



Thousands of protesters gathered to support the putschist soldiers in the capital Niamey, Niger, on August 3, 2023. The sign reads 'France must go'.  
Image: Mahamadou Hamidou/Renews

### The African Uprising Against Colonialism and Exploitation

Despite being marginalized in global equations, Africa today seeks to establish its position on the world political stage. The coups also tell the tale of a collective will in Africa against the new French colonialism and its allies. Africa, despite its rich resources and strategic mineral reserves crucial for modern technologies, has been subjected to exploitation and poverty, aimed at depriving its people of progress and plundering its natural resources through increasing influence. For instance, Gabon, a country rich in major oil wells and vast uranium reserves for nuclear fuel production in France, finds its cities in darkness.

The common denominator in these coups has largely been anti-French sentiments and a quest for liberation from Western imperialism. After coming to power, coup leaders, especially in Niger, canceled military agreements with France, cut off radio and television networks, demanded the departure of this country's diplomats, and even legally ordered the expulsion of the ambassador by the country's supreme court.

Africans are striving in every way to present themselves as independent decision-makers in the global governance system, and what are called coups are part of these efforts. Coups may be named after military actions, but in essence, they are movements based on the desire for freedom to cast aside governments linked to France and with the support of the people. Supportive marches for coups and anti-French slogans validate this. Therefore, these military actions can be assessed as protests against colonialism and efforts to regain the independence of these countries.

### Power Blocs as Threats to the West and Future Scenarios

What concerns Western-influenced countries like France right now is not just the shortening of their reach; it's the direct effects that the domino effect of coups has on the perception of other African societies and the motivation it will instill in them. Hence, France, along with its allies, is working to prevent the spread of coups to other countries.

The first threatening effect of these coups is that the performance of colonial governments involved in coups makes their intentions more transparent than before, leading to greater enlightenment among the African public. Therefore, Paris is trying to address the issue diplomatically. Secondly, the support of other countries, especially in the military domain, for the coup in Niger, indicates the increasing growth of coups, which can form powerful anti-Western blocs in Africa. This, alongside the coup development, can pose a serious threat to the West, especially since the fear is that blocking their influence might facilitate the infiltration of rival countries. Countries like Burkina Faso and Guinea have announced that they will face any military intervention by ECOWAS alongside Niger. Furthermore, influential countries like Algeria and Mali are also seriously opposed to military intervention.

The scenarios currently pursued by the West, primarily France, focus on military intervention under the umbrella of ECOWAS, which they are currently seriously considering. This is because a country like France, despite having thousands of military personnel in Niger, cannot overtly carry out military intervention due to a change in its intervention strategy, so they act indirectly by supporting military interventions. In this context, ECOWAS, a group of African countries, can prevent any future coups in Africa, but

the problem is that military support from other countries such as Guinea and Burkina Faso to Niger can ignite a war with unpredictable dimensions, leading to detrimental outcomes for the West, especially as these disputes may trigger other coups in the midst of them, with rival actors playing roles, ultimately leading to proxy wars, especially as the Ukraine war has become an unfinished conflict, and the West is now entangled in it. On the other hand, some countries like the United States are trying to place the coup path in their plans to stabilize governments, aiming to exploit the power vacuum. Some time ago, the American media attempted to cast doubt on the anti-colonial intentions of key figures in the Niger coup who had spent time studying in the United States, creating uncertainties.

Observing transcontinental political developments in Africa also indicates that this continent is on the path to aligning itself with a multipolar world and distancing itself from Western hegemony. The lack of alignment with the United States and NATO in the Ukraine war, which even led to the presentation of a peace plan, as well as the presence of representatives from about 40 African countries such as Mali and Guinea at the Russia-Africa summit, signifies this change. Therefore, the United States is trying to reduce the created space and strengthen its influence by establishing its strategy based on moderating interactions with Africa. To the extent that even Joe Biden, the President, introduced the "Africa-America Partnership" as a new approach of the United States.

In conclusion, the recent coups send a clear message about the end of Western hegemony in French colonies, which, with stability, can create a strategic shift for this continent alongside other developments.

# Why Africans hate France?

By Syed Ali Hassan  
Iran Daily's correspondent in Pakistan

In July 2023, General Abdourahmane Tchiani overthrew the government of President Bazoum of Niger on the grounds that he was weakening the army in alliance with France.

The president has been accused of conspiring with foreign governments against the United States' military and any such attempt would lead to the riots he was supposed to prevent. Economically, it is a uranium-rich country and produces seven percent of the world's supply.

Despite this, the people of Niger are considered among the poorest people in the world, while the United States and France have established military bases in this country as a basis for the war against terrorism.

France has not recognized this military coup and plans to overthrow the new military government through continued pressure and intervention. Niger's military rulers have revoked the diplomatic immunity of the French ambassador and ordered police to expel him from the African country. In the latest message sent by Niger's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, French Ambassador Sylvain Ette does not enjoy the privileges and immunities attached to his status as a member of the diplomatic staff of the embassy.

The document also states that diplomatic cards and visas of the ambassador's family have been revoked.

The army has said in a recent statement that the visas of the ambassador and his family have been cancelled. The growing influence of Russia and China is giving the former imperial colonies of African countries a chance to rise from poverty and independence. But at this point, the African people have to find their own way forward because the imperialist and arrogant forces are only looking out for their own interests.

African people have to take the path of hard work and education to prog-

ress towards development. Niger's new military rulers say the ambassador refused to meet General Tchiani, who says that the behavior of the French government is against the interests of Niger.

President Emmanuel Macron has said that France's ambassador to Niger has been ordered to stay in the rebellion-hit African country, which could lead to further escalation of the conflict.

In early August, the military rulers scrapped several of Niger's cooperation agreements with France to end the French military presence across the country and the resulting looting of the impoverished nation's resources. France has between 1,000 and 1,500 troops in Niger, claiming to be fighting the so-called war on terrorism.

Niger's neighboring countries Burkina Faso and Mali have already expelled French troops, and now Niger has also ordered foreign troops to leave the country. The negative sentiments against France in Niger and other African countries are due to historical, political and social factors. The exploitation of resources, forced labor, imposition of French culture and language during the French colonial period on Niger are deep wounds left by colonialism.

Not only Niger, the hatred of the people of other African countries against France has increased while Russia and China continue to support them.

Niger is a landlocked country in West Africa. In 2021, President Mohamed Bazoum took office after winning the presidential election earlier in the year. Niger has experienced periods of political instability and military coups in its history, but in recent years it has made progress towards democratic governance.

The impression of French imperialism on the various governments of the French colonial country has been prominent and French interests have been dominant in the policies of Niger governments. Consequently, there has been a distance between the people and the governments.

