

Burkina Faso Coup Soldiers Ordered to 'Lay Down Arms'



Ouagadougou, September 22 (RHC)-- Burkina Faso's military chiefs have ordered members of the presidential guard, which staged a coup against the country's interim government last week, to lay down their arms. In a statement on Monday, the military chiefs called on the coup soldiers to hand in their arms to barracks in exchange for safety guarantees.

They said the West African nation's armed forces were heading to the capital Ouagadougou from the provinces "to disarm the presidential guard without bloodshed."

The coup was fomented by General Gilbert Diendere, a close ally of former President Blaise Compaore, who himself was ousted last year amid angry anti-government protests against his attempts to change the constitution and seek another term in office.

The coup leaders have announced the dissolution of the interim government and parliament, which had been tasked with leading the political transition in the African nation after Compaore's ouster in 2014.

General Diendere was named Burkina Faso's new leader despite condemnations from the West and the African Union (AU).

Kafando's interim government had set October 11 for presidential and legislative elections, which would be the first in the landlocked West African nation since Compaore was forced out of power last year

At least 10 people have been killed and dozens more injured in a series of violent clashes since Thursday's coup.

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