

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

Guinea Monthly Briefing September 2022

Guinea Summary 26 September 2022

*Ruling military junta **Comité national du rassemblement et du développement (CNRD)** leader Colonel Mamadi Doumbouya (2021-present) relaunches political dialogue in Guinea, calling all relevant socio-political actors to meet and discuss the transition back to civilian rule. Opposition coalitions and other political actors reject Doumbouya's appeal. Regional bloc Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) agrees during an extraordinary summit on 22 September to impose sanctions on Guinea over the military junta's refusal to set a date to return to civilian rule. The ECOWAS summit takes place without representation from Guinea, as the country remains suspended from ECOWAS, with junta members calling ECOWAS chair Umaro Sissoco Embaló a "puppet". Justice minister Alphonse Charles Wright announces on 16 September that the trial over the 28 September 2009 massacre will begin on 28 September, starting a long overdue process of reconciliation. The World Bank, through the International Development Association (IDA), disburses \$520m to Guinea, which will be used to prioritise public investment projects. The disbursement may increase confidence in the Guinean economy, and lead to an International Monetary Fund (IMF) deal that the government is after.*

Opposition rejects signed political dialogue framework ...

Ruling military junta **Comité national du rassemblement et du développement (CNRD)** leader Colonel Mamadi Doumbouya (2021-present) has relaunched political dialogue in Guinea, calling for all relevant socio-political actors to meet and discuss the transition back to civilian rule. Prime minister Bernard Goumou made the announcement on behalf of Doumbouya on 8 September during the **Conseil des Ministres** (council of ministers) meeting.¹ Goumou said the dialogue would begin by 24 September and be facilitated by a group of national facilitators chosen by the junta based on "morality, neutrality and expertise".² The dialogue would also focus on agreeing to a timeline for return to civilian rule. Doumbouya signed the framework for the dialogue on 19 September.³

Goumou's announcement came three weeks after regional bloc **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)** mediator Thomas Boni Yayi held a series of meetings aimed at calming recent tensions, namely the deadly protests in July and August organised by opposition coalition **Front National pour la Défense de la Constitution (FNDC)** (see *ARC Briefing Guinea Aug 2022*).⁴ The CNRD dissolved the FNDC on 10 August, but this did not stop the opposition coalition from mobilising support and staging demonstrations. However, the FNDC on 28 August cancelled planned demonstrations for 30 August and 4 September at Yayi's request, to allow for consultation and mediation among the parties.⁵

The FNDC has not participated in any political dialogue organised by the CNRD. Together with other political actors including the party of former president **Alpha Conde** (2010-2021), the **Rassemblement du Peuple de Guinée (RPG) Arc-en-Ciel**, and political alliance **Nationale pour l'alternance et la Démocratie (ANAD)**, the FNDC on 21 September rejected any meeting with the CNRD. The political actors requested that dialogue take place under the supervision of ECOWAS with

¹ Africa Guinee, 9 Sep 2022

² Africa Guinee, 20 Sep 2022

³ Guinee News, 19 Sep 2022

⁴ Africa Guinee, 9 Sep 2022

⁵ Vision Guinee, 28 Aug 2022

Yayi as mediator.⁶ The political stakeholders also noted that the framework Doumbouya created was not in consultation with political stakeholders as it should be.⁷

Despite the junta's efforts to restart the political dialogue, it has failed again to strike the balance between its own wishes and those of political stakeholders. It is unlikely that tensions will ease between the two and further unrest cannot be ruled out as the transition process is delayed.⁸

... as ECOWAS agrees on sanctions for Guinea

ECOWAS agreed during an extraordinary summit on 22 September to impose sanctions on Guinea over the ruling military junta's refusal to set a date to return to civilian rule.⁹ The latest sanctions are targeted at people linked to the junta and will be on top of the sanctions already in place against Doumbouya.¹⁰ ECOWAS leaders met in **New York (United States) (US)** on the sidelines of the **United Nations General Assembly** where they made the decision.¹¹ ECOWAS commission chair **Omar Alieu Touray** confirmed the sanctions via **France**-based media outlet **Agence France-Presse** on 23 September.¹² ECOWAS said 21 members of the CNRD would be sanctioned.¹³ While no official details of the sanctions have been released, local media publication **Guinee News** reports that several members of the junta have dual citizenship and property in other countries that could be impacted by the sanctions.¹⁴

Guinea-Bissau's President **Umaro Sissoco Embalo** (2020-present), current chair of ECOWAS, met with the junta in July to discuss the timeline for the transition to civilian rule. Embalo stated after his visit that he had agreed with the junta on a 24-month transition; however, the junta denied this information.¹⁵ Prime minister Bernard Goumou launched a media attack on Embalo prior to the summit, calling him a "*puppet*" and claiming Embalo forced his way into the chair position.¹⁶ Junta secretary general Colonel **Amara Camara** also addressed the media on 22 September, stating that Embalo practises "*clown diplomacy*".¹⁷ Representatives of Guinea, **Mali** and **Burkina Faso** were not present at the ECOWAS meeting as their countries were suspended from the regional bloc following their respective coup d'états.¹⁸

The attacks on Embalo do not bode well for the already high tensions between the junta and ECOWAS. It has been over a year since the coup d'état and Doumbouya has still not agreed on a transitional timeline or any other details regarding a return to civilian rule.¹⁹ Further sanctions by ECOWAS cannot be ruled out should the bloc and the junta not come to an agreement soon, which may hold further economic ramifications. Mali, which has also experienced tension with the bloc, faced a commercial and financial embargo in January, limiting trade with other ECOWAS members.²⁰ The embargo was lifted after military junta leader **Assimi Goïta** confirmed that elections would be held in Mali in February 2024.

Trial scheduled for 2009 massacre

Justice minister **Alphonse Charles Wright** announced on 16 September that the trial over the 28 September 2009 massacre will begin on 28 September, starting the long-overdue process of

⁶ Guinee Matin, 21 Sep 2022

⁷ Guinee Matin, 21 Sep 2022

⁸ ARC Guinea analyst

⁹ France24, 23 Sep 2022

¹⁰ Guinee News, 23 Sep 2022

¹¹ France24, 23 Sep 2022

¹² France24, 23 Sep 2022

¹³ Africa Guinee, 23 Sep 2022

¹⁴ Guinee News, 23 Sep 2022

¹⁵ France 24, 23 Sep 2022

¹⁶ France 24, 23 Sep 2022

¹⁷ AFP, 22 Sep 2022

¹⁸ Africa Guinee, 23 Sep 2022

¹⁹ Vision Guinee, 25 Sep 2022

²⁰ Lepoint.fr, 23 Sep 2022

reconciliation.²¹ The trial comes at a time when the junta is facing pressure over the deterioration of human rights under its rule. Doumbouya has long expressed support for justice for the victims of the massacre and in July announced that the trial should begin before the 13th anniversary of the event.

Several nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) and opposition parties organised a rally on 28 September 2009 at the **Conakry** stadium to protest the possible presidential candidacy of then military junta leader **Moussa Dadis Camara**, who had seized power in a coup d'état in December 2008.²² Camara sent the army into the stadium, which resulted in the murder of 157 people and rape of 109 women. A **United Nations** international commission of inquiry was carried out to investigate what had happened. The commission determined that the massacre was premeditated.²³

Although Camara and several other defendants were declared to stand trial in December 2017, the process has never taken place. The **International Criminal Court (ICC)** applied pressure to the government of former president Alpha Conde to hold the trial. ICC prosecutor **Karim Khan** will be present at the trial after an ICC delegation visited Guinea at the start of September to see the progress on preparations. Camara, who has been living in exile in Burkina Faso, since December 2009, briefly returned to Guinea in December 2021, saying he was ready to face justice.²⁴ He will be on trial alongside 11 other defendants.

Opposition party **l'Union des forces démocratiques de Guinée** leader and former prime minister **Cellou Dalein Diallo** has welcomed the start of the trial, noting that it is a test for the Guinean justice system. Dalein Diallo was in the stadium the day of the massacre and said he hopes that the perpetrators are not "*suspiciously acquitted*".²⁵

The trial will begin a process of reconciliation, spurred on by an unlikely source, the junta, which may improve its reputation. US-based NGO **Human Rights Watch** has noted that the trial, given its importance and focus on human rights, should be part of broader measures to ensure the respect of human rights in Guinea, including lifting the ban on public demonstrations and the dissolution of the opposition FNDC coalition.²⁶

World Bank signs disbursement agreement with Guinea

The **World Bank**, through its **International Development Association (IDA)**, has disbursed \$520m in loans and grants to Guinea to help strengthen its economy. The economy and finance ministry released a statement on the disbursement on 27 August, noting that the money would be used to prioritise public investment projects in the areas of energy, infrastructure, agricultural, youth employment and capacity building.²⁷ The government and the World Bank are said to be in discussions over a programme that will help mobilise additional domestic revenue in key sectors such as mining.²⁸

Despite the political uncertainty in Guinea, the junta has made positive economic progress. Public debt was reduced by \$180m between the first and second quarters of 2022 and in June, the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** completed a working visit to the country, noting that the economy remains resilient (*see ARC Briefing Guinea June 2022*).²⁹ Guinea is also looking to secure a deal with the IMF, and this recent disbursement from the World Bank may increase IMF confidence in Guinea's economy and lead to a deal being agreed on sooner.³⁰

²¹ Africa Guinee, 18 Sep 2022

²² Africanews, 17 Sep 2022

²³ Africanews, 17 Sep 2022

²⁴ Jeune Afrique, 22 Dec 2022

²⁵ Africa Guinee, 18 Sep 2022

²⁶ Guineematin.com, 22 Sep 2022

²⁷ Agence Ecofin, 30 Aug 2022

²⁸ Agence Ecofin, 30 Aug 2022

²⁹ Agence Ecofin, 30 Aug 2022

Planner

(Date TBA due to Covid-19) **Conakry (Guinea)** Transform Africa Conference;
 2023 **Conakry (Guinea)** Guinea Investment Forum;
 31 March 2025 **Conakry (Guinea)** Start of exploitation at the **Simandou** iron ore project;

Chronology

26 Sep 2022 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Media Guinee*. Opposition leader **Etienne Soropogui** is arrested after conducting a radio interview in which he criticised the ruling military junta;

25 Sep 2022 **Koundara (Guinea)** *Africa Guinee*. **Abdoulaye Bah**, political advisor to former prime minister **Cellou Dalein Diallo**, is arrested while travelling to **Senegal**, in what opposition parties view as a targeted arrest and has since been released;

23 Sep 2022 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Agence Ecofin*. Transitional parliament passes a bill that will strengthen the participation of local residents in the mining sector;

21 Sep 2022 **Bamako (Mali)** *Jeune Afrique*. Ruling military junta leader Colonel **Mamadi Doumbouya** arrives in **Mali** to meet his counterpart, **Assimi Goïta**, ahead of an extraordinary session held by regional bloc **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)** where both parties are unable to present amid their countries' suspension from the regional bloc;

19 Sep 2022 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Africa Guinee*. Ruling military junta leader Colonel **Mamadi Doumbouya** signs a framework for inclusive dialogue aimed at organising exchanges with civil society actors to discuss the return to civilian rule;

17 Sep 2022 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Africanews*. Justice minister **Alphonse Charles Wright** announces that the trial over the 28 September 2009 massacre in which the army killed 157 people, will begin on 28 September;

15 Sep 2022 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Africa Guinee*. **Italy** donates \$4.5m to **Guinea** to boost agricultural activities;

12 Sep 2022 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Africa Guinee*. The ruling military junta, **Comité national du rassemblement et du développement**, says it is taking seriously the concerns raised by the **United Nations (UN)** over the deterioration of the human rights situation seriously and has recently dispatched a delegation to meet with UN officials;

6 Sep 2022 **Istanbul (Turkey)** *Abadolu Agency*. Former president **Alpha Condé** has been hospitalised in **Istanbul** where he currently lives in exile;

5 Sep 2022 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Africa Guinee*. Opposition coalition **Front National pour la Défense de la Constitution (FNDC)** organises another round of protests, leading government to deploy 1,000 soldiers and police officers in the capital, **Conakry**, with security forces and protestors reporting injuries but no deaths;

2 Sep 2022 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Africanews*. Ruling military junta **Comité national du rassemblement et du développement** tells the **Confederation of African Football** that the country will meet the timetable set out for hosting the **2025 Africa Cup of Nations**;

28 Aug 2022 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Vision Guinee*. Political opposition coalition **Front National pour la Défense de la Constitution (FNDC)** cancels planned demonstrations in **Conakry** at the request of the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**;

26 Aug 2022 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Agence Ecofin*. Economy ministry announces that public debt fell by \$180m between the first and second quarter of 2022;

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

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