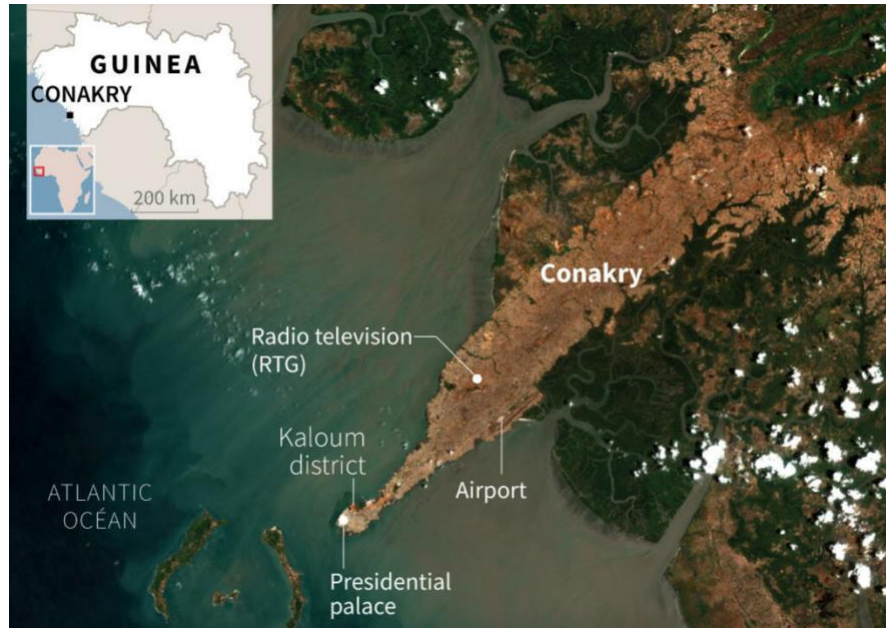


## Security Advisory - Guinea

### Current Situation

Early on Sunday 5 September 2021, heavy gunfire and military deployments were reported in several areas of Conakry. Gunfire was reported in Coleah, Kaloum and Camayenne, with soldiers being deployed near the Palais du Peuple. Video circulating on social media showed military vehicles patrolling Conakry, with one military source disclosing that the only bridge connecting the mainland to the Kaloum neighbourhood, where the palace and most government ministries are located, had been sealed off. By mid-afternoon, when the shooting had stopped, residents of the capital city were venturing back onto the streets to celebrate the uprising's apparent success, with some shouting that the country has been liberated.



Source: France24

Special forces soldiers have ousted Guinea's long-serving President, Alpha Condé, telling the county that they had dissolved the government and constitution and have closed the land and air borders. The head of the elite army unit, Mahamady Doumbouya, appeared on state TV on Sunday, stating that "poverty and endemic corruption" had driven his forces to remove President Condé from office. Doumbouya, a former French foreign legionnaire, further disclosed on state television, draped in Guinea's national flag and surrounded by eight other armed soldiers that "we have dissolved government and institutions," and "we are going to rewrite a constitution together." Hours after gunfire erupted near the presidential place in Conakry, a video shared on social media showed Condé in a room surrounded by army special forces. Military sources have reported that President Condé was taken to an undisclosed location and that the forces commanded by Doumbouya had made several other arrests, adding that they included senior government officials. The junta that appeared to have seized power later disclosed that Condé was not harmed, that his wellbeing was guaranteed and that he was being given access to his doctors. A statement read on the state broadcaster disclosed that outgoing ministers and heads of institutions were invited to a meeting at 11:00 GMT on Monday morning in parliament, adding that "any failure to attend will be considered as a rebellion against the CNRD," the group said referring to its chosen name, the National Rally and Development Committee (CNRD).

Late on Sunday, the defence ministry had claimed briefly that the attempted uprising had been put down, disclosing in a statement that the group of attackers had been repelled. However the elite soldiers who staged the uprising have announced a nationwide curfew "until further notice" and the replacement of

regional governments by the military. While the whereabouts of Condé currently remain unclear, one of his advisers has disclosed that he is under arrest.

## *Regional/International Reaction*

So far, no sanctions have been imposed on those behind the military coup, though the international community has condemned the latest coup to hit the West African region.

The United Nations has condemned the takeover by force, while the West African region's economic bloc, ECOWAS, has threatened reprisals. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres disclosed that he strongly condemned "any takeover of the government by force," and called for Condé's immediate release. ECOWAS threatened to impose sanctions, after what its chairman, Ghanaian President Nana Akufo-Addo, called an attempted coup. The African Union (AU) indicated that it would meet urgently and take "appropriate measures" while the foreign ministry in Nigeria has called for a return to constitutional order. Meanwhile the United States State Department has issued a statement condemning the incident. It further disclosed that violence and any extra-constitutional measures would only erode Guinea's prospects for peace, stability and prosperity, adding "these actions could limit the ability of the United States and Guinea's other international partners to support the country as it navigates a path toward national unity and a brighter future for the Guinean people."

## *Background*

President Alpha Condé won a third term in office in October 2020 after changing the constitution to allow him to stand again, in a move that triggered violent protests from the opposition. In recent weeks, the Guinean government has sharply risen taxes to replenish state coffers and has also raised the price of fuel by 20%, causing widespread frustration.

## *Players*

On Sunday, Special Forces Group Commander Colonel Mahamady Doumbouya confirmed the takeover of power from President Alpha Condé on state TV, pledging to oversee a peaceful transitional period. However, little is known about Col Doumbouya's early life, except that he is a Malinke, like President Condé, and hails from Guinea's eastern Kankan region. He had been based in Forecariah, western Guinea, where he served under the bureau of territorial surveillance and the general intelligence services, and had reportedly attended the War College in Paris, France. He has 15 years of military experience, which includes operational missions in Afghanistan, Ivory Coast, Djibouti, Central African Republic, and close protection in Israel, Cyprus, the United Kingdom and Guinea. The colonel is said to have completed the operational protection specialist training at the International Security Academy in Israel, the unit commanders' training course at Senegal's Infantry Application School, the staff officer training in Gabon's Staff College of Libreville (EEML), and at the War College in Paris. He also served as a legionary in the French army until 2018, when President Condé asked him to return to Guinea to lead the GFS, which was established that year.

## *Regional Instability*

The latest coup d'état comes at a time when the wider West African region has over the past year seen democratic instability. It is also the fourth coup to take place in the region over the last 12 months. Over the last year, both Condé and Ivory Coast President Alassane Ouattara have altered their country's respective legislation to extend the clock on their presidencies. Meanwhile Mali has suffered two coups in the span of nine months, the first in August 2020 which saw the removal of President Keïta and a second in May of this year, while Chad also experienced a coup in April shortly after the death of long-time President Idris Deby, who died while visiting the battlefield. On 31 March, an attempted coup in Niger was

foiled and a number of perpetrators were arrested after gunfire erupted in the streets of Niamey two days before the inauguration of president-elect Mohamed Bazoum.

## *MS Risk Advisory*

An element of the military, the Special Forces Group (Groupement des Forces Speciales), led by Lieutenant Colonel Doumbouya, has arrested President Alpha Condé. A nationwide curfew is in effect following the military coup. Doumbouya has also announced the suspension of the country's constitution, the dissolution of the government, the closure of borders, and that the National Committee of Rally and Development (Comite National du Rassemblement et du Developpment, CNRD), has assumed power. The extent of the CNRD's support currently remains unclear. Doumbouya has convened a meeting with outgoing ministers and heads of institutions for 11:00 GMT on 6 September.

**Security forces are likely to remain deployed on the streets of Conakry in the coming days and movement restrictive measures, telecommunication disruptions and disruptions to state and business operations are likely. Clashes between rival security factions are likely to continue and these could occur in Conakry or elsewhere in the country. Public gatherings in response to developments are likely nationwide, and these could be in favour of the coup or in support of the Condé government. Any gatherings are likely to be met by a security force deployment. Clashes are likely at all protest locations. Anyone currently in Conakry is strongly advised to shelter in place until the situation becomes clearer or stabilizes. Anyone planning to travel to Guinea is advised to defer travel at this point until the situation stabilizes. Monitor local media and maintain contact with your diplomatic representation. Avoid concentrations of security personnel. Plan for road travel delays and if travelling, ensure that you have proper identification documents, and be prepared for checkpoints. Avoid all protests and demonstrations as they may turn violent.**

## About MS Risk

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- Interim security
- Training
- Special assignments

### VIRTUAL SECURITY DIRECTOR SERVICE

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References are always available.

More information is found at [www.msrisk.com](http://www.msrisk.com)

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