

# Supply Chain, Import Controls and Market Entry in Algeria

Regulatory Mastery and Operational Risk Mitigation for International Operators

Seminar of 6 May 2026 — Fares Legal, Algiers

---



## Executive Summary

The seminar confirmed one central point: import operations in Algeria cannot be managed as ordinary commercial transactions. They must be structured as integrated legal, banking, customs and administrative processes. Each layer conditions the next, and a weakness at one stage can block the entire operation.

The practical consequences are clear. Poor preparation may result in refused bank domiciliation, blocked payments, delayed customs clearance, stranded goods, contractual deadlock, unrecoverable costs and, in sensitive cases, regulatory or contentious exposure.

*“A contract for Algeria must be drafted for the day everything goes wrong.”*

Rodolfo Drudi, Founding Partner, FARES LEGAL

Three institutional signals emerged with particular importance:

1. **PPI is now structurally embedded.** The validation of approximately 28,000 PPI in 2026 confirms that the mechanism is no longer exceptional or transitional. It is now a core operational gateway for import activity.
2. **Digital compliance is expanding.** The expected launch of a third digital platform for service trade imports in Q2 2026 will introduce a new compliance layer for service operators.
3. **The administration’s posture is evolving.** Economic operators are increasingly positioned as partners of the administration, not adversaries. This has direct consequences for how companies should engage with authorities, document difficulties and manage disputes.

The conclusion is straightforward: Algeria remains a market of significant opportunities, but it rewards operators who prepare early, document properly and structure their operations around the applicable institutional processes.

## **I. The Strategic Context**

Yannil Belbachir opened the seminar by reframing the discussion. Foreign operators often describe Algeria as a difficult market. The more accurate analysis is different: Algeria is a high-complexity market, where success depends on preparation, procedural discipline and a precise understanding of the competent authorities.

*“L’Algérie n’est pas un marché difficile. L’Algérie est un marché qui récompense ceux qui préparent.”*

**Yannil Belbachir**, Managing Partner, FARES LEGAL

This distinction matters. A high-risk market may be avoided or priced. A high-complexity market must be engineered. The relevant question is therefore not whether Algeria is accessible, but whether the operator has built the correct legal and operational architecture before entering the market.

The year 2026 appears particularly significant. Several developments converge: increased attention to foreign financing for national interest projects, renewed opportunities in strategic sectors, a public budget with a strong equipment orientation, and progressive institutional digitalisation of import and service-related procedures.

Taken together, these elements suggest that the current period is not merely a regulatory phase. It is a decision window for operators seeking to consolidate or enter the Algerian market.

## **II. FARES LEGAL as Institutional Interface**

The seminar was deliberately structured as a closed-door working session with selected multinational operators. It was not conceived as a public conference, but as an operational exchange between companies, legal advisers and institutional representatives.

That format reflects FARES LEGAL’s role in Algeria. The firm does not act only as a conventional legal adviser. It operates as an interface between international business expectations and the Algerian institutional architecture governing market access, import procedures, customs clearance, banking compliance and investment implementation.

This interface requires knowledge of the legal texts, but also of the competent institutions and their respective perimeters, including:

Institution	Main Relevance for Operators
Ministry of Foreign Trade and Export Promotion	Import programmes, PPI, trade regulation, import-related platforms
Ministry of Domestic Trade and Market Regulation	Internal market regulation and national commercial activities
Algerian Customs — DGD	Tariff classification, customs clearance, Incoterm application, documentary controls
AAPI	Investment facilitation, single window, project authorisation and investor support
ALGERAC / IANOR	Accreditation, certification and conformity standards
Banking institutions	Domiciliation, payment channels, currency transfer and banking compliance

A frequent mistake is to confuse the role of the Ministry of Foreign Trade with that of the Ministry of Domestic Trade. The distinction is not formalistic. It determines the competent authority, the applicable procedure and the correct route for resolving operational issues.

No operator can navigate this environment efficiently through commercial instinct alone. The operator must speak both languages: the language of international business and the language of Algerian institutional process.

### **III. Structural Diagnosis: Where Operators Usually Fail**

The seminar identified a recurring pattern. Foreign operators rarely fail in Algeria because their product or service lacks market relevance. They fail because the legal, customs, banking or administrative route has not been anticipated with sufficient precision.

Algeria’s foreign trade environment involves a triple complexity:

Layer	Nature of Risk	Practical Consequence
Regulatory	Dense and evolving texts, technical requirements, sectoral restrictions	The operation may be blocked even after signature
Administrative	Multiple authorities, silent responses, undocumented refusals	The operator may be unable to trigger remedies or deadlines
Contractual	Standard international clauses not adapted to Algerian execution risks	The contract may be commercially signed but operationally ineffective

The central risk is therefore not merely legal uncertainty. It is the gap between what the contract says and what can actually be implemented through Algerian procedures.

A contract, a purchase order, an invoice and a shipping schedule are not sufficient. They must be aligned with PPI requirements, banking domiciliation, customs classification, certification rules, import restrictions and documentary evidence.

## IV. Institutional Signal: The Administration as Partner

One of the most important messages of the seminar came from the institutional panel: economic operators should be considered partners of the administration, not adversaries.

This point should not be treated as rhetorical. It directly affects the correct strategy in case of uncertainty, blockage or refusal.

Incorrect Approach	Correct Approach
Avoid contact with authorities until a problem occurs	Engage early, formally and in writing
Treat informal refusals as final	Request written clarification and legal basis
Escalate immediately in adversarial	Position the company as a compliant operator

Incorrect Approach	Correct Approach
terms	seeking guidance
Manage administrative issues orally	Build a written evidentiary record from the first difficulty
Separate the administrative issue from the contract	Activate contractual notices and protections in parallel

The practical lesson is simple: in Algeria, the way the operator behaves before the administration often determines the outcome. A company that demonstrates preparation, transparency and compliance is better positioned than a company that reacts late and informally.

**V. Critical Risk Area No. 1 — PPI Compliance**

PPI is no longer a formality

The Programme Prévisionnel d’Importation, or PPI, has become an operational gateway for import activity. If the PPI is absent, incomplete or inconsistent with the planned operation, the effects may cascade across the entire transaction.

The typical sequence is the following:

No valid PPI → bank domiciliation refused → currency transfer blocked → customs clearance delayed → supplier payment impossible → contractual dispute triggered.

The reported validation of approximately 28,000 PPI in 2026 confirms that the mechanism is now fully embedded in the operating environment. Companies should therefore stop treating PPI as a late administrative step. It must be addressed before the contract is signed and before the commercial timeline is confirmed.

**Operational impact for large-volume importers**

Large operators may face a significant practical burden where product references must be entered line by line. The example raised during the seminar concerning thousands of product

references illustrates that PPI preparation may become a full compliance project in itself.

Until simplified upload mechanisms are formally available and operational, companies should allocate dedicated internal or external resources to PPI preparation, verification and renewal.

Action	Timing	Responsible Function
Verify HS codes against the intended PPI scope	Pre-contract	Legal / Compliance
Align quantities, timing and product references	Pre-contract	Operations
Identify the competent authority for each product line	Pre-contract	Legal
Confirm banking channel readiness	Before domiciliation	Finance
Insert PPI renewal and refusal scenarios into the contract	Contract drafting	Legal

## **VI. Critical Risk Area No. 2 — Contract Architecture**

**Contracts must be drafted for difficulty, not only for signature**

Many contracts used by foreign operators in Algeria are based on standard international templates. That approach is dangerous. A clause that works in another jurisdiction may be ineffective, incomplete or commercially insufficient in Algeria if it does not address the actual execution risks of the market.

For Algeria-related operations, the contract must function as an operational risk management instrument. It must anticipate administrative refusals, customs delays, payment restrictions, certification issues, exchange-rate exposure and documentary burdens.

## Contract registration as a security layer

The Ministry of Foreign Trade's contract registration platform represents an important instrument for operators. Properly used, contract registration may help strengthen the evidentiary position of the parties, support ministerial validation and reduce uncertainty in the execution phase.

This should not be viewed as a mere administrative option. For relevant contracts, registration should be assessed as part of the contractual risk management strategy.

## Clauses that should be considered

Risk Scenario	Contractual Protection
Licence, quota or PPI refusal	Suspension clause, cost allocation and termination trigger
Customs clearance delay	Force majeure / administrative delay clause and demurrage allocation
Payment transfer restriction	Hardship mechanism and alternative payment route where lawful
Exchange-rate fluctuation	Price adjustment formula or currency protection clause
Administrative silence	Deemed refusal timeline and escalation procedure
Certification failure	Compliance warranty, evidence obligations and termination right

The objective is not to make the contract longer. The objective is to make it executable.

## **VII. Critical Risk Area No. 3 — Administrative Blockage Management**

Oral problems must become written records

Administrative blockages often become legally difficult because they are managed informally for

too long. Oral refusals, undocumented instructions and informal exchanges create an evidence vacuum. Once that vacuum exists, contractual and administrative remedies become harder to trigger.

The institutional message was equally clear: lack of information is a major source of blockage. The remedy is not passive waiting. The remedy is structured engagement.

### Recommended protocol

1. Document immediately. Any refusal, delay or request for additional information should be confirmed in writing.
2. Request the legal basis. The operator should ask whether the position is based on a published norm, an internal instruction, a procedural requirement or a missing document.
3. Trigger deadlines where possible. A formal request may be necessary to create a procedural record and avoid indefinite uncertainty.
4. Notify the contractual counterparty. The administrative issue should be mirrored in the contractual file through appropriate notices.
5. Preserve a cooperative posture. The operator should position itself as a compliant partner seeking clarification, not as an adversary challenging the administration from the outset.

This approach gives the company room to solve the issue commercially while preserving its legal position if the matter deteriorates.

## **VIII. Critical Risk Area No. 4 — Regulated and Strategic Sectors**

Timelines must be engineered, not hoped for

The pharmaceutical sector illustrates the logic applicable to strategic and sensitive sectors in Algeria. Drug registration timelines of 12 to 24 months before commercialisation require early planning. The same logic applies, with different timing and intensity, to food, agricultural products, industrial equipment, services and other regulated activities.

Operators in these sectors cannot build the project schedule around the commercial launch date alone. The legal and regulatory lead time must drive the project plan.

Sector	Key Compliance Concern	Operational Consequence
Pharmaceutical	Registration and elevated scrutiny	Commercialisation may require 12-24 months of preparation
Food and agricultural products	Certification and conformity categories	Product classification affects importability and timing
Industrial equipment	HS code and tariff classification	Classification determines the applicable compliance pathway
Services	New digital platform expected in Q2 2026	Service importers must prepare for additional procedural requirements

The practical conclusion is blunt: in regulated sectors, optimistic timelines are not a strategy. They are a risk.

## **IX. Critical Risk Area No. 5 — Market Entry Structuring**

A proper Algerian market entry strategy must be built before the operational risk materialises. It should include five layers of due diligence.

<b>Layer</b>	<b>Questions to Answer</b>
Legal	What corporate structure is required? Are sectoral authorisations needed?
Customs	What are the HS codes, tariff references and Incoterm implications?
Banking	Is domiciliation possible? Are transfer rules and payment routes clear?
Administrative	Is a PPI required? Are importer codes, certifications or platform registrations needed?
Contractual	Does the contract reflect Algerian execution risks and evidence requirements?

A market entry roadmap should not be prepared after the first blockage. At that stage, the operator is already negotiating from a weakened position.

The seminar also surfaced the possible logic of an approved operator status or similar recognition framework. Whether or not such a status is formally institutionalised in the near term, the underlying principle is already valid: operators who build a documented compliance track record tend to navigate administrative processes more efficiently.

Compliance should therefore be viewed not only as a legal obligation, but also as a competitive advantage.

## **X. Strategic Conclusions**

**Algeria is not a high-risk market. It is a high-complexity market.**

The distinction is essential. Risk can be priced. Complexity must be structured. Operators who understand the applicable procedures can protect value and reduce friction.

**Preparation must precede negotiation.**

In Algeria, the legal and administrative feasibility of an operation should be assessed before the commercial terms are finalised. Otherwise, the parties may sign a contract that cannot be executed as planned.

**The administration should be engaged early and properly.**

A cooperative and documented approach is usually more effective than late-stage confrontation. Companies must build a record of compliance, not a record of improvisation.

**The contract is the last line of defence.**

The contract must anticipate the practical risks of import operations: PPI issues, customs delays, banking restrictions, certification requirements and administrative silence.

**Regulated sectors require legal timelines, not commercial optimism.**

Pharmaceutical, food, industrial and service operators must incorporate regulatory lead times into the project schedule from the outset.

The 2026 window matters.

The current convergence of reforms, institutional digitalisation and sectoral opportunities creates a favourable but demanding environment. Operators that prepare now will be better positioned than those that wait until the procedure blocks.

## Recommended Next Steps for Operators

Priority	Action	Recommended Timing
Immediate	Audit existing Algeria-related contracts against import, customs, banking and administrative risks	Within 30 days
Immediate	Identify contracts suitable for registration on the Ministry platform	Within 30 days
Immediate	Implement a written protocol for administrative blockage management	Within 30 days
Short term	Review PPI validity, renewal deadlines and product-reference capacity	Within 30 days
Short term	Map competent authorities by product line, sector and transaction type	Within 45 days
Medium term	Conduct a full five-layer market entry audit	Within 60 days
Medium term	Integrate regulatory lead times into project planning	Within 60 days

## **Closing Note**

Algeria offers significant opportunities for international operators, particularly those active in equipment, infrastructure, regulated products, industrial supply chains and strategic services. But the market does not reward improvisation.

The operators best positioned to succeed are those who treat legal preparation as part of the business model: before signature, before shipment, before domiciliation and before the first administrative difficulty arises.

*“The strength of your position is the quality of your preparation.”*

Yannil Belbachir, Managing Partner, Fares Legal

The seminar was also prepared and supported by members of the FARES LEGAL legal team, whose contribution helped structure the panel discussions and translate the institutional exchanges into practical operational guidance. With contribution of: Yassine Ghanemi, Attorney at Law, Aurélie Guillemet, Attorney at Law, Mohamed Amrani, Attorney at Law

---

## **Contacts**

Rodolfo DRUDI

Founding Partner

rodolfo.drudi@fareslegal.com

+39 39 28729935

Yannil BELBACHIR

Managing Partner

yannil.belbachir@fareslegal.com

+213 6 67784583

Mazilda KERKOUCHE

Business Lawyer

mazilda.kerkouche@fareslegal.com

+213 5 63 00 84 39

Fareslegal.com

---

This document is a post-event analytical brief prepared by Fares Legal following the seminar of 6 May 2026. It is intended for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Specific matters require an individual legal assessment based on the relevant facts, documents and applicable procedures.