



Summary (Current as of 12:00 BST)

Coup attempt appears to be taking place in Burkina Faso as of the morning of Friday 30 September. Reports from local media in the West African country are pointing to a coup attempt. Witnesses have reported a heavy military presence around the city. Schools are closed and residents are remaining indoors, waiting for updates on the developing situation.

Heavy gunfire was reported near the main military camp at Baba Sy and some residential areas near Ouaga 2000 in the capital Ouagadougou during the early morning hours on Friday. A large blast was also reportedly heard near the presidential palace. Sources report that soldiers have taken up positions along the avenue leading to the presidency and have blocked access to major buildings, including the national Assembly, as well as the residence of the prime minister, all of which have been blocked by military vehicles. Access to the national broadcaster has also been blocked. While initially, the broadcaster stopped its transmission, coverage has resumed intermittently, though there has been no reporting of the suspected coup attempt. Local media are reporting that on Kwame Nkrumah Avenue, banks and local traders are closed. Most of the main roads in the capital remain deserted. Reports indicate that Ouagadougou International Airport remains accessible.

While there has been no official word on whether this is a coup attempt, it does bear the hallmarks of other power grabs that have occurred in West Africa in recent years. The tensions in Ouagadougou also come just days after at least eleven soldiers were killed in an attack on a 150-vehicle convoy in northern Burkina Faso and amidst growing frustration amongst the local populations over continued insecurity in the country. In the north of Burkina Faso, militants have blockaded several areas, effectively leaving communities stranded, with government convoys and air drops delivering essential goods to trapped civilians. Other cities and towns that are not under siege have also been impacted by the ongoing insecurity as they have seen their populations rapidly increase as people flee the violence in the countryside. Protests against the current government have also taken place, with one occurring in Bobo Dioulasso on 29 September where demonstrators called on the current leadership to resign. There are also reports that the government has lost control of 40% of the country. While the current leader of Burkina Faso, Lt Col. Paul-Henri Damiba swept into power in a coup in January, a takeover that was largely celebrated at the time by civilians who were fed up with the former government's inability to rein in Islamist militants, and pledged to restore security, attacks have continued to take place. Security sources report that some amongst the rank and file, which gave Damiba their support back in January, are now increasingly growing frustrated at the lack of progress on the ground.

Security Advisory

The situation in Burkina Faso remains fluid and is developing. The situation remains confusing and tensions are heightened. So far, authorities have not made any official comments or statements. Heightened security and business and transportation disruptions are likely over the coming hours, particularly in Ouagadougou. Clashes could also erupt.

Anyone currently in the capital Ouagadougou is advised to remain extra vigilant, to remain indoors where possible and to follow the advice of the local authorities. Monitor local media to remain abreast of the ongoing situation. Avoid the vicinity of Camp Baba Sy, as well as governmental buildings. In the event that violence does break out, leave the area immediately, if it is safe to do so, and take shelter in a secure, non-governmental building. Abide by all official directives.

MS RISK is closely monitoring the developing situation in Burkina Faso and will issue further advisories as more information becomes available.



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