

Protesters in Niger threaten French base if troops don't leave

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Niamey, August 26 (RHC)-- Hundreds of protesters in Niger have held a demonstration in front of the French military base in the capital Niamey and threatened to storm the facility if French troops don't leave the West African nation within a week.

The demonstration was held on Friday, hours after Niger ordered the French ambassador to leave the country within 48 hours over France's meddling in the internal affairs of its former African colony.

Niger's Army generals overthrew the country's Paris-allied President Mohamed Bazoum on July 26. Ever since, they have accused France of seeking to intervene militarily in the West African country to reinstate Bazoum.

The military takeover in Niger came amid a growing wave of anti-French sentiment, with the people of Niger accusing the European country of interfering in their affairs.

Niger has strategic significance as one of the world's biggest producers of uranium and French, American and other foreign troops are deployed in the country under the pretext of fighting militancy in the region.

Earlier this month, thousands of anti-West protesters took to the streets to protest against plans by West African nations to deploy a military force to the country.

The protesters surrounded the French military base in Niger, protesting against years of military intervention by the European country in the West African nation. Protesters rallied near the army base on the outskirts of the capital Niamey on August 11, shouting, "Down with France, down with ECOWAS."

The Niger Army has accused the African nation's former colonizer France of being the force behind ECOWAS' determination to restore Bazoum to office to serve the West's interests.

France was a colonial power in West Africa until 1960. Since independence, the European country has maintained trade relations and a military presence in the region.

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