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Pravda

USA To Take All of Niger's Uranium, Push France Aside

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The USA will no longer provide economic help to Niger; the entry of Niger officials to the United States will be restricted. The US attempts to pressure the president of the Central African nation, Mamadou Tandj, who refused to step down and continues to conduct the politics, which excludes Niger's return to constitutional ruling.

Tandj, the 71-year-old president, has been ruling the impoverished African nation since the end of 1999 for two terms in a row. Now he wants to rule the nation for life. Tandj conducted the national referendum in Niger in August: the people approved the president's intention and expanded his power.

Therefore, Mamadou Tandj did not leave his office in December as the nation's Constitution required and dissolved the oppositionist Constitution Court.

Sergey Golubev, an expert on Africa, told Pravda.Ru that the situation in Niger began to aggravate seriously at the end of the 1990s.

“Niger is a very wealthy state when it comes to its natural resources, but the majority of the nation's population lives below the poverty line. It may seem at first sight that it is the government of Niger that is guilty of such a state of affairs. However, this country strongly depends on the West, particularly France, which is the former owner of this African colony. Niger's independence was officially declared in 1960, but it is only a formality.

“Niger had neither money nor technologies for developing its natural wealth. France was working very actively in this direction, mining most of its uranium there.

“Now it seems that the French will have to move over because the United States needs to get cheap raw materials and control Niger’s uranium not to let terrorists do it first.

“It is not ruled out that Niger has the largest reserves of uranium in the world. It currently comes third on the list of uranium-rich nations (after Canada and Australia), but may eventually take the absolute leadership at this point already in 2011, following a recent discovery of a huge uranium field.

“Japan is another competitor to France. The Asian state is determined to struggle for uranium, tin monoxide, gold, oil and gas. China entered the market of Niger too and already invested \$5 billion in this sector of economy.

“In general, it is very easy to understand why US and French special services support mass riots against the government of Niger,” the expert said.