

American worker shot dead in Nouakchott

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The body of the American shot in the centre of Nouakchott on Tuesday
(Photo: AFP)

The 38-year-old American teacher was killed on Tuesday morning when he was shot several times in the head after resisting what is being described as a "kidnap attempt".

The man was identified as Christopher Logest by the Mauritanian Interior Ministry, who worked for the charity Noura. He had lived in the capital city for several years and spoke the local dialect fluently.

Mohamed, a resident of Nouakchott, told RFI correspondent Manon Rivière that he was shocked but not surprised by the attack, "this is the way things are going, it's simply people who won't accept others".

Rivière says that when the killing took place it was 8.30 in the morning, locals were doing their shopping and there was a lot of people, which may have facilitated their escape.

Logest was killed outside a city-centre school that he managed.

The Mauritanian Interior Ministry rejected criticism from the opposition that it had failed to ensure the security of citizens and foreigners. The scene of the crime was visited by the Governor of Nouakchott and the State Prosecutor.

The attack comes ahead of the country's presidential election which is to elect a successor to former leader Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi, ousted in a coup in August last year.

On Tuesday, the current government announced that presidential candidates would have until 26 June to declare themselves for the 18 July vote.