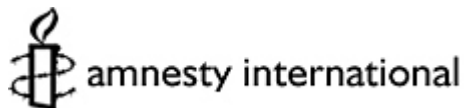


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Amnesty International Annual Report 2012 - Guinea

Head of state: **Alpha Condé**
Head of government: **Mohamed Saïd Fofana**
Death penalty: **retentionist**
Population: **10.2 million**
Life expectancy: **54.1 years**
Under-5 mortality: **141.5 per 1,000**
Adult literacy: **39.5 per cent**

President Condé's residence was attacked in July. The police and gendarmerie used excessive force; at least three people were killed. Arbitrary arrests as well as torture and other abuses by security forces continued in a climate of impunity. Freedom of expression remained under threat. Sixteen people were sentenced to death. The National Commission for Human Rights was created.

Background

Ahead of parliamentary elections initially scheduled for late 2011, fears of potential instability grew after two gunfire and rocket attacks were mounted in July on President Condé's residence in the capital, Conakry. Army officers as well as civilians were arrested and accused of organizing the attacks. President Condé also blamed Senegal, Gambia and opposition leaders during an interview with a Senegalese radio station. Both countries denied these allegations, and political opponents criticized the President's stance. The independence and impartiality of the National Independent Electoral Commission were questioned after it proposed election dates without consulting the political opposition. No dates were confirmed by the end of the year.

In February, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights published a report on Guinea. Among the concerns highlighted were human rights violations committed with impunity over decades by security and armed forces, and sexual and gender-based violence sometimes linked to traditional practices. The report recommended that Guinea implement the recommendations of the UN Universal Periodic Review of 2010, including developing close co-operation with the treaty bodies and special procedures of the UN Human Rights Council, and allowing it to visit at regular intervals. In a subsequent resolution adopted at its 16th session (A/HRC/RES/16/36), the Council supported the conclusions of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Council reiterated the

need for Guinea to pursue efforts to implement the recommendations of the UN Commission of Inquiry, including taking measures to combat impunity.

In March, President Condé created by decree the National Commission for Human Rights. In July, the National Transitional Council adopted a new law relating to the organization and function of the Independent National Institution of Human Rights.

Excessive use of force

The misuse of lethal force by the police and other law enforcement officials continued. In September, live rounds, tear gas and batons were used against protesters on their way to an unauthorized demonstration against the organization of elections. At least three people were killed, including Amadou Boye Barry. In a public statement, the Minister of Communications responded to Amnesty International, stating that two people had died and a judicial inquiry had begun.

Possible prisoners of conscience

Arbitrary arrests and detention by police and army of possible prisoners of conscience were reported. Most were carried out with excessive force.

In April, supporters of the Union of Democratic Forces in Guinea (UFDG), were dispersed by security forces using excessive force at Conakry airport where they were greeting UFDG leader Cellou Dalein Diallo. At least 25 people were injured. Others were arrested, including Alpha Abdoulaye Sow and Abdoulaye Diallo, soldiers in charge of the opposition leader's security. They were sentenced to prison terms for "participating in a prohibited demonstration, acts of vandalism and violence" but were pardoned in August.

In September, more than 300 people opposing the way elections were organized were arrested for participating in a banned demonstration. Some were later released. Over 50 were sentenced to between one month and one year's imprisonment and a further 95 were given suspended prison sentences.

Torture and other ill-treatment

Soldiers and police officers continued to torture and ill-treat detainees and others with impunity.

- In February, a man arrested in Mamou for setting up roadblocks was taken to the police station. He was handcuffed to a window with his feet barely touching the ground and left for more than eight hours. He was beaten while handcuffed and suspended in a squatting position with a piece of wood between his knees and elbows.
- In April, a supporter of the UFDG was arrested and beaten on the way to the airport at Dixinn by armed forces. He was blindfolded and threatened at a police station in Conakry.

Freedom of expression – journalists

- Daniel Loua and Théodore Lamah, journalists from Radio Liberté de Nzérékoré, were arrested in January and accused of "inciting violence and disturbing the peace" after referring to the possible return of former President Camara during a radio broadcast. They were released the following day.
- In May, following a story in the newspaper *L'indépendant-Le Démocrate* concerning salary increases among the armed forces, soldiers attempted to arrest the publisher, Mamadou Dian Diallo, and other journalists. They left the newspaper's offices after mediation by two human rights organizations.
- In July, the National Communication Council banned all local and foreign media from reporting the attack on President Condé's residence. The ban was lifted three days later.

Impunity

Impunity and lack of discipline within the armed forces continued to be of concern.

- Families of more than 150 people who were killed, and over 40 women who were publicly raped, when security forces attacked a peaceful opposition rally in September 2009 against former President Camara's military junta, were still awaiting justice. A UN Commission of Inquiry stated that it was reasonable to consider the events as crimes against humanity. Despite the opening of a judicial inquiry in 2010, the perpetrators of the massacre had not been suspended from duty and none had been brought to trial by the end of the year.

Death penalty

Sixteen people were sentenced to death in September, eight in their absence, by a court in Kankan. They had been convicted of "premeditated murder, violent killings, criminal conspiracy and destruction of property" following confrontations between two ethnic groups in which at least 25 people were killed.

The sentences contradicted a statement by President Condé in July during a meeting with foreign diplomats that the death penalty did not exist in Guinea. He said that sentencing people to death was never acceptable, even for those making an attempt on the President's life, as this would not bring him back to life.

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