



Remarks of Ambassador Joan A. Polaschik

Armistice Day Commemoration Oran November 11, 2014

I would like to thank the French Embassy for organizing this Armistice Day commemoration in Oran.

It's a privilege to pay honor to our service men and women in a sacred place where so many fought so valiantly, and so many made the ultimate sacrifice for their countries.

I would like to take a moment to reflect on the meaning of Armistice Day. When this solemn event was adopted as an official holiday in the United States, our Congress stipulated that "it is fitting that the recurring anniversary should be commemorated with thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations."

With this goal in mind, it is incredibly moving to stand on this hallowed ground with colleagues and friends from nations that once fought ferociously but are now allies and partners.

Through a commitment to shared principles of democracy, individual liberty and rule of law, the U.S., France, Germany and the UK have built a lasting alliance that has promoted peace and stability for decades. The United States very much welcomes Algeria's growing partnership with NATO and is grateful to the Algerian government for joining us at this commemoration today.

And as we recall the solemn vow of "never again" that was uttered on that very first Armistice Day in 1918, I hope that all of our nations will honor the memory of our fallen countrymen by continuing to work together to make that vow a reality. As U.S. President John Kennedy said in November 1963: "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."

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