

## **International Petition**

### **July 5, 1962 in Oran, Algeria**

On July 5, 1962, Algeria celebrated its independence, voted on July 1 by a referendum as part of the Evian Accords which were signed on March 18 and recognized by France on July 3, 1962.

That same day, in Oran, the second largest Algerian city, a large-scale massacre was committed using racial profiling against non-Muslim, Christian and Jewish people who hoped to be able to stay and live in harmony alongside Muslims in the new Algeria. Muslims denounced as “traitors” were also massacred.

For the entire day starting at 11:15 a.m. simultaneously in every neighborhood thousands of civilian women, children, and men of all ages, were rounded up and taken, on foot or in trucks, to police stations and immense detention centers including the Abattoirs. That is at least what happened to those who were not immediately given up to the mob and lynched or torn to bits. This happened despite the presence of 18,000 French soldiers confined to barracks in the heart of the city by order of their commanders. The killing continued for several days in all of the detention centers.

The facts are well known to all citizens of Oran present that day. Even if officials silenced these massacres in Algeria, indelible marks remain in the memory of common Algerian Muslim citizens, passive witnesses or actors, but among whom some used various measures to save those whose only apparent wrongdoing was being of Jewish or Christian descent.

How many were killed and are “missing” forever? More than 700 according to historical research, notably the most recent work by Jean-Jacques Jordi (*Un silence d’État, Les disparus civils européens de la guerre d’Algérie* [State Silence, the Algerian War’s Civilian Europeans who disappeared], Soteca, 2011), who was able to access certain French archives. Until all French and Algerian archives are opened, we can only suppose that thousands of innocent people succumbed to that sad fate.

But whatever the number, the extent of the massacre, the fact that it took place simultaneously in all of Oran’s neighborhoods, and the immense logistical deployment, lead one to believe that it was scheduled, organized and coordinated at a very high level, even if the participation in the stampede of a hysterical mob made the “spontaneity” of these events believable.

On July 5, 1962, in Oran, during the celebration of that first Algerian Independence Day, a true crime against humanity was committed. A silenced crime, as was for so long the one in Katyn, although in that case, the materiality of the massacre of Polish officers was never contested. It was only attributed to the Nazis when it was the work of the Soviet army.

A silenced crime like so many others! But 51 years later, is it not time that the whole truth finally be known about this massacre? 51 years later, is it not time for the Algerian and French archives to finally be opened to all historians and that an international inquiry worthy of its name be undertaken so that the exact extent can be determined?

This is our demand.

But meanwhile we want the world to know that on July 5, 1962 in Algeria, two days after the official declaration of independence, a civilian massacre indeed took place in Oran.

This is why, we the undersigned, on this July 5, 2013, address our message to all international humanitarian organizations as well as to all citizens of the world.

**AUGUST 30, 2013, INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THOSE WHO DISAPPEARED.**