



# Guinea: Background and Relations with the United States

**Alexis Arieff**

Analyst in African Affairs

**Nicolas Cook**

Specialist in African Affairs

March 22, 2010

**Congressional Research Service**

7-5700

[www.crs.gov](http://www.crs.gov)

R40703

## Summary

This report analyzes developments in Guinea, a poor West African country, following the death of longtime president and former military leader Lansana Conté in December 2008. It focuses on the military's seizure of power after Conté's death, U.S.-Guinea bilateral relations, and U.S. policy in the wake of the coup. It also provides background on Guinean history and politics.

Guinea is a Francophone country on West Africa's Atlantic coast with a population of about 10 million. It is rich in natural resources but characterized by widespread poverty and limited socioeconomic growth and development. While Guinea has experienced regular episodes of internal political turmoil, it had been considered a locus of relative stability over the past two decades, a period during which each of its six neighbors suffered one or more armed internal conflicts. At the same time, democratic progress was limited, and Guinea has never undergone a democratic or constitutional transfer of power since gaining independence in 1958.

On December 23, 2008, following the death of President Conté, a military junta calling itself the National Council for Democracy and Development (CNDD, after its French acronym) seized power. It named as interim national president a previously relatively unknown figure, Captain Moussa Dadis Camara. After taking power, the CNDD dissolved the constitution and legislature, appointed a civilian prime minister, and promised to hold presidential and legislative elections. Elections were repeatedly postponed, however. On September 28, 2009, Guinean security forces opened fire on some 50,000 civilian demonstrators in Conakry who were protesting the CNDD and Dadis Camara's perceived presidential ambitions, killing many. The protest sparked wide international condemnation, including from the United States.

On December 3, 2009, Dadis Camara was evacuated to Morocco after he was shot and wounded by his chief bodyguard. He was later flown to Burkina Faso. Following several weeks of political uncertainty, an agreement was signed providing for the creation of a transitional government of national unity prior to presidential elections that are slated to take place in June 2010. On January 15, the new transitional government, headed by Defense Minister Brig. Gen. Sekouba Konaté, was formed. A longtime opposition leader, Jean-Marie Doré, was named Prime Minister.

Following the coup in December 2008, the United States suspended some bilateral development aid and all security assistance to Guinea. U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) governance and humanitarian assistance programs, which comprised a substantial portion of the U.S. aid budget in Guinea before the coup, were not affected by the suspension, nor were U.S. contributions toward Guinea's electoral process. After the September 28 crackdown, the United States called for Dadis Camara to step down and announced targeted travel restrictions against CNDD members and selected associates. The African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and European Union (EU) imposed an arms embargo. The AU and EU also imposed additional targeted sanctions on CNDD members and associates.

Legislation related to Guinea in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress has included H.Res. 1013 (Ros-Lehtinen); S.Res. 345 (Boxer); and H.R. 3288 (Olver), which was signed into law as P.L. 111-117 on December 16, 2009. This report will be updated as events warrant.

## Contents

Recent Developments.....	1
U.S. Relations with the Unity Government.....	2
Overview .....	2
U.S. Interests in Guinea.....	3
Recent Congressional Actions .....	5
The Conté Regime: Final Years .....	6
The CNDD and the Transitional Government .....	7
December 2008 Coup: Background.....	8
International Reactions.....	9
The Presidency of Capt. Moussa Dadis Camara.....	9
Counter-Narcotics Efforts.....	9
Anti-Corruption Efforts.....	10
China Minerals and Infrastructure Agreement.....	11
The Stalled Political Transition Under Dadis Camara .....	12
September 28 Protests .....	12
Dadis Camara’s Exit and Growing Instability .....	16
January 2010: Formation of a Government of National Unity .....	16
Elections.....	17
Election Administration and Funding .....	17
Human Rights and the Rule of Law.....	18
Alleged Abuses by CNDD Members Under Conté’s Presidency .....	18
Press Freedom.....	18
Economic Issues .....	19
Socioeconomic Conditions .....	20
U.S. Policy Issues .....	20
Foreign Aid.....	20
Elections and Democracy Promotion.....	21
Security Assistance and Counter-Narcotics Cooperation.....	21
Multilateral Aid.....	22

## Figures

Figure 1. Map of Guinea .....	3
-------------------------------	---

## Appendixes

Appendix A. Profiles of Selected Guinean Political Party Leaders .....	23
Appendix B. Touré and Conté Regimes: Historical Background .....	25

## **Contacts**

Author Contact Information ..... 32

## Recent Developments

In December 2009, Capt. Moussa Dadis Camara—the leader of the National Council for Democracy and Development (CNDD), the military junta that had seized power in December 2008 upon the death of Guinea’s then-president, Lansana Conté—was shot by a member of his personal guard.<sup>1</sup> On January 15, 2010, after several weeks of growing political instability, Dadis Camara, Defense Minister Brig. Gen. Sekouba Konaté, and regional mediator Blaise Compaoré, the president of Burkina Faso, announced a new political agreement in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.<sup>2</sup> The *Joint Declaration of Ouagadougou* provided that:

- Konaté assume executive powers as “Interim President” and that a government of national unity (GNU) be formed, along with a quasi-legislative body, the National Council of Transition (CNT);
- a GNU prime minister be appointed from the *Forces Vives* (“active forces”), an opposition coalition of political parties, trade unions, and civil society groups;
- a presidential election be organized within six months of the date of the agreement; and
- Konaté, the prime minister, and members of the GNU, the CNDD, the CNT, and the defense and security forces be precluded from running for president.<sup>3</sup>

*Forces Vives* spokesman Jean-Marie Doré, a critic of the CNDD, was named GNU Prime Minister on January 19, and on February 16, he appointed a 34-person cabinet, composed of civilians and CNDD members. In early March, the CNT, made up of 155 members representing political parties, trade unions, civil society groups, and other socio-economic demographics, was inaugurated.<sup>4</sup> Presidential elections are scheduled for June 27, 2010. The date for planned legislative elections has yet to be confirmed. Konaté has stated that he will uphold the electoral calendar and that he will not be a candidate in elections.<sup>5</sup>

After signing the declaration, Dadis Camara declined to return to Guinea. Some analysts suggest that he may have agreed to sign the declaration under the implicit threat that international pressure might otherwise have resulted in his surrender to the International Criminal Court (ICC), which is investigating a September 2009 massacre of opposition supporters in Conakry, Guinea’s capital. In late 2009, an international commission of inquiry concluded that Dadis Camara might reasonably be suspected of “individual criminal responsibility” in the massacre.<sup>6</sup> Guinea and Burkina Faso are states party to the Rome Statute, under which the ICC was established.

---

<sup>1</sup> After being shot in the head, Dadis Camara was evacuated to Morocco for medical treatment. In early 2010, he was flown to Burkina Faso, where he now resides, to further convalesce.

<sup>2</sup> In October 2009, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a regional grouping of countries, appointed Compaoré to mediate between the CNDD and the main opposition coalition, the *Forces Vives*.

<sup>3</sup> The declaration also provided for the reorganization and reform of Guinea’s security forces. “Joint Declaration of Ouagadougou,” signed January 15, 2010, via State Department Office of Language Services, January 2010.

<sup>4</sup> Boubacar Diallo and Rukmini Callimachi, “Guinean Military Appoints Civilian Prime Minister,” Associated Press (AP), January 19, 2010; AFP, “Guinea Appoints Transition Government: Official,” February 15, 2010; and Camara Moro Amara, « Liste Complète des Membres du CNT », *Guineenews*, March 8, 2010.

<sup>5</sup> AP, “Guinea Interim Leader Rules Out Presidential Bid,” March 14, 2010.

<sup>6</sup> ICC Office of the Prosecutor, “ICC Prosecutor Confirms Situation in Guinea Under Examination,” October 14, 2009; (continued...)

## U.S. Relations with the Unity Government

U.S. officials have signaled approval of the *Joint Declaration* and of Konaté's leadership. On January 5, 2010, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson met with Konaté in Morocco, and on February 22 the International Contact Group on Guinea, of which the United States is a member, praised Konaté's "commitment to resolutely conduct the transition within the time frame agreed under the *Joint Ouagadougou Declaration*."<sup>7</sup> On March 10, a U.S. government delegation of security sector reform experts met with Konaté, expressing U.S. support for his leadership and for Guinea's transition.<sup>8</sup> Prior to the *Joint Declaration*, senior U.S. officials had expressed support for a transitional government led jointly by military and civilian officials.<sup>9</sup>

## Overview

Guinea is a socioeconomically impoverished but mineral-rich West African country, about the size of Oregon, which has experienced regular episodes of political turmoil. Despite its wealth in natural resources, Guinea's development indicators are poor even by regional standards, and standards of living are among the worst in the world.<sup>10</sup> Over the past two decades, Guinea was considered a locus of relative stability in a sub-region that has witnessed multiple armed conflicts. Between independence from France in 1958 and 1984, Guinea was ruled as a one-party, quasi-Socialist state under the charismatic but repressive leadership of Ahmed Sékou Touré. In 1984, Col. (later Gen.) Lansana Conté came to power in a military coup d'état following Touré's death. Conté oversaw some economic and political reforms, but his critics accused him of stifling Guinea's democratic development while allowing corruption and nepotism to flourish.<sup>11</sup> Upon Conté's death in December 2008, a military junta known as the National Council for Democracy and Development (CNDD) seized power, ushering in a new period of political uncertainty.

---

(...continued)

and *Report of the International Commission of Inquiry Mandated to Establish the Facts and Circumstances of the Events of 28 September 2009 in Guinea*, S/2009/693, December 18, 2009.

<sup>7</sup> State Department, Daily Press Briefing, January 5, 2010; and Eleventh Meeting of the International Contact Group on Guinea (ICG-G), *Final Communiqué*, February 22, 2010.

<sup>8</sup> Guinee24.com, « Les Etats Unis d'Amérique, Prêts à Soutenir la Guinée », March 11, 2010. The content of the meeting was separately confirmed to CRS by two participants.

<sup>9</sup> Comments by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State William Fitzgerald at the U.S. Institute of Peace, October 28, 2009.

<sup>10</sup> See e.g., U.N. Development Program (UNDP), "Guinea: 2007/2008 Human Development Report."

<sup>11</sup> Historical background on the Touré and Conté eras is provided in **Appendix B** of this report.

Figure I. Map of Guinea



## U.S. Interests in Guinea

U.S. interests and associated policy challenges in Guinea, currently and in recent years, have centered on democratization and good governance; counternarcotics; bilateral economic interests and relations; regional peace and security; and socioeconomic and institutional development.<sup>12</sup> Ensuring a transition to a democratically elected, civilian-led government is now a focus of U.S. governance concerns. Issues of interest to Congress may include stability and governance in West Africa; counter-narcotics; Guinea's natural resource wealth and extractive industries; and maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. Counternarcotics issues are a relatively recent area of engagement, as Guinea, among other countries in the region, has emerged as a reported transshipment point for cocaine en route from South America to Europe.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> In particular, in the final years of Conté's tenure, U.S. concern had focused on issues of governance, political stability and succession, and democratization prospects, notably following the Conté administration's violent suppression of a general strike in 2007 and in light of Conté's long-reported ill health. See U.S. Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, *Prospects for Peace in Guinea*, 110<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., March 22, 2007 (Washington: GPO).

<sup>13</sup> See CRS Report R40838, *Illegal Drug Trade in Africa: Trends and U.S. Policy*, by Liana Sun Wyler and Nicolas Cook.

A broader U.S. interest in Guinea is the maintenance of political stability and peace, both in Guinea itself and in the surrounding sub-region. In contrast to Guinea, each of its six neighbors—most notably Sierra Leone and Liberia—have suffered armed civil conflicts over the past two decades. Guinea’s relative stability has had several key implications for the United States. First, Guinea has not, to date, been the source of a significant challenge to U.S. international peace and security policies. This is notable in a region where U.S. diplomatic efforts and substantial humanitarian assistance have at times been devoted to ending or mitigating the effects of conflict. Second, Guinea has been able to act as a humanitarian partner to the United States by hosting hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing conflicts in neighboring states. Guinea was also able to help prevent a regional spillover of the conflicts in Sierra Leone and Liberia by repelling attacks on its territory by factions from Sierra Leone and Liberia backed by former President Charles Taylor of Liberia. At the same time, Guinean government policy has presented both confluences with and challenges to U.S. objectives in the region, in the form of Guinean intervention in the civil wars in Liberia and in Guinea-Bissau.<sup>14</sup>

Guinea is a recipient of U.S. bilateral aid, notably humanitarian assistance and funding for democracy and governance programs. Reflecting Guinea’s perceived role in regional stability, U.S. security assistance prior to the 2008 coup included military training for participation in peacekeeping missions as well as programs aimed at bolstering maritime security. In 2002, the U.S. military trained an 800-person Guinean Ranger unit to shore up border security. Guinean socioeconomic and state institutional development are also long-term U.S. policy objectives.

Guinea’s extractive industry sector is of financial and strategic interest to the United States. In addition to gold, diamonds, uranium, and potential oil and gas reserves, Guinea possesses an estimated 27% or more of global reserves of bauxite, a key component of aluminum, and Guinea provided 16% of U.S. bauxite and alumina imports between 2004 and 2007.<sup>15</sup> Several U.S.-based resource firms operate in Guinea. The large U.S.-based multinational aluminum firm Alcoa, for instance, is a major shareholder in the *Compagnie des Bauxites de Guinee*, a bauxite mining and export partnership with the Guinean state, while a much smaller U.S. energy firm, Hyperdynamics, holds the largest single license for offshore oil exploration.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> Former President Conté’s government hosted former Sierra Leonean President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah after he was deposed by a junta, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, in 1997. The Conté government also reportedly permitted the Liberian anti-Taylor rebel group Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) to maintain rear bases in southern Guinea, supplied LURD with arms, and periodically provided tactical military assistance to it, such as cross-border mortar and helicopter air fire support. Guinea also intervened militarily in Guinea-Bissau’s civil war in 1998 on behalf of the late former president, Joao Bernado “Nino” Vieira. On Guinea’s involvement in regional warfare, see Alexis Arieff, “Still Standing: Neighbourhood Wars and Political Stability in Guinea,” *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 47, 3 (September 2009): 331-348. On LURD, see CRS Report RL32243, *Liberia: Transition to Peace*, by Nicolas Cook.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Geological Survey, *2009 Bauxite and Alumina Survey*.

<sup>16</sup> Information on the two firms’ activities in Guinea are available online; regarding Alcoa, see <http://www.alcoa.com/guinea/en/home.asp>; regarding Hyperdynamics, see <http://www.hyperdynamics.com>.



### Hyperdynamics: A U.S. Firm's Involvement in Guinea's Nascent Oil Sector

Guinea's oil production potential is drawing interest among international oil firms in light of recent large oil discoveries in nearby countries. Hyperdynamics, a small independent Texas-based oil prospecting firm, holds exploration rights in Guinea under a Production Sharing Contract (PSC) signed with the country's government in 2006. The status of the PSC, however, is disputed, and the firm's claims may be under threat. The PSC, which is reportedly favorable to Hyperdynamics, was reportedly never approved by the late President Conté, and its terms—including the size of the block at issue—were later contested by the government, first under Conté and then by the CNDD. The latter has taken steps to reallocate part of Hyperdynamics's concession. In September 2009, Hyperdynamics—reportedly aided by former U.S. under secretary of state for African affairs, Herman Cohen, who reportedly now sits on the firm's board—signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the CNDD government. Valid for six months, it provided for a review of the 2006 PSC and a possible amendment of it “in line with international standards.”<sup>17</sup> The MOU reportedly also required the firm to relinquish all but 36% of its original PSC acreage, but reaffirmed for the duration of the MOU the validity of its remaining concession. Much of the relinquished portion was reportedly later acquired by China Sonangol International Holdings Limited, a firm co-owned by Angola's state oil company, Sonangol, and a Chinese holding company and international construction firm, Dayuan International Development Limited. Since the signing of the MOU in September, Hyperdynamics has reportedly sought U.S. and European government support for its concession claims. It has also been engaged in efforts to sell portions of its remaining block to other firms, but these efforts are dependent on the status of the MOU negotiations on the PSC, which remain under way. In mid-March 2010, the Guinean government agreed to extend the MOU by five days to enable it to complete its review of the proposed PSC amendment.<sup>18</sup>

### Recent Congressional Actions

In March 2007, the House Foreign Affairs Committee held a hearing on the political situation in Guinea and the eruption of mass anti-government demonstrations earlier that year. Several pieces of legislation related to Guinea have been introduced during the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress. These include H.Res. 1013 (Ros-Lehtinen), *Condemning the violent suppression of legitimate political dissent and gross human rights abuses in the Republic of Guinea*, introduced January 13, 2010, and passed by the House on January 20, 2010; and S.Res. 345 (Boxer), *A resolution deploring the rape and assault of women in Guinea and the killing of political protesters on September 28, 2009*, introduced on November 9, 2009, and passed by the Senate on February 22, 2010. Several Members criticized the CNDD following a violent military crackdown in September 2009.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Energy Weekly News*, “Hyperdynamics Corporation; Hyperdynamics Announces Extension of Memorandum of Understanding with Government of Guinea,” March 26, 2010

<sup>18</sup> Hyperdynamics Corporation, *Frontier Exploration in West Africa*, November 2009; *Africa Energy Intelligence*, “Hyperdynamics Switches Strategy,” September 9, 2009; “Hyperdynamics Wins at Last,” September 23, 2009; “Oil Companies Make Beeline for Conakry,” December 16, 2009 “Hyperdynamics in Lobbying Push,” January 6, 2010; “China Sonangol in Offshore Grab,” October 21, 2009; and “New Snub to Hyperdynamics,” March 17, 2010. See also Catherine Hunter, “Hyperdynamics Drums Up Support for Work on Guinea Acreage with Dana, Repsol,” *IHS Global Insight Daily Analysis*, February 2, 2010; Thomas Pearmain, “Hyperdynamics Divests of U.S. Oil Assets to Fund Guinea Operations,” *Global Insight Daily Analysis*, May 5, 2009; *Scandinavian Oil & Gas Magazine*, “Hyperdynamics Signs MoU With Guinea Government,” September 15, 2009; and U.S.-China Economic & Security Review Commission (USCC), *The 88 Queensway Group: A Case Study in Chinese Investors' Operations in Angola and Beyond*, by Lee Levkowitz, Marta McLellan Ross, and J.R. Warner, July 10, 2009.

<sup>19</sup> “Statement of Senator Russ Feingold on Guinean Soldiers Firing Into an Opposition Rally,” September 29, 2009; Office of Congressman Howard Berman, “Guinea's Military Leaders, Tarnished by Violence, Should Allow for Free and Fair Elections, Berman Says,” October 8, 2009; Yvette D. Clarke, “Movement of Guinean Women in the United States,” October 28, 2009, Congressional Record, Page E2648; Letter to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, signed by Senators Russ Feingold, Richard G. Lugar, Jeanne Shaheen, Johnny Isakson, Barbara Boxer, James M. Inhofe, Patrick J. Leahy, Sam Brownback, Robert P. Casey Jr., Benjamin Cardin, Mary L. Landrieu, Sheldon Whitehouse, Bill Nelson, and Roland W. Burris, October 15, 2009.

Section 7008, Title VII, Division F of P.L. 111-117, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010, signed into law on December 16, 2009, states that “none of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available pursuant to titles III through VI of this Act shall be obligated or expended to finance directly any assistance to the government of any country whose duly elected head of government is deposed by military coup or decree,” with an exemption for “assistance to promote democratic elections or public participation in democratic processes.” The prohibition covers bilateral economic assistance, international security assistance, multilateral assistance, and export and investment assistance; humanitarian aid is generally exempt. The Act (Section 7070) also restricts International Military Education and Training (IMET) programs in Guinea to Expanded IMET (E-IMET)—emphasizing respect for human rights and civilian control of the military.

## **The Conté Regime: Final Years**

The final years of Conté’s rule were marked by a decline in average living standards, the co-optation of power by members of Conté’s inner circle of businessmen and politicians, and increasing signs of public dissatisfaction. Conté’s supporters, however, argued that his leadership prevented Guinea from experiencing the kind of armed civil conflict and political instability that have afflicted its neighbors. While Guinea held several general elections under Conté, democratic gains under his leadership were limited, and power remained concentrated in his hands. For several years prior to his death, Conté reportedly suffered from a combination of diabetes, heart problems, and possibly leukemia, and rarely appeared in public. His critics contended that his illness and increasing reclusiveness rendered him incompetent for the presidency.

Conté maintained a careful balance between political and military factions, never publicly cultivated a designated successor, and generally brooked little public opposition to his rule. The president typically co-opted political opponents and suppressed protests by force or deflated them with pledges of food and fuel subsidies or limited policy reforms, which were often only partially fulfilled. Starting in 2006, growing public discontent with economic stagnation and high inflation, the slow pace of promised democratic reforms, extensive corruption, and Conté’s semi-autocratic leadership spurred a growing number of formerly rare strikes and protests. These peaked with nationwide anti-government demonstrations in early 2007. The disintegration of state institutions, together with Conté’s ill health and reclusiveness, also led to power struggles within the cabinet and Conté’s inner circle. Legislative elections were due to take place in 2007, but were repeatedly delayed, leaving the National Assembly with an expired mandate.

Divisions and restiveness within the military, often over pay and slow rates of promotion, also grew. Particularly notable was a May 2008 uprising led by junior army officers at Camp Alpha Yaya, the largest military base in Conakry and the headquarters of the army’s elite commando parachutist unit (known as the BATA). Mutinous troops exchanged fire with members of the presidential guard, and several people were reportedly killed, and dozens wounded, by stray bullets.<sup>20</sup> After a week of unrest, Conté met with mutiny leaders, and the government agreed to pay salary arrears of \$1,100 to each soldier, sack the defense minister, and grant promotions to junior officers, ending the uprising.<sup>21</sup> In mid-June 2008, military troops crushed an attempted mutiny by police officers in Conakry over alleged non-payment of back-wages and a failure to

---

<sup>20</sup> Kissy Agyeman, “Tension Mounts in Guinea in Wake of Army Revolt,” *Global Insight*, May 29, 2008.

<sup>21</sup> Saliou Samb, “Guinea Settles Army Pay Dispute With Mass Promotion,” Reuters, June 14, 2008.

implement pledged promotions. This culminated in a bloody shoot-out at a police headquarters that left at least four police officers dead, according to an official tally. Key members of the CNDD junta have claimed to have played key roles in the 2008 mutiny.<sup>22</sup>

From 2005 onwards, many analysts were concerned about the risk of ethnic or intra-military violence and instability should Conté die in office, and the potential impact on Guinea's fragile neighbors. Others, however, argued that Guineans' historically strong sense of national identity and social cohesion meant that such a scenario was unlikely. It was widely agreed that the National Assembly, judiciary, and opposition parties lacked sufficient cohesion, political power, or popular legitimacy to ensure a constitutional succession.<sup>23</sup> A post-Conté military coup was predicted by many observers, but it was unclear what military faction, if any, might prevail, as the armed forces were reportedly divided along ethnic and generational fault lines. It was also unclear whether a military seizure of power would permit a return to civilian rule and constitutional governance. International concerns over potential instability heightened with reports that trafficking activities were being facilitated or directly undertaken by government officials, members of the military, and Conté associates.

## The CNDD and the Transitional Government

Guinea is currently governed by a transitional government of national unity (GNU) made up of civilians and members of a military junta, the National Council for Democracy and Development (CNDD). The transitional government was formed under an agreement signed by the CNDD's two top leaders, the *Joint Declaration of Ouagadougou* (see above), in mid-January 2010.

The CNDD seized power shortly after President Conté's death on December 23, 2008, following a long illness. The junta appointed as national president a previously little-known military officer, Capt. Moussa Dadis Camara, and he held the position until the *Joint Declaration* was implemented. A member of the politically marginalized southeastern Guerzé ethnic group, Dadis Camara was a member of the elite BATA airborne commando unit and had previously served as director of Army fuel supplies, a reportedly powerful position that helped him build a base of support among the rank-and-file. Other powerful CNDD members included Gen. Sekouba Konaté, former commander of the BATA, who was named Defense Minister, and Gen. Mamadouba Toto Camara, the most senior CNDD officer in terms of rank, who was named Security Minister.

As of early 2009, the CNDD had 33 members, including six civilians. The CNDD's composition was ostensibly multi-ethnic, but many key posts appeared split between ethnic Malinké and *Forestiers*, a collective term for members of several small ethnic groups based in southeast Guinea.<sup>24</sup> Many believe that several military factions had envisioned carrying out a coup upon

---

<sup>22</sup> Claude Pivi, a CNDD member and low-ranking officer who was promoted to Minister of Presidential Security in January 2009, styled himself the leader of the Camp Alpha Yaya mutiny. Pivi also led the crackdown on the police uprising, according to witnesses. After he became president, Dadis Camara stated he had played a key role in the mutiny and in the negotiations that ended it.

<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, the National Assembly had arguably played the role of a vital check on executive power in February 2007, when legislators refused to extend a military state of siege that had provided cover for a massive crackdown on anti-government demonstrators.

<sup>24</sup> SSRC, *Policy Approaches to the Current Situation in Guinea*, March 2009: 4.

Conté's death, and that CNDD leaders were able to unite these factions through negotiation and promises of patronage. The junta was therefore assessed to be susceptible to internal divisions.<sup>25</sup>

In December 2009, Dadis Camara was evacuated to Morocco from Guinea to receive medical treatment after he was shot by a member of his personal guard. He currently resides in Burkina Faso, where he is reportedly convalescing. In January 2010, Defense Minister Konaté assumed executive powers as self-described Interim President. He invited the civilian opposition to join a national unity government, with opposition spokesman Jean-Marie Doré becoming prime minister. Prominent trade unionist Rabiadou Sera Diallo was named to head a National Transitional Council (CNT), a quasi-legislative body with 155 members.

## December 2008 Coup: Background

Under Guinea's constitution, National Assembly Speaker Aboubacar Somparé was mandated to assume power following Conté's death, with presidential elections to be organized within 60 days. Instead, on December 23, 2008, the CNDD announced on national television that it had taken power. The junta dissolved the constitution and the National Assembly, banned political and union activity, and promised elections within two years. The coup leaders justified their actions on the basis that Guinea's ruling elite had provided poor leadership.<sup>26</sup>

It was initially unclear what the composition of the CNDD was and whether the junta represented the military as a whole, or merely a faction.<sup>27</sup> On the afternoon of December 24, reportedly following tense internal negotiations, the CNDD announced that junta spokesman Capt. Moussa Dadis Camara had been chosen as president.<sup>28</sup> Dadis Camara paraded into downtown Conakry, where he was greeted by cheering crowds. Guineans' initially positive response to the CNDD appeared to be due to widespread dissatisfaction with Somparé, senior military staff, and other figures seen as representing the Conté era, along with relief that the coup had been carried out without bloodshed.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> International Crisis Group, *Guinea: The Transition Has Only Just Begun*, March 2009: 11; SSRC, *Policy Approaches to the Current Situation in Guinea*, March 2009: 4; *La Lettre du Continent*, "Un Chef, Une Armée, Des Clans!" October 8, 2009.

<sup>26</sup> In the broadcast announcing the coup, CNDD spokesman Captain Moussa Dadis Camara stated that the incumbent regime had permitted the systematic "embezzlement of public funds, general corruption, impunity established as method of government, and anarchy in the management of state affairs" leading to "a catastrophic economic situation." He also cited as justification a pattern of national poverty, despite the existence of abundant natural resources, the rise of drug trafficking, and diverse other crimes and patterns of poor governance. "Guinea: Army Dissolves Cabinet...." via Open Source Center.

<sup>27</sup> Witnesses suggested that the CNDD controlled Camp Alpha Yaya (Conakry's largest military base) and the main Radio-Télévision Guinéenne (RTG) offices, while "loyalist" soldiers who did not support the coup initially retained control of Camp Almamy Samory Touré (where the senior military leadership was based) and a subsidiary RTG station. On December 24, the CNDD accused the former government of importing mercenaries in a bid to regain power. (The claim did not appear to be borne out by events.)

<sup>28</sup> RFI, "Guinean Putschists Said Still Debating Choice of Leader," December 23, 2008 and AFP, "Guinea: Analysts Say Divisions Within Military Explain Attempted Coup," December 23, 2008, via Open Source.

<sup>29</sup> Arieff interviews, Conakry, December 24-26, 2008. While there is little public opinion data available, reports suggest Assembly Speaker Somparé, Conté's constitutional successor, was deeply unpopular. In 2005, the International Crisis Group reported that "Not one person consulted by Crisis Group expressed the desire for Somparé to take over. Once an ardent member of Sékou Touré's PDG party, he is often described as a Touré-era holdover, useful to the PUP primarily because of his tendency toward demagoguery and authoritarianism." (*Stopping Guinea's Slide*, 2005: 8.) In explaining their aversion to a constitutional succession led by Somparé, many pointed out that the National Assembly's five-year (continued...)

## International Reactions

The United States condemned the coup, called for “a return to civilian rule and the holding of free, fair, and transparent elections as soon as possible,” and announced restrictions on bilateral aid.<sup>30</sup> Other donors also announced aid restrictions, though France continued all development aid and military cooperation programs. ECOWAS and the AU, both of which have policies against accepting non-constitutional changes of power, condemned the coup and suspended Guinea’s membership in their organizations.<sup>31</sup>

## The Presidency of Capt. Moussa Dadis Camara

Upon assuming power, the CNDD immediately took steps to assert its authority, for instance by suspending civilian regional administrators and replacing them with military commanders. As the main public face of the CNDD, Dadis Camara sought to centralize power and neutralize potential opposition, both to the CNDD and to his dominant leadership within it. The CNDD-appointed civilian prime minister, Kabiné Komara, was viewed as having little decision-making power, and CNDD members directly controlled key government functions.<sup>32</sup> The CNDD also created several new ministerial-level positions and appointed members of the military or close civilian associates to fill them. Several key ministries, including security, defense, and finance, and the governor of the Central Bank, were attached to the presidency.

Signs of internal dissent within the military soon emerged following the CNDD takeover. Dadis Camara ordered 22 generals—nearly the entire senior military leadership under Conté—into retirement. Many were later arrested, primarily based on accusations of plotting against the CNDD. In January 2009, two CNDD officers were sacked for unclear reasons, and in April, as many 20 military officers, including a CNDD member, were reportedly arrested in a crackdown on an alleged counter-coup attempt. In July 2009, General Mamadouba “Toto” Camara, who is Security Minister and the most senior CNDD member in terms of military rank, was assaulted by members of the presidential guard. The incident heightened fears among some observers that the CNDD was vulnerable to internal fractures that could lead to violence.<sup>33</sup>

## Counter-Narcotics Efforts

Soon after taking power, Dadis Camara initiated populist moves to crack down on drug trafficking. These measures appeared designed to signal a break with the Conté regime, enhance the junta’s popularity, and respond to international and domestic concerns that Guinea, among other countries in the region, had become a transshipment hub for cocaine en route from Latin America to Europe. CNDD actions largely relied on the “naming and shaming” of alleged

---

(...continued)

mandate had expired in late 2007, and that the constitution had been amended in 2001 in a disputed referendum. For a critical analysis of this argument, see SSRC, *Policy Approaches to the Current Situation in Guinea*, March 2009: 2-3.

<sup>30</sup> AFP, “After Coup, U.S. Halts Aid to Guinea,” January 7, 2009; U.S. Embassy News Digest, January 29, 2009.

<sup>31</sup> ECOWAS Protocol A/SP1/12/01 on Democracy and Good Governance, December 2001, Article 1(b) and (c); and Constitutive Act of the African Union, Article 4(p).

<sup>32</sup> *Guineenews*, “La Liste Complète des Membres du Gouvernement de Kabiné Komara,” January 14, 2009.

<sup>33</sup> BBC News Online, “Troops Crawl After Guinea Attack,” July 24, 2009; United Nations, *Contingency Plan Conakry*, August 2009; AFP, “Guinée: Une ONG Redoute une ‘Dérive Dictatoriale,’ Dénonce la Torture,” August 12, 2009.

wrongdoers, rather than advancing institutional reform. At least 20 high-profile individuals, including top Conté officials, senior police officers, the former chief of the armed forces, and a son and brother-in-law of the late president were arrested in 2009 on drug trafficking allegations.<sup>34</sup> Dadis Camara personally interrogated several alleged traffickers on national television, in some cases eliciting detailed “confessions.” Many Guineans welcomed the attempt to pursue powerful figures in the former regime. However, concerns arose over a lack of due process in these cases, and some arrests appeared to be politically selective. Several CNDD members are believed by Guineans and the diplomatic community to have ties to the drug trade.

CNDD anti-drug efforts concentrated power in the presidency and sidelined civilian-led anti-drug agencies in favor of the military.<sup>35</sup> Dadis Camara created a new presidentially controlled agency, the State Secretariat for Special Services, to curb drug and human trafficking, money laundering, and organized crime. A military officer, Capt. Moussa Tiegboro Camara, was placed in charge of the agency, with a corps of gendarmes and soldiers for enforcement.<sup>36</sup> The agency’s legal mandate and authorities were not clearly defined, including vis-à-vis the judiciary or police.<sup>37</sup> This raised due process and human rights concerns, and some military elements participating in anti-drug efforts have been accused of abuses of power.<sup>38</sup>

### *Chemical Precursors*

In July 2009, the CNDD announced the discovery in Conakry of hundreds of pounds of chemicals that it said could be used for making drugs or bombs. The U.N. Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) concluded that some of the chemicals were drug precursors and that the seizure was “the best evidence yet for clandestine laboratory activity” in West Africa.<sup>39</sup> At the same time, no drugs were seized at the sites where chemicals were found. The CNDD agency charged with counter-narcotics announced it had arrested 11 people in connection with the seizures.

### **Anti-Corruption Efforts**

Dadis Camara also announced he would review the mining code and all mining and prospecting licenses, conduct an audit of the Conté government and foreign companies operating in Guinea, and initiate the privatization of water, energy, and telecommunications firms.<sup>40</sup> A committee was established to audit firms and individuals accused of having embezzled public funds, dodged tax

---

<sup>34</sup> Conté’s son Ousmane, a military officer, admitted involvement in trafficking, but denied being a “kingpin.” See Rukmini Callimachi, “In TV confessions, Curtain Lifted on a Narcostate,” AP, March 14, 2009; AFP, “Son of Guinea’s Late President Confesses to Drugs Trafficking,” February 26, 2009; Amadou Toure, “Society: ‘Biggest’ Drug Trafficker’s Presence in Conakry: Police DG Gives ‘Orders’,” *Guineenews*, May 5, 2007 via BBC Monitoring Africa; AP, “20 Indicted on Drug Charges in Guinea,” June 13, 2009, among others.

<sup>35</sup> The police anti-narcotics bureau, known as OCAD, was criticized in the past for being allegedly infiltrated by drug traffickers. However, the agency’s track record reportedly improved after a new director was appointed in late 2008.

<sup>36</sup> Arieff interview with security specialist, Conakry, February 2009.

<sup>37</sup> In June, Tiegboro Camara reportedly called on the Guinean population to “burn all armed bandits who are caught red-handed,” noting that prisons were already overcrowded. Reuters, “Burn Armed Robbers, Says Guinea Crime Chief,” June 2, 2009.

<sup>38</sup> Human Rights Watch (HRW), “Rein in Soldiers,” April 27, 2009.

<sup>39</sup> UNODC, “Evidence of Clandestine Laboratory Activity in West Africa,” July 31, 2009.

<sup>40</sup> Oxford Analytica, “Guinea: Junta under conflicting transition pressures,” April 9, 2009. In Transparency International’s 2008 Corruption Perception Index, Guinea placed 173 out of 180 countries.

payments, or entered into corrupt government contracts under Conté. The committee questioned mining and telecommunications executives, government contractors, businessmen, and former government officials.<sup>41</sup> While many Guineans welcomed the audits, some expressed concern that the process was extra-judicial and could be politically motivated or extortionist.<sup>42</sup>

Throughout 2009, Dadis Camara appeared to take unpredictable actions related to mining oversight, such as publicly threatening to close or nationalize various mining projects. These and other CNDD actions reportedly sparked fears among international investors concerned about the security of their assets.<sup>43</sup> Analysts noted that a global fall in primary commodity prices and a decrease in funding available for foreign direct investment had weakened the junta's bargaining position, causing some firms to consider withdrawing from Guinea.<sup>44</sup> However, in March 2010, the multinational mining company Rio Tinto and China's state-run mining firm Chinalco reportedly signed a non-binding, \$1.35 billion deal to develop a large iron ore mine in Simandou. Chinalco was said to acquire a 47% stake in the venture.<sup>45</sup>

### **China Minerals and Infrastructure Agreement**

In October 2009, the Guinean government announced a \$7 billion minerals-for-infrastructure agreement with a Hong Kong-based firm, the China International Fund (CIF).<sup>46</sup> Previously, following the December 2008 coup, China had appeared poised to abandon prior plans to invest in major infrastructure projects in Guinea due to perceived political instability and weak global

---

<sup>41</sup> Some of the accused were publicly interrogated on national television, including by Dadis Camara himself. Several had previously been cited during audits of public institutions carried out by former Prime Minister Lansana Kouyaté, who headed the government between February 2007 and May 2008 (see **Appendix B**).

<sup>42</sup> See, e.g., *Aminata.com*, "Les Audits à la Guinéenne: De la parade tout trouvée aux inquiétantes maladroites," February 2, 2009. The International Crisis Group expressed concern that "the process is more about getting hard cash for the new regime than re-introducing the rule of law." *The Transition Has Only Just Begun*, March 2009: 6.

<sup>43</sup> EIU, *Guinea: Country Report*, March 2009: 16; Andrea Hotter, "Guinea Ruler Worries Miners," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 16, 2009; Reuters, "Analysis-Guinea RUSAL Dispute Sends Warning Sign to Miners," September 16, 2009.

<sup>44</sup> In September 2009, a Guinean court canceled the 2006 sale of an alumina refinery to Russia's RUSAL company, following which the Guinean government asserted it now fully owned the refinery. The decision followed CNDD allegations that the original sale was made by corrupt officials at far less than market value. RUSAL contested the court's decision, and the Russian government accused Guinean authorities of attempting to "expropriate UC RUSAL's property." Saliou Samb, "Aluminium Slump Adds to Guinea Woes After Coup," Reuters, February 20, 2009; Ougna Camara, "La Révision des Conventions Pourrait Nuire au Secteur Minier Guinéen," *Les Afriques*, March 4, 2009; Reuters, "Guinea Court Reclaims Friguia from RUSAL," September 10, 2009; Reuters, "Guinea Court Reclaims Friguia from RUSAL," September 10, 2009, "RUSAL Lays Claim to Seized Guinea Alumina Refinery," September 11, 2009, and "Russia Says Guinea Alumina Ruling Could Damage Ties," September 11, 2009. A Guinean government delegation was said to be planning to travel to Moscow in October to decide the fate of the refinery. AFP, "Russia May Back Guinean Junta in Return for Business Ties: Report," September 29, 2009.

<sup>45</sup> In August 2009, Rio Tinto had announced it would pull its equipment from its Simandou iron ore project, earlier valued at \$6 billion, reportedly after the CNDD indicated it would uphold a decision made under Conté to unilaterally award half of Rio Tinto's concession to another company, BSG Resources Guinea, a subsidiary of Israeli businessman Benny Steinmetz's BSG Resources, a move that Rio Tinto pledged to fight in court. Robert Guy Matthews, "Mining Giants Are Forced to Lessen Global Ambitions," *The Wall Street Journal*, July 17, 2009; Neil Ford, "Junta Uncertainty Clouds Guinea Mining Sector," *African Business*, February 1, 2009; Andrea Hotter, "Guinea Mulls Independent Simandou Inquiry: Rio," *Dow Jones Newswires*, March 5, 2009; David Robertson, "Guinea Accuses Rio Tinto of Threat to Civil Peace," *The Times* (London), July 23, 2009; Talek Harris, "Rio Tinto Signs Huge China Deal as Staff Await Trial," AFP, March 19, 2010.

<sup>46</sup> Adam Nossiter, "Guinea Boasts of Deal with Chinese Company," *The New York Times*, October 14, 2009.

commodity markets.<sup>47</sup> While the CIF, which has been linked to multi-billion dollar deals in Angola and other African countries, is ostensibly a privately owned company, an investigative report released in July 2009 by the U.S.-China Economic & Security Review Commission found that “key personnel have ties to Chinese state-owned enterprises and government agencies.”<sup>48</sup> Chinese officials maintain that the company’s “actions have no connection with the Chinese government”; a Chinese Foreign Ministry statement nevertheless maintained that Chinese-Guinean cooperation “always obeys the rules of the market and of international practice.”<sup>49</sup> Negotiations over the agreement are thought to have been initiated prior to former President Conté’s death.<sup>50</sup> The deal has been criticized by Guinea’s traditional donors, including the United States, and by the Guinean opposition.<sup>51</sup>

## The Stalled Political Transition Under Dadis Camara

Dadis Camara initially committed to overseeing free and fair elections and a “peaceful transition” to a civilian-led government.<sup>52</sup> He also promised that neither he nor any CNDD member would run for office.<sup>53</sup> In March 2009, the CNDD agreed to an elections timetable proposed by a broad coalition of political parties, trade unions, and civil society groups known as the *Forces Vives* (“Active Forces”), in which both legislative and presidential elections would take place in 2009. However, in August 2009, the CNDD postponed elections until early 2010. Also in mid-2009, Dadis Camara also repeatedly indicated that he might choose to run for president, while continuing delays in electoral preparations provoked suspicion among many that junta members were reluctant to leave power. These fears intensified after security forces brutally suppressed mass civilian protests on September 28, 2009, as Dadis Camara claimed that he had little control over the military and was unable to step down.

### September 28 Protests

On September 28, 2009, some 50,000 protesters gathered in and around an outdoor stadium in Conakry to protest repeated election delays and Dadis Camara’s perceived intention to run for president. While the protest started peacefully, security forces responded by surrounding the

---

<sup>47</sup> Lydia Polgreen, “As Chinese Investment in Africa Drops, Hope Sinks,” *The New York Times*, March 25, 2009.

<sup>48</sup> USCC, *The 88 Queensway Group*. See also *Africa-Asia Confidential*, “Blood and Money in the Streets: China’s Business Ties to the Loathed Camara Junta Could Quickly Backfire,” October 20, 2009; Christopher Bodeen, “China-Guinea Deal Highlights Africa Business Ties,” AP, October 24, 2009.

<sup>49</sup> Reuters, “China Says Guinea Investment Not Government-Linked,” October 16, 2009; Xinhua, “La Coopération Entre la Chine et la Guinée Correspond aux Intérêts des Peuples des Deux Pays,” October 15, 2009.

<sup>50</sup> Adam Nossiter, “Guinea Boasts of Deal with Chinese Company,” *The New York Times*, October 14, 2009.

<sup>51</sup> Voice of America, “Guinea Opposition Calls China Deal Illegal,” October 14, 2009; and State Department, *Daily Press Briefing*, October 14, 2009.

<sup>52</sup> The CNDD initially promised to hold elections in 2010, but it later agreed to organize the vote by the end of 2009, following pressure from domestic opposition and civil society groups as well as donor countries. Conakry Radio Guinée Internationale, “Guinea: Army Dissolves Cabinet, Suspends Constitution After President’s Death [Statement by the Guinean Army following President Conte’s death, in Conakry on 23 December],” December 23, 2008, via Open Source Center; Guineenews, “‘Le Pouvoir Sera Remis A Un Civil Qui A Les Mains Propres,’ Dixit Dadis Camara,” February 10, 2009.

<sup>53</sup> Reuters, “Guinea Coup Chief Says Will Not Stand in Vote,” December 25, 2008; AFP, “Junta in Guinea Moots Late 2009 Elections,” February 7, 2009; *Jeune Afrique*, “Moussa Dadis Camara: ‘Je Suis un Incompris, et J’en Souffre,’” July 26, 2009.



stadium and opening fire with live ammunition on the crowd.<sup>54</sup> CNDD authorities had reportedly earlier attempted to ban the protest from taking place. Several political leaders were in the stadium and planned to address the crowd. Demonstrators reportedly chanted, “We want true democracy” and held signs reading “Down with the Army in Power.”<sup>55</sup>

The scale of violence in the military-led crackdown was unprecedented since nationwide anti-government protests in early 2007. The Guinean Organization for Human Rights (OGDH) reported that at least 157 people were killed, many by bullets, while over 1,000 were wounded. Many believe the death toll to have been significantly higher.<sup>56</sup> According to multiple reports, CNDD commanders ordered the bodies of those killed to be hidden in military camps or otherwise disposed of, rather than taken to the morgue.<sup>57</sup> Human Rights Watch reported that the military response was “premeditated” and that soldiers and gendarmes—including members of the Presidential Guard and of the CNDD’s anti-drug and anti-crime unit, both of which ostensibly answered to the presidency—directly fired on the stadium crowd and stabbed those fleeing with knives and bayonets.<sup>58</sup> Security forces also reportedly carried out lootings and rapes in residential areas of Conakry during the melee. Several local journalists were reportedly assaulted and threatened by soldiers.<sup>59</sup> In the days following the protests, lootings continued and sporadic confrontations were reported in several opposition strongholds in Conakry.<sup>60</sup> Several dozen protesters were detained in military and police facilities, where they were reportedly denied access by international monitors.<sup>61</sup>

### ***Sexual Assault***

The deliberate infliction of violence against women protesters provoked particular outrage among Guineans and the international community. According to numerous reports, soldiers molested and raped dozens of women openly in public, including in full view of military commanders.<sup>62</sup> Some women were also reportedly detained for days and tortured in police stations and military camps. While sexual violence by the military against civilians has been documented in the past—notably during anti-government protests in 2007—the public and large-scale nature of the attacks

---

<sup>54</sup> September 28 is a national holiday in Guinea, commemorating Guinea’s decision in 1958 to declare independence from France. Adam Nossiter, “In Guinean Hospital, Wounded Attest to Military Attack,” *The New York Times*, October 1, 2009; Radio France Internationale (RFI), “Un Militaire Témoigne,” October 1, 2009; *Jeune Afrique*, “Lundi Sanglant A Conakry: L’Enquête-Vérité,” October 4-10, 2009; AFP, “En Banlieue de Conakry, la Terreur ‘Quand les Bérets Rouges Sont Venus,’” October 1, 2009.

<sup>55</sup> AP, “Guinea Soldiers Shoot Dead at Least 10 Protesters,” September 28, 2009; Adam Nossiter, “Over 100 Protesters Killed in Guinea,” *The New York Times*, September 29, 2009.

<sup>56</sup> U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Guinea Victims of Security Forces Crackdown: Situation Report No. 3,” October 18, 2009; HRW, “Guinea: September 28 Massacre Was Premeditated,” October 27, 2009.

<sup>57</sup> Human Rights Watch (HRW), “Guinea: September 28 Massacre Was Premeditated,” October 27, 2009.

<sup>58</sup> HRW, “Guinea: September 28 Massacre Was Premeditated,” October 27, 2009.

<sup>59</sup> Reporters Without Borders, “‘We Know You, We’ll Make You Pay,’ Soldiers Tell Journalists,” October 8, 2009.

<sup>60</sup> CRS interviews with Conakry residents, September 29, 2009; RFI, “Calme Tendu Après la Sanglante Répression,” September 29, 2009.

<sup>61</sup> HRW, “Guinea: Free or Charge Detainees,” October 4, 2009; U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Guinea Victims of Security Forces Crackdown: Situation Report No. 3,” October 18, 2009.

<sup>62</sup> HRW, “Guinea: September 28 Massacre Was Premeditated,” October 27, 2009; AFP, “Guinée: J’ai Vu les Soldats Mettre le Fusil dans le Sexe des Femmes,” October 5, 2009; Adam Nossiter, “In a Guinea Seized by Violence, Women Are Prey,” *The New York Times*, October 6, 2009; U.N. IRIN, “Guinea: In the aftermath of rape,” October 9, 2009.

appeared to be a new tactic. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated that she was “appalled by the violence against women.”<sup>63</sup>

### *Opposition Leaders Injured, Arrested*

At least six opposition leaders were reportedly injured, and three were beaten by soldiers. Several were arrested before eventually being taken to a hospital, where they were temporarily barred from communicating with the media.<sup>64</sup> The leaders’ homes were reportedly looted by soldiers in their absence, and at least one was sprayed with machine gun fire.<sup>65</sup> Several of the leaders, notably Cellou Dalein Diallo and Jean-Marie Doré, later said they had been threatened with death.<sup>66</sup> (See **Appendix A** for profiles of selected Guinean political party leaders.)

### *CNDD Statements*

Dadis Camara stated that he was “disgusted” by the violence of September 28 and that “innocent people lost their lives.”<sup>67</sup> At the same time, the junta leader denied any responsibility for the killings and abuses, contending that he was not in command of the armed forces and suggesting that military disorder under Conté caused a breakdown in the chain of command.<sup>68</sup> Dadis Camara also accused the opposition of being at fault for the September 28 violence and for seeking to overthrow the government.<sup>69</sup> In February 2010, a CNDD investigation cleared Dadis Camara of any responsibility and found that Lt. Aboubacar “Toumba” Diakité—who was by then in hiding after shooting Dadis Camara in December 2009—carried sole blame for September 28 abuses.<sup>70</sup>

### *International Reactions*

In response to the crackdown, regional organizations and donors sought to further isolate the CNDD. The International Contact Group on Guinea, of which the United States is a member, called for a “new transitional authority” to lead toward elections.<sup>71</sup> Senior U.S. officials called for CNDD leaders to step down.<sup>72</sup> The United States imposed targeted travel restrictions on “certain members of the military junta and the government, as well as other individuals who support

---

<sup>63</sup> Congressional Quarterly Transcript, “Secretary of State Clinton Holds Press Conference with Pakistani Foreign Minister Qureshi,” October 6, 2009.

<sup>64</sup> AFP, “Guinée: Trois Opposants Ayant Été Hospitalisés ont Regagné Leur Domicile,” September 29, 2009; RFI, “Calme Tendu Après la Sanglante Répression,” September 29, 2009.

<sup>65</sup> AFP, “Guinée: Les maisons de deux opposants pillées par des militaires (témoins),” September 28, 2009.

<sup>66</sup> RFI, “Calme Tendu Après la Sanglante Répression,” September 29, 2009.

<sup>67</sup> AFP, “Guinea Under Fire After Scores Killed in Opposition Crackdown,” September 28, 2009; Agence Guinéenne de Presse, “Discours A La Nation du Chef de l’Etat,” November 3, 2009.

<sup>68</sup> *Jeune Afrique*, “Massacres du 28 Septembre: Dadis a-t-il été l’instigateur?” September 30, 2009; AFP, “Massacre en Guinée: Dadis Camara Ne Se Reconnaît ‘Aucune Responsabilité,’” October 4, 2009.

<sup>69</sup> Adam Nossiter, “Guinea Seethes as a Captain Rules at Gunpoint,” *The New York Times*, October 3, 2009.

<sup>70</sup> BBC News Online, “Guinea Aide Blamed for Massacre,” February 2, 2010.

<sup>71</sup> AFP, “Guinea Junta Must Step Aside: Contact Group,” October 13, 2009.

<sup>72</sup> Adam Nossiter, “U.S. Envoy Protests Violence in Guinea,” *The New York Times*, October 7, 2009; U.S. Fed News, “Guinea Violence ‘Vile Violation’ of Human Rights, Clinton Says,” October 9, 2009.

policies or actions that undermine the restoration of democracy and the rule of law in Guinea.”<sup>73</sup> The crackdown also provoked criticism by several U.S. Members of Congress.<sup>74</sup>

The European Union (EU) and AU announced targeted sanctions against CNDD members and certain associates; ECOWAS, the EU, and the AU additionally imposed an arms embargo.<sup>75</sup> France condemned the violence and announced the suspension of military aid; previously, France had been one of the only donors to continue such aid to the CNDD.<sup>76</sup> On September 30, the U.N. Security Council, chaired by U.S. Ambassador Susan Rice, urged Guinean authorities to “put an end to the violence, bring the perpetrators to justice [and] release all political prisoners, opposition leaders and individuals who are being denied due process under the law.”<sup>77</sup>

### *International Investigations into the Violence*

The report of a U.N. commission of inquiry, released on December 29, 2009, confirmed 156 deaths, 109 instances of sexual violence, “hundreds of other cases of torture or of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment,” and dozens of extrajudicial arrests. The commission concluded that crimes against humanity may have been committed, for which the Guinean state carried legal responsibility, in addition to the potential individual liability of Dadis Camara and select other commanders of the security forces.<sup>78</sup> The commission recommended that cases in which there was a “strong presumption” of crimes against humanity should be referred to the International Criminal Court. In a separate investigation, Human Rights Watch found that the violence of September 28 was “both organized and pre-planned” by forces reporting to Dadis Camara, including members of his personal guard. The organization concluded that Dadis Camara, along with several commanders of the security forces, should be investigated for criminal responsibility in potential crimes against humanity.<sup>79</sup> The chief prosecutor for the International Criminal Court (ICC) announced in October that he had opened a “preliminary examination” of the situation.<sup>80</sup>

---

<sup>73</sup> State Department, “Guinea: Travel Restrictions,” October 29, 2009.

<sup>74</sup> “Statement of Senator Russ Feingold on Guinean Soldiers Firing Into an Opposition Rally,” September 29, 2009; Office of Congressman Howard Berman, “Guinea’s Military Leaders, Tarnished by Violence, Should Allow for Free and Fair Elections, Berman Says,” October 8, 2009; Yvette D. Clarke, “Movement of Guinean Women in the United States,” October 28, 2009, Congressional Record, Page E2648; Letter to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, signed by Senators Russ Feingold, Richard G. Lugar, Jeanne Shaheen, Johnny Isakson, Barbara Boxer, James M. Inhofe, Patrick J. Leahy, Sam Brownback, Robert P. Casey Jr., Benjamin Cardin, Mary L. Landrieu, Sheldon Whitehouse, Bill Nelson, and Roland W. Burris, October 15, 2009.

<sup>75</sup> The EU adopted sanctions against members of the junta and “associated individuals responsible for the violent repression or the political impasse in the country.” African Union sanctions were announced on October 29 and include denial of visas, travel restrictions, and asset freezes targeting “the president and members of the CNDD, members of the government, and any other individuals, civilian or military, whose activities are aimed at maintaining the anti-constitutional status quo in Guinea” (CRS translation of French-language communiqué). Reuters, “West African Leaders Impose Arms Embargo on Guinea,” October 17, 2009; Voice of America, “EU Arms Embargo Imposed on Guinea,” October 27, 2009; Europolitique, “UE/Guinée: L’UE Adopte des Sanctions Contre la Guinée”; State Department, “Guinea: Travel Restrictions,” October 29, 2009; AU Peace and Security Council Communiqué, October 29, 2009. African Union, “AU Commission Expresses Grave Concern Over Situation in Guinea,” September 29, 2009.

<sup>76</sup> AFP, “France Condemns ‘Violent Repression’ in Guinea,” September 28, 2009; Reuters, “Clash Toll in Guinea Soars, France Cuts Aid,” September 29, 2009.

<sup>77</sup> VOA News, “UN Security Council Concerned About Guinea,” September 30, 2009.

<sup>78</sup> *Report of the International Commission of Inquiry Mandated to Establish the Facts and Circumstances of the Events of 29 September 2009 in Guinea*, December 29, 2009.

<sup>79</sup> HRW, *Bloody Monday: The September 28 Massacre and Rapes by Security Forces in Guinea*, December 2009.

<sup>80</sup> ICC Office of the Prosecutor, “ICC Prosecutor Confirms Situation in Guinea Under Examination,” October 14, 2009.

## Dadis Camara's Exit and Growing Instability

On December 3, 2009, Dadis Camara was shot in the head by a commander of his presidential guard, Aboubacar "Toumba" Diakité, who had been cited in international reports as a key instigator of the September 28 violence. Dadis Camara was evacuated to Morocco to receive medical care. There, he made no public appearances or statements, and it was unclear how badly he had been wounded or who was in charge in Guinea. After the shooting, Diakité went into hiding. He remains a fugitive sought by Guinean authorities.<sup>81</sup>

The shooting and subsequent power vacuum coincided with reports of rising ethnic tensions and instability within the CNDD and wider armed forces. Prior to December, reports had surfaced that the CNDD was recruiting hundreds of irregular fighters and training them as militias in camps located near Conakry.<sup>82</sup> The International Crisis Group reported in October 2009 that "junta members are recruiting militias from their own ethnic groups, or from pools of young men who have previously been involved in militia activity," warning that while divisions in the military are multi-faceted, ethnic tensions "could potentially act as an instability multiplier in the event of further breakdown."<sup>83</sup> News reports in November 2009 stated that millions of dollars worth of weaponry were being imported into Guinea and that foreign mercenaries were working for CNDD leaders and helping to train the militias.<sup>84</sup> At least a dozen targeted killings were reported in Conakry in October 2009 alone, with at least one government official murdered.<sup>85</sup>

## January 2010: Formation of a Government of National Unity

On January 15, 2010, Dadis Camara, CNDD Defense Minister Brig. Gen. Sekouba Konaté, and regional mediator Blaise Compaoré (president of Burkina Faso) announced a new political agreement in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, where Dadis Camara was receiving medical treatment.<sup>86</sup> The *Joint Declaration of Ouagadougou* stated that Konaté would assume executive powers as "Interim President" while forming a government of national unity by appointing a prime minister from the opposition *Forces Vives* ("active forces") coalition. The declaration added that the interim president, CNDD members, the prime minister, members of the national unity government, members of the National Council of Transition (a quasi-legislative body), and

---

<sup>81</sup> BBC News Online, "Guinea Aide Blamed for Massacre," February 2, 2010.

<sup>82</sup> Human Rights Watch (HRW), "Guinea: September 28 Massacre Was Premeditated," October 27, 2009. See also Richard Moncrieff, "Repression and Violence Are a Danger to the Whole Region," September 30, 2009; Reuters, "Foreign Gunmen Helped Guinea Crackdown—Witnesses," October 3, 2009; RFI, "Violences Imputées aux Milices Libériennes," October 6, 2009; HIS Global Insight, "Liberian Authorities Boost Border Control in Response to Guinean Refugee Crisis," October 21, 2009.

<sup>83</sup> International Crisis Group, *Guinea: Military Rule Must End*, October 16, 2009. See also U.N. IRIN, "Caravans and Kola Nuts—Keeping a Lid on Communal Tensions," October 30, 2009.

<sup>84</sup> *Beeld* (South Africa), "Secretive Mails Sent to Recruits," October 18, 2009; BBC, "'Big Guns' Herald Guinea's Crisis," October 31, 2009; Ed Butler, "Guinea's Military Junta Imports Millions of Dollars Worth of Arms Despite Embargo," *The Guardian*, November 3, 2009.

<sup>85</sup> Reuters, "Guinea Sees New Violence After Protest Crackdown," October 23, 2009; RFI via BBC Monitoring, "Twelve Opposition Supporters Said Killed in Guinea's 'Targeted Killings,'" October 23, 2009.

<sup>86</sup> In October 2009, ECOWAS appointed Blaise Compaoré to mediate between the CNDD and the opposition *Forces Vives* coalition. Some observers and Guineans expressed concern at Compaoré's appointment, as he himself came to power in a military coup and later legitimized his rule by running for president, and he has reportedly militarily or politically interfered in conflicts in Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Côte d'Ivoire.

active members of defense and security forces would be precluded from running for president. Finally, the declaration promised reorganization and reform of Guinea's security forces.<sup>87</sup>

Dadis Camara has since declined to return to Guinea. *Forces Vives* spokesman Jean-Marie Doré was named Prime Minister on January 19, and on February 16, he appointed a 34-person cabinet, composed of CNDD members and civilians. In early March, a National Transition Council (CNT) was inaugurated as a quasi-legislative body, with 155 members representing political parties, trade unions, civil society groups, and other socio-economic demographics.<sup>88</sup>

## Elections

Elections were repeatedly delayed in 2009, leading to growing civilian unrest. After Sekouba Konaté's assumption of power in January 2010 as interim president, the date for presidential elections was set for June 27, 2010. Legislative elections have not yet been scheduled. Some observers fear that elections could be delayed further due to a lack of political will and logistical challenges, in part associated with the onset of the rainy season. Interim President Konaté has stated that he will ensure that the presidential vote will be held as planned, and that he will not be a candidate, in accord with the *Joint Declaration of Ouagadougou*.<sup>89</sup> Prime Minister Doré has prevaricated in his commitment not to run for president, though the *Joint Declaration* ostensibly precludes his candidacy.<sup>90</sup>

## Election Administration and Funding

The organization of elections is being overseen by the Ministry for Territorial Administration and Political Affairs (MATAP) and the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI). However, these agencies' mandates remain unclear.<sup>91</sup> Voter registration has reportedly been completed, though the finalization of voting lists was reportedly ongoing at the time of writing. The elections are expected to cost roughly \$28 million dollars, including \$11.3 million for voter registration and \$16.6 million for organizing and holding the elections themselves. The Guinean government has disbursed the equivalent of \$7.6 million toward the electoral process. Additional funds that were designated by Conté's administration for use in legislative elections are also expected to be applied. Major donors to the electoral process include the United States, the European Union, France, Japan, Germany, and Spain. Donors do not expect a significant shortfall in election funding.<sup>92</sup>

---

<sup>87</sup> "Joint Declaration of Ouagadougou," State Department Office of Language Services, January 2010.

<sup>88</sup> Guineenews, « Liste Complète des Membres du CNT », March 8, 2010.

<sup>89</sup> AP, "Guinea Interim Leader Rules Out Presidential Bid," March 14, 2010.

<sup>90</sup> RFI, "New Guinea Premier 'Unaware' of Transition Pact; Vague on Presidential Ambitions," January 21, 2010, via BBC Monitoring; Doré comments during International Contact Group meeting, Conakry, February 22, 2010.

<sup>91</sup> Arieff interview with NGO expert on Guinea elections, May 2009.

<sup>92</sup> The \$28 million figure covers election costs from February 2010 through the June presidential elections; it does not include certain pre-election expenditures that occurred prior to February 2010. Funding is expected to come from previous budgeting for delayed legislative elections as well as newly committed funds. USAID responses to CRS queries, July 2009-March 2010.

## Human Rights and the Rule of Law

Human rights advocates and members of the international community have expressed concern over violations of human rights and the rule of law. Since early 2009, security forces have been accused of looting private homes and businesses in Conakry, carrying out arbitrary arrests and detentions, targeting political opponents of the CNDD, and other abuses of power.<sup>93</sup> Military leaders have also appeared to sideline the role of the judiciary and civilian law enforcement agencies in upholding the rule of law. Advocates have also raised concerns over an apparent rise in vigilante attacks, particularly after a CNDD official called on the Guinean population to “burn all armed bandits who are caught red-handed,” noting that prisons were already overcrowded.<sup>94</sup>

On September 28, 2009, security forces and militias loyal to the CNDD carried out massive violence against opposition supporters who had gathered in Conakry to protest the CNDD’s rule. In February 2010, two powerful CNDD members accused of involvement in the September 28 violence were appointed members of Konaté’s 23-person “presidential cabinet.”<sup>95</sup>

## Alleged Abuses by CNDD Members Under Conté’s Presidency

Several CNDD members have been accused of committing human rights abuses under Conté. They include individuals who were in a position of command responsibility during nationwide anti-government protests in January and February 2007, when Guinean security forces allegedly opened fire on demonstrators and committed other serious abuses against civilians.<sup>96</sup> CNDD member Pivi is believed by many to have overseen violent reprisals against police officers in June 2008 (during a military-led crackdown on a police mutiny in Conakry) and other abuses.

## Press Freedom

Guinea’s media are relatively diverse and represent a variety of views. However, local media outlets are largely concentrated in Conakry: newspapers rarely circulate outside the capital, most private FM radio stations have a small broadcast radius, and Internet access is confined to urban

---

<sup>93</sup> HRW, “Guinea: Rein in Soldiers,” April 27, 2009; *Guineeactu.com*, “Perquisition Chez la SG de la CNTG : Le Capitaine Tiègboro et Raby s’expliquent,” March 5, 2009; Human Rights Watch, “Guinea: Respect Rights of Opposition,” August 31, 2009.

<sup>94</sup> Reuters, “Burn Armed Robbers, Says Guinea Crime Chief,” June 2, 2009.

<sup>95</sup> They were “Minister of State at the Presidency for Presidential Security” Maj. Claude Pivi and “Minister of State at the Presidency for Counter-Narcotics and Crime” Lt. Col. Moussa Tiegboro Camara. *Report of the International Commission of Inquiry Mandated to Establish the Facts and Circumstances of the Events of 29 September 2009 in Guinea*, December 29, 2009; HRW, *Bloody Monday: The September 28 Massacre and Rapes by Security Forces*, December 16, 2009; HRW, “Ensure Redress for Stadium Massacre Victims,” March 4, 2010. For further details, see section entitled “September 28 Protests,” above.

<sup>96</sup> See HRW, “Guinea: Plan Elections and Hold Rights Abusers Accountable,” January 21, 2009. An investigation by a coalition of local human rights organizations concluded that 186 people were killed and over a thousand injured during the protests. In addition, human rights activists allege that security forces engaged in arbitrary arrests, mistreatment of detainees, and rape. See Coalition Pour la Défense des Victimes des Evénements de Janvier et Février 2007 en République de Guinée, *Rapport sur les Violations Commises en République de Guinée Pendant les Evénements de Janvier et Février 2007*, November 2007; and HRW, *Dying for Change: Brutality and Repression by Guinean Security Forces in Response to a Nationwide Strike*, April 24, 2007.

centers. Adult literacy is under 30%.<sup>97</sup> Nonetheless, much of the population has access to shortwave radio, including international news broadcasts focusing on Africa. The CNDD under Dadis Camara tightly controlled the national television station, the only locally broadcast channel. Local journalists report widespread self-censorship and a lack of access to official information. In 2009, the CNDD reportedly detained journalists on multiple occasions for reasons that were not publicly explained or that related to alleged press criticisms of the CNDD.<sup>98</sup>

## **Economic Issues**

Guinea's economy relies heavily on primary commodity exports, notably bauxite (a mineral ore used to produce aluminum), gold, diamonds, uranium, and iron ore. Guinea is thought to have the world's largest bauxite reserves, and joint-venture bauxite mining and alumina operations have historically provided about 80% of Guinea's foreign exchange.<sup>99</sup> Guinea may also have oil and gas reserves, and has significant hydro-electric and agricultural potential. Prior to 2008, Guinea's natural resources sector was set to expand, partly in response to increasing global commodity prices. In early December 2008, the African Development Bank announced the approval of a \$200 million loan to partly finance a \$6.3 billion bauxite mining and alumina refinery project in Guinea. The project was reportedly expected to be the largest ever investment in the country.<sup>100</sup>

However, the global economic crisis, perceived political instability, and populist threats by the junta to close or seize corporate mining projects are reportedly causing mining investment projects to be delayed or canceled.<sup>101</sup> Many observers believe the Guinean government is facing severe fiscal challenges due to corruption, mismanagement, and the scaling back of international investment. Reports suggest government finances have been depleted due to corruption and mismanagement, a drop in the collection of import duties, the fall since 2008 in global mineral commodity prices, and the freezing of some foreign aid.<sup>102</sup> Guinean officials acknowledged in September 2009 that government revenues from the largest bauxite consortium, CBG, would likely fall by 60% in 2010 due to lower prices and export volumes.<sup>103</sup>

---

<sup>97</sup> CIA *World Factbook* online.

<sup>98</sup> See, for instance, Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA), "Guinea Alert: Soldiers Brutalise Journalist, Briefly Detain Him," March 20, 2009; MFWA, "Guinea Alert: Journalist and Family Held Incommunicado," June 5, 2009; MFWA, "Guinea Alert: Journalist Arrested, Detained Incommunicado," August 13, 2009; MFWA, "Guinea Alert: Cameraman Detained Briefly and His Film Destroyed," January 14, 2009; HRW, "Guinea: Respect Rights of Opposition," August 31, 2009; and International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), "IFJ Condemns Threats on Freedom of Expression in Guinea," September 4, 2009.

<sup>99</sup> State Department, "Background Note: Guinea." The Compagnie des Bauxites de Guinée (CBG) is a joint venture in which 49% of the shares are owned by the Guinean Government and 51% by an international consortium led by Alcoa and Rio Tinto-Alcan.

<sup>100</sup> EIU, *Guinea: Country Report*, March 2009: 17.

<sup>101</sup> EIU, *Country Report: Guinea*, June 2009; Lydia Polgreen, "As Chinese Investment in Africa Drops, Hope Sinks," *The New York Times*, March 25, 2009.

<sup>102</sup> EIU, "Guinea Economy: Government faces fiscal crisis," June 1, 2009. The EIU has elsewhere noted that "the poor quality of fiscal reporting in Guinea makes it difficult to estimate the size of the fiscal deficit" (EIU, *Guinea: Country Report*, March 2009: 8).

<sup>103</sup> Reuters, "Guinea Bauxite Income Seen Down 60 Pct in 2010," September 28, 2009, and "Factbox-Guinea's Major Mining Operations," September 16, 2009. CBG is thought to account for some 80% of Guinea's mining income.

## Socioeconomic Conditions

Despite its resources, living standards in Guinea are among the worst in the world.<sup>104</sup> Poor living conditions helped spark nationwide anti-government protests in 2007, and some analysts fear that the perception of continued economic decline could lead to further unrest. Access to running water and electricity is rare, even in Conakry and other urban centers. The World Health Organization lists Guinea as a “country under surveillance” with respect to possible complex humanitarian emergency needs.<sup>105</sup> According to figures released by the United Nations in May 2009, the rate of chronic malnutrition increased over the previous two years, from 34.8% to 36.2%; 8.3% of Guinean children are thought to suffer from serious malnutrition.<sup>106</sup> The adult prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS is estimated at 1.6%.<sup>107</sup>

## U.S. Policy Issues

U.S. officials have signaled approval of the unity government led by Konaté. At the same time, restrictions on U.S. assistance to Guinea and targeted visa restrictions imposed in October 2009 remain in place. Following the September 28 violence, the Peace Corps Volunteers were evacuated and the program was suspended, as were public diplomacy programs such as educational and cultural exchanges.

Potential issues for U.S. policy may include the following:

- Monitoring of the timeline for and progress toward the conduct of elections and of the state of human rights and the rule of law.
- The resumption, continuation, or further restriction of selected foreign assistance programs, including support for Guinea’s electoral process and medium- to long-term democratization and governance reform efforts.
- The continued enforcement of current targeted sanctions against selected CNDD members and associates, and possible alterations of this sanctions regime.
- Congressional oversight of planned State Department support for Guinean security sector reform (SSR) and possible additional assistance for SSR, which many analysts see as a prerequisite for long-term stability in Guinea.

## Foreign Aid<sup>108</sup>

In response to the coup, the United States suspended bilateral assistance to Guinea, with the exception of humanitarian and democracy-promotion assistance. The United States also suspended most programs that required working directly with central government agencies;

---

<sup>104</sup> U.N. Development Program statistics at [http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/country\\_fact\\_sheets/cty\\_fs\\_GIN.html](http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/country_fact_sheets/cty_fs_GIN.html).

<sup>105</sup> World Health Organization, *Africa Weekly Emergency Situation Update*, February 8, 2010.

<sup>106</sup> U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), *Information Bulletin May 2009*.

<sup>107</sup> CIA World Factbook.

<sup>108</sup> Figures in this section are drawn from the FY2011 Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations, except where otherwise indicated.



exceptions were made for some health and education projects.<sup>109</sup> In practice, security assistance was suspended, while most non-military aid fit into permitted categories. However, while this policy broadly conformed to congressional directives, legal restrictions on bilateral assistance to post-coup governments were not triggered.<sup>110</sup> U.S. officials have indicated that elections must take place in order for the aid suspension to be fully lifted. Funding for suspended assistance programs has been cut in some cases, while in others, it has been reprogrammed toward non-suspended activities.

It is likely that many of the same goals that defined U.S. aid priorities prior to the coup would continue to be pursued if democratic elections occur as planned. In its FY2011 Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations, the Obama Administration stated that “assuming a credibly elected, civilian government is in place by FY2011, U.S. assistance will play a critical role in supporting the transition of this fragile country. U.S. assistance in FY2011 will focus on fostering more effective law enforcement and judicial systems, greater democracy, good governance, better health services, and improved economic opportunity.”

### **Elections and Democracy Promotion**

The Obama Administration has stated that the primary U.S. objective is to assist “peaceful, democratic change” in Guinea.<sup>111</sup> Programs supporting Guinea’s electoral process are not affected by the suspension in U.S. aid. (U.S. democracy and governance programs in Guinea are funded through the Development Assistance [DA] account, other aspects of which are discussed below.) The Obama Administration’s FY2011 request for democracy and governance funding is for \$5.527 million, with an estimated \$8.639 million appropriated for democracy and governance programs in FY2010. U.S. support for Guinea’s electoral process will be largely implemented through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). USAID programmed \$5,526 million for ongoing electoral assistance programs in FY2009, making the United States the second-largest electoral donor after the EU.<sup>112</sup> U.S. officials have not publicly outlined what, if any, criteria might be required with respect to the continuation or suspension of electoral assistance or democracy and governance programs.

### **Security Assistance and Counter-Narcotics Cooperation**

Security assistance to Guinea is currently suspended. The Obama Administration has indicated that if the aid suspension is lifted, the U.S. government will resume security assistance

---

<sup>109</sup> Programs that involve working with district and municipal administrators who were elected in 2005 local elections were likewise exempted; the United States held that these elections, “though flawed, were Guinea’s best-conducted elections ever.” *FY2008 Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations*.

<sup>110</sup> The Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-8, Division H, Title VII, section 7008) barred direct assistance “to the government of any country whose duly elected head of government is deposed by military coup or decree,” with the exception of democracy promotion assistance. Such provisions, which have been included in annual appropriations legislation since 1985, are often referred to as “Section 508” sanctions. The State Department determined that the December 2008 coup in Guinea did not trigger legal sanctions because the deposed government had not been “duly elected.” (State Department response to CRS query, March 2010.)

<sup>111</sup> *FY2011 Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations*.

<sup>112</sup> Information provided by USAID, March 2010. U.S. programs are expected to include training and technical assistance for Guinea’s National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI), training for electoral agents including poll workers, training for political parties and candidates, voter education, civil society and media election monitoring and oversight, and the provision of electoral materials.

programs.<sup>113</sup> At the same time, concerns over alleged human rights abuses by the Guinean military have, at times, restricted military training programs, and Congress has restricted International Military Education and Training (IMET) assistance in Guinea to “Expanded” IMET, which emphasizes human rights and civilian control of the military.<sup>114</sup>

Prior to the coup, U.S. security assistance officials had informally planned to provide training and equipment in support of maritime and air space security and military training under the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance Program (ACOTA) and through the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program. The State Department had additionally requested \$100,000 in FY2009 and \$110,000 in FY2010 for International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE) counter-narcotics programs.<sup>115</sup>

## **Multilateral Aid**

Development assistance and anti-poverty programs administered by multilateral organizations were affected by the coup. In 2009 the World Bank stopped disbursing roughly \$200 million in outstanding loans designated for programs related to health, transportation, education, and other sectors, due to political uncertainty following the coup as well as Guinea’s subsequent failure to make sufficient payments on its existing loans.<sup>116</sup> The International Monetary Fund-led Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, which was due to provide additional government financing in 2009, has not advanced since Conté’s death.<sup>117</sup>

---

<sup>113</sup> *FY2011 Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations.*

<sup>114</sup> Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010, P.L. 111-117, Division F, Title VII, Section 7070.

<sup>115</sup> *FY2011 Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations.*

<sup>116</sup> Arieff interview with World Bank officials, May 2009 and February 2010. The World Bank classifies Guinea as one of the world’s 78 poorest countries, which qualifies Guinea for loans through the Bank’s International Development Association (IDA). IDA lends money (credits) on concessional terms, meaning that credits have no interest charge and repayments are stretched over 35 to 40 years, including a 10-year grace period. IDA also provides grants to countries at risk of debt distress.

<sup>117</sup> The HIPC Initiative is a comprehensive approach to debt reduction for heavily indebted poor countries pursuing IMF- and World Bank-supported adjustment and reform programs. At the time of the coup, the program was on track. Reaching the HIPC “completion point” would grant Guinea an estimated relief of \$2.2 billion and reduce debt service by approximately \$100 million the first year (Arieff interview with IMF official, May 2009). Part of the reason the program has been halted is that it relies heavily on funds from donors (EIU, *Guinea Country Report*, June 2009: 18).

## Appendix A. Profiles of Selected Guinean Political Party Leaders<sup>118</sup>

There are over 60 registered political parties in Guinea, according to the website of the national electoral commission.<sup>119</sup> Conté's political party, the Party for Unity and Progress (PUP), fractured following the president's death, and it is not expected to garner significant support in a popular vote. Parties expected to compete in elections include a handful of former opposition parties as well as dozens of new parties formed after Conté's death. Many parties are generally perceived as having an ethnic or regional base, and as having little organizational capacity. Leaders' electoral potential is difficult to assess, particularly as Conté ran essentially unopposed in Guinea's most recent presidential election, in 2003, amid an opposition boycott.

Jean-Marie Doré, Union pour le Progrès de la Guinée (Union for Guinean Progress, UPG)

In January 2010 Doré was appointed Prime Minister of the government of national unity formed in accordance with the *Joint Declaration of Ouagadougou*. A longtime opponent of Conté and former close associate of Sékou Touré, Doré ran for president in 1998 but garnered less than 2% of the vote. He was elected to the National Assembly in 2002. Following the December 2008 coup, Doré served as spokesman of the opposition "Forces Vives" coalition of political parties and civil society groups. Doré is a member of the Guerzé ethnic group and a Christian.

Alpha Condé, Rassemblement du Peuple Guinéen (Rally of the Guinean People, RPG)

The RPG is believed to be Guinea's largest political party, and Condé is a potential front-runner for the presidency. At the same time, he has been criticized for living overseas during much of Guinea's recent history. Condé's base is thought to be the Malinké ethnic group, concentrated in Guinea's northeast, though he is believed to draw some cross-ethnic support. A former exiled opponent of founding president Ahmed Sékou Touré during Guinea's first republic, Condé challenged Lansana Conté in presidential elections in 1993 (Guinea's first multiparty election) and 1998. He received 19% and 16% of the vote, respectively, in these elections; both were marred by reports of irregularities and fraud. Following the 1998 election, Condé was arrested for trying to leave the country "illegally" and attempting to overthrow the government. He was sentenced to five years in prison in 2000, but released in 2001 on a presidential pardon. Condé and the RPG boycotted the 2002 legislative election and the 2003 presidential election.

Sidya Touré, Union des Forces Républicaines (Union of Republican Forces, UFR)

Touré served as prime minister from 1996 to 1999. Many Guineans credit him with initiating government reforms as head of a relatively technocratic government appointed by Conté amid a faltering economy. A member of the tiny Diakhanké ethnic group, Touré is believed to benefit from significant cross-ethnic appeal. However, his personal popularity is thought to far outshine his party's ability to garner votes in a legislative contest. Touré's base is in Conakry, both because he is from the coast and because his time as prime minister is remembered as a period in which

---

<sup>118</sup> The following profiles are drawn from Arieff interviews, news reports, and International Crisis Group publications.

<sup>119</sup> Available at <http://www.ceniguinee.org/index.php>.

government services in the capital, such as running water and electricity, noticeably improved. In 2004, Touré was accused of plotting a coup; many believe the charges were politically motivated.

Cellou Dalein Diallo, Union des Forces Démocratiques de Guinée (Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea, UFDG)

Diallo held several ministerial portfolios starting in the 1990s, and served as prime minister from late 2004 until mid-2006. He was appointed to head the UFDG in 2007, succeeding founder Mamadou Bâ (who had garnered over 24% of the vote in the 1998 presidential election); Bâ had earlier led a split from the Union pour le Progrès et le Renouveau (Union for Progress and Renewal, UPR).<sup>120</sup> In January 2009, members of the military raided Diallo's Conakry home and accused him of hiding weapons and recruiting "mercenaries." The junta later denounced the raid and claimed it was the work of rogue soldiers. Diallo oversaw local council elections in December 2005, which were thought to be Guinea's most free and fair (despite some flaws), but he has also been dogged by corruption allegations and the perception that he was too close to Conté. Diallo and the UFDG are seen as relying primarily on an ethno-regional base among Guinea's Peuhl (Fulbe) community of the northern Fouta Djallon region.

Mamadou Mouctar Diallo, Nouvelles Forces Démocratiques (New Democratic Forces, NFD)

Diallo, head of the recently formed NFD party, is a relative newcomer to Guinean politics who has taken an active role in opposing the CNDD. Diallo was reportedly threatened with arrest in August 2009, and he was one of several opposition leaders to be targeted by the military during the protests of September 28, 2009.

François Lonsény Fall

A career diplomat and former Guinean representative to the United Nations, Fall served as foreign minister for two years and prime minister for two months in 2004. He was praised by some Guineans for choosing to resign as prime minister because, he said, he could no longer work with Conté. Fall remained abroad after his resignation and worked for the United Nations as the Secretary-General's special envoy for Somalia, Burundi, and the Central African Republic; his time in exile is thought to detract from his popularity. He returned to Guinea in March 2009 to launch a presidential campaign.

Lansana Kouyaté, Parti de l'Espoir pour le Développement National (Party for Hope and National Development, PEDN)

A career diplomat, Kouyaté was appointed to serve as a "consensus" prime minister in early 2007 amid attempts to end nationwide anti-government protests. Kouyaté's appointment was initially met with widespread optimism, and he reportedly benefited from enormous popularity during his first months in office. However, despite some successes, such as an audit of government institutions and the renegotiation of international debt-relief agreements, his attempts to initiate sweeping institutional reforms stalled. In May 2008, Conté's decision to sack Kouyaté via presidential decree met with little organized protest. Kouyaté left the country, but returned in early 2009 and founded his own party in April.

---

<sup>120</sup> Led by Ousmane Bah, the UPR was the largest opposition bloc in the National Assembly, with 20 seats, before the legislature was dissolved by the CNDD. However, the last legislative elections were boycotted by the RPG. The UPR's electoral appeal is untested following its fragmentation.

## Appendix B. Touré and Conté Regimes: Historical Background

### Ahmed Sékou Touré and the Guinean “Revolution” (1958-1984)

Alone among France’s African colonies, Guinea gained independence in 1958 after Guineans overwhelmingly voted for immediate sovereignty rather than membership in the self-governing but neocolonial French Community. Ahmed Sékou Touré, a trade unionist and militant anti-colonialist, spearheaded the movement for independence, which caused France to precipitously withdraw all aid and remove many physical assets, such as port equipment. After the break with France, Guinea’s fledgling government received significant technical and economic assistance from the Soviet Union and other Eastern Bloc countries. While adopting a radical anti-Western public stance, Guinea nevertheless also accepted aid from the United States which, seeking to counter Soviet influence, sponsored a Peace Corps program and provided other assistance. U.S. companies also maintained investments in Guinea, notably in the mining sector.

Touré’s Parti Démocratique de Guinée (PDG)—Guinea’s sole political party at the time—centralized control over all aspects of political, economic, and cultural life. The economic system and national educational program were ostensibly designed to eradicate all traces of Western colonial and neo-colonial influence. External travel for Guineans was restricted, while foreigners’ entry and movements within Guinean territory were strictly monitored. Touré allowed foreign multinational firms to form joint ventures with the government to mine and process Guinea’s large bauxite reserves through the use of industrial enclaves largely unlinked to the local economy. Nonetheless, enormous economic hardship was the norm for nearly all Guineans, especially after Touré attempted to ban all private trade in the mid-1970s. Broad opposition to such policies, which was catalyzed by the 1977 “Market Women’s Revolt,” led to an easing of economic control and other reforms during the late 1970s. After this point, Guinea turned increasingly toward the West for financial and technical aid.

Touré’s government was strongly nationalist and espoused a non-ethnic, unified Guinean identity. The Bureau Politique National, the country’s highest decision-making body, included members of each of Guinea’s major ethnic groupings. At the same time, members of the president’s extended family held key state positions and reportedly wielded significant power behind the scenes. Additionally, some government programs disproportionately affected certain regions. For example, the “demystification” campaign of the mid-1960, which sought to eradicate “backwards” cultural practices, mainly targeted the diverse ethnic groups of Guinea’s southeastern Forest region,<sup>121</sup> while in 1976 the regime specifically targeted members of the Fulbe (Peulh) ethnic group after Touré announced that he had discovered a Fulbe “plot” to destabilize the country. Overall, state-sponsored repression affected Guineans of all ethnicities, including members of Touré’s own Malinké ethnic group.

The first two decades of Touré’s presidency were marked by increasingly repressive practices as Touré claimed that France and other neo-colonial powers were engaged in a “permanent plot” to undermine the Guinean “Revolution.” The government regularly denounced various anti-

---

<sup>121</sup> The many ethnic groups who predominantly reside in the Forest region, of which the largest are Kissi, Guerzé (also known as Kpelle), and Toma (Loma), have acquired an ethno-regional identity, known in Guinea as *Forestier*.

government schemes purportedly led by counter-revolutionary Guineans and conducted regular purges of the civilian and military bureaucracies. The PDG also instilled a pervasive culture of surveillance and secrecy. A civilian militia was created for public security and to check the power of the military. Several thousand Guineans are believed to have disappeared in government detention under Touré, though precise figures are not available.<sup>122</sup> As many as a third of Guinea's population (some two million people) fled the country during the Touré era, though many left for predominantly economic, rather than explicitly political, reasons.<sup>123</sup> Many long-time observers suggest that Guineans, even those born after Touré's death in 1984, remain deeply influenced by the PDG regime, similar to the populations of post-socialist states in eastern Europe.<sup>124</sup>

## Guinea under Lansana Conté

Sékou Touré died during heart surgery in the United States in March 1984, leaving no clear successor and a government with little popular support. In early April, a military junta calling itself the Military Committee of National Recovery (*Conseil Militaire de Redressement National*, CMRN) took power in a bloodless coup. Colonel (later General) Lansana Conté, a senior officer and former member of the French colonial military, soon emerged as the leader of the CMRN.

The coup leaders suspended the constitution, disbanded Touré's ruling party (executing several of its formerly most powerful members), banned all political activity, and ruled by decree. However, the CMRN also relaxed the level of repression and initiated a few improvements in human rights, including shuttering the prison block at Camp Boiro, a notorious military base in Conakry that served as a detention center for Guineans accused by Touré of anti-government activities.

In July 1985, while attending a regional conference, Conté faced a coup attempt by a rival CMRN member, Diarra Traoré, an ethnic Malinké who had served as Vice President following the coup but who had later been demoted. The putsch was suppressed by pro-Conté troops. Purges of putative anti-Conté military elements, including military trials and executions of accused coup participants, followed, as did vigilante attacks on ordinary Malinkés and looting of their businesses. Such acts were publicly praised by Conté. These events were seen as lessening the influence of Malinkés within the military and state institutions, but they also highlighted ethnic divisions in Guinea and politicized ethnic identity among the President's fellow Soussou people.

---

<sup>122</sup> There has never been a comprehensive independent investigation into the PDG's detention practices. The Association of Camp Boiro Victims, a Conakry-based organization that seeks the rehabilitation of former detainees and the disappeared, believes as many as fifty thousand Guineans may have died in detention, though international researchers generally cite a lower number. Amnesty International estimated that 2,900 prisoners had disappeared in Guinea between 1958 and 1982 (Amnesty International, *Emprisonnement, 'Disparitions' et Assassinats Politiques en République Populaire et Révolutionnaire de Guinée*, Paris: Editions Francophones d'Amnesty International). One historian estimates 2,500 disappeared during Touré's presidency (Maligui Soumah, *Guinée de Sékou Touré à Lansana Conté*, Paris: L'Harmattan, p. 21).

<sup>123</sup> A. O. Bah et al., "Les Guinéens de l'Extérieur: Rentrer au pays?" *Politique Africaine* 36 (December 1989): 22.

<sup>124</sup> For example, the anthropologist and Guinea expert Mike McGovern has written that "remnants [of Touré's regime] persist in bureaucratic habits such as the strict surveillance of foreigners on Guinean territory... and citizens' habits such as that of looking to the State to solve all problems, in lowering for example the price of merchandise such as gasoline and rice, or further in omnipresent rhetoric... considering merchants as greedy saboteurs rather than as entrepreneurs "naturally" seeking to conserve their operating margins amid market fluctuations. A certain nostalgia for the Touré era is equally perceptible, even if that period was one of suffering and privations." "Sékou Touré Est Mort," *Politique Africaine* 107 (October 2007): 134-5.

As president, Conté steadily consolidated power. In seeking to resurrect the devastated economy, Conté pursued a pragmatic program of economic liberalization and reforms, including, for example, currency devaluation, a floating foreign exchange system, allowances for the creation of agricultural markets, and the privatization of state firms. Though Guinea remained somewhat economically isolated and strongly nationalist, Conté's reforms led to improvements in foreign relations and aid cooperation with donors. This included a moderate rise in U.S. assistance. In 2006, the government authorized Guinea's first private radio stations, making the country the last in West Africa to allow private broadcasting. The move ended a state radio monopoly in place since 1958, and was seen as complying with government agreements to relax regulation of political expression.

### **Tenuous Democratization**

The ostensible need to ensure state security in the wake of the 1984 coup gave Conté latitude to extend his control over the state administrative and security apparatus. The president ruled by decree for nearly a decade. In December 1990, a new constitution, drafted by a transitional CMRN legislative body, was approved by popular referendum. Though it foresaw a five-year transition to elections, the constitution gave the president wide-ranging decision-making and governance powers. It also created the basis for a highly personalized regime based around the presidency, manned by officials drawn from across Guinea's ethnic groups but drawing heavily from the President's Soussou ethnicity. In 1991, Conté dissolved the CMRN, replacing it with a Transitional National Recovery Commission, which promulgated laws based on the constitution and was charged with overseeing a transition to electoral democracy.

In 1992, Conté legalized multi-party politics, but political activity was placed under strict state regulation. While donor countries, including the United States, provided technical assistance in support of this process, they did not extensively financially back the transformation or subsequent elections, due to apprehensions about limitations on popular participation under the system being created. Guinea's first presidential election, held in December 1993, was won by Conté, who garnered 52% of the vote. Conté won re-election in December 1998 and 2003. Guinea has held two multi-party legislative elections, in 1995 and in 2002. Conté's ruling Party of Unity and Progress (PUP) won both, taking 76 and 91 of the 114 seats in each respective election. Legislative elections were due to take place again in 2007, but were repeatedly delayed, leaving the National Assembly with an expired mandate.

Most of these elections were characterized by credible reports of irregularities and manipulation favorable to Conté and the PUP. Varying, though often extensive, levels of political unrest, election violence, state harassment and detention of opposition leaders, and coercive suppression of opposition political activities, were common threads. In 1998, the main opposition leader, Alpha Condé, was imprisoned following the vote. In 2001, a PUP-sponsored referendum aimed at extending Conté's time in office was passed by a putative 98% vote margin, amid low turnout and an opposition boycott, anti-referendum protests, a crackdown by security forces on opposition parties, and strong international criticism of the effort. It extended the presidential term from five to seven years and removed term and presidential candidate age limits, among other measures, extending Conté tenure.

In December 2003, Conté, who did not campaign because of his ill health, was re-elected with a reported 96.63% of the vote with only nominal opposition, following the Guinean Supreme Court's disqualification of six presidential candidates from the race on technical grounds and in the face of an election boycott by key opposition parties. The European Union reportedly refused

to support the conduct of the election or deploy election observers because of doubts over the transparency of the election.<sup>125</sup> In 2004, the Federation of Human Rights Leagues (FIDH, in French) issued a report, titled “Guinea: A Virtual Democracy with an Uncertain Future,” that sharply criticized the government’s regular suppression of political freedoms and targeting of opposition groups.<sup>126</sup>

## Regional Instability

Starting in the late 1980s, each of Guinea’s neighbors experienced one or more internal conflicts—notably Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, and Côte d’Ivoire. Conté’s government was an active participant in many of these conflicts, supporting various government and non-government actors in neighboring countries and reportedly serving as a conduit for arms. For example, Conté sent troops to neighboring Guinea-Bissau in 1998 to shore up his ally President Bernardo “Nino” Vieira amid a military uprising, while throughout Liberia’s successive conflicts (1989-2003), Conté provided backing for groups opposed to his regional nemesis, Charles Taylor.<sup>127</sup>

In September 2000, Conté’s support for anti-Taylor rebels, along with ethnic tensions, played into a series of armed attacks along Guinea’s borders with Sierra Leone and Liberia. These attacks lasted several months, and terrorized residents of the southeastern Forest region in particular. A self-described Guinean rebel spokesman whose identity remains unknown claimed responsibility for the attacks and said they were aimed at forcing Conté to step down. Most observers believe the attacks were instigated by Liberia’s then-president, Charles Taylor, and carried out by members of Sierra Leone’s RUF rebel movement, Liberian militias, and some Guinean fighters. The Guinean military eventually quashed the assailants, using extensive aerial bombardment of villages suspected of harboring the rebels and the help of hastily formed village militias and Liberian rebel fighters opposed to Taylor.

Conté meanwhile presided over a weakening of central state structures. In its waning years, Conté’s government was reportedly divided into factions controlling different areas of the government, economy, military, and even nominal opposition and civil society groups. NGOs and international media portrayed a country whose leader was unable “to control the day-to-day operations of government.”<sup>128</sup> Concerns over factionalization in the administration and military heightened with reports that President Conté, who declined to institutionalize his succession and who did not often appear in public, was terminally ill. Starting in 2003, the International Crisis Group warned that Guinea was at serious risk of a civil war or military coup.<sup>129</sup>

---

<sup>125</sup> IFES, “Of Interest,” Election Profile (Guinea), at <http://www.electionguide.org/results.php?ID=402>.

<sup>126</sup> IRIN, “Guinea: Rights Group Slams ‘Caricature of Democracy,’” April 14, 2004. See also Maligui Soumah, *Guinée: La démocratie sans le peuple*, Paris: L’Harmattan, 2006.

<sup>127</sup> In particular, Conté reportedly provided logistical support and a rear base on Guinean territory for the United Liberation Movement for Democracy (ULIMO) in the late 1990s, and later supported Liberians United For Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), a rebel faction that proved instrumental in unseating Taylor in 2003.

<sup>128</sup> International Crisis Group, *Stopping Guinea’s Slide*, 2005: 10.

<sup>129</sup> International Crisis Group, *Guinée: incertitudes autour d’une fin de règne*, 2003: i.



## Relations with the Military

Although he arrived in power via a military coup, Conté had a complex relationship with Guinea's armed forces. The military benefited from significant socioeconomic privileges, but served as the target of purges and surveillance from a president who feared a military uprising. Conté faced many coup attempts, notably in 1996, when dissident officers shelled the presidential palace and briefly detained the president himself. The stand-off was reportedly diffused when the mutinous troops failed to agree on who should take over power upon Conté's dismissal. In 2005, an armed attack on the president's motorcade was followed by mass arrests.

The Conté era was also marked by repeated military mutinies spurred by demands for higher pay, more frequent promotions, and an end to the perceived monopolization of military patronage networks by a small handful of high-ranking officers. In response to these challenges, Conté cultivated the Presidential Guard (also known as the *Bataillon Autonome de Sécurité Présidentielle*, or BASP), an elite force based in Conakry and commanded directly by the presidency.<sup>130</sup> Conté also expended significant state resources on military salaries and benefits such as subsidized rice for Guinean troops. Numerous officers were forced to retire in late 2005 following the mass promotion of about 1,000 non-commissioned and commissioned officers. In 2007, the government more than doubled army salaries after soldiers rioted in dissatisfaction at their low salaries following their role in quelling nationwide strikes. These moves were generally seen as decreasing resources available to such public goods as education and infrastructure. The International Crisis Group noted that "pay increases, along with waves of recruitment in 2007-2008, ate into the state's fragile finances. But far from satisfying the troops, they generated an expectation that violent protests would bear fruit."<sup>131</sup>

Conté's administration generally refrained from enforcing military discipline in connection with alleged abuses of civilians, fostering what many Guineans and international observers see as a culture of impunity. In 2006, Human Rights Watch issued a report that Guinea's security forces routinely employed arbitrary arrest, torture, assault and occasionally murder to fight crime and perceived government opponents.<sup>132</sup> An official commission of inquiry into security forces' killings of demonstrators in 2006 and 2007 had stagnated at the time of Conté's death in 2008. The last wave of protests in Conakry before Conté's death took place in November 2008; at least four people reportedly died when security forces opened fire with live ammunition.

## Growing Pressure for Reform

Popular anger at Conté's regime grew in the later years of his regime. In mid-2006 and again in early 2007, a coalition of trade unions organized a series of general strikes in response to long-standing and widespread public dissatisfaction with economic stagnation, inflation of about 30%, the slow pace of promised political reform and democratization, and Conté's semi-autocratic presidential exercise of power. In January and February 2007, a general strike spiraled into

---

<sup>130</sup> Conté's personal guard also reportedly included a portion of the roughly 800 elite commandos known as the Rangers who were trained in border protection by a United States military cooperation program in 2001-2002 (International Crisis Group, *Guinée: incertitudes autour d'une fin de règne*, 2003: 12; Arieff interview with security specialist, Conakry, February 2009).

<sup>131</sup> International Crisis Group, *Guinea: The transition has only just begun*, March 2009: 4.

<sup>132</sup> HRW, *The Perverse Side of Things: Torture, Inadequate Detention Conditions, and Excessive Use of Force by Guinean Security Forces*, April 22, 2006.

unprecedented nationwide anti-government protests. These protests, which were supported by major political opposition parties and civil society groups, caused significant political unrest in urban centers. In response, the military opened fire on protesters and launched a harsh crackdown, particularly in urban centers and notably in Conakry, the capital. Confrontations between troops and largely unarmed demonstrators resulted in 186 civilian deaths, while hundreds were injured, beaten, or extra-judicially detained, and dozens tortured or raped, according to an investigation by local human rights groups.<sup>133</sup> Martial law was imposed in February, during which time Human Rights Watch reported that security forces in Conakry “went house-to-house, breaking down doors, and looting everything of value inside, including cell phones, cameras, and money.”<sup>134</sup>

In late February, the strikes were brought to an end in talks mediated by Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The unions agreed to call off strikes in exchange for several concessions from Conté, including the appointment of a Prime Minister with some executive powers from a list of candidates pre-approved by unions and civil society groups. Conté’s selection of Lansana Kouyaté, a former diplomat, was widely welcomed.

Kouyaté managed a few significant successes, such as an audit of some government institutions and the renegotiation of a debt-relief agreement with the IMF. His attempts to initiate sweeping reforms of public institutions, however, stalled. Many attributed his failures to machinations by Conté’s inner circle, Conté’s refusal to accord to Kouyaté the power to make real changes, and public’s disillusionment with the prime minister’s perceived pursuit of his own political agenda.<sup>135</sup> Quality of life across Guinea continued to decline, and a promised official probe into abuses by security forces during the strikes stagnated. The unions, which had enjoyed broad public support during the strikes, waned in influence due to Kouyaté’s lackluster performance and rumors of internal splits and corruption among union leaders.<sup>136</sup> A presidential decree in May 2008 sacking Kouyaté and replacing him with a close Conté ally and businessman, Ahmed Tidiane Souaré, met with little protest.

## **Military Divisions and Restiveness**

Conté, a former general, depended on the military to enforce his rule, and closely controlled the Ministry of Defense and other security agencies. Nevertheless, he faced several alleged putsches, some attributed to military officers. In 1996, a military mutiny spawned a coup attempt that reportedly nearly overthrew the president, and in 2005 the president’s motorcade came under fire as he drove through Conakry. In addition, as his tenure waned, the military became increasingly divided along ethnic and generational lines, and in recent years there were several military protests — some violent — mostly over pay, working conditions, and military rank promotions.

---

<sup>133</sup> Coalition pour la Défense des Victimes des Evénements de Janvier et Février 2007 en République de Guinée, *Rapport sur les violations commises en République de Guinée pendant les événements de Janvier et Février 2007* (November 2007): 4. See also HRW, *Dying for Change: Brutality and Repression by Guinean Security Forces in Response to a Nationwide Strike*, April 24, 2007.

<sup>134</sup> HRW, “Guinea: Security Forces Abuse Population Under Martial Law” [press release], February 15, 2007.

<sup>135</sup> International Crisis Group, *Guinée: Garantir la poursuite des Réformes Démocratiques*, 2008; Kissy Agyeman, “President Replaces Consensus Prime Minister in Guinea,” *Global Insight Daily Analysis*, May 21, 2008; and Michelle Engeler, “Guinea in 2008: The Unfinished Revolution,” *Politique Africaine* 112 (December 2008).

<sup>136</sup> Arieff interviews, Conakry, February 2009.

### *The 2008 Junior Officer Mutiny*

Particularly notable was a May 2008 uprising led by junior army officers at Camp Alpha Yaya, the largest military base in Conakry and the headquarters of the army's elite commando parachutist unit (known as the BATA). Mutinous troops demanding back wage payments and rice subsidy increases took control of Alpha Yaya, took the army chief of staff hostage, and pillaged shops and private homes in Conakry. They demanded that the chief army quartermaster and the defense minister be fired and that Guinea's generals, who were reportedly seen by the mutineers as blocking opportunities for promotion and monopolizing lucrative patronage networks, be retired.<sup>137</sup> Mutiny leader Claude "Coplan" Pivi also told local media that the mutineers sought the rehabilitation of soldiers who were punished for abuses during the 2007 strikes.<sup>138</sup> Mutiny leaders exchanged fire with members of the presidential guard, and several people were reportedly killed, and dozens wounded, by stray bullets.<sup>139</sup> After a week of unrest, Conté met in person with the mutineers' leaders, and the government agreed to pay salary arrears of \$1,100 to each soldier, sack the defense minister, and grant promotions to junior officers, ending the uprising.<sup>140</sup> Much of the top military hierarchy, however, remained in place until Conté's death, but were subsequently dismissed by the CNDD, key members of which have claimed to have played key roles in the May 2008 mutiny.<sup>141</sup>

In mid-June 2008, police officers in Conakry attempted to launch their own mutiny over alleged non-payment of back-wages and a failure to implement pledged promotions. Military troops led by Pivi crushed the police uprising, culminating in a bloody shoot-out at a police headquarters in the upscale Camayenne neighborhood that left at least four police officers dead, according to an official tally. Pivi's troops also reportedly laid siege to and looted police facilities throughout Conakry, and the police counter-narcotics unit was also ransacked and its records destroyed.<sup>142</sup> The confrontations reportedly left a rift in relations between the police and the army, and established Pivi's reputation as a well-known and much-feared figure in Conakry.<sup>143</sup> These events reportedly allowed junior officers to gain control of substantial portions of state armaments and, given past incidents of violent military indiscipline, placed in question security conditions in Conakry. There were also reports that some military elements employed these weapons in common crimes targeting civilians.<sup>144</sup>

---

<sup>137</sup> Saliou Samb, "Guinea Meets Soldiers' Demands To End 2-Day Mutiny," Reuters, May 27, 2008; RFI, "Guinean Soldiers Demand Retirement Of Army Generals," May 29, 2008 via BBC Monitoring.

<sup>138</sup> *BBC Monitoring*, "Guinea: Mutiny leader explains reasons behind action [from *GuinéeNews*]" June 8, 2008.

<sup>139</sup> Kissy Agyeman, "Tension Mounts in Guinea in Wake of Army Revolt," *Global Insight*, May 29, 2008.

<sup>140</sup> Saliou Samb, "Guinea Settles Army Pay Dispute With Mass Promotion," Reuters, June 14, 2008.

<sup>141</sup> Claude Pivi, a CNDD member and junior officer who was promoted to Minister of Presidential Security in January 2009, styled himself the leader of the Camp Alpha Yaya mutiny. Pivi also led the crackdown on the police uprising, according to witnesses. After he became president, Dadis Camara stated he had played a key role in the mutiny and in the negotiations that ended it.

<sup>142</sup> *Aminata.com*, "Affrontements Entre Policiers Et Militaires—La Bande De Pivi Et Des Gardes Présidentielles," June 17, 2008; and Pascal Fletcher, "Bauxite-Exporter Guinea Faces Drugs Trade Threat-UN," Reuters, July 12, 2008.

<sup>143</sup> Many Conakry residents believe that Pivi possesses powers that make him bulletproof. Anxiety over Pivi's activities peaked in November, when Pivi reportedly ordered the arrest and torture of a group of Cameroonian nationals he suspected of having damaged his car. (*La Lance* newspaper, November 26, 2008).

<sup>144</sup> International Crisis Group, *Guinea: The Transition Has Only Just Begun*, March 2009: 16.

## **Author Contact Information**

Alexis Arieff  
Analyst in African Affairs  
aarieff@crs.loc.gov, 7-2459

Nicolas Cook  
Specialist in African Affairs  
ncook@crs.loc.gov, 7-0429