United States Department of State
Office of Foreign Missions
Washington, D.C. 20520

May 31, 2002

Ms. Jerrily R. Kress, Director
Office of Zoning
One Judiciary Square
441 4th Street, N.W., 2nd Floor
Washington, D.C. 20001

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RE: BZA Application No. 16882
Embassy of the People's Democratic
Republic of Algeria
2118 Kalorama Road, N.W.

Dear Ms. Kress:

The Department of State hereby provides its comments concerning the application submitted to the BZA by the Embassy of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria on March 27, regarding its desire to construct a modest addition to its chancery located at 2118 Kaloram Road, N.W. The application was submitted pursuant to D.C. Code 5-1206 and Section 206 of the Foreign Missions Act (22 U.S.C. §4306.) This case is scheduled to be heard on June 11, 2002.

On behalf of the Secretary of State, and pursuant to the Foreign Missions Act, 22 U.S.C. §4301, *et seq.*, particularly sections 4303 and 4306, I hereby convey to the BZA the following comments and determinations concerning the subject application. These comments and determinations relate to the statutory criteria governing BZA determinations that lie within the purview of the Federal Government, namely 22 U.S.C. §4306(d)(1), (4), and (6), as well as the pertinent portion of (d)(3).

First, with respect to the criterion set forth in 22 U.S.C. §4306(d)(1), we have determined that favorable BZA action on the present application would fulfill the international obligation of the United States to facilitate the acquisition of adequate and secure premises by the Government of Algeria for its diplomatic mission in Washington.

BZA
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Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16882
EXHIBIT NO.28

Second, after consultation with Federal agencies authorized to perform protective services, we have determined, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. §4306(d)(6), that there exist no special security requirements relating to parking requirements in this case. I have also, after similar consultation, and pursuant to 22 U.S.C. §4306(d)(4), determined that the subject site and area are capable of being adequately protected.

Third, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. §4306(d)(6), I have determined that a favorable decision on this application would serve the federal interest. The United States Embassy in Algiers has outgrown its current chancery facility and requires a better facility with more space as well as a larger lot area to provide security setback, in conformity with the stringent security requirements that govern construction of United States diplomatic missions. The United States currently is searching for a site on which to construct such a new, more secure chancery in Algiers, and the Government of Algeria has been very helpful and supportive in this endeavor. A favorable decision in the present case would assist the United States in continuing to enjoy the support of the Government of Algeria, as the United States pursues its search for a new chancery site.

Finally, the Algerian Chancery was almost completely destroyed by fire on January 11, 2001. Rather than attempt a quick renovation in order to use the building sooner, the Embassy has spent the time and resources required to preserve and restore the exterior of the building to its original, historical state. Moreover, the Board should note that the fire restoration work involved code-required modifications (such as an enclosed fire escape and an elevator for handicap access) that resulted in a significant loss of floor space, which is compensated for by the proposed addition. We believe that the Ambassador and his government deserve great credit for the unusual sensitivity they have demonstrated to the concerns of the residents and Government of the District of Columbia, particularly in the area of historic preservation.

It would be appropriate that this cooperation be reciprocated by the approval of the modest Algerian expansion request before the Board.

For the above reasons the Department of State strongly supports the request of the Embassy of Algeria.

Sincerely,

T. Strickler

Theodore E. Strickler
Deputy Assistant Secretary