

Recorded Speech by the Minister of Finance
Human Capital Ministerial Conclave hosted by the World Bank
“The impacts of the pandemic on learning and employment”

Good morning everyone,

Like all countries in the world, Algeria has been impacted by the adverse socioeconomic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In response, my country has not only taken steps to accord top priority to the health and well-being of the population, particularly the most vulnerable, but also and especially to safeguard the education of our young generation as well as employment, in order to maintain economic vibrancy.

The actions taken were aimed, first and foremost, at providing assistance to health facilities, in particular by:

- (i) Significantly increasing the number of budget items allocated to these facilities;
- (ii) Increasing the transactions included on the list of health sector public investments and,
- (iii) Introducing special insurance, covered by the State, for all doctors and public health employees working to prevent and combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

Algeria has also stepped up its efforts to improve the qualitative performance of the national education system, technical education, and professional training, so as to ensure their continuous adaptation to the changing economic environment in the country as well as the alignment of human capital with labor market needs, with the aim of enhancing the efficiency and performance of the economy and integrating the society into the modern economy.

These efforts have focused mainly on:

- (i) Overhauling educational programs as well as the assessment, promotion, and guidance systems;
- (ii) Improving the quality of mentoring and,
- (iii) Providing schooling assistance, particularly in remote areas.

The outcome, in statistical terms, has been the enrollment of 11 million students at the three educational levels (primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary), supervised by 850,000 teachers and administrative staff, and spread over more than 28,000 schools.

We have also placed great emphasis on higher education, with the aim of providing students with the best learning conditions and improving the quality of instruction and scientific research.

Another top priority area for the public authorities is employment, more specifically youth employment, which has been taken on in order to mobilize the resources needed to ensure the best support for young people transitioning from the education system to the job market.

In this context and for the first time in Algeria, an unemployment benefit was introduced in March 2022 for young first-time jobseekers. To date, it has assisted more than 500,000 beneficiaries during the period when the National Employment Agency (ANEM), which provides employment assistance, has been unable to match job demand with job supply.

From a medium- and long-term perspective, Algeria has undertaken a sweeping reform program, initiated in the context of the Socioeconomic Recovery Plan, with the aim of steering the economy toward a dynamic, diversified, inclusive, and sustainable growth model, driven by an economic sector capable of generating wealth and employment, and with the capacity to respond, on a priority basis, to the aspirations of our youth to find good jobs.

Before concluding, I would like to commend the work done by the World Bank in the context of its Human Capital Project. We reaffirm our absolute commitment to strive to further improve our performance in this area, in the spirit of sharing knowledge and good practices.

Thank you for your attention.