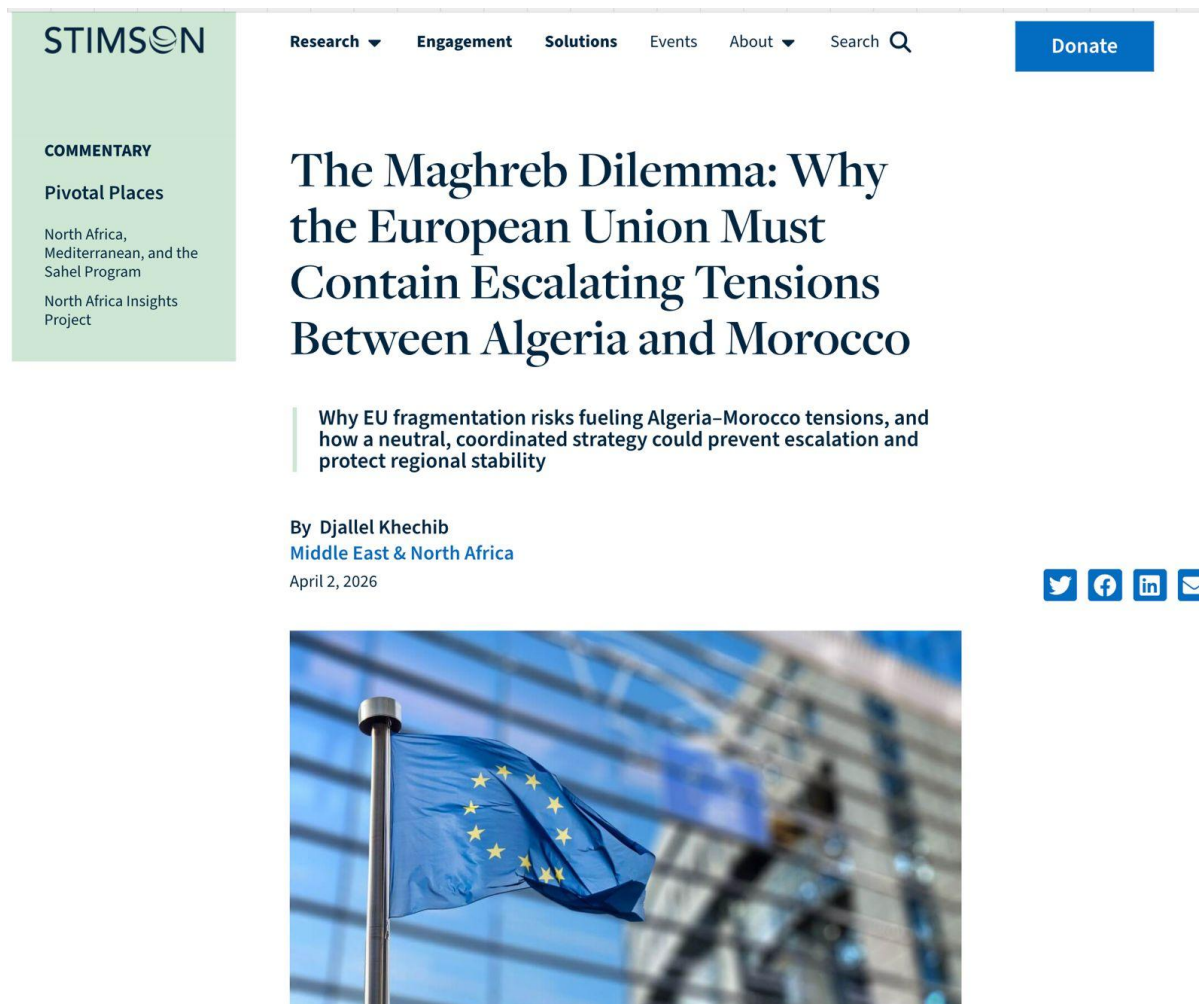


The Maghreb Dilemma: Why the European Union Must Contain the Escalating Tensions Between Algeria and Morocco—And How



The screenshot shows a webpage from the Stimson Center. The header includes the Stimson logo, navigation links for Research, Engagement, Solutions, Events, and About, a search bar, and a blue 'Donate' button. The main content area features the article title 'The Maghreb Dilemma: Why the European Union Must Contain Escalating Tensions Between Algeria and Morocco'. Below the title is a sub-headline: 'Why EU fragmentation risks fueling Algeria–Morocco tensions, and how a neutral, coordinated strategy could prevent escalation and protect regional stability'. The author is identified as 'By Djallel Khechib, Middle East & North Africa', with a date of 'April 2, 2026'. To the right of the text are social media icons for Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Email. Below the text is a photograph of the European Union flag waving in front of a modern glass building.

By: [Djallel Khechib](#)

Voices: April 2026

Djallel Khechib, a Research Fellow at the Center for Islam and Global Affairs (CIGA), recently authored a policy analysis published by the Stimson Center in Washington, D.C., USA.

The idea for this article dates back to 2024, when the author wrote his paper at the Luiss Mediterranean Platform entitled [“Sleepwalkers into War: Are Algeria and Morocco on the Path to Conflict?”](#). At that time, Algeria was facing mounting pressure from certain European Union countries, which had openly supported Morocco’s position on Western Sahara at the expense of Algerian interests. Tensions between the two neighbors were steadily escalating, with potentially serious repercussions for the entire Western Mediterranean region.

This article seeks to influence the European Union’s approach in a manner consistent with the interests of all parties on both shores of the Western Mediterranean. It proposes a practical, mutually beneficial approach that the author has termed “Soft Dual Containment”—a strategy aimed at mitigating the risks arising from the Western Sahara conflict and enhancing regional stability.

This would be achieved by encouraging EU member states to maintain neutrality regarding the dispute and to play a constructive role by promoting diplomatic, economic, and cultural cooperation between actors on both shores of the Western Mediterranean. Such an approach could help neutralize extremist voices within the European Union and avoid replicating “peace through power and alignment” approaches, which are likely to produce adverse consequences for the region as a whole.

Read the full piece here: [LINK](#)

[Djallel Khechib](#)



Djallel Khechib is a researcher in geopolitics and international relations.

He is a PhD candidate in the Department of Asian Studies and International Relations, Faculty of Political Science and International Relations, at the University of Algiers 3, and is expected to defend his dissertation in Spring 2026.

Khechib recently (September 2025) completed his third Master’s degree—this time in Mediterranean Cooperation and Security—at the Luiss School of Government, Luiss Guido Carli University in Rome, Italy. His graduation project was titled “Emerging Middle Powers’ Rivalry Over Maritime Ports and Routes in the Wider Mediterranean and Its Implications for European Security: The Case of Türkiye and the UAE in the 21st Century.”

Additionally, he holds a second Master’s degree (with thesis) in Political History of the Middle East and International Relations from the Institute of Middle Eastern and Muslim Countries, Marmara University, Istanbul, which he completed in 2019 after securing a prestigious Turkish government excellence scholarship in 2014.

Khechib earned his first Master’s degree (with thesis) in Asian Studies and International Relations from the University of Algiers 3 (2013–2017), and his Bachelor’s degree (also with thesis) in International Relations from the University of Constantine (2005–2009). He was

consistently the top student in his undergraduate and Master's programs, graduating the first ranked student in his cohort.

In 2015, he received another scholarship for academic excellence from Algeria's Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, allowing him to undertake a short-term scientific internship at Sakarya University, Türkiye.

Originally from Algeria, Khechib moved to Türkiye in 2014, where he gained nine years of academic and professional experience. During this period, he collaborated with numerous Turkish and Arab research centers both locally and internationally. He also spent a year in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and an academic year in Rome, Italy further expanding his academic and cultural horizons.

Since 2020, Khechib has been serving as a research fellow at the Center for Islam and Global Affairs (CIGA) at Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University, Türkiye. Since 2015, he has also been affiliated with several research institutions, including IDRAK Center for Studies and Consultations (Istanbul), the Egyptian Institute for Studies (Istanbul), the International Relations Academy (Istanbul), SETA Foundation's Turkish Insight Journal (Istanbul), IHH INSAMER Center for Humanitarian and Social Studies (Istanbul), TRT Arabi (Istanbul), and Siyaset Arabbiya Journal, published by the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies (Doha), Future for Advanced Research and Studies (Abu Dhabi, U.A.E), the Mediterranean Platform (Rome), the Cambridge Middle East and North Africa Forum-MENAF, in Cambridge (England), among others.

Khechib's research spans a wide range of topics, including geopolitics, international relations theory, great/middle power politics and the International System/order, and the geopolitics of Eurasia, the South China Sea, North Africa, and the Mediterranean region. He has a particular interest in the foreign policies of the United States, China, Russia, Türkiye, and Algeria.

An accomplished scholar, Khechib has been writing regularly since 2010. He has published over 50 academic studies in peer-reviewed journals and research centers across the Arab world and internationally, alongside 55 academic translations of academic works in geopolitics and international relations/IR from English to Arabic. His contributions also include 152 academic

summaries of articles and studies authored by leading scholars in geopolitics and international relations, published in Geopolitical Compass Reports and Geopolitics Bridges Magazine, issued by CIGA in English, Arabic, and Turkish. From 2019 to now-2026, he served as the executive editor and supervisor of these publications and oversaw CIGA's Critical Voices platform.

In December 2018, Khechib won first place in the Dr. Mahathir Mohamad International Award for Intellectual Creativity, organized by the Kuala Lumpur Forum for Thought and Civilization in Malaysia. His winning research, "The Impact of Islamic Movements on Malaysia's Democratic Transition: Islamization of Democracy or Democratization of Islam?", formed the basis of one of his published books.

Khechib's authored books include:

["The Impact of Islamic Movements on the Democratic Transition in Malaysia: Islamizing Democracy or Democratizing Islam?"](#) (2024).

["The Struggle for Free Will: Turkish Foreign Policy in a Changing International System \(1923-2017\)"](#) (Second Ed 2024).

["The Liberal International Order: Rise or Fall? John Ikenberry VS John Mearsheimer"](#) (2021).

["The Prospects for Democratic Transition in Russia, a Critical Study for Structures and Challenges"](#), (2015).

In addition to his publications, Khechib has presented research papers at numerous international academic conferences and participated as a guest speaker in seminars, workshops, and training sessions in countries such as Algeria, Türkiye, Qatar, Russia, Iran, the UAE, Jordan, Lebanon, Italy, and Spain.

Khechib is a native Arabic speaker and conducts his research in Arabic, English, French, and Turkish.