



By: TA | AP Brief

Algeria to send troops to Niger in first foreign deployment in over 50 years



Algeria's parliament approved a resolution Sunday to send troops to Niger, making it the first time Algerian soldiers will be deployed abroad since 1973, when they were sent to support Egypt during the Arab-Israeli war.

Authorities have not released any information about when and where exactly the Algerian army detachment will be deployed, or how many soldiers will be involved.

Algerian Sen. Belkacem Boulghiti said troops would be sent "to protect Algeria's economic and strategic interests, particularly its oil facilities in Niger."

"We are not sending our soldiers to wage war in Niger, but for a mission to secure economic infrastructure," he told reporters as he left the chamber after the vote. "It is simply an adaptation of our doctrine to evolving circumstances so we can rise to the new challenges imposed by the situation in the Sahel region."

Algeria's state-owned energy giant and the largest company in Africa, Sonatrach, has been working with the Sahelian country on the Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline, which is designed to transport natural gas from Nigeria, through Niger to Algeria for export to European markets.

The western Sahel region comprising Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso, has been shaken by violent extremism due to deadly attacks by armed groups linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group and the governments fighting them.

All three countries have seen coups in recent years and struggled with overstretched security forces.

Thawing relations between Algeria and Niger

The move on Sunday emphasizes the thawing relations between Algeria and Niger.

In August, Algeria was the first country to express **support for Niger** after aggrieved soldiers staged a mutiny against the military junta under Gen. Abdourahmane Tchiani, which was repelled by loyalist forces aided by Russian troops.

After its foreign ministry assured Niger of its "full solidarity and firm support," Algeria then sent a **delegation to Niger's capital**, Niamey, with four combat fighter jets and a military transport aircraft in what Niger's ruling council described as "the demonstration of the strategic support."

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Last April, the countries of the Alliance of Sahel States — Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso — recalled their ambassadors from Algeria following an incident in which a Malian drone was shot down by Algeria's army near the border.

Algeria's foreign ministry also condemned the 2023 coup which brought Niger's junta leader Tchiani to power.