

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

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Conakry hosts the Symposium Mines Guinea (SMG) from 15-17 November, West Africa's largest mining event, bringing together the global mining community under the theme "Optimize the mining industry to catalyse the socio-economic development of Guinea". The event highlights Guinea's mining potential as well as the reforms the ruling Comité National de Rassemblement pour le Développement (CNRD) military junta has made to mining legislation. The junta has continued its push to address corruption across all sectors of Guinean society. State judiciary official Mohamed Sampil announces on 18 November that the judiciary has seized \$288.98m in cases involving embezzlement of public funds since the CNRD took power on 5 September 2021. The public prosecutor's office raises an alert after unidentified individuals threatened three members of its staff involved in the 28 September 2009 massacre trial when former presidential security minister Claude Pivi appeared in court. The threats highlight the high-profile nature of the case and the test it represents for the justice system.

Conakry hosts West Africa's largest mining event

Symposium Mines Guinea (SMG), West Africa's largest mining event, took place from 15-17 November, bringing together the global mining community in **Conakry (Guinea)** under the theme "Optimize the mining industry to catalyse the socio-economic development of Guinea".¹ The event was organised in partnership with the mining ministry and **United Kingdom**-based trade company **AME Trade**.² SMG is an opportunity for mining companies to share their experiences operating in Guinea and speak about the opportunities in Guinea. This year's symposium also served as a reminder that Guinea's mining sector is forging ahead despite the military junta still being in power.³

Transition president **Mamadi Doumbouya** (2021-present) chaired the opening event, notably taking time to meet with the representatives of **Russia**-headquartered **Rusal**. Doumbouya welcomed the presence of the Rusal officials at SMG and declared that he views Rusal in a positive light. Rusal remains one of Guinea's largest foreign investors.⁴ Rusal officials used SMG to highlight their socio-economic contributions to Guinea, including the construction of a \$10m hospital in 2014 at the height of the **Ebola** epidemic and its scholarship programme.

Mining minister **Moussa Magassouba** addressed the 3,000 attendees on 15 November, stating that the event is of "capital importance", as it highlights Guinea's mining potential and the reforms the ruling military junta, the **Comité National de Rassemblement pour le Développement (CNRD)**, have undertaken since assuming power.⁵ The junta has reformed Guinea's mining legislation, arguably for the better, by placing increased focus on social and environmental aspects of mining, while negotiating contracts to be more beneficial to the state and its citizens.⁶ A prime example of this is the **Simandou** iron-ore project where the CNRD negotiated for months with **Anglo-Australian Rio Tinto** and **China**-backed **Winning Consortium Simandou (WCS)** for terms that will benefit the state, unlike previous deals struck with international mining firms. Doumbouya has pressured Rio Tinto and WCS to create an agreement that he believes is beneficial to the Guinean population. Despite the

¹ Media Guinee, 20 Nov 2022

² Africa Guinee, 23 Nov 2022

³ ARC Guinea analyst

⁴ Guinee Matin, 21 Nov 2022

⁵ Africa Guinee, 22 Nov 2022

⁶ Guinee Matin, 18 Nov 2022

delays since the agreement was signed in March, progress on the mine is moving faster than ever, pushed by Doumbouya (*see ARC Briefing Guinea Jun, Jul & Aug 2022*).

Prime minister **Bernard Gomou** closed the SMG on 17 November, noting its success. Gomou further noted that Doumbouya had instructed the government and mining administration to respect the mining agreements signed and mining regulations, but also to remain attentive to mining companies.⁷ The junta appears to be working on its balance of retaining investors, and attracting more investment, but also ensuring that local companies and communities benefit from the sector.

Transitional government tackles corruption

The ruling CNRD junta has continued its push to address corruption across all sectors of Guinean society. State judiciary agent **Mohamed Sampil** told media on 18 November that the judiciary has seized \$288.98m in cases involving embezzlement of public funds since the CNRD took power on 5 September 2021. This amount has not been recovered as there are still legal proceedings pending but the funds have been blocked.⁸ Sampil noted that the judiciary is processing a total of 170 cases, of which 75 are with the economic crimes-focused court created by the CNRD, the **Cour de répression des infractions économiques et financière (CRIEF)**.⁹ The CRIEF is mandated with judging crimes that involve amounts greater than GNF 1 billion (\$117,000). Sampil also announced that GNF 12.2 billion (\$1.4m) had been seized from the accounts of **Sidiki Sylla**, the former administrative director of financial affairs for the constitutional court.¹⁰ The funds have since been transferred to the public treasury following a judgement by CRIEF.

Justice minister **Charles Alphonse Wright** has been key in the CNRD's anti-corruption efforts. On 3 November, Wright initiated legal proceedings in the Conakry court of appeal against former president **Alpha Condé** (2010-2021) and 187 of his former senior executives and ministers for alleged crimes of corruption, illicit enrichment, money laundering, forgery and embezzlement of public funds.¹¹ Former prime minister **Ibrahima Kassory Fofana**, already being tried on other charges, former defence minister **Mohamed Diané**, former economic minister **Mamady Camara** and former commerce minister **Mariama Camara** are among the 40 former ministers targeted.¹² This is the second case that Wright has launched against Condé; in May he announced legal proceedings against Condé over alleged human rights abuses (*see ARC Briefing Guinea May 2022*).

Wright's actions did not end there. On 16 November, Wright initiated legal proceedings against infrastructure and transport minister **Yaya Sow** and seven of his senior executives over alleged corruption, embezzlement of public funds and complicity in the awarding of public contracts.¹³ The minister and executives were suspended on 6 November and fired from their positions on 16 November. The suspensions came after voice recordings of Sow and his executives circulated on social media where they discussed sharing public contracts among themselves and the companies with which they are associated.¹⁴

The junta, upon seizing power, made its intentions regarding tackling corruption very clear and set up CRIEF as its legal tool in this fight. **French** publication **Jeune Afrique** reported in March that Doumbouya wants the junta's fight against corruption, which has also led to some judicial reform, to be his legacy.¹⁵ Initial concerns were raised regarding the pace of prosecution of cases and incarceration of individuals, particularly whether the correct procedures were being followed.

⁷ Guinee Matin, 18 Nov 2022

⁸ Africa Guinee, 19 Nov 2022

⁹ Guinee Matin, 18 Nov 2022

¹⁰ Guinee Matin, 18 Nov 2022

¹¹ Jeune Afrique, 3 Nov 2022

¹² Jeune Afrique, 3 Nov 2022

¹³ Guinee Matin, 17 Nov 2022

¹⁴ Guinee Matin, 18 Nov 2022

¹⁵ Jeune Afrique, 13 Mar 2022

However, the concerns have since dissipated as the junta sees more success in returning public funds to the treasury.

September 28 trial prosecutors threatened

The public prosecutor's office has raised an alert after unidentified individuals threatened three members of its staff involved in the **28 September 2009 Massacre** trial on 22 November following the appearance of former presidential security minister **Claude Pivi** in the **Dixinn** criminal court.¹⁶ Pivi is widely viewed as the main soldier who helped former military junta leader **Moussa Dadis Camara** (2008-2010) come to power. Notorious for his brutality, Pivi was known as the 'armed wing' of Camara's junta.¹⁷ Dixinn criminal court president **Ibrahima Sory Tounkara** told the media that threats would not be tolerated and that complaints had been filed against the individuals who threatened the prosecutors.¹⁸ A lawyer for a party of victims testifying in the trial told the court that some of his clients had also been threatened and that a complaint had been filed with the police.¹⁹

Guineans have followed the trial, broadcast on radio and television, closely on social media, amid reports of a slowdown in economic activity since the start of the trial.²⁰ This has created high expectations for the court, with opposition **Union des forces démocratiques de Guinée** leader and former prime minister **Cellou Dalein Diallo** pointing out at the start of the trial that it is a test for the Guinean justice system. The trial, the first of its kind in Guinea, is viewed as an opportunity for the country to push human rights to the forefront and bring closure to a dark period in its history. The justice system will need to guarantee the safety of the defendants, who until now have been able to live life normally without facing the consequences of their role in the massacre.

Planner

2023 **Conakry (Guinea) Guinea Investment Forum;**

31 Mar 2025 **Conakry (Guinea)** Start of exploitation at the **Simandou** iron ore project;

Chronology

23 Nov 2022 **Conakry (Guinea) Africa Guinee. United States (US)** embassy in Conakry urges all socio-political actors to join dialogue efforts with the transitional government **Comité National du Rassemblement et du Développement (CNRD)** to help determine the way forward;

22 Nov 2022 **Conakry (Guinea) Guinee News. Port of Conakry** workers protest over unpaid wages;

21 Nov 2022 **Conakry (Guinea) Guinee Matin.** Political parties **ANAD, FNDC** and **RPG ARC en Ciel et Alliés** tell prime minister **Bernard Gomou** that they will not participate in the political dialogue he plans to launch on 23 November;

21 Nov 2022 **Conakry (Guinea) Guinee Matin.** Justice minister **Alphonse Charles Wright** suspends three magistrates over "*professional insufficiency constituting disciplinary misconduct*";

18 Nov 2022 **Conakry (Guinea) Media Guinee.** Transition president Colonel **Mamadi Doumbouya** reshuffles his cabinet slightly, appointing three new ministers;

18 Nov 2022 **Conakry (Guinea) Media Guinee. European Union (EU)** delegation meets with technical education and vocational training minister **Alpha Bacar Barry**, announcing financing of €26.5m (\$27.5m) over five years for the ministry;

¹⁶ Guinee News, 23 Nov 2022

¹⁷ Jeune Afrique, 13 Oct 2009

¹⁸ Guinee News, 23 Nov 2022

¹⁹ Guinee Matin, 23 Nov 2022

²⁰ Justice Info, 17 Nov 2022

17 Nov 2022 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Guinee Matin*. Transition president Colonel **Mamadi Doumbouya** dismisses transport minister **Yaya Sow** and six senior ministry executives over allegations of corruption and embezzlement;

15 Nov 2022 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Guinee Matin*. Transition president Colonel **Mamadi Doumbouya** receives **Saudi Fund for Development** CEO **Abdulrahman Al-Marshad** and his accompanying delegation to discuss progress on development projects financed by the group in **Guinea**;

11 Nov 2022 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Guinee Live*. Transition president Colonel **Mamadi Doumbouya** orders an audit of the management of ministers, directors general of public administrative establishments, public companies and financial authorities;

3 Nov 2022 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Media Guinee*. Government adjusts the legal working hours in **Guinea** from 8am to 6pm with a two-hour break, and 8am to 5pm on a Friday with a two-hour break;

28 Oct 2022 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Media Guinee*. Opposition coalition **Front national pour la défense de la Constitution (FNDC)** leaders **Oumar Sylla** and **Ibrahima Diallo** announce they will begin a hunger strike in jail in protest of their illegal detention after their arrest three months ago without facing charges or appearance in court;

24 Oct 2022 **Conakry (Guinea)** *Guinee Matin*. Workers from **Compagnie des Bauxites et d'Alumina de Diandian (COBAD)**, owned by **Russia**-headquartered **Rusal**, voice concerns over their poor living and working conditions at the **Boké** mine;

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