

## TACKLING THE CRISIS IN GUINEA: PRIORITIZING THE PRIORITIES

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The September 28, 2009 massacres of over 150 Guineans and maiming of others; the brutal raping of women and reported hiding of corpses of the victims, have dashed all hopes of Guineans and pundits who still afforded to give the military junta a chance. Captain Dadis Camara has just plummeted from a 'hero to a villain.' The 'wait and see' period that followed the bloodless coup d'état after the death of President Lansana Conté and the seizure of power by Captain Dadis Camara has flickered out.

The international community's reaction to the September 28 massacres was a mix of rage and consternation.<sup>1</sup> The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) qualified the action of the military junta as barbaric and totally unacceptable. Following the extra-ordinary summit of the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government that held in Abuja on October 17, 2009, an arms embargo was slammed on the military junta in Guinea. The EU has followed with an arms embargo and targeted sanctions including travel bans on members of the junta and

their associates and freezing of assets. This followed an earlier decision of ECOWAS to appoint President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso as the mediator of the Guinean political crisis.

The momentum on Guinea is building. Three fundamental issues arise:

- the September 28 massacres and the question of impunity;
- the military factor with its attendant complexities (indiscipline and anarchy, factions and generational differences, historical factors) and ramifications which must be addressed; and
- the persistent political crisis (governance related, the constitution, the political parties, lack of credible elections) that Dadis Camara inherited.

These issues cannot be well understood without situating them in their rightful geopolitical context characterised by serious economic interests (including the growing threat of drug cartels and influence of mercenaries) in Guinea.

In proffering solutions to the ongoing crisis in Guinea, the aforementioned issues must be taken into account. This

policy brief therefore analyzes the crisis in Guinea with a particular focuses on:

- Key variables that would determine the direction of the ongoing crisis;
- Identifying the potential spoilers and connectors;
- Possible scenarios to envisage between now and expected elections; and
- Options available for the Guinean actors, ECOWAS-AU, and the international community.

Our conclusion is that Guinea is at the crossroads and what is needed now is to prioritize the priorities in addressing the present quagmire. A wrong approach, a deviation from the main focus may hijack the process and we may soon start counting loses and missed opportunities.



Capt. Dadis Camara, Junta Leader  
Source : Guinea libre// Partenaire de Guinea-Forum

<sup>1</sup> Thanks to new information technology, mobile phones captured the shocking images of the victims of rape, gun shots, and torture of political leaders, journalists, human rights activists and arbitrary arrest of ordinary Guineans and other grave violations that were circulated worldwide.

### West Africa Early Warning & EARLY RESPONSE Network (WARN)

The West Africa Early Warning and Early Response Network (WARN) is an integral part of the West Africa Preventive Peacebuilding Program coordinated by the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP). Through its WARN Program, WANEP is setting the stage for a civil society-based early warning and response network in Africa with emphasis on human

security.

WARN covers the entire Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) sub-region including Cameroon and Chad. Since 2002, WANEP entered into an agreement with ECOWAS through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in the framework of capacity building

in Conflict Prevention. One of the goals of this agreement is to interface WARN with the ECOWAS Early Warning Systems to optimize early warning conflict prevention in West Africa.

In recognition of the role and achievements of the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) in Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding in Africa, particularly in West Africa, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations at its substantive session of 2006 granted WANEP Special Consultative Status to the UN. WANEP is therefore mandated to designate official representatives to the United Nations in New York, Geneva and Vienna to further its advocacy and outreach strategies for peace and human security.

## 2. FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES AT STAKE

### a) Stark Face of Impunity

The bloody suppression of the September 28 opposition rally inside the football stadium in Conakry depicts the stark reality of the level of brutality with impunity that reigns in Guinea. The high level of intolerance to opposition to state authority and the glorification of demagoguery and sycophancy to leadership contributed to the unfortunate events. Memories of the January-April 2007 events in Guinea are a great reminder of how the military, particularly elements of the Presidential Guard shot at armless youths who were demonstrating against the unbearable cost of living. This did not end there. The same forces shot at the police forces that were manifesting against poor conditions of service.

This blatant demonstration of force by the privileged Presidential Guard has gone unpunished for years and the September 28 incident was just one shooting among many. The victims of the politically motivated arrests and detentions at Camp Boiro and the scores of disappearances of dissidents and political opponents of the successive regimes in Guinea are legion. Current calls for the creation of commissions of enquiry would be incomplete if the issue of impunity is not addressed in a comprehensive manner. The UN led commission of enquiry must therefore take advantage and address the issue from a holistic perspective and ensure that perpetrators are brought to book for crimes committed (including those in the past).

### b) The Military Factor

During the years of dictatorship under Sekou Touré and General Lansana Conté, Guinea witnessed a gradual but systematic failure of almost all viable state institutions. Dictatorship and corruption eroded all the institutions and the only surviving relic seem to have been the military establishment. Even this surviving institution has lost its grandeur and discipline that it was once reckoned for.

Today, the Guinea army in particular and its security forces in general needs urgent reform and restructuring. Indiscipline and anarchy is supreme within the ranks of the Guinea armed forces. A rank and file soldier can hold a position that is meant for superior officers like colonels and generals. Promotion is no longer on the basis of merit but rather on loyalty, allegiance and affiliation. The respect for hierarchy is gone and it is difficult to know who is in charge of what. No doubt therefore that Captain Dadis Camara who proclaimed himself President of the Republic and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces said he does not control all the army in Guinea. An investigation would reveal many anomalies within the Guinean military.

Since the unfortunate events of September 28, 2009 (and previous ones that were not taken seriously by the international community), attempts to arrest some of the soldiers believed to have been the instigators and commanders of the bloody massacres have failed.<sup>2</sup> The divisions and factions within the army and struggles to protect parochial interests constitute a serious source of instability in Guinea.<sup>3</sup> Recent recruitments mostly from the Forest Region where Dadis Camara hails raised fears of eventual tensions although it must be recognized that the army in Guinea has been dominated by former President Lansana Conté's ethnic group (Soussou).

Nonetheless, it is imperative to recognise the professionalism of the Gendarmerie forces particularly during the September 28, 2009 opposition rally. All in all, the military has historically been in charge in Guinea. The coup d'état that brought Dadis Camara to power was predictable. The military thus sees their involvement in politics as a right and look down on the civilian opposition leaders (who also compromised their rightful role by endorsing Captain Dadis Camara's December 2008 putsch). To deal with the present crisis, particularly the military factor, there is need for a thorough and

comprehensive reform of the security and defence sector. This should be a key priority area of focus in the envisaged transitional debate. A framework of 21st century and Republican army (security sector) need to be defined, preferably before the elections to enable the new government to pursue the security sector reform agenda and refrain from downplaying this critical area of Guinea's future.

### c) Elections and Persistent Political Crisis

Since independence, Guinea has never had credible elections. The many years of dictatorships and the inability of the Guinean opposition to mount a meaningful alternative front had paralyzed the political culture in Guinea. Immediately the military took over power in Guinea, they promised to organize elections in two years time. This was further trimmed down to one year following pressure and eventual suspension from the AU, ECOWAS and (limited) sanctions from the rest of the international community. After months of political jostling, the military finally made it known that elections will hold in the months of November (legislative) and December (presidential) 2009. This pledge has since been marred by the junta's evident intentions to hang on to power. The need to lay a solid foundation for free, fair and transparent elections is paramount. This can build on breakthroughs that the opposition in Guinea made during the attempts to revive the stalled dialogue with the government prior to the January-February 2007 general strike.

Political dialogue in Guinea over the governance crisis has been a critical factor even during the days of late President Lansana Conté. With reference to the electoral matter, the dialogue and negotiations between the government and the opposition culminated in a consensual agreement in December 5, 2006 between the leaders of political parties of the presidential majority and their counterparts of the oppositions and civil society.<sup>4</sup> This was the fruit of a memorandum signed by 33 political parties

<sup>2</sup> There were reports of gun fire within the barracks when the military attempted arresting the purported Presidential Guard officers who carried out the shooting. There was also allegations that former ULIMO-K fighters in the Liberian civil war that were funded and supported by late Lansana Conté and based in the Forest Region of Guinea were used in committing the September 28 massacres.

<sup>3</sup> The WANEP WARN Policy briefs on Guinea, July 2006 and December 2008 drew attention to this military factor as a potential destabilizing factor. In our December 2008 briefing, we warned that "abrupt attempts to make sweeping measures at redressing the imbalance within the army may antagonize some interests and result in a major crack within the system". One of the major elements of stability in Guinea is the maintenance of a republican army no matter the ethnic diversities.

Despite the economic hardship that has gripped Guinea for many years, constant provision of amenities, motivations and other benefits such as housing allowances, food (rice given at highly subsidized rates) and regular promotions kept the military morale to a manageable level. In addition, President Conté had maintained the portfolio of Defense Minister to himself even though ill health compelled him to cede some of the responsibilities to his chief of cabinet, Colonel Kandé Touré, a veritable loyalist and tribesman. The command and control of strategic and key positions remained in the hands of trusted men, most of who are from the minority but very influential Soussou ethnic group. Dismantling this existing structure and consolidating himself in power has been a huge challenge for Captain Dadis.

in 2003 that set the pace for the political dialogue.

The critical concern of the time is how to mobilize all stakeholders to ensure that elections hold in Guinea by addressing the obstacles or factors militating against free, fair and transparent elections in Guinea thereby creating an enabling environment for a smooth transition. In view of the nature of the situation in Guinea, ECOWAS and the AU have so far been working in a cooperative and consensus manner in the spirit of 'subsidiarity' and 'complementarity'. The problem now is how to ensure that this political component which constitutes the crux of the crisis is dealt with appropriately despite the sanctions.

#### d) Geopolitical and Economic Factor

Guinea's untapped economic potentials are enormous. Analysts have maintained that it is scandalous and ironical that Guinea remains poor despite its mineral endowment. More than ever before, Guinea remains an attractive destination in the new scramble for Africa's mineral and petroleum and gas resources. Media sources are awash with news that the Hong Kong-based China International Fund (CIF) is negotiating deals worth 70 billions of dollars aimed at financing infrastructural development, minerals projects and oil prospecting on and off-shore Guinea. Should the deal be allowed to go through, it means the junta would not have to worry about economic sanctions since it surpasses the country's annual budget requirement. The timing of this 'news' remains worrisome as the junta would evidently use this as a strong bargaining factor. Moreover, this would anger their Western rivals who would see China's move as opportunistic and insensitive to human right violations.

Towards the tail end of his reign, President Lansana Conté entered into a series of economic deals with South Africa that might have included arms sales in exchange

for mineral exploitation and other bargains. The French and other Western companies have been eagerly eyeing the Guinean geological endowments and past EU led economic sanctions have limited their ability to grasp business deals. This did not deter the French to sell arms to the Guinean Government which it has now suspended including military cooperation. On October 5, 2009, France, through its Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner even recommended an international military intervention after the bloody protest.

The United States equally backed the Lansana Conté regime with military supplies and training, especially during the Liberian war, and the support was channelled through the LURD rebel group that enjoyed the protection of Conakry.

The reaction of these powers is (and would be) informed not just by humanitarian concerns and charity, but by the economic interests in the immediate and medium/long terms. It is imperative that Guinea's interest should supersede all other interests in the quest for a durable solution to the ongoing crisis.

### 3.0. ANALYSES OF KEY VARIABLES LIKELY TO DETERMINE FUTURE OF CRISIS

#### a) Healing the trauma

Relatives of the victims of the September 28 massacres are still mourning in disbelief of what happened to their loved ones. The victims of rape and those in hospitals are still nursing their wounds, while scores of Guineans are still missing, most of whom are feared dead. The commissions of enquiry by the military junta and that of the United Nations are expected to establish a clear picture and situate responsibility. However, the fact that there are two commissions of enquiry already raises doubts as to whether the war of figures, and contradictory views would not divert the attention and focus.

The whole World has recommended sanction for the CNDD government. The critical question is to what extent will sanction achieve regime change to a more favorable political transformation in Guinea? What else can be done alternatively if the regime change does not happen within the stipulated timeframe of sanction? Who will be affected most by the sanction? These questions arise given the experience that many sanctions have failed to achieve the required goal for which they were imposed on illegitimate regimes. David Steinberg argued that, "International efforts through the UN to censure Myanmar have been more theatrical than likely to achieve their objective".<sup>7</sup>

If the junta is ready to cooperate, there is no reason to have two different commissions of enquiry. The threats from the International Criminal Court (ICC) on the junta may be seen as a serious tool to deter continuous human rights violations, but could also be counterproductive if the sanctions and the possible international arrest warrant for crimes against humanity on Captain Dadis Camara may push the military to do what they are very good at doing-becoming the spoilers. Freeing all opposition elements locked, searching for the missing and handing over dead bodies of victims to their families would be good signals towards trauma healing.

#### b) Internally Generated and Concerted Response Initiatives

Historical antecedents and intuitive knowledge reminds us that Guineans detest external mingling in their affairs. This trump card has been played by past dictators with great success. Both leaders have won wars of external aggressions.<sup>8</sup> Whatever interventions that are envisaged, there is need for an internally driven process or better still, a balance between external pressure and internal processes leading to a political breakthrough. Consequently, how the Force Vives (civil

4 The ceremony formalizing this process was held at the Palais du peuple, and was witnessed by the diplomats and international institutions accredited to Guinea. Key highlights of the recommendations of the document included: the creation of a truly national electoral commission, amnesty, freedom of political activities, and equal access to state media, liberalization of the airwaves, single electoral ballot and transparent ballot boxes. An ad hoc committee was thus set to draft three laws on: (i) status of the opposition, (ii) modalities and financing of political parties, and (iii) independent organ to conduct and supervise elections -- independent electoral commission (CENI). It was not until August 2006 that 12 representatives each from the two sides of the political divide went to work for three months to reform the electoral law but the dialogue was aborted following the January-February 2007 riots in Guinea.

5 This view was articulated by the Director of Political Affairs of ECOWAS, Dr Abdel Fataou Musah during a discussion on the situation in Guinea with the author of this briefing on March 20, 2009. We also captured this in the IPA briefing note to the AU Panel of the Wise.

6 The Chinese government has been accused of seeking exclusive access to African natural resources with an aggressive economic campaign to penetrate the continent irrespective of the rhetoric of human rights violations and bad-governance in the countries concerned. In a rebuttal to the accusations in Guinea, the Government of China has disowned claims that it entered into agreement with the military junta. It should be recalled that Guinea is the world's largest bauxite producer and also has large untapped deposits of iron ore, gold, uranium, diamonds and a host of other minerals.

7 Steinberg, David I (2007) *The United States and Its Allies: The Problem of Burma/Myanmar Policy* Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs - Volume 29, Number 2, August 2007, pp. 219-237

8 Sekou Touré won the war against the Portuguese invasion in 1971 and Lansana Conté won the rebel incursions in 2000-2001



society and political parties) organize themselves and take advantage of the international consensus and momentum would determine the future of peace efforts in this transition phase. Therefore, attention of the international community should be on how the forces vives are capacitated and supported to play a positive role in bringing Guinea out of the present quagmire. No amount of external pressure would make positive impact if internally generated efforts and initiatives are not considered, nurtured and bolstered.

#### **c). Capacity of Guinea's Political Parties**

Besides the civil society, the role of political parties is very critical. Pundits have described weak and self-seeking opposition political leaders as the bane of Guinea's democracy. Apart from the rhetoric of change slogans and "Dadis must go" chanting, the opposition must be able to convince Guineans of a veritable alternative and capacity to lead. That will depend not only on how they are organized. It would entail leadership by example and internal democracy within their parties and within the coalitions. Guinea's opposition parties have always agreed to disagree among themselves. Would it be again a rush and quest for power where every political leader wants to be president? The opposition parties have a task to either make or mar. And the one to make is undoubtedly the development of a visionary political agenda that is flawless and marketable to the electorates.

#### **d). Military Factor**

The military factor in the present crisis in Guinea is a very slippery factor. The risk of an implosion within the military cannot be ruled out. This becomes more evident when the responsibility for the September 28 crackdown on the opposition begins to figure out. Any attempts to save face or arrest the 'scape goats' may backfire and a counter-coup cannot be ruled out in a fragile situation as is the case in Guinea now. The manner in which the military will be engaged would determine the success or failure of the peace process in Guinea. The army constitutes a major potential spoiler. Perhaps the peace makers (particularly the mediation by President Blaise Compaoré) may contemplate negotiating Dadis' departure as was the case with Charles Taylor. The problem here is what guarantees would be made to convince the junta of a safe exit given the

apparent 'betrayal' that Charles Taylor, the Former Rebel Leader and President of Liberia experienced. How would one compromise safe exit for the junta in the face of investigation of alleged crimes against humanity which they evidently committed? Though this presents a dilemma, we believe that not all military officers committed the crimes. The voices of reason within the army could be identified and worked with. Also, a safe exit could mean resorting to alternative dispute resolution mechanisms such as the Truth and Reconciliations Commission. If Guineans decide to forgive one another in the interest of peace, only few who bear the ultimate responsibility should defend their innocence in a legally constituted court of law.

#### **e). Drug War, Drug Money**

The influence of the drug cartels that have invaded West Africa and its potential to worsen the crisis in Guinea cannot be underestimated. The present state of uncertainty provides the needed opportunity for drug cartels to use both cash and arms to impose their will on whoever they can influence. The embargoes and other sanctions may go a long way to paving the way for the cartels and mercenaries to penetrate the junta or factions within the military. Recent reports that Guinea is not just a transit point but a major manufacturing site of hard drugs go a long way to buttress this fear. No strategy towards a solution to the crisis in Guinea can afford to ignore the drug menace.

#### **f). ECOWAS-AU Tandem to Define Realistic Course of Action**

The AU ultimatum to the military junta leader to engage in writing that neither he nor any member of the CNDD would be a candidate in the anticipated elections expired at midnight of October 17, 2009. It is certain that more sanctions may be envisaged. Besides the use of the stick (sanctions), the carrots (negotiation) are used in order to ensure meaningful dialogue and an enabling environment for the political transitional process to proceed in an accelerated manner. The ECOWAS-AU tandem needs to pursue a rigorous effort to mobilize funding for capacity building of electoral organs (Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) and the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Political Affairs (MATAP), civil society and other structures. Mobilizing enough funding to establish a realistic and updated electoral register (if possible a

computerized system); assisting Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Guinea to be active interlocutors between the political parties thereby playing a veritable role of citizen mobilization and providing civic education as well as 'watch dog role' is critical.

The AU and ECOWAS should therefore spearhead the process and strategically lead the rest of the international community to see beyond elections-as elections alone do not constitute democracy. Guinea's problems are grounded on addressing the structural impediments that underlie the poverty and human security challenges the country is facing today- issues that are exploited for socio-economic or political motives.

## **4.0. POSSIBLE SCENARIOS WITHIN THE NEXT 3-6 MONTHS**

Given the current dynamics of the Guinea crisis, we envisage three(3) scenarios. They are not predictions but pointers of probable direction that the crisis may take us and serve as clues for effective interventions.

#### **Best Case Scenario (Probability rating: Medium)**

*The Best Case scenario is premised on two likely developments and outcomes.*

The international pressure on Captain Dadis Camara to renounce his intentions to run for the office of President of the Republic pays off. Through the good offices of the ECOWAS powered Mediator, President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, the military junta leader engages (in writing) not to be a candidate, and to step down immediately after the elections. Negotiations and guarantees are enough to convince Captain Dadis that there will be no witch-hunting, although impunity would not be endorsed. Sanctions are lifted (but arms embargo remain in force) in order to pave the way for an enabling environment for electoral campaigns and the organizations of free, fair and transparent elections. The military reorganization processes begins and the soldiers accept their role as neutral arbiters and adopt a non-partisan approach in the conduct of elections.

International support for the transition in Guinea is re-energized and because of the attractive economic potentials the country offers, donors and development partners pour in money into the electoral process. On the other hand, the political parties rise

up to their responsibilities and an issue-based campaign takes place, leading to successful elections and a new president emerges and a representative national assembly is installed. The new president encourages a high degree of inclusiveness and proceeds to announce constitutional review aimed at cleaning the Guinea constitution of its undemocratic and dictatorial clauses.

**Worst Case Scenario** (*Probability rating: High*)

*The Worst Case scenario is premised on the following:*

The military junta of Captain Dadis Camara defies international pressure and insists on the candidacy of the CNDD strongman. Their argument is that most of Africa's leaders today are self-transformed military officers, including the mediator in the current crisis. The military junta is aware of loopholes which exist in the coming into force of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance which could prevent coup leaders from standing for Presidency. Out of 15 state signatory requirements for it to enter into force, only 2 states have ratified. Therefore, desire to control state resources and attempt to dodge justice entice the military to vie for the Presidency. More pressure and sanctions follow and attempts to enforce the sanctions result in more tension and cracks of dissension surface within the military ranks. International opinion is equally divided on the issue. Rivalry and suspicion results in a counter (palace) coup and Dadis Camara is overthrown and Guinea is plunged into yet another moment of uncertainty despite promises of the new junta leader to return the country to constitutional legality.

The combined outcomes of these developments would be: continuous suffering of the masses; a divided opinion on what to do; the infiltration of drug barons and mercenaries into the system; and the worsening of human rights violations and the reign of impunity. Factions feeling marginalised or threatened decide to transform into a rebellion and regroup in a part of Guinea, rallying ethnic and regional support.

**Medium Case Scenario** (*Probability Rating: Low*)

The event of mass killings and human rights abuses of September 28, the pressure from

the international community and from the opposition parties in Guinea force the military junta to step down. A national transitional council is formed to manage the electoral process. (This scenario has happened in South Africa when the ANC asked the then elected President, Thabo Mbeki to resign in 2008 in the interest of the nation and an interim government was put in place until elections was held). Captain Dadis Camara still believes he is man of the people and decides to contest the elections. The International community supports (finance) the electoral process and provide a robust security to ensure free, fair and credible process. The political parties present a united front and see the outcome of the elections as freedom from dictatorship rather than opportunistic manoeuvres for the Presidency. Elections are conducted meeting international standards and Capt. Camara is beaten. A new government of national unity is formed.

**5. OPTIONS FOR RESPONSE**

The responsibility for change and transformation in the crisis in Guinea resides primarily in the hands of Guineans. The following options for response are proposed with regards to the envisaged scenarios described above.

**Military Junta**

- a) Captain Dadis Camara must face reality (understand that the military can no longer remain in power), respect his commitments and formalize in writing his intention not to run in the upcoming elections. A firm and decisive action must be taken to commence the healing of wounds in Guinea by:
  - Admitting the gravity of the crimes committed on September 28, 2009 and taking responsibility to bring all culprits to book;
  - Releasing the bodies or corpses and political activists under detention;
  - Fully cooperating with UN investigations; and
  - Providing a precise roadmap of activities leading to the attainment of set out goals as outlined in the initial transition plan with the International Contact Group for Guinea (ICGG).
- Provide a security for the people and refrain from war mongering
- b) The opportunity to move out of the ambiguities is now. The sycophants who

have lured Dadis Camara to think that it is now the turn of the people of Forest Guinea to produce a president may have misled the CNDD junta leader.

**Forces Vives** (Guinea's Civil Society and Political Parties) **platform**

- c) The resource base and capacity of labour union needs to be strengthened to remain a strong catalyst for change; civil society including the media should be supported and imbued to adequately play the watch dog role, and combine activism and engagement with the junta.
- d) Civil society organizations should be strengthened institutionally to be able to adequately coordinate their efforts in the quest for the re-birth of Guinea through effective programmes and partnerships that work. The leverage of regional CSOs and donor support would be very critical in this direction.<sup>9</sup>
- e) Present a united front with one voice in terms of dealing with the military junta. Any fragmentation and quarrelling within the political opponents might only justify the junta's claim that it is better suited to rid Guinea of its protracted political malaise. In this sense, building alliances across regions and ethnicity is critical.
- f) In the framework of the mediation brokered by ECOWAS, the Force Vive should be realistic with the election timetable. Learning from the lessons of almost perpetual postponement of elections in Cote d'Ivoire since 2009, agreeing to carry out the elections in Guinea in the last quarter of 2010 might be realistic and reasonable. This is particularly important to avoid rush that might present opportunities for fraud emanating from, ill preparedness and leading to disenfranchisement due to time constrains. A positive outcome should be the focus rather than a rushed process.

**The Broader International Community**

- g) Spearheaded by ECOWAS and the AU, the outside actors or the international community may need to advocate for a 9 month transition with strict benchmarks leading to elections. As it stands now, Guinea is not rife for elections given that the junta has succeeded in playing for time on the electoral issue. However, caution should be taken not to fall prey into the Cote d'Ivoire syndrome of one postponement leading to another.

<sup>9</sup> It is easy to hear people say what the civil society has not done or should do but very few ever consider supporting these structures institutionally leaving one to wonder how these structures can function on their own. Civil society actors with little or no core support are vulnerable to all kinds of manipulations and Guinea is no exception.

- h) Targeted support to strengthen political parties in Guinea institutionally through adequate funding should be enshrined into the revised electoral law under scrutiny. Remaining engaged is primordial to sustainable peace and stability in Guinea. ECOWAS already has a Special Representative on the ground in Conakry. The AU and ECOWAS' engagement further reinforces the argument that best practice in conflict prevention in Africa must be led by African initiatives and institutions.
- i) As we have mentioned in our previous briefings, Guinea is one of the countries that have ratified the ECOWAS Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security and the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. This provides a good window of opportunity for engagement.
- j) The international media should continue to tell the story of Guinea and clearly feed policy makers and world leaders with timely and objective reports of the happenings in the country. This would require working with local media practitioners/executives and the use of investigative journalism techniques. Media relayed messages should shun sensationalism and hate messages and orient towards opinions that seek to provide solutions and way forward. Guinea needs 'Peace Media' at this crucial moment.
- k) Promotion of genuine political dialogue is very vital. Such a dialogue should be adequately inclusive of all the major actors and stakeholders (politicians, trade unions, civil society, Guinean's in the Diaspora, and the military). The lack of respect for the opposition<sup>10</sup> and shabby treatment meted on political leaders as evidenced in the September 28 events, and branding of opposition as enemies of the political system is an indication that democracy is losing favour in Africa.
- l) Considering the gravity and barbaric

nature of the rape cases during the military crackdown on September 28, establishing a legal aid clinic to provide medical treatment for the rape victims as well as pro bono legal services is imperative. The success of such a scheme would largely depend also on the implementation of effective psycho-social service programmes and the provision of safe space for victims.

- m) The AU's Constitutive Act adopted in 2000, have already made an ambitious departure from 'non-interference to non-indifference' including the right of the AU to intervene in any member state's internal affairs. In many respects, the Constitutive Act have augmented the value of non-indifference with the responsibility to protect. Similarly, Paragraphs 138 and 139 of the 2005 World Summit stressed the legal obligation of sovereign States to protect its citizens, while the second concerned the reaffirmation and commitment of Member States under chapters VI and VIII of the Charter, thus justified the use of force as the last resort. This also implies the right to intervene in the affairs of a sovereign State with the responsibility to protect innocent civilians against genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, where the state is unwilling or unable to do so. Guinea therefore is a test case.

### CONCLUSION

Our conclusion is that Guinea's experience is a stark reminder of the fast deteriorating political and democratic culture in Africa where leaders are ready to hang onto power at all cost. Our caution is that Guinea may not be the last, but the beginning a new wave of military adventurism as a result of failure of the political class to safeguard values of democracy and good governance. The solution to the Guinea crisis must be internal, and the voices of top politicians and statesmen in the country such as Sydia Touré, Alpha Condé, Cellou Dalein Diallo, Jean Marie Doré, and Lansana

Kouyaté ...must be heard loud and clear. The UN led independent investigative committee is expected to look into all human rights violation including the killings of 28 September 2009, as well as the killing that took place in January and February, 2007, and the perpetrators brought to justice. It must not be another window dressing as was the case in Cote d'Ivoire where the UN investigation report achieved virtually nothing (or was rather ignored).

To bring healing to Guinea, many have suggested the transitional justice system that would involve, amongst others, prosecuting perpetrators, revealing the truth with regards to past crimes, providing victims with reparations, reforming abusive institutions and promoting reconciliation of historical injustices. The rest of the international community should join hand to ensure that the innocent lives lost in the cause of democracy do not perish in vain. To this end, the current reign of impunity must end. In the context of carrot and stick policy option, the preventive diplomacy to ensure that the process of a return to constitutional legality and creation of an enabling environment for free, fair and transparent elections are achieved must be pursued relentlessly. The question is how this can be achieved in the context of sanctions. This will happen through 'constructive and strategic engagement' of the military junta and the 'forces vives' in Guinea. The example of Guinea should serve as food for thought and challenge on how the world operates its crisis/conflict prevention approach. The question we must answer is whether we would wait for yet another coup before the issue of 'sit tight' regimes in Africa<sup>11</sup> is invoked and proactively addressed. Sit-tight regimes (l'état c'est moi) end up destroying state institutions that cannot support a transition, thus creating the conditions that favour coup d'états. The solution to the Guinea crisis must be internally generated and externally supported to guarantee sustainability of its outcome.

<sup>10</sup> During a working session on dialogue in Guinea in 2002, an opposition leader told WANEP that it should lobby for the change of name "opposition" because in Guinea's political arena, the word is equated to enemy by the authorities. Consequently, the youth are now resorting to other means to push their case.

<sup>11</sup> It is time the international community start addressing the issues in so called stability island countries and ensure a democracy power alternation in Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Congo Brazzaville, Equatorial Guinea, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Uganda and Zimbabwe (to name but a few). In these countries, the opposition has been destroyed and personality cult, sycophancy, and civilian dictatorship (worse than military regimes in most cases) reign supreme in the name of stability and continuity

Authors: Alimou Diallo, Kalie Sillah and Zebulon S. Takwa

Editor/quality assurance: Zebulon S. Takwa, Programs Director, WANEP

Address enquiries to: Emmanuel H. Bombande, Executive Director, WANEP. P.O. Box CT 4434 Cantonments, Accra, Ghana.

Email: ebombande@wanep.org, wanep@wanep.org, Tel: +233 21 775 975/77; Fax: +233 21 776 018.

Website: www.wanep.org; Design & Layout: Kwesi Enchill