorities). Once tortured, they were sent back to their prison<sup>63</sup>...”

Lastly, the BMPJ (Judicial Police Mobile Brigades) were under the authority of the regional judicial police service and collaborated with the CTRI in all anti-subversive operations. Their men travelled in Nissan four-wheel drives and wore blue outfits with masks. The population called them the ‘Ninja’s Nissans’.”

### **The militias**

Some political parties close to the ruling clique, such as the Rally for Culture and Democracy (RDC), took the initiative from 1993 to organise the population in self-defence militias. Set up amongst other places in Kabylia<sup>64</sup> (but also in the region of Algiers), these first militias were the armed wings of those parties and of regional associations.

However, the first groups of civilians armed by the DRS appeared in March 1994. They represented the government in rural areas which had been abandoned by the State. They were ruled by small local despots famous for all kinds of trafficking activities and for their adherence to some political parties. The militiamen were very often young rural people whose brother or uncle had been killed by Islamist opponents and fostered a deep desire for revenge. They worked with the police and gendarmerie forces and were placed under the authority of their operational sector (COLAS).

Those militias were foremost in charge of setting up ambushes in orchards and woodlands, but they were also used by the DRS to gather intelligence and carry out arrests and physical eliminations: “Now it has changed, it is not the Islamists who cut heads off any

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<sup>62</sup> Abdelkader TIGHA, notes.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> Luis MARTINEZ, *La guerre civile en Algérie*, Karthala, Paris, 1998, p. 235.

more, but militiamen<sup>65</sup>.”

From 1996 especially, those regions which refused to take up arms were subject to frightful reprisals: no more supplies, no more electricity and killings were committed in the name of the GIA. However, the authorities refused for years to provide the residents of areas which had voted in favour of the FIS and supported the rebellion with means of self-defence, until they became victims of large-scale massacres in 1997 and 1998<sup>66</sup>.

Some of the ‘patriots’ quickly acted beyond the authority they had initially been assigned and became real ‘warlords’. Sometimes enjoying a double power (paramilitary and administrative when they replaced FIS mayors removed in the wake of the coup), they first targeted the families of FIS supporters, acting as real DRS death squads. In such cases, the DRS identified targets and patriots came at night to surround the doyards, search and kill, confident that they enjoyed impunity. If truth came out, the incriminated patriots were posted in state companies as security guards. Whatever they did, their actions were shielded by the Services.

Perhaps fearing the reactions of international public opinion, in January 1997, the army Chief of Staff Mohamed Lamari ordered the patriots to change their names to be called ‘Self-Defence Group’ (GLD). They were made official under this name that same year. In reality, patriots were used day and night as a back-up army and played a major role in the escalation of violence, amplifying the vicious circle of retaliation.

In parallel, the Interior Ministry created in 1994 a ‘communal guard’ to control urban areas. Considering the dire economic situation of young Algerians, being employed in the security sector was a great opportunity. Its members did not leave urban centres and suburbs and were only operational within city limits. The communal guards were at times accompanied in their work by the GIS and special units in plain clothes. Their members seemed to have reached 50,000, but the whole group of paramilitaries counted approximately 200,000 men<sup>67</sup>, more than the national army (not including the conscripts).

### **The hidden organs of repression: the fake underground resistance and the ‘death squads’**

In his book *Chronique des années de sang* [tr. Chronicle of the Bloody Years], subtitled “Algérie: comment les services secrets ont manipulé les groupes islamistes”, [tr. ‘Algeria: how the secret services manipulated the Islamist groups’], the former DCE Colonel Mohammed Samraoui, who worked in Algiers under the direct orders of his superior, Smaïn Lamari, from March 1990 until June 1992, explains the setting up, sometimes even before the coup of January 1992, of clandestine repressive structures which were to play, in his view, an important role later on by creating, in diverse forms, real ‘death squads’.

#### \* The creation within the DRS of a clandestine ‘protection section’ in 1990:

“Soon after [...] the end of October 1990, Smaïn Lamari created within the CPO (Main Operations Centre) a ‘protection section’. This structure, which had no legal character, was not mentioned in the organisational chart of the DCE. [...] Entrusted to Lieutenant Maachou, [it] was originally composed of around thirty members and received its orders directly from Smaïn Lamari. In order to cover-up the true aims of this structure (which inspired from March 1992 the grim ‘death squads’ of the DCSA [...]), these men (all of them highly experienced second officers) were officially posted as body guards and drivers for the Generals Khaled Nezzar [...], Larbi Belkheir, Abdelmalek Guenaïzia, etc. [...] During the

<sup>65</sup> Quoted by Luis MARTINEZ, *La guerre civile en Algérie, op. cit.*, p. 236.

<sup>66</sup> See the study “Les massacres”.

<sup>67</sup> The authorities have never given the exact number of militiamen. Some newspaper quoted the unlikely figure of 500,000.

years of war which followed the suspension of the electoral process in January 1992, this illegal structure played an important role<sup>68</sup>.”

It then turned into an instrument of terror, Samraoui explained, and focused on making journalists, policemen, judges, intellectuals and even members of the military join the side of the Islamists. It harassed them and frightened them with the same methods used by the Islamists, thus spreading confusion: threats, anonymous calls, sending shrouds and soap – a sign that their death was programmed – and through a rumour that there existed a black list of people to murder, established by the FIS activists<sup>69</sup>. Equipped with communication systems, weapons and ammunition, it also participated in the abduction of those thwarting the plans of the DRS chiefs.

\* The creation of ‘fake underground resistance’ by the DRS in 1991 and 1993:

“In April 1991, i.e. two months before the date of the legislative elections initially scheduled for 27 June (they were postponed until 26 December 1991 following the strike by the FIS and the institution of the state of emergency), Colonel Smaïn Lamari entrusted in my presence Major Guettouchi to create Islamist core groups to be under the total control of DRS agents and to supervise their coordination: the idea was that each agent should control a group of five to ten men. There was no question yet of creating armed groups *ex nihilo* (at least at the level of the DCE, such policy was however quickly implemented by the DCSA), but only networks to supervise and control those FIS activists ready to follow the watchword of ‘civil disobedience’ advocated by the ‘tough ones’ in the party (like Saïd Makhloufi), as well as young Islamist radicals hostile to the legalistic policy of the FIS and who had started to switch to clandestine activities with a view to joining the underground resistance. [...]

“In the three main military regions, the heads of the local units of the DCE (the CRI), Majors Djebbar (Blida), Waheb (Oran) and Farid (Constantine), actively contributed to the creation of those Islamist core groups. Most of the *katibate* composed of six to twelve men were directly controlled by some ‘Emirs’ who were in fact officers of the services (such as Chief Sergeants Nacer and Omar in the 5<sup>th</sup> military region’s CRI), or else by Islamist activists agents of the DRS. The other branch of the DRS, the DCSA, focused on border areas, such as the region of El Oued, Bechar or Tlemcen<sup>70</sup>.”

While real underground resistance was preparing ready (it only became active from early 1992), the DRS was also starting to organise ‘fake resistance’, first targeting policemen and civil servants and later the real underground resistance.

\* The creation by the DRS of death squads in 1992 and 1993

Other ‘death squads’, following the more classic ‘model’ developed by the French army during the battle of Algiers in 1957<sup>71</sup>, were created from 1992 by the heads of the DRS. Captain Hacine Ouguenoune, spokesperson for the MAOL (Algerian Movement of Free Officers), described the existence of a ‘unit 192’ or ‘squadron 192’, with the ultimate goal of eliminating members of the military opposing the ‘eradication’ strategy of their superiors:

“Many high level officers – even within these services – who refused to execute orders were simply liquidated and their liquidation was later cynically attributed to the Islamist groups. These army members were eliminated by a ‘death squad’ created by Larbi Belkheir. The group’s management was given exclusively to General Smaïn (then a Colonel) and he is the one who created this ‘squadron 192’: 1 for the month of January and 92 symbolising the year of the coup. The number of officers they liquidated is unbelievable. Doing this, they killed two birds with one stone: on the one hand, they liquidated the opponent officers and on the other hand their death was used to fuel hatred among the other officers as they were

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<sup>68</sup> Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang, op. cit.*, p. 70.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>71</sup> Marie-Monique ROBIN, *Escadrons de la mort, l’école française, op. cit.*

told they had been killed by Islamists. Through this they also encouraged people to ‘go beyond’ and get further involved in the fight against terrorism<sup>72</sup>.”

The creation by the DRS of OJAL (Organisation of Free Young Algerians), a fictitious organisation (supposed to have stemmed from simple citizens opposed to Islamism) imagined at the end of 1993 by General Médiène, was proved by three concurring testimonies. Former Colonel Samraoui thus explained that OJAL:

“Signed its first activities as an alleged clandestine anti-Islamist civilian organization in November 1993. OJAL was most active in March and April 1994, but it claimed responsibility for dozens of murders, leaving a bloody and lasting trail in the region of Algiers, in Blida, Médéa, Chlef, Boufarik... Here is an example, among many others, of its acts: on 11 April 1994, the bodies of five murdered young persons were found with this message signed by OJAL: “This is the fate of those who help terrorists”

“Another victim of OJAL was Mohamed Bouslimani, President of the charity El Islah oua El Irshad, a man very respected for his righteousness and his integrity [...] (advocating a fair Islam, tolerant and peaceful, he was a danger for the DRS Generals who sought to tarnish the image of Islam to justify their fight against extremism). Bouslimani was abducted on 26 November 1993 at his home in Blida. He was found slaughtered on 23 January 1994. Strangely enough, both OJAL and the GIA (two relays of the ruling power) claimed responsibility for his abduction. Of course, no investigation was carried out and this crime, like many others, remains unpunished.

“I learned the truth about OJAL in 1995, through an officer who had been a member of the CC/ALAS special forces, Colonel Mohamed Benabdallah, who had been under my orders in June 1991 during the administration of the state of siege [...]. This officer had actively participated to the ‘extremists’ hunt’ at the head of a unit under the joint authority of the CC/ALAS (and as such receiving orders directly from General Mohamed Lamari) and of the DRS working in close collaboration with the CTRI of Blida. (...) Colonel Benabdallah proudly told me that he had been an officer at OJAL, a death squad created at the initiative of General Toufik. He directly took part in the acts signed under this name, carrying out his nasty job in Blida, Béni-Mered and Chebli. The men under his command wore masks during the operations (...) which were later attributed to OJAL, or disguised themselves as Islamists to perform abductions and summary executions. In order to illustrate his allegations, Colonel Benabdallah told me previously unknown facts, such as the publication in spring 1994, of fake statements attributed to the Islamists imposing a curfew on Blida, Médéa and Aïn-Defla starting at 6 o’clock PM to allow the paratroopers under his command to conduct raids in total impunity.<sup>73</sup>”

The former Chief Sergeant Tigha gave the following details:

“The name OJAL was invented by Colonel M’henna Djebbar’s deputy, i.e. Captain Abdelhafidh Allouache, one of the brains of the first military region’s CTRI. He is the one who came up with the initials of this imaginary pseudo-organisation. He even ordered the judicial police to put up leaflets under the organisation’s name on the city walls. Following the first experience of the CTRI/1<sup>st</sup> military region, the other DRS centres scattered across the national territory used the same procedure to kill and cover themselves up officially. The gendarmerie and the police, well aware of the facts, picked up the bodies every morning and buried them.<sup>74</sup>”

With the creation of militias in the spring of 1994 – which, under the supervision of the military command took over part of the death squads’ dirty job – and with the massive involvement of the CCLAS special forces in illegal and clandestine activities to eliminate

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<sup>72</sup> Interview of Captain Ouguenoune collected by Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, 14 June 2002, in Habib SOUAÏDIA, *Le Procès de ‘La Sale guerre’*, La Découverte, Paris, 2002, p. 494.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 202-204.

<sup>74</sup> Abdelkader TIGHA, notes (quoted by Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang*, *op. cit.*, p. 204).

opponents, this type of organizations no longer served a purpose. Their developers no longer needed this kind of screen and they simply disappeared.

### Conclusion

From 1994, the army and the services put in place a real machinery of war: some 200,000 militiamen and 80,000 gendarmes, in addition to army members, policemen and agents of the DRS and GIS already mobilised. In short, in 1996, a force potentially of 480,000 men strong, whose 'core group' - a few thousands members of so-called 'elite' units of the special forces and the DRS - played the main part in the 'clandestine' state terrorism developed by the 'Janvieriste' Generals against the Islamist armed groups and the civilian population. Secrecy was the main characteristic of the functioning of this military power, which managed to organise secrecy and disinformation in order to hide from the eyes of the international community the conduct of a war against the population which went far beyond the horror reached in some Latin-American dictatorships in the 1970s, and which can be compared to those twice led by the FSB and the Russian army in Chechnya in the 1990s.

In July 2002, former Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghazali (June 1991 – July 1992), overcome by a rare excess of sincerity, gave details in an interview with a weekly Algerian magazine of his own vision about the organisation of real authority, which undoubtedly constitutes one of the keys to understanding the secrecy which surrounded the 'dirty war' and its methods:

“There exists in Algeria an apparent power and a hidden power. [...] All our institutions are fictitious. Only the military institution really exists. [...] When one talks about the military institution, it is a 'handful' of people who, in the name of the army, control the whole of Algeria and not only the institution it represents. [...] But everything they did, they did it with the complicity of the political power in the framework of a contract: we get the power and you, the responsibility. This is to say: we decide, and you are responsible<sup>75</sup>.”

Behind those 'decision makers', the army and the services appear as a sum of power structures mutually keeping watch on each other. In fact, each of these military structures tried from 1992 to fight their own war through continuously building alliances and compromises. The DRS occupied a central place in this fragile game: whatever the service which conducted arrests, torture and executions (police, gendarmerie, CCLAS, ANP...) the information was transmitted to the services of the DRS, as was abstemiously described by Abdelkader Tigha, who noted that, from 1993:

“All information or arrested terrorist ought to be systematically transferred to the CTIR in Blida. Such were the orders of General Mohamed Lamari<sup>76</sup>.”

Logically, the DRS had a deciding influence on subsequent operations. It controlled the use of torture (its agents regularly visited centres in the many services involved in repression to supervise torture sessions or to abduct victims and detain them in their own centres, where they were tortured again and often murdered) and assassinations (elimination on an 'industrial scale' was generally carried out in precise locations under the control of the DRS). Also, due to the almost total control it had acquired from early 1996 over the Islamist armed groups, the DRS was also directly involved in 1996 and 1997 in mass massacres (the order to prohibit army intervention in case of massacres was a decision of Smaïn Lamari: he asked the ANP's Chief of Staff Mohamed Lamari to inform military units posted in each of the regions<sup>77</sup>). The DRS chiefs thus controlled the war machinery thanks to their alliances, their provocations, manipulations and secret structures.

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<sup>75</sup> *El Khabar-Hebdo*, n. 177, 20-26 July 2002.

<sup>76</sup> Abdelkader TIGHA, notes.

<sup>77</sup> See study "Les massacres".

The DRS was formally under the authority of the army, but the war allowed it to widen its scope of action: it became its source of information, its brains and its clandestine armed wing. Because the services also had at their disposal the most effective means of influence on political and economic life, with an infinite margin for action and decision, its chiefs still today hold an inescapable power.

### III. The methods of repression

The description above of the functioning of the organs of repression from the beginning of the war in 1992 is not sufficient to thoroughly understand it: it is also necessary to consider the methods of repression, and the way in which they interfered with one another, were superimposed or complementary. In this sense, their classification is a partly artificial exercise. Still, it is helpful to understand the diversity of means used, their dangerousness, the chain of events they set in motion, and, most importantly, the key role of secrecy and disinformation in the conduct of the war, to the extent that officials were able for years to deny even the existence of human rights violations committed by the forces of repression and, all the more so, their responsibility in them.

#### **The methods of ‘psychological action’ and manipulation of Islamist violence**

As early as 1990, and in a much greater way after 1992, the chiefs of the DRS and the army widely resorted to methods of psychological action and warfare, which had been developed and theorised during the first Algerian war by the officers who created the concept of ‘modern warfare’ (mainly Colonels Charles Lacheroy and Roger Trinquier). They gained wide adherence in many wars, from Viet Nam to Latin American state terrorism in the 1970s, then in the ‘savage wars’ of the 1990s (former Yugoslavia, Chechnya, Algeria, etc.)<sup>78</sup>.

These methods’ main objectives are, on the one hand, to condition public opinion and, on the other hand, to infiltrate and manipulate the enemy. With no claim of exhaustiveness, we will study below a number of those techniques used by the Algerian Generals and their services.

#### *Indoctrination and disinformation*

\* Indoctrination of soldiers, from the end of 1990, was considered essential by the hierarchy. They were progressively accustomed to think and speak in a heinous manner about the Islamists who they were about to confront, through different techniques: convincing them that the worst was to happen to them if the Islamists came to power (the Iranian and Sudanese examples were used as arguments), talking about them in injurious terms (‘cockroaches’, ‘sub-humans’, ‘rapists’) and envisaging any possible way of eliminating them (‘we must exterminate traitors’ etc.)

From 1994, as war was conducted on a large scale, this conditioning was exacerbated, as Habib Souaïdia, a former officer in the special troops, explained in his book:

“More generally, everything was done to condition us to kill without uncertainties. Of course, from 1993 already, the heavy losses we incurred bred hatred among soldiers against anyone with a beard and *kamis*. But our chiefs fostered this feeling.<sup>79</sup> »

The expected and obtained outcome was that many soldiers believed that the arrested suspects were more than likely to be ‘terrorists’. For some young officers, even civilians were responsible for what was happening, and repression could thus be extended to the whole population.

\* The numerous disinformation campaigns jointly conducted by the DRS press and documentation service, with the support of some politicians and intellectuals and the majority of newspapers, aimed at hiding, from international and national public opinion, the reality of war and its actual stakes.

In these discourses, ever since the coup, the Islamists were systematically presented as

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<sup>78</sup> Marie-Monique ROBIN, *Escadrons de la mort, l'école française, op. cit.*

<sup>79</sup> Habib SOUAÏDIA, *La Sale Guerre, op. cit.*, p. 187.

obscurantist and archaic ‘bearded men’, and bloodthirsty, dangerous extremists. In order to be credible, the DRS propaganda service underlined, through the press, the violent and excessive words of some of them, ‘forgetting’ their calls for peace and dialogue, and attributing to them slogans and statements more radical than their own, that were conceived and written by the services. In the face of the Islamists, the regime was presented as defending the values of modernity and the rights of women. War thus allegedly opposed a society supporting a multiparty system and fighting for democracy to the tenets of a regressive Islamic dictatorship.

*Entirely manufactured ‘scandals’* were used to nourish the theory of a powerful (because it had foreign support) and brutal Islamism. For instance, it was easy, given that the radical Islamist speech was ‘structured around the harmful and corrupting role of women’, to invent scandalous incidents to support this way of thinking, as was noted by former Colonel Samraoui, who explained that, from late 1990 and early 1991,

“In Telemly, an area in the hills above Algiers, a ‘radical’ was pouring vitriol on young women who did not wear the *heap*; this ‘mysterious’ religious extremist was never identified, and all the less so arrested by the police. And for a very good reason: he came also from the CPMI barracks in Ben-Aknoun.<sup>80</sup>”

‘Evidence’ was all the easier to provide for the international and national media, to the effect that the responsibility for the war and its barbarism was always attributed to the Islamists. The security forces were only officially accused of some ‘faux pas’. State terrorism, despite its extent, totally hid behind Islamist terrorism. It was a most efficient screen:

“The police entered the neighbourhood and targeted families: thefts, destruction, arbitrary arrests, rapes, murders [...] and the blame for all of this was put on the armed groups<sup>81</sup>.”

The chief of Security to a policeman who discovered a massacre perpetrated by other policemen: “Make it a terrorist story and close the file!<sup>82</sup>”

Such examples are countless. On television, false evidence was abundantly presented: AIS members collaborating with the DRS were presented as reformed GIA members and denounced their methods; soldiers guilty of murder were presented as FIS supporters; tortured detainees admitted their belonging to the GIA and crimes they did not commit, etc. All the massacres (in particular in the years 1996-1998) were also attributed to the Islamists, although many clues lead one to believe that they were ordered by the security services.

*The use of cruel and shocking images* was exploited in a very clever manner, especially after the great massacres of 1997. If it can be said of tales of horror that their instrumentalisation “is one of the most efficient means of building the hate-worthy enemy, it makes survivors go mad and prevents witnesses from thinking [...] telling the story of cruelty terrorises and de-politicises<sup>83</sup>”, what can be said of pictures of slaughtered women and massacred babies??

“February 1995: many women were kidnapped, some raped, others mutilated and murdered in the region of Blida and Chlef by ‘armed groups’ [...]. These ignoble and villainous acts were largely reported on state television. Horrible and shocking scenes were broadcast at prime time<sup>84</sup>.”

“The bodies of women who had been raped and whose throats had been slit was used to

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<sup>80</sup> Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang, op. cit.*, p 105.

<sup>81</sup> Jacques GIRARDON, “Algérie : parole de flic”, *L’Express*, 12 September 1995.

<sup>82</sup> Kamel B., “À propos de terrorisme...”, *loc. cit.*

<sup>83</sup> Sonia DAYAN-HERZBRUN and Véronique NAHOUM-GRAPPE, “Algérie, des questions nécessaires”, *Le Monde*, 30 January 1998.

<sup>84</sup> Salah-Eddine SIDHOUM, *Chronologie d’une tragédie cachée (11 janvier 1992-11 janvier 2002)*, Algeria-Watch, 11 January 2002.

promote a policy. You cannot imagine the impact a naked and horribly tortured body seen on TV can have on households...It is a terrible shock...terror...If women are not safe, then nothing is safe...The show is used to provoke disgust and revolt, with the aim to promote the creation of anti-Islamist militias...Any real debate about the modalities of the use of power is avoided and emotion is highlighted. To the detriment of reason<sup>85</sup>...”

What was really at stake and those responsible for the conflict then had to be masked, and the issues clouded. Confusion was organised. To begin with, in its most straightforward expression: *the use of rumour*, as the journalist Ali Habib explained in 1996:

“This ‘culture of rumour’ was built and managed from the start by the authorities and in particular by the security services. Thanks to censorship and total control over information, they were able to use rumour as a political weapon. [...] Since 1989, the two conflicting sides, the ‘democrats’ allied to the military and the Islamist movement, made rumour their combat weapon with which no holds were barred. [...] At the military level, rumour took mad proportions, underlining the acts of some and others and entangling truth and lies, exaggeration and pure brainwashing<sup>86</sup>.”

In the massive disinformation action led by the DRS, *the habit of always intermingling truth and lies* was particularly useful to mask the authorities’ real objectives and allow them to keep all the cards. Based, for instance, on genuine facts (the religious taboos of some extremists), it was possible to spread an alarmist, exaggerated or false idea (that *all* Islamists goals were behind the times). It was also possible to hide a shameful goal behind a virtuous objective of ‘public interest’ (the need, in order to ‘protect the democratic process’, for imposing the state of siege in June 1991 implied that no election could take place<sup>87</sup>; the coup of January 1992 was supposed to prevent an Islamist dictatorship, but also to dismiss President Chadli, who was in the way of the real decision makers).

*The use of double language*— Algeria ratified the International Convention against Torture in 1989, as if the hundreds of young people tortured in October 1988, had never existed<sup>88</sup> — *and of double game* had the same use, as Samraoui explained for the early 1991 period:

“General Toufik [Médiène] used the two branches of the DRS to provoke the FIS while controlling it: while the *agents provocateurs* of Major Bachir Tartag (DCSA) attempted (with little success) to disrupt the FIS marches, agents of Major Amar (DCE) were helping the FIS security services to supervise the demonstrations<sup>89</sup>...”

This double-dealing continued till the late 1990s: clemency was promised to ‘terrorists’ who surrendered and, at the same time, the order was given to the militiamen to slaughter them<sup>90</sup>; the army negotiated with FIS leaders while a virulent defamation campaign presented the Islamists as a horde of fanatics ready to eliminate all those who stood in the way towards a theocratic State; etc. It is important to underline that this defamation campaign led by the DRS was largely facilitated by the fact that the leaders of the former FIS did not clearly condemn the acts of radical Islamists, although they no longer ignored, at least from 1996, that they had been widely manipulated by the DRS.

*Fake statements, leaflets, slogans and generalisation.* From 1991, Samraoui reports, his service (under the DCE) drafted and disseminated fake statements attributed to the FIS. Their

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<sup>85</sup> Salima GHEZALI, *Le Nouvel Observateur*, loc. cit.

<sup>86</sup> Ali HABIB, “La gestion de la rumeur”, in REPORTERS SANS FRONTIÈRES (dir.), *Le Drame algérien*, op. cit. p. 100.

<sup>87</sup> Lounis AGGOUN and Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, *Françalgérie, crimes et mensonges d’États*, op. cit., p. 206.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 140.

<sup>89</sup> Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang*, op. cit. p. 100.

<sup>90</sup> Luis MARTINEZ, *La Guerre civile en Algérie*, op. cit., p. 236.

main aim was to raise awareness among public opinion on the danger of the Islamist threat and to comfort the position of all the enemies of the FIS; however, they were also used to fuel tensions among FIS leaders, which were suspecting one another of drafting such statements without prior consultation. These called for *Jihad*, to take up arms, to install a theocratic state, to apply the *Sharia* and went beyond the Islamists' statements, themselves already disturbing (in January 1991, fake statements attributed to the FIS were even read out during the 8 o'clock evening television news on TV)<sup>91</sup>.

In the same spirit, fake leaflets containing death threats against journalists, intellectuals, artists, doctors or civil servants were drafted at the CPO and distributed by the 'Protection Section' of Smaïn Lamari<sup>92</sup>. These methods involved generalisation and confusion (between the people and the FIS, and between the FIS and armed groups), confusion which was widely fuelled by the violent acts of DRS-manipulated extremist groups and attributed to the FIS.

After the start of the war, the practice of 'DRS-made' fake Islamist statements intensified, Samraoui reports, quoting amongst others Colonel Benabdallah, who had been from 1992 to 1994 at the head of a unit under the authority of both the CCLAS and the DRS, and who told him in 1995 that he was at the source of

“the publication in spring 1994 of fake statements attributed to the Islamists, imposing a curfew in Blida, Médéa and Ain-Defla from 6 o'clock PM in order to allow the paratroopers he controlled to carry out raids in full impunity<sup>93</sup>”.

From autumn 1994, the DRS agent Djamel Zitouni became a GIA's 'national Emir', and under his 'Emirate',

“The DRS fabricated many GIA statements signed by him, targeting [amongst others] two FIS leaders, Abbassi Madani and Ali Benhadj, even condemning them to death<sup>94</sup>.”

*The scenarios* were staged and officially concealed the DRS lethal objectives or activities. There were 'actively sought' terrorists with whom the DRS was quietly negotiating (such as Saïd Makhloufi in summer 1991). There were 'fake' abductions (for instance of three French consulate staff members, the Thévenot spouses and Alain Fressier, in October 1993<sup>95</sup>), fake shooting by terrorists who were used to justify the death of detainees during their transfer, fake imprisonment (of DRS Islamists) accompanied by fake claims (the GIA demanded after each 'strike' the release of Layada, a double agent at the service of the DRS which imprisoned him in June 1993) and, of course, 'unsuccessful searches' following bogus investigations in some murders or disappearances<sup>96</sup>. Such examples can be multiplied, in particular with regards to the activities of the GIA against France (from the abduction of the Thévenot spouses to the one of the Tibhirine monks and their subsequent murder in 1996, through the hijacking of a Air France Airbus in December 1994, the murder of the *Pères blancs* of Tizi-Ouzou a few days later or the terrorist attacks in Paris in 1995), acts which are now recognised to have been conducted following 'scenarios' drawn up by the DRS services<sup>97</sup>.

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<sup>91</sup> Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang*, *op. cit.*, p. 66 and 94.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 204.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 219.

<sup>95</sup> See Lounis AGGOUN and Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, *Françalgérie, crimes et mensonges d'États*, *op. cit.*, p. 342 *sq.*

<sup>96</sup> Tigha tells how he was reprimanded by his superiors for having conducted in 1996 a genuine investigation in the murder of two professors, which was attributed to the Islamists, but was in fact carried out by the DRS, which he did not know...

<sup>97</sup> See on these issues the rigorous demonstrations by Lounis AGGOUN and Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, *Françalgérie, crimes et mensonges d'États*, *op. cit.*

All these disinformation operations were very successful: the military as well as an important part of national and international public opinion were convinced that the nature of the 'Islamist threat' widely justified the all-repressive policy. The theory of a khaki messianism fighting 'green fascism' was disseminated in all possible forms to muffle accusations of human rights abuses perpetrated by the security forces. It took large-scale civilian massacres (1997-1998) and the criminal passivity of the security forces at this occasion for the accusations, stemming from international NGOs amongst other, to start being heard.

#### *Other methods of repression and psychological action*

\* Intimidation and blackmail. Intimidation were carried out through anonymous phone calls as well as letters of threats, sending shrouds and pieces of soap (from as early as 1991, a DCE unit under the direct authority of Smaïn Lamari was in charge of such way of intimidating journalists or other personalities in order to 'convince' them of the Islamist threat<sup>98</sup>) abductions or arrests (in June and July 1991, policemen and gendarmes proceeded to several thousand arrests of simple FIS activists or supporters, who were progressively released the following weeks).

Blackmail, as a more specific threat, was largely used from 1992 against soldiers and policemen reluctant to execute clearly criminal orders, as a dissident policeman told the British daily *The Observer* in January 1998:

"Either you obeyed the orders or you were dead! If you stopped, they could attack your families and they confiscated your passports when you joined the police<sup>99</sup>."

The 'choice' between death and cooperation with the services was also used to force some military dissidents (and above all many Islamists arrested and tortured) to collaborate. This was for instance explained in 2002 by former Captain Ahmed Chouchane, who had been a victim of attempted blackmail in 1995 after three years in prison (he had been sentenced because of his Islamist affinities), an attempt he was able to escape:

"The command of the security services used blackmail against me. General-major Kamel Abderrahmane himself told me that some within the security services had decided to eliminate me and that I would only be able to escape this sentence by working under his direct authority<sup>100</sup>."

More generally, blackmail on families or close contacts was used throughout the war to recruit informers, or to obtain ransom or confessions. It is very important to underline that this technique is still used today in 2004: in at least the last ten years, hundreds or even thousands of soldiers and police officers, disagreeing to the iniquitous orders their superiors asked them to execute, chose to go into exile (in Europe for most of them). But only a tiny handful of them, despite their wish to do so, have spoken openly about the acts of the security forces they witnessed: all know for a fact that their public testimonies would inevitably lead to reprisals against their families and friends who stayed in Algeria.

This is, for instance, only to mention two cases which became public, what happened to the family of former Second Lieutenant Habib Souaïda when his book *La Sale Guerre* (Ed.

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<sup>98</sup> Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang*, *op. cit.*, p. 118-119.

<sup>99</sup> Quoted by John SWEENEY, "Atrocités en Algérie : "Nous étions les meurtriers qui ont tué pour l'État", *loc. cit.*

<sup>100</sup> Testimony by Ahmed Chouchane before a Parisian court in July 2002, during the lawsuit for defamation by General Khaled Nezzar against former second-lieutenant Souaïdia (reproduced in Habib SOUAÏDIA, *Le Procès de « La Sale guerre », op. cit.*, p. 165).

The Dirty War) was published in February 2001<sup>101</sup>, or to the wife of former Chief Sergeant Abdelkader Tigha following the complaint filed in France in December 2003 after his revelations on the role of the DRS in the abduction, followed by the murder, of the French monks of Tibhirine in May 1996<sup>102</sup>.

\* Enrichment and allegiance. Money, land, social benefits, apartments, miscellaneous goods, cars, holidays overseas, amnesty, and so on. All this was used to buy the silence, to reward or compromise the different actors and/or witnesses of repression and win the loyalty of those responsible. Corruption inevitably led to officials to confuse their own interests with those of the regime. Many testimonies reveal those practices and present them as a deliberate policy. Those officers or political officials who tried to change this were relocated, dismissed or even killed.

Allegiance could also be obtained through promotions, political integration, group networking or business vote-catching. The Generals had personal contacts and networks in every institution. And to be part of them was obligatory to anyone wishing to accede to some posts or to develop a business.

\* Dishonest compromises. Those DRS and army officials who had the most blood on their hands were in general 'loyal' men who owed their career to some military chief. They were prisoners of a system which compromised them by pushing them to take part in barbarism. Getting out of it meant facing elimination: their active participation in acts of torture or assassinations made them accomplices of this killing madness and turned them into 'remote-controlled robots', as Tigha called them.

\* Widespread use of drugs. This is, undoubtedly, the key element which explains the enrolment of thousands of men (officers, troop soldiers and manipulated Islamist militants) in barbarism let loose by the army and DRS chiefs, mainly in the years 1994 to 1998. In their book, Lounis Aggoun and Jean-Baptiste Rivoire summarised as such the information available on this issue:

"In order to bear torture sessions and, in a more general manner, the terrifying missions they were entrusted with, many men in the special forces, including paratroopers, were given drug doses intended to 'give them courage' by their chiefs. "I would say, without risking to be wrong, that close to 80% of troop soldiers and junior officers, but also some officers, took drugs every day" Habib Souaïdia claims in his book<sup>103</sup>. According to the former special forces lieutenant, "several kinds of drugs, including hashish, ecstasy and heroin, were sold inside the barracks". The drug most requested by soldiers, he said, was a product they dubbed 'Mrs Courage': "Within the special forces, this product had almost the same value as a Kalashnikov. As its name shows, it gives courage to soldiers when they have to face death. And they also take some when they are the ones who have to kill ...[...] The real name of this drug is Artane; [...] in general, those who used 'Mrs Courage's' pills took them with alcohol<sup>104</sup>."

«"This terrifying testimony by Habib Souaïdia supports this other one, by a former paratrooper posted in Mitidja in 1997 we were able to interview in London in 1998: "I stayed four and a half months in the Biskra Academy. Professional soldiers taught us camouflage and gave us injections to kill any feeling we had inside...There was a doctor in a uniform, Doctor L. He was the one who gave us the products to be injected. They vaccinated us in the back and gave us injections on our hands. They were not vaccines. I do not know if it was

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<sup>101</sup> "Menaces sur la famille de Habib Souaïdia", <[www.algeria-watch.org/farticle/sale\\_guerre/menaces.htm](http://www.algeria-watch.org/farticle/sale_guerre/menaces.htm)>, 11 February 2001.

<sup>102</sup> ALGERIA-WATCH, "Le scandaleux harcèlement des services secrets algériens contre Mme Tigha", <[www.algeria-watch.org/fr/aw/com\\_aw\\_230204.htm](http://www.algeria-watch.org/fr/aw/com_aw_230204.htm)>, 23 February 2004.

<sup>103</sup> Habib SOUAÏDIA, *La Sale Guerre, op. cit.*, p. 148.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

cocaine, but it ruins your heart and makes you dizzy. You have the impression than the others are as small as flies...that you can control Algeria. If you are told to kill, you do kill. You are like a robot<sup>105</sup>.”

In early 1994, police officers taking part in summary executions in Blida also took drugs: “Some of our colleagues carried out these killings and massacre operations with a feeling of inebriation and happiness”, revealed three former police officers in 1997, who were disgusted by what they had witnessed. “They were under the influence of pills which stimulated courage and neutralised fear. We were given these pills daily before undertaking counter-terrorist operations<sup>106,107</sup>”

### *Infiltration and manipulation of the enemy*

\* Phone-tapping, shadowing. Already in 1990, the leadership of the FIS was being closely watched through telephone-tapping and shadowing<sup>108</sup>. But all administrators, members of political party or personalities were being monitored. The CPO was in charge of this task. As to the prisons, at least for the one in Blida, Tigha stated that it was monitored by the CTRI, which had bugged the cells with the complicity of the judicial authorities.

\* Provocations were first and foremost manipulations aimed at pushing the Islamists to act or strike, to radicalise and divide those movements at the same time, and eventually to justify repression. The means used were those mentioned earlier: infiltration, disinformation, but also assassination.

\* Infiltration aimed at controlling a group’s activities and orient its actions. During the – very relative – ‘democratic opening’ which followed the events of October 1998, DRS agents infiltrated every party which had not been directly created by the DRS. Trade unions and administrations, as it was essential for them to adopt the General’s security policy, were equally infiltrated, as Mohammed Samraoui explained when he came at the head of the DCE’s research and analysis service in March 1990:

“Almost all of the forty officers under my orders were allocated research and investigation duties [...] A real spider’s net was thus covering all political, economic and administrative activities in Algiers<sup>109</sup>.”

The infiltration of Islamic radical wings (such as the group Hocine F’lichea, active in Algiers) began in 1990. It was implemented by ‘turncoat’ Islamist activists or by DRS agents introducing themselves as deserters. Its aim was to foster division and neutralise those officials supporting political dialogue by provoking actions of blind violence which would put them on a black list. Indeed on that infiltration policy that intensified further in the first months of 1992, Mohammed Samraoui declared:

“I understood only much later that the DCE and DCSA chiefs were playing a double game [...]. Most DRS officials like me were told that the infiltration of Islamist groups aimed at better knowing them with a view to destroying them, an option which seemed pretty classic to us in the framework of an anti-subversive war. But in reality, with the secret and active complicity of a very small number of DRS officials carefully selected well before the coup (including Majors Amar Guettouchi, for the DCE, and Bachir Tartag, for the DCSA), this infiltration mainly aimed at fuelling those groups’ ‘natural’ violence, by inciting them to multiply acts against the security forces, in order to make all of us join the

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<sup>105</sup> Interview with “Reddah” for the documentary “Fausses barbes”, *Le Vrai Journal*, Canal Plus, 19 October 1997.

<sup>106</sup> Call in Arabic dated 2 September 1997, signed by three police officers: Ramadani, Meziani, Arfi (see <[www.algeria-watch.org/mrv/mrvreve/Erklaeru.html](http://www.algeria-watch.org/mrv/mrvreve/Erklaeru.html)>).

<sup>107</sup> Lounis AGGOUN and Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, *Françalgérie, crimes et mensonges d’États*, *op. cit.*, p. 305 *sq.*

<sup>108</sup> Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang*, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

<sup>109</sup> Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang*, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

‘Janviériste’ side<sup>110</sup>»

This policy lay within the scope of the recommendations of the ‘Nezzar plan’ of December 1990 (mentioned above), which also planned the infiltration and control of the FIS. The main objectives were surveillance and control, but infiltrated agents also influenced leaders to radicalize their action and managed to divide them (between nationalists and internationalists, or supporters of participation to the elections versus supporters of a boycott).

From 1993, the security camps in the South and the prisons were infiltrated by DRS agents or turncoat Islamists who constituted new armed groups upon their release by rallying other Islamists, those groups later joined the GIA or AIS<sup>111</sup> (the infiltration of independent armed groups and underground resistance members was also carried out by ex-convicts and tortured delinquents ‘trained in the MS barracks, like at Bouzaréah, where they learn to slaughter<sup>112</sup>’). Later, infiltration and manipulation of Islamist armed groups (mainly the GIA) by DRS agents took even greater proportions, leading to a complex mosaic of truly autonomous groups and those controlled by the DRS<sup>113</sup>.

Infiltration as a way of preventing crime is a classic method common to all polices in the world. However, to instrumentalise crime is perverse abuse. It was used in many different ways, particularly by the DRS, from provocation to infiltration, and eventually led to the creation of a DRS-controlled counter-guerrilla from 1996, in the framework of a terrorism-planning policy.

\* Brainwashing the enemy, a method developed by the French army during the war of independence, was widely used by the DRS in the years 1994-1996, as former Colonel Samraoui reports, mentioning the surprising escape, on 10 March 1994, of 1,200 detainees at the Tazoult penitentiary (formerly Lambèze), resulting, he said – something which was confirmed by several other sources<sup>114</sup> —from a sophisticated DRS operation:

“I later learned through Colonel Ali Benguedda, aka ‘little Smaïn’ [an officer very close to Generals Toufik and Smaïn Lamari], that among the fugitives were many ‘moles’ infiltrated by the DRS, and that the operations had several objectives at the same time: first, to get rid of the refractory Islamist detainees (they were brought into fake DRS underground resistance groups and simply eliminated); then to populate the GIA’s underground resistance with former convicts and delinquents carrying out villainous acts, in order to maintain further control on the image of those groups and make the population rally behind the regime; lastly, to use these individuals to intensify fratricidal war between Islamist groups.

### **Mass human rights violations by the ‘security forces’**

In parallel to these methods directly inspired by ‘psychological action’, the ‘Janviériste’ Generals used, throughout the years of the ‘dirty war’, more ‘classic’ brutal repressive techniques. Such techniques amount, in our view, to crimes against humanity, as defined in the statutes of the International Criminal Court (which entered into force in July 2002).

#### Raids and deportations

In 1992, about 13,000 FIS activists or supporters (or alleged so) were deported to eleven

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<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 149.

<sup>111</sup> Lounis AGGOUN and Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, *Françalgérie, crimes et mensonges d’États*, *op. cit.*, p. 365.

<sup>112</sup> “Malik”, “C’est l’armée qui massacre”, *loc. cit.*

<sup>113</sup> For a detailed and documented analysis on this development, see the study: “Le mouvement islamiste algérien entre autonomie et manipulation”.

<sup>114</sup> See in particular Nesroulah YOUS (with the collaboration of Salima MELLAH), *Qui a tué à Bentalha?*, *op. cit.*, p. 62-63.

detention centres in the Algerian South, which were real concentration camps. The lists were drawn up by the gendarmerie, the police and security services. “The security forces arrested men from all social backgrounds and professions<sup>115</sup>.” No judicial process authorised those arrests. The Prefects simply signed collective ‘administrative orders’ containing the names set out in the security services’ lists. No investigations, trials or sentences were undertaken or imposed. The persons arrested were only progressively released months, or more often two or three years, after being detained in the Southern camps.

### Torture

According to Major ‘Mounir’, a former officer who deserted in 1994:

“Torture was implicitly accepted from the start, then unofficially legalised, so to speak, by verbal order. At the very beginning of the fight against terrorism, when a suspect was arrested, he was inevitably tortured. Brought before the courts, he would deny its confession which was extorted through force and was often released. Clandestine elimination was then decided for many suspects<sup>116</sup>”

According to M<sup>e</sup> Ali Yahia Abdenmour, lawyer, President of the Ligue algérienne pour la défense des droits de l’homme (Tr. Algerian Human Rights League), “torture has become administrative practice in Algeria”. This was confirmed by ex-Captain Ouguenoune, former DCSA official:

“It was from this period [1992], unfortunately, that the use of torture started being widespread: gendarmes resorted to torture in gendarmeries, policemen in police stations, the military in military units and the Military Security (DCSA and DCE) was of course the reference on the subject of torture<sup>117</sup>”

Generalised resort to extra-judicial killings gave torture an ordinary aspect: knowing that the victim could be summarily executed at any time, torturers made excessive use of torture, often to death. This also influenced the conduct of interrogations: when a group of suspects was located or arrested, they were all killed but one, who was called a ‘vector person’, and whose torture and interrogation was hoped to lead to the location of other people. The procedure was then repeated.

### Forced disappearances, summary and extra-judicial executions

In the first seven years of the war, thousands of citizens were executed, in the name of the fight against terrorism. At the beginning, the Generals engaged in the anti-terrorism struggle ordered the execution of ‘terrorists’ suspected of having been involved in attacks, whatever the degree of complicity they had assumed. From 1993, Smaïn Lamari ordered the CTRI to limit the ‘court transfers’, which meant: start executing the people arrested.

This ‘culture of death’, as many dissident policemen and army members confirmed, was encouraged in a thousand ways within the army, the police and militias. One simple example is the terrifying testimony of ‘Dalilah’, a police officer at the Cavaignac police station in Algiers, collected in London (where she took refuge) in 1997 by the famous journalist Robert Fisk. Explaining that she had expressed disagreement to her superiors against systematic torture followed by murders of simple suspects, she got the following response:

“My daughter, you are not made for the police. If you suspect somebody, you must kill

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<sup>115</sup> Mourad (army member), testimony collected by Algeria-Watch, November 1997.

<sup>116</sup> “Le témoignage d’un officier : “La sale besogne pour rien...”, *Le Monde*, 16 September 1994.

<sup>117</sup> Interview of Captain Ouguenoune collected by Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, 14 June 2002, in Habib SOUAÏDIA, *Le Procès de « La Sale guerre », op. cit.*, p. 494.

him. Killing people, this is how you will get promotions<sup>118</sup>.”

Executions targeted in the first place residents of areas considered as ‘Islamist fiefdoms’, but from spring 1994, punitive raids killed thousands, and many dissident police and military officials gave the same type of account, often under seal of anonymity:

“They knocked on the door and shouted: “Open, we are *mujaheddins*.” As soon as the door opened, all those present were killed. At dawn, the body count was of about twenty<sup>119</sup>.”

As to the persons arrested, they were either tortured to death, or assassinated using different methods, as Abdelkader Tigha recalled concerning the CTRI in Blida, one of the major elimination centres:

“The detainees are executed inside the jail using strangulation, with plastic bags in which they suffocate quickly. [...] Some people were even burnt alive so as to prevent their identification<sup>120</sup>.”

For the period 1994-1998, the estimate of the number of missing ranges, depending on the sources, from 7,200 to 20,000. Since 1999, although the number of new cases of disappearances has dramatically decreased, they still continue to occur<sup>121</sup>. No credible information was given to the families as to the fate of their relatives; the government institutions did not want to identify the persons or groups responsible for these disappearances:

“When someone goes missing after having been arrested by us, in case of a request for investigation, we have to say ‘inconclusive investigation’. This is the official formula to stay out of trouble<sup>122</sup>”

The tribunals failed to conduct investigations in the claims launched by thousands of families after the disappearance relatives, and the families were pressured to drop legal actions.

#### Assassinations of army and police members

Although this policy of ‘eradication’ through death disproportionately affected the civilian population, it did not spare those members of the security forces seen as ‘unreliable’.

When Smâïn Lamari took the lead of the ONRB in April 1992, he judged the attitude of the police in the fight against terrorism as too passive (many policemen, living in the same precarious conditions as the rest of the population, were sometimes close to the FIS). The aim of organising, by special units (the death squads already mentioned) or by GIA-manipulated Islamist groups, ‘targeted’ assassinations of some of them was a very cynical way of fostering an *esprit de corps* and breeding a reflex of revenge:

The objective was also to get rid of those soldiers or officers who knew too much (“Many officers were liquidated because they had participated in raids<sup>123</sup>”), to eliminate those who made mistakes and the officers who raised doubts or did not adhere to the eradication policy advocated by the Generals. They were victims of ambushes, attacks and road accidents, according to former Captain Hacine Ouguenoune:

“The number of officers they liquidated is unbelievable. [...] They killed two birds with

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<sup>118</sup> Quoted by Robert FISK, “Massacres in Algeria : strong evidence for Military Security responsibility”, *loc. cit.*

<sup>119</sup> “Témoignage du transfuge ‘Adlane Chabane’”, *El Watan-El Arabi*, 2 January 1998.

<sup>120</sup> Abdelkader TIGHA, notes.

<sup>121</sup> Mohamed MEHDI, “Human Rights Watch à propos du comité sur les disparus”, *Le Quotidien d’Oran*, 9 December 2003.

<sup>122</sup> Interview with Abdelkader Tigha for the documentary by Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, *Services secrets : révélations sur un « vrai-faux » enlèvement*, *op. cit.*

<sup>123</sup> “Malik”, “C’est l’armée qui massacre”, *loc. cit.*

one stone: on the one hand, they eliminated the objecting officers and, on the other hand, their death was used to fuel hatred among the other officers as they were told they were assassinated by Islamists<sup>124</sup>.”

As a matter of fact, those suspected of having Islamists sympathies were also eliminated, whether policemen or simple soldiers – a majority of them coming from a working class background and as such influenced by its many tendencies – and those deliberately accused of being Islamist, as a means of dissuasion:

The climate of suspicion and fear created by these murders was used by military command as a tool to control the army and prevent any organised protest activity.

### Assassinations of personalities

From 1993, personalities also started to become targets of assassination, which affected famous civil society leaders as well as state officials. These operations were in general conducted with a high level of professionalism. Clan disputes, elimination of those too well informed, opposing the General's policy, or of charismatic or popular personalities: these murders – attributed to the GIA – were calculated to shock and horrify. It seems – as François Burgat suggests<sup>125</sup> — that each segment of the public opinion was targeted (women, sportsmen, musicians, Berbers, moderate Islamists and so on) in order to make them oppose the Islamist movement.

Whatever their motives, there has been many such assassinations and not a single proper investigation has ever been conducted to identify the culprits. We will only mention here the most representative ones.

- President Boudiaf was assassinated on 29 June 1992, by a lone Islamist agent, according to the official investigation. But the great majority of Algerians and those familiar with Algerian affairs are convinced that he was assassinated at the initiative of the Generals who had made him come back from exile to Preside over the HCE<sup>126</sup>. In 2003, in his book, former Colonel Samraoui gave previously undisclosed details about the case: he claims that the assassination was preceded by two unsuccessful attempts, and that the organiser of the operation to eliminate the President was Colonel Smaïn Lamari, head of the DCE<sup>127</sup>. According to him, the Generals decided to get rid of Boudiaf, as he was an impediment to them in several respects: he had brought up the issue of corruption, was planning important changes in the military hierarchy, the creation of a political party and a new government. He had decided to reach a settlement on the issue of Western Sahara and was planning to close down the security camps in the South. A few weeks before the death of the President, the investigating officers instructed by Boudiaf to uncover cases of corruption had also been eliminated. The President's assassination opened a long list of liquidation.

- Kasdi Merbah, former head of Military Security, was assassinated on 21 August 1993, in an ambush for which all evidence shows that it was carried out by professionals of the security forces. Many converging facts confirm this, and indicate that he was eliminated by the 'decision-making' Generals as he too must have been a threat to them<sup>128</sup>. He had created a party, MAJD, and, in open opposition with General Belkheir, he had contacted FIS officials overseas and was working with some members of the opposition to draw up scenarios to get

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<sup>124</sup> Interview of Captain Ouguenoune collected by par Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, 14 June 2002, in Habib SOUAÏDIA, *Le Procès de « La Sale guerre »*, *op. cit.*, p. 494.

<sup>125</sup> François BURGAT, *L'Islamisme en face*, La Découverte, Paris, 1995, p. 171.

<sup>126</sup> See on this issue the summary of available information made by Lounis AGGOUN and Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, *Françalgérie, crimes et mensonges d'États*, *op. cit.*, p. 281-293.

<sup>127</sup> Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang*, *op. cit.*, p. 254-264.

<sup>128</sup> See Lounis AGGOUN and Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, *Françalgérie, crimes et mensonges d'États*, *op. cit.*, p. 326-330.

out of the crisis.

- From 1993 to 1994 the journalist Tahar Djaout, the sociologist M'hamed Boukhobza, the author Abdelkader Alloula, the paediatrician Belkhenchir and dozens of other intellectuals were assassinated. Responsibility for almost all these killings was claimed by the GIA (and sometimes approved by former FIS officials). But here again, the numerous clues gathered by the journalists Lounis Aggoun and Jean-Baptiste Rivoire reinforce the hypothesis that they were 'educational assassinations' orchestrated by the DRS: according to them, the authorities were aiming at convincing the elites to adhere to the military's eradication policy<sup>129</sup>.

- On 4 June 1996, General Saïdi Fodhil was killed in a highly suspicious car accident. He had been at the head of external intelligence services until July 1994. President Zéroual was planning, according to a confidential memo of the French Foreign Ministry<sup>130</sup>, to grant him considerable responsibilities with a view to creating within the army an opposition force to the pro-eradication Generals. His assassination was carried out to remind the President that he could not take control of the DRS.

- Abdelhak Benhamouda, Secretary-General of the Algerian workers' union Union générale des travailleurs algériens, a strong anti-Islamist and an important political figure, had been sounded out by President Zéroual about founding the RND, his political party. He was assassinated on 28 January 1997, and his presumed murderer was subsequently 'suicided' during his secret detention. His assassination was in all likelihood a message from the eradicating Generals to the President, warning him that no official voicing criticism against them could ever be at the head of a political party<sup>131</sup>.

- The renowned Kabyl singer Lounès Matoub was assassinated (officially by Islamists) on 25 June 1998, most probably at the General's initiative, with the aim of setting Kabylia ablaze. According to Aggoun and Rivoire's detailed investigation, this operation lay within the framework of the tough power struggle which then opposed the 'pro-eradication clan' of the Generals to President Zéroual and his supporters. The latter was eventually forced to resign a few weeks later<sup>132</sup>.

- The assassination of foreigners, systematically attributed to the GIA, increased in the period from 1994 to 1996. Considering that from 1994 many GIA units (*katibas*) were controlled by 'DRS Emirs' (agents on a mission or turncoat Islamists), and that during this period the Algerian authorities' legitimacy was weakened by international support to the opposition's 'Rome Platform'<sup>133</sup> — only to mention two factors, but many other factual evidence points towards the same conclusion — it appears highly likely that these assassinations were, for the main part, carried out at the instigation of the chiefs of the army and the DRS, in order to bring Algeria's partners to bring unconditional support to its 'fight against terrorism', while at the same time urging Western capitals — and Paris in particular — not to interfere in the Algerian conflict. The war ought to be conducted behind closed doors.

The assassinations in July 1994 of seven Italian sailors in an Eastern Algerian harbour, of four members of the Pères Blancs community in Tizi-Ouzou in December that same year, of Bishop Pierre Claverie in August 1996 and of many others remain unexplained. However,

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<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 318-324.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 488.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 497.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 555 *sq.*

<sup>133</sup> Signed in Rome in January 1995 under the auspices of the catholic community of Sant'Egidio, this platform gathered all opposition movements, including the FIS, and was advocating for the installation of a minimal democratic framework to put an end to the war (see Marco IMPAGLIAZO and Mario GIRO, *Algeria in ostaggio. Tra esercito e fondamentalismo, storia di una pace difficile*, Guerini e Associati, Milan, 1997).

regarding the assassination of the Trappist monks at the Tibhirine monastery in May 1996, revelations made in 2002 by former Chief Sergeant Abdelkader Tigha, supported by the investigations of the Trappist Father Armand Veilleux<sup>134</sup>, show that the DRS was indisputably directly involved in these murders<sup>135</sup>. It was, it seems, an operation by the Algerian secret services over which they partly lost control.

### *Napalm and fire*

Napalm was widely used during the war to destroy areas suspected of sheltering Islamist underground resistance groups. According to former Colonel Samraoui, napalm:

“Was used by the PNA from 1993 in the mountains difficult to access, such as Djurdura, Zeccar and near the Jijel ledge (which moreover created a foreseeable ecological disaster as a result of forest fires, especially in Jijel). The napalm used, manufactured in Israel, was bought [...] from 1993 in South Africa (Algeria was at the time under military embargo following the suspension of the electoral process) through the agency of Colonel Ali Benguedda, aka ‘little Smain’, and our ambassador in the country, DRS Colonel Sadek Kitouni, aka ‘Tass’<sup>136</sup>.”

Lieutenant Messaoud Allili, a helicopter pilot at the Bouafrik military base who fled to Spain in June 1998, declared:

“I know that the Algerian army bombarded with napalm the villages where Islamists hid. [...] Use of napalm or fire was made by the ground forces<sup>137</sup>.”

### *Destruction of houses, collective punishments*

The destruction of family houses suspected of supporting the GIA or of houses which allegedly sheltered ‘terrorists’ is an example of the lethal implementation of the principle of collective responsibility. In the framework of a housing crisis, the destruction of a house threw whole families into the streets. This was the case for instance in Ouled-Alleug (Blida), where villas and houses were destroyed with bulldozers, according to Abdelkader Tigha:

“These operations were more media oriented and not anti-terrorist activities. [...] The units involved only destroyed citizen’s villas and properties without arresting any criminals<sup>138</sup>.”

However, collective punishment could affect a whole village, neighbourhood, or youth groups ... Following the attack on the Guemmar barracks in November 1991, the whole region was left at the mercy of the special troops; peasants were tortured and sentenced to death<sup>139</sup>. Furthermore, during the war, the massacre of thousands of citizens allegedly supporting the FIS undoubtedly constitutes the most tragic example of collective punishment.

### *Theft and racketeering*

A very large number of witnesses gave accounts of the widespread character of racketeering and theft among the members of the security forces and militiamen throughout

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<sup>134</sup> Armand VEILLEUX, “Hypothèses sur la mort des moines de Tibhirine”, *Le Monde*, 24 January 2003.

<sup>135</sup> See Lounis AGGOUN and Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, *Françalgérie, crimes et mensonges d’États*, *op. cit.*, p. 374-491.

<sup>136</sup> Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang*, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

<sup>137</sup> Interview of Messaoud Allili for the documentary “Sécurité militaire”, *Le Vrai Journal*, Canal Plus, 22 November 1998 ; see also: Juan Carlos SANZ, “El piloto argelino huido a Ibiza acusa a su Ejército de exterminar al pueblo”, *El País*, n°767, 9 juin 1998.

<sup>138</sup> Abdelkader TIGHA, notes.

<sup>139</sup> Hearing of Ahmed Chouchane (in Habib SOUAÏDIA, *Le Procès de ‘La Sale guerre’*, *op. cit.*, p. 168).

the war and up to this day<sup>140</sup>. In many cases, it was a manner of making up for miserable wages and dire living conditions, but it was also the expression of largely-tolerated impunity at the base of the repressive strategy deployed by the regime, something which many dissident policemen and soldiers confirmed:

“Hordes of soldiers and policemen organize real looting expeditions without being at risk of punishment: they extort money through blackmail and set up road blocks to rob citizens. Or else, they massacre alleged terrorists in order to steal the jewelry and money from the dead. Temptation is great: a police inspector earns between 8,000 and 12,000 dinars per month; a kilo of meat costs 560 dinars<sup>141</sup>. »

It is worth noting that this phenomenon, strongly reinforced by the war, is not new: corruption has been widespread for a long time and illicit income generation has long become some sort of right acquired by carrying weapons. From corruption to robbery, the line has been quickly crossed in a time of total insecurity and fear.

### Massacres and forced displacement

From 1994 especially, many clues point to the responsibility of the DRS, with the complicity of high level army officers, in collective massacres of civilians. This can be seen as a new ‘method’ in the fight against terrorism. Massacres started already in spring 1994, and increased when Djamel Zitouni, a DRS agent according to convergent sources,<sup>142</sup> became the GIA’s ‘national Emir’ in October 1994. They targeted priority families and Islamists’ relatives.

These massacres encouraged (by letting the terrorists carry out their activities, bringing them logistic support, offering them impunity, etc.) or ordered by the security forces are thought to have had different objectives: to terrorise the whole population and punish the areas which supported the FIS in the elections, to bring them to actively collaborate with the DRS and to eliminate problematic witnesses. Another major clandestine aim seems to have been to break the social fabric within the population through forced displacement: indeed, the mass massacres perpetrated from 1996, first in the South of Algiers, made hundreds of thousands flee their land and villages in the face of the ‘slaughterers’ (an estimated 1 to 1.5 million people were displaced mainly because of the war, and many crammed in miserable conditions, in the suburbs of Algiers and in several coastal cities<sup>143</sup>).

Finally, it is very likely that massacres were also used as a weapon by the ‘Janvieriste’ Generals to estrange President Zéroual, who was trying to break away from them by negotiating with FIS politicians: accused of being ‘unable to protect the population’, he was de facto forced to resign in September 1998<sup>144</sup>.

### **The organisation of secrecy and impunity**

To sum up, one can say that the decision makers in the Algerian system had the prowess

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<sup>140</sup> For a recent example, see: “Les patriotes accusent leur chef de les racketter sous la menace et l’intimidation avec la complicité de certains gradés de l’armée et précisément du CTRI”, *El Watan*, 30 January 2002.

<sup>141</sup> Captain ‘Haroun’, “Ils soupçonnent la Sécurité militaire”, *loc. cit.*

<sup>142</sup> See on this issue the study on armed groups and the summary of available information made by Lounis AGGOUN and Jean-Baptiste RIVOIRE, *Françalgérie, crimes et mensonges d’États, op. cit.*, pp. 385-393, 430-434, 464-465.

<sup>143</sup> See NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL/GLOBAL IDP PROJECT, *Algeria, over one million internally displaced people are being ignored by the international community*, <www.idpproject.org>, 5 March 2004.

<sup>144</sup> See François GÈZE and Salima MELLAH, “Crimes contre l’humanité”, postscript to Nesroulah YOUS, *Qui a tué à Bentalha?*, *op. cit.*, p. 271 sq.

of conducting for years a very large scale war against their own population, without it being ever recognized as such and keeping secret the structures of the formidable repressive machinery they had created for a very long time. Through disinformation and secrecy, they quickly went from ‘electoral eradication’ by cancelling the elections to ‘political eradication’ by passing special laws against every citizen and banning the FIS in 1992; then to physical eradication of activists and civilians through raids, deportation, extra judicial killings and finally collective massacres.

The Islamist armed groups were obviously involved, especially in the first years, in the gross human rights violations which characterised this ‘dirty war’. The fact that they were widely manipulated, especially from 1994, does not remove their responsibility for these crimes nor does it the passive complicity of many Islamist leaders, most of whom remained silent although they knew, at least from 1995, that many of the crimes ‘attributed to the Islamists’ were in reality committed under manipulations of the DRS.

#### *Absolute secrecy and partitioning*

As former under-lieutenant Habib Souaïdia clearly explained, secrecy was the foundation on which was built the whole organisation of repression:

“It is very important to underline that the dirty war is a secret war. Since March 1993, there has never been any written mission order like those we used to receive before. For each operation, the instructions were exclusively oral. Often, as a result, the other security forces such as the police, gendarmerie or the army units which did not belong to the special forces were not aware of the operations they conducted. As to the dirty jobs (massacre of entire villages, summary executions...) carried out by the CCLAS regiments ‘special sections’, they were even more secret: I have learned through officers who participated in them that it was forbidden for them to even talk about it by radio, unless they used code names and special frequencies. [...] These kinds of operations were only ordered by the CCLAS chiefs and heads of ‘operational sectors’ to men they fully trusted, all of whom became professional killers<sup>145</sup>.”

Moreover, Abdelkader Tigha explained that, according to his experience at the CTRI in Blida, the ‘treatment’ of the many agents recruited by the DRS, in particular within the Islamist movement was always in accordance with strict secrecy rules:

“Contact between the manipulating officer and the agent was generally done over the telephone, or in an apartment of the so called ‘post box’ service, where the agent receives instructions on a detailed objective. Under no circumstances can the agent enter or be contacted inside the barracks, except in case of an emergency or if a case is deemed urgent by the command. Each recruited agent has its own pseudonym, which is only known by the manipulating officer or the officials at the Research Service. Contacts with the agents must be kept secret. [...] Every contact is filmed and recorded, even in public places<sup>146</sup>.”

Policemen, gendarmes or DRS agents who carried out the arrests often ignored what became of the detainees. Work between the different services was partitioned and there existed secret detention centres in every military region. As a result, the absence of a comprehensive picture of the different people in charge prevented them from getting a full sense of the ‘death machinery’ in which they were involved. This difficulty to grasp the objectives of the decision makers and the means to achieve them was well expressed by former Colonel Samraoui, although at a high level in the military: the officer explained that only a few men (essentially Generals Larbi Belkheir, Mohamed Lamari and the three DRS bosses) controlled the whole machinery. For his part, he acknowledged that it was impossible to be ‘lucid’, for instance, he understood only later the involvement of DRS chiefs in the

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<sup>145</sup> Habib SOUAÏDIA, *La Sale Guerre, op. cit.*, p. 187.

<sup>146</sup> Abdelkader TIGHA, notes.

creation of some 'Islamist' armed groups<sup>147</sup>.

Finally, in very many cases, as we have seen, secrecy was preserved through the elimination of those 'who knew too much', whether they were simply executing orders or had more responsibility ...

*The absence of coordination between the services, the war between agents*

Partitioning of the different elements of the 'death machinery' not only maintained its opacity but also led to its racing out of control as a result of the confusion over one another's assignments. According to some dissident officers, this confusion was, at least during the first two or three years of the war, created by the fact that decision making Generals had relatively little control over it. But the likelihood that it was deliberately kept this way precisely to increase violence and state terror cannot be excluded.

As we have seen, the two pillars of the DRS, the DCE and DCSA, each had a structure in charge of conducting repressive operations: the CPO and CTRIs for the DCE, the CPMI (and CMI until March 1993) for the DCSA. According to Habib Souaïdia, already from 1992, the lack of proper coordination between those rival entities, a rivalry that was fuelled by General Médiène, chief of the DRS, was at the source of a lethal escalation:

“‘Tewfik’ gave carte blanche to each of his services. He fostered competition between their chiefs and did not hesitate to set them against each other to obtain better results. In this undeclared war between services, they would stop at nothing: each used the worst behaviours in order to be well viewed by Tewfik, arresting, torturing and assassinating hundreds of ‘suspects’, without even bothering to know if they were guilty or not<sup>148</sup>.”

But the absence of coordination between the DRS and the other security forces (police, gendarmerie and army) was also the cause of many excesses, as Samraoui explained. From 1991 already:

“There had been so much manipulation thoughtlessly carried out that the DRS slowly lost control of its ‘agents’, and became unable to distinguish turncoat agents from double agents. This situation subsequently became worse, as each service had its own agents: One can well imagine the confusion that prevailed, each service thinking they were dealing with terrorists, although they were in fact manipulated by their colleagues. The real terrorists as well as the decision makers got something out of this confusion<sup>149</sup>.”

Each service thus had its own agents infiltrated in armed groups they manipulated, each service arrested, tortured and killed people breeding confusion, which was made worse by 'borrowings' of clothing: Soldiers carried out arrests wearing police uniforms, militiamen wore military outfits, DRS agents grew their beards and wore a *kachabia*, etc. The judicial police services for their part recruited Islamists in prisons, who could be mistaken for terrorists by other services upon their release.

One service would frequently arrest a suspect, only to find out that it was an agent of another service, as Samraoui recalled:

“The history of the creation of the GIA by the secret services looks like ‘Doctor Jekyll and Mister Hyde’: at some point, around the second half of 1992, the manipulation process got out of control. Many turncoat agents playing a double game ‘vanished’ in the underground resistance. And because of the partitioning, COMI and CPO agents were ‘at war’ with each other. As responsible for the PCO’s intelligence unit, I witnessed countless interventions by Colonel Kamel Abderrahmane, Amar and Tartag, requesting the release of one person or another who had just been arrested because he ‘worked’ with them. Lack of

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<sup>147</sup> Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang, op. cit.*, p. 149 and 299.

<sup>148</sup> Habib SOUAÏDIA, *La Sale Guerre, op. cit.*, p. 83.

<sup>149</sup> Mohammed SAMRAOUI, *Chronique des années de sang, op. cit.*, p. 87.

coordination, in this devilish plan, was equally serious between the DRS structures and other state institutions. It was amidst such cacophony that the fight against the ‘extremists’ was engaged<sup>150</sup>.”

Tigha confirmed that the overlapping of manipulation and the violence it created were at the time not really controlled:

“Each DRS service carried out infiltrations of armed groups (DCE, DCSA, CTRI and CMI) and there was total confusion. Nobody could control them in the field. When CTRI arrested someone, the CPMI of Bachir Tartag called to say they should be released. Nobody no longer knew who was manipulating and who gave the instructions<sup>151</sup>.”

This confusion led to a climate of suspicion and murders between agents, as a police defector told *Le Monde* in 1995:

“Policemen were tortured by their colleagues. They were suspected of being double agents. [...] The military security, gendarmes, police, everybody was killing one another<sup>152</sup>...”

This also explains the amount of mistakes reported by defectors, like for instance:

“We had received the information that an armed group was in action in Baraki. We went there. [...] We killed them and discovered it was an army second-lieutenant and his group<sup>153</sup>.”

This initial confusion, whether organised or not, seemed to have been subsequently overcome in the course of 1993 and 1994, when repressive violence yet increased in intensity. But the organisation of secrecy and partitioning continued, in order to make underlings more docile and partially blind to what was happening, and to guarantee impunity for those responsible.

#### *Impunity and killing madness*

Impunity was guaranteed to all individuals in the security services, and when an agent was charged and convicted, it was generally just a show (the person was subsequently cleared and released) or a means of revenge. As far as murders were concerned, everything was possible. It was even possible at the DRS to take a wounded person out of the hospital and execute him. Licence to torture, steal, rape and massacre gave this war a barbarian and atrocious character, acts of horror acts multiplied, dramatically increasing the violence committed by the Islamists:

“People said: he is a terrorist! And the man was executed<sup>154</sup>.”

“These [police] units operate in total darkness. They kill indiscriminately and loot everything on their path<sup>155</sup>.”

“There were murders, looting and rapes on a very large scale. [...] There was an increasing number of people who committed massacres as if they were hit by a ‘massacre epidemic’<sup>156</sup>.”

“It is anarchy. Policemen are terrorised and behave like wild animals. They steal, rape,

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<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 182.

<sup>151</sup> Abdelkader TIGHA, notes.

<sup>152</sup> Dominique LE GUILLEDOUX, « Ils voulaient faire de nous des fous, des sanguinaires », *loc. cit.*

<sup>153</sup> Kamel B., “À propos de terrorisme...”, *loc. cit.*

<sup>154</sup> Quoted by Robert FISK, “Massacres in Algeria: strong evidence for Military Security responsibility”, *loc. cit.*

<sup>155</sup> “Un ancien policier d’Alger réfugié au Royaume-Uni: témoignage intégral”, Al-Jazira, December 1997.

<sup>156</sup> “Témoignage du transfuge ‘Adlane Chabane’”, *El Watan-El Arabi*, 2 January 1998.

and commit massacres. [...] They no longer know if they are alive or dead: they do not feel life anymore. [...] At night, they get drunk and take drugs or sleeping pills<sup>157</sup>...”

The authorisation to torture and kill and the habit of it led the way to pathologically extreme acts and turned these practices, in some cases, into acts of pleasure:

“One police superintendent told me that his men somehow felt satisfaction when they slaughtered their victims, as if they slaughtered sheep or goats. [...] They were caught in some kind of mechanism that completely transformed their relationship with violence<sup>158</sup>.”

Murder was also used by DRS agents to take revenge, extort funds or take over the assets of businessmen or manufacturers. It was possible to ‘hire’ them, with backhanders, to ‘settle’ financial disputes. The incriminated person was arrested and tortured, gave in and the dispute was ‘settled’.

This madness of killing was contagious and a great part of the repressive forces slipped into large-scale criminality.

### *Since 1999: control of violence and the maintenance of terror*

More than twelve years after the start of the war, most of the same Generals are still in power and pretend they have won the ‘war against terrorism’. However, a war that can be qualified as ‘low intensity’ in comparison to the black years, is still ongoing. New armed groups (GSPC, HDS, GSPD...) and a residual GIA are thought to gather still a few dozens (or hundreds?) of terrorists (official information as well as revelations from ‘informed sources’ in the press are surprisingly fluctuating). There is no known reliable information on the nature – or even on the very existence – of these groups which, as before, seem to fight each other and confront the army and the DRS services “by way of massacres”<sup>159</sup>.

What is however certain, is that the picture seems very improbable: well trained security forces, made up of hundreds of thousands of men, are allegedly unable to overcome a few dozen ‘terrorists’, while no Algerian political movement and least of all the population, exhausted after a decade of horror, have been advocating armed struggle for many years. The most likely reason is that decision making Generals deliberately maintain – or even fuel – a ‘residual’ level of terrorist violence, in pursuit of a double goal.

At the internal level, such a climate of violence allows them to keep their ascendancy on the population and block any democratic alternative, in order to maintain a sustainable control over the resources created by trade in the oil. At any moment, as we have witnessed during the ‘black spring’ in Kabylia in 2001, the DRS can foment conflicts and fuel sources of tensions to increase violence and riots, and prevent any political solution to be reached at its expense. This was confirmed by a specialist’s analysis already in 1994:

“The state of generalised insecurity accelerates the disorganisation of the State and encourages above all the misappropriation of financial flows<sup>160</sup>.”

At the external level, this ‘terrorist violence’ (which the DRS propaganda obviously claims is linked to Al-Qaeda) allows decision makers to fully play the ‘9/11 card’. In the new international climate created by the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 in the United States of America, the Algerian regime seems to have secured impunity for the crimes against humanity committed by its leaders since 1992. The Generals who led this criminal policy themselves are now looked on as ‘good pupils’ in the global fight against terrorism:

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<sup>157</sup> Jacques GIRARDON, “Algérie: parole de flic”, *loc. cit.*

<sup>158</sup> Capitaine “Haroun”, “Ils soupçonnent la Sécurité militaire”, *loc. cit.*

<sup>159</sup> “Le GSPC et le GIA semblent se répondre en écho par massacres interposés”, *L’Expression*, 2 October 2003.

<sup>160</sup> Lawrence K. HALL, “L’ajustement structurel en panne”, in REPORTERS SANS FRONTIÈRES (dir.), *Le Drame algérien, op. cit.*, p. 109.

“Mr. Ali Tounsi [chief of DGSN] underlined that the state of cooperation between the Algerian secret services and Interpol ranks our country among those most cooperative in the field of the fight against terrorism<sup>161</sup>.”

But for the population, violent repression has not stopped and has even increased since the re-election of Abdelaziz Bouteflika in April 2004: torture, abductions followed by disappearances and extrajudicial killings continue to be reported. Popular riots and protests are increasing and are brutally repressed, at the cost of many killed and wounded, and arrests take place in total lawlessness. Although detailed information on the issue is very sparse, what we know is enough to establish that the repressive scheme described in this paper is essentially still in place, under the control of General Mohamed ‘Tewfik’ Médiène.

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<sup>161</sup> *Le Jeune Indépendant*, 17 September 2003.

**Annex:**  
**Algerian civil and military officials, 1988-2004**

We present below is a summary of available information about the incumbents of the main official civil and military posts, who played a role in the 'dirty war' which started in 1992 (whenever possible, the holders of the post in the period 1988-1992 are also mentioned). It is important to underline that this data is sometimes incomplete, except for the highest public functions (Chief of State, government members, ANP and military regions Chiefs of Staff...) information (name of the incumbent, starting and end dates of the occupation of the post) relating to many posts remain confidential, in particular for unit command posts (CTRI, regiments, etc.) involved in repression and fight against terrorism. Similarly, outside a few cases, the careers of major army and police official are not made public. This list was thus established through connecting information gathered throughout the years in the Algerian press, the few studies dedicated to the army<sup>162</sup> and the testimonies of army and police defectors, and it will necessarily have to be supplemented and clarified.

**Government officials**

\* **President of the Republic:** Colonel Chadli Bendjedid (January 1979-11 January 1992), Mohammed Boudiaf (January 1992-29 June 1992), Colonel Ali Kafi (June 1992-30 January 1994), Major-General Liamine Zéroual (31 January 1994-14 April 1999), Abdelaziz Bouteflika (15 April 1999 to date).

- *Director of the President's Cabinet:* General Larbi Belkheir (1986-1991), Major General Mohamed Betchine (January 1994-August 1998), Major-General Larbi Belkheir (September 2000 to date).

- *Head of military affairs of the Presidency:* Major-General Mohamed Touati (September 2000-to date).

\* **Prime Minister:** Abdelhamid Brahimi (22 January 1984-8 November 1988), Kasdi Merbah (9 November 1988-8 September 1989), Mouloud Hamrouche (9 September 1989-17 June 1991), Sid Ahmed Ghazali (18 June 1991-18 July 1992), Belaïd Abdesslam (19 July 1992-24 October 1992), Rédha Malek (25 October 1992-10 March 1994), Mokdad Sifi (11 March 1994-30 December 1995), Ahmed Ouyahia (31 December 1995-15 december 1998), Smaïl Hamdani (16 December 1998-23 December 1999), Ahmed Benbitour (24 december 1999-27 August 2000), Ali Benflis (28 August 2000-5 May 2003), Ahmed Ouyahia (6 May 2003 to date).

\* **Ministrer of Defence (MDN):** Colonel Chadli Bendjedid (January 1979-24 July 1990), General Khaled Nezzar (25 July 1990-10 July 1993<sup>163</sup>), Major-General Liamine Zéroual (11 July 1993-14 April 1999), Abdelaziz Bouteflika (15 April 1999 to date).

- *Political adviser to the MDN:* Major-General Mohamed Touati (1992-1993).

- *Secretary-General of the Defense Ministry:* General Mustapha Chelloufi (1998-1990), General Mohamed Ghenim (1991- August 2000<sup>164</sup>), Major-General Ahmed Senhadji (August 2000 to date).

\* **Minister of the Interior:** El-Hadi Khédiri (1987- 8 November 1988), Aboubekr

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<sup>162</sup> Such as by Nicole CHEVILLARD, «Algérie: l'après-guerre civile», *Nord-Sud Export*, June 1995.

<sup>163</sup> Date of retirement.

<sup>164</sup> Currently retired.

Belkaïd (9 November 1988- 8 September 1989<sup>165</sup>), Mohamed Salah Mohammedi (9 September 1989-17 June 1991), Abdelatif Rahal (18 June 1991-17 October 1991), Major-General Larbi Belkheir (18 October 1991-18 July 1992), Mohamed Hardi (19 July 1992-24 October 1993<sup>166</sup>), Colonel Salim Saadi (25 October 1993-10 March 1994), Abderrahmane Chérif Méziane (11 March 1994- March 1995), Mostapha Benmansour (March 1995-December 1998), Abdelmalek Sellal (December 1998-December 1999), Noureddine Zerhouni (December 1999 to date).

- *Director-General of National Security (DGSN)* : Mohamed Bouzbid (1988-1990), Colonel Bachir Lahrèche (1990-28 June 1991), M'hamed Tolba (29 June 1991-May 1994), Mohamed Ouaddah (May 1994-March 1995), Colonel Ali Tounsi (20 March 1995 to date).

### ANP officials

\* **ANP Chief of Staff**: Major-General Abdallah Belhouchet (1986-15 November 1988), General Khaled Nezzar (16 November 1988-25 July 1990), Major-General Abdelmalek Guenaïzia (26 July 1990-9 July 1993<sup>167</sup>), Army Corps General Mohamed Lamari (10 July 1993-August 2004), Major-General Mohamed Gaïd Salah (August 2004 to date).

- *Deputy Chief of Staff*: General Liamine Zéroual (1988-1989), Major-General Mohamed Lamari (1992), Major-General Brahim Fodhil Chérif (1993-1995).

- *Chief of the Employment-Preparations Department*: Major-General Brahim Fodhil Chérif (1995- February 2000), General Mohamed Baaziz (February 2000 to date).

\* **Ground Forces Commander** (HQ in Aïn-Naâdja) : General Khaled Nezzar (1986-1988<sup>168</sup>), General Mohamed Lamari (1989- April 1992), major-General Khelifa Rahim (April 1992-May 1994), Major-General Mohamed Gaïd Salah (May 1994- February 2000), Major-General Abdelhaziz Medjahed (February 2000- March 2001<sup>169</sup>), General Mohamed Chibani (March 2001- August 2004), Major-General Ahcène Tafer (August 2004 to date).

\* **Director of the Cherchell Interarmy Academy**<sup>170</sup> : General Abdelhaziz Medjahed (late 1993-xxx), General Mohamed Chibani (February 2000-March 2001).

\* **Gendarmerie Commander** (HQ in Cheraga): General Zine El Abidine Hachichi (1988), General Benabess Ghezaïel (1989- March 1995<sup>171</sup>), Major-General Brahim Fodhil Chérif (March 1995-July 1997), Major General Tayeb Derradji (July 1997-February 2000), Major-General Ahmed Boustila (February 2000 to date).

\* **Republican Guards Commander**: Major-General Makhlof Dib (1991-February 2000), General Ali Djemaï (February 2000 to date).

\* **Air Force Commander** (HQ: Chéraga): Major-General Mohamed Benslimane (xxxx to date)

\* **Navy Commander** (HQ: Algiers Admiralty): General Kamel Abderrahim (1988), General Chaâbane Ghodbane (1992- February 2000), Major-General Brahim Dadci (February 2000- July 2002), Major-General Mohamed Tahar Yala (August 2002 to date).

\* **First military region commander** (Blida, centre): General Mohamed Attaïlia, aka 'Red' (1988-1989), General Mohamed Djennouhat (1989- May 1994), Major-General Saïd

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<sup>165</sup> Aboubekr Belkaïd was assassinated on 28 September 1995.

<sup>166</sup> Mohamed Hardi was assassinated on 4 May 1996.

<sup>167</sup> Currently Algeria's Ambassador to Switzerland.

<sup>168</sup> Deputy: General Mohamed Betchine.

<sup>169</sup> Director of Military Health Care since that date.

<sup>170</sup> He is in principle number two of the ground forces.

<sup>171</sup> Currently Algeria's Ambassador to Argentina.

Bey (May 1994- September 1997), Major-General Rabah Boughaba (September 1997-February 2000), Major-General Brahim Fodhil Cherif (February 2000- August 2004), General Habib Chentouf (August 2004 to date).

\* **Second military region Commander** (Oran, West): Hocine Benmalen (1988), Major-General Khelifa Rahim (1989- April 1992), Major-General Gaïd Salah (April 1992-May 1994), Major-General Mohamed Bekhouche (May 1994- June 1996), Major-General Kamel Abderrahmane (June 1996- July 2004), Major-General Saïd Bey (August 2004 to date)

\* **Third military region Commander** (Béchar, South-West): General Tayeb Derradji (1988), General Gaïd Salah (1989- June 1990), General Tayeb Derradji (June 1990-1991), General Saïd Bey (1992- May 1994), General Hocine Benhadid (May 1994-1995), Major-General Zoubir Ghedaïdia (1995- February 2000), Major-General Ahcène Tafer (February 2000- July 2004), Major-General Saïd Chengriha (August 2004 to date).

\* **Fourth military region Commander** (Ouargla, South-West): General Mohamed Bekhouche (1992-1993), General Saïdi Fodhil *aka* Abdelhamid (December 1994-assassinated on 4 June 1996), Major-General Abdelmadjid Saheb (1996 to date).

\* **Fifth military region Commander** (Constantine, East): General Mohamed Lamari (October 1988-1989), General Abdelhamid Djouadi (1989-May 1994), Major-General Rabah Boughaba (May 1994-September 1997), General Ali Djemaï (September 1997-February 2000), Major-General Saïd Bey (February 2000- July 2004), Major-General Kamel Abderrahmane (August 2004 to date).

\* **Sixth military region Commander** (Tamanrasset, extreme South): Major-General Belkacem Kadri (May 1994- February 2000), Major-General Brahim Belguerdouh (February 2000-xxxx), Major-General Ben Ali Benali (xxxx to date).

\* **Commander of the Center for Conduct and Coordination of Anti-Subversive Actions (CCC/ALAS)**: Major-General Mohamed Lamari (September 1992- July 1993), Major-General Saïd Bey (July 1993- May 1994).

- *Commander of the operational sector of Mitidja West* (SOMO, HQ Blida): Colonel Hamana (1993), Colonel Belkacem Amar (1994), Colonel Ahmed (1995-1999).

- *Commander of the operational sector of Bouira* (SOB): Colonel Habib Chentouf (1993), General Abdelaziz Medjahed (1994), General Mohamed Chibani (May 1994 to 1995).

- *Commander of the operational sector of the Hauts Plateaux* (SOHP, HQBerrouaghia): Kechida (1993).

- *Commander of the operational sector of Aïn-Defla* (SOAD, HQ Aïn-Defla): Abderazek Maiza (1993).

- *Commander of the operational sector of East Mitidja* (SOME, HQ Boumerdès): Colonel Malti, Colonel Hamana (1993- killed in 1994).

- *Commander of the operational sector of Algiers* (SOAL, HQ Béni-Messous): Colonel Hadj-Chérif (1993), Colonel Ouda (1994-1996).

- *Commander of the operational sector of Tizi-Ouzou* (SOTO): xxx.

#### **Officials of the Department of Intelligence and Security (DRS, HQ: Delly-Brahim)**

\* **Chief of the Department of Intelligence and Security**: Major-General Mohamed Lamine Médiène, aka 'Toufik' (from September 1990 to date).

\* **Chief of the Directorate for Counter-Espionage** (DCE, HQ: Centre Ghermoul, in Algiers): Colonel (who became General in late 1992) Smaïl Lamari, aka 'Smaïn' (September 1990 to date).

- *Service for Research and Analysis (SRA)*: Major Mohamed Samraoui (March 1990-July 1992), Major Larbaa Hadj (1992-xxx).

- *Main Operations Center (CPO, called 'Centre Antar', HQ in Ben-Aknoun)*: Colonel Fares Belbahri (1988), Major Amar Guettouchi (1990 – killed in May 1992), Colonel Farid Ghobrini (August 1992-1995), Colonel Kamel Hamoud (1995-1999).

- *Operational Post of Command (PCO, HQ Chateaneuf barracks)*: General Smaïl Lamari and Commissioner Mohamed Issouli (1991-1999), General Smaïl Lamari (2000 to date).

- *CTRI (Territorial Center for Research and Investigation<sup>172</sup>) of the 1st military region (RM) (HQ Blida, Centre 'Haouch-Chnou')*: Major Abdelfetah (1988-1990), Major (who became Colonel) M'henna Djebbar (September 1990- October 2003).

- *CTRI (Territorial Center for Research and Investigation) of the 2<sup>nd</sup> RM (HQ Oran, Centre Magenta)*: Colonel 'Abdelwahab' (1988-1993), Major Hamidou (1993-1998), Major Hamou Belouisa (1998-xxxx).

- *CTRI (Territorial Center for Research and Investigation) of the 3rd RM (HQ Béchar)*: Major Hichem (1989-1992), Colonel Abbas (1993-1995), Major Smaïn (1995-1999).

- *CTRI (Territorial Center for Research and Investigation) of the 4<sup>th</sup> RM (HQ Ouargla)*: Colonel Farid Ghobrini (1988), Major M'henna Djebbar (1989- August 1990), Ahmed Kherfi (1990-2001).

- *CTRI (Territorial Center for Research and Investigation) of the 5<sup>th</sup> RM (HQ Constantine, Centre Bellevue)*: Colonel Farid Ghobrini (1989- May 1992), Colonel Kamel Hamoud (May 1992-1995), Colonel Karim (1995-xxxx).

- *CTRI (Territorial Center for Research and Investigation) of the 6<sup>th</sup> RM (HQ Tamanrasset)*: Major Hasnaoui (1988), Major Abderrezak (1989-1992), Major Abdelkader Sedjari (1993-1999).

\* **Commander of the Special Intervention Group (GIS, HQ Béni-Messous)**: Mustapha Ghomri (1988-1989), Major Hammou (1990-1992), Major Hamidou (1993), Colonel Abdelkader Khémène (1994-2003).

\* **Chief of the Central Directorate for Army Security (DCSA)**: General Mohamed Betchine (November 1987- November 1988), General Mohamed Médiène (November 1988-September 1990), Colonel (promoted General in late 1992) Kamel Abderrahmane (September 1990- June 1996), colonel Mohamed Zeghloul (1996-xxx).

- *Main Military Investigation Center (CPMI, HQ in Ben-Aknoun)*: Major Abdelhak Benzlikha (1988), Farès Belbahri (1988-1990), Colonel Athmane Tartag, dit 'Bachir' (1990-March 2001).

\* **Chief of the Directorate for Documentation and External Security (DDSE)**: General Saïdi Fodhil (1992-July 1994), General Hassan Bendjelti *aka* Abderazak, *aka* Hassan Tetouan (July 1994-1995), General Rachid Laalali *aka* 'Attafi' (1995 to date).

\* **Chief of the Press and Information Service (Centre of Communication and Dissemination; HQ: Centre Belaroussi)**: Colonel Djillali Meraou *aka* Salah (assassinated in February 1995), Colonel Tahri Zoubir *aka* Hadj Zoubir ou El-Hadj (February 1995-December 2001), Colonel Faouzi (December 2001 to date).

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<sup>172</sup> The CTRIs, units of the DRS (DCE) in each military region, are the product of the fusion, in March 1993, of the CRI (Research and Investigation Centres), which were previously under the authority of the DCE, and the CMI (Military Investigation Centres), previously under the authority of the DCSA.

\* **Chief of the Presidential Security Service (SSP):** General El Hachemi Hadjeres (1989- June 1992), Major Medjebar (June 1992-1993), Mohamed Douar (1993-1995), General Sadek Aït-Mesbah (1995-1999).

### **Militia chiefs**

- **Mohamed Sellami:** Founder of the Boufarik militia, created in April 1995, died on 19 December 1995.

- **Hadj Fergane:** dubbed the ‘sheriff’ (Mayor of Rélizane and later President of the city), founder with Hadj Abed, Mayor of Djédioua, of the Rélizane militia created in March 1994 and active until 1998.

- **Sheikh Zidane El-Mekhfi:** Founder of the Zbarbar militia (Bouira), created in June 1995, deceased in 2000, replaced since by his son Boualem.

- **Boukhenhouche Lakhdar:** Chief of the Merouana militia (Batna).

- **G. Rabah:** Chief of the Bordj Ménaïl militia (Boumerdès).

- **Zitoufi:** MP of the RND party in 1997, founder of the Ténès militia, created in 1994.

- **Smaïl Mira:** Chief of the Tazmalt militia (Bejaia).

- **Nourredine Aït-Hamouda:** MP of the RCD party, Chief of the Tassaft (Tizi-Ouzou) region militia.

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173 Départ en retraite.

174 Actuellement à la retraite.

175 Aboubekr Belkaïd sera assassiné le 28 septembre 1995.

176 Mohamed Hardi sera assassiné le 4 mai 1996.

177 Actuellement ambassadeur d’Algérie en Suisse.

178 Adjoint : général Mohamed Betchine.

179 Directeur de la santé militaire depuis cette date.

180 Il est en principe le deuxième personnage de l’armée de terre.

181 Actuellement ambassadeur d’Algérie en Argentine.

182 Les CTRI, antennes du DRS (DCE) dans chaque région militaire, sont issu de la fusion, en mars 1993 des CRI (centres de recherche et d’investigation), dépendant auparavant de la DCE, et des CMI (centres militaires d’investigation), dépendant auparavant de la DCSA.