

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

Guinea Monthly Briefing December 2021

Guinea Summary 20 December 2021

Supporters of former president Alpha Condé (2010-2021) organise protests demanding his full release following his transfer from detention at the Palais Mohammed V into house arrest at the private residence of his wife, former first lady Hadja Djéne Kaba. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) maintains sanctions against leaders of the Comité National de Redressement et du Développement (CNRD) military council. United States (US) assistant secretary of state for African affairs Mike Gonzales visits Guinea and calls for transition authorities to provide a transition calendar. Interim president Mamady Doumbouya (2021-present) issues an ordinance creating the Cour de Répression des Infractions Économiques et Financières (CRIEF) aiming to combat financial crimes, in particular embezzlement of public funds. Chinese-Singaporean-Guinean consortium SMB-Winning, holder of the concession to exploit blocks 1 and 2 of the Simandou iron ore megaproject, pledges to complete the 670-km Transguinean railway by 2024 and to begin commercial production at the mine in 2025. Guinea has yet to record a case of the so-called Omicron variant of Covid-19 but requires international travellers to provide a negative PCR test upon arrival in Guinea. Guineans will remember 2021 as the year that a military coup toppled Condé from power while they look ahead to possible completion of the political transition process in 2022.

Demands continue for Condé's full release ...

Demonstrations demanding the full release of former president **Alpha Condé** (2010-2021) from detention took place in front of the headquarters of Condé's former ruling party, the **Rassemblement du Peuple de Guinée (RPG) Arc-en-Ciel (RPG-AEC)**, in Conakry on 11 December. Condé was transferred on 27 November from detention at the **Palais Mohammed V** where he had been held since the military coup that deposed him on 5 September, and was placed under house arrest at the private **Conakry** residence of his wife, former first lady **Hadja Djéne Kaba**.¹ Security forces dispersed protesters with tear gas and arrested eight individuals.² Civil society organisation **Front national pour la défense de la constitution (FNDC)** condemned the "acts of repression" against the demonstrators, suggesting security forces' actions violated the terms of the **Transition Charter**, which guarantees personal freedoms, and called for the release of those arrested.³

RPG-AEC secretary general **Saloum Cissé** distanced the former ruling party from the protest action, acknowledging that "rational steps" were being taken to obtain Condé's release.⁴ RPG-AEC permanent secretary **Sékou Condé** described Condé's transfer to house arrest as "a good first step" and expressed optimism that the **Comité National de Redressement et du Développement (CNRD)** military council would issue further positive directives in the coming weeks.⁵ The RPG-AEC has established a collective called the **Forum National pour la Libération du Prof. Alpha Condé (FONAL-PRAC)** to lobby for Condé's release (see *ARC Briefing Guinea November 2021*), demanding that the CNRD guarantee Condé's physical and moral integrity.⁶

¹ Jeune Afrique, 29 Nov 2021

² Guinée Matin, 11 Dec 2021

³ Africa Guinée, 11 Dec 2021

⁴ GuinéeNews.org, 6 Dec 2021

⁵ Africa Guinée, 30 Nov 2021

⁶ Africa Guinée, 2 Dec 2021

... as ECOWAS maintains sanctions and demands transition timetable ...

The **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)** has similarly been unwavering in its demands for Condé's unconditional release and continues its hardline stance towards the CNRD. At its 60th Ordinary Summit in **Abuja (Nigeria)** on 12 December, ECOWAS decided to uphold its suspension of Guinea from the organisation and to maintain sanctions imposed on CNRD officials and their family members.⁷ While ECOWAS praised the release of Condé from detention and welcomed the announcement that **Conseil National Transition (CNT)** (national transition council) membership would be finalised by the end of December, the body expressed concern that in the three months since the coup took place, the CNRD had failed to deliver a timetable for a return to constitutional order.⁸ ECOWAS repeated its demand for Guinea to adhere to the six-month deadline to hold elections that it initially set for Guinea.⁹

Open Society Institute for West Africa (OSIWA) researcher **Mathias Hounnkpé** predicts the impasse between the CNRD and ECOWAS will continue. The CNRD wants the same timeframe that ECOWAS granted to **Mali**, in order to pursue its transition.¹⁰ Despite ECOWAS' hardline stance against the CNRD, during visit to Conakry on 5 December, **African Union (AU) Commission** chairperson **Moussa Faki Mahamat** noted the positive measures that the CNRD has taken to date and declared the AU's readiness to support Guinea's transition.¹¹

... amid mixed international support for Guinea's transition

The **United States (US)** has reaffirmed its support for Guinea amid warnings that the provision of financial assistance will be contingent on the fulfillment of a "*return to normal*".¹² US assistant secretary of state for African affairs **Mike Gonzales** undertook a three-day visit to Conakry from 1-3 December to assess the state of Guinea's transition.¹³ Gonzales was scheduled to meet with CNRD leader Col. **Mamady Doumbouya** (2021-present), prime minister **Mohamed Béavogui**, civil society members and the ECOWAS delegation, which was in Guinea at the time.¹⁴

At a press conference on 3 December, Gonzales said the US and Guinea had "*forged a solid friendship*" and that the US had been alarmed by the socio-political situation that had prevailed in Guinea over the past two years.¹⁵ Gonzales acknowledged that this period had been characterised by repression, democratic reversal, constitutional manipulation, impunity and the detention of political leaders.¹⁶ Gonzales also noted US displeasure with the 5 September coup but recognised the CNRD's efforts to date.¹⁷

Nevertheless, Gonzales expressed the US' desire to see Guinea "*return to normal*". This scenario entails the publication of a transition timeline, which will pave the way for the organisation of free and transparent elections, the return of a democratically-elected civilian regime and constitutional order.¹⁸ Gonzales said future financial assistance will hinge on Guinea achieving these milestones.¹⁹ The US suspended Guinea on 2 November from the **African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)**, a regulatory framework that allows several **African** products to be exported duty-free to the US (see *ARC Briefing Guinea November 2021*).²⁰

⁷ RFI, 12 Dec 2021

⁸ Africanews, 14 Dec 2021

⁹ Africanews, 14 Dec 2021

¹⁰ RFI, 12 Dec 2021

¹¹ GuinéeNews.org, 5 Dec 2021

¹² GuinéeNews.org, 3 Dec 2021

¹³ GuinéeNews.org, 3 Dec 2021

¹⁴ Vision Guinée, 2 Dec 2021

¹⁵ GuinéeNews.org, 3 Dec 2021

¹⁶ GuinéeNews.org, 3 Dec 2021

¹⁷ GuinéeNews.org, 3 Dec 2021

¹⁸ Vision Guinée, 3 Dec 2021

¹⁹ GuinéeNews.org, 3 Dec 2021

²⁰ Jeune Afrique, 9 Nov 2021

In contrast to the US' carrot and stick approach, a delegation from the Africa directorate of the **Quai d'Orsay** (French foreign ministry) visited Guinea on 23 November, and expressed France's willingness to support the transition in order for it to be successful.²¹ France's ambassador to Guinea, **Marc Fonbaustier**, noted that the delegation had not been sent by President **Emmanuel Macron** (2017-present).²² Following a meeting with Guinea's foreign affairs minister, Dr. **Morissanda Kouyaté**, Fonbaustier declared on 3 December that the CNRD's intentions were "*clear and good*".²³ **European Union (EU)** resident representative **Joseph Coll** told territorial administration minister **Mory Condé** on 29 November that the EU is ready to provide technical support to the transition government with respect to electoral reform.²⁴

Doumbouya creates economic crimes court

President Doumbouya is making good on the CNRD's promise to tackle corruption and other economic crime. On 2 December he issued an ordinance creating the **Cour de Répression des Infractions Économiques et Financières (CRIEF)** (economic and financial crimes court).²⁵ The court aims to combat financial crime, in particular the embezzlement of public funds.²⁶ According to justice minister and keeper of the seals **Fatoumata Soumah**, the court also intends to crack down on corruption, infringement of business rights and on individuals she called "*economic predators*".²⁷ Soumah said the creation of the court is part of President Doumbouya's desire to incorporate transparency in the management of public goods but that it would not be used to settle scores.²⁸ The court will judge cases where the amounts allegedly misappropriated are equal to or above 1 billion GNF (\$105,000).²⁹

Former **Barreau de Guinée** (Guinean Bar Association) president **Mohamed Traoré** says the creation of the CREI will help to eradicate impunity and ensure that those accused of economic crimes and misdemeanours will not go unpunished.³⁰ Traoré claimed former president Condé did not have the desire to fight economic crime, but instead used the fight against corruption to blackmail adversaries and state agents.³¹ **Opposition Parti des Démocrates pour l'Espoir (PADES)** leader **Ousmane Kaba** similarly noted that the CRIEF will hold individuals in public office accountable and show that nobody is above the law.³² **Union des Forces Républicaines (UFR)** president **Sidiya Touré** described the establishment of the CRIEF as the "*beginning of the moralisation of public management*".³³ Doumbouya issued a further ordinance on 6 December transferring the powers of the **Haute Cour de Justice (HCJ)** (higher court of justice) to the CRIEF.³⁴

Agence Judiciaire de l'État (state judicial agency) head **Mohamed Sampil** released a list on 13 December of 75 high-ranking officials who will face imminent judgement on allegations of embezzlement of public funds and property, forgery and the use of property.³⁵ The list includes former **Haute Autorité de Communication** (higher communication authority) director general **Boubacar Yacine Diallo**, former **Agence National de la Sécurité Sanitaire (ANSS)** (national health security agency) director **Sekoba Keita** and former **Institut de Recherche Agronomique (IRA)**

²¹ Africa Guinée, 23 Nov 2021

²² Africa Guinée, 23 Nov 2021

²³ GuinéeNews.org, 3 Dec 2021

²⁴ Vision Guinée, 29 Nov 2021

²⁵ Africa Guinée, 2 Dec 2021

²⁶ RFI, 4 Dec 2021

²⁷ Africa Guinée, 4 Dec 2021

²⁸ Africa Guinée, 4 Dec 2021

²⁹ RFI, 4 Dec 2021

³⁰ RFI, 4 Dec 2021

³¹ RFI, 4 Dec 2021

³² RFI, 4 Dec 2021

³³ RFI, 4 Dec 2021

³⁴ Guinée Matin, 7 Dec 2021

³⁵ GuinéeNews.org, 13 Dec 2021

(agriculture research institute) director general **Sawa Camara**.³⁶ Sampil said the investigations have the full support of the head of state.³⁷

Doumbouya has also proceeded with the nomination of new directors general at bodies including the **Port Autonome de Conakry** (Conakry autonomous port), **Caisse National de Sécurité Sociale (CNSS)** (national social security fund), and the **Direction Générale des Impôts** (general tax directorate), which may see the outgoing heads pursued for financial mismanagement.³⁸

SMB-Winning provides update on Transguinean railway

Chinese-Singaporean-Guinean consortium **SMB-Winning** has promised to complete the 670-km **Transguinean** railway by 2024. The consortium, which holds the concession to exploit blocks 1 and 2 of the **Simandou** iron ore megaproject, has also pledged that commercial production at the mine will begin in 2025.³⁹ During a 23 November audience with prime minister Mohamed Béavogui, SMB-Winning general coordinator and majority shareholder **Sun Xiushun** said the project is in the final stage of feasibility studies and the mobilisation of funds to accelerate construction of the railway.⁴⁰ The railway will be used to transport iron ore from blocks 1 and 2 to the port of **Morebayah** at **Forécariah Prefecture**.⁴¹ A passenger railway service will also be operational on the railway line.

The council of ministers in November 2020 ratified two rail and port infrastructure agreements related to the exploitation of blocks 1 and 2 of the Simandou iron ore mega project (see *ARC Briefing Guinea November 2020*).⁴² The overall cost of the projects is estimated at \$16 billion, of which \$5.5 billion will be allocated to railway infrastructure, \$1.5 billion for construction of mine equipment and installations, and \$1 billion for port infrastructure.⁴³ The second phase of the project budgets \$7 billion for expanding mine capacity, doubling the railway and port size, and building a steel plant. Former mines minister **Abdoulaye Magassouba** suggested the projects would create 30,000 direct jobs and 65,000 indirect jobs in the construction phase and \$15.5 billion in revenue during its 25-year lifespan, when exploitation commences in 2026 (see *ARC Briefing Guinea November 2020*).⁴⁴

Covid update

Guinea has yet to record a case of the **Omicron** variant of **Covid-19**.⁴⁵ The CNRD lifted most of the Covid-19 related restrictive measures in October, including night-time curfews, but Guineans are still required to wear facemasks in public settings and are encouraged to wash their hands. A Covid vaccine passport is required to enter public buildings.⁴⁶ Travellers to Guinea are required to present a negative PCR test, no older than 72 hours, upon arrival in Guinea.⁴⁷

The **Agence Nationale de la Sécurité Sanitaire (ANSS)** (national health security agency) reports that, as of 12 December, Guinea has recorded 30,814 cases of Covid-19 in its population of roughly 12 million, with 29,776 recoveries and 388 Covid-19-related deaths.⁴⁸ The ANSS has administered 1,687,180 Covid-19 vaccinations.⁴⁹ Dr. **Fodé Amara Traoré** replaced **Dr. Sakoba Keita** as ANSS director general on 3 December.⁵⁰

³⁶ GuinéeNews.org, 13 Dec 2021

³⁷ GuinéeNews.org, 13 Dec 2021

³⁸ GuinéeNews.org, 15 Dec 2021

³⁹ Agence Ecofin, 24 Nov 2021

⁴⁰ Agence Ecofin, 24 Nov 2021

⁴¹ Agence Ecofin, 24 Nov 2021

⁴² Agence Ecofin, 6 Nov 2020

⁴³ Agence Ecofin, 6 Nov 2020

⁴⁴ Bloomberg, 5 March 2020

⁴⁵ ARC Guinea analyst

⁴⁶ Xinhua, 21 Oct 2021

⁴⁷ www.anss-guinee.org

⁴⁸ ANSS, 12 Dec 2021

⁴⁹ ANSS, 12 Dec 2021

⁵⁰ GuinéeNews.org, 3 Dec 2021

2021 in review

Guineans will long remember 2021 as the year that a military coup toppled Alpha Condé. Elite army defence unit **Groupement des Forces Spéciales (GPS)** commander Colonel **Mamady Doumbouya** led the military takeover on 5 September, the climax of a three-year socio-political crisis largely fueled by Condé's determination to pursue a third presidential term in office. He did so by modifying the constitution in March 2020 and emerging victorious in the October 2020 presidential election. His victory resulted in widespread violence, repression and arrest of opposition leaders and their supporters, and violation of human rights and civil liberties. Although the coup attracted international condemnation, many Guineans welcomed it, with the leading opposition coalition, the **Alliance Nationale pour l'Alternance Démocratique (ANAD)**, and prominent civil society organisation **Colléctif pour la Transition en Guinée (CTG)** expressing support for the newly formed **Comité National du Rassemblement pour le Développement (CNRD)** military council under Doumbouya's leadership.

Doumbouya appointed **United Nations (UN)** career diplomat **Mohamed Béavogui** as his prime minister. The CNRD established a transition charter to regulate the conduct of transition authorities, and nominated a 25-member cabinet, which included only two non-civilians. The CNRD has not announced a timetable for elections but appears to be embarking on a significant overhaul of Guinea's government, creating new institutions and replacing individuals who facilitated the entrenchment of Guinea's socio-political crisis.

While the African Union suspended Guinea's membership, ECOWAS went a step further and imposed sanctions on CNRD leaders and their family members, insisting that the CNRD hold elections by March 2022. In 2022, it will become clear whether the CNRD will prolong the transition or adhere to the calls made by international stakeholders to quickly organise presidential elections. At this stage, this appears unlikely.

Planner

(Date TBA due to Covid-19) **Conakry (Guinea)** Transform Africa Conference;
 2023 **Conakry (Guinea)** Guinea Investment Forum;
 2026 **Conakry (Guinea)** Start of exploitation at the **Simandou** iron ore project;

Chronology

18 Dec 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Africa Guinée*. Former president **Sékouba Konaté** returns to Guinea after eight years in exile;

17 Dec 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *GuinéeNews.org*. According to his lawyer, **Jean Baptiste Jomamey**, former president **Moussa Dadis Camara** will return to Guinea on 22 December for the first time since January 2010, after an assassination attempt on him;

16 Dec 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Africa Guinée*. The **Conakry-Gbessia** Airport will henceforth be called **Aéroport Ahmed Sékou Touré**, after Guinea's founding head of state;

13 Dec 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Africa Guinée*. The military ruling council, the **Comité National du Rassemblement et du Développement (CNRD)**, is reportedly set to launch legal proceedings on allegations of corruption against former heads of state-owned enterprises during former president **Alpha Condé's** time in office;

13 Dec 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Africa Guinée*. The selection of members of Guinea's **Conseil National de Transition (CNT)** (national transition council) will be completed by the end of December;

11 Dec 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Africa Guinée*. Police break up protests organised by supporters of former president **Alpha Condé** calling for the deposed leader's release from house arrest;

8 Dec 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Financial Afrik*. **Karamo Kaba** replaces **Louncény Nabé** as governor of the **Banque Centrale de la République de Guinée (BCRG)** (central bank);

5 Dec 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *GuinéeNews.org*. **African Union Commission (AUC)** chairperson **Moussa Faki Mahama** suggests during a visit to Conakry that Guinea's political transition is moving in the right direction;

3 Dec 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Vision Guinée*. **United States (US)** under-secretary of state for **African** affairs **Mike Gonzales** says during a visit to Conakry that the US wants Guinea to hold free and fair elections and return to civilian rule as soon as possible;

2 Dec 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Vision Guinée*. Former ruling **RPG Arc-en-ciel** party has called on the **Comité National de Redressement et du Développement (CNRD)** military council to release its leader, deposed former president **Alpha Condé**, from house arrest;

2 Dec 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Africa Guinée*. Transition president Col. **Mamadi Doumbouya** announces the creation of the **Cour de Répression des Infractions Economiques et Financières (CRIEF)** (economic and financial crimes court), which aims to combat financial crime, in particular the embezzlement of public funds;

29 Nov 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *GuinéeNews.org*. Authorities have moved former president **Alpha Condé** from the **Palais Mohamed V** to the private residence of his wife in the Conakry district of **Dixinn**;

24 Nov 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Africa Guinée*. Public service minister **Julien Yombouno** is set to retire 6,300 civil servants;

24 Nov 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Agence Ecofin*. **Sun Xiushun**, general coordinator and majority shareholder of **Sino-Guinean** consortium **SMB-Winning**, assures prime minister **Mohamed**

Béavogui that the 670-km **Transguinean** railway that the consortium is developing as part of the **Simandou** iron ore megaproject, will be completed in 2024;

About Africa Risk Consulting:

Africa Risk Consulting (ARC) is a pan-African consulting company that provides timely, relevant information and advice that enables its clients to take informed investment decisions and to safeguard their reputations.

ARC's core consulting services include integrity due diligence and corporate investigations, political advisory and country assessments, opportunity monitoring and reputation risk management. Most relevant to private equity firms is ARC's integrity due diligence and corporate investigations capability. Specifically, ARC offers pre-deal integrity checks to highlight red flags before negotiations start; full detailed multi-jurisdictional reputation due diligence; and supplier and senior hire vetting and repeat due diligence for compliance programmes. ARC is unique in that it offers a 10-day delivery for a routine integrity due diligence. ARC also offers a suite of corporate investigations services from immediate investigation, evidence gathering, e-discovery, forensic accounting and whistleblower support on one end to crisis media management and regular monitoring on the other.

www.africariskconsulting.com

About ARC Briefing:

ARC Briefing is ARC's essential business information service.

Companies at any stage in their Africa expansion, whether building or communicating an Africa strategy, investing directly, expanding current operations, financing other investors, doing the legal leg-work or researching the Africa growth trend, need ARC Briefing.

ARC Briefing is an information service keeping you:

- Up to date with Country Chronologies of business-critical events
- In the know via Country Briefings on political, economic, business and operating trends. Written in-country, ARC experts analyse and comment
- Ahead with Country Planner which details future elections, budgets, regulatory changes etc.

www.africariskconsulting.com

Getting in touch

Please contact us by email info@africariskconsulting.com or call + 44 (0) 20 7078 4080

Follow us on Twitter: [@ARCBriefing](https://twitter.com/ARCBriefing)