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What Works in UN Resident Coordinator-led Conflict Prevention: Lessons from the Field

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Republic of Guinea 2009-17

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Introduction

When President Lansana Conté died on 24 December 2008 after decades of authoritarian rule, political repression and under-development, it took only a few hours before a group of young military officers – acting in the name of the *Conseil National pour la Démocratie et le Développement* (CNDD) and led by Captain Moussa Dadis Camara – enacted a bloodless, military ‘coup.’¹ The constitution, all state institutions and the activities of trade unions and civil society organizations were suspended with immediate effect. The ‘junta’, as it became known, made bold promises concerning anti-corruption, economic transparency and ‘free and fair’ elections, leading many Guineans to flock to the streets in celebration, anticipation and hope for change.² While the specific group of individuals that took power was relatively unknown to the public, Conté’s health had been in decline for over a decade and there was a widely held expectation that the military would eventually step in to fill the void.

The joy with which the move was received by the Guinean public and political parties was matched in equal measure by the dismay with which it was received by the international community, where the ‘junta’ was unanimously condemned: the *African Union’s Peace and Security Council* (AU-PSC) suspended Guinea’s membership, calling for a return to constitutional order; the *Economic Community of West African States* (ECOWAS) held an extraordinary summit in Abuja, also suspending Guinea and outlining five conditions³ for a return to constitutional order; echoing the sentiments of their regional counterparts, both the European Union (EU) and the United States (US) went onto suspend all development assistance, bar humanitarian aid;⁴ and the Paris-based *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* (OIF) suspended Guinea’s participation in all francophone multilateral co-operation initiatives, except for programmes directly of benefit to civilians or to the consolidation of democracy.⁵

Even before international pressure could really take effect, the situation on the ground began to unravel, and over the course of 2009 it went from bad to worse. Just days after the military coup the new leader appeared “increasingly erratic and messianic.”⁶ Concerns about levels of commitment to the transitional roadmap and elections in particular became progressively prominent among political parties and civil society alike. A loose umbrella movement comprised of both trade unions and political parties, called the *Forces Vives de la Nation* (FVN) emerged as counter-weight to CNDD and, increasingly, the “euphoria of the 2008 Christmas season was replaced by talk of war, confrontational politics, and increasing mistrust.”⁷ Tensions continued to rise during the course of 2009 as a result of Camara’s expression of intent to seek the presidency in elections that were scheduled for 31 January 2010,⁸ despite prior promises that no members of the junta would seek personal power.

Dialogue over the democratic transition process fell into complete disarray: the junta blocked the creation of a

National Transitional Council – a cornerstone of the entire process; political discussions on state media were banned; the leaders of political parties and civil society representatives became targets of military intimidation and harassment; and the formation of CNDD-related ethnic militias across the country had a de-stabilising effect at the local level and created mistrust between junta leaders and other sections of the military.⁹ It was within this tense context that Guinea witnessed one of its most violent episodes to date: On 28th September 2009, under the banner of the FVN, political parties, trade unions and members of civil society assembled in Conakry Stadium in a show of unity, support and discontent with the CNDD broadly speaking and in opposition to Camara’s bid to run for president specifically. Security forces were charged to disperse the gathering, killing over 150 people, and injuring more than 1500.¹⁰ Security forces were also accused of perpetrating the mass rape of women protestors¹¹ and, in the days that followed, soldiers “attacked and looted neighbourhoods throughout the capital that were known as opposition strongholds.”¹²

The spectre of civil war loomed large, not least since, in addition to these local dynamics, the spill-over effects from sub-regional conflicts in Sierra Leone and Liberia had destabilised Guinea throughout the 2000s. And yet, not only has Guinea avoided succumbing to large-scale violence, it has embarked on a largely successful – albeit incomplete – political transition, marked by the holding of Presidential elections in 2010, legislative elections in September 2013, the formation of the National Assembly in January 2014, and, the holding of Presidential elections in October 2015 when the sitting president, Mr. Alpha Condé was re-elected.¹³ Furthermore, the first local elections since the era of military dictatorship were finally held in February 2018 after a thirteen year delay. How did Guinea step back from the ‘brink’, and what role did the United Nations (UN) broadly speaking, and the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) along with the UN Country Team (UNCT) specifically play in preventing violence from spiralling into civil war? What steps did the RC and the UNCT take to foster the required dialogue and necessary compromises in the context of Guinea’s political transition?

This case study will argue that the RC and UNCT made an important contribution to conflict prevention, crisis response and peacebuilding in Guinea as a result of the crucial ability of UN actors specifically and the international community as a whole to act in concert, towards shared goals, in a (largely) coordinated, efficient manner. The RC acted in predominantly politically ‘savvy’ ways and, at no point in the 2009-14 timeframe – which will be the main focus of this paper – did s/he do so alone. Far from it, s/he leveraged and/or worked in concert with the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA)¹⁴ with support from the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA), UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), and a critical role was also played by the former United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) entity known as the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR). Outside of the UN system, the RC depended upon

the International Contact Group (ICG), the so-called 'Troika' (made up of the AU, UN and ECOWAS), the EU, the US, and France, amongst others. Putting aside some of the favourable elements of the context, any successes the RC enjoyed can and should be attributed to his/her ability to see him/herself as a part of a greater whole, rather than a 'lone ranger' taking on the task of supporting the political transition in isolation. This required: an intricate understanding of the context, a deep appreciation of each actor's comparative advantage within that context; and, the ability to communicate, mobilise and synergise with multiple actors at any given moment.

1. Country Context

Underlying conflict risk factors

Guinea borders Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and Mali in the north, Côte d'Ivoire in the east and Liberia and Sierra Leone in the south, and has a 320km coastline along the Atlantic Ocean.¹⁵ Despite its rich mineral wealth, Guinea sits among the world's least developed countries: with over 9 million people, in 2015 it ranked 178th out of 187 countries in UNDP's Human Development Index,¹⁶ and has a long history of "poor macroeconomic performance, weak governance structures, political instability, and insecurity."¹⁷ Progress that was made following the beginning of Guinea's political transition in 2010 was quickly unraveled by the crisis associated with the Ebola Virus Disease in 2014, which was a tragic and momentous setback for the country. The outbreak undoubtedly contributed to a drop in the GDP growth rate from 2.3 per cent in 2013 to 0.1 per cent in 2015.¹⁸ These diverse dynamics and conflict risk factors can only be explained and understood against the background of Guinea's historical trajectory.

A former French colony, Guinea 'inherited' a highly centralised state system, which left very limited space for autonomy at the local level, or any real degree of political pluralism¹⁹ – or, indeed, any significant capacity for political participation. Thus, the French colonial system created a "centrally directed hierarchy of territorial bureaucrats who exercised control throughout the country."²⁰ When Guinea gained independence in 1958, its first President, Ahmed Sékou Touré took over these structures and used them to secure and perpetuate his authoritarian regime, characterised as "Stalinist, violent and repressive."²¹ Lasting 24 years, his regime served to reinforce colonialist legacies through one-party rule and endemic corruption, repression and a dire lack of economic development. Economic development that did take place – including the mining and exportation of bauxite, diamonds, gold and other minerals – enriched the few at the expense of the many. Sékou Touré's adoption of 'socialist policies' and the concomitant shift towards the Eastern bloc increasingly isolated the economy,²² sending it into crisis. This forced the President to enter into negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank for a loan as part of a structural adjustment programme.²³

When Touré died suddenly in March 1984 – before concluding any loan agreements – Colonel Lansana Conté took over

just a few weeks later, following Guinea's first bloodless military coup. He installed a ruling elite, dominated by the military, which – over time – "came to resemble a primitive corporatist regime"²⁴ based on rent-seeking – dynamics that have remained at the forefront of Guinean politics for decades.²⁵ Conté loosened the state's grip on the economy and encouraged private investments, especially in the mining sector. The regime also made commitments to implement the structural adjustment programmes imposed by the IMF and World Bank, which involved a drastic reduction of the public sector – a move which, the regime believed, also increased the risk of civil conflict as the result of a public sector backlash.²⁶ The regime, therefore, continued to make promises to international counterparts to implement the programme on the one hand, while deliberately stalling on any real action on the other. The liberalisation of the economy was accompanied by centralised 'rent-seeking', thereby channelling profits to an extremely small elite group, targeting mainly "mid- and high-ranking military officers, the presidential entourage, mid-level state administrators and some privileged sections of the population."²⁷

Conté's twenty-four-year reign was defined by "widespread corruption, repression, weak state structures, a fragmented civil society, political opposition, a burgeoning drug trade, and plummeting living standards"²⁸ and, perhaps most notably, the manipulation of ethnic divisions²⁹ for political purposes. Unlike his predecessor Touré, who was from the 'Malinké' ethnic group,³⁰ President Conté was a 'Soussou', one of the smaller minority groups.³¹ Until Conté's appearance on the national stage, ethnicity had played little to no role in provoking or exacerbating tensions in the country, but in 1990, Guinea introduced political pluralism through the holding of a national referendum to adopt a new constitution, a process of multiparty politics which moved the country towards identity politics.³²

Thus, political parties based on ethnic identity were born: the *Rassemblement du Peuple de Guinée* (RPG) 'represented' the Malinké group, led by Alpha Conde and dominated the Upper Guinea region; the *Union pour la Nouvelle République* (UNR), led by Mamadou Ba, and the *Parti du Renouveau et Progrès* (PRP) led by Siradiou Diallo, dominated Middle Guinea and was largely Fulani-based. Meanwhile, the ruling party, *Parti de l'Unité et du Progrès* (PUP) led by Conté, dominated by business, economic and security interests which could not be toppled from its powerful position on the domestic landscape as a result of ethnically-based, highly fractured and divided opposition.³³ On the basis of these dynamics, Conté won the first multiparty presidential elections in 1993, was re-elected in 1998 and 2003, and continued to rule the country until his death in 2008, following illness.

Medium-term political dynamics affecting conflict risk

President Alpha Condé was democratically elected to the presidency in 2010 – following the second 'bloodless military coup' led by Camara in 2009 – setting in motion the political

transition process is ongoing to this day. As this case study will demonstrate, while progress has been made on Security Sector Reform in particular, significant conflict risk factors remain, underscoring the notion that the transition is far from over. The 2015 elections, for example, which saw Condé re-elected, were considered largely flawed. Despite significant reforms of the security sector, the justice sector remains extremely weak, with concerns raised by Human Rights Watch over “prison overcrowding, unprofessional conduct by judicial personnel, and a lack of judicial independence.”³⁴ And, more than eight years on, there is still no justice for the crimes committed in September 2009 in the Conakry Stadium, and many suspects remain in government posts.³⁵ Impunity has also been extended to the security forces and ‘militias’ involved in other acts of political violence both before and after President Condé took office, including “the alleged killing by the security forces of some 130 unarmed demonstrators in 2007, some 60 opposition supporters protesting the delay in holding parliamentary elections in 2013-14, and at least 10 people in the run-up to the 2015 presidential poll.”³⁶

Slow economic growth will remain a persistent challenge for Guinea in the years ahead, as a result of: limited economic diversification; inadequacies in agricultural, mining and fisheries value chains; insufficient support for entrepreneurship; poor employment opportunities for women and youth; and slow formalization of the informal sector.³⁷ As outlined by UNDP, efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) “had little impact on reducing poverty and social inequalities: 55 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line and there are strong urban (35 per cent) and rural (65 per cent) disparities.”³⁸ This is fueled in part by high unemployment rates, which remain at around 50.4 per cent for women and 83 per cent for youth.³⁹ State-society relations are characterized by high-levels of mistrust and negative perceptions, including the perception that state processes are insufficiently transparent and inclusive⁴⁰ – especially when it comes to mining-related initiatives.

In light of the forthcoming Presidential elections in 2020, one of the most significant concerns revolves around the continued personalisation and ethnic-based character of political parties, which still serve as vectors for personal gain, nepotism, corruption and patronage.⁴¹ In this context, political violence remains a relatively consistently applied ‘practice’: in 2016, for example, a battle between the UFDG leader and his vice president quickly escalated into a violent confrontation, leading to the death of a journalist as a result of a stray bullet;⁴² and, unrest flared following the 2018 local election when protestors claiming vote-rigging and proxy ballots to the advantage of President Conde, clashed with riot police – leading to multiple deaths.⁴³ The peaceful conduct of the forthcoming elections, therefore, will depend on the ongoing political dialogue between the Government and the opposition concerning the electoral register and the composition of the national electoral commission, and the continued ability of the international community to monitor

and provide targeted, coherent – and coordinated – support as and where necessary.⁴⁴

2. RC-Supported Prevention Initiatives

The UNCT role prior to the coup

Much of the focus of the UN prior to the September 2008 coup was not specifically concerned with conflict prevention. The UNCT was very much aligned with the Government’s focus on poverty reduction, not least as the country witnessed a dramatic increase in poverty from 49.2% in 2002 to 58% in 2010,⁴⁵ despite concerted efforts to focus on the implementation of the MDGs. The UNCT placed state weakness front and centre in its analysis of the causes of insecurity and under-development, underscoring in the 2007-11 UNDAF, for example, the “instability of institutions” and the “deterioration of the capacities of the administration.”⁴⁶

That focus began to change already in 2007, however – on the part of the RC and UNDP at least – in the context of a general, country-wide strike which began on January 10. The *Union Syndicale des Travailleurs de Guinée* (USTG), which called the strike, cited the increasing instability of the regime, repeated health scares, chaotic cabinet reshuffles, mismanagement of the economy, and corruption.⁴⁷ In the second week of the strike more than 20 people were killed and over 150 wounded when security forces opened fire on protestors, and authorities arrested around 15 union leaders and officials.⁴⁸

The strike increasingly took on the form of a popular uprising. The UN Secretary-General at the time, Ban Ki-moon, called upon the Government of Guinea to exercise maximum restraint on its security forces, and urged the parties to engage in dialogue in order to find a peaceful resolution to the dispute.⁴⁹ Meanwhile, behind the scenes, RC Mbaranga Gasarabwe wasted no time. An experienced RC with solid knowledge of the West Africa context, Gasarabwe was already in extensive contact with ECOWAS and Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, the then-Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for UNOWA, the UN’s Dakar-based regional political office in West Africa, concerning the deteriorating political context and preparations for political dialogue and mediation. UNOWA and OHCHR, working closely with the RC, deployed a joint short-term mission to Guinea to investigate human rights violations.⁵⁰ Gasarabwe also reached out to PBSO concerning the need for funds to support the political dialogue and efforts to foster social cohesion, and requested a Peace and Development Advisor (PDA), who arrived in 2008.⁵¹ She also drew extensively upon the support of the Mano River Women’s Network, active in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia to help ensure the gender dimension was taken into account by the ongoing mediation efforts.⁵²

Many of her former colleagues attribute Gasarabwe’s effectiveness to a combination of her proactive approach as

well as prior life experiences: a native of Rwanda, she was all too aware of how quickly conflicts can escalate, and of the tragic consequences of failure to prevent them from doing so.⁵³ She was also a risk-taker. So when, during the 2007 crisis, representatives of the trade unions came to her office insisting they were under threat and in need of protection, and despite pressure from New York to evacuate as the security risk level reached stage 4, she decided to stay.⁵⁴ Recalling the failure of the UN to protect vulnerable populations in Rwanda, she allowed the 'asylum-seekers' to seek refuge in the UN compound and requested UN security to protect the building.⁵⁵ Signing a letter which relinquished the UN of any responsibility for her actions, she then took a non-UN vehicle before sunrise on a Sunday morning and drove 30 miles outside of Conakry to President Conté's residence – at a time when almost the entire country was against him.⁵⁶ Given Conté was fully aware of the protection she was offering to the trade unions in her compound, and also of the UN planes being used to distribute food and medicines to populations in need as the humanitarian situation worsened, it was unclear how she would be received, but she was determined to do everything she could to prevent the security situation from unravelling.⁵⁷

Sitting in front of the President, who had been the object of weeks of protest and outrage following the deaths of protestors, she used this moment to explain that Guineans were tired of the corruption and inefficiency of the people he had selected to lead the country (alluding to his Prime Minister).⁵⁸ The people were calling for a new Prime Minister, she explained, and as their President he had a responsibility to respond to their wishes. Going one step further, she reminded him that just one-week prior former Liberian president Charles Taylor had been sent to The Hague to face war crime charges – a comment which abruptly interrupted his otherwise quiet nodding of agreement.⁵⁹ Deciding to take a softer tone, she explained that she could not sit back and watch the country fall into further disarray and insisted upon the need to find a peaceful solution.⁶⁰ Having listened to her for some time in absolute silence, she was unsure of how he would respond. When he finally spoke, her relief was palpable: "Looking at your face", he said, "you have not slept, you're concerned, and you have come here to my house when no one else wants to come. I believe you love Guinea."⁶¹ By 8pm that evening, the President made an address to the nation indicating his willingness to nominate a new Prime Minister, leading to public celebrations in Conakry.⁶²

A crisis was averted. But Guinea's underlying conflicts were far from resolved and it was certainly the beginning rather than the end of political dialogue. On 25 June 2008, the UN Secretary-General designated Guinea as eligible for PBF support and preparations got underway for Guinea's first Peacebuilding Priority Plan (PPP1).⁶³ The UNCT as a whole, however, was not yet positioned in 'prevention mode' – and was, rather, still operating according to the "logique de développement" and "planification classique."⁶⁴ The elaboration of PPP1, therefore, was an opportunity to 'rally

the UNCT' around a collective goal, and to develop a shared understanding of the challenges that needed to be addressed.

It was in this spirit that the RC embarked on two key initiatives which laid the ground for the deepening of the RC and UNCT prevention strategy in the years that followed: the first was a UNCT-wide training led by BCPR in partnership with UNOWA on conflict prevention, combined with extensive technical support from BCPR on context analysis;⁶⁵ and, the second was a 'caravane de la paix' which toured the entire country with the objective of understanding the source of the deep cleavages within Guinean society, an understanding that would underpin the elaboration of the first PPP.⁶⁶ The peace caravan, which included UN and state representatives along with religious and civil society leaders toured the country for three months, calling for calm and moderation, while simultaneously seeking to understand the roots of the 2007 crisis and the continued instability.

RC efforts to support the transition and international mediation efforts

Adjusting the UN's Peacebuilding Strategy to the Coup and its Aftermath

When President Conté died at the end of 2008 and the military took over, Gasarabwe and her PDA had already been in extensive preparations for PPP1. The dramatic change in context risked jeopardizing their efforts to date: against the background of the AU and ECOWAS suspending Guinea and the World Bank suspending its Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility,⁶⁷ there were concerns that PBSO, too, would 'pull the plug' as it might see support for Guinea at this time as a 'risky' move, especially at a time when other actors sought to put pressure on the military 'junta.' Not despite but indeed because of these dynamics, PBSO took the unusual and risky decision to approve PPP1 regardless of the fact that Guinea was under the control of a military regime as the result of coup.⁶⁸ This was not a simple process, however, and the steps involved demonstrated the relatively burdensome process required to access funds in this complex, rapidly changing context.

The final version of PPP1 – which had been agreed upon with the UNCT, PBSO and government under President Conté – was submitted to the UN's Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) for approval in early December, just weeks before Camara seized power. As a result of the profound changes brought about by the coup, PPP1 had to be updated and then re-submitted to the PBC in April 2009.⁶⁹ Projects in support of the PPP then had to be formulated, a relatively lengthy process involving five different agencies (UNDP, UN-OHCHR, UNFPA, UNIDO and UNESCO). These projects were at a relatively advanced stage when the September 2009 stadium violence took place, in response to which the PBC and PBSO required that the PPP and associated projects be updated once more.⁷⁰ With significant support provided by the PDA

who drove the entire PPP and project elaboration process and helped ensure the formulation of the projects were anchored as much as possible in the 2008 Peace Caravan process, projects were elaborated in three key domains: 1) inclusive and sustainable dialogue; 2) human rights, citizenship, security, and justice; and 3) empowerment of youth and women. Despite these challenges, the PPP enjoyed high-level buy-in from both government (junta) actors at the level of the Prime Minister,⁷¹ and civil society as well as strong support from key international partners including the United States, France, Germany, Spain, Japan and the EU, which certainly helped with the decision to release funds despite the unusual context. Running from March 2009 until February 2012, the PPP had an initial two-year phase focused on the transition, and a second phase focused on the consolidation of transition results.⁷²

However, given the initial delay in PPP formulation caused by the December 2008 coup and the deteriorating national context, the RC could not wait for PBF funds to be approved and dispersed to elaborate and implement a crisis response and conflict prevention strategy. In January 2009, therefore – and in light of the irrelevance of the 2007-11 UNDAF – the RC and key development partners decided to elaborate ‘a support programme for the transition process in Guinea.’⁷³ The programme, or transition strategy, was designed to support the Government (junta) to define and implement a transition action plan, which included, inter alia, creating an enabling conditions for elections, revising the constitution and key laws, and putting in place relevant institutions for the transition. While never formally approved by the government,⁷⁴ the transition strategy served as an informal guide for the work of the RC and the UNCT during this particularly turbulent period.

International Mediation Efforts: From the coup to the January 2010 Ouagadougou Accords

In parallel to these RC-led endeavours, the December 2008 events also triggered internationally-led mediation efforts to negotiate a return to constitutional order in Conakry. Within a month of the coup, an International Contact Group (ICG) for Guinea was established, jointly chaired by the president of the ECOWAS Commission, Mohamed Ibn Chambas, and the AU special representative to Guinea, Ibrahima Fall.⁷⁵ Its members included: the United Nations, the Community of Sahel-Saharan States, the European Union, the Mano River Union, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, the Francophonie, and the African Member States of the UN Security Council.⁷⁶ The ICG helped facilitate a united front for support to the ECOWAS framework (i.e. the “five conditions” outlined above) for engaging with the Government (junta), notwithstanding support for the coup leaders voiced by both Senegal and Libya.⁷⁷

The September 2009 stadium massacre fundamentally changed the dynamics – sparking a number of new international attempts to put pressure on the junta.⁷⁸ This

violent event added a sense of urgency to international engagements: the imperative was no longer simply a restoration of constitutional order, but preventing a possible full-scale ethnic civil war.⁷⁹ International pressure on the junta included: targeted sanctions and arms embargoes by the AU, EU and ECOWAS; the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry⁸⁰ into the stadium massacre and the threat of ICC prosecution. ECOWAS appointed Blaise Compaoré as mediator, supported by a troika arrangement between the AU, ECOWAS and UNOWA, with a UN mediation advisor based in Conakry.⁸¹

International efforts began to stall, however, when the first transitional roadmap presented by Compaoré did not exclude *a priori* the possibility that Camara could participate in the elections.⁸² This sparked outrage amongst members of the *Forces Vives* and undermined support for a Compaoré-led mediation within the ICG.

However, dramatic events once again changed the situation on the ground when, on 3 December 2009, just one year after the military coup led by Dadis Camara, one of his bodyguards shot him in the head, nearly killing him.⁸³ He was immediately evacuated to Morocco where he received emergency treatment and General Sekouba Konaté – a key rival – took over as the leader of the transitional government, a ‘power switch’ which created an unlikely but fortunate opening for mediation and security sector reform.⁸⁴ An ECOWAS-led mediation process began in Ouagadougou and just a few weeks after his near-death, Dadis Camara arrived to participate in the mediation process, sparking tensions between those that favoured military-, and those that favoured civilian-rule.

On 15 January 2010, Camara and Konaté signed the Ouagadougou Accord, which created a unity government with a civilian prime minister appointed by the opposition; promised elections within six months; and identified the reform of the security sector as a priority (implementation of the Security Sector Reform aspects of the accord will be addressed in detail below). These accords were followed by the signing of a ‘pact,’ supported by ECOWAS, the AU and the UN, between the two presidential candidates – Alpha Conde and Cellou Diallo⁸⁵ – outlining their intentions to hold peaceful elections, and extensive efforts to ensure calm when the elections were repeatedly postponed due to technical difficulties.⁸⁶ During this difficult time, the UN was able to capitalise upon the credibility garnered by both the RC and UNCT who, unlike other external actors, stayed put in-country throughout the duration of the crisis.⁸⁷

On the UN side, the political lead role on Guinea from early 2009 onwards had fallen to SRSG Said Djinnit, who in February of that year had replaced Ould Abdallah as head of UNOWA. Djinnit played an instrumental role following the stadium massacre in securing the cooperation of junta leader Camara with the Commission of Inquiry, and in convincing Camara’s replacement, Konaté, to commit to a transitional government

in December 2009.⁸⁸ Recognizing the importance of Security Sector Reform to stability in Guinea (arising largely from the fact that the potential spoilers were in particular members of the junta and mid-ranking officers involved in the coup, who risked losing the most from a transition to civilian rule), SRSG Djinnit, ever since October 2009, also ensured that each meeting of the International Contact Group or of the sub-regional, regional and UN peace and security organs incorporated some language on the need for security sector reform, laying the ground for concrete action to come.

While the RC was not in the 'driving seat', the internationally-led mediation efforts were fully supported by RC Gasarabwe, who served at different points in the process as advisor, 'connector', 'Secretariat', and liaison between international efforts and dynamics on the ground.⁸⁹ The RC had established strong relationships with members of the junta and civil society, relationships that could be leveraged to call for restraint, calm and de-escalation. One key initiative prior to her departure in January 2010 was to bring women who were close to the political leaders at the time together to launch a campaign calling for peace and calm.⁹⁰ This was a risky initiative given the polarisation between political leaders and parties; through this high-level engagement in between the two rounds of the Presidential elections, she was able to appeal to common interest at the political level, but also at the level of civil society through their links to women's groups and civil society organisations.

Preparing the ground for Security Sector Reform

The overarching peacebuilding priority emerging from the Ouagadougou Accords was Security Sector Reform. In order to move this agenda item forward in the wake of the accords, UNOWA, ECOWAS and the African Union, coordinated closely to prepare a comprehensive assessment of the security sector. Mindful of the failure of a previous ECOWAS mission, composed of a delegation of Chiefs of Defense Staff from West African states - which had been barred from any meetings by Guinean authorities after its arrival to Conakry in January 2010 - the joint assessment was carefully tailored.⁹¹

The joint assessment was headed by General Lamine Cissé, who had been appointed as ECOWAS Special Envoy to Guinea in January 2010. Cissé deployed to Guinea on 1 February 2010, supported by a small UN team (partly consisting of staff seconded by UNOWA) providing technical expertise and financial resources.⁹² A former Chief of Defence Staff and Minister of Interior of Senegal, as well as head of the UN's peace operation in the Central African Republic, Cissé was chosen purposely to play a critical role in this regard.⁹³ As a senior military figure from a neighbouring state, he was well-respected and viewed as an 'insider' from the perspective of junta members and the broader security sector. He was therefore a credible interlocutor and would play, in the following years, a vital role in helping the SRSG to 'open doors', build relationships in Conakry and beyond, and convince potential spoilers to participate in moving the process forward.⁹⁴

Once General Cissé and his team had produced a draft assessment, they conducted public consultations of the draft document in key cities around the country, publicised via radio. The goal of these hearings was to road-test the draft, enable a wide range of voices to give their inputs and ensure buy-in from and a sense of ownership by key constituencies outside the capital.⁹⁵ Much like the 'caravane de la paix' that toured Guinea in 2008, this exercise also included experts from key partners (EU, USA and OIF) as well as high-level representatives, including the Special Representative of the President of Burkina Faso and ECOWAS Mediator for Guinea, General Ali Traore, a retired and respected Guinean army General, and General Cissé himself – who generously agreed to undertake the three-week journey.⁹⁶ Meanwhile, behind the scenes, the RC's inputs in this process were critical as many of the relationships in the regions were ones built up over several years of UN presence across the country.

Following this highly participatory consultation process, SRSG Djinnit, on 4 May 2010 and acting on behalf of the UN, AU, and ECOWAS, handed the joint report to the Head of State for the transition, General Sekouba Konate. This brought the assessment phase of the security sector reform process to a conclusion and constituted a starting point for its concrete implementation.⁹⁷ The short-term, mid-term and long-term recommendations agreed upon with the Guinean transitional authorities became the national roadmap for the security sector reform process. The commitment demonstrated by the Interim President at the hand-over ceremony bolstered the reform process. UNOWA remained engaged in proposing ideas and concepts for the implementation phase.⁹⁸

As an immediate follow-up, President Conde, who had emerged victorious from the December 2010 elections, requested the establishment of a Security Sector Reform Advisory Team (SSRAT) to provide strategic guidance to the national authorities. Deployed in 2011 with the support of the PBF, it was placed under the SRSG's supervision to allow for tight coordination with the political processes underway, raising initial – but ultimately unsuccessful – opposition by the RC who was keen to oversee that process himself.⁹⁹ The assassination attempt against the President at his private residence in July 2011 illustrated the urgency of pushing forward with the reform of the security sector, with strong international support.¹⁰⁰ The President was actively involved in selecting the General Officer to lead the SSRAT (with Canadian General Marc Caron being the first to serve in that role), and gave personal instructions to visibly locate the SSRAT office at the Presidency, not far from his office, with full access to its head, sending a clear message to his military entourage.¹⁰¹

Implementing Security Sector Reform

With the roadmap for security sector reform in place as a result of the 2010 joint assessment, and with the SSRAT anchoring the issue (and international support thereto) in the President's office, focus now turned to the equally difficult task of moving forward its implementation.

While SRSJ Djinnit continued to play the lead role at the political level (in 2010 alone, SRSJ Djinnit flew from Dakar to Conakry around 40 times, with security sector reform always high on his agenda),¹⁰² at the programmatic level, this effort was led by Anthony Kwaku Ohemeng-Boamah who had assumed his position as RC in Guinea in February 2010. Of Ghanaian origin, Ohemeng-Boamah was embarking on his first experience as RC in Guinea but brought extensive West Africa knowledge and over ten years of high-level experience with UNDP to the table.

To translate security sector reform into concrete programming and secure the necessary funding, Ohemeng-Boamah had to embed the issue in the second iteration of the UN's Peacebuilding Priority Plan (PPP2) for Guinea, which was elaborated in the course of 2011. In this context, the RC embarked on a highly inclusive stakeholder consultation process, co-facilitated by the RC and staff members deployed by PBSO. Its main goal was to generate a game plan for and broad stakeholder buy-in (including from the military) into what the joint assessment report had identified as the immediate priority for security sector reform, namely the retirement of a large number of military officers and professionalisation of the army, in order to reduce the risk of coup d'états.

Securing strong national buy-in for this endeavour was essential, not least in light of President Conde's concerns that making changes to the army so soon after elections could create new conditions for a 'coup'.¹⁰³ This consultation process lasted around six months, and involved over 150 key stakeholders, including political representatives, the military, women's and youth groups, trade unions, and Civil Society Organisations.¹⁰⁴

Eventually, PPP2 featured 8 security sector reform projects with a budget of just over US\$15 million, the most important of which involved 'retiring' 3,928¹⁰⁵ out of 24,000 soldiers with a 'pension package', a transparently operated programme which essentially 'bought out' military personnel by paying the arrears that had been blocking the security sector reform process. (The other priority areas included in the PPP2 were national reconciliation and jobs for young people and women, which are briefly discussed below).

To oversee implementation as well as national appropriation, oversight and monitoring of the PPP2 and its projects, an inclusive National Joint Steering Committee (JSC) was set up, with broad participation from Government, the UN, civil society and key donors, and chaired by the Prime Minister. Subsequently, Ohemeng-Boamah effectively used his role in that committee to enlist support from other international actors for the security sector reform endeavour. At working level, PPP2 was managed by a Secretariat (to the JSC), placed under the RCO, and was directed by a national coordinator, Thierno Aliou Diaoune, former Minister of Youth and Sport, who had previously been active in civil society, and who was widely respected by all parties.

Given the political sensitivities involved, it was no doubt unusual for an RC to assume such a prominent role in security sector reform initiatives related to the professionalisation of the army and, specifically, the 'retiring' of a large number of military professionals. Ohemeng-Boamah is widely commended for his enthusiasm to engage in this space, and the efforts he made to develop and implement the programme.¹⁰⁶ His personal experience was critical in this regard: his father operated in the security services and he felt extremely comfortable working in this field (unlike many RCs), while simultaneously understanding its strategic importance.¹⁰⁷

Particularly noteworthy is the RC's productive use and leveraging of other UN assets and capacities in the pursuit of security sector reform and their effective coordination into a coherent strategy. Informally, the RC – as well as SRSJ Djinnit – continued to rely heavily upon strategic advice and support of General Cissé. After leading the joint security sector assessment in 2010, Cissé never reassumed an official role in Guinea but he remained closely involved behind the scenes, visiting the country regularly to facilitate political access, and to move the process forward, with double reporting lines between UNOWA and the RC.¹⁰⁸

The RC also worked closely with the Security Sector Reform Advisory Team, called upon strategic support from UNOWA as and where necessary, and relied upon the advice, guidance and support of the UNDP Administrator who made the necessary calls amongst HQ colleagues as and when required to secure internal, political support.¹⁰⁹ Ohemeng-Boamah also successfully leveraged the fact that, in February 2011, Guinea had been placed – at its own request¹¹⁰ – on the agenda of the PBC, which proved a useful forum to draw a modicum of international attention to Guinea, attract international support for RC-led initiatives, and to ensure a degree of donor coordination and fund mobilisation, especially in the field of security sector reform.¹¹¹

Within the RCO, the coordinator of the JSC Secretariat, Aliou Diaoune, is credited with having played a particularly instrumental role in the context of security sector reform thanks to his influence with national stakeholders. A former minister in Guinea, he managed all the funds related to the PPP and performed PDA-like functions. He served as an advisor to the RC, relationship-builder and manager and was responsible for steering all the PPP-related programmes.¹¹² Most colleagues give him important credit for their successes, including on security sector reform.¹¹³ Aliou Diaoune was tragically assassinated in early 2015 and, while the motivation for the assassination has never been proven, the event underscored the particular risky nature of peacebuilding work for national staff.¹¹⁴

In light of the fact that bilateral donors were unlikely to take the reputational risk required to pour money into security sector reform – i.e. the very sector that had been responsible for the turbulence of recent years –¹¹⁵ PBF support for the

endeavour in the context of PPP2 was vital for the success of this effort. PBF funding has also been catalytic in encouraging other donors to come forward following ‘proof of concept’ – notably the World Bank (US\$ 25 million), the Japanese embassy (US\$ 3 million)¹¹⁶ and the EU (US\$ 20 million).¹¹⁷

Finally, the RC’s engagement on security sector reform benefited from being aligned with the diplomatic activities of SRSJ Djinnit and the joint strategy deployed by Djinnit and Ohemeng-Boamah with the support of multiple actors proved largely successful. The engagement of an envoy alongside the RC in the Guinean transition also allowed for a degree of “good cop, bad cop” division of labour between the two in their respective engagement with host country authorities. While both SRSJ Djinnit and Ohemeng-Boamah cultivated very close relationships with the government – relationships which benefited the security sector reform process – the former had, due to his mandate, greater leeway to have frank and vocal disagreements with President Conde and compensate for the RC’s constraints in pushing the envelope on issues sensitive to the government, most notably with respect to reconciliation and electoral reforms.¹¹⁸

Overall, the RC’s engagement on security sector reform was successful and the early retirement of several thousand officers was implemented as planned. While UN engagement on security sector reform benefitted from the strong political will of both Konaté¹¹⁹ and President Conde, the RC and others succeeded to use these political openings as entry points for effective support to a difficult transition. Progress on security sector reform also helped unlock other peacebuilding processes and allowed for greater discussions on national reconciliation which were difficult to have prior to the reform process.

National Reconciliation, Job creation, and electoral support

Other areas of PPP2 were also important, although the evaluation noted that some interviewees were left with the impression that security sector reform was prioritised to the detriment of other vital areas of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Under the second pillar, national reconciliation, the RC and UNCT led the development of a peace infrastructure, including Communal Peace-Building Synergies (SCAP), young people’s clubs in the neighbourhoods, and national consultations in support of reconciliation, for example, paying particular attention to women and vulnerable people.¹²⁰ Under the last pillar, jobs for young people and women, initiatives were considered critical but impact was limited in comparison to resources allocated, with one beneficiary stating: “Where you picked us up is where you left us.”¹²¹

Alongside the PPP process, SRSJ Djinnit and Ohemeng-Boamah were both actively engaged in preventing tensions and violence around the legislative elections, which experienced multiple delays. Support in this regard involved an audit of the electoral voters roll and the deployment

of independent electoral experts to increase the level of transparency and trust in the process, led by UNDP, with a view to strengthening the Independent National Electoral Commission.¹²²

PBF support also proved important to support the peaceful holding of elections. It made quick funds available for urgent election-related projects on: mediation; reintegration of “les enfants de Kalia” (trained in Guinea Forestiere by Dadis Camara’s people) – who could be easily mobilised during the electoral period; support to the security forces to maintain order during the electoral period in the full respect of human rights; and a ‘post-electoral’ project to prevent violent contestations after the elections and to promote peaceful acceptance of results.¹²³ The overall envelop amounted to about US\$ 5 million and underscored once more the flexibility and ‘nimbleness’ of the PBF to step-in when required.

Specific Prevention Interventions and Initiatives

In the case of Guinea there were numerous initiatives, projects and programmes launched by individual UN agencies, in particular UNDP, aimed at addressing specific conflict drivers or advancing specific prevention objectives. This section, however, will only look at those initiatives and approaches in which the RC had a significant role and/or which were jointly carried out in an interagency context and which hold particularly valuable lessons for RCs elsewhere. Security sector reform is the ‘cause celebre’ of UN engagement in Guinea, but since it has already been extensively discussed above, it is not included below.

Consultative Committees in Mining Localities (CCMLs) for conflict prevention

With large deposits of bauxite, gold, diamonds, and iron ore, Guinea is one of the most resource rich countries in Africa, with a strong potential for other minerals including uranium, zinc, cobalt, platinum, nickel, silver and high-quality granite.¹²⁴ During the period of Ohemeng-Boamah’s time as RC, there was increasing interest from major multi-nationals, such as Rio Tinto, in mining in Guinea. Historically speaking, however, the work of mining companies has been ‘de-linked’ from sustainable development in Guinea and often contributed to an increase rather than a reduction in tensions. Prior to the elaboration of the CCMLs, mining-related conflicts were a relatively common occurrence in Guinea, leading to demonstrations, clashes with security services, and – often, deaths.

Engagement in this area took place on three axes. First, the RC engaged with the Chamber of Mines to establish a regular platform between the UN and the Ministry of Mines to discuss private sector-related environmental, social and human rights-related issues around mine sites. Second, it included the provision of technical support to the government on the negotiation of contracts, to ensure greater transparency and accountability, as well as adherence to Corporate Social

Responsibility principles. And, thirdly, the engagement had a conflict prevention component, developed by UNDP, in partnership with other UNCT entities, the World Bank, BCPR and PBSO. All three initiatives benefited from the support of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Mines.

As a result of this last initiative, eighty-two Consultative Committees in Mining Localities (CCLMs) were established throughout the country, with the goal of preventing and/or resolving conflicts between local communities and mining companies – forming part of the broader peace and social infrastructure established and supported through the PPP. The PPP evaluation found that these committees served as key tools for conflict prevention and peace consolidation at the local level, and supported efforts to foster the sustainable exploitation of mineral resources in Guinea. Given their effectiveness and the increasing activity in both mining and agricultural sectors, the evaluation recommended the strengthening of such mechanisms in light of the important role in conflict prevention at the local level. The CCLMs, therefore, could provide a good model for other countries with a heavy extractive and/or private sector footprint.

The Women's Situation Room

The RC-supported project on the 'Women's situation room' (WSR), designed to prevent and manage violence during elections periods, and to generate a relationship between early warning, early response and conflict resolution.¹²⁵ The project was managed by the gender advisor seconded in 2012-14 by UN Women and PBSO to the RCO, with a mandate to support the PBF Secretariat, working closely with the PDA and UNOWAS. It benefited from extensive civil society participation and support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Guinea is one of several West African countries to have benefited from a WSR.

The initiative, conceptualised initially by the Angie Brooks International Centre, was first used in Liberia's elections in 2011, and has since been replicated in other African countries.¹²⁶ In Guinea, in the run-up to the Presidential elections in 2015, the project involved the training and deployment of over 600 female election observers across the country, to raise concerns and lower tensions – reporting back to a central group of women operating in Conakry. The women were responsible for reporting all incidents of violence or threats to peace and, once reported back to the Secretariat, the information was passed on to a team of leaders and eminent persons, operating on standby and ready to intervene when necessary.¹²⁷ This team was also in close contact with the police and the NEC, and could be activated to respond to specific events if necessary.

The women played a particularly important role in decreasing the possibility of fraud, and of increase levels of trust in the process. The initiative is also widely credited as having had a particularly stabilising effect at the local level, while simultaneously empowering women and strengthening their

capacities as peace actors. As stated by UN Women, these platforms help "rally women, youth, media, stakeholders, professionals, religious and traditional personalities and institutions to ensure a transparent and peaceful electoral process."¹²⁸

Participatory workshop on conflict analysis (2017)

While falling outside the main focus of this case study (which looks mainly at 2009-14), the conflict analysis exercise underway in Guinea in 2017, led by RC Seraphine Wakana who arrived in Guinea in August 2014 in her first position as RC, demonstrate continued commitment on the part of the RC and the UNCT to ensure conflict prevention remains at the heart of engagements. The initiative is commendable also due to its highly participatory nature. The project was made possible thanks to additional funding (US\$50,000) made available to the PDA in the context of the DPA-UNDP Joint Programme.

In July 2017, the conflict analysis exercise, which forms part of the project on strengthening social cohesion, led by UNDP in partnership with the Ministry of National Unity and citizenship, gathered more than 140 stakeholders from the government, Parliament, social and economic council, local government across the country, unions, civil society representatives, academics, as well as multilateral and bilateral partners and UNCT entities.¹²⁹ The exercise was designed to inform the creation of a 'conflict map' for Guinea, a greater understanding of the root causes of conflict, and enhanced knowledge of the main actors and potential 'flashpoints', as well as potential conflict mitigation strategies.

The exercise helped participants 'organise' conflicts into eight categories: Mining related, land-related, socio-economic, political, inter-communal, electoral, human rights violations-related, and water and electricity-related. The exercise also helped generate greater clarity on how a wide range of UNCT programmes can be made more conflict sensitive. Unfortunately, due to the timing of the project – when the UNDAF process had almost been fully rolled out, the findings of the exercise were not included in the context of the UNDAF, but it has influenced the nature of the new projects funded by PBF for the period 2017-18 as well as the content of specific initiatives within the UNDAF and is likely, therefore, to the overall conflict-aware stance of both the RC and UNCT.

Peacebuilding Resources and RCO Capacities

A significant part of the resource mobilisations strategy led by the RC has focused on the PBF, not least given the fact that, especially during the turbulent years from 2008-10, most donors had withdrawn their support for Guinea. Under PPP1, the RC was able to raise US\$ 12.8 million between 2007 and 2010, under 'tranche 1', and around US\$15 million in 2011 under 'tranche 2', when the thematic areas were re-oriented to be in line with the Ouagadougou Accords. Following

Guinea being put on the agenda of the PBC, Guinea received a total of US\$69 million dollars, corresponding to 31 projects in three priority areas, including: security sector reform (US\$15 million); national reconciliation (US\$21 million); and jobs for young people and women (US\$8.5 million), and support for the Secretariat and Steering Committee was over US\$2.5 million.¹³⁰

Following a request for additional support from RC Gasarabwe, one of the first ever PDAs was deployed to Guinea in 2008. From 2012, Guinea didn't benefit from a continued and stable presence of a PDA until the deployment of Waly Ndiaye in January 2016. During this time, the RC depended on the PBF Secretariat that had been established within the RCO and which consisted of one a national staff person, who was assisted by an M&E specialist. A gender advisor with a mandate to support the PBF Secretariat was deployed in August 2012 for two years. In 2014, the RCO also benefitted from a strategic planner who was deployed briefly, and a Senior Ebola crisis advisor, also financed by PBF.

More broadly speaking the RC benefited, however, from the tremendous support of the UN System, and from the international community more broadly. UNOWA in particular, with support from DPA, provided significant support through the deployment of a security sector reform advisor deployed extensively but intermittently from 2009-14, and through the establishment of SSRAT, also funded by PBF. PBSO provided very 'hands on' support since 2011 (starting with support on the organisation of the 2011 consultation process), with frequent in-country visits by the PBSO Guinea desk officers and, with a PBF project manager operating from New York. The UNDP administrator during 2010-13 in particular was very helpful, providing behind the scenes political support from New York, and BCPR provided extensive technical support, advice and trainings; UNDP in-country also provided critical support managing the Secretariat of the Fund in Guinea and, more broadly, given the UNDP lead on many of the projects associated with the transition. The UN staff college also provided ongoing trainings to the UNCT, financed by the PBF, as previously discussed. Outside of the UN system, support from ECOWAS and bilateral actors has been instrumental.

3. Overall Contribution of RC- and UNCT to prevention

As summarised by one researcher: "That Guinea did not experience further atrocities and the situation did not deteriorate into broader ethnic conflict that risked destabilizing the region is largely due to the effective preventive action taken during this time. These targeted efforts included preventive diplomacy, arms embargoes, travel bans, and threats of International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutions. The case of Guinea is a rare example of how domestic, regional, and international actors using an array of primarily non-coercive and proximate measures can prevent a recurrence of mass atrocities."¹³¹

Direct intervention by the RC in 2007 seems to have helped nudge the President to nominate a new PM, defusing a volatile crisis situation. Drawing on relationships in his country, the RC also helped provide entry-points for SRSG Djinnit, who was *de facto* leading the international response. The RC, furthermore, spearheaded a major security sector reform endeavour, funded by the PBF, that led to the retirement of a large number of military officers and professionalisation of the army, thereby reducing the risk of coup d'états. Successful engagement on security sector reform also provided both the political space and the 'proof of concept' required for other international donors to buy into – and provide funding to – the reform process and the transition more broadly. Overall, working with and leveraging other UN and non-UN actors anchored the approach that allowed the RC to have a meaningful impact on prevention and transition dynamics in Guinea.

4. Lessons, Good Practices and Recommendations

The RC is a key piece in a broad system of prevention-oriented actors, and the relationship between the RC and SRSGs/regional offices is key: The RC is able to significantly enhance their prevention role by leveraging other parts of the UN System to this end – in the case of Guinea closely working with a regional political office (UNOWA), PBSO, the PBC, the UNDP Administrator, a former UN force commander (General Cissé) – as well as key actors outside of the UN System, in particular regional and sub-regional actors. The relationship between the RC and the SRSG was critical from a prevention perspective and enabled them to play a 'game' of "good cop, bad cop" as and where necessary; this relationship works best where there is a clear division of responsibilities and a collaborative approach to strategy development.

RCs need to be political and often need to be risk-takers, and to be supported as such: The bold move on the part of RC Gasarabwe to first protect the trade union representatives, and then to make the trip to visit the President was a courageous move, which ultimately had a constructive outcome. The UN can support RCs to be risk takers but making it clear that they their careers will not suffer if the risk 'backfires' (it would not be a 'risk' if they knew the outcome would be positive, after all). The system 'hierarchy' must support efforts on the part of the RC to take (calculated) risks.

Making progress means engaging in complex and unpredictable situations: The 'junta' was open to working on peacebuilding, but for the UN this meant engaging with a government which had mounted a coup and which was accused of human rights violations. Non-engagement in this situation would almost certainly have been less constructive. Indeed, engagement in this context enabled the UN to make progress and gain entry points at a critical moment in Guinea's political trajectory.

Peacebuilding endeavours must be based on participatory conflict analyses, and require a significant resource investment: In Guinea, the UNCT developed innovative ways of conducting conflict analysis in 2008, for example (with the 'caravane' exercise), but the evaluation maintained that there was a disconnect between programmes and the country context, and limited impact. This point demonstrates that the UN may lack staff who have the capacity to translate conflict analysis findings efficiently into projects and programmes. The RC/UNCT learnt from this experience and, the 2011 PPP2, for example, was embedded in an exemplary conflict analysis exercise with extensive stakeholder engagement, leading to a programme which had sufficiently greater levels of impact than its predecessor. Inclusive stakeholder engagement is vital for national buy-in, especially on sensitive areas of programming, such as security sector reform.

The PBF (and PBSO) tolerance for risk makes it a unique actor in the international system: The Guinea case demonstrates the importance of PBF as one of the few, if not the only, actor with a risk tolerance that allows it to engage in difficult situations such as Guinea post-coup, when all the other actors were withdrawing their support, and on issues such as security sector reform. This support paid off, as it was catalytic both programmatically and financially. These cases show that RCs are successful in engaging the PBF if they are willing to take risks themselves, have strong relationships in-country, are able to anchor programming in sound analysis, and present a clear and targeted vision for what they want to achieve. Furthermore, the cost of 'peace' for the UN amounted to only US\$ 70 million over a decade, compared to the billions spent in countries affected by conflict, and which require a political or peacekeeping mission.

RCs can use the PBC to their advantage: The RCs are able to use the fact that host countries no longer need to be 'on the agenda' of the PBC to receive support. Countries can request to use the PBC as a forum for analysis and discussions, and, therefore, for political accompaniment, donor coordination and mobilization.

RCs have a constructive role to play in supporting international mediation efforts: Guinea demonstrates that RCs can play a helpful, complementary role in supporting international mediation efforts. In Guinea, the RC was particularly helpful, playing the role of advisor, 'connector', 'Secretariat', and liaison between international efforts and dynamics on the ground.

PDA's are a critical resource and the absence of a PDA can have a detrimental effect on the RC and UNCT; the PDA, however, is not the only critical resource for RCs in transition contexts: The absence of a PDA at a critical moment in the transition, as demonstrated in many of case studies, can have a detrimental effect on the ability of the RC to stay abreast of political developments in the country context, while simultaneously designing responses to them. But the PDA was not the only resource that the RC depended upon: the RC response was enhanced massively by the timely deployment of staff capacity from HQ, UNOWA, and UNWomen; the availability of General Cissé and the Subsequent Generals to advise the RC, and the RC's ability to leverage them for entry-points with the junta, and the military was also key. The RC needs a "team" of PDAs, with specific expertise provided in line with the needs of the country in question.

Several innovative examples from Guinea merit further analysis and could be replicated (with contextual adaptation) elsewhere: The work on Security Sector Reform, the Women's Situation Room and the Consultative Committees in Mining Localities are creative examples of RC-led initiatives that would benefit from more analysis and possible replication/adaptation in other country contexts.

Endnotes

Cover Image: REUTERS/Luc Gnago. 25 June 2010. Guinea's presidential candidate Alpha Conde, leader of Rassemblement du Peuple de Guinea (RPG), gestures as he arrives for a presidential campaign rally in Conakry.

* This paper is based on secondary resources (listed below) and 14 interviews with RCs, PDAs and other RCO staff, other UNCT staff, national interlocutors of RC/UNCT Guinea, and, UNHQ staff via phone. The lead writer/researcher would like to sincerely thank all those who participated in this process for their active participation and generous comments, both in the context of interviews and the review process that followed.

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- 83 The attempted murder was tied to the ongoing investigation of the International Commission of Inquiry, set up by the UNSG "to investigate incidents which occurred during the violent crackdown on unarmed civilians with a view to determining the accountability of those involved." Taken from, unarmed civilians.
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- 85 An economist by training, who served as a minister of several departments, going onto to become Prime Minister under

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- 86 Kikoler, N. 2015, p.12
- 87 Erwin van Veen, Guinea's transition from military rule to weak policing, Clingendael, March 2014.
- 88 Interview, United Nations Official, conducted via phone, 6 February 2018; Kikoler, N. 2015, p. 8.
- 89 Ibid.
- 90 Ibid
- 91 UN Office, Comments on draft, March 2017.
- 92 Ibid.
- 93 UN Official, Comments on draft, March 2018.
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- 99 UN Official, Comments provided on draft, March 2018.
- 100 Ibid.
- 101 At the request of President Conde, SSRAT was co-led by three officials: General Marc Caron (Canadian), General Gutierrez, (Spanish). and Gen Vadeboncoeur (Canadian). These advisors played a prominent role in the implementation of security sector reform and, particularly, in deflecting attention away from the President when conducting high-risk reforms and towards the security sector reform advisors. They also played a critical role in mobilising resources through a dedicated national security sector reform steering committee framework, which was established by President Conde.
- 102 Ibid.
- 103 Interview, RC Ohemeng-Boamah, conducted via phone, 22 January 2018
- 104 Ibid.
- 105 UN Mission Report of the PBC Guinea Configuration's Chairperson's visit to Conakry, February 2013.
- 106 Interviews, United Nations Officials, conducted via phone, January-February 2018.
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- 108 Interview, UN Official, 3 June 2018.
- 109 Ibid.
- 110 Interview, United Nations Official, conducted via phone, 22 February 2018
- 111 Following Guinea being put on the agenda of the PBC, Guinea received a total of \$69 million, corresponding to 31 projects in three priority areas, including: security sector reform (\$15 million); national reconciliation (\$21 million); and jobs for young people and women (\$8.5 million), and support for the Secretariat and Steering Committee was over \$2.5 million.
- 112 Interview, United Nations Official, conducted via phone, 6 February 2018
- 113 Interviews, United Nations Officials, conducted via phone, January and February 2018.
- 114 "Ban condemns killing of UN peacebuilding partner in Guinea." *UN News*, 10 February 2015, news.un.org/en/story/2015/02/490702-ban-condemns-killing-un-peacebuilding-partner-guinea
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- 130 Transtec 2017
- 131 Kikoler, N. 2015, p.2.