



Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso Left ECOWAS

The West African nations of **Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso** have officially withdrawn from the [Economic Community of West African States \(ECOWAS\)](#).

- The three countries formed the **Alliance of Sahel States**, seeking military support from **Russia** and distancing themselves from the US and France.
 - The Sahel is a **semi-arid region** (western and north-central Africa), a **transitional zone** between the **Sahara desert** (north) and **humid savannas** (south).
- **About ECOWAS:**
 - It is a regional group of **15 West African countries** (before withdrawal), founded in **1975** with the signing of the **Treaty of Lagos (Nigeria)**.
 - It is headquartered in **Abuja, Nigeria** and aims to promote **economic integration and shared development** of the West African sub-region.
 - It established its **free trade area in 1990** and adopted a **common external tariff in 2015**.
 - A **peacekeeping force** was sent to **Liberia in 1990** during its **civil war** and to **Sierra Leone in 1997** after the government was overthrown.
 - **Mauritania** withdrew in **2000** but **rejoined** as an associate member in **2017**.



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