



## Gangsters ambush 17 troops in Niger

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### **NIGER: -**

A government spokesman, Abdourahamane Zakaria affirmed on Wednesday that gangsters murdered nothing less than 17 Nigerien armed forces in an ambush proximal to the Malian border, where several jihadist groups are active, and another 11 soldiers are missing.

Zakaria attested that the assault on Tuesday occurred around the town of Tongo Tongo, where fighters from an Islamic State affiliate murdered four U.S. Special Forces together with four Nigerien soldiers in a hide in October 2017.

The government spokesman did not pinpoint the culprits of the ambush, which is one of the most pernicious against the military in Niger's west in recent years.

Jihadists, including affiliates of al Qaeda and Islamic State, have improved attacks on military and civilian targets across West Africa's Sahel region this year, particularly along the penetrable borders between Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso.

Niger also faces a threat in its southeast from Boko Haram and a fragment group affiliated with Islamic State, which

are both based in Nigeria but frequently bombard neighbouring Niger, Chad and Cameroon.