



Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada



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Responses to Information Requests

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1 March 2012

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Guinea: The Union of Guinea's Democratic Forces (Union des forces démocratiques de Guinée, UFDG) party, including its structure, the name of its president and its main leaders; how its members are treated by the authorities (2009-February 2012)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

1. The leaders and the structure of the UFDG

According to an article published by Agence France-Presse (AFP), the three main political forces in Guinea are, in order of importance, the Rally for the Guinean People (Rassemblement du peuple de Guinée, RPG), the UFDG and the Union of Republican Forces (Union des forces républicaines, UFR) (AFP 3 July 2011). Alpha Condé is the president of Guinea and the leader of the RPG (President Alpha Conde n.d.; Reuters 24 Dec. 2010). According to the AFP article, the UFDG is the main opposition party, and its leader is Cellou Dalein Diallo (3 July 2011; Guinée news 14 Feb. 2012). The UFR is led by Sitya Touré (Africaguinee.com 21 Feb. 2012; RFI 24 Feb. 2012).

The leaders of the UFDG include Bah Oury, vice president of foreign affairs and communication (UFDG 31 July 2011), who is also considered the party's [translation] "number two man" (*Le Monde* 7 Feb. 2012); Fodé Oussou Fofana, vice president of legal and social affairs (UFDG 31 July 2011); Ms. Tofani, vice president of cultural affairs (ibid.); Bano Sow, administrator of the party's headquarters (UFDG 31 Jan. 2012); Abdoulaye Mané, leader of the UFDG section of the Hamdallaye mosque and member of the UFDG federal office in Ratoma; and Thierno Sadou Diallo, secretary general of one of the party's sections in Hamdallaye (Lejour.info and Le Populaire 9 Feb. 2012). Additional information on the leaders of the UFDG could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

According to the UFDG website, the party is also represented abroad by federations located in the following countries: Germany, Angola, Belgium, Benin, Canada, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Spain, United States (Chicago, New York, Ohio, Philadelphia, Washington DC, the Washington Metropolitan Area), France, The Gambia, The Netherlands, Morocco, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Sierra Leone, Switzerland, Chad and Togo (UFDG 3 Dec. 2011). According to articles published by the UFDG, Mouctar Barry and Baldé Ibrahima are, respectively, the men responsible for the federations in New York and the Côte d'Ivoire (UFDG 31 July 2011), and Alpha Souleymane Diallo is the administrative and political secretary of the federation in the United Kingdom (ibid. 25 Jan. 2012). Additional information on the leaders of the other federations or on the structure of the UFDG could not be found among the sources consulted by Research Directorate.

2. Treatment of UFDG members by authorities

According to an article published by Amnesty International (AI), [AI English version] "Guinean security forces shot dead more than 150 unarmed protesters during an opposition rally" on 28 September 2009 in Conakry (AI 28 Sept. 2011). According to the article, [AI English version] "[o]ver 40 women were raped in public, at least 1,500 people were wounded and many others went missing" (ibid.). The article also states that [AI English version] "the main perpetrators of the massacre have not been suspended from duty and none of them have been brought to justice" (ibid.). During an interview given to two media outlets in February 2012, the UFDG president, Cellou Dalein Diallo, stated that [translation] "the overwhelming majority of victims of 28 September were UFDG members" (Lejour.info and Le Populaire 9 Feb. 2012). He also stated that on that same day, he too had been a victim of the security forces, who broke four of his ribs (ibid.). The UFDG president explained that the security forces had gone to his home twice, that they [translation] "destroyed the house by shooting up the entire place," and that they left with many of their belongings (ibid.). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

According to two sources, the home of Alpha Condé, the president of Guinea and leader of the RPG, had been [translation] "attacked" on 19 July 2011 (RFI 3 Aug. 2011; *Le Monde* 7 Feb. 2012) by a group of soldiers (ibid.). In the early hours of the morning on the day following the attack, armed civilians went to the home of Bah Oury, a member of the UFDG (ibid.; see also RFI 3 Aug. 2011), because they had heard [translation] "rumours for several weeks...that he was going to be involved in a coup d'état" (*Le Monde* 7 Feb. 2012). During an interview with Radio France internationale (RFI), Mr. Oury stated, [translation] "Luckily, I realized automatically that they were not paying me a friendly visit" and that he had been forced to disappear (RFI 3 Aug. 2011). He therefore fled to Senegal and then to France (*Le Monde* 7 Feb. 2012). According to Mr. Oury, the soldiers returned to his home on the evening of 20 July 2011, this time dressed in their uniforms, and destroyed everything (RFI 3 August 2011). An article published by the UFDG also mentions the [translation] "Guinean security forces' armed raid of Bah Oury's residence" (UFDG 27 July 2011). That article states that, during the raid, [translation] "approximately 30 men and women, who were armed to the teeth...with scope rifles and other weapons, stole whatever that they could carry-jewels and other valuable objects" (ibid.). No source independent from the UFDG corroborating this information could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

According to another UFDG article, in mid-September 2011, [translation] "without any evidence have been produced," Alpha Condé charged Bah Oury [translation] "with having inspired the raid on his house" (ibid.). The article noted that an international arrest warrant against Bah Oury had been requested by the Guinean courts for [translation] "association with criminals, drug possession and being a threat to national security" (ibid.). However, two sources indicated that Interpol did not grant the Guinean authorities' request and therefore did not issue the arrest warrant (*Le Monde* 7 Feb. 2012; Guinée news 6 Oct. 2011) because [translation] "article 3 of the International Criminal Police Organization convention prohibits Interpol from meddling in political, racial, military and religious affairs" (ibid.). Cited in an article published by the UFDG on 31 July 2011, Fodé Oussou Fofana stated that since the raid on the president's residence, there has been

[translation]

“a kind of psychosis imposed on the impoverished population, which has been significantly traumatized by untimely searches in all neighbourhoods by over-armed and very nervous soldiers, but we have also received reports of searches at ungodly hours in violation of the legislation currently in effect.”

Also in September 2011, some protesters were allegedly killed (AI 28 Sept. 2011; Afrik.com 28 Sept. 2011) and others injured (Afrik.com 28 Sept. 2011) [AI English version] “during clashes between police and demonstrators at a banned opposition rally” (AI 28 Sept. 2011). That demonstration, which had been called for by two of the main opposition parties, protested the manner in which the legislative elections-scheduled for December 2011-were organized (ibid.). Amnesty International’s Deputy Director for Africa noted that [AI English version] “[b]eating and killing protesters has been the standard response of Guinean security forces whenever popular demonstrations have called for political or economic reforms” (AI 28 Sept. 2011). She also stated that [AI English version] “[i]t’s deeply alarming that President Alpha Condé [who came to power in September 2010] is resorting to exactly the same brutal methods as his predecessors” (ibid.).

According to the UFDG, party members have been arrested (UFDG 25 Jan. 2012; ibid. 31 Jan. 2012; ibid. 3 Feb. 2012). Bano Sow and Alpha Souleymane Diallo were reportedly [translation] “kidnapped” on 25 January 2012 (UFDG 25 Jan. 2012), and Abdoulaye Mané was arrested on 2 February 2012 (ibid. 3 Feb. 2012). The reason for that arrest was apparently unknown (ibid.). Corroborating information about these arrests could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

In an interview given to two media outlets on 9 February 2012, Cellou Dalein Diallo, president of the UFDG, stated that numerous party members had been imprisoned; one of them was Thierno Soufiana Diallo, chairperson of one of the party’s grassroots committees, who was subjected to [translation] “extensive torture” and died in prison (Lejour.info et Le Populaire 9 Feb. 2012; Guinée58 30 Jan. 2012). Thierno Soufiana Diallo was reportedly [translation] “kidnapped” by soldiers on 29 August 2011 and imprisoned; he was charged with “being involved in the failed attack on President Alpha Condé” (ibid.). He died on 18 January 2012, due to a [translation] “lack of medical care” (ibid.).

Cellou Dalein Diallo also noted that [translation] “the party in power is relentlessly going after UFDG militants” (Lejour.info and Le Populaire 9 Feb. 2012). He added that this was because the UFDG is [translation] “the party that is most determined to denounce abuses of power” (ibid.).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

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