

Republic of the Niger

Date of Independence:	August 3, 1960
Capital:	Niamey
Population:	6,057,000
Head of State:	His Excellency Brigadier-General Seyni Kountché
Economy:	The economy of Niger, which has been affected by drought, is based predominantly on agriculture and livestock raising. Exports of uranium and livestock.

Canada/Niger Relations: Relations between Canada and Niger are excellent, dating back to the creation of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation. Official visits have been made between the two countries by several ministers, including Mme Monique Vézina, who visited Niger in January 1985. Although virtually non-existent, trade could assume new importance as a result of Niger's desire to promote the private sector and to grant a greater share to Canadian interests. Niger is one of Canada's principal African partners in the area of co-operation. It received more than \$146 million between 1965 and 1984 for rural development, natural resources (mines), transportation and energy projects.

His Excellency Brigadier-General Seyni Kountché: Born in 1931. Career in the French Army. Joined the Niger army in 1961. Chief of General Staff in 1973. He ousted the Diori government in 1974 and became Head of State. Promoted to General in January 1983. Architect of the "developing society" concept, in which the people are involved in government development activities.