

Your Excellency, Ambassador of Spain to South Africa  
Your Excellency, Ambassador of Algeria to South Africa  
Mr. Mayor  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Mr. Wali of Oran, would have liked to honor this invitation, except for the commitments of professional orders that coincided with this period, so Mr. Wali apologizes. To this end, he has asked me to extend his warmest greetings to you and, as General Manager of the Water and Sanitation Society of Oran (SEOR), he asked me to share with you the Experience of Oran in the desalination of seawater.

The city of Oran, the second city of Algeria and capital of the West of Algeria, is located in a semi-arid zone, where annual rainfall rarely exceeds 400 mm. It was founded in 902-903 by Andalusian sailors on the bank of a river (Oued Errhi), fed mainly by only one source (Ras El Aïn), with a natural flow of 60 liters per second (5,200 M3 per day). For nearly 10 centuries, the population having never reached the 30,000 inhabitants, the city needs were satisfied by this source.

As a result of the development of economic activities and the resulting influx of labor, Oran has experienced and is still experiencing great development, increasing water demand and pressure on local resources that could no longer meet the needs of more than 50,000 inhabitants, a figure reached at the end of the 19th century. From then on, the city embarked on the search for and exploitation of increasingly distant resources. The source of Breda, situated 25 kilometers to the west of the city, was the first. However, its water was brackish and pumping from the many wells drilled in the area causes the increase of water salinity. There followed a period marked by dramatic restrictions.

They decided to go and fetch the water even further, with the dam of Béni Bahdel, located 180 kilometers to the west. The water reaches Oran in July 1952. , Oran could blow for a moment.

However, the situation became critical again in the 70's, The authorities then turn to the east and resort to the Fergoug dam situated 100KM East of Oran.

But the spectacular population growth of the last three decades, as well as the extension of the agglomeration, have major repercussions on the supply and distribution of drinking water. As resources are gradually reduced, the population faces severe restrictions in this area. Consequently, and as early as May 1982, the city adopted a rationed distribution system with rotating cuts.

From then on, we are still turning to new resources. In 1987 the Transfer of the Chelif from the East takes place. As a result, this new resource reduces the restrictions somewhat and for a short time.

As needs became more and more important, new mobilization structures and transfers, mainly those of the Tafna and the Gargar, had to be used, if only to alleviate the deficits.

Unfortunately, the situation worsens in the following years for a variety of causes (mainly dams and drought). The wilaya of Oran, in August 2005, receives only 150,000 m<sup>3</sup> per day, while needs exceed 300,000 m<sup>3</sup>. A new great transfer was made; The MAO (Mostaganem-Arzew-Oran), with a production capacity of 540 000m<sup>3</sup> / d, but the situation is still conditioned by the rainfall and the filling rate of the dams. We are talking about chronic shortages.

The authorities, alerted by the persistent drought and noting that the installed structures, despite their very high theoretical capacities, could no longer meet the drinking water needs, turned resolutely towards less conventional solutions, less dependent on the vagaries of the climate. Thus the option of desalination of seawater is taken in 2001, and a first emergency program launched throughout northern Algeria.

As for Oran, in 2005 the first desalination plants began operating, reaching today a production capacity exceeding 1 million m<sup>3</sup> / d for the region.

With all these achievements and as of 2010, the situation of the drinking water supply keeps improving. Indeed, the allocation, which was 106 liters per inhabitant per day for the city of Oran in 2008, increased to 149 in 2010, with an estimated population of 672,921. The program of distribution in 24 hours, is assured to 100% of the population from 2012.

This video will illustrate the history of Oran city with drinkable water