

Coup In Niger

Current Situation (as of 18:00 BST)

On Sunday 30 July, hundreds of coup supporters protested outside of the French embassy in the capital Niamey. Demonstrators chanted anti-French and pro-Russia slogans and threw stones at the embassy. They were dispersed by security forces who used tear gas. The demonstrations have been condemned by France, who has pledged to react strongly to any attack on its nationals or interests. In a statement, President Emmanuel Macron's office said that "the President will not tolerate any attack against France and its interests," specifying that it would respond to attacks against French diplomats, armed forces or businesses.

West African leaders have threatened military action against Niger's military junta in the wake of last week's coup, giving them seven days to reinstate President Mohamed Bazoum, who remains held by the junta. Earlier the junta warned that it would resist any "plan of aggression against Niger" by regional or Western powers. On Sunday, regional bloc ECOWAS held an emergency meeting in Nigeria to discuss the latest coup. A statement issued shortly after the summit said that ECOWAS had "zero tolerance" for coups and that the regional bloc would "Take all measures necessary to restore constitutional order" if its demands were not met within a week, adding "such measures may include the use of force," and military chiefs are to meet "immediately" to plan for an intervention. West African leader also announced the immediate enforcement of a no-fly zone over Niger for all commercial flights, the closure of land borders with the country, and the imposition of financial sanctions against the junta.

On 29 July, France announced that it has suspended all development aid and budgetary support to Niger, with the European Union and United States making a similar decision.



Advisory

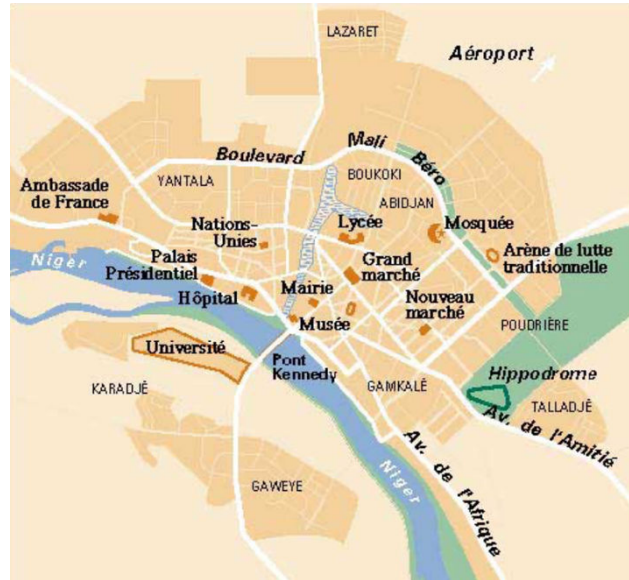
As of Sunday 30 July, tensions remain heightened in Niger, including in Niamey. On the ground, the sentiment appears to have shifted in the last 24 hrs, increasingly becoming anti-French, though this could expand in the coming days. Protests occurred on 30 July in front of the French Embassy in the capital, and further such demonstrations cannot be ruled out. Additional gatherings are likely to take place near prominent government buildings, Western embassies, and public squares, including the French Embassy, Presidential Palace, Place de la Concertation in front of the National Assembly, and President Bazoum's party headquarters. Clashes are likely to take place if pro- and anti-CNSP groups demonstrate in proximity or if protesters engage in acts of violence or ignore official orders to disperse. A nationwide curfew, originally 22:00 – 05:30, remains in place, though it has been reduced to 00:01 – 05:00. Security will likely



Incident Advisory: Niger (30 July 2023)

remain particularly tight in Niamey and in other major cities across the country, and along Niger's border crossings over the coming days. Security measures may include roadblocks, checkpoints, and searches of vehicles and pedestrians. Coup leaders could implement further restrictions, including restricting telecommunications. Clashes between supporters of President Bazoum and military leaders could occur with little-to-no warning, and a counter coup attempt by soldiers loyal to the ousted president and his administration cannot be ruled out in the coming days. As of 30 July, there have been no reported clashes involving the armed forces. If border closures persist, shortages of basic commodities are likely.

Anyone currently in Niger is advised to avoid unnecessary travel until the situation stabilizes and should exercise extreme caution if operating anywhere in the country. Anyone currently in Niamey is advised to exercise increased caution, should shelter in place until the security situation stabilizes, should account for personnel and plan for possible disruptions to telecommunication networks if the situation becomes unstable. Be wary that the political and security situation could deteriorate quickly and with little notice. Sudden localized violence could occur, notably in the capital; further curfews and movement restrictions could be imposed on short notice. Heed official directives, including curfew orders. All protests, demonstrations and large gatherings should be avoided as they could turn violent with little warning. It is advised to avoid government buildings, security installations and large concentrations of soldiers and police/gendarmes. If approached and questioned by security personnel, it is advised to remain courteous and cooperative. Refrain from taking photographs in public spaces due to the heightened tensions nationwide. Anyone deciding to travel within Niamey or outside of the capital city during this period should ensure that they have the proper identification documents at all times. Transport services, including flight reservations, should be reconfirmed prior to leaving accommodation. You should monitor the local news, social media and diplomatic outputs to remain abreast of the events should conditions change.



Terrorists groups operating in the region could take advantage of the political turmoil in Niger to launch attacks, including ambushes, and kidnappings that may potentially target the Western community in Niger. Any security force response to such attacks is likely to remain poor. NGOs and resources companies operating in rural areas of the country are advised to conduct careful and deliberate risk assessments on all of their operations and should ensure that controls are in place, with the knowledge that government forces relief may be unreliable.

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