

GUINEA

CIVICUS MONITOR WATCHLIST

OVERVIEW OF RECENT RESTRICTIONS
TO CIVIC FREEDOMS





INTRODUCTION

On 5th September 2021, Guinea's Special Forces under the leadership of Mamady Doumbouya [ousted](#) President Alpha Condé, suspended the Constitution and dissolved the government and its institutions. Although the Comité National du Rassemblement et du Développement (CNRD), the military transitional authorities, initially released dozens of political prisoners, it became increasingly intolerant of dissenting voices, in particular those criticising how the transition to civilian rule is being managed. Since 28th July 2022, protests to demand more transparency in Guinea's current transition and the establishment of an inclusive framework for dialogue have been met with force. Civic space violations in the past few months include a blanket ban on protests, excessive force against protesters, dissolution of a pro-democracy protest group and arrested HRDs.

RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOM OF PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY

Blanket ban on protests

On 13th May 2022, the military transitional authorities [announced](#) that all public protests "likely to compromise social tranquillity and the proper implementation of the activities contained in the timetable, (...)" are banned until the start of the electoral campaign period. The transition period to civilian rule is currently [set](#) at 36 months. As a result, political and social protests are banned for the coming years.

Excessive use of force

In July and August 2022, security forces [used](#) excessive and lethal force during protests against the "unilateral management of the transition", leading to several casualties and arrests of protesters and HRDs. On 28th and 29th July 2022, five people were killed and three injured during protests organised by the pro-democracy coalition of civil society groups, opposition and trade unions, Front National pour la Défense de la Constitution (FNDC: National Front for the Protection of the Constitution). Human rights group Amnesty International [said](#) it received information from witnesses that live ammunition was used during the protests, while media reports claim that about one hundred protesters, including 34 minors, were arrested. Protests occurred again on 17th August 2022, with at least two people killed, reportedly by bullets.

Guinea has a long history of using excessive force against peaceful protesters. For example, at least 50 people were [killed](#), and nearly 200 injured, in protests in Guinea between October 2019 and July 2020.

Freedom of Association

On 8th August 2022, Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation of the military transitional government, Mory Condé, [issued](#) an order dissolving FNDC, the coalition of political parties, trade unions and civil society groups that organised the recent protests. In the order, the military transitional government accuses FNDC of perpetrating violence and targeting security forces during protests. The order further motivates the group's dissolution as FNDC "jeopardises national unity, public peace and peaceful living together, does not appear on the list of NGOs in Guinea, nor on the list of association collectives [...] and even less in the directory of NGOs approved in Republic of Guinea".

ABOUT THE CIVICUS MONITOR

The [CIVICUS Monitor](#), an online platform that tracks threats to civil society in countries across the globe, rates civic space – the space for civil society – in Guinea as "**Repressed**".

The data provides the basis for civic space ratings, which are based on up-to-date information and indicators on the state of freedom of association, peaceful assembly and expression. Countries can be rated as:

CLOSED

REPRESSED

OBSTRUCTED

NARROWED

OPEN



ARBITRARY ARREST AND JUDICIAL HARASSMENT OF HRDS

Human rights defenders, in particular pro-democracy activists, are regularly subjected to arbitrary arrests and prosecution. Following the FNDC protests on 28th and 29th July 2022, police [arrested](#) Tournons la Page-Guinée (TLP Guinée) deputy coordinator and FNDC coordinator Oumar Sylla, also known as Foniké Menguè, on 30th July 2022. Later in the day, Ibrahima Diallo, TLP-Guinée coordinator and FNDC activist in charge of operations, was likewise arrested by hooded and heavily armed gendarmes. The two FNDC activists and a third person, executive secretary of political party Union des Forces Républicaines (UFR) - who was also arrested on 30th July 2022 - were charged on 2nd August 2022 with 'participation in a prohibited assembly, looting, destruction of public and private property, setting fires and intentional assault and battery'.

Earlier in July 2022, officers of the Repression of Banditry Brigade (BRB) violently [arrested](#) FNDC activists Oumar Sylla, Mamadou Billo Bah and Djanii Alpha, without a warrant and prior summons, while they were giving a press conference on the current socio-political situation in Guinea at the FNDC headquarters in Conakry. Officers beat Sylla and Bah during their arrest. The three were charged with contempt of court and disrespect of justice. The three were acquitted on 8th July 2022.

ATTACKS ON JOURNALISTS

Journalists in Guinea are regularly assaulted by state and non-state actors. For example, Mosaiqueguinee.com reporter Mohamed Bangoura was [summoned](#) on 5th August 2022 to the military intelligence headquarters, where he was questioned on his sources for an article he wrote about the involvement of military officers in the theft of a truck containing medical supplies. At least seven journalists have been [assaulted or harassed](#) during protests by soldiers, police officers or protesters since 28th July 2022. Politician and president of political party Guinée pour la Démocratie et l'Équité (GDE) Aboubacar Soumah shouted at and [jumped](#) on Radio Espace host Ahmed Camara during a live broadcast of the radio programme 'Les Grandes Gueules' on 15th June 2022. The reporter had claimed that Soumah had supported former President Condé in his bid for an unconstitutional third term.



RECOMMENDATIONS

To the *Comité National du Rassemblement et du Développement* (CNRD):

- Guarantee respect for fundamental freedoms at all times in line with Guinea's domestic and international human rights obligations
- Guarantee that the rule of law is universally applied and hold accountable members of the security forces and representatives of government who target journalists and human rights defenders
- Release all those who were detained arbitrarily in relation to the protests or their human rights activities
- Lift any bans on peaceful protests, refrain from imposing arbitrary restrictions on demonstrations and ensure that Guineans are able to protest freely to raise concerns about the transition or other issues affecting them
- Guarantee that under all circumstances, human rights defenders are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment
- Hold urgent consultations with the political opposition, civil society and the public to define and determine a clear path and timeline for the return to civilian rule
- Create an enabling environment for civil society and the political opposition to raise any concerns and participate in political processes during the transition period without fear of intimidation, arrests or attacks

To the African Union and ECOWAS :

- Ensure that Guinea complies with its regional human rights obligations including those enshrined in the African Charter on Human and People's Rights
- Set timelines for the CNRD to hold broad-based consultations with the public, political opposition and civil society that will usher a transition to civilian rule
- Raise concerns when civil society and the political opposition are targeted during protests and call on the CNRD to lift any restrictions on fundamental freedoms

To the international community:

- Urge Guinea to abide by its international human rights obligations and to fulfil its voluntary commitments and pledges, including by scheduling visits of Special Procedures, and refraining from threats and attacks against them
- Support civil society and the political opposition during the transitional period and raise urgent concerns when civil society and protesters are targeted during protests.