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Appendix One

The FIS Approach to the Algerian Crisis

Statement from Anwar N. Haddam President, FIS Parliamentary Delegation Abroad
Detention Center of Manassas, Virginia, March 12, 1998

Introduction:

As time goes by, people get entangled in the details and intricacies of the Algerian crisis, overlooking the cause of it. The current situation in Algeria is a definite result of a cause. The result will disappear when its cause disappears, and hence the Algerians will enjoy their right for freedom, peaceful life and the rule of law and order. The ruling elite, when it realized the growing gap between itself and the realities of the masses, instead of stepping down in order to let "winds of change blow in Algeria" it confiscated the choice of the people and forced the entire country into a regrettable state of war. Indeed, since the military coup d'état of January 11th, 1992, Algeria is in a deplorable situation. The decision, taken by the military/security establishment to replace the power of the ballot box by that of the gun, led to a total collapse of the state. This is currently leading to the collapse of the society as well. The death toll has reached 150,000 and hundreds are being killed every week. Massacres of numbers of civilians are being reported on a daily basis. It is a real genocide undertaken by various factions of the military/security establishment against the Algerian people behind closed doors. The various independent reports on Algeria confirmed indeed such tragic Human Rights situation in the country. However, ignoring the roots of the crisis, and not recognizing the people's right to defend their elected institutions, they accused both sides. On the aftermath of the coup d'état, and after the rejection of the regime of repeated calls from FIS for a political solution, Algerians were forced to engage in the use of force to defend their elected institutions against the junta which has confiscated the popular will, crushed the ballot box, and installed itself with the barrel of the gun. The struggle is not against civilians. The FIS reiterates its call for an Independent Commission of Inquiry -- be it National or International -- to investigate the recent massacres and all crimes committed in the country since the coup d'état of 1992. The FIS firmly believes that an independent investigation, which will bring the perpetrators as well as those who commanded them to justice, is in the sole interest of the Algerian people. Indeed, only such investigation which will shed light and will break the walls of silence on the horrible events in Algeria will stop the ongoing bloodshed in the country and will lead the way to a comprehensive, just, and fair political solution. The FIS considers that International Human Rights Organizations as well as western government which have interests in Algeria have material evidence that factions of the military regime are behind the terrorization of the population and behind the turning during summer 1995 of one of the armed groups, namely former GIA, into a terrorist anti-guerrilla group. The FIS also considers that there is already sufficient circumstantial evidences to warrant such independent investigation without waiting the approval of the military regime in place in Algiers. The situation in Algeria is catastrophic. The horrible massacres, perpetrated against civilians, which are driving the Algerian society to the brink of destruction has to be put to an end at once. The crisis has been compounded by the unwillingness of the military/security establishment to find political solutions other than the ones accepted to

itself. Such solutions have been judged by the serious Algerian political class inadequate to solve the crisis, in the contrary, it adds in its complexity. Indeed, the military regime, which is opposed to any independent investigation concerning the massacres and all crimes committed against civilians, rejected also the “Platform for a Political and Peaceful Solution to the Algerian Crisis”, find in Rome, Italy, on January 13, 1995, by the Algerian main political parties. Instead, the military regime in power in Algeria, since the end of 1995, engaged in a drive to legitimize itself. It has organized series of illegal and unconstitutional elections. These elections were held against all accepted norms of due electoral process. Indeed, these elections were not free and fair. They did not solve the crisis of legitimacy in Algeria, neither did they ensure return to normalcy. On the aftermath of these elections, some say that the army-general “in charge” in Algeria today is in better position than his predecessors. It is said also he did not participate in the January 11, 1992 coup d’etat. The Algerian people, who, in his majority was forced to participate in these elections under emergency rule, knows that the army-general ‘in charge’ in Algiers owns his appointment to the directly implicated putschists. Also, since the arrival of the army-general to power, hundreds of civilians have been killed weekly. Since these elections, this number has increased. Moreover, the hard-core of the putschists still have the upper hand. Algeria’s hour of agony has never seemed to be closer. The need for a positive change in all aspects of Algerian life has never been as urgent. This paper is devoted to the FIS approach to the crisis of the political authority . Before that, and for a better appreciation of the FIS approach, the Algerian people’s journey for freedom and the cause that led to the current situation are briefly recalled to mind.

The Algerian People’s Journey for Freedom:

Islam reached the people of North Africa very early in the era of Islamic expansion. The newly Muslims of North African carried the message across the Mediterranean sea. Andalusia (Spain) stood as a testimony of the genius creativity for centuries, where they fostered a cultural atmosphere brilliantly blending East and West. In 1830, France invaded Algeria. People were subjugated, brutal military rule was implemented and economic disparity drove people to starvation. But above all, the Islamic identity of Algerians was the ultimate target. The Algerian “became” European and his mosques were converted to churches. The French colonial attempted to deestablish Islam, destroyed public institutions and replaced Islamic Law with colonial one. In the midst of these difficult times, North African Muslims never surrendered. In Algeria, Ameer Abd-Elkader, Sheikh El-Mokrani, Sheikh Bou Amama, and other Muslim scholars waged a continuous armed struggle against the French oppressors. In 1930, France celebrated the 100 anniversary of its Algerian occupation. After their bloody repression of all the revolts, the French felt and thought that they had subjugated totally and forever the Islamic identity of the Algerians. The year 1930 is also a memorable year in Algeria because it marks the beginning of a project of reconstruction of the Algerian society. The year of 1932 saw the birth of *Jamiat El Ulama El Muslimin El jazairiine* (Association of Algerian Muslim Scholars) headed by Sheikh Abd Elhamid Ibn Badis. As a complementary effort to the one of the Algerian Nationalist Movement, the Jamiat embarked on a paramount mission of reviving the faith and the true personality of the Algerian people. In 1954, a war was declared by the National Liberation Front (FLN) against the colonial rule. The initial goal of the historic FLN leaders as proclaimed in the declaration of November 1st, 1954, was the restoration of the Algerian independent state within the framework of the Islamic principles. In 1962, despite the French military brutal reaction against the civilian population, and after seven

years of war that left a million and a half martyrs (one tenth of the population) the struggle of the Algerian people culminated by the accession to independence. Following the independence, a military group, ex-officers of the French army who joined the war of liberation just before its end, took over and imposed socialism and one party rule. The authoritarian rulers consolidated their power by physically eliminating anyone opposed to their rule. Under the successive military regimes, Algerians experienced religious, social, as well as economic hardship. In September 1988, the state of Algeria became almost bankrupt. The servicing ratio of the foreign debt was 97% of the export earning. 80% of the state owned companies were in the red light, causing a rapid decline in the standard of living. Meanwhile, a caste of privileged people was getting defiantly and openly richer: 5% of the population earned 45% of national income.

Events of October 1988:

for about a week, tens of thousands of Algerian youth marched angrily in the streets of the main cities attacking the symbols of the regime and demanding justice and equity. These events- the first major anti-establishment demonstrations targeting all what represented the regime- were considered as an ultimate call for a change. Indeed, after more than 25 years of one party imposed rule, the Algerian people realized that the reconstruction of a society to a more ethical and productive one is of such importance that no reform in any sector of life can succeed without it. Most of these attempts were unsuccessful since the Algerian people were lacking legitimately elected institutions. In February 1989, under continuous pressure from the masses led by the Algerian Islamic Movement, the Constitution was amended allowing the organization of free multiparty elections at all levels. This was thought by the Algerian people as a new hope for a better future. In March 1989, the mainstream of the Algerian Islamic Movement, hoping for a political and peaceful change, decided to form the Islamic Front for Salvation (FIS). In June 12, 1990, the first multiparty Municipal and provincial elections were held. The Algerian people spoke for themselves for the first time since more than 160 years by choosing their local government officers. The FIS won 32 of the 48 wilaya (provincial) Assemblies, and 854 of the 1541 Communal (Municipal) Assemblies. The FIS local government officers demonstrated the ability to earnestly strive to improve the living conditions of the population. It is the restoration of confidence and trust between the local governments and their constituencies, with few exceptions, that gave the FIS the full support of the majority of Algerians, as shown in the landslide victory of December 1991 Parliamentary election. Having been unsuccessful to undermine the popularity of FIS local governments, by depriving them from many of their previous prerogatives, and after several delays of the Parliamentary election which under public pressure was scheduled to be held in June 1991, the regime decreed a new Electoral Law designed to give the ruling military-backed party and edge over all other parties. The new Electoral Law was judged unfair, and thus challenged by all major parties. However, it was the FIS alone who took the responsibility to oppose this Electoral Law. Indeed, after the failure of all political means to dissuade the regime to change the unjust Electoral Law, the FIS called for a general political strike and peaceful demonstrations at the end of May 1991. The regime responded to this peaceful strike by killing more than 300 people, arresting more than 8,000 and by firing more than 12,000 from their jobs. They arrested also the FIS leadership, especially its President, Dr. Abbassi Madani, his Deputy, Sheikh Ali Ben Hadj, (the first one in house arrest since September 1997, the second one in jail since June 1991) and a week later Sheikh Mohammed Said, in his quality as the new interim FIS Spokesman (later on, he was released then sentenced while being on the run after the coup d'état of January 11, 1991. In November 1995, he was assassinated by

extremist elements who infiltrated one of the armed movement , the former GIA). After having decreed a state of emergency and detained the FIS leadership, a new government was appointed and decided to revise the unfair Electoral Law. The two-round Parliamentary election was rescheduled. The FIS called then for the end of the strike. The new Electoral Law for the December 1991 Parliamentary election denied any participation of the elected local governments to the administration of the election: - the regime, through appointed councils (Daira) had the exclusive control of the Election. - the municipality officers had no access to the electoral process, not even to the electoral cards. -almost two million electoral cards have not been mailed to registered voters, mainly from poor regions known to be favorable to FIS. However the regime repeatedly promised a fair and free election, and that it will abide by the polls results, regardless of the participation rate. Despite the fact that its leaders were detained illegally, the FIS went to the December 1991 election. On December 26, 1991, the first round of Parliamentary election was held. 430 seats are contested. In this round, the FIS obtained 188 seats, FFS 25 seats, FLN 15 seats, and 3 seats went to independent candidates. On January 11, 1992, the military/security establishment seized power and announced the cancellation of the second round of the Parliamentary election, which was to take place five days later. Algerians were denied their right to elect freely their legitimate political representatives.

Cause of the crisis:

The cause of the Algerian crisis as seen by the FIS, is presented here as a contribution to a better understanding of the issue and hence for a better appreciation of the historical transformation that Algeria is undergoing. This transformation aims at establishing political pluralism, the cornerstone of the FIS promoted Islamic State, and as the efficient self-guarding path against tyranny, despotism and dictatorship. Several factors have distinguished post-colonial Algeria. These have led to the current situation, these are: an authoritarian regime, a repressive army, a controlled news media and a weak civil society.

The ruling elite: Isolated from the rest of the society.

In post-colonial Algeria, the Algerian Muslim people have come to know with full conviction that those in power are nothing more than a regionally affiliated, culturally self-hating elite that cares little for the ethical, moral, and civilizational dimensions of Islam. Regional affiliation has become the determining factor in the orientation, dynamics, structures and participation in the political process, and thus the growing gap between the elite and the realities of the masses.

The State: A vague concept among the ruling elite. The State has become interchangeable with the ruling regime. Any criticism of the head of State or the regime is punishable by law.

The military/security establishment: To protect the ruling elite.

The military/security, instead of upholding its constitutional duties -- to fend off any external threat and protect the sovereignty of the country -- played a prominent role, turning its machine inward to protect the "stability of the system". As a result, the military/security establishment has turned the armed forces into an instrument of repression at the hands of the ruling elite.

The State-run media: A tool to propagate the official ideology and distort reality.

The media establishment has conspired by turning the country's media into an instrument of propaganda to insure public acceptance of the ruling elite's discourse. It missed, during the short era of multipartism and freedom in 90-91, a chance of rehabilitation in the eyes of the Algerian people by not accepting the free exercise of political multipartism; it went as far as calling for and supporting unconstitutional moves such as the coup d'état and the interruption of the electoral process.

The civil society: Defenseless

While the ruling elite was consolidating its power, the institutions of the civil society -- family, schools, mosques, media, associations, even the State-worker's union and political party (FLN) -- and its defense mechanism were quickly eroded. The independence of these institutions is an essential prerequisite for the preservation of freedom and private interests, and for the protection of the individual rights against the possibility of an excessive use of power by the state.

Artificial change: A democratization process that preserved structure and leaderships

The ruling elite, confronted by the economic and social problems, led to the tragic riot of October 1988 in order to promote a "change" while maintaining the same structures and leaderships. The proposed democratization process consequently was hampered by several factors: First, it was heavily guarded by an arsenal of regulations to prevent any opposition from achieving any decisive victory. Second, the ruling elite insisted on being outside the democratic process. They refused to be removed through the ballot box no matter how high the cost they may need to inflict upon the population. Third, the entire process was closely monitored by a vigilant military/security establishment, willing to intrude whenever its privileges were challenged. These were some of the factors behind the Algerian Crisis as seen by the FIS, and which have led to the regime's transgression against the people's choice on January 11, 1992. Therefore, the Crisis in Algeria is not simply due to a group of fundamentalists, fanatics, extremists, ... allegedly the FIS, trying to overthrow a duly elected government.

The Rome Accord initiated by the FIS, under the hospices of St. Egidio, and signed by the legitimate opposition on January 13, 1995, which represents more than 80% of the electorate in the 1991 election, clearly reveals that the crisis is due to a military dictatorship regime. This military /security establishment has committed a historical mistake when it thwarted the democratic process, transgressed the Constitution, confiscated the choice of the people when it voided the Parliamentary election, dissolved the elected municipalities, suppressed and banned the legitimately winning party, imposed a state of emergency, resorted to brutal and repressive measures and forced the entire country into this regrettable state of war.

The FIS and the commitment for a peaceful solution :

Political Islam in Algeria aims at reestablishing Islam as a comprehensive way of life through the institutionalization of a stable governing system which ought to be representative of the Algerian society in its plurality. A multi-party system that has no resemblance with the theocratic system experienced in the West for centuries. The intention of the Algerian Political Islam is not to replace the present by a mystical past, but to restructure the modern social order so that it conforms to Islamic principles and values. This does not mean, however, that under Islamic reforms everything western is to be discarded. A selective interactive approach to western political, economic and social

expressions is undertaken so long as there is no violation of Islamic moral principles. The Islamic Front for Salvation (FIS), the main expression of the Algerian Political Islam, tried to operate in the open, seeking to reform society from bottom up via gradual and peaceful evolutionary process. Its program and positions on various issues were (and are) always public and were made available to the Algerian voter before the local and national elections. The FIS is a political party, which is non-violent. It chooses honest competition through the people's choice and respects the constants of the multi-party political system. Contrary to widely circulated claims of the putschists, the FIS formation has always been legal and in accordance with the Constitution of February, 1989 and the Party Formation Act of July 1989 (Article 5 of the Code only prohibits the formation of political associations when solely based on religion, ethnic group or regionalism). Decisions are made within the FIS through a collective consultative process (Shoura). No individual can monopolize the decision making process. FIS has never viewed force or violence as the means for solving the Crisis:

FIS went to the December 26, 1991 election despite the fact that its leaders were detained illegally since the events of June 1991. FIS gave commitments for the respect of pluralism, election principle, alternance of power and public freedoms. FIS gave commitments to work within the Constitution: we have spelled out clearly that any change to it has to be made through constitutional means. Following the coup d'état of January 11, 1992 and the crackdown on our people (more than 30,000 arrests within the first 3 days only), FIS tried its utmost to contain any views calling for escalation toward the use of force. FIS gave firm instructions to its constituency to avoid any provocation or confrontation. FIS declared, following the cancellation of elections, that it would resort to legal means. All this is recorded in FIS official statements and press conferences and was carried by the international news services at the time. These examples are mentioned here just to put events in their proper sequence as they have taken place. Despite that, the military/security establishment did not hesitate to use terror and torture to maintain itself in power.

The FIS Approach to the Crisis of the Political Authority:

The Algerian totalitarian establishment and its creditors should realize that opposing the principle that *"the political authority should be based on the popular will"*, and hence prolonging the Crisis, is definitely not in the interest of the state of Algeria, whose image and credibility have terribly suffered by failure to resolve the conflict of the political authority. The FIS believes that any political reform aiming at a real stability and a return to constitutional legality in the country is doomed to fail if it is attempted through more repression and TORTURE. Thus the idea to continue to support the engagement of the army in politics will only aggravate the situation, and prolong the plight of the Algerians. *For that reason*, the FIS considers that the principles mentioned in the National Contract (Rome, January 13th, 1995) are until now the only available platform for a real political solution to the crisis. The FIS approach to the resolution of the crisis is summarized in the following :

The FIS is requesting that some measures must precede any serious negotiations . These are:

- 1- The constitution of an Independent Commission of Inquiry to investigate all the crimes committed against the Algerian people since the military coup d'état of January 11th, 1992. The army-general "in charge" in Algeria, if he is not to be held responsible for this atrocities, must at once removed the political cover on those behind the crimes and must

accept and fully cooperate with such independent investigation. The FIS is ready for a full cooperation with any Commission of Inquiry if it is an independent one. The FIS has already called on the Mudjahedeen - Freedomfighters, loyal to its political line for a unilateral cease-fire. Indeed, after a call from the President of FIS, Dr. Abbassi Madani, held in house arrest, in Algiers, the Freedom fighters announced their unilateral cease-fire by October 10th, 1997 and in order to open the door for an Independent Inquiry on all crimes committed against civilians as well as for the quest for a political solution. The FIS is also ready to play a constructive role in mediating with the Freedom-fighters who are faithful to its political line in order to establish the full facts surrounding crimes attributed to them and determine the responsibilities. This position is taken despite our full conviction that the Mudjahedeen- Freedom fighters faithful to the FIS political line have no relation with the crimes being perpetrated against civilians. The FIS will not negotiate with those responsible for the massacres of civilians.

2- Recognition of the people's right to defend their elected institutions: There has been a military coup d'état in January 11, 1992. The army-general 'in charge' in Algeria must unambiguously condemn the coup d'état and recognize the people's right to defend their elected institutions. This recognition would be a clear rejection, by the military/security establishment, of dictatorship. The FIS have consistently supported the right of people to choose freely their institutions. This is a clear engagement of FIS to reject dictatorship.

3- Condemnation of terrorism: The army-general "in charge" in Algeria must unambiguously condemn all acts of terrorism, especially those committed by the "special forces" against civilians and prisoners. The FIS has consistently condemned all acts of terrorism. This position was summarized, on behalf of FIS, by its Parliamentary Delegation Abroad, on February 1st, 1994, in a "Statement against Violence in Algeria".

4- Condemnation of and dissociation from terrorists: If he is not to be held accountable of those atrocities against civilians and prisoners, the army-general "in charge" in Algeria must unambiguously condemn and dissociate himself from those terrorists, members of the military/security establishment and their allies, who are responsible of these criminal acts. The Algerian people know these criminals, they are the ones behind the coup d'état of January 11, 1992. The FIS has always condemned and dissociated itself from terrorists. It has always made a clear distinction between Freedom-Fighting and terrorism. Because of their stand against terrorism and terrorists that some of the FIS leaders, symbols of the Freedom fightings, have been assassinated by terrorist elements who infiltrated the main armed movement, the former GIA.

5- Adoption of the following values and principles: These are reported in the National Contract. It could be summarized as follows: The adoption of the Declaration of November 1, 1954 (of the Algerian war of liberation), which stipulates the restoration of the Algerian State, sovereign, democratic and social in the framework of the principles of Islam. The constitutive elements of the Algerian personality are Islam, Arabism, and Amazigh. The culture and the two languages contributing to the development of this personality must be promoted without any exclusion or marginalization. *The rejection of violence as a mean to remain in power or to achieve power.* The rejection of dictatorship regardless of its nature or form, the respect of the rights of the human person and the recognition of the people's right to defend their elected institutions. The respect of popular legitimacy and the respect of political alternation through popular vote. The institution freely elected cannot be questioned except through people's will. The guarantee of fundamental freedoms, the separation between powers, the supremacy of the legitimate law and the consecration of the multiparty system. The non-interference of the army in political affairs and the return to its Constitutional mandate of guarding the unity and the

indivisibility of the National territory. The non- acceptance of these above measures will make no negotiation for a political solution viable . Once these measures are accepted, the first step toward serious negotiations is:

To ensure to the FIS leaders all the means and guarantees necessary that enable them to meet freely among themselves and with all those whose participation they deem necessary to decision making, i.e. the Freedom Fighting- Mujahideen leaders, loyal to the original line of FIS. Since the army-general “in charge” seems to be unable to assure the security of such necessary meeting, the FIS will see no objection to such meeting to be hosted by any safe European country. Some people claim that the FIS is no longer in a position to designate a delegation to any negotiation, because of alleged divisions among its leaders. As response to this allegation, the FIS challenges here the army-general “in charge” in Algeria, to accept and to implement to above mentioned measures, and, from its side, the FIS can assure our people that within the following twenty four hours, the FIS Delegation to the negotiations will be ready. The question that remains is: is the army-general “in charge” in Algeria really in charge? The hysterical reaction of this army-general and his entourage to the various FIS propositions for a political solution to the Algerian crisis, especially their reaction to the various propositions of the FIS President, Dr. Abbassi Madani, and his Deputy, Sheikh Ali Ben Hadj, to the Rome ‘National Contract’ (January 13, 1995) and to the Stockholm ‘Quest for Peace’ FIS initiative (February 8, 1996), seems to indicate that he is not in charge. As time goes by, the situation in Algeria seems to confirm the belief that this army-general is in fact only the “visible part of the iceberg” formed of extremist elements who took over the military/security apparatus and turned the armed forces into an instrument of repression.

The next step toward serious negotiations will be to address the issue of: C- Reinstatement of Peace, the Return to Constitutional Legality and Popular Sovereignty: The FIS proposes the following, with the participation of the parties in conflict and representative political forces :

1- The set up of a “National Commission for Peace” to be dedicated to the issues related to the military and security matters : This commission shall discuss the implementation of: Immediate, effective and verifiable cease of the practice of torture. An end to the execution of capital punishment, extrajudicial killings, reprisal against the civilian population and prisoners, and the destruction of public properties and effective closing of detention camps. Full freedom to all political detainees. End of the state of emergency and other measures of expection. Abrogation of the decision to ban the FIS. Cease fire and cessation of hostilities. The set up of a mechanism for the application and guarding of the accord.

2 - The set up of a “National Commission for the Return to Constitutional Legality and Popular Sovereignty”: The participants in this commission shall engage themselves to the respect of the February 1989 Algerian Constitution. Its amendment shall not be possible except through constitutional means. The commission shall be devoted to:- The opening of the fields of political action and media. - The definition of the transitional structures as well as the mechanism and duration of the transitional period which will lead to free, fair and pluralistic election. - The Social-Economic problems : how to address it during the transition. - The conduct of free, fair and pluralistic elections at all levels.

Conclusion:

The FIS still hopes for a political and peaceful resolution to the Crisis in order to put an end to the shedding of the blood of innocent people and for an immediate restoration of legitimacy, order and stability to the country. While continuing its struggle for the return to constitutional legality and popular sovereignty in Algeria, the FIS calls on the International Community to cut any non-humanitarian aid to Algeria and to end diplomatic relation with it until this regime accepts the constitution of an Independent Commission of Inquiry to investigate all the recent massacres and all the crimes committed against civilians since the military coup d'état of January 11th, 1992. The current evolution of events and the prospects which may open in Algeria, must incite everyone, at any given level of responsibility, to get out of the mute indifference, and to work for the return to legitimacy in that Mediterranean country. This has to materialize through the respect of the popular will, the only way to ensure a climate of confidence, essential for a durable stability and security of the region. Time has come for the World Community to rethink to its selective approach to the democratization process; to review its tendency to define stability and security in terms of support of the status quo in the Muslim countries, however much it may contradict its values. This trend was based on short-term considerations of order and stability. It is high time for it to consider long-term interests by expanding the concepts of freedom and basic human rights to encompass concepts such as the respect of cultural pluralism, and hence to accept the unavoidable reality: the right of the Algerian people to get back their Islamic State, a State of Law and Justice, they have lost to the French colonialism more than 160 years ago.