



Politics

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Guinea SITUATION UPDATE: Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) suspends Guinea's membership on September 8

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Executive Summary

- Following an extraordinary summit, the heads of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) condemned the September 5 coup d'état, demanded the release of former President Alpha Conde, and suspended Guinea's membership in ECOWAS bodies.
- This statement was expected given the concern of regional leaders that the Guinea coup will trigger further political and security instability across the region.
- However, it is notable that ECOWAS avoided more significant measures, such as the closure of borders, which were temporarily implemented during the past year against Mali.

Please be advised

- On September 8 the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) held an online extraordinary summit to discuss the developments in Guinea following the September 5 coup d'état which removed President Alpha Conde from power.
- According to an official communique, ECOWAS condemned the coup while describing it as unconstitutional, and expressed concern regarding the impact on regional security and stability. ECOWAS further demanded the immediate return to constitutional order and the unconditional release of Conde.
- ECOWAS also announced the suspension of Guinea from all ECOWAS governing bodies and stated its intention to immediately dispatch a high-level mission to assess the situation. It further called upon the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN) to take similar measures.
- Reports from September 8 indicate that additional African leaders, including Senegal President Macky Sall and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni condemned the coup as well.
- Meanwhile, the CNRD ordered all government ministries to schedule interviews with the CNRD leadership, preceded by the filing of comprehensive written reports by September 10 at 18:00 (local time).

Assessments & Forecast

1. The Economic Community of West African States' (ECOWAS) resolution, including the suspension

of Guinea's membership in ECOWAS governing bodies, was anticipated given that the coup removed a prominent leader in the region. These statements mainly reflect the regional organization's concern that this coup may inspire further instability in other member countries. ECOWAS is expected to send a high-ranking delegation, likely led by a former President of one of the region's countries, likely to establish a connection with the National Committee for Reconciliation and Development (CNRD) and its leader Colonel Mamady Doumbouya.

2. **FORECAST:** The mission will attempt to extract a commitment from the CNRD regarding the establishment of a clear transitional schedule and pressure it to allow significant participation of political parties and civil society elements to ensure inclusiveness. In this context, should the CNRD refuse to include civilians in the transition and display intention to hold onto power, the ECOWAS might be forced to impose further diplomatic and economic sanctions. While similar measures were also taken against Mali after the August 2020 coup, it is notable that this time ECOWAS refrained from imposing more significant sanctions against Guinea such as the closure of borders and the suspension of trade relations.
3. It is possible that ECOWAS avoided such measures right after the coup as the organization likely understood the logistical difficulties in imposing measures such as the closure of the borders with Guinea. These measures would likely have a limited impact on the new authorities in Guinea, given that, unlike Mali, Guinea is not a landlocked country and has a diverse set of non-West African trade partners. It can also import basic goods or export minerals produced in the country through its maritime ports. In this context, while ECOWAS may impose a trade blockade on Guinea, it will be extremely complicated for it to impose a maritime blockade in light of the limited capabilities of the regional naval forces.

Recommendations

1. Those operating or residing in Conakry over the coming days and weeks are advised to minimize movement given the recent coup d'état and unpredictable security situation.
2. Maintain heightened vigilance and avoid the vicinity of large gatherings given the political uncertainty and potential for unrest.