

Germany pulls out military forces from Niger

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Berlin, September 2 (RHC)-- Germany has pulled out its military forces from the country of Niger in the restive Sahel region of Africa.

At a signing ceremony over the weekend in Niamey, representatives from both the Nigerian and German Defense Ministries signed an agreement finalizing "the withdrawal of German troops and equipment from

Niger.”

Nigerien and German officials read out joint statements announcing the completion of the withdrawal.

“This withdrawal does not mark the end of military cooperation between Niger and Germany, in fact the two sides are committed to maintaining military relations,” they said.

The Bundeswehr, Germany’s army, said it removed the last 60 soldiers and equipment from Niger. For eight years German soldiers had served in the international MINUSMA (United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali).

MINUSMA was established under the auspices of the United Nations on April 25, 2013 after the Tuareg rebellion of 2012. The UN peacekeeping mission was terminated on June 30, 2023.

Germany’s airbase in Niamey, which served as a logistics center for the UN mission, had been staffed by up to 120 men and women at any one time. Since February 2016, some 3,200 German soldiers deployed to the airbase served in the region.

Last year on July 26, the country witnessed a coup d’état widely supported by Malians, resulting in the removal and detention of pro-West president Mohamed Bazoum.

The Bundeswehr initially announced its decision to withdraw German troops in July, noting that it had no cooperative working agreement with the new military government.

In May, Germany and Niger reached an interim agreement allowing the German military to continue operating its airbase in the capital Niamey until the end of August.

Negotiations between the two sides to extend that agreement broke down, notably because the German military would no longer benefit from immunity from prosecution. The withdrawal of German troops from Niger followed the pullout of troops from the United States and France, the former colonial power.

Niger’s coup was one of several in the region in the recent past as countries cut their traditional colonial ties linking them to Western imperialism.

[SOURCE: PRESS TV]

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