



# Guinea's 2008 Military Coup and Relations with the United States

**Alexis Arieff**

Analyst in African Affairs

**Nicolas Cook**

Specialist in African Affairs

November 5, 2009

**Congressional Research Service**

7-5700

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

R40703

## Summary

Guinea is a Francophone West African country on the 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 was 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. Guinea entered a new period of political uncertainty on December 23, 2008, when a group of junior and mid-level military officers seized power, hours after the death of longtime president and former military leader Lansana Conté. The junta, calling itself the National Council for Democracy and Development (CNDD, after its French acronym), named as the interim national president a previously relatively unknown figure, Captain Moussa Dadis Camara.

Some fear that rivalries within the CNDD, tension between Dadis Camara's supporters and those who oppose his candidacy, and substantial economic challenges could pose threats to Guinea's future stability. Guinea has never undergone a democratic or constitutional transfer of power since gaining independence in 1958, and Dadis Camara is one of only three persons to occupy the presidency since that time. After taking power, the junta dissolved the constitution and legislature, appointed a civilian prime minister, and promised to hold presidential and legislative elections. In August 2009, however, elections were postponed from late 2009 to early 2010 and Dadis Camara publicly suggested that he may run for president, contradicting his repeated previous pledges that neither he nor any other CNDD member would run for office. 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. The death toll is thought to exceed 150, and dozens of women were reportedly raped and molested by soldiers.

The protest sparked wide international condemnation and led many countries to suspend or further restrict cooperation with the junta. Following the coup in December 2008, the United States suspended some bilateral development aid and all security assistance to Guinea, in line with congressional directives, signaling a hiatus in what had been a cordial bilateral relationship during much of the Conté period. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)'s 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. pledged contributions toward Guinea's electoral process. After the September 28 crackdown, the United States called for Dadis Camara to step down, and announced visa sanctions against CNDD members and certain associates. The African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and European Union (EU) have imposed an arms embargo, with the AU and EU further instituting targeted sanctions on CNDD members and associates.

This report analyzes developments since the military's seizure of power in December 2008, Guinea's relations with the United States, and U.S. policy in the wake of the coup. It also provides background on Guinean history and politics.

## Contents

Recent Developments.....	1
Investigations into the Violence.....	1
Targeted Sanctions .....	2
Regional Mediation.....	3
China Minerals and Infrastructure Agreement.....	4
Outlook and Regional Implications .....	4
Background .....	6
U.S. Interests in Guinea.....	7
The Conté Regime: Final Years .....	9
The December 2008 Coup.....	10
International Reactions to the Coup.....	11
Regional Relations .....	11
Donor Relations .....	11
U.S. Responses .....	12
Multilateral Assistance .....	13
The CNDD .....	13
Centralization of Power.....	14
Intra-Military Friction .....	14
Counter-Narcotics Efforts.....	15
Chemical Precursors Found.....	15
Anti-Corruption Efforts.....	16
Mining Sector Reform.....	16
Human Rights and Rule of Law .....	17
Alleged Abuses by CNDD Members Under Conté's Presidency .....	18
Press Freedom.....	19
Transition Process.....	20
Election Administration.....	20
Funding .....	21
Potential Dadis Candidacy .....	21
Reactions .....	22
September 28 Protests .....	22
Opposition Leaders Injured, Arrested .....	24
CNDD Statements.....	24
International Reactions.....	25
U.S. Reactions .....	26
Economic Issues .....	27
Socioeconomic Conditions .....	27
Issues for U.S. Policy.....	28
Foreign Aid.....	29
Elections and Democracy Promotion.....	29
Security Assistance and Counter-Narcotics Cooperation .....	30

## **Figures**

Figure 1. Map of Guinea ..... 6

## **Appendixes**

Appendix A. Profiles of Selected Guinean Political Party Leaders ..... 31  
Appendix B. Touré and Conté Regimes: Historical Background ..... 33

## **Contacts**

Author Contact Information ..... 40

## Recent Developments

In response to a violent military crackdown on unarmed civilian demonstrators on September 28, 2009 (see section below), regional organizations and donors have sought to further isolate the National Council for Democracy and Development (CNDD), the military junta that has led Guinea since seizing power in a bloodless coup in December 2008. The death toll during the protests continues to be disputed, as most observers believe over 150 died, while the CNDD has acknowledged 57.<sup>1</sup> Dozens of individuals were reportedly detained during the crackdown, and the CNDD has reportedly blocked international access to detention sites.<sup>2</sup> Four civilian ministers in the Guinean government have resigned in protest of the September 28 events. A recent communiqué by the *Forces Vives* (“Active Forces”), a coalition of Guinean political parties, trade unions, and civil society groups which has served as the primary civilian entity negotiating with the CNDD over the transition to civilian rule, accused elements within the junta of seeking to “eliminate” opponents or “force them through terror into exile.”<sup>3</sup>

The International Contact Group on Guinea, of which the United States is a member, has called for a “new transitional authority” to lead toward elections.<sup>4</sup> Senior U.S. officials have also called for CNDD leader Captain Moussa Dadis Camara to step down, and have expressed support for an international commission of inquiry and a transitional government led jointly by military and civilian officials.<sup>5</sup> Deputy Assistant Secretary of State William Fitzgerald traveled to Conakry in early October and met in person with Dadis Camara. Fitzgerald said he told the junta leader that he was responsible for the violence and that he should not run in planned presidential elections.<sup>6</sup> Secretary of State Hillary Clinton referred to the September 28 crackdown as “criminality of the greatest degree,” and stated that Guinea’s military leaders must recognize “that they cannot remain in power, that they must turn back to the people the right to choose their own leaders.”<sup>7</sup>

The United States evacuated all non-essential personnel and Political Affairs staff from the Embassy in Conakry during the weeks following the protest. Newly appointed Ambassador Patricia N. Moller, however, was posted to Guinea in early November.

## Investigations into the Violence

A Human Rights Watch investigation published in late October found that the violence of September 28 was “both organized and pre-planned” by forces reporting to Dadis Camara,

---

<sup>1</sup> Seconding numerous other reports, Human Rights Watch (HRW) contends that “the armed forces attempted to hide evidence of the crimes by seizing bodies from the stadium and the city’s morgues and burying them in mass graves” (HRW, “Guinea: September 28 Massacre Was Premeditated,” October 27, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> HRW, “Guinea: Free or Charge Detainees,” October 4, 2009; Amnesty International, “Guinée: Quel sort pour les civils et militaires dont on est sans nouvelles?” October 15, 2009; U.N. OCHA, “Guinea Victims of Security Forces Crackdown: Situation Report No. 3,” October 18, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> The *Forces Vives* also stated that human rights activists who have assisted victims of the crackdown “are daily threatened with reprisals,” while “women raped during the events of September 28 do not dare go to hospitals, fearing for their life.” *Le Forum des Forces Vives de Guinée*, Communiqué No. 11, October 24, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> AFP, “Guinea Junta Must Step Aside: Contact Group,” October 13, 2009.

<sup>5</sup> Comments by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State William Fitzgerald at the U.S. Institute of Peace, October 28, 2009.

<sup>6</sup> Adam Nossiter, “U.S. Envoy Protests Violence in Guinea,” *The New York Times*, October 7, 2009.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Fed News, “Guinea Violence ‘Vile Violation’ of Human Rights, Clinton Says,” October 9, 2009.

including members of his personal guard, potentially amounting to a crime against humanity. Human Rights Watch also found that some attacks were characterized by the targeting of members of the Peuhl ethnic group (also known as Fulbe) by members of southeastern family of ethnic groups known as Forestiers, to which CNDD leader Captain Moussa Dadis Camara belongs.<sup>8</sup> The International Crisis Group reported 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>9</sup>

The CNDD has promised an investigation into the violence; however, opposition groups and civil society have rejected such an effort as biased.<sup>10</sup> The United States, France, and other donors have expressed support for an international commission of inquiry into the events of September 28. On October 30, the U.N. Secretary-General appointed three prominent African former officials and lawyers to lead such a commission.<sup>11</sup> The U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights is also gathering information on the violence, including the looting of homes of opposition leaders who were arrested during the protest.<sup>12</sup> While the African Union has supported international efforts to mediate an end to the political crisis, AU head and Libyan leader Muammar al Qadhafi reportedly criticized a U.N. inquiry as “interference in the internal affairs of an independent country.”<sup>13</sup> The CNDD has promised to cooperate with the U.N. inquiry.<sup>14</sup> Separately, the chief prosecutor for the International Criminal Court (ICC) has announced he will investigate the September 28 violence. Guinea is a state party to the Court.

## Targeted Sanctions

Effective October 23, 2009, the United States imposed travel restrictions on “certain members of the military junta and the government, as well as other individuals who support policies or actions that undermine the restoration of democracy and the rule of law in Guinea.”<sup>15</sup> The United States is also reportedly considering the imposition of an asset freeze on CNDD members.<sup>16</sup>

The European Union (EU), African Union (AU), and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have announced an arms embargo.<sup>17</sup> The EU also imposed a visa ban on 42

---

<sup>8</sup> HRW, “Guinea: September 28 Massacre Was Premeditated,” October 27, 2009. Others dispute this interpretation of the crackdown, stating that it was primarily aimed at suppressing opposition to CNDD rule, regardless of ethnicity (CRS interviews).

<sup>9</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>10</sup> AFP, “Guinea Junta Names Team to Probe Massacre: Decree,” October 17, 2009.

<sup>11</sup> The three members of the commission are Mohamed Bedjaoui of Algeria, a diplomat, jurist, and former government minister; Françoise Ngendahyo Kayiramirwa of Burundi, a former government minister and advisor to the International Criminal Court; and Pramila Patten of Mauritius, a legal scholar and expert on violence against women. U.N. News Service, “Statement Attributable to Spokesperson for Secretary-General on Establishment of International Commission of Inquiry on Guinea,” October 30, 2009.

<sup>12</sup> U.N. News, “Guinea: UN Official Fears for Witnesses’ Safety in Probe into Killing of Protesters,” October 9, 2009.

<sup>13</sup> AFP, “African Union Criticizes UN ‘Interference’ in Guinea,” October 19, 2009.

<sup>14</sup> AFP, “Guinea Pledges to Cooperate with UN Inquiry,” October 19, 2009.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Guinea: Travel Restrictions,” October 29, 2009.

<sup>16</sup> Comments by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Fitzgerald at the U.S. Institute of Peace, October 28, 2009.

<sup>17</sup> Prior to the announcement of an embargo, Amnesty International reported that equipment used in the September 28 (continued...)

members of the CNDD and “individuals associated with them, responsible for the violent repression of 28 September 2009 or the political stalemate in the country,” and the European Parliament rejected an EU-Guinea fishing agreement in a non-binding vote designed to give “a strong signal to the Guinean dictatorship.”<sup>18</sup> African Union sanctions 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.”<sup>19</sup>

France, which had declined to cut off aid to Guinea following the December 2008 coup, announced it would cut military aid and suspend most official cooperation with the CNDD, including roughly 10 technical advisors to civilian government institutions.<sup>20</sup> French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner reportedly said that France “can no longer work with Dadis Camara,” and that “there has to be an international intervention.”<sup>21</sup> The French and British embassies in Conakry have urged citizens to leave Guinea and defer travel to the country.

## Regional Mediation

ECOWAS has appointed Burkina Faso’s president, Blaise Compaoré, to mediate between the CNDD and the *Forces Vives*. Compaoré traveled to Conakry in early October, and more recently has invited opposition party leaders to meet with him in Burkina Faso. The International Contact Group on Guinea, which includes representatives of regional organizations and the permanent and African members of the U.N. Security Council—including the United States—has endorsed Compaoré’s mediation efforts.<sup>22</sup> Some observers and Guineans, however, have expressed concern that Compaoré’s background makes him an inappropriate appointee. 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.<sup>23</sup>

---

(...continued)

crackdown was made by French and South Africa-based British companies (Amnesty International, “Guinea: Military and Police Weapons Transfers Must Be Suspended,” October 8, 2009). The idea of an arms embargo was supported by the International Contact Group on Guinea (ICG-G). ICG-G, “Communiqué Final,” October 12, 2009, via Guineenews; Reuters, “West African Leaders Impose Arms Embargo on Guinea,” October 17, 2009; Voice of America (VOA), “African Union Backs Arms Embargo on Guinea,” October 18, 2009; *Official Journal of the European Union*, “Council Common Position 2009/788/CFSP of 27 October 2009 concerning restrictive measures against the Republic of Guinea,” October 28, 2009.

<sup>18</sup> *Europolitique*, “UE/Guinée: L’UE Adopte des Sanctions Contre la Guinée,” October 28, 2009; *Official Journal of the European Union*, “Council Common Position 2009/788/CFSP of 27 October 2009 concerning restrictive measures against the Republic of Guinea,” October 28, 2009; AFP, “Violences en Guinée: Des eurodéputés rejettent un accord de pêche UE-Guinée,” October 1, 2009.

<sup>19</sup> AU Peace and Security Council Communiqué, October 29, 2009 (CRS translation from French).

<sup>20</sup> Reuters, “France Steps Up Guinea Sanctions,” October 30, 2009.

<sup>21</sup> The CNDD strongly rejected French criticism as neo-colonial and a “political lynching.” AFP, “France Turns Against Guinea Leader After Bloodbath,” October 4, 2009; Radio France Internationale via BBC Monitoring, “Guinea Protests Against ‘Political Lynching’ by French Government,” October 17, 2009.

<sup>22</sup> International Contact Group on Guinea, Final Communiqué, October 12, 2009, via Guineenews.

<sup>23</sup> E.g., AllAfrica.com, “Guinea: ‘Another Strategy’ Required to Deal with the Deteriorating Situation—Challenor,” October 13, 2009; Oxford Analytica, “Burkina Faso: Compaoré Cements Regional Role,” October 16, 2009; U.N. News, “Parties Continuing to Rearm Despite Embargo, Says UN Report” [about Burkina Faso’s alleged continuing involvement in Côte d’Ivoire arms flows], October 28, 2009.

## China Minerals and Infrastructure Agreement

In October, the Guinean government announced the signing of a new \$7 billion minerals and infrastructure agreement with a Hong Kong-based firm, the China International Fund (CIF).<sup>24</sup> Previously, following the December 2008 coup, China had appeared poised to abandon prior plans to invest in major infrastructure projects in Guinea in return for mineral rights, due to perceived political instability and weak global commodity markets.<sup>25</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>26</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>27</sup> Negotiations over the agreement are thought to have been initiated prior to former President Lansana Conté’s death in late 2008.<sup>28</sup> The deal has come under international criticism at a time when traditional donors are attempting to isolate the CNDD; it has also been criticized by the Guinean opposition.<sup>29</sup> A State Department spokesman said, “We have expressed concerns about this kind of activity... We think it’s important that as you do business with countries, that you also have respect for human rights.”<sup>30</sup>

## Outlook and Regional Implications

Credible reports of rising ethnic tensions and CNDD recruitment of irregular fighters, former combatants in neighboring civil wars, have potential significant implications for Guinea’s future stability and that of the sub-region.<sup>31</sup> In early November, a news report stated that millions of dollars worth of weaponry had been imported into Guinea in recent weeks; others have reported that foreign mercenaries are working for CNDD members.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, reports suggest the

---

<sup>24</sup> E.g., Adam Nossiter, “Guinea Boasts of Deal with Chinese Company,” *The New York Times*, October 14, 2009.

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

<sup>26</sup> U.S.-China Economic & Security Review Commission, *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. 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,” *The Associated Press (AP)*, October 24, 2009.

<sup>27</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>28</sup> Adam Nossiter, “Guinea Boasts of Deal with Chinese Company,” *The New York Times*, October 14, 2009; CRS interviews.

<sup>29</sup> Voice of America, “Guinea Opposition Calls China Deal Illegal,” October 14, 2009.

<sup>30</sup> Congressional Quarterly Transcript, “State Department Holds Regular News Briefing,” October 14, 2009.

<sup>31</sup> Several witnesses, including opposition spokesman Jean-Marie Doré, have alleged that Liberian nationals participated in the September 28 violence. Human Rights Watch reported the existence of a Guinean military-trained “commando unit dominated by people from ethnic groups from the forest region.” 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; Radio France Internationale, “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>32</sup> *Beeld* (South Africa), “Secretive Mails Sent to Recruits,” October 18, 2009; BBC, “‘Big Guns’ Herald Guinea’s (continued...)”



security situation and political atmosphere in the capital have grown increasingly tense in recent weeks. Several city-wide strikes have been observed in protest of the September violence and subsequent degradation in public safety. Some dozen targeted killings have been reported in Conakry since September 28, with at least one government official murdered.<sup>33</sup> Amid international concern over a perceived breakdown in the military chain of command in Guinea and potential spillover effects to Guinea's fragile neighbors, opposition parties and some observers have called for an international force to protect civilians.<sup>34</sup> Some believe security sector reform is necessary to prevent further crises.<sup>35</sup>

---

(...continued)

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>33</sup> Reuters, "Guinea Sees New Violence After Protest Crackdown," October 23, 2009; Radio France Internationale via BBC Monitoring, "Twelve Opposition Supporters Said Killed in Guinea's 'Targeted Killings,'" October 23, 2009.

<sup>34</sup> See e.g., AFP, "Guinée: L'Opposition demande l'intervention d'une 'force de paix,'" October 1, 2009; *Africa Confidential*, "Gunning Down Democracy," October 9, 2009; International Crisis Group, *Guinea: Military Rule Must End*, October 16, 2009; Reuters, "Guinea Leader Says Will Cooperate With Inquiry—UN," October 21, 2009; AFP, "Guinée: Un banquier brièvement enlevé et dévalisé par des militaires," October 27, 2009.

<sup>35</sup> CRS interviews. See also Reuters, "Out-Of-Control Soldiers Seen Stoking Guinea Turmoil," October 13, 2009.

## Background

Figure I. Map of Guinea



Guinea is a socioeconomically impoverished but mineral-rich West African country, about the size of Oregon, which has experienced regular episodes of political turmoil. Over the past two decades, Guinea was considered a locus of relative stability in a sub-region that has witnessed multiple armed conflicts. Until December 2008, Guinea was ruled by President Lansana Conté, who came to power in a military coup in 1984. 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.

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. Guinea's health sector and national infrastructure are very poor, even by regional standards, and Guinean standards of living are among the worst in the world.<sup>36</sup> Conté's supporters, however, argued that his leadership prevented Guinea from

<sup>36</sup> See e.g., U.N. Development Program (UNDP), "Guinea: 2007/2008 Human Development Report," 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).

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. Further aspects of Conté's rule are discussed in **Appendix B**, which provides historical background on Guinea.

## **U.S. Interests in Guinea**

U.S. interests and associated policy challenges in Guinea center on democratization and good governance; counternarcotics; bilateral economic interests and relations; regional peace and security; and socioeconomic and institutional development.<sup>37</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; counternarcotics; Guinea's natural resource wealth and extractive industries; and maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.<sup>38</sup>

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>39</sup> This development has implications for U.S. security interests, as some of the beneficiaries of this trade are believed by analysts to include South American drug syndicates that are the target of U.S. military or law enforcement counternarcotics operations. Such organizations may include the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), a U.S.-designated terrorist entity. Drug trafficking also threatens to undermine U.S. foreign policy goals in Africa, such as the promotion of good governance and the rule of law, legitimate economic growth, state institution-building, and other foreign aid program goals set out in the U.S. Foreign Assistance Framework.

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.<sup>40</sup> Guinea provided 16% of U.S. bauxite and alumina imports between 2004 and 2007,<sup>41</sup> and 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 the much smaller U.S. energy firm Hyperdynamics holds the largest single license for offshore oil exploration.<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> In 2007, the House Foreign Affairs Committee held a hearing on Guinea, focusing on governance, stability, and then-recent political protests.

<sup>38</sup> In 2007, the House Foreign Affairs Committee held a hearing on Guinea, focusing on governance, stability, and the general strike that took place earlier that year.

<sup>39</sup> See CRS Report R40838, *Illegal Drug Trade in Africa: Trends and U.S. Policy*, by Liana Sun Wyler and Nicolas Cook.

<sup>40</sup> U.S. Geological Survey, *2009 Bauxite and Alumina Survey*.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Further information on Alcoa is available at <http://www.alcoa.com/guinea/en/home.asp>; see Thomas Pearmain, "Hyperdynamics Divests of U.S. Oil Assets to Fund Guinea Operations," *Global Insight*, May 5, 2009. In September 2009, Hyperdynamics signed a memorandum of understanding with the Guinean government that reaffirmed the (continued...)

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. These conflicts were sparked by such factors as adverse socioeconomic development conditions; often volatile ethnic, regional, and leadership rivalries; and corruption and other abuses of state power and resources. While the Guinean state faces similar challenges, it has survived multiple threats to its institutional authority and integrity, contrary to the predictions of some analysts. Reflecting Guinea's perceived role in regional stability, U.S. security assistance prior to the coup included military training for participation in peacekeeping missions as well as programs aimed at bolstering maritime security.

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. Following these attacks, which took place in 2000 and 2001, the U.S. military trained an 800-person Guinean Ranger unit to shore up border security. 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>43</sup>

Guinean socioeconomic and state institutional development are also long-term U.S. policy objectives. Prior to the December 2008 coup, Guinea was a recipient of U.S. bilateral aid, notably humanitarian assistance and funding for the promotion of democracy and good governance. In response to the coup, the United States suspended all bilateral assistance that did not fall into either of these latter categories, including military and counternarcotics assistance.

---

(...continued)

validity of a portion of Hyperdynamics' concession and its right to carry out exploration on 36% of its acreage. Much of the relinquished concession was reportedly subsequently acquired by China Sonangol. *Scandinavian Oil & Gas Magazine*, "Hyperdynamics Signs MoU With Guinea Government," September 15, 2009; *Africa Energy Intelligence*, "Hyperdynamics Wins at Last," September 23, 2009; *Africa Energy Intelligence*, "China Sonangol in Offshore Grab," October 21, 2009.

<sup>43</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 Bernardo "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.

## The Conté Regime: Final Years<sup>44</sup>

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. Conté's final years were beset by growing public discontent with economic stagnation and high inflation; the slow pace of promised democratic reforms; extensive corruption; and Conté's semi-autocratic leadership. This spurred a growing number of formerly rare strikes and protests, some violent, culminating in a mass general strike in early 2007 that spiraled into nationwide anti-government demonstrations. Legislative elections were due to take place in 2007, but were repeatedly delayed, leaving the National Assembly with an expired mandate. 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. 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>45</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>46</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 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>47</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.<sup>48</sup> Despite such differences in perspective, 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>49</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

---

<sup>44</sup> See **Appendix B** for further analysis of recent Guinean history.

<sup>45</sup> Kissy Agyeman, "Tension Mounts in Guinea in Wake of Army Revolt," *Global Insight*, May 29, 2008.

<sup>46</sup> Saliou Samb, "Guinea Settles Army Pay Dispute With Mass Promotion," Reuters, June 14, 2008.

<sup>47</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>48</sup> Social Science Research Council (SSRC), *Policy Approaches to the Current Situation in Guinea*, March 2009: 2.

<sup>49</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.

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 December 2008 Coup

In the early hours of December 23, 2008, President Conté's death, following a long illness, was announced on national television. Under Guinea's constitution, National Assembly Speaker Aboubacar Somparé was mandated to assume power as head of state, with presidential elections organized within 60 days. Instead, within hours, a military junta calling itself the National Council for Democracy and Development (CNDD) announced that it had taken power in a coup. 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 decision to overthrow the government on the basis that Guinea's ruling elite had provided poor leadership. 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.<sup>50</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>51</sup> On the afternoon of December 24, reportedly following tense internal negotiations, the CNDD announced that spokesman Dadis Camara had been chosen as president.<sup>52</sup> Dadis Camara paraded into downtown Conakry, where he was greeted by cheering crowds. Guineans' 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>53</sup> Many Guineans also viewed the incumbent government as lacking legitimacy.<sup>54</sup> In a television

---

<sup>50</sup>"Guinea: Army Dissolves Cabinet...." via Open Source.

<sup>51</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>52</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>53</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.)

<sup>54</sup> In explaining their aversion to a constitutional succession led by Somparé, many pointed out that the National Assembly's five-year 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.

broadcast on December 25, Prime Minister Souaré and members of his cabinet, along with the military chief of staff, pledged to support the junta.

## **International Reactions to the Coup**

Regional organizations and donors, including the European Union (EU), the United Nations, France, and the United States, condemned the coup and called for elections and a return to civilian-led government. An International Contact Group on Guinea was formed in January 2009; members include the ECOWAS Commission and Chair, the AU Commission and Chair of its Peace and Security Council, the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), the European Union, the Mano River Union, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Organization of Francophonie, the U.N. Secretariat, and the permanent and African members of the U.N. Security Council (including the United States).<sup>55</sup> The International Contact Group has held several meetings in Conakry with the junta, civil society groups, and political parties. It has focused on overseeing the electoral calendar, and on urging Dadis Camara to refrain from running for president.

## **Regional Relations**

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>56</sup> Neighboring governments were cautious in responding to the coup, particularly as some fear that instability in Guinea could destabilize their own countries. At the same time, Libyan leader Muammar al Qadhafi—who currently chairs the AU—and Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade initially publicly argued that the CNDD should be recognized and supported by the international community.<sup>57</sup>

## **Donor Relations**

Major donors include the United States, France, and the EU. Many donors declined to recognize the CNDD, and some, including the United States and the EU, suspended selected assistance to the Guinean government pending democratic elections.<sup>58</sup> In February 2009, the European Commission stated of its assistance programs to Guinea that “[n]ew contracts are, in principle, only signed for humanitarian aid, aid benefiting directly the population and measures in support of the transition process,” and initiated consultations with Guinea under the framework of Article

---

<sup>55</sup> Commissions of the AU and ECOWAS, *Statement of the Consultative Meeting on the Situation in the Republic of Guinea*, January 30, 2009.

<sup>56</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>57</sup> Qadhafi was appointed head of the AU for 2009. Wade praised the “bloodless” nature of the CNDD coup, and called on the junta to organize democratic elections. However, Wade has been more critical of the CNDD in recent statements. AFP, “Guinée: Le Président Wade réaffirme, depuis Conakry, son soutien à la junte,” January 7, 2009; *Africa Energy Intelligence*, “Kadhafi Soutient les Putschistes,” January 28, 2009; RFI, “Senegalese Leader Warns International Community Over Guinea,” September 20, 2009, via BBC Monitoring. See also WANEP, *Transitional Crisis in Guinea; Coup d’Etat: Its Inevitability, Legitimizing Factors & Lessons for Africa*, December 28, 2008: 5-8.

<sup>58</sup> *EU Business*, “EU Imposes Aid Conditions on Guinea Junta,” March 16, 2009. The EU initially stated it would not suspend aid; see U.N. Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), “Guinea: Regional, international condemnation spreads,” January 12, 2009.

96 of the Cotonou Agreement to “determine the appropriate measures to be taken as far as cooperation is concerned.”<sup>59</sup> In July 2009, the EU concluded consultations with Conakry, deciding to place Guinea under “surveillance” for two years and to maintain the suspension of development aid pending concrete steps toward a transition to democracy. An EU statement concluded that despite Guinean authorities’ commitments, EU authorities remained “preoccupied by the slow pace in implementing the road-map” toward elections.<sup>60</sup>

France, Guinea’s former colonial power, continued bilateral aid to the Guinean government following the December 2008 coup, while calling for elections to be held as soon as possible. French aid included a 2006-2010 bilateral development assistance program worth €100 million (\$140.7 million) and a military cooperation program worth €400,000 (\$563,000) over the same period, in addition to programs related to agriculture and food security, education, water and sanitation, and governance.<sup>61</sup>

As of early July 2009, the United States, Japan, the EU, France, Germany, and Spain had pledged financial support for Guinea’s post-coup elections (see below).

## **U.S. Responses**

The United States condemned the coup and called for “a return to civilian rule and the holding of free, fair, and transparent elections as soon as possible.”<sup>62</sup> The Bush Administration announced in early January 2009 that the United States would suspend bilateral aid to Guinea, with the exception of humanitarian and democracy-promotion assistance, in line with congressional directives.<sup>63</sup> In practice, all security assistance was suspended, while most development assistance and other non-military aid was unaffected. The United States also signaled its opposition to the junta by prohibiting the U.S. Embassy’s acting Ambassador from meeting personally with junta members. The restriction does not apply to other Embassy officials. In a digital video press conference in Conakry in late January 2009, Phillip Carter, then the State Department’s Acting Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs and a previous U.S. ambassador to Guinea, warned that a failure to hold elections and restore civilian rule by year’s end would “jeopardize the United States’ long-term bilateral relationship with Guinea.”<sup>64</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup> European Commission, “Answer given by Mr Michel on behalf of the Commission,” E-0219/09EN, February 2, 2009. The Cotonou Partnerships Agreement, which governs relations between the EU and African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP), requires that signatories respect human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law, and thus places political conditions on development cooperation. Article 96 of the Agreement provides for a process of consultations between signatories when one party asserts that these requirements are not being met.

<sup>60</sup> AFP, “L’UE Met la Guinée Sous Surveillance Pour 2 Ans, Maintient le Gel de l’Aide,” July 27, 2009; Agence Europe, “EU/Guinea: EU is Ready to Gradually Resume Cooperation Subject to Tangible Progress in Transition to Democracy,” July 31, 2009; AFP, “Sous Pression, la Junte Guinéenne Accepte une Présidentielle en Janvier,” August 18, 2009, CRS translation.

<sup>61</sup> A French government official who spoke to CRS stated that bilateral disbursements to the Guinean government had not been disrupted, but that France was closely monitoring how funds were spent.

<sup>62</sup> AFP, “After Coup, U.S. Halts Aid to Guinea,” January 7, 2009.

<sup>63</sup> The Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-8, Division H, Title VII, section 7008) bars 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 and humanitarian assistance. The provision is commonly referred to as “Section 508,” a reference to previous appropriations legislation.

<sup>64</sup> U.S. Embassy News Digest, January 29, 2009.



## Multilateral Assistance

Development assistance and anti-poverty programs administered by multilateral organizations have been affected by the coup. Following the December 2008 coup, the World Bank stopped disbursing loans designated for programs related to health, transportation, education, and other sectors, leaving \$200 million in outstanding loans, while awaiting further assessment of whether disbursements may continue.<sup>65</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>66</sup> On the other hand, in May 2009, the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund allocated a first tranche of \$6 million in support of programs in Guinea.<sup>67</sup>

## The CNDD

### Moussa Dadis Camara: Profile

Moussa Dadis Camara, Guinea's military leader, was born in 1964 near the southeastern city of Nzerekoré, in the Forest Region of Guinea near the border with Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. He is a member of the Guerzé (also known as Kpelle) ethnic group, which accounts for under 10% of Guinea's population and since independence has held little influence over Guinean politics. He is also Christian in a country that is over 85% Muslim. Dadis Camara graduated from Guinea's national university and entered the Army in 1990, spending time in Germany in the 1990s in the course of both civilian and military training courses. As a military officer, he joined the elite BATA airborne commando unit, serving in the logistics wing. Shortly before Conté's death, he was promoted to director of fuel supplies for the Army, a reportedly powerful position that helped him build a base of support among the rank-and-file. He is believed to have played a role in the May 2008 junior officer mutiny.

As of early 2009, the CNDD had 33 members, including six civilians. Military members were drawn mainly from the Army. The CNDD's composition is ostensibly multi-ethnic, but key posts appear split between ethnic Malinké and *Forestiers*, a collective term for members of several small ethnic groups based in southeast Guinea.<sup>68</sup> Many believe that several military factions had envisioned carrying out a coup upon Conté's death, and that CNDD leaders were able to unite these factions through negotiation and promises of patronage. Many believe the junta could thus be susceptible to factionalization or a counter coup.<sup>69</sup> The junta's stability appears to rest on a precarious balance of power among its key members. In particular, the relationship between Dadis Camara and Defense Minister Sékouba Konaté—a powerful military officer at the time of

<sup>65</sup> 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>66</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).

<sup>67</sup> The Peacebuilding Fund generally provides support to countries emerging from conflict. Most recipients to date have been African countries, including Burundi, Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau, and Sierra Leone. More information is at <http://www.unpbf.org/index.shtml>. The United States does not contribute to the Peacebuilding Fund.

<sup>68</sup> SSRC, *Policy Approaches to the Current Situation in Guinea*, March 2009: 4.

<sup>69</sup> E.g., 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.

the coup, as commander of the elite BATA unit—has been a source of frequent speculation among Guineans and members of the diplomatic community.<sup>70</sup>

## Centralization of Power

Upon taking 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 has further 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, is viewed as having little decision-making power, and CNDD members directly control key government functions. Komara's cabinet was named in January 2009 by presidential decree, with 10 of 29 cabinet posts held by military officers—most of them CNDD members, and many lacking experience in public affairs.<sup>71</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, have been attached to the presidency.

## Intra-Military Friction

Signs of internal dissent within the military have emerged since the CNDD takeover. After being named president, Dadis Camara ordered 22 generals—nearly the entire senior military leadership under Conté—into retirement. Many were later arrested, according to news reports, 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. While Dadis Camara apologized and ordered presidential guard members to beg for forgiveness, the incident heightened fears among some observers that the CNDD may be vulnerable to internal fractures that could lead to intra-military violence on a large scale.<sup>72</sup>

In August, reports surfaced in the media that 11 military officers detained since the December 2008 coup had been secretly transferred to a penal colony on an island offshore from Conakry, and that some may have been tortured. A regional human rights organization reported that “arrests in the ranks of the Army and the practice of torture in the sinister detention camp on the Island of Kassa are intensifying”; the group additionally raised concerns that benefits accrued by those close to the junta leader were creating “frustration” among other military factions, and that “heavy distrust” persisted between members of the police and the army.<sup>73</sup>

---

<sup>70</sup> E.g., Cheikh Yérim Seck, “Jusqu’où Ira Sékouba Konaté?,” *Jeune Afrique*, March 8-14, 2009; Reuters, “Tensions in Guinea Junta as Isolation Grows,” October 8, 2009.

<sup>71</sup> *Guineenews*, “La Liste Complète des Membres du Gouvernement de Kabiné Komara,” January 14, 2009. Cabinet membership has shifted since January, but military officers and close associates of CNDD members continue to control key posts.

<sup>72</sup> BBC News Online, “Troops Crawl After Guinea Attack,” July 24, 2009; United Nations, *Contingency Plan Conakry*, August 2009.

<sup>73</sup> AFP, “Guinée: Une ONG Redoute une ‘Dérive Dictatoriale,’ Dénonce la Torture,” August 12, 2009.

## Counter-Narcotics Efforts

Soon after taking power, the CNDD initiated populist moves to crack down on corruption and 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 during the final years of the Conté regime. To date, CNDD actions have relied on the "naming and shaming" of alleged wrongdoers, rather than advancing institutional reform. Over 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 have been arrested since February on drug trafficking allegations.<sup>74</sup> Dadis Camara personally interrogated alleged traffickers on national television, in some cases eliciting detailed "confessions."

Many have welcomed the attempt to pursue powerful figures in the former regime. However, concerns have arisen over a lack of due process in these cases, and some of the arrests appear to have been politically selective. Dadis Camara has promised that accused drug traffickers will receive a fair trial. This may prove difficult, however, given corruption and a lack of capacity among the Guinean judiciary, and the fact that many of the accused have already been prompted to confess to crimes on television.

CNDD anti-drug efforts additionally concentrated power in the presidency and sidelined civilian-led anti-drug agencies in favor of the military.<sup>75</sup> The CNDD created a new presidentially controlled agency, the State Secretariat for Special Services, to curb drug and human trafficking, money laundering, and organized crime. It is headed by an active-duty military officer, Capt. Moussa Tiegboro Camara (no relation to Dadis Camara). The agency's legal mandate and authorities have not been clearly defined, and the CNDD has not publicly outlined how the agency is meant to interact with the judiciary or police.<sup>76</sup> Tiegboro Camara reportedly relies on a corps of gendarmes and soldiers for enforcement.<sup>77</sup> This has raised due process and human rights concerns, and some military elements participating in anti-drug efforts have been accused of abuses of power.<sup>78</sup>

## Chemical Precursors Found

In late July, the CNDD announced the discovery in Conakry of hundreds of pounds of chemicals that it said could be used for making drugs or bombs. A fact-finding mission sent by the U.N. Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) concluded that some of the chemicals were precursors used

---

<sup>74</sup> Conté's son Ousmane, a military officer, admitted to involvement in trafficking, but denied being a "kingpin." See Rukmini Callimachi, "In TV confessions, curtain lifted on a narcostate," Associated Press (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>75</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>76</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>77</sup> Arieff interview with security specialist, Conakry, February 2009.

<sup>78</sup> Human Rights Watch (HRW), "Rein in Soldiers," April 27, 2009.

in making drugs such as ecstasy while others were “solvents commonly used in the processing of cocaine and heroin.” The UNODC called the seizure “the best evidence yet for clandestine laboratory activity” in West Africa.<sup>79</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 chemicals and other drug seizures.

## **Anti-Corruption Efforts**

The CNDD also initially announced it would review the mining code and all current mining and prospecting licenses, conduct an audit of the Conté government and all foreign companies operating in Guinea, and initiate the privatization of water, energy, and telecommunications firms.<sup>80</sup> The judiciary has not played a lead role in anti-corruption initiatives under the CNDD, which has so far emphasized making an example of high profile figures from Conté’s administration rather than initiating institutional reform. In January 2009, the CNDD established a committee to audit firms and individuals accused of having embezzled public funds, dodged tax payments, or entered into corrupt government contracts under Conté. The committee questioned mining and telecommunications executives, government contractors, businessmen, and former government officials.<sup>81</sup> Many Guineans welcomed the audits as an attempt to reign in corruption. At the same time, some have expressed concern that the audits are extra-judicial and could be politically motivated or extortion-related.<sup>82</sup>

## **Mining Sector Reform**

Soon after seizing power, the CNDD said it would revise the mining code, renegotiate mining contracts, and crack down on corruption in the mining sector.<sup>83</sup> Guinea’s economy relies heavily on primary commodity exports, notably bauxite (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>84</sup>

---

<sup>79</sup> UNODC, “Evidence of Clandestine Laboratory Activity in West Africa,” July 31, 2009.

<sup>80</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.

<sup>81</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>82</sup> See e.g., *Aminata.com*, “Les Audits à la Guinéenne: De la parade tout trouvée aux inquiétantes maladresses,” 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>83</sup> A revision of mining contracts had been initiated shortly before Conté’s death with the help of international financial institutions, though no results were publicly announced. In March, the CNDD auditing committee detained four former mining ministers of embezzling millions of dollars from the Guinean state, releasing them after they agreed to repay allegedly stolen funds. The African Union expressed concern over the apparently extra-judicial nature of the arrests. Saliou Samb, “Guinea Ex-Ministers Freed, Say Will Repay Cash,” Reuters, April 1, 2009; AFP, “African Union Expresses Concern Over Arrests,” March 26, 2009.

<sup>84</sup> U.S. Department of State, “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.

Dadis Camara has appeared at times to take unpredictable actions related to mining oversight, such as publicly threatening to close or take over various mining projects. He has also forced several mining projects to close down for days or weeks at a time. In August 2009, the multinational mining company Rio Tinto announced it would pull its equipment from an iron ore project in Simandou 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.<sup>85</sup> In September, 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 months of allegations by the CNDD that the original sale was made by corrupt officials at far less than market value.<sup>86</sup> RUSAL contested the court's decision, and the Russian government accused Guinean authorities of attempting to "expropriate UC RUSAL's property."<sup>87</sup>

These actions have reportedly sparked fears among international investors concerned for the security of their assets.<sup>88</sup> Analysts contend that a global fall in primary commodity prices and a decrease in funding available for foreign direct investment have weakened the junta's bargaining position, causing some firms to consider withdrawing entirely from Guinea.<sup>89</sup> These concerns reportedly heightened following the September 28 protests and military crackdown.<sup>90</sup>

## **Human Rights and Rule of Law**

Upon Conté's death, one observer noted that "the army that General Conté has bequeathed his country knows little of the role and methods that it would need to employ in a democratic state respectful of its citizens' most basic rights."<sup>91</sup> Since the coup, human rights advocates and members of the international community have expressed growing concern over violations of human rights and the rule of law, including arbitrary arrests and detentions.<sup>92</sup> Security forces have been accused of looting private homes and businesses in Conakry, as well as other abuses of

---

<sup>85</sup> Robert Guy Matthews, "Mining Giants Are Forced to Lessen Global Ambitions," *The Wall Street Journal*, July 17, 2009. See also 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.

<sup>86</sup> Reuters, "Guinea Court Reclaims Friguia from RUSAL," September 10, 2009.

<sup>87</sup> 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>88</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>89</sup> 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.

<sup>90</sup> Reuters, "Expatriate Mining Execs Flee Guinea on Security Concern," October 25, 2009; Dow Jones, "Guinea's CBG to Evacuate 20 Expatriate Staff—Rio Tinto," October 26, 2009.

<sup>91</sup> Gilles Yabi, "Le Pire Cadeau Empoisonné de Conté à Son Pays: Une armée à la fois dangereuse et incontournable," *AllAfrica.com*, January 7, 2009.

<sup>92</sup> E.g., International Contact Group on Guinea, "Communiqué," June 19, 2009.

power.<sup>93</sup> In September, defense lawyers for individuals detained in connection with cocaine trafficking contended their clients were suffering “degrading and humane” treatment in prison.<sup>94</sup>

In separate incidents, soldiers raided the homes of a political party leader, Cellou Dalein Diallo (in January 2009) and a prominent trade union activist, Rabiadou Sera Diallo (in March). In the former case, the CNDD claimed that the raid was carried out by rogue soldiers; in the second, the CNDD contended that the raid was carried out during a routine anti-drug operation.<sup>95</sup> In August 2009, Human Rights Watch reported that opposition politicians and a human rights activist who had criticized Dadis Camara had been the target of threats and intimidation.<sup>96</sup>

The CNDD has created several new agencies with undefined legal mandates, and has appeared to sideline the role of the judiciary in upholding the rule of law. The formation of a State Secretariat in Charge of Disputes sparked protests by human rights advocates and a strike by members of the Guinean bar association, which contended that “citizens and lawyers are regularly summoned to the military base ... where they appear before the Secretariat or before the president in person as part of ostensibly judicial procedures.” Bar members termed these proceedings “pseudo-trials.”<sup>97</sup> The Secretariat was abolished in June, in apparent response to such criticisms. Advocates have also raised concerns over an apparent rise in vigilante attacks, particularly after the head of the newly created State Secretariat for Special Services called on the Guinean population to “burn all armed bandits who are caught red-handed,” noting that prisons were already overcrowded.<sup>98</sup>

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

Guinean and international advocates believe some CNDD members may have been responsible for human rights abuses under Conté. These 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>99</sup> Dadis Camara promised to revive an official inquiry into alleged abuses by security forces during the protests, which stagnated under Conté; however, little progress appears to have been made.

The inclusion of Claude Pivi in the CNDD, and his promotion in January to Minister for Presidential Security, has provoked particular concern. Pivi rose to national prominence in May 2008, when he portrayed himself as the leader of a mutiny by junior army officers. He is a widely

---

<sup>93</sup> HRW, “Guinea: Rein in Soldiers,” April 27, 2009.

<sup>94</sup> AFP, “Guinea Prisoners Suffer ‘Inhumane’ Treatment: Lawyers,” September 13, 2009.

<sup>95</sup> *Guineeactu.com*, “Perquisition Chez la SG de la CNTG : Le Capitaine Tiègboro et Raby s'expliquent,” March 5, 2009.

<sup>96</sup> Human Rights Watch, “Guinea: Respect Rights of Opposition,” August 31, 2009.

<sup>97</sup> AFP, “Guinée: ‘Graves violations des droits de l’Homme’ (ordre des avocats),” May 15, 2009.

<sup>98</sup> Reuters, “Burn Armed Robbers, Says Guinea Crime Chief,” June 2, 2009.

<sup>99</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.

feared figure in Conakry, and is believed by many to have personally overseen the reported killing of police officers in June 2008 (during a military-led crackdown on a police mutiny in Conakry) and the torture of a group of civilians the following November.<sup>100</sup> Pivi is also believed by some Guineans and members of the diplomatic community to have had ties to the drug trade.

## **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 centers. Adult literacy is under 30%.<sup>101</sup> Nonetheless, much of the population has access to shortwave radio, including international news broadcasts focusing on Africa. The CNDD tightly controls the national television station—the only locally broadcast channel—which often airs hours of footage of Dadis Camara at a time. State-owned media have reportedly been barred from covering political party activities.<sup>102</sup>

Local journalists report widespread self-censorship and a lack of access to official information. Dadis Camara has appealed to local journalists to “support” the CNDD, and is said to have offered money in exchange for favorable coverage. Many journalists fear Presidential Security Minister Claude Pivi, who reportedly harassed and threatened several local journalists prior to Conté's death for coverage that was allegedly critical of the late president's regime.<sup>103</sup> Events throughout 2009 appear to bear out such fears. The CNDD reportedly has detained journalists on multiple occasions for reasons that have not been publicly explained or that relate to alleged press criticisms of the CNDD.<sup>104</sup>

In August and September 2009, there was an uptick in such incidents. The CNDD reportedly undertook a series of overt actions aimed curtailing the free exchange of information and press coverage relating to politics and, in particular, rising opposition to a possible Dadis Camara presidential candidacy:<sup>105</sup> These actions included a temporary block on critical cell phone text messages; the arrest and interrogation of a local journalist who had taken photos at a demonstration by an anti-Dadis Camara youth group; and a ban on call-in shows and other programs of a “political” nature on private radio stations.<sup>106</sup> Additionally, following the violent

---

<sup>100</sup> In November 2008, Pivi reportedly ordered the torture of several Cameroonian nationals whom he claimed had damaged his car; the incident was reported in the Guinean press and by members of the diplomatic community.

<sup>101</sup> CIA World Factbook.

<sup>102</sup> AFP, “Guinée: Un meeting d'un parti d'opposition empêché dans l'Est,” June 18, 2009.

<sup>103</sup> Interview with Guinean media analyst, June 2009.

<sup>104</sup> The Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA), among other international human rights and press freedom organizations, has been particularly active in calling international attention to alleged press abuses in Guinea. MFWA is a regional association of journalists and human rights advocates that promotes freedom of expression. See, for instance, 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; MFWA, “Guinea Alert: TV Journalist Suspended Indefinitely,” April 8, 2009; and MFWA, “Guinea Alert: Two National Radio Journalists Unfairly Suspended,” February 20, 2009.

<sup>105</sup> See International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), “IFJ Condemns Threats on Freedom of Expression in Guinea,” September 4, 2009; and HRW, “Guinea: Respect Rights of Opposition,” August 31, 2009.

<sup>106</sup> HRW, “Guinea: Respect Rights of Opposition,” August 31, 2009; Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA), “Guinea Alert: Military Authorities Censor Telecom Operators,” August 31, 2009; MFWA, “Guinea Alert: Another (continued...)”

repression of anti-CNDD protests on September 28, 2009 (see below), two local correspondents who had reported on the protests for international media, including Agence France-Presse, Radio France Internationale, and the BBC, were reportedly assaulted and threatened by soldiers.<sup>107</sup>

## Transition Process

The CNDD committed to overseeing “transparent elections” and a “peaceful transition” to a civilian-led government.<sup>108</sup> Dadis Camara also promised that neither he nor any CNDD member would run for office.<sup>109</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 before year’s end.<sup>110</sup> However, in August 2009, the CNDD postponed presidential and legislative elections until January and March 2010, respectively.

Some believe the junta’s centralization of power, statements by Dadis Camara that he might run for president, and limited progress in electoral preparations could indicate an unwillingness by junta members 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.

## Election Administration

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>111</sup> Voter registration has reportedly been completed, though the finalization of voting lists was reportedly ongoing at the time of writing.

---

(...continued)

Journalist Detained By The Military, Released Without Charge,” August 31, 2009; URTELGUI, “Déclaration de l’Union des Radiodiffusions et Télévisions Libres de Guinée,” August 31, 2009 via <http://www.guineepresse.info>; MFWA, “Guinea Alert: Media Regulator Censors Private Radio Stations,” September 4, 2009; and Guineenews, “Une Union des Radios et Télévisions Libres Créée en Guinée,” March 24, 2009.

<sup>107</sup> Reporters Without Borders, “Two Reporters for Foreign Media Go Into Hiding After Getting Death Threats,” September 30, 2009.

<sup>108</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>109</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.

<sup>110</sup> The *Forces Vives* coalition has served as the main domestic civilian entity engaged in negotiations with the junta over Guinea’s transition from military rule. While the *Forces Vives* have been the main domestic civilian entity engaged in negotiating with the CNDD over Guinea’s transition to military rule, the coalition’s components—which include political parties expected to compete against each other in elections—do not necessarily share a single political perspective.

<sup>111</sup> Arieff interview with NGO expert on Guinea elections, May 2009.



Voter ID cards have not yet been issued.<sup>112</sup> International concerns over a possible Dadis candidacy were preceded by earlier international warnings that electoral preparations by the CNDD were not on track.<sup>113</sup> Many observers agree that the longer the CNDD remains in power, the more vulnerable it may become to violent public opposition, factionalization, or a counter-coup.<sup>114</sup>

## Funding

The total budget for completing a national voter registry and holding legislative and presidential elections is projected to be over \$38 million dollars.<sup>115</sup> As of early July 2009, the United States had pledged \$5.3 million, the largest single contribution. Other pledges have come from the European Union, France, Japan, Germany, and Spain. In late June, after the International Contact Group on Guinea criticized the CNDD for failing to provide promised funds, the Guinean government disbursed the equivalent of \$3 million toward the electoral process. Additional Guinean government funds that were designated by Conté's administration for use in legislative elections are also expected to be applied. A significant funding shortfall nevertheless continues to exist.<sup>116</sup> The Obama Administration has expressed support for elections in Guinea, stating in its *FY2010 Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations* that "for the first time ever, Guinea has the opportunity to hold credible elections," and that "despite deteriorating political conditions, the United States sees reason for hope."

## Potential Dadis Candidacy

In August and September 2009, Dadis Camara indicated on several occasions that he may run for president. His statements contradicted his own repeated previous pledges not to remain in power and a prior CNDD ban on the candidacy of any CNDD member.<sup>117</sup> While Dadis Camara has not officially announced that he will run—stating, instead, that he "might or might not stand"—he has repeatedly asserted his right to stand for election, stating that "no one can stop me" from entering the presidential race and that his potential candidacy is "in the hands of God."<sup>118</sup> In mid-September, a new political party, the Rally for the Defense of the Republic (RDR), was formed to support Dadis Camara's candidacy.<sup>119</sup>

---

<sup>112</sup> CRS interview with NGO expert on Guinea elections, October 2009.

<sup>113</sup> Statement by African Union Peace and Security Council, July 10, 2009; *5ème Réunion du Groupe de International de Contact sur la Guinée (GIC-G)*, Final Communiqué, July 16-17, 2009; AFP, "France Ready to Help Guinea Stage Post-Coup Polls," August 4, 2009.

<sup>114</sup> SSRC, *Policy Approaches to the Current Situation in Guinea*, March 2009: 1.

<sup>115</sup> Funding for elections is expected to come from previous budgeting for delayed legislative elections as well as newly committed funds. As of early September, the budget for remaining activities was estimated at roughly \$28.5 million (\$11.5 million to complete the voter registry and \$17 million for the elections). USAID responses to CRS queries, July-September 2009.

<sup>116</sup> As of early July, donor pledges of new funds totaled just over \$12.76 million. USAID, July 6, 2009.

<sup>117</sup> Radio France Internationale (RFI), "Guinea Junta Leader Says May Run for Presidency in 2010 Poll," via BBC Monitoring, August 20, 2009; Reuters, "Guinea Rejects U.S. Call for Junta-Free Election," August 23, 2009.

<sup>118</sup> AFP, "Guinée/Présidentielle: la Candidature de Camara 'Entre les Mains de Dieu,'" August 20, 2009; AFP, "Guinea Junta Chief Says He May Run in Polls," August 24, 2009; Reuters, "Guinea Bans Political Debates on Radio and TV," September 3, 2009.

<sup>119</sup> AFP, "Guinea Party Backs Junta Leader for President Despite Sanctions," September 19, 2009.

## Reactions

Dadis Camara's indications that he may enter the presidential race and the CNDD's decision to postpone the elections have provoked concern and criticisms among many Guineans, African leaders, and donors. The *Forces Vives* coalition called on Guineans to reject any attempt by the junta leader to run for president, and announced that they would boycott a meeting convened on August 31 by the junta due to their "categorical opposition" to Dadis Camara's candidacy.<sup>120</sup> The U.S. government, France, the African Union, ECOWAS, and the International Contact Group also condemned Dadis Camara's statements, while the AU threatened sanctions.<sup>121</sup> Dadis rejected such criticisms, while the CNDD accused the United States of "a blatant act of interference in the internal affairs of the Republic of Guinea."<sup>122</sup>

Several pro-Dadis youth groups, such as *Dadis Doit Rester* ("Dadis Must Stay"), were formed after the CNDD took power and have held demonstrations calling for Dadis to remain in office. These groups are seen by some as part of a CNDD strategy to retain power by cultivating a youth constituency and marginalizing traditional political parties. Simultaneously, youths opposed to Dadis have organized a group called *Dadis Doit Partir* ("Dadis Must Go") and staged demonstrations in early September in Conakry's impoverished suburbs—the site of frequent anti-government protests under former President Lansana Conté—including a protest in front of the U.S. Embassy.<sup>123</sup>

## September 28 Protests

The postponement of elections and Dadis Camara's statements that he might run for president occurred amid indications of strong public dissatisfaction with the CNDD's leadership and increased economic hardship.<sup>124</sup> On September 28, 2009, security forces opened fire with live ammunition on a crowd of some 50,000 civilian protesters who had gathered in and around an outdoor stadium near the center of Conakry.<sup>125</sup> Several major 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>126</sup> CNDD authorities had earlier

---

<sup>120</sup> AFP, "Guinée: Les 'Forces Vives' Boycoteront une Réunion Convoquée par la Junte," August 29, 2009.

<sup>121</sup> State Department [U.S. Embassy-Conakry], "Delay of Guinean Elections," August 20, 2009; AllAfrica.com, "U.S. Calls on Malagasy, Guinea Leaders to Step Down," September 24, 2009; AFP, "Paris Appelle Dadis et Sa Junte A Ne Pas Se Présenter A la Présidentielle," August 24, 2009; AFP, "Guinée/Présidentielle: Le Groupe de Contact Appelle Camara A Ne Pas Se Présenter," September 3, 2009; AU, "Communiqué of the 204<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Peace and Security Council," September 17, 2009; AFP, "Guinée: l'Opposition Approuve les Sanctions Prônées par l'Union Africaine," September 19, 2009; AFP, "Guinea Opposition Calls on Junta Chief Not to Run for President," August 23, 2009.

<sup>122</sup> Government of Guinea, "Communiqué de la Direction de la Communication du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères de la République de Guinée," August 22, 2009, via Guineenews.

<sup>123</sup> Guineenews, via BBC Monitoring, "One Gendarme Killed in Demo Against Junta Chief's Candidacy in 2010 Poll," September 1, 2009.

<sup>124</sup> IRIN, "Guinea: 'Yesterday Was Better Than Today,'" August 24, 2009.

<sup>125</sup> September 28 is a national holiday in Guinea, commemorating Guinea's decision in 1958 to declare independence from France.

<sup>126</sup> Associated Press (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. Four days earlier, tens of thousands of protesters had reportedly demonstrated against Camara when he traveled to Labe, the main city in central Guinea and an opposition stronghold, though no violent confrontations were reported. AFP, "20,000 in Guinea Demo Against (continued...)"

attempted to ban the protest from taking place. The military crackdown in response to the September 28 protest was the deadliest since nationwide anti-government protests in early 2007.

While state authorities reported 57 mortalities as a result of the confrontations, the Guinean Organization for Human Rights (OGDH) reported that at least 157 people were killed, many by bullets, while over 1,000 were wounded. The OGDH toll is based on a survey of hospitals, and many believe the death toll to be significantly higher.<sup>127</sup> Human Rights Watch reported that soldiers and gendarmes—including members of the Presidential Guard and of the CNDD's anti-drug and anti-crime unit, both of which answer directly to the presidency—directly fired on the stadium crowd and stabbed those fleeing with knives and bayonets. Military and police officers also carried out lootings and rapes in residential areas of Conakry during the melee. Several local journalists were reportedly assaulted and threatened by soldiers.<sup>128</sup> Protesters set fire to a police station during the crackdown.<sup>129</sup> In the days following the protests, looting by soldiers continued and sporadic confrontations were reported in several opposition strongholds in Conakry. Witnesses said at least three civilians were killed in such confrontations.<sup>130</sup> Several dozen protesters detained on September 28 were held in military and police facilities, where they were reportedly denied access by international monitors such as the International Red Cross.<sup>131</sup>

The deliberate infliction of violence against women protesters has provoked widespread outrage among Guineans and the international community. According to numerous reports, soldiers molested and raped women openly in public, many in full view of their commanders.<sup>132</sup> A U.N. humanitarian report stated that “dozens” of women had been victims of such attacks, though “the exact number is not known due to a lack of cross-referencing in the collection of data, and to the fear of social stigma and possible repercussions on the part of victims.”<sup>133</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 appeared to be a new tactic. Secretary of State Clinton stated at a press conference, “It will not surprise you to hear that I was particularly appalled by the violence against women.”<sup>134</sup>

---

(...continued)

Coup Leader,” September 24, 2009.

<sup>127</sup> Many reports contend that CNDD commanders ordered bodies to be taken to military camps rather than the morgue. 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>128</sup> Reporters Without Borders, “‘We Know You, We’ll Make You Pay,’ Soldiers Tell Journalists,” October 8, 2009.

<sup>129</sup> Agence France Presse (AFP), “‘Dozens Killed’ in Guinea Anti-Junta Demonstration,” September 28, 2009.

<sup>130</sup> CRS interviews with Conakry residents, September 29, 2009; Radio France Internationale (RFI), “Calme Tendu Après la Sanglante Répression,” September 29, 2009.

<sup>131</sup> Human Rights Watch, “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>132</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; BBC, “African View: Guinea’s Lingerin Military Legacy,” 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; National Public Radio, “Guinea Shaken by Wave of Rapes During Crackdown,” October 20, 2009.

<sup>133</sup> U.N. OCHA, *Bulletin Humanitaire Mensuel*, October 31, 2009.

<sup>134</sup> Congressional Quarterly Transcript, “Secretary of State Clinton Holds Press Conference with Pakistani Foreign Minister Qureshi,” October 6, 2009.

In response to the attacks, human rights organizations condemned the Guinean military and Dadis Camara. Corinne Dufka, a senior researcher at Human Rights Watch, said the killings were “shocking even by the abusive standards of Guinea’s coup government.”<sup>135</sup> Human Rights Watch subsequently found that the military response to the protests had been planned and “premeditated,” and could amount to a crime against humanity.<sup>136</sup> Alioune Tine, head of the regional human rights organization RADDHO, stated, “If Camara maintains his desire to be president, we are heading to an open conflict in this country.”<sup>137</sup> Gilles Yabi, a former Guinea analyst with the International Crisis Group, warned that the protest could be “only the beginning of demonstrations and counter-demonstrations we can expect in the next few months.”<sup>138</sup>

## Opposition Leaders Injured, Arrested

At least six opposition leaders—Cellou Dalein Diallo and his deputy Amadou Bah Oury, François Lonsény Fall, Sidya Touré, Jean-Marie Doré, and Mouctar Diallo—were reportedly injured, and three were beaten by soldiers. Diallo, Touré, and Fall were reportedly arrested before eventually being taken to a hospital, where they were temporarily barred from communicating with the media.<sup>139</sup> The leaders’ homes were reportedly looted by soldiers in their absence, and at least one was sprayed with machine gun fire.<sup>140</sup> According to statements later made to the international press, Diallo said he was beaten by soldiers who threatened to kill him. (Diallo was later evacuated from Guinea to receive medical treatment.) Touré said he had witnessed “complete disorder and total anarchy,” while Fall accused the military of crimes against humanity.<sup>141</sup> (See **Appendix A** for profiles of selected Guinean political party leaders.)

## CNDD Statements

Dadis Camara has stated that he was “disgusted” by the violence of September 28 and that “innocent people lost their lives.”<sup>142</sup> At the same time, in remarks to the press, the junta leader has denied any responsibility for the killings and abuses, contending that he is not in command of the armed forces and suggesting that military disorder under Conté caused a breakdown in the chain of command.<sup>143</sup> These statements are contradicted by numerous witness reports and a Human Rights Watch investigation, which indicate that commanders of the Presidential Guard and of the State Secretariat for Special Services—both of which answer directly to the president—orchestrated the crackdown.<sup>144</sup> Dadis Camara also contended that “the army have taken me

---

<sup>135</sup> Human Rights Watch, “Security Forces Unlawfully Kill Dozens of Protesters,” September 29, 2009.

<sup>136</sup> Human Rights Watch, “Guinea: September 28 Massacre Was Premeditated,” October 27, 2009.

<sup>137</sup> Reuters, “Guinea Forces Kill 14 in Crackdown-Group,” September 28, 2009.

<sup>138</sup> BBC, “Guinea Army ‘Bayoneted Victims,’” September 29, 2009.

<sup>139</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>140</sup> AFP, “Guinée: Les maisons de deux opposants pillées par des militaires (témoins),” September 28, 2009.

<sup>141</sup> RFI, “Calme Tendu Après la Sanglante Répression,” September 29, 2009.

<sup>142</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>143</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>144</sup> E.g., Adam Nossiter, “In Guinean Hospital, Wounded Attest to Military Attack,” *The New York Times*, October 1, 2009; Radio France Internationale, “Un Militaire Témoigne,” October 1, 2009; *Jeune Afrique*, “Lundi Sanglant A (continued...)”

hostage. They tell me ‘if you step down then we’ll take over.’”<sup>145</sup> At the same time, Dadis Camara has maintained that he cannot step down because he is the only one capable of controlling the military.<sup>146</sup>

Dadis Camara has also accused the opposition of being at fault for the September 28 violence and for seeking to overthrow the government.<sup>147</sup> A CNDD statement, released September 29, contended that security forces had been deployed “to prevent public unrest and to guarantee the security of individuals and belongings,” while opposition leaders had “unilaterally” organized a protest that risked “compromising public order” despite CNDD orders. It also maintained that the majority of those who died had been killed by asphyxiation in the stampede, not by bullets.<sup>148</sup> Dadis Camara separately declared two days of national mourning and a prohibition on “any gathering from whatever side and nature and with subversive character,” which was later lifted.<sup>149</sup> The CNDD has promised to organize its own investigation, but the opposition has rejected any junta attempt to investigate as biased.<sup>150</sup>

## **International Reactions**

The United States, European governments, and African regional organizations condemned the military crackdown of September 28 and apparent attempts by the CNDD to prolong its hold on power. The U.S. government, European Union (EU), and AU announced targeted sanctions against CNDD members and certain associates; ECOWAS, the EU, and the AU have additionally announced an arms embargo.<sup>151</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>152</sup>

---

(...continued)

Conakry: *L'Enquête-Vérité*, October 4-10, 2009; AFP, “En Banlieue de Conakry, la Terreur ‘Quand les Bérets Rouges Sont Venus,’” October 1, 2009; Human Rights Watch, “Guinea: September 28 Massacre Was Premeditated,” October 27, 2009.

<sup>145</sup> Reuters, “Guinea Opposition Rejects Junta Unity Call,” October 1, 2009.

<sup>146</sup> France 24, “Our Army Has Never Been Disciplined,” Warns Camara,” October 1, 2009.

<sup>147</sup> Adam Nossiter, “Guinea Seethes as a Captain Rules at Gunpoint,” *The New York Times*, October 3, 2009.

<sup>148</sup> Guineenews, “Massacre du 28 Septembre. Déclaration du CNDD et du Gouvernement,” September 29, 2009.

<sup>149</sup> AP, “Guinée: Camara Décède Deux Jours de Deuil National,” September 30, 2009; BBC, “Guinea Bans ‘Subversive’ Meetings,” September 30, 2009.

<sup>150</sup> Reuters, “Tensions in Guinea Junta As Isolation Grows,” October 8, 2009.

<sup>151</sup> The United States has imposed travel restrictions on “certain members of the military junta and the government, as well as other individuals who support policies or actions that undermine the restoration of democracy and the rule of law in Guinea.” 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”; U.S. Department of State, “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>152</sup> AFP, “France Condemns ‘Violent Repression’ in Guinea,” September 28, 2009; Reuters, “Clash Toll in Guinea Soars, France Cuts Aid,” September 29, 2009.

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>153</sup> U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has announced the formation of an international commission of inquiry, with which the CNDD has agreed to cooperate.<sup>154</sup>

## **U.S. Reactions**

Philip J. Crowley, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, stated that the United States is

deeply concerned about the general breakdown ... of security in Conakry, and we encourage the Guinean Government to exercise restraint and ensure the safety and security of all Guineans and foreign nationals. We're very concerned about violations of basic human rights and call upon the regime to release all political prisoners.<sup>155</sup>

The State Department said the United States would monitor “the extralegal actions of the military and government.”<sup>156</sup> The Obama Administration announced travel restrictions against members of the CNDD as well as “other individuals who support policies or actions that undermine the restoration of democracy and the rule of law in Guinea,” effective October 23, 2009.<sup>157</sup> The United States has evacuated all non-essential personnel from the Conakry embassy, including Political Affairs officers and USAID personnel.

## **Congressional Reactions**

The violent crackdown of September 28 provoked criticism by several Members of Congress. Senator Russ Feingold released a statement condemning “this blatant and violent repression” and urging Dadis Camara “to abide by his pledge not to run in the elections scheduled for January.”<sup>158</sup> Congressman Howard Berman, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, condemned the CNDD and stated that, “In the eyes of the world the Guinean military leadership’s credibility has been destroyed.”<sup>159</sup> Congresswoman Yvette Clarke, in a statement on the House floor, criticized the use of violence against civilian protesters and praised diaspora organizations for bringing attention to “the atrocities that continue to take place in Guinea.”<sup>160</sup> A group of 14 Senators additionally addressed a letter to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton praising the Obama Administration for its “strong public stand” and urging the Administration to continue “actively addressing the situation in Guinea, in coordination with our European partners, the African Union and the Economic Community of West African State” and to consider “measures that can be taken

---

<sup>153</sup> VOA News, “UN Security Council Concerned About Guinea,” September 30, 2009.

<sup>154</sup> Reuters, “Guinea Leader Says Will Cooperate With Inquiry-UN,” October 21, 2009; United Nations, “Statement Attributable to Spokesperson for Secretary-General on Establishment of International Commission of Inquiry on Guinea,” October 30, 2009.

<sup>155</sup> State Department, “Daily Press Briefing,” September 29, 2009.

<sup>156</sup> Reuters, “U.S. Condemns ‘Brazen’ Guinea Crackdown,” September 29, 2009.

<sup>157</sup> State Department, “Guinea: Travel Restrictions,” October 29, 2009.

<sup>158</sup> “Statement of Senator Russ Feingold on Guinean Soldiers Firing Into an Opposition Rally,” September 29, 2009

<sup>159</sup> Office of Congressman Howard Berman, “Guinea’s Military Leaders, Tarnished by Violence, Should Allow for Free and Fair Elections, Berman Says,” October 8, 2009

<sup>160</sup> Yvette D. Clarke, “Movement of Guinean Women in the United States,” October 28, 2009, Congressional Record, Page E2648.

against senior Guinean officials found to be complicit in this violence or other gross human rights violations.”<sup>161</sup>

## **Economic Issues**

Guinea has significant mineral resources, including gold, diamonds, uranium, and an estimated 27% or more of global bauxite (aluminum ore) reserves. Guinea may also have oil and gas reserves, and has significant hydro-electric and agricultural potential. Prior to the coup, 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>162</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>163</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 recent fall in mineral commodity prices, and the freezing of some foreign aid.<sup>164</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>165</sup>

## **Socioeconomic Conditions**

Despite its resources, living standards in Guinea are among the worst in the world.<sup>166</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>167</sup> According to figures released by the United Nations in May 2009, the rate of chronic malnutrition increased over the last two years, from 34.8% to 36.2%;

---

<sup>161</sup> 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>162</sup> EIU, *Guinea: Country Report*, March 2009: 17.

<sup>163</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>164</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>165</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.

<sup>166</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>167</sup> World Health Organization, *Africa Weekly Emergency Situation Update*, March 23, 2009.

8.3% of Guinean children are thought to suffer from serious malnutrition.<sup>168</sup> The adult prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS is estimated at 1.6%.<sup>169</sup>

## Issues for U.S. Policy

The United States has taken various steps to isolate the CNDD since the violent military crackdown on protesters on September 28, 2009. These steps followed the suspension of certain foreign assistance programs in Guinea as the result of the 2008 military coup. Non-essential personnel were evacuated from the U.S. Embassy days after the crackdown for security reasons, while additional personnel—including the Political Affairs Section—were evacuated several weeks later. The Peace Corps program was also evacuated and suspended, as were public diplomacy programs such as educational and cultural exchanges. Newly appointed Ambassador Patricia N. Moller, however, was posted to Guinea several weeks after the crackdown. Effective October 23, 2009, the United States imposed targeted visa restrictions against “certain members of the military junta and the government, as well as other individuals who support policies or actions that undermine the restoration of democracy and the rule of law in Guinea.”<sup>170</sup>

Potential issues for U.S. policy may include

- Monitoring of the timeline for and progress toward the conduct of elections, and contingency policy planning with respect to the appropriate U.S. response to potential related developments, such as a further deterioration in security, a possible presidential election bid by Dadis Camara or other CNDD members, or a change in the sequencing of presidential and parliamentary elections;
- The status of Guinean or international investigations into the September 28 violence and consideration of potential support for international emergency assistance to victims of the September 28 crackdown;
- The resumption, continuation, or further restriction of certain foreign assistance programs, including support to Guinea’s electoral process and medium to long term democratization and governance reform efforts;
- The enforcement and possible expansion of targeted sanctions against CNDD members and associates;
- Support to, and coordination with, multilateral policies toward Guinea, including a planned international commission of inquiry, consideration of a possible deployment of a regional peacekeeping or observation force, and an arms embargo announced by ECOWAS, the AU, and the European Union;
- Guinean security sector reform;
- The status of U.S. Embassy personnel.

---

<sup>168</sup> U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), *Information Bulletin May 2009*.

<sup>169</sup> CIA World Factbook.

<sup>170</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Guinea: Travel Restrictions,” October 29, 2009.



## Foreign Aid

In response to the coup, the United States suspended bilateral assistance to Guinea, with the exception of humanitarian and democracy-promotion assistance, in line with congressional directives.<sup>171</sup> U.S. officials have indicated that free and fair elections must take place in order for the aid suspension, which affects some development and all security assistance, to be lifted. At the same time, the majority of programs administered by USAID have been categorized as either humanitarian or democracy and governance assistance, and as such have not been affected by the suspension. Health and education programs have been classified as humanitarian assistance and therefore generally exempted from suspension, even when they involve working directly with national government counterparts. In practice, suspended programs mainly include those related to the environment and natural resource sector.<sup>172</sup>

While most programs that require working directly with central government agencies are subject to the suspension, a few are not; exceptions include some health and education projects. Programs that involve working with district and municipal administrators who were elected in 2005 local elections are likewise exempt; the United States held that these elections, “though flawed, were Guinea’s best-conducted elections ever.”<sup>173</sup> 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 were to occur. In its *Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations*, the Obama Administration stated that “U.S. assistance to Guinea can play an important role in supporting popular calls for greater democracy, good governance, better social services, and improved economic opportunity, all of which should bolster stability.”

## Elections and Democracy Promotion

U.S. democracy and governance assistance is expected to increase in the lead-up to elections; programs supporting the electoral process are not currently affected by the suspension in U.S. aid. (U.S. democracy and governance programs in Guinea are funded through development assistance, other aspects of which will be discussed below.) The Obama Administration’s FY2010 request for democracy and governance funding represented a significant increase over FY2009: \$7.14 million compared to \$2.57 million.<sup>174</sup> The United States is the largest single donor to the electoral process, having pledged \$5.3 million as of July 2009 toward a total electoral budget of over \$38 million dollars.<sup>175</sup> U.S. electoral assistance is expected to fund training and technical assistance to

---

<sup>171</sup> The Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-8, Division H, Title VII, section 7008) bars 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 and humanitarian assistance. The provision is commonly referred to as “Section 508,” a reference to previous appropriations legislation.

<sup>172</sup> USAID communications with CRS, May-July 2009.

<sup>173</sup> *FY2008 Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations*.

<sup>174</sup> *2010 Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations*, May 2009.

<sup>175</sup> U.S. electoral assistance is expected to be funded from several accounts, including FY2008 carryover Development Assistance, FY2009 Development Assistance, and Elections and Political Processes funds, according to USAID. Other donors that have pledged support for Guinea’s elections are the European Union, France, Japan, Germany, and Spain. As discussed above, in late June, the Guinean government provided the equivalent of \$3 million toward the electoral process. A significant shortfall in donor funds nonetheless continues to exist.

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.<sup>176</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**

U.S. security assistance to Guinea prior to the coup focused on ensuring Guinea's continued stability in a region scarred by armed conflict, and on Guinea's reported role as an international drug trafficking transit hub. In 2002, the U.S. military trained an 800-person Guinean Ranger battalion following incursions from fighters backed by then-Liberian president Charles Taylor. At the same time, concerns over alleged human rights abuses by the Guinean military have, at times, restricted military training programs. In appropriations legislation passed in 2008 and 2009, Congress restricted International Military Education and Training (IMET) assistance in Guinea to "Expanded" IMET, which emphasizes human rights and civilian control of the military.<sup>177</sup>

All security assistance to Guinea is currently suspended, including military training programs, counter-narcotics programs, and the provision of maritime security equipment. Prior to the coup, Defense Department and State Department officials had informally planned a potential security assistance budget totaling over \$100 million over three years, starting in FY2009. The bulk of this funding would have supported maritime and air space security and monitoring capacity-building programs and regional peacekeeping 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 for International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE) counter-narcotics programs in FY2009, the first time such funding had been requested for Guinea; the FY2010 budget request is for \$110,000. The Obama Administration has stated that Guinea's military is "an important element in ensuring regional stability," and indicated that if the aid suspension is lifted, U.S. military assistance will work "to promote maritime safety and security in West Africa" and "will also focus on counter-narcotics activities."<sup>178</sup>

---

<sup>176</sup> Information provided by USAID.

<sup>177</sup> Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-8, Division H, Title VII, section 7070).

<sup>178</sup> *FY2010 Congressional Budget Justification for International Operations*, May 2009.

## **Appendix A. Profiles of Selected Guinean Political Party Leaders<sup>179</sup>**

There are over 60 registered political parties in Guinea, according to the website of the national electoral commission.<sup>180</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.

### 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 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

---

<sup>179</sup> The following profiles are drawn from Arieff interviews, news reports, and International Crisis Group publications.

<sup>180</sup> Available at [www.ceniguinee.org/index.php](http://www.ceniguinee.org/index.php).

Renewal, UPR).<sup>181</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 is credited by the international community with overseeing 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.

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

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. Since the coup, he has served as spokesman of the "Forces Vives" coalition of political parties and civil society groups, which is the primary civilian entity negotiating with the CNDD over the transition to civilian rule. Doré is a member of the Guerzé ethnic group, to which Dadis Camara also belongs; like Dadis Camara, he is a Christian. The UPG won three seats in the National Assembly in 2002 legislative elections.

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

Diallo, head of the newly formed NFD party, is a relatively young newcomer to Guinean politics who has taken an active role in opposing the CNDD. Diallo was reportedly threatened with arrest in August, 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>181</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>182</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>182</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>183</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>184</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>185</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>183</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>184</sup> A. O. Bah et al., "Les Guinéens de l'Extérieur: Rentrer au pays?" *Politique Africaine* 36 (December 1989): 22.

<sup>185</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>186</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>187</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>188</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>189</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>190</sup>

---

<sup>186</sup> IFES, “Of Interest,” Election Profile (Guinea), at <http://www.electionguide.org/results.php?ID=402>.

<sup>187</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>188</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>189</sup> International Crisis Group, *Stopping Guinea’s Slide*, 2005: 10.

<sup>190</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>191</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>192</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>193</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>191</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>192</sup> International Crisis Group, *Guinea: The transition has only just begun*, March 2009: 4.

<sup>193</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>194</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>195</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>196</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>197</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>194</sup> Coalition pour la Défense des Victimes des Événements 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>195</sup> HRW, “Guinea: Security Forces Abuse Population Under Martial Law” [press release], February 15, 2007.

<sup>196</sup> E.g., 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>197</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>198</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>199</sup> Mutiny leaders exchanged fire with members of the presidential guard, and several people were reportedly killed, and dozens wounded, by stray bullets.<sup>200</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>201</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>202</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>203</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>204</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>205</sup>

---

<sup>198</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>199</sup> *BBC Monitoring*, "Guinea: Mutiny leader explains reasons behind action [from *GuinéeNews*]" June 8, 2008.

<sup>200</sup> Kissy Agyeman, "Tension Mounts in Guinea in Wake of Army Revolt," *Global Insight*, May 29, 2008.

<sup>201</sup> Saliou Samb, "Guinea Settles Army Pay Dispute With Mass Promotion," Reuters, June 14, 2008.

<sup>202</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>203</sup> E.g., *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>204</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. (E.g., *La Lance* newspaper, November 26, 2008.)

<sup>205</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