



General Assembly

Distr.: General
3 September 2010

English and French only

Human Rights Council

Fifteenth session

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Pax Christi International, a non-governmental organisation in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[20 August 2010]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Continuation of the democratisation process in Guinea

Reports from the Universal Periodic Review have highlighted the deteriorating political, economic and social conditions of Guinea. The political status of Guinea has been one of confusion since 23 December 2008, the day of President Conte's death and subsequent coup d'état. The transitional government that came into power lost popularity, notably due to ambiguous decisions made by the National Council for Democracy and Development (CNDD), sparking discontent within the country. Confronted by the difficulty of the authorities to carry out a successful transition and considering the Guinean people's experience of past abuse of military power, the population refused to recognize political decisions made by the CNDD.

Guineans reaffirmed their displeasure when Captain Daddis Camara, the transitional government chief, attempted to present his candidature for the presidency. On 28 September 2009, a public demonstration of protest was severely repressed by the army. Human rights organizations produced a disturbing account of the events, reporting incidents of murder, rape, missing persons, arbitrary arrests and torture. The international community for the most part condemned these acts and several inquiries were made in order to find and punish those who were responsible.

Following the assassination attempt on Captain Daddis Camara, a change in leadership led to a more peaceful process until the first round of presidential elections on 27 June 2010. General Sékouba Konaté, the new head of the transitional government, and his consensually-appointed Prime Minister assured the population that democracy in Guinea would be restored under the conditions set by the Ouagadougou agreements. These agreements were signed by all belligerent parties in the crisis, including President Daddis who was convalescing in Ougadougou. This was carried out in the presence of ECOWAS mediator President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso. It is also noteworthy that the accords permit neither transitional government leaders nor military officers to stand for election. In addition, in the first round of elections international observers reported positively on the election's organisation, though some complaints arose after the announcement of the provisional results, risking the possibility of obstructing the process.

The main factors that alarmed both the Guinean population and the international community were the threat of President Konaté's resignation and demonstrations in active support of defeated candidates. Known since 21 July 2010, the two candidates in the second round will have to represent unity for all Guineans regardless of what comes out of the elections.

In consideration of certain improvements noted in certain community reports and considering the work left to do, Pax Christi International recommends that the United Nations Human Rights Council:

- Issue a resolution that reiterates its support for leaders of the transition in Guinea, encouraging them to continue their momentum in the process toward democratization. With this in mind, emphasis must especially be placed on the demilitarisation of political power throughout this process. Measures to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate militia that were formed during previous administration must be applied by authorities.
- Support improvements to state security, especially during elections, with particular attention to vulnerable sectors of society such as women and children. This policy will help prevent large-scale human rights violations. This will also contribute to the success of this process by showing a positive effect of this newfound democracy.

- Implement monitoring schemes for reforms carried out in the post-presidential election period. It is on the one hand a matter of diligence to accompany the democratization process through the oversight of newly appointed authorities. On the other hand, oversight will also lead to the implementation of reforms, accompanied by the necessary resources. This process must especially address the struggle against corruption through the active engagement of civil society movements and NGOs, for instance through public awareness campaigns and training seminars.
- Appeal for calm among political actors of all sorts, regardless of the outcome of the second round of elections, and if necessary, denounce anyone that threatens to disturb the ongoing process. Guinean civil society must be fully participative in playing a role in easing tensions and contributing in this way to the smooth transition toward democratization. These actions will themselves help facilitate the emergence of civil society.
- Call for a supervisory process for reforms in the judiciary in an effort to place greater emphasis on the re-establishment of justice that is equally applied. This will respond not only to the needs of those who have already endured injustices in Guinea but will also especially contribute to the establishment of a new type of justice for the future democracy. This justice will thereby be competent to judge infractions and criminal actions within the country.
- Favour an environment which advances the active engagement of all governmental and non-governmental organisations in order to contribute to the improvement of the educational system and the promotion for the employment of women and children. This mechanism should be implemented progressively by promoting the education of youth and the creation of infrastructure such as training centres in the rural areas of the country. These structures will thereby promote and assist projects of small and medium-sized businesses that benefit women and youth. In addition, these projects should mobilize the assistance of large institutions such the EU, the IMF and the World Bank, as they seek to support these new authorities under certain conditions.
- Support the application of laws issued in view of the re-establishment of public freedoms, the freedom of expression and of the press, leading to the emergence and functionality of independent media. This will be the gauge of a political pluralism that is animated by the participation all of society.
- Encourage a large involvement of women throughout this process. In fact, the inclusion of gender from the highest political levels to the grassroots of civil society will be an opportunity for the Guinean State to demonstrate its commitment to eradicating all forms of discrimination within its borders.