

# Russia Expands Nuclear Ambitions in Africa With Niger Power Plant Deal

July 29, 2025



Meeting of the Russian and Nigerian delegations in Niamey, July 28, 2025. **Ministry of Energy of Russia**

Russia deepened its foothold in West Africa on Monday, signing a civil nuclear cooperation agreement with Niger's military-led government that includes plans to build nuclear power plants and overhaul the country's energy infrastructure.

The [memorandum of understanding](#), finalized in Niamey by officials from Russia's state atomic energy corporation Rosatom and Niger's Energy Ministry, outlines a long-term partnership focused on electricity generation, nuclear medicine and workforce training.

"Our task is not simply to participate in uranium mining," said Russian Energy Minister Sergei Tsivilev, who led Moscow's delegation. "We must create an entire system for the development of peaceful atomic energy in Niger."

The project's scope includes power plants, energy distribution systems and localized expertise, part of what Tsivilev described as a "comprehensive infrastructure effort" to bring electricity to the country's roughly 25 million citizens, many of whom lack reliable access to

power.

The agreement signals another milestone in Moscow's growing influence across the Sahel, where Western partnerships have frayed in recent years.

Niger has been under military rule since July 2023, when General Abdourahamane Tiani led a coup that ousted the democratically elected President Mohamed Bazoum.

Since then, Niger's alignment with Russia has redefined its international relations. The coup drew condemnation from the U.S. and EU and Washington [withdrew](#) its military forces from the country last year, ending nearly a decade of counterterrorism cooperation.

Russia, by contrast, quickly voiced support for the new regime and warned against any military intervention by the West African bloc ECOWAS, calling it a threat to regional stability.

In January 2024, the two nations formalized a defense pact, and by April of that year, Russia had [deployed](#) 100 military instructors and equipment to support Niger's armed forces, according to Russian state media.

Tsivilev also held talks with General Tiani on Monday, discussing plans to establish a Russian-Nigerien intergovernmental commission focused on trade and economic development.

Officials from both sides explored potential joint ventures in sectors ranging from energy and transportation to agriculture and mineral extraction.

Niger has some of the world's largest uranium reserves.

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