

# Niger: From the Depletion of the State to the Struggle Over Who Will Reshape It!

(Translated)

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Niger has entered a new phase of security and political turmoil following a military mutiny that shook the capital, Niamey, in the early hours of Saturday, August 29, 2026. This marks the most serious internal challenge facing General Abdourahamane Tiani's regime since he assumed power in July 2023.

According to an official statement from the Ministry of Defense, the uprising began after midnight when a group of soldiers detained fellow troops at Air Base 101, located within the Diori Hamani International Airport complex, before opening fire on sensitive sites across the capital. The minister stated that defense and security forces intervened swiftly and began gradually regaining control of the targeted locations. ([Al Jazeera, August 29, 2026](#))

However, what unfolded was not merely a limited mutiny within a barracks; heavy gunfire and explosions were heard in the vicinity of the airport, the airbase, and the presidential palace as mutineers attempted to approach seats of power in the heart of the capital. The unrest also extended to the national television headquarters, where broadcasts were interrupted for several hours, a move carrying clear political significance, given that seizing state media is a crucial element of any coup attempt aimed at taking control of the capital and state institutions. ([Al-Khaleej Newspaper, August 30, 2026](#))

Reports indicated that the Presidential Guard remained loyal to Abdourahamane Tiani and succeeded in repelling the mutineers from the palace. Authorities later announced that the mutiny had been contained, control over the targeted sites regained, and the situation normalized; operations at Diori Hamani Airport also resumed. Regarding casualties, the authorities did not release a final, detailed figure, though state television reported the deaths and arrests of dozens of soldiers.

However, the significance of these events lies not merely in the scale of the losses, but in the nature of the targets affected by the mutiny. Air Base 101, Niamey Airport, the Presidential Palace, and the national television station represent the country's centers of military, political, and media power.

Even more telling is the fact that Air Base 101 itself has been targeted twice this year. The first attack occurred in January, when the "Islamic State in the Sahel (IS-Sahel)" struck the base; authorities reported killing twenty attackers and noted that four soldiers were wounded. The second attack took place in June, claimed by the Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM); according to the Ministry of Defense, this incident resulted in the deaths of 11 security personnel and two civilians, while twenty-two attackers were killed and approximately twenty suspects were arrested. The base's importance stems from its location within Diori Hamani Airport and its role in the army's aerial and reconnaissance capabilities, including the use of drones. Consequently, its shift from being a target for armed groups to a theater of internal mutiny serves as a potent symbol of the fragility facing the security apparatus under the regime of Abdourahamane Tiani.

Today, this pro-American regime finds itself facing a diverse array of forces, ranging from armed groups to mutinous soldiers, that have effectively converged in targeting the very same site, a location bearing significant military and sovereign symbolism historically linked to French influence in Niger. Thus, what was once a key state asset, intended to serve as a bulwark protecting the capital and securing its airspace, has transformed into a glaring vulnerability; the disparate nature of the authorities' adversaries did not prevent their interests from aligning to strike a center of state power, turning a symbol of security control into an emblem of the regime's fragility.

The significance of the mutiny extends beyond the base itself, bringing back to the fore the paradox that has dogged Abdourahamane Tiani since he assumed power. In July 2023, the general ousted elected President Mohamed Bazoum, accusing him of undermining national security, with the administration's failure to confront armed groups and ensure safety serving as a primary justification for the coup. Yet, the regime now faces the same problem, albeit in a far more perilous form: the deteriorating security situation is no longer merely draining the army in its fight against external foes

but is beginning to erode its internal cohesion, with reports indicating that frustration over persistent losses and military pressure fueled the soldiers' mutiny.

Thus, the crisis has shifted from a conflict between the state and armed groups to a crisis of confidence within the army itself, representing a perilous process of attrition for the military establishment. While the authorities succeeded in containing the mutiny and retaking the targeted sites, the mere fact that a group of soldiers managed to reach such sensitive locations reveals that apparent state control does not necessarily equate to internal cohesion within the military.

The situation is further complicated by the geopolitical shift Niger has undergone since the 2023 coup. The military authorities severed ties with France and expelled its forces, then made a similar move regarding the United States, only to pivot toward Russia with a US "green light." They also formed an alliance with Mali and Burkina Faso, the Alliance of Sahel States, at US behest. During the recent mutiny, they turned to Russia for support, as Russian forces were present at the targeted base.

In contrast, the Nigerien authorities had previously accused France of attempting to destabilize the country, collaborating with armed groups, and violating its airspace following an attack in January, accusations Paris denied. Yet, the issue has evolved beyond a mere conflict between a military regime and armed groups; it is now tied to a redistribution of influence within a country that has redrawn its alliances under the banner of purging Western influence, even as other powers, including Türkiye, begin to expand their presence and interests there.

From this perspective, the successive blows striking the regime can be viewed as factors reshaping the balance of power, going well beyond mere attempts to exhaust or weaken it. Armed groups are draining it from the outside, while military mutiny has exposed its internal fragility. Meanwhile, Russia's intervention reinforces the regime's temporary reliance on Moscow and provides the United States with a pretext to reshuffle the deck and reassign roles, particularly given that the U.S. has held the reins of power since well before the 2023 coup. At the same time, any further weakening of the authorities opens the door for other powers to reposition themselves and influence the country's future.

Türkiye holds particular significance in this equation, having developed an increasingly prominent presence in Niger over recent years, especially in the defense, intelligence, and energy sectors, and viewing the country as a gateway to expanding its influence across West Africa ([Al Jazeera, July 28, 2024](#)). Consequently, the arena is no longer defined by a Western-Russian duopoly, as the pro-American regime claims; rather, it has opened up to broader competition involving powers that challenge European influence, most notably the United States, Türkiye, and Russia.

As for Russia, implicated in the bloodshed of Muslims across the African Sahel through its Africa Corps, it acts as nothing more than a hired assassin for the U.S., the ultimate embodiment of disbelief and criminality. It is driven to undertake this dirty mission by the lure of international gains promised by the U.S.

Thus, the failure of the mutiny does not signify the end of the crisis; rather, it may mark the beginning of a new phase in the struggle over Niger's future. While the authorities have regained control of the targeted sites, they have emerged more dependent on Russian support. Meanwhile, pressure from armed groups and restlessness within the military establishment persist, all amidst a drone war that has demonstrated its capacity to exhaust conventional armies and erode their traditional superiority.

More dangerously, the continued attrition of the state could alter the nature of the conflict. Armed groups, particularly the Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM), which is influenced by the Taliban model, might evolve from a force that merely drains state resources into a party that helps shape the country's future, as demonstrated by the Syrian experience. Here, another risk emerges: that the US might exploit this shift to cultivate forces that adopt Islamic rhetoric yet ultimately accept the terms and interests of the international order, including normalization with the Jewish entity. Consequently, the impending conflict may not merely be about who rules this Muslim country, but rather about what form of Islam and what type of state will rise from the ruins of this attrition, should the US decide to abandon its agent, Abdourahamane Tiani.

We ask Allah (swt) to turn back the plots of the schemers and to hasten for the Muslims a Khilafah Rashidah (rightly guided Caliphate) on the Method of the Prophethood, one that deeply unsettles the disbelieving colonialists. Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ﴾ **“And victory comes only from Allah—the Almighty, All-Wise—”** [TMQ Surah Aali Imran:126].