

European Parliament resolution of 22 October 2009 on the situation in Guinea

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- having regard to the communiqué issued by the International Contact Group on Guinea (ICGG) in Abuja (Nigeria) on 13 October 2009,
 - having regard to the prolonged instability in the Mano River region that is traumatising the local population,
 - having regard to its previous resolutions on Guinea,
 - having regard to the statement by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on 29 September 2009, on the violent events in Conakry, Republic of Guinea,
 - having regard to Parliament's debate on 7 October 2009,
 - having regard to Rule 122 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas a military junta, led by Captain Moussa Dadis Camara, seized power on 23 December 2008, following the death of President Lansana Conté,
- B. whereas the repression of a peaceful demonstration by the opposition on 28 September 2009, the anniversary of the referendum by which the country gained independence, caused, according to sources, between 100 and 200 deaths, (the military having recovered a number of bodies to prevent them being counted, thus also preventing the families from mourning their dead), and more than 1 000 wounded, by gunshots or bayoneting, and numerous cases of rape were reported,
- C. whereas leading opposition figures have been beaten, injured and arrested, journalists critical of the authorities are being hunted down and the junta is creating a real risk of ethnic conflict,
- D. whereas there have been horrifying reports of soldiers using rifle butts, even bayonets, to rape women, while other women were stripped of their clothing and their dignity – and were then violated, humiliated and raped in public by the security forces,
- E. whereas acts of violence against women amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity and all perpetrators should be brought to justice to end their impunity,
- F. whereas Articles 8 and 9 of the Cotonou Agreement, to which Guinea is a signatory, require respect for human rights and democracy,
- G. whereas the "roadmap" set up on 27 July 2009 under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement was designed to organise the transition to democracy,

H. whereas the members of the junta who were formerly members of the National Council for Democracy and Development had pledged to hold free elections as soon as possible, and not to stand as candidates in those elections themselves,

I. whereas the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) has just begun a preliminary investigation into the situation in Guinea, in order to determine whether crimes have been committed within the ICC's jurisdiction,

J. whereas its irresponsible use of armed force to repress the population disqualifies the military junta from organising the country's transition to democracy, through free and fair elections,

K. whereas positions have been taken by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union, and Burkanibe President Blaise Compaoré has been appointed as the "facilitator",

L. whereas the International Contact Group on Guinea (ICGG), comprising diplomats from ECOWAS, the UN, the African Union and the European Union and representatives of the world human rights defence watchdogs, visited Guinea and has reported accordingly,

M. whereas the European Union and Guinea signed a fisheries partnership agreement in December 2008, a few days before the coup that brought Captain Dadis Camara to power, with the first payment under that agreement being due by 30 November 2009,

N. whereas the African Union's ultimatum to Captain Dadis Camara, urging him to renew his undertaking not to stand as a candidate in the next presidential election, has expired,

O. whereas ECOWAS has appealed to the international community to deploy a neutral force in Guinea to protect the population and opposition figures and the ICGG has called for a total embargo on arms destined for Guinea,

P. whereas there is considerable development potential in Guinea's substantial mineral resources; whereas Guinea is classified by Transparency International as one of the most corrupt countries in Africa,

1. Condemns the bloody and murderous repression of unarmed demonstrators and presents its condolences to the families of the victims;
2. Condemns all acts of sexual violence against women and girls and calls for medical and psychological assistance for rape victims; calls on the Commission to urgently launch specific programmes for the rehabilitation of women victims of violence in Guinea;
3. Welcomes the ICGG communiqué following its 13 October 2009 meeting in Abuja on the Guinean crisis in which it calls on the military junta to "immediately release all those arbitrarily arrested, and particularly those held in custody in connection with the September 28 incident" in Conakry and calls on it to formalise by Saturday, 17 October 2009 the arrangements necessary to rule out participation by members of that junta in the presidential elections scheduled for January 2010;

4. Welcomes the setting-up by the UN of an independent international committee of inquiry to determine responsibility for the massacre, and the opening of a preliminary investigation by the ICC to ensure that it does not go unpunished;
5. Calls for every possible measure to be taken to guarantee the safety of the witnesses and the victims' families when they are heard by the international committee of inquiry;
6. Calls on the military junta to respect the right to freedom of opinion, expression and association, including the right to peaceful assembly, as expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
7. Considers that only a government resulting from free and fair elections will be able to represent the country's long-term interests;
8. Wishes to see a transitional government put in place, incorporating the main opposition parties, with the task of preparing for the presidential and parliamentary elections;
9. Calls on the Council to take the 'appropriate measures' referred to in Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement and to look into the options for responding to the request by ECOWAS to arrange a mission in support of an African force for protection of the population, so as to provide that force with the resources needed to fulfil its mission, and a longer-term civilian mission to contribute to the organisation of the security forces;
10. Calls on the African Union, in collaboration with ECOWAS, to impose strong sanctions against the military junta personnel while organising a national dialogue through a truth and reconciliation commission;
11. Calls on all states to suspend international supplies of military and police weaponry, munitions and other equipment that could be used to commit human rights violations by Guinean security forces, in accordance with the position taken by the ICGG;
12. Deplores the fact that both state-owned and private Chinese firms investing in Guinea are largely indifferent to the human rights of the country's citizens;
13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the authorities of the African Union and ECOWAS and the junta in power in the Republic of Guinea.

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