

# *Niger's Foreign Minister Gave KeyNote Lecture on His Country's Situation*

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Havana, November 16(RHC)- The vulnerabilities and challenges currently facing the Republic of Niger and its immediate future were addressed in Havana by the Foreign Minister of that African nation Mohammed Bazoum, who on Friday ended an official visit to Cuba.

The African Official gave a keynote lecture at Havana's International Relations Institute noting that even though his country has huge reserves of uranium, oil and other minerals it is still gripped by poverty, aggravated by a population explosion.

Niger's territory is mostly desert and thus barred to agriculture. Some 15 million people crowd the non-desert areas, which are progressively being reduced due to a pronounced climate change.

The Foreign Minister said that Niger is a land-locked country and the closest sea port is at more than one thousand kilometers away from its Capital city, Niamey.

The Government of Niger is currently promoting infrastructure projects, specially telecommunications, transport and energy, as well as initiatives involving solar and other renewable energy sources for the generation of electricity.

The minister said that ome three thousand miles of roads are being prepared and paved and there is a plan to expand the railway system.

On the negative side, Bazoum said, conflicts in neighboring areas are affecting his country. One of those areas is Lybia, whose volatile internal situation is a source of serious concern to Niger's government.

During his visit, the African official was also received by the VicePresident of the Council of Ministers of Cuba, Ricardo Cabrisas; he held talks with Foreing Minister Bruno Rodriguez, who bid him farewell in Havana.

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