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# Guinea: In Brief

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## Summary

At present, Guinea is one of three countries most affected by the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. The outbreak is impacting Guinea's economy, social relations, food security, and politics, with potentially dire implications. For coverage of the outbreak and U.S. responses to it, see CRS Report R43697, *The 2014 Ebola Outbreak: International and U.S. Responses*, by Tiaji Salaam-Blyther; and CRS Report IF00044, *Ebola: 2014 Outbreak in West Africa (In Focus)*, by Nicolas Cook and Tiaji Salaam-Blyther. A range of other CRS products on Ebola are available; see also CRS Report R43736, *Ebola Virus Disease (Ebola or EVD): Experts List*.

A former French colony on West Africa's Atlantic coast with a population of about 11 million, Guinea is rich in natural resources, but poverty is widespread. President Alpha Condé, a former opposition leader, was voted into office in 2010 in what many observers consider to have been the country's first free and fair election. His inauguration brought an end to a turbulent period of military rule that followed the death of longtime leader Lansana Conté (who himself came to power in a military coup). As president, Condé has focused on containing the political influence of the military and improving Guinea's economic outlook, including by overhauling the mining code. However, opposition activists accuse Condé of authoritarian tendencies, state institutions remain weak, and ethnic tensions continue to influence politics and society. Local-level elections have been repeatedly delayed due to a stand-off between the government and opposition over electoral procedures. The impact of the Ebola outbreak on these and on presidential elections slated for 2015 remains to be seen.

U.S. engagement in Guinea has focused on development assistance; support for security sector reform; efforts to counter narcotics trafficking; and concerns about regional peace and stability. Guinea's large mineral deposits, including the world's largest known reserves of bauxite (an ore used in producing aluminum), also present strategic and commercial interests. Following the 2008 military coup, the United States identified Guinea's political transition as a key policy goal in West Africa and made significant diplomatic and financial contributions toward the success of Guinea's election process. U.S. bilateral aid is now overwhelmingly focused on health assistance. In 2013, the U.S. Department of Justice initiated a prosecution under the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) that revolves around allegations of large-scale corruption in the allocation of a large iron ore mining concession in 2008.

Congress plays a role in shaping U.S. engagement through the authorization, appropriation, and oversight of U.S. policies and aid programs. The FY2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act (P.L. 113-76) restricts Guinea's ability to receive International Military Education and Training (IMET) assistance for purposes other than "training related to international peacekeeping operations and expanded IMET [focusing on human rights and civilian control of the military]." Similar restrictions have been contained in previous annual appropriations measures. The FY2012 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 112-81) authorized Guinea, among several West African countries, to receive Defense Department-administered counter-narcotics assistance. During the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, several Members of Congress introduced resolutions in response to the military junta's involvement in a massacre of civilian protesters in the capital, Conakry, in September 2009. These included H.Res. 1013 (Ros-Lehtinen) and S.Res. 345 (Boxer).

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## Overview

Poor governance, corruption, weak or nonexistent infrastructure, and other factors have prevented Guinea's population from benefiting from its rich natural resource endowments. Guinea's development indicators are poor even by regional standards in West Africa, and living conditions are among the world's worst.<sup>1</sup> During the 1990s and early 2000s, Guinea was considered a locus of relative stability as civil conflicts raged in neighboring Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, and Mali. However, in recent years, Guinea has been viewed as a potential vector of instability in the region, as its weak state institutions have struggled to contain and respond to a fractious and restive military, political unrest, ethnic tensions, and the rise of transnational drug trafficking and maritime piracy.

The ongoing Ebola outbreak in West Africa has highlighted stark gaps in Guinea's national healthcare infrastructure. It has also cast a spotlight on long-running tensions between state and society in the remote areas of the southeast, where the epidemic is thought to have originated in December 2013. Communities in this southeastern "forest" region, which is geographically proximate and closely socially linked to Liberia and Sierra Leone, appear to be the worst affected. Still, many other regions in Guinea have had confirmed Ebola cases since the start of the outbreak, including the densely inhabited capital, Conakry.

The outbreak is likely to impact Guinea's economy, social relations, and politics. Previously, Guinea had seen a relative increase in stability since President Alpha Condé's election in 2010. The election put an end to two years of turbulent military rule, and many hoped it would mark a transition from a history of authoritarian rule starting at independence from France in 1958. President Condé has pushed through several economic and security reforms, and appears to have largely confined the military to the barracks. Critics, however, accuse him of attempting to rule unilaterally, and his record in office has also been marked by severe political tensions. Legislative elections held in 2013 allowed an appointed, quasi-legislative body to be replaced by an elected parliament. Still, the ability of opposition groups to participate in legislative deliberations has not eased political polarization. Some opposition activists continue to claim that Condé's 2010 electoral victory itself was illegitimate, although international observer groups portrayed the conduct of the election as acceptable.

Ethnicity has become an increasingly salient factor in Guinean politics in recent years, and many Guineans interpret Condé's record through an ethnically colored lens. Members of the president's Malinké community (about 30% of the population) may be more likely to view his presidency favorably, whereas ethnic Fulbe (about 40%)—the group to which his primary electoral rival belonged—appear more likely to view the president as seeking to install an authoritarian regime. The pre- and post-electoral periods in 2010 were afflicted by violence, much of it along ethnic lines, which revealed latent tensions and damaged the social fabric in ethnically mixed areas. Dynamics surrounding the vote left scars that continue to affect political dynamics.

The United States played a key role in Guinea's 2010 political transition by isolating the military junta that came to power in 2008 and providing diplomatic and financial support to the electoral process. U.S. aid to Guinea focuses on health system strengthening, socioeconomic development, and military professionalization and security sector reform—in addition to aid related to the

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<sup>1</sup> Guinea ranked 179 out of 187 countries assessed on the U.N. Human Development Index in 2014.

Ebola outbreak. Congress may guide U.S. engagement with Guinea through its authorization and appropriation of foreign assistance and its oversight of executive branch policies and programs.

Issues of potential interest to Congress may include:

- the authorization, appropriation, and oversight of U.S. foreign aid and Ebola response programs;
- Guinea's democratic trajectory and prospects for institutional reforms;
- the role of Guinea's military and prospects for security sector reform;
- trends related to counter-narcotics and transnational organized crime;
- Guinea's natural resource wealth and related U.S. commercial interests; and
- Guinea's role in regional stability.

## Background

The past six years have seen dramatic political changes for a country that had previously had only two presidents in the first 50 years after independence in 1958. Longtime president Lansana Conté, who came to power in a military coup in 1984, died in late 2008 following a long illness. A military junta led by mid-ranking officers then seized power. Amid growing popular opposition to the junta's rule, the military violently cracked down on peaceful protests in September 2009, sparking widespread condemnation and increasing Guinea's international isolation. Two months later, junta leader Captain Moussa Dadis Camara was shot and wounded by his own bodyguard, and his departure paved the way for a military-led transitional government.

In 2010, Guineans voted in their country's first presidential elections organized by an independent electoral commission and without an incumbent candidate. Alpha Condé, who had never served in government, was declared the winner after defeating Cellou Dalein Diallo in a run-off. The two candidates had widely diverging political backgrounds: Condé was a longtime opposition leader who had lived in exile during most of Guinea's post-independence history, while Diallo was a former prime minister widely seen as a political and business insider. The vote was nevertheless perceived by many as a contest between Guinea's two largest ethnic groups: the Peul (Fulbe/Fulani), who were seen as constituting Diallo's base, and the Malinké, seen as Condé's.

Condé ultimately benefitted from cross-ethnic support, apparently in part because other groups feared political consolidation by the already economically influential Fulbe. (There has never been a Fulbe president in Guinea, but the Fulbe community is prominent in domestic and regional commerce.) International observers ultimately concluded that the overall conduct of the elections had been acceptable, while noting concerns regarding logistical shortcomings, delays between the first and second rounds of voting, political polarization, and election-related violence.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., The Carter Center, *Observing the 2010 Presidential Elections in Guinea: Final Report* (at [cartercenter.org](http://cartercenter.org)), which concluded: "The Carter Center's overall observation assessment is that the presidential election process was basically consistent with Guinea's international and regional obligations for genuine democratic elections. Nevertheless, there remains much more work to be done to ensure the continued development of democratic institutions and professional, neutral, and respected election administration in Guinea."

Figure I. Map and Basic Data



## Politics

Guinea's political system concentrates substantial power in the presidency. President Condé appears to have solidified his political control, although he has not been able to fulfill campaign promises to raise living standards, and analysts periodically express concerns about stability. Two prominent issues in Guinean politics are (1) extreme polarization between the president's supporters and the political opposition, which is likely to escalate ahead of presidential elections slated for 2015; and (2) civil-military tensions, given a history of military involvement in politics.

Legislative elections were held in September 2013 after multiple delays and several violent street protests by opposition forces, following a compromise agreement between the government and opposition on electoral procedures brokered by the U.N. regional political mission. Observer groups generally regarded the vote as fair, despite technical shortcomings.<sup>3</sup> The elections were widely viewed as a key step in Guinea's political transition, and the European Union had conditioned the resumption of full development aid on successfully holding them.<sup>4</sup> Previously, a transitional council appointed under the 2008-2010 military junta had served as a legislature, and the role of opposition parties in government was extremely limited, despite the fact that Condé's electoral rival had won over 47% of the presidential run-off vote in late 2010.

Condé's Rally of the Guinean People party (RPG after its French acronym) won a plurality of seats in the legislature (53 out of 114), which, along with allies in its larger "Arc en Ciel" (Rainbow) coalition, has enabled it to lead a slim majority block of some 60 seats. Condé's leading opponent is Cellou Dalein Diallo, who leads the ethnically Fulbe-dominated Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea (UFDG) party and the opposition block in parliament. The UFDG has 37 seats in parliament, the second-largest number, and a second opposition party, the Union of Republican Forces (UFR), has 10. No other party won more than two seats.

Political tensions initially seemed to ease after the legislative election. However, legislative decision-making has been characterized by gridlock, and a new political standoff has arisen over plans to conduct local-level elections. The elections were due in the first half of 2014, but have yet to take place due to disagreements between the government and opposition over electoral procedures, the appointment of elections officials, and the selection of contractors to carry out certain election-related tasks such as finalizing the voter rolls. Opposition leaders often look to street protests to express their discontent, which sometimes turn violent.

### President Alpha Condé

Alpha Condé, 74, spent nearly 40 years in exile, largely in France, where he was a law professor. He founded Guinea's first registered opposition party, the Rally of the Guinean People (RPG), in the early 1990s, and unsuccessfully ran against then-President Lansana Conté in 1993 (Guinea's first multi-party vote) and 1998. Both elections were marred by irregularities and reported fraud. Following the 1998 election, Condé was imprisoned for trying to leave the country "illegally" and attempting to overthrow the government. He was released in 2001 on a presidential pardon. Condé and the RPG boycotted the 2002 legislative election and the 2003 presidential election. Condé is a member of the Malinké ethnic group, which is concentrated in Guinea's northeast; Condé also drew cross-ethnic support during the presidential campaign, notably from the Soussou and Forestier ethnic communities.

## The Economy

Guinea boasts bountiful natural resources, including the world's largest known reserves of bauxite (aluminum ore);<sup>5</sup> sizable deposits of high-grade iron ore, diamonds, gold, and uranium; and potential (as yet unverified) offshore oil and gas reserves. It also has significant hydro-electric and commercial agricultural potential. The economy relies heavily on mineral exports,

<sup>3</sup> State Department, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2013*, February 27, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> For background on the standoff over the legislative elections, see International Crisis Group (ICG), *Guinea: A way out of the election quagmire*, February 2013.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Geological Survey, "Bauxite and Alumina," 2013.

notably joint-venture bauxite mining and alumina operations.<sup>6</sup> Natural resource extraction is estimated to account for over 30% of gross domestic product (GDP).<sup>7</sup>

While Guinea's economic potential is considerable, over three-quarters of the workforce is reportedly employed in (largely subsistence) agriculture<sup>8</sup> and living conditions are poor. Economic hardship has periodically contributed to popular unrest. Limited infrastructure, corruption, a history of poor macroeconomic management, periodic labor unrest, and political instability have inhibited inclusive economic growth.

President Condé has introduced reforms that have improved Guinea's macroeconomic stability by tackling key aspects of poor economic governance under past regimes—including unsustainable fiscal expenditures and the printing of extra currency to meet budget shortfalls, which caused high inflation. These reforms secured \$2.1 billion in debt relief in 2012, under the World Bank- and International Monetary Fund (IMF)-managed Highly Indebted Poor Countries initiative.<sup>9</sup> They have also enabled the restoration of international financial institution assistance, which had previously been suspended due to a combination of payment arrears and policy concerns.

However, economic growth at about 2-4% annually in recent years has not been sufficient to substantially reduce poverty or improve living standards. Indeed, some government fiscal austerity measures may have worsened living standards for some households, for example by reducing some subsidies. GDP has also been buffeted by regional instability and swings in global mineral prices. Moreover, the Ebola outbreak is expected to reduce growth.

## Selected Issues

### Governance and Human Rights

Guinea has arguably never experienced the effective rule of law, and it is among the world's most corrupt countries, ranking 150 out of 177 countries and territories assessed on Transparency International's 2013 *Corruption Perceptions Index*. According to the State Department's latest annual human rights report, "the judicial system lacked independence and was underfunded, inefficient, and overtly corrupt."<sup>10</sup> Political tensions contribute to governance shortfalls. A 2011 report by international and Guinean advocacy groups, for example, found that security forces "still regularly use torture and cruel treatments ... toward suspects under common law, prisoners,

<sup>6</sup> The Compagnie des Bauxites de Guinea (CBG), for example, is a joint venture in which 49% of the shares are owned by the Guinean Government and 51% by an international consortium led by Alcoa and Rio Tinto-Alcan.

<sup>7</sup> World Bank, "total natural resource rents" (% of GDP), 2012 latest available; at [data.worldbank.org](http://data.worldbank.org).

<sup>8</sup> CIA World Factbook, figure dated 2006.

<sup>9</sup> IMF, "IMF and World Bank Announce \$2.1 Billion Debt Relief for Guinea," September 26, 2012. According to IMF data, Guinea's debt burden decreased from over 99% of GDP in 2010 to an estimated 38% in 2014. (World Economic Outlook database, April 2014.)

<sup>10</sup> The report adds that "Budget shortfalls, a shortage of qualified lawyers and magistrates, an outdated and restrictive penal code, nepotism, and ethnic bias limited the judiciary's effectiveness... Domestic court orders were often not enforced." *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2013*, op. cit.

people considered to be political opposition sympathizers, and soldiers accused of plotting against the government.”<sup>11</sup>

The State Department’s latest human rights report lauded the 2013 legislative elections as “the first competitive and inclusive legislative elections in the country’s history.” The report identified the following as major human rights concerns: security force killings and use of excessive force against demonstrators; arbitrary arrest and detention, including long periods of pretrial detention and denial of fair trials; and life-threatening prison and detention center conditions.<sup>12</sup>

## The Role of the Military

Observers point to Guinea’s bloated and undisciplined military as a key underlying cause of instability. Challenges include an overweening size (Guinea’s armed forces, estimated at over 45,000 personnel in 2010, are among the region’s largest); a history of coup attempts, mutinies, and serious human rights abuses; and the incomplete integration of past waves of irregular recruits.<sup>13</sup> President Condé has leveraged a combination of appointments, promotions, and forced retirements to exercise control over the armed forces. After the president’s house came under armed attack in July 2011, several prominent military officers were arrested or dismissed.<sup>14</sup> The assailants’ ultimate aims and whether or not they were plotting a coup are disputed. There have not been other episodes to suggest high-level civil-military tensions since then.

Condé has pledged to prioritize security sector reform (SSR), for which the United States has provided support (see “U.S. Assistance” below). Some progress has been made, but overall results have been mixed. In November 2011, Condé announced the retirement of over 4,000 soldiers and paramilitary officers, with U.N. assistance to help finance the cost of severance. However, broader attempts to develop a coherent national security strategy and to tailor the mandates and size of the state security forces accordingly have made only slow progress, and civilian oversight of the military’s budget and management remains limited. In part, this reflects the armed forces’ role as a vehicle for patronage. Military salaries and benefits also act as a crucial safety net for a deeply impoverished population.

The military coup in 2008 appeared to contribute to the deterioration of discipline and to intra-military divisions along ethnic, generational, and factional lines. While many credit former transitional president General Sekouba Konaté (who headed the government for most of 2010) and President Condé with improving military discipline, the potential for abuses remains high. Some contend that a truth and reconciliation process is needed to address public perceptions of the armed forces and allegations of abuses stretching back to the post-colonial period.<sup>15</sup> Both the

<sup>11</sup> L’Action des chrétiens pour l’abolition de la torture (ACAT-France) et al, *La Force Fait Loi : Etude du phénomène tortionnaire en Guinée*, November 2011.

<sup>12</sup> *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2013*, op. cit.

<sup>13</sup> Joint Mission of ECOWAS, the AU, and the United Nations for Security Sector Reform in the Republic of Guinea, *Rapport d’Évaluation du Secteur de la Sécurité en République de Guinée*, May 2010; and International Crisis Group (ICG), *Guinea: Reforming the Army*, September 23, 2010.

<sup>14</sup> The president subsequently accused a prominent (now exiled) opposition leader, Amadou Oury Bah, along with a former government minister and a businessman, of plotting the attack from neighboring Senegal. Bah and Tibou Camara, the former minister, denied any involvement. CRS interview with Amadou Oury Bah, Washington DC, September 2011; Aminata.com, “Tibou Kamara—‘Alpha Condé est devenu un danger pour la Guinée et pour la région,’” September 19, 2011. Senegal also denied involvement or prior knowledge of the plot.

<sup>15</sup> For analysis of how Guinea’s troubled history and ethnic tensions affect debates over transitional justice, see Arieff (continued...)

Guinean government and the International Criminal Court (ICC) have conducted inquiries into the security forces' brutal crackdown on civilian protesters in 2009, and a handful of individuals accused of command responsibility have been charged in the domestic court system.<sup>16</sup> However, there have been no trials and few concrete results; indeed, some of the commanders charged in connection with the abuses have retained their posts.<sup>17</sup>

## Drug Trafficking

Guinea, among other countries in the region, is a key transshipment hub for cocaine en route from South America to Europe.<sup>18</sup> The junta that seized power in 2008 initiated populist moves to crack down on drug trafficking, but these were politically selective, neglected due process, and empowered abusive security agencies, seemingly undercutting institutional accountability and reform efforts. According to the State Department's 2014 *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, "Guinea's troubled counternarcotics programs have witnessed little improvement since President Alpha Condé's election in 2010." Some analysts posit that narcotics flows have increased in recent years, with a recent Reuters investigation reporting that traffickers may have relocated to Guinea from Guinea-Bissau following the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency arrest of a top Guinea-Bissau military commander in 2013. The report also found that traffickers are operating in Guinea "with the protection of senior civilian, military and police officials."<sup>19</sup> The head of the country's top counter-narcotics agency remains an individual implicated in the September 2009 security force massacre of protesters in Conakry, complicating international cooperation efforts.

## The Mining Sector

Guinea's economy and state budget are highly dependent on the mining sector, but erratic government decision-making and regulatory uncertainty created serious concerns for private firms and investors during the late Conté era (2005-2008) and under the military junta that followed (2008-2010). President Condé has identified mining sector reform as a priority, and in September 2011 his administration promulgated a new mining code. The U.S.-based organization Revenue Watch and international financier George Soros assisted with the drafting process, among others. The code, which Condé described as a "win-win" for investors and Guinea, increased the required ownership stake for the Guinean government in all mining projects;

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(...continued)

and Mike McGovern, "'History is stubborn': Talk about Truth, Justice, and National Reconciliation in the Republic of Guinea," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 55(1), January 2013.

<sup>16</sup> See Human Rights Watch (HRW), *Waiting for Justice: Accountability before Guinea's Courts for the September 28, 2009, Stadium Massacre, Rapes, and Other Abuses*, December 2012; and ICC, "Statement of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Fatou Bensouda, on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the 28 September 2009 events in Conakry, Guinea," September 26, 2014.

<sup>17</sup> U.S. State Department, Office of the Spokesperson, "Fifth Anniversary of Massacre at Pro-Democracy Rally in Guinea," September 28, 2014.

<sup>18</sup> See United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *Transnational Organized Crime in West Africa: A Threat Assessment*, February 2013; State Department, *2014 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, March 2014.

<sup>19</sup> Reuters, "Insight: Surge in cocaine trade undermines Conde's bid to revive Guinea," January 31, 2014.

required preference to Guinean sub-contractors and employees; introduced new procedures for obtaining mining permits; and raised taxes on mineral exports; among its extensive provisions.<sup>20</sup>

Industry reactions to the new law have varied between strident criticism and a wait-and-see attitude. An audit of existing mining contracts is ongoing. In February 2013, the government published all mining contracts on a public website, an unprecedented move. The decision enabled Guinea to be determined “compliant” with the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), an international effort to foster open and accountable management of revenues from natural resources.<sup>21</sup> The government then released revisions to the mining code in April 2013 in response to industry input. The implementation of the new code may succeed in mollifying investors if it is conducted quickly, fairly, and transparently, while offering greater regulatory stability and security of contract in return for possible financial losses from settlement fees or increased government ownership. Such an outcome, however, is not guaranteed.

The government has revoked some mining contracts following the adoption of the new mining code and investigations into alleged mining sector corruption. Notably, the government in 2013 revoked a concession acquired in 2008 by Benny Steinmetz Group Resources (BSGR), a firm headed by Israeli businessman Benny Steinmetz. BSGR had subsequently entered into a lucrative joint venture with the Brazil-based mining company Vale. (The concession was granted to BSGR after being stripped from the British-Australian company Rio Tinto. In 2011, Rio Tinto agreed to accept the 2008 loss of half of the concession to BSGR—which it had previously challenged—and reacquired the rights to develop the remaining blocs in exchange for a \$700 million one-time payment to the Guinean government.<sup>22</sup>) BSGR has vigorously contested the loss of its concession, accusing the Condé administration of corrupt motivations, and has appealed for international mediation. BSGR’s original acquisition of its concession is also subject to a U.S. Department of Justice Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) investigation, which in 2013 led to the arrest of an alleged BSGR surrogate.<sup>23</sup>

## U.S. Relations

According to the U.S. State Department, “U.S. policy seeks to encourage Guinea’s democratic reforms, its positive contribution to regional stability, and sustainable economic and social development.”<sup>24</sup> Following the 2013 legislative elections, which the Obama Administration hailed as “a positive advance in Guinea’s democratic development,” the Administration has called for “fortifying the National Assembly, constructing a transparent judiciary, and preparing for 2015 Presidential elections.”<sup>25</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *Code Minier de la République de Guinée*, September 9, 2011, obtained via Revenue Watch ; Guineenews, “L’intégralité du discours du chef de l’Etat à la Nation,” July 27, 2011.

<sup>21</sup> See <https://eiti.org/Guinea>.

<sup>22</sup> David Winning, “Rio and Guinea Settle Mine Fight,” *The Wall Street Journal*, April 25, 2011.

<sup>23</sup> United States v. Frederic Cilins, filed on April 15, 2013; see <http://www.justice.gov/criminal/fraud/fcpa/cases/cilinsf.html>. For background, see Patrick Radden Keefe, “Buried Secrets: How an Israeli billionaire wrested control of one of Africa’s biggest prizes,” July 8, 2013. Steinmetz and other critics of President Condé have contested the article’s portrayal of both the case and of Condé’s motives in pursuing it.

<sup>24</sup> State Department, “U.S. Relations with Guinea,” Fact Sheet, January 23, 2014.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

The Obama Administration congratulated Guinea in 2010 “on the successful completion of its first democratic presidential election” and congratulated Alpha Condé on his victory, expressing hopes that “it is only the first step on the road to democratic transition and civilian rule.”<sup>26</sup> As a result of that election, U.S. aid restrictions related to the 2008 military coup were lifted,<sup>27</sup> and Guinea’s eligibility for trade preferences under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) was restored. President Condé, along with three other West African presidents, met with President Obama at the White House in late July 2011.

U.S. policy toward Guinea has also focused on commercial interests in Guinea’s mineral resources. Guinea provides about 22% of U.S. bauxite imports, making it the second-largest source of such imports (after Jamaica).<sup>28</sup> Several U.S.-based resource firms operate in Guinea and face possible growing competition from other foreign investors.<sup>29</sup>

Amid rising U.S. concerns over Guinea’s role in the transnational drug trade, in June 2010, President Obama designated Ousmane Conté, a son of the late president Lansana Conté, as a “drug kingpin,” freezing any U.S. assets held by Conté and prohibiting any transactions with him by persons subject to U.S. jurisdiction.<sup>30</sup>

## U.S. Assistance

U.S. bilateral aid allocations for Guinea have trended downward since the 2010 elections. Bilateral aid appropriated in FY2014 totaled an estimated \$18.3 million, compared to \$25 million in FY2011; over 97% of FY2014 funding is designed to “support Guinea’s national health strategy with a particular focus on health system strengthening.”<sup>31</sup> The remainder (\$480,000) is for military aid, largely aimed at professionalization. The Obama Administration has requested \$17.7 million for Guinea in FY2015 (see **Table 1**, below). Unlike in past years, no Development Assistance (DA) was allocated in FY2014 and none has been requested for FY2015.

In addition to bilateral aid, Guinea has received at least \$5.6 million in U.S. aid in support of security sector reform since 2010.<sup>32</sup> This has been provided through State Department Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) funds, largely under the regional Africa Conflict Stabilization and Border Security Initiative. Starting in 2013, Guinea has also received some U.S. logistical

<sup>26</sup> State Department, “U.S. Statement on Alpha Condé’s Presidential Victory in Guinea,” December 3, 2010.

<sup>27</sup> At the time, the State Department determined that the 2008 military coup did not trigger a legal provision contained in that year’s foreign aid appropriations act that bars certain types of aid to the government of any country in which a “duly elected head of government” has been overthrown by a military coup or decree—arguing that the previous administration had not been “duly elected.” However, the executive branch imposed as a matter of policy aid restrictions that corresponded to those that would have been triggered by the provision. A similar provision has appeared in appropriations measures since at least 1985.

<sup>28</sup> U.S. Geological Survey, “Bauxite and Alumina,” 2013.

<sup>29</sup> The large U.S.-based multinational aluminum firm Alcoa, notably, is a major shareholder in the Compagnie des Bauxites de Guinée, a bauxite mining and export partnership with the Guinean state, while a much smaller U.S. energy firm, Hyperdynamics, holds a license for offshore oil exploration.

<sup>30</sup> Conté, who had been imprisoned in Guinea on drug-related accusations since February 2009, was released by Guinean authorities in mid-July 2010. Further details on the scope of the “kingpin” designation, made under the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act (Title VIII, P.L. 106-120), are discussed in U.S. Treasury, *Narcotics: What You Need to Know about U.S. Sanctions Against Drug Traffickers*, July 15, 2010.

<sup>31</sup> State Department, FY2015 *Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations*.

<sup>32</sup> State Department Congressional Notification, September 2014.

support for its peacekeeping deployment to Mali. International financial institutions, which receive significant U.S. support, are separately providing significant financing to Guinea.

**Table 1. U.S. Bilateral Aid, Selected Accounts**  
\$ thousands, appropriations, not adjusted for inflation

	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014 (est.)	FY2015 (req.)
DA	14,518	7,000	5,700	2,003	0	0
Global Health <sup>a</sup>	7,500	17,469	17,500	17,880	17,850	17,500
IMET	0	48	57	279	280	240
PKO <sup>b</sup>	1,600	0	0	0	0	0
FMF	0	0	400	190	200	0
INCLE	0	500	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23,618</b>	<b>25,017</b>	<b>23,657</b>	<b>21,600</b>	<b>18,330</b>	<b>17,740</b>

**Source:** State Department Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations (FY2012-FY2015)

**Notes:** DA=Development Assistance; IMET=International Military Education and Training; PKO=Peacekeeping Operations; FMF=Foreign Military Financing; INCLE=International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement. This table does not reflect aid provided under regionally or globally managed programs, or funding administered by entities other than the State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

- a. Refers to the Global Health and Child Survival (GHCS) account (FY2010-FY2011) and Global Health Programs (GHP) account (FY2012-FY2015).
- b. Additional PKO has been provided through regionally managed programs in FY2011-FY2014, including in support of security sector reform and Guinea's U.N. peacekeeping deployments.

## Congressional Actions

The FY2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act (P.L. 113-76) restricts Guinea's ability to receive International Military Education and Training (IMET) assistance for purposes other than "training related to international peacekeeping operations and expanded IMET." Expanded IMET, or E-IMET, focuses on encouraging respect for human rights and civilian control of the military. Similar restrictions have been contained in previous annual appropriations measures. The FY2012 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 112-81) authorized Guinea, among several West African countries, to receive Defense Department-administered counter-narcotics assistance.

During the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, several Members of Congress introduced resolutions condemning security force abuses against civilian protesters in Conakry in September 2009, including H.Res. 1013 (Ros-Lehtinen) and S.Res. 345 (Boxer). In 2007, the House Foreign Affairs Committee held a hearing on the political situation in Guinea during mass anti-government demonstrations.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, *Prospects for Peace in Guinea*, 110<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., March 22, 2007 (Washington: GPO).

## **Outlook**

The United States played a key role in Guinea's 2010 transition to an elected, civilian government. The transition led to a significant improvement in Guinea's security situation compared to 2009—when the country was beset by a political crisis and military fragmentation. Guinea may continue to interest U.S. policy makers for its role in regional security, its economic potential, and its recent democratic transition—but generally, U.S. policy attention has faded substantially between 2010 and the present. The Ebola outbreak has prompted new concerns, accompanied by substantial resource commitments for affected countries, but U.S. aid efforts to halt the epidemic and mitigate its effects are focused primarily on Liberia, with France taking the lead on funding for the international Ebola response in Guinea. The U.S. response to the outbreak is moving rapidly, and the full extent and impact of U.S. actions remains to be seen. The outbreak is impacting Guinean politics and society, with potentially dire implications for the country's prosperity and future stability.

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