

States band together to fight Boko Haram

①TOKYO -- Five African nations are teaming up to push back against Boko Haram, a Nigerian militant group behind an escalating wave of violence.



Niger President Mahamadou Issoufou

②On a recent visit to Tokyo, Mahamadou Issoufou, president of the West African nation of Niger, told The Nikkei that the coalition would launch late next month. It is to be composed of roughly 8,700 soldiers from countries surrounding Lake Chad at the heart of the continent: Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, Chad and Benin. The force will be headquartered in N'Djamena, Chad. According to Issoufou, having a unified chain of command will make troop deployments more efficient.

③Boko Haram, which seeks to create an Islamic state, began a campaign of violence in around 2009. It has massacred citizens and carried out suicide attacks, not only in Nigeria but also neighboring countries such as Niger and Chad. The U.S. government designated the group a terrorist organization in 2013.

④According to Issoufou, efforts by individual countries have weakened the militants' power, but more must be done to completely eradicate the threat. This is seen as crucial for restoring civil order and spurring economic development in the region.

Seeking investment

⑤ One question mark is funding. It will require tens of millions of dollars to set up the headquarters in N'Djamena. Additional money will be needed to follow through with military operations.

⑥Issoufou on Friday briefed Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on his plans for fighting terrorism. The two leaders agreed to reinforce the bilateral relationship, including anti-terrorism measures.

⑦Issoufou also requested help in stoking his country's economy, through technology-related support as well as the expansion of Japanese businesses into Niger.

⑧Niger's per capita gross domestic product in 2013 stood at roughly \$400, making it one of the world's poorest and least developed countries. Issoufou stressed that he is committed to infrastructure development and noted Niger's economic growth rate of 7% in 2014.

⑨He said he hopes for support from Tokyo in such fields as agriculture, medicine and human resource training. He also called for Japanese investment in energy resources such as uranium, along with railways and the power grid. The president said the development of Niger's legal system is improving the investment environment.

【June 23, 2015/Nikkei】

④eradicate 根絶する restore civil order 治安を回復させる spur 拍車をかける ⑤follow through with ~を遂行する ⑥brief (手短かに)必要な指示[情報]を与える ⑦stoke...に燃料をくべる、火をかき立てる ⑨grid 送電網

☆Ice breaker for active discussion☆

1. What do you know about Boko Haram?
How do Boko Haram, Taliban and ISIS connected each other?
2. What was the purpose of Niger President's visit to Japan?
3. Should Japan respond to the Niger President's request? Why or why not?
4. What are the merits and demerits for Japan to extend a helping hand to African countries?
5. What is the most important thing for underdeveloped countries to do in order to get out of poverty?
6. Make sentences using the following words: eradicate, spur, brief, stoke, be committed to follow through with and power grid.



ニジェール共和国はアフリカサハラ砂漠南縁のサヘル地域に位置する内陸国でアルジェリア、マリ、ブルキナファソ、ベナン、ナイジェリア、チャド、リビアと国境を接する。主都はニアメ。公用語はフランス語。農業、畜産、鉱業が主産業。鉱業の主力のウランの埋蔵量は世界3位。ウラン関連産業が全雇用の2割を占める。ボコ・ハラムはナイジェリアの過激派組織。西洋の教育を禁止している。兵力は7000から1万人と言われる。タリバンと提携し、ISILに忠誠を誓っている。2014年に学生寮を襲撃し240人の女子学生を拉致し、2015年1月にはバガで住民2000人を虐殺した。