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Niger: UN chief demands president's immediate and unconditional release



UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe | President Mohamed Bazoum of Niger chairs a Security Council meeting on maintenance of international peace and security in September 2021.

27 July 2023 | [Peace and Security](#)

The [UN Secretary-General](#) on Thursday demanded the release of Niger's President Mohamed Bazoum "immediately and

unconditionally”, as military officers continue to hold the democratically-elected leader captive after declaring a coup.

A group of officers from all branches of the military made the television announcement late on Wednesday, after members of the president’s own guard detained him inside his offices in the capital Niamey.

According to news reports, the attempted coup does not have the backing of the entire military, but the head of the army has announced that he supports the move.

End assault against democracy

Addressing reporters at UN Headquarters in New York on Thursday morning, António Guterres once again **strongly condemned** the attempted military takeover and the “assault against the democratically-elected government”.

The UN supports the efforts of the West African bloc ECOWAS and the African Union (AU) “to restore democracy.”

President Bazoum issued a defiant tweet of his own on Thursday, saying that “the hard-won achievements will be safeguarded. All Nigeriens who love democracy and freedom will see to it.”

Mr. Guterres said he had spoken to the president on Wednesday to express the UN’s full solidarity.

Addressing the coup plotters in Niger directly to camera, the UN chief demanded they stop obstructing democratic governance, and respect the rule of law.

‘Disturbing trend’

After coups in neighbouring Mali and Burkina Faso in recent years, provoked by the rise of jihadist terrorist groups across the entire Sahel region, the Secretary-General noted that the events in Niamey were part of “a disturbing trend”.

“Successive unconstitutional changes of government are having terrible

effects on the development and lives of civilian populations. This is particularly glaring in countries already affected by conflict, violent extremism and terrorism, as well as the devastating effects of climate change.”

The UN’s human rights chief Volker Türk said in [a statement](#) that he was “shocked and distressed” by the coup attempt, adding that every step must be taken to restore constitutional order.



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UN Spokesperson 



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Yesterday I spoke to President Bazoum to express our full solidarity.

Now I want to speak directly to those detaining him: Release President [@mohamedbazoum](#) immediately and unconditionally.

UN Spokespe...  @UN_Spokesper...

Replying to @UN_Spokesperson

Hier, j'ai parlé au président Bazoum pour lui exprimer toute notre solidarité.

Aujourd'hui, je souhaite m'adresser directement à ceux qui le retiennent :
Libérez Président Bazoum –
immédiatement et sans condition-
[@antonioguterres](#)

4:45 PM · Jul 27, 2023



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