



The Role of Legal Legislation in Regulating Public Relations Practices in Algeria

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Abstract:

The economic, social, and technological development has been accompanied by the growth of public relations, which have asserted themselves among individuals and entities within society. They have gained a prominent status and have become a hoped-for aspiration for all institutions around the world, aiming to earn public trust. These entities, institutions, or organizations cannot carry out their duties and achieve their goals unless there is mutual trust and shared understanding between them and their audiences. Here lies the role of public relations in the daily life of any society. The role played by public relations, regardless of the field in which it operates—be it economic, social, or even charitable—drives the legislator to intervene and regulate the practice of such relations, even indirectly, through laws that institutions are required to abide by. These laws organize the links between institutions and their audiences in order to maintain a balance between the freedom of these institutions and the community's right to protection through enhanced transparency. However, it is not possible to enact a specific law that applies to all practices related to public relations, given the particularities of each field in which public relations are practiced.

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Introduction:

Man lives within an organized society and practices his daily life through interactions with others or with the institutions and structures of this society, in a manner that ensures the stability of his life and the quality of his living conditions. This continuous interaction forms bilateral connections across various aspects of life. The multiplicity of life domains and the evolving needs of the public have necessitated the diversification and expansion of public relations to cover these fields. Some are related to political life, others to commercial life, and still others to social and economic life. The relationships that link individuals—whether collectively or individually—with institutions, entities, or bodies have become the most prominent at the level of public life in society. Although the numerous connections between institutions and the public are based on elements drawn from reality—such as good reputation, trust, good morals, and the gaining of public opinion—organizing these relations through legal provisions has become an urgent necessity. This is to prevent such complexity and expansion from leading to the dominance of one interest over the other. While the institution seeks to achieve its goals, the public also has rights and freedoms that must be preserved. Thus, stability in these relations is achieved, and they gain a lasting character.

If it is indeed necessary to organize public relations through legal texts, has the Algerian legislator succeeded in regulating and controlling public relations? To answer this question, we relied on the descriptive and analytical methods by exploring the place of public relations in the lives of peoples, and then attempting to investigate the role of law in structuring and regulating these relations. To that end, we followed a plan divided into two sections: The first is dedicated to the position of public relations in the daily life of society, while the second addresses the necessity of regulating public relations to foster societal stability.

Part One: The Position of Public Relations in Everyday Life in Society

Society constantly performs its daily life functions to affirm its existence and to express the practice of its life in a manner consistent with human behavior. This behavior relies on science and knowledge for success, thereby forming public relations that connect its institutions with one another as well as with those who interact with them.

The success factors of these institutions lie in fostering and establishing good and distinctive relations with their stakeholders. Through these connections, stakeholders express the practice of their private lives, regardless of the nature of these relations—whether economic, social, or even political.

Establishing a place for public relations within the spectrum of everyday life necessarily requires understanding the concept of these relations and then exploring their functions.

Subsection One: Principles and Components of Public Relations

The foundation of public relations lies in the identity of each institution and the extent of its influence on public opinion and the groups that affect authority in society. Thus, these relations are influenced by the messages and statements issued by the institution, its expertise in a given field, and the resulting product. Moreover, interpretations of public opinion by key stakeholders also play a role. ¹

A. Principles of Public Relations

The environment or work field of the institution is the living space of public relations, and as such, is affected by all changes occurring within the work environment. Public relations here translate into activities aimed at achieving satisfaction and agreement between the institution and its stakeholders, or those concerned with it. This requires policies and programs based on the principle of social responsibility—ongoing efforts and uninterrupted activity—given that public relations have their own principles. ²

Practitioners in public relations may be guided by several key principles, including:

- Focusing on creating mutual understanding between the institution and its employees starting from within, fostering a collective moral unity and promoting cooperation internally.
- Relying on transparency in the institution's interactions with the public by upholding honesty and integrity in everything it issues and adhering to the principle of equality in dealings, in order to gain the public's trust and satisfaction—an essential goal for the institution's continuity and success.
- Practicing professionalism through commitment to work ethics, adherence to professional principles, values, and traditions, and demonstrating truthfulness and good manners in behavior and speech. The truth should be revealed in all circumstances, as concealing it results in loss of public trust and the spread of rumors and false information about the institution. ³

The process of public relations involves a series of essential questions, such as: ⁴

- What is the specific objective?
- Who is the target audience?
- In what context is the public relations initiative taking place?
- What is the budget allocated for this initiative?

¹ Andrea Cattellani, *Les relations Publiques (Public Relations)*, Dunod, Paris, 2015, p. 39.

² Abdelsalam Abu Qahf, *Advertising Engineering and Public Relations*, Al-Ishaa Library, Alexandria, 2001, p. 341.

³ Gharib Abdelsami Gharib, *Communication and Public Relations in Contemporary Society*, Shabab Al-Jamia Foundation, Cairo, 2002, pp. 62-63.

⁴ Stéphane Billiet, *Les Relations Publiques*, Dunod, Paris, 2009, p. 24.

- How is the success of the public relations initiative evaluated?
- What are the most important modern technological tools used to highlight this initiative?

B. Components of Public Relations

Public relations rely on several fundamental components that enable them to fulfill their role effectively, most importantly: creating a good reputation, ethical behavior, awareness of social responsibility, relational and organizational trust, and public opinion—which is the lifeblood of public relations.

1. Establishing a Good Reputation:

A good reputation encompasses the ideas and impressions that emerge from or appear in a person as an objective target for research. The subject of study may include goods or products offered for marketing, or it may concern an institution or organization. A person's behavior toward the subject is usually tied to reputation, making it part of the studied subject. Reputation strongly affects the targeted groups or entities, with the goal of aligning outcomes with planned programs.⁵ For example, the reputation of a commercial store affects its fame and economic activity, which in turn impacts productivity and the number of employees. If the store thrives, more employees are hired; if the opposite occurs and lies prevail, the institution may deteriorate and become corrupt.⁶ For nonprofit institutions such as associations and political parties, a good reputation plays a major role in increasing membership and contributions, as well as in conveying their voice and demands to the governing authorities, thereby making them more effective in society. Thus, it is necessary to work on creating a positive image for the recipient regarding the noble charitable or political goal the institution aims to achieve. Public relations specialists work to market a good reputation for their institutions through communication about their activities, the nature of their products and services, and implementing changes at the management and work-style levels to achieve stakeholder satisfaction and build trust, thereby enhancing competitive capacity, which is based on the principle of division of labor within the institution. This ultimately shapes its brand and logo.⁷

2. Ethics and Public Relations:

Ethics are an innate quality or condition within the human self that appears in actions and behaviors. Ethics refer to virtues such as honesty, integrity, and justice. From this, ethical values are derived, forming a set of behavioral actions of individuals, groups, and institutions within society. These behaviors are distinguished by the contrast between what is negative and rejected and what is positive and accepted by the target sectors of public relations activities. This necessitates that public relations professionals and institutional members maintain high standards of ethical conduct, as public relations today have become an activity involving all individuals within an institution. It entails forming flexible relationships in their behaviors, communication, and interactions with others inside and outside the institution. Regardless of its origin—religion, culture, social class, belief system—or its application in fields such as medicine, science, law, or communications, ethics ultimately aim to answer the fundamental question: How should we act to achieve the best outcome?⁸ Thus, ethics are deeply rooted in knowledge and represent a field of struggle to win the trust of as many clients and institutional members as possible, including the most influential stakeholders. Ethics, therefore, are the true partnership between them and the institution.⁹

3. Social Responsibility:

⁵ Haj Ahmed Karima, *Public Relations and Its Applications to Modern Technologies in Communication Institutions*, PhD thesis, University of Oran, Faculty of Social Sciences, 2017-2018, p. 44.

⁶ Stéphane Billiet, *Les Relations Publiques*, op. cit., p. 104.

⁷ Ridwan Belkhiri, Sarah Jabri, *Introduction to Communication and Public Relations*, Jisoor Publishing and Distribution House, 1st edition, Algeria, 2013, p. 243.

⁸ Haj Ahmed Karima, op. cit., p. 51.

⁹ Abdellah El Mzem, Serge le Clerc, Patrice le Roux, *Vocabulaire des relations publiques*, University of Montreal, Faculty of Continuing Education, 2nd edition, 2014, p. 51.

Social responsibility refers to bearing the consequences of production, distribution, and the provision of services toward the society in which the institution operates. This idea gained traction after World War II and received increased attention due to a focus on several factors:

- **Consumer direction and opinion:** The consumer, through their voluntary choice of certain goods and services, compels the institution to fully assume its responsibilities concerning its work and its relationship with consumers.
- **Laws and regulations:** These define and regulate the institution's responsibilities concerning its operations and dealings with stakeholders—such as consumer protection law, competition law, commercial law, and labor law. These laws have significantly elevated the importance of social responsibility, which ultimately brings long-term profits to the institution.¹⁰

4. Relational and Organizational Trust:

Trust is generally defined as the belief based on a partial perception of the integrity of the other party.¹¹ From this definition, it appears that trust is a sense of reassurance in interactions—a psychological feeling. When related to public relations, trust becomes broader than mere feelings and perceptions, as it can be developed to achieve common objectives. Shared trust enables continued communication and the fulfillment of mutual interests, eliminating deception and fraud.¹² Trust can also extend to the organizational framework of the institution. When we trust the institution, we consequently trust its employees. For instance, when we hand over our bags to the storage clerk, we may not know that employee personally, but we trust the institution they work for.

5. Public Opinion:

Public relations require the presence of an audience, and public opinion is an essential part of it. Thus, the success of an institution in achieving its objectives depends on how well it understands its public. The public relations manager typically works to identify the institution's core audiences in order to design communication programs focused on clear objectives.¹³ The relationship between public opinion and public relations is a close one. Public opinion justifies the existence of public relations and explains the efforts made by institutions and organizations to inform, persuade, and appeal to the public.¹⁴ For example, political parties try to explain their objectives and policies and to rally as much support as possible for their political performance, convincing the public that they are working in its service and interest.

Section Two: Functions and Tasks of Public Relations

This subsection addresses the most important functions performed by public relations in modern organizations, along with the associated tasks. Given their significance, these functions make public relations a role as vital as any other within the institution, regardless of its size or field of activity.

A. Functions of Public Relations

Public relations, with their increasing importance in institutions, perform various functions comparable to other specialized departments within the organization. Among the most important functions identified by researchers are:¹⁵

¹⁰ Mahfouz Ahmed Gouda, *Public Relations*, Zahraan Publishing and Distribution House, 1st edition, Jordan, 2009, p. 256.

¹¹ Anne-Marie Gagné and Pierre Mongeau, "The Trust Relationship in Public Relations: Towards an Optimal Contextual Fit Model," *Communiquer* (Journal of Social and Public Communication), No. 6, Paris, 2011, p. 4.

¹² Haj Ahmed Karima, op. cit., p. 57.

¹³ Hiba Suwan, *The Importance of Studying Public Opinion of Workers in the Field of Public Relations*, Diploma research submitted to the Syrian International Academy, Syria, 2009, p. 16.

¹⁴ Haj Ahmed Karima, op. cit., p. 60

¹⁵ Abdel Karim Radhi Al-Jubouri, *Public Relations: Art and Creativity in Developing the Institution and the Success of Administration*, 1st edition, Dar Al-Bihar, Dar Al-Tasyeer, Beirut, 2001, p. 36.

1. **Research:** This involves studies that measure public opinion trends among the institution's internal and external audiences, as well as evaluating the success of media and advertising campaigns and their various tools. Public relations collect, analyzes, and studies public opinion trends to obtain accurate facts.
2. **Planning:** This is about formulating a precise public relations plan that aligns with the institution's overall strategy. The public relations department sets the institution's general policy and the specific public relations program, based on the research and studies it conducts, including goal-setting, audience targeting, and media program design.
3. **Communication:** This is the means of implementing previously developed plans, through the transfer of information in all directions inside and outside the institution.
4. **Execution:** In this function, public relations performs several tasks, including:
 - Implementing the communication plan with the targeted audiences and selecting the appropriate means of communication for each audience.
 - Providing services to various departments within the institution and assisting them in their functions, particularly those involving the public.
 - Developing relationships with other institutions in society.
 - Introducing the public to the institution and the products and services it offers.
 - Establishing good relations with opinion leaders in society by presenting facts about the institution.
 - Assisting the public in forming their opinions by supplying the necessary information to build a sound perspective.
5. **Coordination:** Public relations coordinate between various departments inside and outside the institution to foster understanding among them. It acts as a liaison. Coordination is not confined to the internal boundaries of the institution but is a natural extension that interacts with the institution's external stakeholders. Coordination is not a temporary task; it is part of the institution's strategic operations and public relations must operate within the framework of a general strategy that includes detailed objectives to ensure harmony in the institution's communication and its consistency with overall goals. This role of coordination provides coherence in messaging and action plans across all departments and external partners.

B. Duties of Public Relations

The tasks of public relations can be summarized as the practical aspects derived from its principles, components, and core functions. These tasks are organized into three main categories: internal, external, and general tasks.

1. Internal Tasks:

These are aimed at strengthening relationships within the institution itself. They include:

- Creating a positive work environment to enhance employee satisfaction and productivity.
- Promoting the institutional culture, including its values, vision, and mission, among employees.
- Facilitating effective internal communication between different departments and hierarchies.
- Organizing internal events such as meetings, workshops, or recreational activities to foster unity and motivation.

- Informing employees of developments within the institution, whether related to achievements or challenges, to promote transparency and involvement.

2. External Tasks:

These target the broader public, stakeholders, and society at large. They involve:

- Communicating the institution's goals, services, and achievements to the public in a clear and positive manner.
- Managing the institution's image and reputation by handling public inquiries and complaints responsibly and respectfully.
- Building and maintaining good relationships with media organizations and journalists to ensure balanced and accurate coverage.
- Organizing external events such as press conferences, exhibitions, or community service initiatives to boost public engagement.
- Monitoring external trends and public opinion to advise leadership on adapting messages and strategies. ¹⁶

3. General Tasks:

These reflect the comprehensive and strategic role of public relations and include:

- Providing leadership in crisis communication by preparing and implementing plans that ensure effective management of crises.
- Conducting surveys and research to continuously assess the impact of communication strategies and to improve future performance.
- Advising the executive leadership on matters related to public perception, societal expectations, and communication policy.
- Ensuring consistency in the institution's message across all platforms and communication channels.
- Overseeing the design and dissemination of promotional materials, publications, and institutional reports. ¹⁷

In summary, public relations are no longer limited to simply responding to media inquiries or promoting institutional activities. Rather, they have become a **strategic function** integrated into the organizational structure, responsible for building trust, maintaining relationships, and guiding communication to meet the institution's overall goals. The more public relations align with the strategic vision and objectives of the institution, the more effective they become in creating sustainable, mutually beneficial relationships with stakeholders. ¹⁸

Part Two: The Necessity of Regulating Public Relations to Restore Social Stability

The development that has occurred in society across all fields has made it necessary to organize it to preserve its stability and protect the rights and freedoms of its individuals. This has been one of the fundamental tasks of the modern state, through enacting legislations and laws that regulate the practice of public life in all domains. These legislations have varied between those that are general and concern the

¹⁶ Tamer Al-Bakri, *Marketing Communications and Promotion*, Al-Hamed Publishing and Distribution House, 1st edition, Jordan, 2006, p. 51.

¹⁷ Hussein Abdel Hamid Ahmed Rashwan, *Public Relations from a Sociological Perspective*, Taha, Modern University Office, Alexandria, 2003, p. 152.

¹⁸ Jamal Al-Aifa, *Media and Communication Institutions*, University Publications Office, Algeria, 2002, p. 7.

relationship between the ruling authority and its subjects, and those that are specific, related to regulating relationships among individuals themselves or between individuals and private entities.

Since public relations are bonds between individuals and institutions regardless of their activity, they are necessarily concerned with this protection and organization according to a framework that ensures their stability and achieves their goals, especially after their expansion and diversification.

Section One: Organizing Public Relations under Public Law

The establishment of the modern state has been aided by its structural organization and the emergence of institutions and bodies vested with public authority and seeking to achieve the public interest. Although these institutions may appear separate, they are morally connected by relationships and bonds among themselves, as well as connected to the public according to the domain in which each institution operates. These bonds are governed by the rules of public law, which organize relations of any kind whenever the state is a party, considering it as the authority and sovereignty holder.¹⁹

The stability of society, and consequently the continuity of the state's existence, necessarily requires the imposition of laws that regulate these relations, starting with the constitution, which contains general provisions and is above all laws. It is the fundamental law that guarantees individual and collective rights and freedoms, protects the principle of the people's free choice, legitimizes the exercise of powers, and consolidates democratic turnover through regular, free, and fair elections,²⁰ followed by a series of laws such as the Public Service Law, Anti-Corruption Law, Election Law, Political Parties Law, Local Authorities Law, and other laws establishing public legal persons, like the law establishing the university, for example.

A. The Role of the Constitution in Organizing Public Relations

The constitution is defined as the supreme document in the country that organizes the relationship between rulers and the ruled. The Algerian constitution refers to this in Chapter Two under the title: "Fundamental Rights, Public Freedoms, and Duties," and the rules in this chapter are general, recognizing protection for these freedoms and rights, which fundamentally arise from various bonds such as nationality and citizenship. However, specific laws should detail the methods and modalities of this protection and its practices.

The Algerian constitution states that freedom of opinion and expression is guaranteed, and the law specifies the conditions and modalities of their exercise,²¹ meaning the state acknowledges and recognizes that expression is free and that expressing opinion in any field is permitted. However, the manner and limits of expression are regulated by a specific law, such as the media law. Anyone present on Algerian territory has the right to express opinions according to the law that regulates and organizes this. Thus, the relationship between the sovereign state, concerned with protecting its reputation and its institutions, and the public is subject to these regulations. Consequently, public relations in their form as bonds between the state and its citizens, or between the state and those present on its territory, are subject to rules of recognition and protection.

This organization of relations appears more clearly through the mention of "duties" in Chapter Two of the same part. For example, it is stated that no tax may be imposed except by law, and all taxpayers are equal before the tax; the law defines cases and conditions for full or partial exemption. Taxation is considered a civic duty,²² so the tax represents a commitment of the merchant towards the tax administration, which is one of the state's institutions and reflects their relationship. This relationship, which arises from declaring the activity, cannot be established, raised, or altered except if provided by the tax law or finance law.

The relationship between the merchant and the tax administration is one of obligation: the merchant must declare the activity and subsequently pay the tax, while the tax administration must not exaggerate or reduce this tax or impose a tax not approved by law.

¹⁹ Amira Al-Muradi Awad, *Private Law and Public Law (Attempts between Abolition and Resilience)*, *Ijtihad Journal for Legal and Economic Studies*, University of Tamanrasset, Vol. 8, No. 4, 2019, p. 300.

²⁰ Constitutional Amendment of 2020, Official Gazette No. 82, issued on 30.12.2020, p. 2 of the preamble.

²¹ See Articles 51 and 52 of the 2020 Constitutional Amendment, op. cit.

²² See Article 82 of the same constitution.

There are many other bonds referred to in the Algerian constitution that express various relationships between different state institutions and the public. Since the constitution refers to them, they must certainly be organized and regulated by laws consistent with these general constitutional principles.

B. Organizing Public Relations through Some General Laws

What concerns us in this section is internal public law, which is a set of legal rules that define the entity of the state and regulate its relationships as the sovereign authority with individuals,²³ branching into several subfields such as administrative law, including the public service law, tax law, customs law... financial law such as public finance law, public accounting law, public contracts law, and others.

First: Organizing Public Relations through Administrative Law:

Administrative law is defined as the set of legal rules that regulate the performance of the executive authority in carrying out its various administrative functions, whether related to sovereign acts or administrative acts.²⁴ It includes several laws, the most relevant to our research being the Public Service Law,²⁵ which governs the relationship between the employee who performs activity for the public administration in exchange for a monthly salary. This employment relationship includes appointment, promotion, dismissal, and transfer, all regulated by this law. Neither the administration acts arbitrarily, nor does the employee perform duties as he wishes, and all is under judicial supervision.

Second: Organizing Public Relations through Financial Law:

Financial law is a set of legal rules governing the state's and public bodies' finances, clarifying various resources such as taxes, fees, and loans, their collection methods, expenditure, and oversight.²⁶ For example, in tax law, it governs the relationship between the taxpayer and the tax administration, aiming for balance and equality between the interests of both parties because the stability of this relationship benefits both: the tax administration collects money, and the taxpayer avoids judicial follow-up and seizure of assets for tax payment.

Third: Organizing Public Relations through Media Law:

Similarly, media law²⁷ defines principles and rules that regulate media activity and its free practice. Media, in general, is the sensitive and effective nerve of public relations; therefore, it must be regulated and controlled. It is prohibited to publish anything contrary to public order and morals, and this law assigns regulatory authorities to supervise and organize publication.²⁸

Fourth: Organizing Public Relations through Public Contracts Law:

Public contracts, or administrative contracts, are economic relations linking public administrations with some members of the public, called economic operators in this law. These bonds involve carrying out works or providing services to the public administration, called the contracting authority, in exchange for a financial consideration agreed upon. Public contracts law²⁹ regulates these relations from their establishment until execution to achieve efficiency, equality among operators, and uphold principles of transparency and integrity, thereby fostering public trust, which will be the future economic operators when participating in public contracts.

²³ Tawfiq Hassan Faraj, *General Principles of Law*, Book One, Introduction to Legal Sciences, Beirut, Makkawi Library, 1974-1975, p. 65.

²⁴ Mohammed Said Jafoor, *Introduction to Legal Sciences*, Part One, Brief in Legal Theory, Dar Houma Publishing and Distribution, 18th edition, Algeria, p. 82.

²⁵ Law No. 06-03 dated 15.07.2006 including the General Basic Law for Public Service, Official Gazette No. 46, 2006.

²⁶ Ahmed Mohammed Al-Rifai, *Introduction to Legal Sciences*, Benha University, 2007-2008, p. 81.

²⁷ Organic Law No. 23-14 dated 27.08.2023 related to media, Official Gazette No. 56, 2023.

²⁸ See Article 14 of the same law.

²⁹ Law No. 23-12 dated 05.08.2023 defining general rules related to public contracts, Official Gazette No. 51, 2023.

The ultimate goal of this law is to stabilize public relations in the state and achieve an economic and social balance among its members, which is one of the state's core tasks.

Fifth: Organizing Public Relations through Election Law:

Election law ³⁰ defines the basic principles and rules related to the electoral system, guaranteeing the independence and neutrality of the authority in charge of organizing and managing elections and ensuring free choice while eliminating money and influence to buy votes. This is ensured by a set of rules and procedures, starting with the establishment of the Independent National Authority for Elections as a neutral body tasked with organizing, managing, and supervising elections until announcing results, instead of the Interior Ministry as before.

The main objective of this law, which was a (direct or indirect) outcome of the 2019 national movement, is to revive citizens' trust in state institutions, consolidate democracy, and moralize political life, ³¹ which is an essential component of public relations. It means taking care of the relationship between citizens or the public and state institutions and organizing it in a way that creates comfort in practicing political life.

There are many other branches of public law that also regulate public relations in various aspects of daily life, such as the law on prevention and combating corruption, currency and credit law, customs law, anti-smuggling law, etc.

Section Two: Regulation of Public Relations under Private Law

Private law is defined as the set of rules that govern relationships in which the state is not a party in its capacity as sovereign authority. It regulates relationships between individuals in general or between them and the state when the state acts as a private person performing ordinary activities like all individuals do. ³² This means it governs relationships that are not affected by public authority and/or public interest. It is enforced by ordinary courts, unlike public law, which is applied by administrative courts.

Private law branches into several fields; those relevant to our study include: civil law, commercial law, labor law, consumer protection law, and maritime law.

A. Regulation of Public Relations through Civil Law

Civil law is considered the foundation and most prominent branch of private law. ³³ It is defined as the set of rules governing relationships between persons and is regarded as the general law and source of all branches of private law. Its rules govern all relationships, whether commercial, social, or otherwise, provided they do not involve public authority—except for some relationships or aspects regulated by special laws, such as the relationship between producers or intermediaries and consumers. Even in these cases, civil law rules may sometimes apply when there is no specific provision regulating an aspect of the relationship in these special laws.

The Algerian Civil Code contains several rules organizing public relations, foremost among them those in Article 3 of Chapter 7 of Book Two of the Code, titled “Company Contract,” as well as those in Article 3 of Chapter 10 of Book Two, titled “Insurance Contract.”

A company—whether civil or commercial—finds its activity only among the public, seeking clients to become its specific audience, establishing with them material bonds in the form of contracts or moral bonds in the form of good impressions, trust, and reassurance. These bonds are governed by civil law rules either directly—such as protecting the rights and obligations of the company and its counterparties—or indirectly, such as preserving the company's reputation and standing with the public.

³⁰ Order No. 21-01 dated 10.03.2021 including the Organic Law related to the election system, Official Gazette No. 17, 2021, amended and supplemented.

³¹ Tawfiq Hassan Faraj, op. cit., p. 74.

³² Ismail Abdel Nabi Shaheen, *Introduction to the Study of Legal Sciences*, Part One, Legal Theory, Al-Wafaa Legal Library, First Edition, 2013, p. 90.

³³ See Articles 36-77 of the amended and supplemented Algerian Commercial Law.

The insurance contract, concluded between insurance companies and those obligated to subscribe to insurance on their property or those who choose to do so, is governed by general rules stipulated in the civil law. Insurance relationships depend on trust and honesty to multiply and spread among the public. Insurance laws such as Order 74-15, Law 88-31, and Order 95-07 further regulate the insurance relationship.

From the above, it is clear that civil law plays a role in regulating a large part of public relations, considering them part of public life.

B. Regulation of Public Relations through Some Other Special Laws

Special laws vary according to the nature of the relationships they regulate. Some govern relations between traders, some regulate relations between workers and employers, others regulate relations between consumers and producers or service providers (known in Algerian legislation as “interveners”), and some govern relations among users of the sea. These are samples of laws regulating some aspects of public relations according to their nature.

First: Regulation of Public Relations through Commercial Law

Commercial law contains several provisions regulating some aspects of public relations, most notably those in Chapter 4 of Section 4 of Book One, titled “Land Transport Contract and Freight Forwarding Contract”.³⁴ Public relations in this field are more evident when the carrier is a legal person; these provisions protect the rights of the consignor and support the presumed trust in the carrier, gaining public support and increasing the number of clients, which leads the public opinion to consider this carrier trustworthy and reputable. The better organized the relationship between the carrier and the consignor or client, the more it contributes to establishing prosperity factors for both parties.

Among these provisions are also those found in Book Two, titled “Commercial Premises”,³⁵ especially the provisions related to the elements of the commercial premises.³⁶ Article 78 of this law focuses on two elements: clients and reputation. Clients are part of the public who regularly frequent the commercial premises, acquired through good service, location, quality of goods and services, and so forth. Reputation is the fame and spread of the commercial premises’ name among the public, gained through seniority, trust, credit, good standing, and others.

Reputation and clients are, in fact, essential components of public relations, so commercial law undoubtedly regulates part of public relations.

Also, the provisions in Book Four of the Algerian Commercial Law, titled “Commercial Papers”,³⁷ relate to public relations. The legislator considers commercial papers as credit instruments,³⁸ serving as intermediaries between the drawer, the drawee, and the beneficiary—a third party being the financial institution where the drawee’s bank account is held. This requires a level of trust and credit permeating the relationship for transactions to stabilize, which is a cornerstone of public relations.

Moreover, Book Five of the Algerian Commercial Law, titled “Commercial Companies”,³⁹ is closely linked to the organization of public relations connecting commercial companies, as legal entities or institutions with legal existence, to the public. Here, trust, reputation, and public opinion—key components of public relations—are regulated mainly under these provisions of commercial law.

Second: Regulation of Public Relations through Labor Law

³⁴ See Articles 78-214 of the same law.

³⁵ See Articles 78-214 of the same law.

³⁶ Article 78 of the Commercial Law states: “Movable assets allocated to the practice of commercial activity are considered part of the commercial premises. The commercial premises necessarily include its clients and its reputation...”

³⁷ See Articles 389-543 of the amended and supplemented Algerian Commercial Law.

³⁸ Belaissawi Mohammed Taher, *Brief Explanation of Commercial Papers*, Dar Houma for Printing, Publishing and Distribution, Algeria, 3rd edition, 2010, p. 11.

³⁹ See Articles 544-842 of the same law.

Labor law is defined as the set of legal rules governing legal ties arising from work, provided the worker is subordinate and subject to the employer, working under his supervision and control. It also regulates collective labor relations and the resulting rights and obligations of both parties.⁴⁰

From this definition, it is clear that labor law regulates two types of relationships: individual labor relations, i.e., ties created by the employment contract between employer and worker or groups of workers, fundamentally based on the element of subordination, which includes the employer's authority to supervise and direct the worker during the performance of his work.⁴¹ This relationship is considered part of public relations, and labor law⁴² regulates it in a way that ensures its stability to fulfill its functions and duties.

The law also regulates the relationship between the employer and workers' representatives or what is called collective labor relations,⁴³ governed by dialogue and negotiation, often formalized in collective agreements related to work, falling under the planning function of public relations.

Regulating labor relations by legal texts and collective agreements lays solid foundations for public relations in this area, achieving transaction stability by preserving the social and economic interests of workers and employers.

Third: Regulation of Public Relations through Insurance Law

The Algerian Civil Code classifies the insurance contract among contracts of uncertainty and regulates it by special laws. Order 74-15⁴⁴ mandates compulsory insurance on vehicles and stipulates financial compensation for victims of traffic accidents or their beneficiaries, paid by insurance companies under conditions and amounts specified by this law and its amendments and supplements.⁴⁵

These laws regulate the relationship between the insured—who are part of the public in the concept of public relations—and insurance companies or institutions. It is noted first that insurance subscription is mandatory for every vehicle owner; second, insurance companies are obliged to compensate damages based on contractual liability or guarantee rules. Hence, insurance companies, from the moment the contract is concluded, embody the idea of bearing responsibility, which supports the public's trust in these companies and favors those that respond quickly and reliably to claims. Insurance companies compete in this regard through planning, which is essentially a public relations function. This also falls under social responsibility and relational trust, both of which are components of public relations. Thus, insurance law has significantly contributed to organizing a part of public relations.

Fourth: Regulation of Public Relations through Consumer Protection Law

Consumer protection law⁴⁶ defines the consumer as any natural or legal person who acquires a good or service, for payment or free of charge, intended for final use to satisfy personal needs or those of another person or a dependent animal. It defines the supplier as any natural or legal person involved in offering products for consumption.⁴⁷

This law contains many provisions regulating the relationship between the supplier and the consumer, such as Article 13 regarding purchase guarantees, which fosters trust and credit—key components of

⁴⁰ Khalifi Abdel Rahman, *Lectures in Labor Law*, Dar Al-Uloom for Publishing and Distribution, Annaba, Algeria, 2014, p. 23.

⁴¹ Ahmiya Suleiman, *Legal Regulation of Labor Relations in Algerian Legislation - Individual Labor Relations - Part Two*, University Publications Office, Algeria, 2002, p. 33.

⁴² Law No. 90-11 issued on 21.04.1990, Official Gazette No. 17, 1990, amended and supplemented.

⁴³ See Article One of the same law.

⁴⁴ Order 74-15 dated 30.01.1974 regarding mandatory compensation on vehicles and the compensation system for damages, Official Gazette No. 15, 1974, amended and supplemented.

⁴⁵ Law No. 88-31 dated 19.07.1988 setting the compensation schedule granted to victims of bodily injury traffic accidents or their legal heirs, and Order 95-07 dated 25.01.1995 concerning insurances, amended and supplemented.

⁴⁶ Law No. 09-03 dated 25.02.2009 related to consumer protection and combating fraud, Official Gazette No. 15, 2009, amended and supplemented.

⁴⁷ See Article 3 of the same law.

public relations. Also, Chapter Five of Section Two, titled "Obligation to Inform the Consumer," and the role of information as a means of development and extension of public relations, as well as Chapter Seven of Section Two on "Consumer Protection Associations," which are part of the public and essential elements of public relations.

Studying the Consumer Protection Law and examining its provisions convincingly shows that it organizes a significant part of public relations, perhaps the largest among the various laws.

Fifth: Regulation of Public Relations through Maritime Law

Maritime law, in its broad meaning, is the law governing all legal relations arising from various uses of the sea, whether public relations in which the state or public authority is a party, or private relations limited to individuals and private law persons.⁴⁸

The Algerian Maritime Law⁴⁹ focuses on the ship and the multiple relationships it enables, whether between the captain and the ship users, between them and the ship agent, between the ship owner and users, or between the owner and insurance companies, among others.

It appears from the texts of Algerian Maritime Law that it regulates a large part of public relations related to maritime navigation, especially those related to commercial activity where the ship is the central focus.

Conclusion

Since the emergence of the modern state, societies have sought more effective ways and means of organization in pursuit of a better life. Public and private bodies and institutions have been the path to achieve this. These institutions were not isolated from the public; rather, each maintained relationships depending on the type of activity it performs or the service it provides. For these institutions to achieve their objectives in a manner that safeguards their interests and protects the rights and freedoms of the public, it is necessary for the state to intervene to regulate and organize these relationships through specially prepared laws.

The diversity and complexity of the relationships woven between the public and institutions have imposed a corresponding diversity in the legal framework required for their regulation. However, the field of public relations is far broader than what legal texts alone can encompass, due to its connection to psychological factors within the human self that are difficult to confine and define.

Rejecting the effectiveness of law in organizing public relations is a form of chaos and would push society back to a pre-organizational stage. Therefore, the law remains the effective means to guide public relations toward achieving their goals and purposes.

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⁴⁸ Medhat Hafiz Ibrahim, *Explanation of the New Maritime Commercial Law issued by Law No. 8 of 1990, Complementary Legislation and Treaties - Jurisprudential Judicial Study*, First Edition, Gharib Publishing Library, Cairo, Egypt, 1990, p. 7.

⁴⁹ Order No. 76-80 dated 23.10.1976 including the maritime law, Official Gazette No. 29, 1977, amended and supplemented.

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