

ECOWAS Peace and Security Report

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Ending the political stalemate in Guinea?

Introduction

Since its historic 'No' to the French colonisers, Guinea's political history has been quite tumultuous. There have been at least four attempts, with mixed outcomes, to implement a political vision aimed at establishing democratic institutions. The first attempt was during the period from 1958 to 1984, which was characterised by a determination to assume and preserve the independence secured by President Ahmed Sékou Touré. This was followed by the military period under general Lansana Conté, whose reign from 1984 to 2007 was marked by an extortionate military dictatorship and an attempt to introduce political pluralism. Then followed the 2007 to 2008 spell distinguished by a transition spurred by the 'forces vives' (Guinean civil society movements and other stakeholders) in the aftermath of the 2006 demonstrations. The final attempt came during the 2008 to 2010 period, which was characterised by the takeover by Captain Dadis Camara and a presidential election that brought to power an old opponent, Professor Alpha Condé. Throughout this entire time the hopes for democratic and socio-economic renewal rarely materialised.

In 2007, what began as a protest movement by trade unionists for better living and working conditions turned into a challenge to the political order under general Conté, who had been in power since 1984 and whose regime was weakened by poor governance and then by his poor health. Despite the establishment of a transitional government provided with a precise roadmap and headed by Lansana Kouyaté, apparently a neutral and apolitical figure, Guinea remained in a political deadlock that neither the coup d'état by Captain Dadis Camara nor the 2010 presidential elections succeeded in resolving, even though significant progress was achieved.

In spite of domestic and international efforts, Guinea is currently experiencing a political crisis that could jeopardise the fragile gains achieved by the last presidential elections. While legislative elections were expected to complete the transition and usher in a functioning democratic system, the administration of the election process has become a source of disagreement and instability. The electoral crisis is being compounded by persistent socio-economic issues that have caused serious tensions against the backdrop of ethnic rivalry.

Many now wonder about the political and socio-economic future of Guinea after the Third Republic raised the hopes of a population let down by decades of dictatorship, corruption, poverty and political violence. How can the difficulties encountered by the electoral process be explained? What possibility is there of the budding democratic order in Guinea being endangering? What are the chances of inter-ethnic violence? What should be done to break the political and socio-economic deadlock in the country?

ECOWAS PEACE AND SECURITY REPORT SERIES

The *ECOWAS Peace and Security Report* series seeks to provide the decision makers of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with analysis on critical and topical human security situations in West Africa. It results from a partnership between the ISS and the ECOWAS Commission (Regional Security Division). The objective is to produce independent, field-based policy research in a timely manner to inform ECOWAS decision-making process or alert its governing structures on emerging issues. The *ECOWAS Peace and Security Report* series includes analyses of country situations and other thematic issues with recommendations. It is circulated, free of charge, both electronically and in hard copy, to a diverse audience in West Africa and beyond. The *ECOWAS Peace and Security Report* is produced by the Conflict Prevention and Risk Analysis Division (CPRA) in ISS Dakar with the support of CPRA staff in ISS Addis Ababa, ISS Nairobi and ISS Pretoria.

This report sets out to analyse the crisis in Guinea. It is based on information collected during a field survey on the issue of the political transition conducted in Conakry from 13 to 23 May 2013. To provide a clear outline of the current crisis, the report is divided into four main parts. The first part analyses the effects of the 2010 presidential elections, which are still being felt in the socio-political landscape of Guinea. The second deals with the deadlock resulting from the difficulties experienced in putting in place an effective dialogue aimed at reaching a political consensus. The third section discusses the real issues surrounding the legislative elections, while in the final part the question is asked whether the problem simply lies with the electoral list or with the operator responsible for the list. Part four also discusses the risks inherent to the democratisation process in Guinea and is followed by a list of recommendations.

Trauma of the 2010 presidential elections

The 2010 presidential elections had two main objectives. Firstly, pursuant to the provisions of the Constitution and regional legislation, they were expected to help restore political order following the military coup that took place after the death of general Lansana Conté.¹ While the coup was hardly a surprise in view of the political deadlock in which the transitional government of prime minister Lansana Kouyaté² was mired, the fact remains that the military junta headed by captain Dadis Camara was leading the country toward another period of instability and political violence. Hence the second objective of the presidential elections, namely to provide Guinea with the legitimate authorities needed to complete the transition, while ensuring the establishment of credible republican institutions that would guarantee the survival of the democratisation process and economic recovery.

The presidential elections were very controversial and still play a role in the current crisis. The circumstances of professor Alpha Condé's victory continue to cause opposition to his administration. However, this old political opponent, who garnered 18,25 per cent of the votes in the first round against his rival from l'Union des forces démocratiques de Guinée (UFDG), former prime minister Cellou Dalein Diallo who won 43,69 per cent of the votes, succeeded in putting together a broad coalition called RPG-Arc-en-ciel that brought him to power with 52,52 per cent of the votes cast against the 47,48 per cent for the 'Cellou Dalein Président' coalition in the second round of voting. Many observers felt that Diallo had exhausted his vote reserves in the first round and that the instructions by former prime minister Sidya Touré of the Union des forces républicaines (UFR) to support Diallo were not heeded by his supporters.

However, the victory of the RPG-Arc-en-ciel coalition presented the winner with two major problems. On the one hand, the democratically elected president, who set out to break with Guinea's political past, found himself having to work with the dignitaries of former regimes who had supported him. On the other hand, his victory was followed by a sharp increase in ethnic and community tensions. Indeed, the second voting round centred to a great extent on the issue of access to political power by the

Peul community. Many respondents believe that the political message of the RPG-Arc-en-ciel in the second round was in principle 'anybody but a Peul'.

The fact of the matter is that while the results announced by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) were more or less accepted by the opposition, the concerns and issues that arose during the elections have still not gone away. They have left a highly polarised political playing field that is not conducive to social cohesion. This has raised new doubts in the minds of a people faced by a fragmented political class and a rather bleak socioeconomic situation, despite a slight improvement at the macroeconomic level. The issue of the transparency of the electoral process, the main reason for the excessively long delay of five months between the two rounds of the elections, has yet to be resolved. Current discussions focus mainly on the electoral list and the independence of INEC.³

The issue of the transparency of the electoral process, the main reason for the excessively long delay between the two rounds in the 2010 presidential elections (five months) has yet to be resolved.

The legislative elections, which should have been held six months after the inauguration of the new president, can still not take place because of political opposition resulting from the trauma of the presidential elections and concerns, justified or not, about fraud. The president's initiatives, including the appointment of opposition members to important posts, have not been perceived by the opposition as being conducive to national reconciliation and the establishment of an inclusive governance system. Furthermore, the ruling coalition is falling apart following the departure of a number of leading figures into the Guinean political landscape.

On the surface, there are four main points of divergence:

- The process of selecting a new technical operator for the preparation of a new electoral list, whereas the state could have availed itself of the services of the operator in the previous elections, and the new revised version (as required by law) of the list used during the 2010 presidential elections.
- The reliability of the list prepared by the new operator.
- The composition and operation of INEC.⁴
- The right of Guineans living abroad to vote.

However, these issues are only the tip of the iceberg. To appreciate their scope, it is necessary to place them in the context of the rather complex socio-political processes that characterise political life in Guinea.

From impossible dialogue to the radicalisation of contestation

The long-awaited, often announced and as frequently postponed legislative elections, which are to re-establish the National Assembly and bring political transition in Guinea to a close, were finally scheduled for 30 June 2013. However, the Guinean political class is still divided over the conditions under which these elections are to be organised. Disagreement mainly revolves around two basic technical and institutional issues, namely the reliability of the electoral list and the role of INEC in the organisation of the elections.

Concerning the electoral list, the opposition has always been opposed to the president's unilateral decision to engage the services of a new operator, a South African company called Waymark Infotech, rather than the French operator Sagem, which serviced the presidential elections, being reappointed. The opposition's doubts about the new operator are threefold.

First, it describes the recruitment procedure of Waymark as 'dubious'. It claims it was not involved in the selection of the operator and has denounced the direct contracting method used to recruit the company. In other words, the problem lies with the absence of a public tender procedure and the competition between different companies. Secondly, it raised doubts about the reliability of the kits Waymark is to supply for drawing up a secure electoral list. Thirdly, it questions the neutrality of the operator, which raised fears that the authorities were preparing to rig the elections. The opposition felt its position strengthened when experts of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Organisation internationale de la francophonie (OIF) pointed out a number of dysfunctions and weaknesses in the technical capacity of the Waymark kits. Moreover, the Guinean company Sabari Technology, which partners Waymark in drawing up the electoral lists, is severely criticised for being managed by members of the RPG.

Concerning the role of INEC, the conflict over its composition, organisation and operation was settled by law L/2012/016/CNT of 19 September 2012. Article 6 stipulates that INEC is to comprise 25 members selected as follows: ten persons appointed by the parties supporting the President, ten by the opposition parties, three by civil society organisations and two by the administration. However, the opposition was not satisfied with the new composition. Representative of the Union pour le progrès de la Guinée, the party of former prime minister Jean-Marie Doré, who claims to be a centrist, was challenged because Doré was not considered to be a member of the opposition (he joined the opposition subsequently). There were doubts about the neutrality of the civil society and administration representatives, which were claimed by the opposition to be in the pay of the authorities.

The current conflict between the ruling coalition and the opposition over INEC mainly concerns two issues, namely the operation and independence of the commission. Concerning its operation, the opposition parties denounce a lack of a consensus and consultation in the decision-making process, arguing



INEC's preparation plan for the legislative elections initially scheduled for 30 June 2013

that everything possible is being done to prevent opposition representatives from taking part in meetings or to place them in the minority. INEC decisions are taken by all the plenary members. A quorum is two-thirds of members⁵ and decisions are taken on the basis of a simple majority, the chairman's vote being the tie-breaker.⁶

When it comes to the independence of INEC, the extension of the deadline for the submission of candidatures from 2 May to 8 May,⁷ when the ruling coalition had not met the deadline for submitting its list, was considered by the opposition as resulting from an instruction from the President's Office. Even though INEC explained this postponement by saying that it was necessary to allow the political parties to put together the required documents, it was still broadly perceived as an order from the presidential movement, which was facing internal disagreements over the selection of its candidates.

Despite the lack of confidence in INEC, the commission maintains that it is technically ready to organise the elections and is, with the assistance of the international community, making every effort to put in place two devices to guarantee the reliability of the electoral list. The first mechanism, according to an INEC communiqué, is for 'monitoring the electoral list' with the help of 'external software' designed by Waymark. The second device, entrusted to the Belgian company Zetes, is designed to eliminate multiple voter or 'double' registration. Apart from the fact that two international experts from the OIF and the EU are working on the list with other national experts, INEC maintains that 'Waymark has nothing to do with the production of the electoral lists or voter's cards. It is not involved in totalling the results and the calculation will be done manually.' This rules out electronic vote counting.

Some progress was made in dispelling the mistrust when dialogue was resumed on 3 June under the auspices of a group of facilitators set up on 10 May. The group comprises the representative of the UN Secretary General for West Africa, Saïd Djinnit, and two national facilitators selected by the opposition and the authorities. While no agreement had been

signed by the date of writing, both parties seemed to agree on a number of points. The authorities accepted that Guineans living abroad should be allowed to vote and the opposition indicated that it was prepared to go to the polls with the Waymark list under conditions that included the recomposition of local electoral commissions or CARLE,⁸ the reopening of the electoral list for review, the reopening of the submission of candidates, the setting up of an INEC watchdog committee, the appointment of two experts in addition to the team of international experts, and the recruitment of a new operator for future elections, in particular the 2015 presidential elections.

This type of UN-led mediation involving direct and frank dialogue between all parties is the appropriate framework for resolving differences. Drawing inspiration from the international contact group that played a major role in the past, the current process could help the political actors to reach consensus on the establishment of an environment conducive to the organisation of credible legislative elections. However, the success of the mediation does not depend solely on the mediator or the party representatives, but rather on a genuine commitment on the part of all the actors, especially the party leaders, to restore confidence in the electoral process. Indeed, that is precisely where the main difficulty lies.

The polarisation and radicalisation of society destroyed the national crisis resolution mechanisms. It was even difficult to talk about the crisis without being called biased.

Many observers cannot understand how it came about that the President's Office issued a decree setting the election date at almost the same time as a UN mediator was appointed to revive dialogue. It is equally difficult to explain why the Supreme Court rejected INEC's proposal to postpone the elections. It is necessary to investigate incidents of violence against members of the opposition despite government assurances to the contrary. Everybody's goodwill is needed to eliminate the current obstacles and avoid other problems that might hamper the mediation efforts.

Apart from the official mediation, local actors have long been involved in crisis resolution. Not only have religious leaders tried to intervene, but an informal group of Guinean women leaders representing political parties, the administration and civil society has been actively involved in the search for a solution. However, the polarisation and radicalisation of society has brought these efforts to nought. It was even difficult to talk about a 'crisis' without being labelled as being biased. This was especially the case with the national facilitators who were perceived as acting on behalf of their principals. Potentially, this also weakened the role of the UN representative.

Thanks to the mediation efforts, however, dialogue resumed after months of silence and it is now possible to reach agreement on the organisation of the legislative elections. Such an agreement would automatically entail a postponement of the election date set by the president, who has stated that a new date depends on INEC.⁹ Despite the advances, there are still uncertainties about the elections and the stakes remain high.

Challenges and uncertainties of the legislative elections

There are 114 seats in the Guinean National Assembly. The last legislative elections were held in 2002. The assembly elected then was dissolved in 2008 and replaced by the National Transition Council (NTC), a body that was expected to serve as the legislative organ for only six months. However, two years after the presidential elections, the NTC is still serving as an ad hoc legislative organ. It is often ignored by the executive and does not have a popular mandate, which raises issues of legitimacy. The re-establishment of the National Assembly to complete Guinea's democratic architecture is essential and the desire by the two political forces to take control cannot be ignored.

The existence of a deliberative assembly that brings together representatives of the people and serves as a public forum where taxes are decided, laws adopted and control is exercised over government is essential for the country's budding democracy. According to article 2 of Guinea's Constitution, 'national sovereignty is vested in the people who shall exercise it through their elected representatives and by referendum'¹⁰ An assembly is also important to Guinea in that it is only after it has come into session that a number of other legitimate institutions, such as the Supreme Court, the Constitutional Court, the Communication Regulatory Authority and the National Human Rights Commission, can be established.

Some observers believe that the president lost part of his electoral base with the departure of minister Lansana Kouyaté, leader of the *Parti de l'espoir pour le développement national* (PEDN or the Parti of Hope and National Development) Jean-Marc Telliano, minister of agriculture, and Kassory Fofana, who between them represented about 10 per cent of the votes in the first round of the presidential elections. It is also thought that the balance of power has changed to the extent that, if the legislative elections were to be held under transparent conditions, it is likely that the ruling coalition will not hold a majority in the assembly. This would hamper the government's actions and jeopardise the presidential elections of 2015. An assembly dominated by the opposition would certainly provide strong evidence of a functioning democratic process, but on the other hand, by exercising its legitimate right of control over government actions, the assembly could cause an institutional blockage, forcing the government to resort to the Supreme Court or to governing by decree, which could be interpreted as an abuse of power. Obviously, the psychological impact on the electorate of a National Assembly dominated by the opposition could be significant.

Fear of such a situation arising may explain why the government has remained vague about elections. In this regard it is important to note that voting in Guinea has essentially always been a community affair with little variation, which strengthens the conviction of opposition members, especially the Union des forces démocratiques de Guinée (UFDG), which is strongly established among the Peul, that they will win at least 40 per cent of the votes and possibly more following recent coalitions. The opposition comprises some four coalitions, which claim that between them they account for more than 60 per cent of voters.

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These include:

- Alliance pour la démocratie et le progrès (ADP);
- Collectif des partis politiques pour la finalisation de la transition;
- Club des républicains; and
- Front d'union pour la démocratie et le progrès.

Some are of the opinion that appointments to strategic posts, both within the government and territorial administrations, of persons belonging to the Malinké community are aimed at consolidating the electoral base of the Malinké, the president's ethnic group, to the detriment of the Peul. The opposition is convinced that the Peul are victims of political cleansing that could soon take on social and economic dimensions, especially as the economic interests of the members of the Peul community are already under attack. It is reported that during the demonstrations that took place in March 2013, which cost the lives of more than 20 people, shops belonging to Peul were looted, although the latter also retaliated.¹¹

For its part, the government maintains that the actions of the opposition are likely to make the country ungovernable and that the real issues lie elsewhere. In the opinion of a number of persons close to the authorities, the current crisis in Guinea is not due to a deficit of democracy and even less because of any desire by the authorities to fabricate results in favour of the government coalition. They maintain that in an effort to relieve the tensions, the government made several attempts to restore dialogue, but that this was boycotted by the opposition.

Many supporters of the government coalition accuse the opposition of harbouring specific intentions, in particular

a deliberate attempt to prevent the implementation of the coalition's programme of action so that the opposition can with the 2015 presidential elections. They also maintain that opposition actions are aimed at preventing the prosecution of those who embezzled public funds under previous regimes, even though the Guinean public in general is of the opinion that the economic crimes were committed by politicians of both the opposition and the government. It is also suggested that the doing away of previous privileges and monopolies frustrated many individuals who as a result switched to the opposition overnight. The review of the mining code and especially existing mining contracts has raised concerns among certain actors 'who indulge in irrational politics disguised in ethnic clothing'.¹²

The issue of impunity is a major concern. However, it does not only apply to the economic crimes committed by various previous regimes. It is more acute in politics and needs to be addressed very carefully to avoid an impression of witch-hunting. Rightly or wrongly, there is a fear both within the opposition and government that a new National Assembly may pass a law authorising the prosecution of persons involved in economic and political crimes. Many members on both sides of the political spectrum also question the genuine desire by politicians to put an end to impunity. They are concerned about threats to new political alliances and the risk of a flare-up, especially if such measures were to affect influential political leaders.

In this context, whether one belongs to the opposition or the ruling party, the political discourse seems to lack an ideological base and protest movements look very much like attempts to use poverty as a tool. Those who join the protest marches do so less out of ideological or political conviction than to express their despair in the face of the deteriorating living conditions characterised by disruptive water and power cuts, the high cost of living and unemployment. As a senior administrative officer put it, 'Guinea is a deeply-changing society, but the personalisation of the political debate, especially in the context of weakening social, political and moral structures is such that the political transition is held hostage'. Attention is thus being diverted from the socio-economic issues facing the country. In other words, even if superficially the current crisis in Guinea is perceived as a political crisis that feeds on the socio-economic difficulties of the country's citizens without providing any solutions, it is also the result of a struggle between different political and financial networks that are losing or trying to cling to their access to power and resources. According to some observers, it is the manifestation of political egocentrism at various levels of responsibility that is likely to prevent any compromise since this could be seen as a sign of weakness on either side.

It is also possible that the political actors are already jockeying for position in preparation for the 2015 elections. It goes without saying that victory in the legislative elections would enable the winner to validate or invalidate the electoral system for future elections, using the same contentious issues debated in the build-up to the legislative elections.

Risk that inter-community tensions will escalate

One of the major aspects of the political crisis in Guinea is ethnic rivalry, which apart from the political rivalry and the violence it has caused, has severely weakened Guinean society. Such rivalry is mainly used as a political tool and is likely to affect relations between different communities in the country, in particular setting the two main ethnic groups, the Peul and the Malinké, against each other. It is all about the exercise of power and control over resources.

The rivalry between these two communities is an old one and is partly explained by Guinea's political history. Indeed, from the rule of president Sékou Touré through to that of president Alpha Condé the frustrations within these communities have accumulated, especially in the Peul who are the only social group that has never had a president elected from within its ranks. Do they feel excluded or do they think that their time has come? Whatever the case, the electoral strategy in the second round of the 2010 presidential elections, which seemed to be based on identity claims, is an indicator of the divide between these communities.

The alliances that characterised these elections caused the final divide between the main ethnic groups of the two rival candidates, with the coalitions seeming to form along ethnic lines. The strategy implemented by both coalitions, called 'ethno-strategies' by some observers even though Sidya Touré and Abé Sylla supported Cellou Dalein Diallo and Bah Ousmane supported Alpha Condé, largely dominated the election campaign during the second round.

The current situation is further characterised by suspicions perpetuated by politicians belonging to radical groups on both sides.

The current political crisis, punctuated by a fierce clampdown on demonstrations, has further deepened the divide and worsened intercommunity tensions. The contestation is not solely political. Social contestation with ethnic undertones has now augmented the political crisis. Communitarianism and ethnicity have become the language of politicians, which further hampers social cohesion. Since the 2010 elections, politicians more and more openly make reference to ethnicity in their speeches either to exacerbate the feeling of hatred or to sound the alarm and relieve the tension.

The reaction of the law enforcement agencies, which resulted in the death of several demonstrators, is rightly or wrongly considered by the opposition as a deliberate attempt by the

authorities to suppress the opposition and in particular the Peul community.¹⁴ The reaction is described as 'targeted repression' by some opponents, particularly by Cellou Dalein Diallo, who pointed out in a statement protesting against the clamp down on demonstrations and the regime's attitude that '96 per cent of the dead are Peul'.¹⁵ He underscored that 'it is not the Malinké ethnic group that is attacking the Peul. It is Alpha Condé's system, the government and law enforcement agents.'¹⁶ These remarks do not mask the ethnic colour the political crisis is taking on.

Evidence of this tension is indicated by the attempted rape of a young girl, as reported by the media in mid-May. Her aggressors asked her whether she was 'diabéré' or 'kapré'. 'Diabéré' means potatoes in Peul and 'kapré' means yam in Malinké. Hence the peace message by the president broadcast over national television on 28 May in which he stated that in Guinea 'nobody should be a victim of abuse on the basis of his or her origins or opinions'.

Diallo's warning against the risk of the violence leading to an inter-ethnic conflict reveals the danger that Guinea is facing. In his statement he also said that 'if the violence continues, if the killings targeting a community and opposition supporters do not stop, if the impunity continues, if the president continues to divide Guinea, driving it into violence that may lead to civil war, there should be no surprise if M. Alpha Condé is asked to leave'.¹⁷

The current situation is further characterised by suspicions perpetuated by politicians belonging to radical groups on both sides. The turn of events seems to have escaped the control of the political leaders, who increasingly have to deal with radical supporters who indicate that they are prepared to stage demonstrations. Rumours about a plot to overthrow the regime, about the introduction of arms in Conakry and the mobilisation of the security forces by the authorities all contribute to the radicalisation.

In the light of these developments, the compromise reached on the legislative elections is a notable advance, especially as the authorities were seemingly prepared to go to the polls with or without the opposition, while the latter had already decided to prevent the holding of elections. Both these positions were likely to have plunged the country into a cycle of pre and post-electoral violence amidst ethnic rivalry. Nevertheless, both the presidential movement and the so-called radical opposition continue to accuse each other of misdeeds. Just as the opposition suspects the authorities of deploying militias in Conakry composed of dozos, traditional hunters, and former Malinké rebels belonging to the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO), the presidential movement suspects the opposition of bringing weapons into the country to overthrow the government.

The general situation of instability in the region could contribute to an escalation of violence. Guinea is surrounded by countries with security problems, including Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Mali, Guinea Bissau and Senegal with its crisis in Casamance. This combined with the porosity of the borders encourage the

circulation of weapons and mercenaries. President Alpha Condé himself declared in an interview that 'ill-intentioned individuals from Guinea Bissau were arrested with ammunition ...'¹⁸ Another problem is that Guinea Bissau, considered a drug trafficking state, could be used as a transit zone to supply the drug market in Guinea. This would provide a source of income for the enemies of peace who could use the proceeds from drug trafficking to purchase weapons and recruit mercenaries.

The army of Guinea is also still a source of concern. Despite security sector reforms that lead to the retirement of 4 000 soldiers, the posting of a number of armed forces to the provinces and the demilitarisation of Conakry, the army is not totally under civilian control. For now it is sitting on the sidelines but it could, if the crisis persists and becomes violent, interfere in political affairs. The government has taken the major step of forbidding the security forces in charge of supervising demonstrations to carry weapons with live ammunition. Whereas some believe that the law enforcement agencies have been infiltrated by unknown persons, others think that the government's instructions are not being followed and that the bloody repression of opposition demonstrators on each occasion is a deliberate strategy on the part of the authorities to curb the protests.

Conclusion

Guinea is at a crossroads with the organisation of high-risk legislative elections in the country. If the political consensus survives and is consolidated, Guinea may finally enjoy political stability and years of violent crises may come to an end. The country has the opportunity to turn its back on the political violence that has marred its history and compromised its socio-economic development. The establishment of genuine rule of law is essential to relaunch the development of the country, reassure investors and meet the expectations of the population. Donors are waiting for the establishment of the National Assembly and, in particular, the introduction of measures that will ensure a return to political normalcy.

Following his election in 2010 and without necessarily following any specific rules, the new president was expected to deliver on several fronts, including national reconciliation, setting up an inclusive governance system that would make the political opposition a partner in managing the country's affairs, combating impunity in all its forms, establishing the rule of law, reforming the security sector and improving the living conditions of all citizens. This list is not exhaustive since it is no exaggeration to say that everything needs to be done from scratch in Guinea.

Recommendations

1. Even if the facilitators succeed in brokering a consensus to take the electoral process forward, the group could be enlarged to include other institutions such as the Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS) and the African Union to serve as a mediation and consultation framework, especially in preparation for the 2015 presidential elections. The removal of the international contact group that served as a framework of consultation in the past left a vacuum that may have contributed to the accumulation of problems that beset Guinea's elections.
2. To ensure a transparent and credible electoral process, civil society should be involved in all stages, including the preparation of the electoral list, the distribution of voter's cards, observance of the election and vote counting.
3. Through the ECOWAS women's peace and security network, the ECOWAS Commission could support national initiatives such as the one by the women leaders of Guinea, and encourage increased involvement by religious and traditional leaders, not only to relieve social tensions but also to promote social cohesion.
4. As part of efforts to enhance the work of INEC, it is necessary to ensure that all its staff have the technical skills required and understand how the structure should operate. INEC staff should also be made aware that they need to avoid giving any impression of political bias and preserve the independent nature of their work in managing the electoral process. It is also necessary to improve communications within INEC and between INEC and the political actors and other stakeholders involved in the electoral process. This initiative should start with citizens.
5. The consensus achieved with regard to voting by Guineans living abroad represents significant progress. The authorities should now ensure that the logistics for this are put in place and that the modalities are clearly defined in order for this operation to be conducted properly.
6. It is essential to prepare a code of conduct on the avoidance of inflammatory remarks, the promotion of hate and especially the idea of 'War opening the way to democracy', as suggested by a local newspaper.¹⁹ This code should be accepted and observed by all the political actors and the media.

Important dates

13 April 2013	The President of Guinea issues a decree calling for elections on 30 June 2013.
25 April 2013	INEC sets 2 May as the deadline for submitting candidatures.
2 May 2013	INEC extends the deadline for submitting candidatures to 8 May.
14 May 2013	The Supreme Court extends the deadline for submitting candidatures to 19 May.
22 May 2013	INEC published the list of candidates.
3 June 2013	Dialogue resumes between the opposition and the presidential movement.
19 June 2013	Clash between law enforcement agents and opposition supporters near the home of Ceillou Dalein Diallo.
20 June 2013	The opposition decides to withdraw from the political dialogue following the clashes.

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Notes

- 1 See article 27 of the Guinean Constitution adopted by the National Transitional Council on 19 April 2010 and, for the regional texts, the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance of 2007 and Protocol A/SP1/12/01 on Democracy and Good Governance additional to the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for the Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-keeping and Security of 21 December 2001.
- 2 This impasse cost Lansana Kouyaté his job. He was replaced by Ahmed Tidiane Souaré in 2008.
- 3 These concerns appeared already in 2010.
- 4 The issue of INEC was more or less settled in September 2012 following the recomposition of the organ. However, the opposition continues to claim that it is not independent.
- 5 This gave the opposition a blocking minority, an opportunity never taken advantage of.
- 6 Article 15 of organic law L/2012/016/CNT of 19 September 2012.
- 7 The Supreme Court, by virtue of an ordinance dated 14 May issued at the request of INEC, extended the deadline for the submission of candidatures to 19 May.
- 8 Administrative commissions for reviewing the electoral lists.
- 9 *Jeune Afrique*, no. 2736, 16–22 June 2013, 24.
- 10 The Constitution of the Republic of Guinea of 19 April 2010.
- 11 Personal interview in Conakry, May 2013.
- 12 Personal interview with a senior administrative official, Conakry, May 2013.
- 13 Personal interview, Conakry, May 2013.
- 14 The law enforcement agencies are often reminded of directives not to use firearms and, compared to the clampdowns under Conté or the military junta, the ones under Condé were less fierce.
- 15 Interview with Cellou Dalein Diallo, Agence France Press, 29 May 2013.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 *Jeune Afrique*, no. 2736, 16–22 June 2013, 24.
- 19 The title of an article written by a political analyst published in the newspaper *Le Lynx* on 20 May 2013.



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