

Lessons Learned from European development projects in Niger



Dr Abdourahmane IDRISSE (*African Studies Centre Leiden*)
Mr Jean VAN WETTER (*Enabel*)

Evening conference
26 October 2023
17:00 - 18:30

Dear Madam, Sir,

We are pleased to invite you to an **evening conference** organised on **Thursday 26 October 2023** from **17:00 until 18:30** by the **Royal Higher Institute for Defence**.

The ousting of Niger's president Mohamed Bazoum on 26 July 2023 follows a string of military coups in the Sahel. This latest coup transcends internal power struggles and fits into a wider pattern of surging great power rivalry. Both Russia and China are seeking to strengthen their foothold in the region, increasingly contesting the presence of European countries. Furthermore, Europe's foreign and defence policy bodies are preoccupied with managing the first major interstate war on our continent in 80 years. These developments, along with the withdrawal of French forces from Niger, have put the spotlight on Europe's commitment towards the Sahel region.

In this conference, we will seek to answer crucial questions about Europe's development aid to Niger. What role has development aid played in Niger's recent history? Which major European development projects are currently in place? How is the military coup impacting these projects? Is development aid a tool of European soft power? And could it contribute to a return of Niger's political stability and legitimacy?

To answer those questions, we will have the pleasure to welcome Dr Abdourahmane Idrissa, from the African Studies Centre at Leiden University, and Mr Jean Van Wetter, CEO of the Belgian development agency Enabel.

This conference will take place **in English** on **Thursday 26 October 2023 at 17:00 in the conference room at campus Renaissance** (entrance: **rue Hobbema 8/Hobbemastraat 8, 1000 Brussels**). A simultaneous interpretation in Dutch and French will be provided in the conference room. It will not be possible to follow the conference online. However, subject to the consent of the speakers, recordings of their presentations will be made available afterwards on our website.

We thank you in advance for registering via the following link: www.defence-institute.be. **Registration by Monday 23 October 2023 at the latest is compulsory.**

(Signed)

Filip BORREMANS, MSc Eng
Air Force Major General
Director-General
Royal Higher Institute for Defence

Programme:

16:30	Welcome
17:00	Conference and Q&A
18:30 – 19:30	Reception