

Answer to Question

Ramifications and Repercussions of the Niger Coup

(Translated)

Question

The coup leaders in Niger announced on Sunday evening, 13/08/2023, (that they intend to prosecute the ousted President Mohamed Bazoum on charges of "high treason" and "undermining the security of the country".... In their statement, the coup leaders renewed their condemnation of the sanctions imposed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) ... Al Jazeera 8/14/2023). General Abdourahamane Tchiani, commander of the Presidential Guard in Niger, announced on his country's official television on 7/28/2023 that he had assigned himself as the transitional president of the country, this came two days after his soldiers in the presidential guard, who called themselves the "National Council for the Protection of the Homeland," announced the overthrow of the country's president, Mohamed Bazoum, and besieged him in his residence. Was this coup process an internal matter related to the conflict between the influential forces in the country, or were there external forces standing behind it and that the process was part of the international conflict? Then how is it understood that he was accused of treason, while he was not arrested, rather, he is still contacting officials abroad?

Answer:

To make matters clear, we present the following:

First: The background to the coup and those who were behind it:

1. Surrounded by nine military men in military uniform, Colonel Major Amadou Abderrahman declared: ["We, the Defense and Security Forces, gathered in the National Council for the Protection of the Homeland, have decided to put an end to the regime that you know. This comes as a result of the continued deterioration of the security situation and the economic and social mismanagement." He asked "all external partners not to interfere" and declared a "curfew from ten in the evening until five in the morning on the entire territory until further notice." (France Press 26/07/2023)].

2. The next day, the army announced its support for the coup, after being slow on the first day. On 27/07/2023, the official French site, France 24, quoted the army in Niger declaring its allegiance to the defense and security forces that overthrew President Mohamed Bazoum, "in order to avoid fighting within the ranks of the armed forces." The site added: A statement signed by the Army Chief of Staff, Major General Abdou Sidikou Issa spoke of "support for the military's announcement to put an end to the Bazoum regime." It seems that the army leadership, after delaying for a day, could not thwart the coup, so it supported it.

3. Alhurra Agency stated on 29/07/2023 that "Tchiani was loyal to former President Mahamadou Issoufou, who appointed him as commander of the Presidential Guard during his two terms of office from 2011-2021." The French magazine Jeune Afrique, which specializes in African affairs, stated that "the Presidential Guard was of great interest by President Mahamadou Issoufou, who granted it all the powers and capabilities to prevent the occurrence of coups." It added, "It is said that General Tchiani is a cruel man, and the army fears him." It is understood from this that the former president was afraid of the army, as it was controlled by the loyalists of France, which established it since it gave formal independence to Niger. And the failed coup attempt was against Issoufou in 2015, and it is possible that there were followers of France in the army who made the attempt, and that is why he promoted Abdourahamane Tchiani and enhanced his power to be his guard against the coups carried out by agents of France for various reasons.

4. There have been four successful coups and several failed coup attempts in Niger since declaring its formal independence from France in 1960, and the last successful one before the last coup was in 2010 by soldiers against President Mamadou Tandja an agent of France, and they

announced the formation of the Supreme Council for the Restoration of Democracy and they appointed a president named General Salou Djibo, commander of the support unit in the capital, Niamey. We had issued an Answer to a Question related to that coup on 20/02/2010, in which we said: "The reference of the American statements to the extension incident is to place actual responsibility on the ousted President Tandja and justify the coup, the US State Department spokesperson did not call for the reinstatement of the president, nor for dialogue between the putschists and the ousted president, but rather called for the organization of new elections and the formation of a new government. This confirms that America was behind the coup... But the French influence in all its forms remained in it and there are still about 1,500 French people residing in it to secure France's nuclear interests, as it is the third country in the world in the production of uranium. That is why it is the place of the Americans' aspirations to control it and remove French influence from it, like the rest of Africa, most of which are Islamic countries, and rich in many natural resources, which are sources of raw materials of all kinds, as well as sources of energy. That's why, it was the subject of conflict between the Western Europeans and Americans, the greedy colonialists."

5. Indeed, shortly after that coup, for several months, elections were held according to American demands in 2011, in which the head of the Nigerien Party for Democracy and Socialism, Mahamadou Issoufou, won and became officially president of the country since April 7, 2011. After that, he resigned from the leadership of the party, and it was taken over by Mohamed Bazoum, who is one of the founders of this party since 1990, along with Issoufou and his close ally. Issoufou appointed him Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, and then appointed him Minister of State at the Presidency of the Republic since 2015. When Issoufou was elected to a second term, Bazoum was appointed Minister of State for Internal Affairs, Public Security and Decentralization. Issoufou and Mohamed Bazoum were opponents of President Mamadou Tandja, and when Mamadou Tandja was overthrown in a military coup on August 18, 2010, Issoufou and Bazoum expressed their support for the coup. It is understood from all this that Issoufou and Bazoum are loyal to America.

6. When Mahamadou Issoufou assumed the presidency in the elections for two terms between 2011-2021, he showed his closeness to America, allowing it to establish two important military bases in Niger, one in 2014 and the other in 2018, in which more than a thousand American soldiers and many drones are stationed. On September 13, 2018, the Noon Post website published a translated article about the American bases in Niger, in which it quoted statements by former President Mahamadou Issoufou in an interview with The Guardian Newspaper, in which he said, "I don't like the term 'foreign forces' – they're friendly forces, who will leave as soon as we want them to... They're here at our request, and once the need for them disappears, they'll leave." Nevertheless, Issoufou maintained his country's relations and alliances with France and did not fire the French forces. Rather, he participated in the Coalition of the Sahel, which was founded and led by France under the pretext of fighting terrorism in 2014. It appears that he cannot easily uproot the French influence from Niger, so he acquiesced in order to strengthen the American influence, which he introduced into the country under the pretext of fighting terrorism.

7. And when Mohamed Bazoum was elected on 21/02/2021 and officially assumed the presidency on 01/04/2021 to succeed Muhammad Issoufou and with his support, he pledged to follow up on the policy of Mahamadou Issoufou. Two days before his inauguration, a coup attempt against him was thwarted, and the commander of the Presidential Guard, General Abdourahamane Tchiani, loyal to Mahamadou Issoufou, played an important role in thwarting it. Bazoum remained endorsing the American presence and worked to strengthen relations with America. The Arabi21 page quoted the American website, The Intercept, on 27/07/2023, in a report by the site about the American presence in Niger, a saying by Mohamed Bazoum to the US Secretary of State, Blinken, "It is incumbent upon us to demonstrate... that we can actually deliver results." So, the policy of Mohamed Bazoum, like his predecessor and friend Mahamadou Issoufou, appears to be pro-American and not to be in hostile with France and its existence. As the political and military milieu in general tend to favor France, the colonial state of the country, directly, previously, for a period of 60 years, and later indirectly, for a period of close to it.

Second: From the foregoing, it appears that Mahamadou Issoufou and Bazoum are loyal to America, and that the commander of the presidential guard, Abd al-Rahman, was a close friend of Issoufou and endowed him with great powers, and that he had an important role in thwarting the coup attempt against Bazoum two days before he took office. This means that the three are on the same side. So why this coup? An examination of the facts and background of what happened reveals the following:

1. As we said, the head of the guard was Issoufou trust and closeness, and he defended him against the coups of France's agents in the army. On 28/07/2023, the media, including the Middle East, reported news related to the coup leader, General Abdourahamane Tchiani and stated that he had joined the ranks of the army and held the rank of officer before assuming duties at home, to lead some military units but he emerged strongly after former President Mohamed Issoufou came to power in 2011, who made him a man of confidence. During Issoufou's rule, Tchiani benefited from rapid promotions in the military ranks where he became general without taking the usual path in the military organization. Issoufou appointed him at the head of the National Guard in 2015, which are the elite units charged with protecting the president, especially after the coup attempt against Issoufou.

2. Two days before Mahamadou Bazoum came to power and before he was officially appointed president of the country and before taking the constitutional oath, he was subjected to a failed coup attempt in 2021 which pushed him to make extensive adjustments in the Presidential Guard Battalion, but he kept General Tchiani at the head of the battalion based on the recommendation of Issoufou, who had just handed over power. However, he remained closely linked to Bazoum. Issoufou is considered the man with the first word within the ruling party and brought his son into the government as Minister of Energy and Minerals.

3. Sources say that those close to Bazoum were warning him of Tchiani and advising him to remove him from the leadership of the Presidential Guard Battalion in order to consolidate his rule, but he kept him based on the recommendation of his friend, the former president. However, recently, political activists circulated on social media about Bazoum's intention to dismiss him and make adjustments to the head of the military establishment and the National Guard. It is said that he intended to dismiss the son of the former president from the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, and all of this caused a cooling of relations between him and the former president. Rather, it led to the aggravation of Issoufou and his close friend Tchiani, and then the popular base of Bazoum weakened, and a number of ruling party leaders became restless with his rise because he does not belong to the Hausa tribe, which represents half of the country, but of Arab origins. This is evidenced by the poor vote for him in the capital, as well as the attempt to overthrow him two days before his inauguration. He was not welcome from other ethnicities, nor from some members of the army.

4. Thus, General Abdourahamane Tchiani was the commander of the presidential guard during the reign of former President Mohamed Issoufou, but the current president was considering to replace him. Al-Jazeera published on its website on 28/07/2023, quoting the Mediapart report: (General Abdourahamane Tchiani was the commander of the presidential guard during the reign of former President Mahamadou Issoufou, but the current president was considering to replace him, for what is known among Nigerian army experts is his great loyalty to his former chief. Political analyst Musa Aksar told the website that everything indicated that Mahamadou Issoufou wanted to return to power. He wanted to control oil, and he has a lot of shares in many companies, according to an investigative report that indicated embezzlement in the Nigerian Ministry of Defense under the former president.). This statement confirms that the coup has internal motives, as if it were the main reason for the coup. That is why, when the coup took place, there were strong responses condemning the coup by America, France, the European Union, Britain, Russia, and regional powers. As if everyone was surprised by that!!

5. Thus, America and the United Nations condemned the coup... France and the European Union condemned the coup... The Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS) also condemned the coup... Even Britain, which has no influence in Niger, condemned the coup! Moreover, Russia, which does not have a presence there, nor does Wagner condemned it, and it did not realize that raising its flag in the movements was to mislead! White House Press Secretary

Karine Jean-Pierre said, "The United States has not seen any credible indications of involvement by Russia, or the Russian Wagner Group private army, in a coup in the African nation of Niger." (Reuters, 27/07/2023).

Third: Conclusion:

1. It is most likely that this coup has internal motives, as it is a struggle or skirmish between America's agents: Issoufou and General Abdourahamane Tchiani on one side and Bazoum on the other. When the first two learned that Bazoum intended to remove Issoufou and the chief of the guard, they arranged this coup move, but they left room for argument and response because they are all American agents, and then they delayed arresting Bazoum and imprisoning him. Then, days after the coup, they accused him of treason, while he is still in his residence, sometimes they harass him and at other times they allow a doctor, medicine, and food to reach him, and at the same time America and its ambassador in Niamey are moving to find a way out of this matter but this coup remains among America's agents.

2. The most affected by this coup is France, as the putschists are loyal to America, and in order to give legitimacy to their coup, they took advantage of France's confused and convulsive stances, and the people's hatred of the old colonizer and its exploitation of their country and its theft of their country's wealth without leaving them anything not even a little. Thousands of people demonstrated against France in front of the French embassy on 30/07/2023 and raised slogans condemning France.

3. America will work to manage the crisis there and employ it against French influence and strengthen its influence, whether that is:

- By returning Bazoum if possible, even if this matter is not easy, and that returning him is also in its interest because he is one of its agents, even if he goes along with France, as public opinion is against the coup and calls for his return because he was legally elected.

- Or by pressuring the putschists to return to end the transitional period and hold new elections, and former President Issoufou might nominate himself to return again, as the putschists are from his men and from his tribe, to preserve his influence and the influence of his family and cover up their thefts and embezzlements. Especially since he is an American agent and has wide influence in his party and in his tribe, which constitutes half of the country.

4. Thus, such an Islamic country, which is considered one of the richest countries in terms of wealth, but one of the poorest countries, because of the pro-colonial agents and their provision of services to this or that colonizer in return for chairs and obtaining public money, not thinking about the interest of their country and how to liberate it and its revival, as they lack any ideology even if they are from the sons of Muslims, and people follow these oppressors without awareness and understanding because of the intellectual delay and the tyranny of ignorant fanaticism. This does not create peace, safety or security, but rather the rule by Islam, the Khilafah Rashidah (rightly guided Caliphate), the glory of Islam and the Muslims, and the path of their strength, resistance and revival, especially that Niger is a Muslim country and its people are Muslims. This is the Truth, ﴿فَمَاذَا بَعْدَ الْحَقِّ إِلَّا الضَّلَالُ فَأَنَّى تُصْرَفُونَ﴾ **“So what is beyond the truth except falsehood? How can you then be turned away?”** [Yunus 10:32].

28 Muharram 1445 AH

15 August 2023 CE