

## AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

### Guinea Monthly Briefing February 2021

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#### Guinea Summary 23 February 2021

*Guinea announces its first Ebola outbreak since 2016 after confirming cases in the Gouéké sub-prefecture and N'zérékore in the south-eastern Guinée Forestière region, as well as in the capital, Conakry. President Alpha Condé (2010-present) has created a permanent framework for social and political dialogue between societal stakeholders. Condé outlines cabinet's four objectives for his six-year mandate. Germany-based NGO Transparency International (TI) ranks Guinea 137<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries in its 2020 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), seven places lower than its 2019 CPI position of 130<sup>th</sup>. Guinea's score drops from 29 points out of 100 in 2019 to 28 in 2020.*

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#### Guinea experiences first Ebola virus outbreak since 2016

Guinea has announced it is experiencing its first **Ebola** outbreak since 2016.<sup>1</sup> Given past experience, health authorities have acted swiftly to contain the spread of the virus, instituting measures such as patient isolation and procuring the Ebola vaccine.<sup>2</sup> Nonetheless, there are concerns of a rise in Ebola contamination. At time of writing, there have been five Ebola deaths.<sup>3</sup>

**Agence Nationale de Sécurité Sanitaire (ANSS)** (national agency for health security) director general **Sekoba Keita** declared on 14 February that Guinea was experiencing an Ebola outbreak, with eight cases and three deaths at the time of the announcement.<sup>4</sup> Keita said the first death had occurred during the night of 27-28 January and subsequent infections took place during the burial of the deceased on 1 February, at **Gouéké**, 40 km from **N'zérékore** in the south-eastern **Guinée Forestière** region and 800 km from the capital, **Conakry**.<sup>5</sup> Keita said the health agency was undertaking preliminary measures including identification of cases, tracing case evolution and finding the origin of the outbreak.<sup>6</sup> The ANSS said it was in contact with the **Centre for Disease Control Africa (CDC Africa)** and the **World Health Organisation (WHO)** to obtain the Ebola vaccine.<sup>7</sup>

Keita said Guinea is better equipped to deal with the current outbreak than it was in 2013-2016.<sup>8</sup> In 2014 Ebola samples had to be sent to the **Instituts Pasteur in Dakar (Senegal)** and **Lyon (France)**.<sup>9</sup> As a result, diagnosis took three and a half months, while currently results are available within two weeks.<sup>10</sup> Keita also said the availability of an Ebola vaccine makes the situation less dire.<sup>11</sup>

Health minister **Rémy Lamah** issued a communiqué on 14 February outlining other preventive measures to complement those already announced by Keita.<sup>12</sup> These include the dispatch of an emergency investigative mission, activation of coordination and technical commissions for the Ebola response, and accelerated procurement of Ebola vaccines.<sup>13</sup> Lamah called on the population to respect

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<sup>1</sup> GuinéeNews.org, 13 Feb 2021

<sup>2</sup> ARC Guinea analyst

<sup>3</sup> Le Monde, 23 Feb 2021

<sup>4</sup> GuinéeNews.org, 14 Feb 2021

<sup>5</sup> GuinéeNews.org, 14 Feb 2021

<sup>6</sup> GuinéeNews.org, 14 Feb 2021

<sup>7</sup> GuinéeNews.org, 13 Feb 2021

<sup>8</sup> DW, 15 Feb 2021

<sup>9</sup> DW, 15 Feb 2021

<sup>10</sup> DW, 15 Feb 2021

<sup>11</sup> DW, 15 Feb 2021

<sup>12</sup> GuinéeNews.org, 14 Feb 2021

<sup>13</sup> GuinéeNews.org, 14 Feb 2021

health measures and report suspected cases.<sup>14</sup> Lamah announced further restrictive measures on 16 February, including a ban on weekly markets, religious and traditional ceremonies and gatherings of more than five people in Gouéké, for a renewable period of 30 days.<sup>15</sup>

WHO Guinea resident representative **Alfred George Ki-Zerbo** said the WHO would deploy the necessary resources to assist Guinean authorities as quickly as possible.<sup>16</sup> **WHO Africa** regional director **Matshidiso Moeti** expressed concern about the emergence of Ebola cases, but said she had confidence in the ability of Guinean authorities to use their past experience dealing with Ebola, to tackle its spread.<sup>17</sup> Moeti reiterated the WHO's support in setting up contact tracing centres and treatment structures.<sup>18</sup> The WHO has also mobilised 100 local and international health experts to support the government's response efforts.<sup>19</sup> Moeti noted the WHO is also helping **Liberia** and **Sierra Leone** to establish preventive strategies, while it has placed **Côte d'Ivoire**, **Mali** and Senegal on high alert.<sup>20</sup>

Poor weather conditions delayed the arrival of the first Ebola vaccines. Moeti had announced on 19 February that Guinea would receive 11,000 doses of the Ebola vaccine from **Geneva (Switzerland)** on 21 February and an additional 8,600 doses from the **United States (US)**.<sup>21</sup> Dr. **Mohamed Yansané**, adviser to the health minister, said the Ebola vaccination programme would begin on 22 February, with priority given to suspected Ebola patients, their families and nursing staff.<sup>22</sup> However, **Harmattan** dust storms delayed the shipment of 11,360 vaccine doses until 22 February, on a charter flight provided by Guinean logistics and mining firm **United Mining Supply (UMS)**.<sup>23</sup>

Guinea is currently dealing with four epidemics: **Covid-19**, Ebola, yellow fever and measles, with a nationwide measles vaccination campaign underway.<sup>24</sup> High-ranking officials are confident in their ability to handle the Ebola outbreak, with prime minister **Ibrahima Kassory Fofana** declaring on **Twitter**, "*Ebola shall be defeated again.*"<sup>25</sup>

### Condé creates framework for socio-political dialogue

President **Alpha Condé** (2010-present) has created a permanent framework for social and political dialogue, which aims to promote dialogue between societal stakeholders.<sup>26</sup> The establishment of the framework comes in response to the on-going socio-political impasse that has plagued Guinea since 2018 and has resulted in scores of deaths and casualties. However, despite Condé's apparent effort to calm the socio-political climate, authorities continue to arrest, try and imprison members of Guinean civil society and opposition groups for participating in anti-government protests.<sup>27</sup>

Condé issued a presidential decree on 27 January establishing a permanent framework for social and political dialogue, to serve as a platform for exchange between political parties, social organisations, communities and government on issues of national interest.<sup>28</sup> The framework aims to facilitate discussions to build consensus.<sup>29</sup> The institution will be headed by the prime minister, head of

<sup>14</sup> GuinéeNews.org, 14 Feb 2021

<sup>15</sup> GuinéeNews.org, 16 Feb 2021

<sup>16</sup> DW, 15 Feb 2021

<sup>17</sup> WHO, 14 Feb 2021

<sup>18</sup> WHO, 14 Feb 2021

<sup>19</sup> RFI, 19 Feb 2021

<sup>20</sup> WHO, 14 Feb 2021

<sup>21</sup> RFI, 19 Feb 2021

<sup>22</sup> RFI, 19 Feb 2021

<sup>23</sup> Le Monde, 23 Feb 2021

<sup>24</sup> GuinéeNews.org, 15 Feb 2021

<sup>25</sup> RFI, 16 Feb 2021

<sup>26</sup> GuinéeNews.org, 27 Jan 2021

<sup>27</sup> ARC Guinea analyst

<sup>28</sup> GuinéeNews.org, 27 Jan 2021

<sup>29</sup> GuinéeNews.org, 27 Jan 2021

government and a permanent secretariat composed of two opposition members, two representatives from the presidential majority and one member each from civil society and the government.<sup>30</sup>

Reactions to Condé's announcement have been mixed. Opposition **Union des Forces Républicaines (UFR)** president **Sidiya Touré** said the framework is necessary to allow opposing groups and individuals to communicate due to the prevailing high level of tension in Guinea.<sup>31</sup> However, Touré said a national dialogue would have been preferable, as the institution has only a few participants.<sup>32</sup> In a previous role as higher representative of the state, Touré's responsibilities included establishing rapport between the government and the opposition movement.<sup>33</sup> Opposition **Union des Démocrates pour la Renaissance de la Guinée (UDRG)** president **Bah Oury** expressed optimism, noting the opposition had requested the pursuit of dialogue since October.<sup>34</sup> Oury said the structure will enable different groups and individuals to prioritise the use of dialogue over violence in the event of disagreement. However, Oury called on the government to make the institution more representative.<sup>35</sup> UFR vice president **Bakary Zoumanigui** was more sceptical, referring to Condé's previous speeches and failure to fulfill promises to engage the opposition.<sup>36</sup> Guinea's leading opposition party, the **Union des Forces Démocratiques de Guinée (UFDG)**, which has been at the forefront of contesting government action, did not comment.<sup>37</sup>

Condé's creation of a dialogue framework is the first manifestation of the call he made in his 15 December inauguration ceremony for national cohesion and for Guineans to renounce the use of violence in addressing political grievances (see *ARC Briefing Guinea December 2020*).<sup>38</sup> The declaration followed the death of an estimated 21 people as a result of violence related to the 18 October presidential elections.<sup>39</sup> In the year leading up to the elections, protests against Condé's desire to pursue a third presidential term led to the deaths of dozens of predominantly opposition supporters and security officers.<sup>40</sup>

External pressure may have played a significant role in overcoming Condé's reluctance to carry out dialogue with civil society and opposition groups.<sup>41</sup> The US, **European Union (EU)** and **France** have recently been very critical of Condé.<sup>42</sup> In a 30 November letter addressed to Condé, French President **Emmanuel Macron** (2017-present) suggested that reconciliation should be a pillar of Condé's third term.<sup>43</sup> During the inauguration of **Ghana's** President **Nana-Akufo Addo** on 7 January, French foreign affairs minister **Jean-Yves Le Drian** encouraged Condé to do more to establish a peaceful climate.<sup>44</sup>

Despite Condé's apparent signs of appeasement, **United Kingdom**-based NGO **Amnesty International** in a 2 February publication reported that 350-400 civil society and opposition members have been arrested and imprisoned in relation to the presidential elections.<sup>45</sup> Amnesty deplored the deaths of some detained individuals, which Le Drian and the EU also condemn, accusing security forces of carrying out arbitrary arrest and torture of government critics.<sup>46</sup> Guinean

<sup>30</sup> RFI, 29 Jan 2021

<sup>31</sup> Vision Guinée, 10 Feb 2021

<sup>32</sup> Vision Guinée, 10 Feb 2021

<sup>33</sup> Vision Guinée, 10 Feb 2021

<sup>34</sup> Africa Guinée, 29 Jan 2021

<sup>35</sup> Africa Guinée, 29 Jan 2021

<sup>36</sup> Africa Guinée, 28 Jan 2021

<sup>37</sup> Africa Guinée, 29 Jan 2021

<sup>38</sup> Aminata.com, 15 Dec 2020

<sup>39</sup> Aminata.com, 15 Dec 2020

<sup>40</sup> ARC Guinea analyst

<sup>41</sup> ARC Guinea analyst

<sup>42</sup> Jeune Afrique, 29 Jan 2021

<sup>43</sup> RFI, 29 Jan 2021

<sup>44</sup> RFI, 29 Jan 2021

<sup>45</sup> Amnesty International, 2 Feb 2021

<sup>46</sup> RFI, 29 Jan 2021

authorities deny the allegations and it remains to be seen whether the permanent framework will help to reduce hostilities.<sup>47</sup>

### President Condé outlines government priorities

President Condé has outlined cabinet's objectives and explained the notion of "*governing differently*", promised following his victory in the 18 October presidential election.<sup>48</sup> In a televised broadcast on 30 January, Condé expressed his desire to build a new and united Guinea in which everyone would have their place and share a common feeling of belonging to the nation.

Condé cited the four major pillars of governing differently.<sup>49</sup> The first is restructuring public administration. This involves fighting corruption and embezzlement of public funds, reform of the judicial system, and review of the public procurement procedures to make them more transparent and avoid conflicts of interest.<sup>50</sup> Greater efforts to mobilise domestic revenue will see more audits and digitisation of state operations. Improving the quality of life in Conakry is the next objective and entails construction of a new administrative city, improving sanitation, mobility and access to social housing.<sup>51</sup> Condé promised to establish more initiatives and programmes that target women, youth and the environment.<sup>52</sup> The government will take steps to enable the creation of 100,000 businesses, create investment funds for youth, and scholarship and training programmes for women. The final pillar focuses on greater allocation of resources to local communities, including development of roads in urban and rural localities as well as railway construction.<sup>53</sup>

Condé said he will assemble a team of highly competent individuals who will be supervised by the presidency, to coordinate the reforms necessary to pursue these objectives.<sup>54</sup> Diagnostic audits will identify the strengths and weaknesses of Guinea's public administration with support from the **Agence Française de Développement (AFD)** (French development agency).<sup>55</sup> Condé reiterated his ambition to bring happiness to all Guineans and foster Guinea's democratic renewal, noting that endless fighting and politics had stalled the country's progress, and success depends on the ability to work together.<sup>56</sup>

Some concrete steps have already been taken to implement these pillars. The government has set up the **Mission d'Appui à la mobilisation des Ressources Internes (Mamri)** (mission to support the mobilisation of internal resources), a task force that aims to raise domestic revenue collection to the equivalent of 20% of gross domestic product (GDP).<sup>57</sup> Condé also made an unannounced visit on 9 February to the education, justice and public service ministries, cautioning that employees absent without good cause would receive warnings.<sup>58</sup>

### Guinea drops seven places in Corruption Perceptions Index

Germany-based NGO **Transparency International (TI)** has reported in its 2020 **Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)** that Guinea has fallen seven places to 137<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries compared to its 2019 position of 130<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries.<sup>59</sup> Guinea's score dropped from 29 points out of 100

<sup>47</sup> ARC Guinea analyst

<sup>48</sup> Africa Guinée, 30 Jan 2021

<sup>49</sup> Vision Guinée, 30 Jan 2021

<sup>50</sup> Vision Guinée, 30 Jan 2021

<sup>51</sup> Vision Guinée, 30 Jan 2021

<sup>52</sup> Vision Guinée, 30 Jan 2021

<sup>53</sup> Vision Guinée, 30 Jan 2021

<sup>54</sup> GuinéeNews.org, 30 Jan 2021

<sup>55</sup> Vision Guinée, 1 Feb 2021

<sup>56</sup> Vision Guinée, 1 Feb 2021

<sup>57</sup> Jeune Afrique, 2 Feb 2021

<sup>58</sup> Africa Guinée, 9 Feb 2021

<sup>59</sup> www.transparency.org

in 2019, to 28 out of 100 in 2020. The CPI barometer is designed to give a sense of public sector corruption and rates countries on a scale of zero (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean).<sup>60</sup>

TI CPI Rankings for Guinea <sup>61</sup>						
	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
<b>Ranking</b>	137	130/180	138/180	148/180	142/176	139/168
<b>Score</b> (out of 100)	28	29	28	27	27	25

This year's score and ranking are disappointing after Guinea improved 18 places and two points from 2017-2019, thanks to Condé's attempts to eradicate the culture of corruption embedded after five decades of authoritarian rule. Guinea took important steps to foster transparency in the allocation of mining contracts, as witnessed with the award of **Simandou** iron ore concession blocks 1 and 2 to SMB in November 2019, which followed an international tender process and demonstrated improved adherence to the **Code des Marchés Publics** (public procurement code) (see *ARC Briefing Guinea November 2019*). In a June 2020 study undertaken by **Pan-African** survey data organisation **Afrobarometer**, 63% of Guineans believed corruption had increased compared to 62% in 2017 and 38% in 2015.<sup>62</sup> The same study showed that 82% of Guineans did not feel the government was doing a good job to address corruption, with 56% and 50% respectively identifying the judiciary and tax inspectors as the most corrupt state institutions.<sup>63</sup> Moreover, 70% of Guineans were of the opinion that reporting corruption could put them in danger.<sup>64</sup>

Although Condé has expressed his desire to govern differently (see above), in his latest cabinet reshuffle he maintained the majority of cabinet members who served in his previous government.<sup>65</sup> The reappointment of **Zénab Djenab Dramé** as technical education, professional training and employment minister has raised eyebrows amid ongoing investigations into her alleged misappropriation of 200 billion GNF (\$20m) in a scandal that Guineans call "*Zenabgate*" (see *ARC Briefing Guinea December 2020*).<sup>66</sup>

The Covid-19 pandemic has also created the potential for increased instances of corruption as the government launches response plans and emergency initiatives. Transparency International notes that across the sub-Saharan region, the pandemic has highlighted structural gaps in national health care systems, corruption risks associated with public procurement and the misappropriation of emergency funds.<sup>67</sup>

Guinea's CPI performance is one of the worst in the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)** and falls below the **sub-Saharan African** average of 32 points. It ranks well below **Cape Verde** (41<sup>st</sup> with 58 points), **Senegal** (67<sup>th</sup> with 45 points), **Ghana** (75<sup>th</sup> with 43 points) and Côte d'Ivoire (104<sup>th</sup> with 36 points), but comes in higher than **Nigeria** in 149<sup>th</sup> position with 25 points.

TI 2020 CPI Rankings: Regional comparison						
	Cape Verde	Senegal	Ghana	Cote d'Ivoire	Guinea	Nigeria
<b>Ranking</b>	41/180	67/180	75/180	104/180	137/180	149/180
<b>Score</b>	58	45	43	36	28	25

<sup>60</sup> www.transparency.org

<sup>61</sup> www.transparency.org

<sup>62</sup> Afrobarometer Dispatch No 368, 19 Jun 2020

<sup>63</sup> Afrobarometer Dispatch No 368, 19 Jun 2020

<sup>64</sup> Afrobarometer Dispatch No 368, 19 Jun 2020

<sup>65</sup> ARC Guinea Analyst

<sup>66</sup> GuinéeNews.org, 26 Nov 2020

<sup>67</sup> Transparency International 2020 CPI, 28 Jan 2021

## Planner

Jul 2021 **Montpellier (France)** France-Afrique Summit

(Date TBA due to Covid-19) **Conakry (Guinea)** Transform Africa Conference;

2026 **Conakry (Guinea)** Start of exploitation at the **Simandou** iron ore project;

## Chronology

22 Feb 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *GuinéeNews.org*. Guinea receives delivery of 11,000 doses of the **Ebola** vaccine to address ongoing outbreak;

18 Feb 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Agence Ecofin*. Guinean government will build a \$42.85m technology hub in Conakry district **Sonfonia** in partnership with **Malaysia**-based companies **Komconsult** and **Serba Dinamik**;

18 Feb 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Africanews*. **World Health Organization (WHO)** says it will send more than 11,000 **Ebola** vaccines to Guinea, launching a vaccination campaign as early as 22 February;

16 Feb 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *GuinéeNews.org*. Guinea's foreign ministry announces the Guinea-**Sierra Leone** border, which has been closed since November, will reopen on 18 February, and signs three cooperation agreements during the visit of Sierra Leone president **Julius Maada Bio** to Guinea;

14 Feb 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *GuinéeNews.org*. **Agence Nationale de Sécurité Sanitaire (ANSS)** (national health security agency) director general **Sakoba Keita** confirms Guinea has recorded seven cases of the **Ebola** virus, which has led to three deaths;

10 Feb 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Agence Ecofin*. The **Agence de Promotion des Investissements Privés (APIP)** (private investment promotion agency), in collaboration with the **African Development Bank (AfDB)** and **International Finance Corporation (IFC)**, will host the **Guinea Investment Forum (GUIF)** from 24-26 February in Conakry and virtually;

9 Feb 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Agence Ecofin*. The government has allocated 50 billion GNF (\$5m) towards the start of **Guinea Airlines**, equivalent to the state's 20% shareholding in the company;

3 Feb 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *GuinéeNews.org*. Foreign affairs minister **Ibrahima Khalil Kaba** says Guinea will receive a donation of 200,000 **Covid-19** vaccine doses from **China**;

3 Feb 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *GuinéeNews.org*. **United Kingdom**-based NGO **Amnesty International** has called on Guinean authorities to launch an independent investigation into the deaths of four individuals who died while under preventive detention;

28 Jan 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *GuinéeNews.org*. **French** foreign affairs minister **Jean Yves Le Drian** during a question and answer session at the French Senate, reiterates France's concern about the arrest and detention of opposition members;

27 Jan 2021 **Conakry (Guinea)** *GuinéeNews.org*. President **Alpha Condé** has created a permanent framework for political and social dialogue which will be responsible for organising dialogue between institutional, political and social actors;

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