



COI QUERY

Country of Origin	Guinea-Conakry
Main subject	Conflicts between the Malinke and Peul in Conakry
Question(s)	Information about conflicts between the Malinke and Peul ethnic groups in Conakry based on ethnic rivalry, from January to August 2018. In particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Information about vandalism committed by Malinké groups against commercial activities ruled by Peul groups in Conakry.- Information about incidents of such vandalism/conflict being reported to the authorities and the related consequence, e.g. sanctions, prosecutions, convictions and other forms of punishment, if any.
Date of completion	27 September 2018
Query Code	Q116
Contributing EU+ COI units (if applicable)	

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The target audience is caseworkers, COI researchers, policy makers, and decision making authorities. The answer was finalised on the 27 September 2018. Any event taking place after this date is not included in this answer.



COI QUERY RESPONSE

Information about conflicts between the Malinké and Peul ethnic groups in Conakry based on ethnic rivalry, from January to August 2018. In particular: information about vandalism committed by Malinké groups against commercial activities ruled by Peul groups in Conakry; information about incidents of such vandalism/conflict being reported to the authorities and the related consequence, e.g. sanctions, prosecutions, convictions and other forms of punishment, if any.

Historical background

The Peul (or Peuhl), also known as Fulbe (English), Fula (Portuguese), and Fulani (Hausa)¹, is the biggest ethnic group in Guinea (33.9%)². The Malinké, also called Mandingo, is the second biggest ethnic group in the country (31.1%), followed by the Soussou (19,1)³.

Although the Peul are the biggest ethnic group and 'represents the main intellectual, economic and religious power', the 'group is perceived as a threat by other communities'⁴. Since independence in 1958, the president was either a Malinké or a Soussou⁵. A Peul has never led the country⁷.

'Guinea's first post-independence president, Sekou Ahmed Touré, ran an authoritarian regime for nearly three decades that promoted Malinké to top government posts'⁸. He also carried out executions and set up a discriminatory policy against the Peul⁹.

After the death of Touré in 1984, Lansana Conté, a Soussou, 'took power in a bloodless coup'. He removed the power at the top from the Malinké to the Soussou¹⁰.

When Conté passed away in December 2008, the military seized power. Military leader Captain Moussa Dadis Camara declared himself president, and in August 2009 he announced that presidential elections would be held on 31 January 2010. The first round of elections was postponed till June 2010, and in November 2010 Alpha Condé, a Malinké, won the run-off presidential race by defeating the Peul presidential candidate Cellou Dalein Diallo¹¹.

¹ Bertelsmann Stiftung: BTI 2018; *Guinea Country Report*, 2018, ([url](#)).

² MRGI, *World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples - Guinea*, January 2018, ([url](#)).

³ MRGI, *World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples - Guinea*, January 2018, ([url](#)).

⁴ Clingendael, *Guinea's 2020 presidential elections, a crisis in the making?*, 2 December 2016, ([url](#)).

⁵ IRIN, *Reining in Ethnic Violence*, 1 November 2010, ([url](#)).

⁶ Both Malinké and Soussou are Manding-speaking people whose language is actually part of the Mande-fu cluster of Manding languages, see Olson, J.S., *The Peoples of Africa: an ethnohistorical dictionary*, pp. 366-367, and 533-534

⁷ MRGI, *World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples - Guinea*, January 2018, ([url](#)).

⁸ Reuters, *Insight: Guinea ethnic divide defies "West Africa's Mandela"*, 23 October 2012, ([url](#)).

⁹ Ba-Konare, D.A.O., [*Tribune*] *En Afrique, le fantasme d'une « communauté peule » radicalisée*, Jeune Afrique, 5 September 2018, ([url](#)).

¹⁰ AFP/swisspeace, *Conflict assessment to Guinea*, September 2008, ([url](#)), p.7; *Minorities at Risk: Assessment for Susu in Guinea*, 31 October 2006, ([url](#)).

¹¹ BBC, *Guinea profile – Timeline*, 14 March 2018, ([url](#)); Gerber, N., *Elections and Ethnicity in Guinea*, 19 September 2013, ([url](#)).



According to an investigation of Human Rights Watch (HRW), the security forces ‘used excessive force and displayed a lack of political neutrality when responding to the election-related violence’ in Conakry and other cities. The investigation shows that:

‘...members of the security forces used ethnic slurs against members of the Peuhl ethnic group, collaborated with civilian mobs from ethnic groups that largely supported Condé, and in several cases looted and stole property from people who were perceived to have supported Diallo’¹².

In the fall of 2012 and the spring of 2013, Conakry was plagued by ethnic violence¹³. On 21 September 2012, clashes broke out at the Madina market in the capital¹⁴ ‘after ethnic Peul merchants found their market stalls ransacked Friday morning, and blamed ethnic Malinkes’¹⁵. Early March 2013, Peul and Malinké communities in Conakry clashed again and shops belonging to Peul were looted¹⁶.

In October 2015 Conde won a second term. Again, Cellou Dalein Diallo, who refused to recognise the results due to fraud and mismanagement, is the runner-up¹⁷. Also these elections were accompanied by violence in Conakry¹⁸. ‘In Conakry’s market neighbourhood of Madina, rioters looted shops and set fire to property as police and soldiers fired tear gas to disperse the rampaging crowd’¹⁹.

To date, politics in Guinea is still based along ethnic lines. The ruling party, Alpha Condé’s Rally of the Guinean People’s Party (*Rassemblement du Peuple de Guinée*, or RPG), is largely backed by the ethnic Malinké electorate in Upper Guinea. The opposition party, Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea (*Union des Forces Démocratiques de Guinée*, or UFDG), is led by Cellou Dalein Diallo and mainly supported by the Peul community in the Fouta Djallon massif in Central Guinea²⁰.

¹² HRW, *Guinea: Witnesses Describe Security Force Excesses*, 29 November 2010, ([url](#)).

¹³ Gerber, N., *Elections and Ethnicity in Guinea*, 19 September 2013, ([url](#)).

¹⁴ VOA, *Guineans Tired of Cycle of Violence*, 21 September 2012, ([url](#)).

¹⁵ Reuters, *Rival political supporters clash in Guinea*, 21 September 2012, ([url](#)); VOA, *Guineans Tired of Cycle of Violence*, 21 September 2012, ([url](#)).

¹⁶ ECOWAS/ISS, *Ending the political stalemate in Guinea?*, ECOWAS Peace and Security Report, Issue 4, June 2013, ([url](#)); Jeune Afrique, *Guinée: de nouvelles violences font une trentaine de blessés à Conakry*, 2 March 2013, ([url](#)); Reuters, *Ethnic clashes flare in Guinea, president asks for calm*, 1 March 2013, ([url](#)).

¹⁷ The Guardian, *Guinea president Alpha Conde wins second term with clear majority*, 17 October 2015, ([url](#)).

¹⁸ AI, *Guinea: Unarmed people shot in back and beaten to death by security forces in Conakry*, ([url](#)).

¹⁹ Al Jazeera, *Deadly clashes flare ahead of Guinea election*, 10 October 2015, ([url](#)).

²⁰ Clingendael, *Guinea’s 2020 presidential elections, a crisis in the making?*, 2 December 2016, ([url](#)); HRW, *Guinea: Ensure Security Forces Show Restraint*, 29 March 2018, ([url](#)); Reuters, *Guinean government warns against ethnic violence after polls*, 12 February 2018, ([url](#)).



Recent incidents

On 4 February 2018, local elections were held. ‘The results were strongly contested by opposition parties’ and led to several mass protests in February and March. During these protests at least 12 people were killed²¹. Other sources like HRW and ACLED, reported 15 people were killed²².

On 5 February 2018, 5 people were killed, including 4 children, after homes were set on fire, ‘following clashes between government and opposition supporters’, in a town called Kalinko²³.

On the night of 17 to 18 March 2018, a large fire broke out and ravaged part of the Madina market in the capital Conakry. At least 300 shops, stalls and kiosks were destroyed by the flames²⁴. Opposition leaders called for an investigation, ‘alleging that government supporters had threatened to target the market’. Although the government said that the investigation into the cause of the fire was ongoing, they suspected that ‘the fire was caused accidentally by an electrical short-circuit’²⁵. At the end of April 2018, the investigation report was published, but the origin of the fire remained unclear²⁶.

According to a report published in July 2018 by Human Rights Watch (HRW), there is credible evidence that Guinea’s security forces were ‘engaged in unprofessional conduct, including theft and vandalism’ during the violent street protests in February and March 2018. Their findings are based on witnesses from the Hamdallaye, Bambeto, Wanindara and Matam neighborhoods in Conakry. A shopkeeper cited by HRW stated that “They kicked in the door of my store and took everything”. Another woman from Matam-Carrière neighborhoods saw members of the Mobile Intervention and Security Force (*Compagnie mobile d’intervention et de sécurité*, CMIS), a rapid-response police unit, steal from her shop²⁷.

HRW also reported the lack of concrete progress in investigations conducted into the deaths during the February and March protests²⁸.

²¹ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel*, (S/2018/649), 29 June 2018, ([url](#)).

²² ACLED, *Protests in Guinea*, 23 March 2018, ([url](#)). HRW, *Guinea: Ensure Security Forces Show Restraint*, 29 March 2018, ([url](#)).

²³ HRW, *Guinea: Ensure Security Forces Show Restraint*, 29 March 2018, ([url](#)).

²⁴ RFI, *Guinée: le plus grand marché de Conakry ravagé par un incendie*, 18 March 2018, ([url](#)).

²⁵ HRW, *Guinea: Ensure Security Forces Show Restraint*, 29 March 2018, ([url](#)).

²⁶ RFI, *Guinée: plus d’un mois après l’incendie, la détresse des commerçants de Madina*, ([url](#)).

²⁷ HRW, *Guinea: Deaths, Criminality in Post-Election Violence*, 24 July 2018 ([url](#)).

²⁸ HRW, *Guinea: Deaths, Criminality in Post-Election Violence*, 24 July 2018 ([url](#)).



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