

EXPLAINER

Fueled by regional rivalries, Algeria severs diplomatic ties with UAE

Algiers accused Abu Dhabi of increasingly “provocative and hostile actions” after years of friction over Morocco, Western Sahara and competing regional interests.



Ezgi Akin

Sep 10, 2026

Add AL-MONITOR on Google



Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune (L) speaks with Emirati President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan as they pose for a family photo with G7 heads of states and delegations of outreach countries at Borgo Egnazia resort during the G7 Summit hosted by Italy, in Savelletri, on June 14, 2024. — LUDOVIC MARIN/AFP via Getty Images

▶

0:00 / 4:39

عربي 简体中文 Español

Algeria announced on Thursday that it was severing five decades of diplomatic relations with the [United Arab Emirates](#) as tensions between the two countries stretching from Western Sahara to the Sahel and fueled by regional rivalries boiled over.

What happened: Algeria accused the UAE of "provocative or hostile actions." Algeria's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that Abu Dhabi "has persisted in its excesses with these actions, which have reached limits that can no longer be considered acceptable or tolerable."

It went on, "Accordingly, and after exhausting all avenues capable of preserving bilateral relations, the Algerian government has decided, this day, to sever diplomatic relations with the United Arab Emirates."

Algerian authorities summoned UAE Ambassador Yousef Saif Khamis Subaa Al-Ali and gave him 48 hours to leave the country, according to the statement.

On Wednesday, a day before the rupture, the country's Algeria Press Service described the UAE as the “conductor” behind regional crises and conflicts, citing its financial support for influential local actors and networks across Africa and the Middle East.

In an official statement later on Thursday, the Emirati Foreign Ministry struck a conciliatory tone, stressing the UAE's commitment to preserving bilateral ties despite Algeria's decision. “The UAE expresses hope that this decision will be temporary, in a manner that preserves the fraternal ties between the two brotherly peoples,” the ministry said.

Meanwhile, Anwar Gargash, diplomatic adviser to UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, appeared to push back against Algerian officials' accusations, criticizing Algiers for what he described as reliance on “vague insinuations” rather than direct diplomacy.

“Diplomatic relations are managed through reason, communication and clarity of interests, not through riddles and hints that require decoding,” Gargash wrote on X, without naming Algeria.

●

بيان وزارة الشؤون الخارجية إزاء تزايد التصرفات الاستفزازية أو العدائية الصادرة عن دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة، تحلّت الجزائر بقدر كبير من ضبط النفس وبحسّ عالٍ من المسؤولية. ولم تتّخذ، انطلاقاً من روح الاحترام الكامل للمبادئ التي تحكم العلاقات بين الدول، أي جهد في لفت انتباه الجانب الإماراتي وتحذيره من العواقب الوخيمة التي قد تتربّ عن سلوكياتة المؤسفة وغير المبررة. وعلى الرغم من هذه التحذيرات العديدة، واصلت دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة تماردها في هذه التصرفات التي بلغت حدوداً لم يعد من الممكن معها اعتبارها مقبولة أو قابلة للتحقّل في إطار العلاقات القائمة بين دولتين ذاتي السيادة، أو أن تبقى من دون رد. وعليه، وبعد استنفاد جميع السبل الكفيلة بالحفاظ على العلاقات الثنائية، قررت الحكومة الجزائرية، هذا اليوم، قطع العلاقات الدبلوماسية مع دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة. تم استقيل سفير الإمارات العربية المتحدة بمقر وزارة الشؤون الخارجية، هذا الخميس، 10 سبتمبر 2026، أين تم تبليغه رسمياً بخوفى هذا القرار. كما تم إعلامه بأنه قد منح مهلة قدرها 48 ساعة للامتثال لهذا القرار.

— Radio Algeria international (@radioalginter) [September 10, 2026](#)

Background: The rupture followed a sharp [deterioration in relations](#) over the past years. Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune had repeatedly taken shots at Abu Dhabi.

In October 2025, Tebboune said Algeria had good relations with every Gulf country “except one,” in a thinly veiled jab at the UAE.

Tebboune described Algeria's ties with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman and Qatar as “brotherly” while accusing the unnamed country of interfering in Algeria's internal affairs and seeking to destabilize the country. “The problem is with whoever wants to sow chaos in my home for dubious reasons,” he said.

Why it matters: Among the main sources of tension in the Algeria-UAE relationship is Abu Dhabi's close strategic partnership with Morocco, Algiers' historic nemesis, with which it is locked in a decades-old dispute over Western Sahara. Morocco claims sovereignty over the territory, while Algeria backs the Polisario Front, which seeks an independent Sahrawi state.

In 2020, the UAE became the first Arab country to open a consulate in Laayoune, the largest city in Moroccan-controlled Western Sahara. The Emirati state news agency WAM said at the time that the move represented a “concrete expression” of Abu Dhabi's support for Moroccan sovereignty over what Rabat calls its southern provinces.

Morocco and the UAE have been increasing their cooperation since the 2020 Abraham Accords, under which Abu Dhabi normalized relations with Israel and Rabat later restored ties with the Jewish state.

Abu Dhabi-Algiers ties began deteriorating after the signing of the 2020 Abraham Accords, which Algeria strongly opposed. Algeria does not have diplomatic relations with Israel and has been critical of the UAE and Morocco's normalization with the country.

[Tensions between Algeria and the UAE](#) have also extended into the Sahel region, which Algeria sees as a security perimeter. Algiers has been wary of the UAE's growing cooperation with the Sahel countries. In the 2010s, Abu Dhabi signed a series of security agreements with Mali and Burkina Faso.

Know more: The UAE and Algeria established diplomatic relations in 1976, five years after the Emirates' formation. Algeria was among the first countries to recognize the federation.

Algeria's embassy in Abu Dhabi was still describing the relationship as “historically rooted” as of this writing.

This developing story has been updated to include a statement from the Emirati Foreign Ministry.

THIS ONE'S ON US.

The story doesn't end here

Our correspondents are already on the next chapter. Read everything they file, from \$2/week.

See Offers

Related Topics

Abraham Accords