

International Organization for Animal Protection



Organizzazione Internazionale per la Protezione degli Animali - ETS

NGO associated with the UN Department of Global Communications (DGC)

UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Accredited at UN Environment Assembly (UNEA)

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Headquarters: Via Gian Battista Brocchi 11, I-20131 Milano (Italy) – Fiscal Code: 97310380155

Tel +39 02 6427882 - Fax 02 36536560 - www.oipa.org



Subject: Urgent Appeal Regarding Municipal Stray-Animal Culling Campaigns and the Need for a Humane One Health Approach in Algeria

To the Competent Authorities of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria,

OIPA ETS – International Organization for Animal Protection – wishes to express its serious concern regarding documented municipal campaigns involving the killing of free-roaming dogs and, in some cases, cats, reported across several provinces of Algeria during 2025 and 2026.

OIPA is an international non-governmental organization dedicated to animal protection and the promotion of animal welfare worldwide. The organization is associated with the United Nations Department of Global Communications (DGC), holds consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), is accredited to the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), and is registered in the Transparency Register of the European Union.

Our organization has received an extensive evidence dossier containing municipal notices, official communications and supporting material concerning operations targeting free-roaming animals in different areas of the country. The documentation refers to municipalities located in the provinces of **Tizi Ouzou, Bejaia, Boumerdes, Ouargla, Relizane, Tiaret, M'Sila, Ain Temouchent, Chlef and Khenchela**.

Of particular concern is an official public notice issued in **Ait Mahmoud, Tizi Ouzou Province**, covering the period from 13 July to 13 August 2026. The notice explicitly refers to the “*abattage de chiens et chats errants par méthode chimique (empoisonnement)*”, namely the killing of stray dogs and cats by a chemical method – poisoning.

The documentation received indicates that this issue is not confined to a single municipality. Several official notices refer to lethal control operations in different parts of Algeria, some of them scheduled during nighttime hours and accompanied by instructions to residents to keep owned animals confined.

We are also particularly concerned by documentation from **Chechar, Khenchela Province**, where an official municipal health notice scheduled repeated operations on 28 July and 4, 11 and 18 August 2026, between approximately 23:00 and 04:00. The notice refers to the participation of a hunting association, asks citizens to report locations where stray animals are present and advises owners to secure their dogs and cats during the relevant periods.

Furthermore, an official municipal communication from **Khenchela Municipality**, dated 9 August 2026, invited residents to identify locations where stray animals were present and stated that an intervention would take place that same night.

OIPA fully recognises the responsibility of public authorities to protect human health and safety, prevent rabies and other zoonotic diseases, and address legitimate concerns associated with free-roaming dog populations.

Precisely for this reason, we believe that the issue should be addressed through a **One Health approach**, recognising the close interconnection between human health, animal health and the environment and promoting coordinated action among public-health authorities, veterinary services, municipalities, local communities and animal-welfare organisations.

International public-health and animal-health guidance indicates that large-scale culling of free-roaming dogs is not an effective long-term strategy for controlling rabies. Sustained mass dog vaccination, accompanied by effective dog-population management, veterinary care, surveillance and community engagement, represents a more effective and sustainable approach to preventing dog-mediated rabies and protecting public health.

The reported use of poisoning is of particular concern. In addition to the severe and potentially prolonged suffering that toxic substances may cause to animals, their use raises broader concerns regarding owned companion animals and non-target wildlife, including birds and wild mammals, as well as potential environmental contamination and the presence of hazardous substances in areas accessible to communities. Such substances may also affect biodiversity and potentially expose wildlife species protected under national or international conservation frameworks.

OIPA therefore respectfully urges the competent Algerian authorities to:

- **immediately review and suspend the use of poisoning and other inhumane methods** for the control of free-roaming animal populations;
- **investigate the municipal operations documented** in the above-mentioned locations and clarify the methods used for the capture, management and killing of animals;
- clarify whether the **use of toxic substances for stray-animal control is authorised under Algerian national legislation** and, if so, under which legal, veterinary and public-health framework and subject to which safeguards;
- promote humane and sustainable dog and cat population-management programmes based on **sterilisation, vaccination, veterinary care, identification, responsible ownership and prevention of abandonment**;
- strengthen **mass dog vaccination against rabies**, alongside appropriate vaccination measures for other susceptible companion animals, as a central component of public-health protection;
- **strengthen access to timely and appropriate human rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP)**, particularly in communities and areas at increased risk, and consider appropriate pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for high-risk groups and populations, in accordance with WHO recommendations;
- align national and municipal rabies-control and dog-population-management measures with **internationally recognised WHO and WOAHA guidance**, including sustained vaccination, surveillance, humane population management and community participation;
- strengthen mechanisms for **rabies surveillance, reporting and epidemiological monitoring**, enabling interventions to be based on reliable public-health data;
- develop stronger cooperation among municipalities, veterinary professionals, health authorities, animal-welfare organisations and local communities;
- introduce **transparent procedures and monitoring mechanisms** for municipal interventions involving free-roaming animals, including public information regarding the methods authorised and implemented;
- reinforce measures aimed at preventing and addressing acts of cruelty against animals, including poisoning, beating and other forms of intentional mistreatment.

OIPA has also received material documenting significant concern among Algerian citizens, including rescue initiatives, public appeals against culling and requests for the adoption of humane alternatives. This demonstrates that concern regarding the treatment of free-roaming animals is also present within Algerian civil society.

We respectfully encourage the Algerian authorities to move away from repeated lethal control campaigns and towards a **comprehensive national strategy capable of simultaneously protecting public health, animal welfare and community safety**.

OIPA remains available for constructive dialogue and would welcome the opportunity to engage with the competent Algerian authorities, veterinary and public-health institutions, international organisations and relevant local stakeholders in order to promote **humane, scientifically informed and sustainable solutions**.

Our objective is not to underestimate the legitimate concerns associated with rabies and public safety, but rather to encourage coordinated responses capable of protecting human health, animal health, wildlife, the environment and local communities together, in accordance with the principles of **One Health**.

Given the seriousness and geographical extent of the documented reports, we respectfully request that this matter receive urgent consideration and would be grateful for an official response.

Yours faithfully,

Massimo Pradella
President, OIPA ETS

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