



**Report of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide
on his Mission to Guinea from 7 to 22 March 2010**

A. Executive Summary

1. The Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide Mr. Francis Deng undertook a mission to Guinea from 7 to 22 March 2010. The objective of the mission of the Special Adviser to Guinea was to investigate the existence of inter-ethnic tensions and the extent to which they could present a threat to peace and stability, including a risk of mass violence, atrocities and genocide, particularly in the transition, election and post-election periods.

2. The Special Adviser found that while the situation appeared to have calmed significantly since the events of 28 September 2009, inter-ethnic tensions had been increasing, especially in the Guinée Forestière region and, specifically, between the Forestiers ethnic groups and the Malinké and Peuhl ethnic groups. It was clear that if the causes of these tensions are not addressed and relations between communities constructively managed in the electoral and post-electoral periods, there is a risk that the tensions could spark/ignite violent conflict resulting in mass atrocities.

3. National institutions in Guinea are weak and lack both credibility and independence. Calls for accountability for serious human rights violations, including the events of 28 September 2009, must be properly addressed. A culture of impunity has encouraged perpetration of violence and human rights violations that have had a destabilizing effect on Guinea and eroded the confidence of the population in the Government. If this is to be reversed, the Transition Government must be seen to uphold the rule of law.

4. The report's recommendations focus on possible actions that could be taken to mitigate the risk of inter-group violence, including mobilization by the United Nations of support for the Transitional Government in order to conduct credible elections and strengthen national institutions, conflict prevention and peace building mechanisms. The report also recommends a focus on support to community-based and civil society groups, whose work is key to promoting good inter-group relations.

B. Methodology

5. The Special Adviser bases his evaluation of any situation on careful verification of information and the application of the Analysis Framework, which was developed by the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide (OSAPG) to assess the risk of genocide. The following factors are taken into account:

- Inter-group relations, including a record of discrimination and/or other human rights violations committed against a group
- Circumstances that affect a state's capacity to prevent genocide
- The presence of illegal arms and armed elements
- Underlying political, economic, military or other motivations for targeting a group
- Circumstances that facilitate perpetration of genocide, such as strengthening of the military or security apparatus
- Acts that could be elements of genocide, such as such as killings, abduction and disappearances, torture, rape and sexual violence, 'ethnic cleansing' or pogroms or the deliberate deprivation of food
- Evidence of the 'intent to destroy in whole or in part' any protected group

- Triggering factors, such as elections and unconstitutional change of government
6. The Mission had two phases: (i) an assessment conducted by two OSAPG staff members in Conakry and the Guinée Forestière Region from 7 to 17 March 2010 and (ii) meetings in Conakry led by the Special Adviser from 17 to 22 March.
 7. During the first phase of the Mission, OSAPG staff met with religious leaders, councils of elders from Basse Guinée, Moyenne Guinée, Haute Guinée and Guinée Forestière regions, civil society experts, the Governor of Guinée Forestière region, women's groups in both Conakry and Nzérékoré, and members of the United Nations Country Team.
 8. In Conakry, the Special Adviser met with Hon. Jean-Marie Doré, the Prime Minister of the Transitional Government, the Minister for Territorial Administration and Political Affairs and the Minister of Justice. The Special Adviser and staff of the Office also held consultations with the United Nations Country Team, representatives of civil society organizations, councils of elders from Basse Guinée, Moyenne Guinée, Haute Guinée and Guinée Forestière regions, civil society experts, and officials of the Office of the Special Representative of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

C. Background

9. Since independence in 1958, Guinea has been dominated by two presidents, who each held on to power for more than 20 years, and whose regimes became progressively more repressive, authoritarian and abusive. Ahmed Sekou Touré, the first President of Guinea following independence from France in 1958, remained in power until his death in 1984. His successor was promptly ousted in a military coup led by Colonel Lansana Conté, who was installed as President and held on to power until his death in 2008. In a similar manner, Lassana Conté's successor was ousted in another military coup. The military, under the aegis of the *Conseil national pour la démocratie et le développement* (CNDD), appointed Captain Moussa Dadis Camara as President of the junta.
10. When President Camara expressed an interest in staying in power and standing in the forthcoming presidential elections, he was heavily criticized by a coalition of opposition parties, civil society and trade unions known as the "*Forces Vives*". Thousands of the *Forces Vives* supporters gathered in the national stadium on 28 September 2009 to protest against the candidacy of Dadis Camara. The protest was violently repressed by security forces, resulting in at least 156 deaths, 1,399 injuries and not less than 109 cases of rape and violent sexual assault, which drew international condemnation. An international Commission of Inquiry appointed by the Secretary-General to investigate the events of 28 September concluded that security forces committed crimes against humanity and recommended that the individuals with greatest responsibility for the atrocities should be held accountable.
11. On 3 December 2009, President Camara was shot and wounded, reportedly by his *aide de camp* Lieutenant Aboubacar "Toumba" Diakité, whose whereabouts remain unknown. Following medical treatment in Morocco, President Camara was flown to Burkina Faso, where he agreed to remain whilst recuperating, leaving interim president Sékouba Konaté to lead the transition. In January 2010, Jean-Marie Doré, the spokesperson of *Forces Vives*, was appointed as a consensus Prime Minister. On 15 February, the new Prime Minister named a national unity Government that

included opposition politicians, trade unionists, civil society and members of the outgoing military government. The main task of the new government was to complete the transition. Presidential elections are scheduled to be held on 27 June 2010. Under the agreement between *Forces Vives* and the junta, members of the current transition government will not be included in the new government that will be formed after the presidential elections.

12. Although there was resentment at the unfair and unequal access to power and resources during the rule of President Lansana Conté, ethnicity was not a divisive issue until the last years of his rule. Opposition parties, although formed broadly along ethnic lines, were united against the one party, autocratic rule of President Conté. When the CNDD took power, led by Captain Dadis Camara, opposition parties, trade unions and civil society groups all initially supported the junta, which had promised to organize immediate elections, in which they would not stand as candidates.

D. Findings

13. In his analysis of the risk of genocidal violence in Guinea, the Special Adviser has focused in particular on inter-group relations, taking into account the history, political and economic contexts and social structures. As indicated in the section on Methodology, the analysis of the Findings is based on the eight factors identified in the Framework of Analysis.

Inter-group relations, including record of discrimination:

14. Guinea has many ethnic groups but the four principal ethnic groups, which are associated with the four regions of the country, are the Soussou, who dominate Basse Guinée (some 20 per cent of the population); the Peuhl or Fulani who dominate Moyenne Guinée (some 40 per cent); the Malinké or Mandingo who dominate Haute Guinée (some 30 per cent); and the Forestiers ethnic groups (Guerze, Kissi, Toma, Kpelle and Mano, who account for ten per cent of the population). About 80 per cent of the population, mainly Soussou, Peuhl and Malinké, are Muslim. The Forestiers groups are predominantly Christian or animist.

15. Since independence, those in power have consistently placed members of their ethnic group in positions of influence. The first President of Guinea, Ahmed Sekou Touré, a Malinké, favoured the Malinké, especially in the last years of his regime, and appointed senior government and military officials from his ethnic group. President Lansana Conté, who replaced Sekou Touré, favoured members of his ethnic group, the Soussou. When President Moussa Dadis Camara took power, the population of the Guinée Forestière region (from where he comes) saw his ascendancy as their opportunity to finally gain influence and access to positions in government and the military. During Dadis Camara's brief time in power, his appointment of senior government and military officials from his region was perceived as favoring the Forestiers groups. He reportedly sponsored a propaganda campaign to extend his stay in power and intimidated his opponents through threats. Leaflets were distributed calling for his support, with the threat, if they failed to do so, the Peuhl and Malinké would be forced out of Nzérékoré in retaliation.

16. The Forestiers groups reportedly encouraged President Camara to stand in the proposed presidential election and not give in to the opposition, whom they perceive as dominated by the Peuhl and Malinké ethnic groups. Some representatives from the Guinée Forestière region, including local leaders in Nzérékoré, saw the opposition to President Camara as driven by ethnic/religious bias. Some

alleged during meetings with the OSAPG that the larger, predominantly Muslim, ethnic groups were uncomfortable with the idea of a Christian from the minority Guinée Forestière region leading the country.

17. There has been continuous settlement of other ethnic groups in the Guinée Forestière region. Most settlers have been Malinké, who are predominantly Muslim. The Peuhl and Malinké dominate business in the main towns, in a region where there is a high level of poverty, whilst the Forestier groups are traditionally agriculturalists. Forestiers representatives accused the Malinké of gaining unfair access to land and business as a result of their connections during Sekou Touré's regime and at the expense of local people. There have also been accusations of the Malinke propagating Islam and disparaging Christianity and the traditional animist faith of the region. Whilst the Malinké and the native Forestiers group co-existed peacefully for decades, inter-communal tensions became overt in the 1990s. They have increased recently as a result of several factors, including the ascendancy to power of President Camara and the violent crackdown on the opposition *Forces Vives* in Conakry. Forestiers groups feel they have long been looked down upon by the Malinké and Peuhl, whom they consider and call "foreigners"; but after Dadis Camara's accession to power, they felt that they could challenge that attitude and became more ready to confront the Malinké and Peuhl.

18. While ethnic groups have co-existed peacefully in the country as a whole, there have been clashes between the Forestiers and Malinké in the Guinée Forestière region since the 1990s. In 1991, after the election of a Malinké mayor for Nzérékoré in the first communal elections, the Forestiers groups rioted, killing many Malinké in Nzérékoré and in surrounding villages. In the past two decades, numerous incidents have been reported, in which a dispute between Forestiers and Malinké individuals was used as grounds to unleash inter-communal violence. In a more recent incident, on 5 February 2010, a Christian ethnic Forestiers woman was beaten in front of a mosque in Nzérékoré for "disrespecting" Muslims who were praying. The incident sparked three days of violence between the Malinké Muslims and the Forestiers Christians in which five people were reportedly killed and seventy wounded.

19. Some persons interviewed gave a partially ethnic interpretation to the violent attack on the opposition *Forces Vives* rally on 28 September 2009. Some sources from civil society, in particular, expressed the view that the presidential guards deployed to break up the rally, commonly referred to as the "Red Berets", were predominantly drawn from the Forestiers ethnic groups. The guards were accused of uttering ethnic slurs and insults against the Peuhl, who made up the majority at the rally. In Guinée Forestière, however, the council of elders and some other interlocutors dismissed the association of the Forestiers groups with the 28 September 2009 massacre as another attempt to justify their exclusion from the political scene and advance the interests of the three main ethnic groups against the Forestiers minorities.

Circumstances that affect the capacity to prevent genocide

20. The long history of internal repression, poor governance and concentration of power in the office of the president has eroded the competency and credibility of Guinea's key institutions, including the judiciary, police, military, and national human rights institutions. Guinea therefore lacks the institutional structure that would protect vulnerable groups from the risk of violence.

21. Impunity is the norm; perpetrators of past violence and human rights violations have gone unpunished, including those responsible for massive human rights violations committed during the previous regimes of Sékou Touré and Lansana Conté, and those responsible for the 28 September 2009 atrocities. The impunity traditionally enjoyed by the security forces contributed to the repressive culture of successive regimes, with cycles of violence and human rights violations.

22. Many Peuhl believe that they have been unfairly targeted by previous regimes and see themselves as victims who did not receive justice.

23. The current junta and previous regimes have suspended the constitution and used decrees to clamp down on the opposition, leading to arbitrary arrests, torture, killings and serious violations of human rights. The weakness of the national justice system to respond adequately has eroded the rule of law and led to tensions and mistrust between the victims and alleged perpetrators.

24. All interlocutors interviewed during the mission cited the absence of rule of law and justice as the main factors for continued inter-communal violence.

Presence of illegal arms and armed elements

25. All three countries bordering the Guinée Forestière region, namely Sierra Leone, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire, are emerging from conflict. Many Guineans fought in the Liberian and Sierra Leone civil wars, and Guinée Forestière was host to thousands of refugees fleeing these wars. Some Guinean ex-combatants, especially in the Guinée Forestière region, were never disarmed and reintegrated. Unconfirmed reports indicate that about 16,000 ex-combatants remain at large in the country as a whole and continue to pose a security risk.

26. In the past, Guinean security forces received military supplies and training from Guinea's development partners. After the 28 September 2009 atrocities, the European Union, ECOWAS and the U.S.A. suspended military and security assistance to Guinea in protest. Arms control, the disarmament and reintegration of former combatants and security sector reform will be essential to prevent the risk of future violence in Guinea.

Motivation of leading actors to encourage divisions between groups

27. Whereas Guineans have, in general, co-existed peacefully across the country, ethnicity and to a lesser extent religion are increasingly being exploited for political reasons in the period leading up to the scheduled elections. The leading political parties have no clear national policy agenda and seem to be relying on the support of their various ethnic groups to ascend to power.

28. Violence has, in the past, been used as a means to ascend to power. Any group that envisages climbing to power, especially in the Guinée Forestière context, is likely to consider using violence as an option.

29. The junta has benefited financially from its involvement in politics and has reportedly engaged in illegal activities, including the profitable and illegal export of minerals (bauxite) and drugs trafficking. Guinea is among the top exporters of bauxite, which constitutes 60 per cent of its exports and provides 20 per cent of the country's GDP. Illegal exploitation of minerals and access to export

proceeds is a key motivation for gaining political power. Senior government officials reportedly continue to benefit personally from income from national resources that would otherwise be directed to national development.

30. Some military personnel have allegedly re-invested illegal income into legitimate businesses and are keen to see their wealth protected. They have an interest therefore in the outcome of the transition. The junta allegedly agreed to a short transition period that would lead exclusively to presidential elections only and allow them to retain control over some areas of government.

31. A group formed by Forestiers elites and composed mainly of military, police and academic representatives from the region has reportedly been promoting the position that Guinée Forestière belongs to the native population and that other ethnic groups that have moved into the region should support the natives in all aspects, including politically, or face eviction. The group strongly supports President Camara and has been calling for his return to Guinea from Burkina Faso. The group reportedly sponsored youths to visit Dadis Camara in Ougadougou, who urged him to return. Furthermore, the organization is suspected of having been behind the February 2010 ethno-religious clashes in Nzérékoré and the wider Guinée Forestière region.

Circumstances that facilitate the perpetration of genocidal violence

32. When President Camara came to power, he recruited about 7,000 men from the Guinée Forestière region into the military, who were reportedly trained by foreigners. The whereabouts of these recruits remains unclear. In the event that there is inter-communal strife, such trained individuals could quickly be mobilized to perpetrate violence against perceived opponents.

33. Attempts by interim President Sékouba Konaté to dismiss some military personnel who were considered to be allied to President Camara exacerbated tensions, especially among the Guinée Forestière groups, from where the soldiers were assumed to originate. These groups now feel they are being targeted for exclusion even in this transition period.

34. There has also been an escalation in cases of sexual and gender-based violence in the country. Most of the injured victims of the 28 September atrocities were women, many of whom were subject to brutal rapes and have, as yet, had no recourse to justice. This is an aspect of a widespread discrimination against women in Guinea. Women are excluded from political, economic and security decision-making and state institutions offer them little protection.

Acts that could be elements of genocide

35. Guinea has a history of human rights violations, perpetrated mostly by the security forces, including unlawful killings, rape, arbitrary detention, torture and excessive use of force. These have not generally targeted any particular ethnic or religious group. However, in the Guinée Forestière region, there has been a history of violence, including killings and serious bodily harm of members of one ethnic group by another since the 1990s. These acts have not been of the intensity or so systematic as to constitute acts of genocide, but they appear to have been organized and committed deliberately.

Evidence of intent “to destroy in whole or in part” an ethnic/religious group

36. OSAPG found no information relating to intent to destroy any group. Previous violence perpetrated under all the regimes did not target any particular ethnic group.

Triggering factors

37. Elections: At the time of the mission, there was no clear front-runner in the presidential elections scheduled for 27 June 2010. In the event that the elections are not perceived as free and fair, the losing candidates may reject or contest the results and cause a post-election crisis. The military may use such a crisis or wrangling among politicians as an excuse to intervene again and draw the country back into crisis.

38. Security during the elections is another concern. The Government does not have the capacity to ensure security of both voters and ballot boxes. The Minister of Territorial Administration and Political Affairs, the lead ministry on elections, requested the international community to support the Government to guarantee security during elections.

39. The political parties that draw their membership from a particular ethnic group pose a challenge as the elections approach. Presidential candidates that may lose in the elections may reject the outcome and rally their ethnic supporters to derail a smooth transition. Enactment of an electoral code is of key importance.

40. President Dadis Camara's return to Guinea before or after the elections would most likely increase tensions. Although the Ougadougou Agreement provides for President Camara to stay in Burkina Faso during this period, and for Interim President Konaté to lead the transition, it is not clear how long President Camara will remain out of the country. His absence has been considered to be a stabilizing factor that has contributed to an enabling environment for the transition. However, it seems that President Camara still has strong support within the military and in the Guinée Forestière region. His return at any time, if not well managed, could have a negative effect on stability.

E. Support by the United Nations and other actors

Political

41. The United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) and the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) have deployed electoral, political and mediation advisors to Guinea to support, in consultation with relevant regional organizations and the Resident Coordinator, ongoing political dialogue, mediation efforts and the electoral process, and to help ensure a peaceful and inclusive transition within the agreed six-month timeline.

42. The International Contact Group on Guinea continues to hold monthly meetings to assess progress towards the elections and transition to constitutional governance.

Humanitarian/Social Services

43. The Secretary-General continues to urge donors to immediately resume funding of basic social services in Guinea to prevent further deterioration of living conditions. In addition, relevant United

Nations entities have maintained resources and personnel in Guinea to respond to the development and humanitarian consequences of the political crisis.

Security Sector Reform

44. UNOWA, the United Nations Office for Drug Control (UNODC) and other United Nations entities, with the support of the Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO), are assisting ECOWAS during the transitional phase in its support to key state-building measures. They are putting particular emphasis on police, military and judicial reforms in order to ensure adequate security for the conduct of peaceful elections, as well as to fight illicit trafficking, especially in drugs, which pose a serious and imminent threat to the democratic process. Such support will be complemented by broader reforms as soon as conditions and resources are in place.

45. The Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) has made available 1.7 million dollars to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for Human Rights/Justice and Security Reform. A Security Sector Reform assessment has been concluded and an action plan is being prepared. The initiative has been undertaken jointly by UNOWA and ECOWAS, with technical advice by DPA, DPKO, UNDP, the European Union (EU), Spain and France.

Peacebuilding/Conflict Prevention

46. The United Nations Country Team has prioritized conflict prevention and peace building activities, with a focus on the potentially volatile Forestière region and ensuring the rapid implementation of agreed projects under the existing six million dollar Peacebuilding Fund envelope for Guinea.

Human Rights

47. The High Commissioner for Human Rights is establishing an office in Guinea to help raise human rights awareness, monitor abuses, build national capacity and help integrate human rights into the broader peace building efforts.

48. The Secretary-General and the international community have urged the Guinean Government to hold those responsible for committing the 28 September 2009 atrocities accountable. The Secretary-General will also continue to call for the recommendations of the International Commission of Inquiry for Guinea to be fully implemented, particularly those related to accountability.

F. Conclusion

49. While there is no open conflict in Guinea, there are underlying tensions that are rooted in the history of the country. Inter-ethnic tensions exist, especially in the Guinée Forestière region, and between Forestiers ethnic groups and the Malinké and Peuhl. If these tensions and the causes behind them are not addressed in the period during and after the elections, there is a real risk that the tensions could escalate into violent conflict with genocidal implications.

50. At the time of the mission, there was no clear front-runner in the presidential elections. If the elections are marred by violence or irregularities, losing candidates are likely to contest the results,

which could cause a post election crisis. Given that the political parties have ethnic affiliations, such a crisis is likely to divide the country along ethnic lines and could, in the worst case scenario, deteriorate into inter-ethnic violence that could potentially become genocidal. The military could use such a crisis as an excuse to intervene once again to resume control.

51. There is urgent need for the rule of law to be upheld in Guinea. Those who have committed atrocities, including the 28 September events, must be held accountable. A culture of impunity encourages the perpetration of the violence and crimes that have had a destabilizing effect on the country and erodes the confidence of the population in the government. Lack of confidence in the judiciary, law enforcement and government institutions, especially in the rural areas, is pushing the population to turn to local and traditional mechanisms to deal with crime and resolve conflicts. While this in itself may not be a matter of concern, resort to local solutions will erode national cohesion and unity.

52. OSAPG concludes that the risk of genocidal violence in Guinea is moderate, but not negligible.

G. Recommendations

53. The Transitional Government recognizes that it needs international assistance to effectively address some of the challenges facing it. The Special Adviser recommends that the United Nations continue to mobilize support for the Transitional Government to conduct credible elections, strengthen conflict prevention and peace building mechanisms, while taking into consideration ethnic dimensions. In the longer term, the United Nations should continue to mobilize resources for comprehensive government reforms and development in areas such as national institutions, infrastructure, employment and gender mainstreaming.

54. The Special Adviser recommends that the Transitional Government be encouraged to emphasize tolerance, and caution political parties and leaders against exploiting ethnicity for political ends, as this may lead to violence among communities. He also recommends that the United Nations work with the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Political Affairs to help the Government put in place credible criteria for registering political parties in order to minimize the exploitation of ethnicity in election campaigns. Registration of parties that are clearly formed along ethnic lines should be discouraged. An electoral code of conduct should be established for political parties and candidates.

55. The Special Adviser recommends that the Transitional Government, the United Nations and the international community support the existing inter-religious groups, women's groups, councils of elders, youth and civil society to promote dialogue, cohesion and unity, especially among ethnic and religious groups.

56. The Special Adviser recommends that the Transitional Government, with the support of the United Nations and other members of the international community, strengthen its justice system, enforce respect for the rule of law, and combat impunity.

57. The Special Adviser calls on the Government of Guinea to take all necessary steps, in line with the requests of the Secretary-General and others from the international community, to hold

accountable the perpetrators of violence and international crimes, including those responsible for the 28 September 2009 atrocities.

58. Arms control and security sector reform should remain a top priority; the Special Adviser recommends that the United Nations continue to support the initiative of ECOWAS to implement the necessary reforms.

59. Economic sanctions imposed on Guinea by the international community are damaging social programmes, have increased the cost of basic commodities and have made the life of the poor more difficult. The Special Adviser recommends that the international community reassess the impact of these sanctions and resume support for development programmes geared to addressing poverty and unemployment and bringing down the cost of living, as well as providing skills training to increase youth employment. The Secretary-General may consider using his good offices to persuade development partners to lift the sanctions and resume funding for these key areas. The United Nations should take the lead in mobilizing donors and raising resources to rehabilitate the infrastructure and initiate development projects in the country.

60. There is a risk that any instability or conflict in the Guinée Forestière region could spill over into neighbouring fragile states. Any conflict prevention initiatives undertaken in Guinée Forestière should take into account the situation of similar ethnic groups in the neighboring countries.

H. Next steps by my office

61. The Transitional Government asked the Special Adviser to conduct a follow-up visit and organize a workshop in Conakry for government officials before the commencement of election campaigns on 27 May 2010. However, following consultations within the United Nations System, it was decided that such confidence building and dialogue initiatives among different groups should be carried out after the presidential elections. The Office of the Special Adviser stands ready to conduct workshops for various stakeholders on genocide prevention at the appropriate time.

62. The Office of the Special Adviser will work with United Nations partners, including the United Nations Country Team in Guinea, the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), DPA, UNOWA, UNDP, OHCHR and ECOWAS to develop a project proposal that will support the strengthening of dialogue among different groups, with specific emphasis on ethnic and religious groups, especially in the Guinée Forestière region. With the collaboration of the United Nations presences in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone, this initiative could be extended to these neighboring countries, given the presence of the Guinée Forestière ethnic groups across national borders.