

# Russians Advisors Arrive in Niger While the Masses Demand the Immediate Withdrawal of Pentagon Troops

Thousands gather in Niamey calling for the departure of United States drone stations and soldiers.

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*On Saturday April 13, thousands of people gathered in Niamey, the capital of the West African state of Niger, demanding the dismantling of the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) operations inside their country.*

This demonstration represents an ongoing struggle in several former French colonies to end the economic, political, cultural and military ties to the imperialist powers.

In addition to the negative influence from Paris, the U.S. has joined their counterparts in France deploying thousands of military personnel under the guise of fighting "Islamic terrorism". AFRICOM was launched in February 2008 from its base in Stuttgart, Germany.

Over the course of the last sixteen years, the Pentagon has built a military base in the Horn of Africa state of Djibouti, also a former French colony. They share this installation, known as Camp Lemonnier, with thousands of French troops.

**Other outposts for AFRICOM operations have included Mali, Guinea-Conakry and Burkina Faso which have been struck by military coups since 2020. In Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, the new military-led governments have formed an Alliance of Sahel States.** The purpose of the grouping is to enhance the security of these states independent of French and U.S. domination as well as to counter the now lifted sanctions imposed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

ECOWAS, a fifteen-member regional alliance of governments, led now by newly elected

**President Bola Tinubu** of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, had been persuaded by the U.S. and France to take a hostile position towards the overthrow of the western-backed administration of **Mohamed Bazoum** in Niger last July 26. The National Council for the Safeguard of the Homeland (CNSP) was formed with widespread support from broad sections of the Nigerien population.

During the change of governments in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, people raised their national flags alongside that of the Russian Federation. Since the military seizure of power within these states, military advisors from Moscow have been requested.

Since the Pentagon-NATO-led counter-revolution in Libya during 2011, the first full-scale operation of AFRICOM, rebel groups have surfaced causing tremendous damage to the stability of various states throughout West and North Africa. These rebel formations operate in a similar fashion as al-Qaeda and the so-called "Islamic State." Both of these designated "terrorist" organizations have their origins within U.S. intelligence in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria.

Although these entities claim they are motivated by Islam in carrying out their attacks, nearly all of their operations target civilians, many of whom are Muslims. The existence of these groupings and the violence they perpetuate provides a rationale for the continued presence of imperialism within their territories.

The propaganda and psychological warfare of France and the U.S. seeks to make the case for the indispensability of their assistance and occupation in order to fight terrorism. Nonetheless, since the formation of AFRICOM and the escalation of French interventions, the overall security situation in the Sahel and other regions of the African continent has worsened.

## **The Arrival of Russian Advisors in Niger**

Therefore, following a pattern established by other Sahel states, the CNSP government in Niger has requested security assistance from the Russian Federation. Military advisors began to arrive in the uranium-rich state on April 12.

[A report published by Al Mayadeen Television](#) based upon an article from Sputnik news agency says:

"Reporting from the scene, a correspondent from Sputnik revealed that Russian experts have landed in Niger in an effort to train local forces on combating terrorism.... The landing of Russia's IL-76 aircraft in Niamey was aired by Nigerien state broadcaster RTN which stated that this update came after a conversation between Russian President Vladimir Putin and chairman of Niger's National Council for the Safeguard of the Homeland, Abdourahmane Tchiani. The broadcaster announced that the arrival entails the installation of an air defense system through which Russian instructors will provide quality training for the Nigerien military staff."

These developments are creating much consternation on the part of the State Department and Pentagon based in Washington. During March, the U.S. dispatched a high-level delegation from the administration of President Joe Biden to Niamey in a failed attempt to salvage a military agreement allowing AFRICOM to remain in Niger.

Even after the CNSP leadership declared the military pact with the U.S. “null and void”, the Biden administration officials from the Defense and State Departments continued to speak publicly as if there was still the potential for remaining in Niger. The official position of the Biden administration is that they have not been formally ordered to leave the country.

However, it has been quite obvious for many months that the CNSP government views the U.S. in the same vein as France. The steadfast character of Niger and the two other Alliance States has not only staved off the intervention of an imperialist-backed ECOWAS invasion it indeed prompted Tinubu and his colleagues to invite these three governments to return to the regional grouping. All of the sanctions imposed by ECOWAS have been lifted against the CNSP in Niamey.

By setting a standard for anti-French and anti-U.S. postures in these underdeveloped states, the pro-western regimes in West Africa are concerned that the same pattern could unfold in their countries. Even in Nigeria, which is the most populated state on the continent with ostensibly the largest national economy, problems of hyper-inflation and foreign debt are hampering the capacity of the Tinubu administration to provide a decent standard of living for the majority of people inside the country.

## **CNSP Administration Bolstered by Mass Support for Independent Foreign Policy**

Since the July 26 seizure of power by the CNSP, there have been demonstrations of hundreds of thousands of people in Niger compelling the administration to reverse the path of neo-colonial dominance by France and the U.S. During the April 13 rallies and marches, people held signs telling AFRICOM to leave the historic city of Agadez and return to Washington.



French and U.S. involvement in post-colonial African states have never been beneficial to the majority of the people who are workers, farmers and youth. Irrespective of the vast

deposits of strategic resources such as gold, diamonds, uranium, iron ore, bauxite, petroleum, natural gas and other assets such as waterways, agricultural potential and youthful labor forces which constitute in many states the overwhelming majority of people, the annual household incomes are some of the lowest in the world. The imperialists are committed to the maintenance of regimes which serve the interests of the ruling classes within the western industrial states.

In acknowledging the withdrawal of French troops from Niger, which was completed in March, the same above-mentioned article from Al Mayadeen noted:

“Presently, the U.S. maintains a deployment of 648 troops across two bases in the former French colony. In 2017, the Nigerien government granted approval for the deployment of armed U.S. drones to target militants as part of the Sahel counterterrorism mission. Despite participating with France and other Western allies in withholding aid to Niamey in response to Bazoum’s ouster, Washington has asserted that disengagement from Niger is not a viable option. As of September, Germany had approximately 110 soldiers stationed in the uranium-rich nation, while Italy had around 300 soldiers deployed there prior to the coup”.

**Therefore, the declining influence of the Pentagon and international finance capital poses a dilemma for Washington, Paris and its NATO allies.** In the 21st century, the People’s Republic of China has established partnerships with African Union (AU) member-states which have proved far more resilient than what is being offered by the imperialist centers.

Since the beginning of the Russian Special Military Operation in Ukraine more than two years ago, many AU member-states have exercised their independence in rejecting the overtures from the Biden administration to line up behind the efforts aimed at bringing down the government of President Vladimir Putin. The AU policy on Ukraine is that the war has negatively impacted food security on the continent.

In regard to the situation in Palestine, there is overwhelming support among the African masses for an immediate ceasefire and the recognition of an independent state. The Republic of South Africa, led by the African National Congress (ANC), has taken the Zionist regime to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) even though the legal challenge charging Israeli genocide against the Palestinians has been ridiculed by the Biden administration, saying it has no merit.

All of these factors are shaping the general mood within many African states not limited to the Sahel. With the U.S. pursuing its same unilateral foreign policy, there will surely be a continuing shift away from the forced subservience to Washington and Wall Street.

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