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## **Guinea: Reform of security forces must deliver justice for Bloody Monday massacre**

Amnesty International today warned that Guinea risks a new era of human rights violations if urgent reforms of the security forces do not take place and the perpetrators of last year's massacre continue to escape justice.

In a new report examining the "Bloody Monday" massacre on 28 September 2009 and its aftermath, Amnesty International outlines a series of reforms for Guinea's security forces to ensure human rights are upheld in the West African country.

Guinea security forces killed more than 150 people and raped over 40 women during and following the protests. More than 1,500 people were wounded and many people went missing or were detained.

At least two senior military officers named by the United Nations as potentially having individual criminal responsibility for events constituting crimes against humanity, remain in positions of influence in the Guinean Presidential Cabinet, despite the formation of a new transitional government.

The report documents extrajudicial executions, torture and other ill-treatment, rape, sexual slavery and arbitrary detention carried out by particular units of Guinea's armed forces - the gendarmerie - and police. It reveals how weapons and security equipment supplied from South Africa, France and elsewhere provided the tools for the crimes perpetrated on 28 September 2009.

"Instead of facing justice for these crimes, the perpetrators of the Bloody Monday massacre remain in positions of authority, protected from prosecution," said Gaëtan Mootoo of Amnesty International.

"Reform of the security forces based on international human rights standards is urgently needed to avoid a repeat of the horrific events of last September. This has to be accompanied by justice for those responsible for the Bloody Monday massacre." said Gaëtan Mootoo.

Recent military assistance and training provided by China, France and other countries to Guinean military and security units responsible for 'Bloody Monday' is disclosed in the report. This assistance was provided without adequate human rights safeguards, and despite these units' decade-long history of human rights violations.

Any future reforms of the Guinea security forces must establish respect for international human rights and humanitarian law, and must not permit impunity for security force members responsible for serious human rights violations. The international community should only assist in reforms if they are consistent with international law and standards.

The French government announced on 16 February 2010 that it intends to resume military cooperation with Guinea. Any cooperation that involves technical assistance or training relating to military or security equipment, as it has done in the recent past, may contravene the current European Union arms embargo on Guinea.

Amnesty International's report details France's wide-ranging programme of assistance to Guinea's security forces. It raises serious concerns about a new programme of public order training assistance for the military junta's major expansion of gendarmerie internal security units that began in 2009.

The authorization of exports of tear gas and anti-riot weapons issued between 2004 and 2008, which have not been published or made known to the French parliament, is also highlighted.

“In the past, some governments providing military assistance have seemed more intent on protecting their interests with the Guinean authorities than protecting the human rights of the Guinean people. Any future assistance must be founded on international human right standards” said Gaëtan Mootoo.

Evidence of private companies and individuals based in Israel, United Arab Emirates and South Africa that were contracted to provide private military and security services to the Guinean government during 2009 is also highlighted.

These companies and individuals denied unlawful activity, and refused to confirm to Amnesty International the nature of their security activities in Guinea.

Evidence obtained by Amnesty International identifies some of these individuals in locations where a new youth militia, reportedly including children under 18 years of age, has been trained by foreign and Guinean trainers during late 2009. The report includes the first eye-witness accounts of this militia training programme.

## Background

On Monday 28 September 2009, Guinean security forces inflicted excessive force, acts of violence, including sexual violence, and other gross violations of human rights against unarmed supporters of civil society organisations and political parties peacefully protesting at Conakry's 'Stade du 28 September'.

The protests, organised by a group of political parties known as the Forces Vives, were against the head of state, Dadis Camara's decision to stand in the forthcoming presidential elections.

The majority of these gross human rights violations were carried out by members of the 'Presidential Guard' and other parts of the Guinean army's commando regiment, as well as by gendarmerie units and militiamen in civilian clothing, with alleged approval from the Guinean authorities. Acts of violence, albeit on a smaller scale, continued in the days following the protest, which plunged the capital Conakry into a state of fear.

Since 2004, arms or training have been provided to Guinea's security forces from China, France, Germany, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa and the USA. Amnesty International is campaigning for an international Arms Trade Treaty to establish a legally binding standard that states will not authorise international transfers of arms or associated training if there is a serious risk that they will contribute to serious violations of international human rights or humanitarian law.

On 19 February 2010, the deputy prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Fatou Bensouda, said at the end of a three-day visit to Guinea that crimes against humanity were committed during Bloody Monday and its aftermath and that the ICC should continue with its preliminary investigation.