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UK / Guinea relations
Internal situation

GUINEA

January 1984

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SUBJECT

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

4 July 1984

Dear Roger,

MEETING BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE PRIME MINISTER
OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA ON 4 JULY AT 10 DOWNING STREET

The Prime Minister received Colonel Diarra Traore, Prime Minister of the Republic of Guinea, for a talk at No.10 Downing Street today. Colonel Traore was accompanied by the Foreign Minister, Information Minister and Ambassador of Guinea. Mr C W Squire was also present.

Welcoming Colonel Traore the Prime Minister said that we were anxious for closer relations with Guinea. We had been impressed with the new Government's strong stand on democracy and human rights. Colonel Traore conveyed the best wishes of the President and the Military Committee and handed over a letter from the President to the Prime Minister (copy enclosed).

In response to an invitation from the Prime Minister, Colonel Traore gave a brief account of events which had led the armed forces to take power. Over the 26 years of Guinea's independence the development of the country had been neglected despite the many sacrifices which its people had been called upon to make. The new Government had found a catastrophic financial situation. They were now engaged in drawing up an inventory of Guinea's economic needs. They also attached particular priority to safeguarding human rights, which for all practical purposes had not existed in Guinea previously.

Colonel Traore continued that it had been decided to make contact with a number of industrialised countries to explain Guinea's misfortunes and describe her needs. The new Government hoped for aid from Britain. The priority areas were agriculture, where there was an urgent need to feed the people while in the longer term restoring self-sufficiency; transport; infrastructure; and education especially the teaching of English. He also wished to raise the major problem of the £5 million debt to ECGD. Guinea would like the debt to be written off.

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The Prime Minister noted that the new Government of Guinea had a very full agenda. She hoped that they would be pleased with our decision to establish a resident charge d'affairs in Conakry. This would enable us to remain in closer contact. She was well aware of the problem of the debt dating from 1976. It would be very difficult to cancel this, not least because it would create a precedent. It would have to be left to officials to discuss the details. As regards aid, we were major contributors through the EDF and the World Bank. The size of the future EDF was currently under discussion. So much of British aid now went through the EDF and other multi-lateral channels that it was difficult to respond to requests for bilateral aid. The Prime Minister continued that she had noted that Guinea's priorities appeared to be additional food aid, particularly in milk products, assistance to agriculture and help with English language teaching.

The Prime Minister asked which other countries the delegation had visited and intended to visit. Colonel Traore said that they had already been to France, Belgium and the European Commission. They were going on to Yugoslavia and Roumania. They proposed to visit the United States at a later stage. They had obtained some infrastructure aid and help for transport and education from France and some additional food aid from the European Community. They had been grateful for the UK's support over the latter.

The Prime Minister concluded that she well understood the new Government's need for help. She would ensure that Mr Raison and Mr Channon were informed of the content of her discussion with Colonel Traore. Discussion on aid and the debt problem should be pursued with them.

Following the meeting, the Prime Minister commented that it was important that Colonel Traore should not return from his visit to Britain empty-handed. She hoped some way could be found to help the new Government over the problem of the debt, perhaps through re-scheduling. I should be grateful if this point could be considered urgently before Mr Channon meets the Guinean delegation on Friday.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to Mr Raison and Mr Channon.

Yours sincerely,
Chris Powell

Roger Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

4 July, 1984

John Austin

Visit of Senior Guinean Ministers

In the course of a preparatory meeting yesterday for the visit by Guinean Ministers, the Guinean Ambassador intimated that his Prime Minister will wish to raise during his call on Mrs Thatcher at 4.30 pm today the question of a £4.8m ECGD owed by Guinea.

Mr Rifkind will discuss the debt problem with Prime Minister Traore in a working session at 3.30 pm today and Mr Channon will also raise it during his talks on Friday. However it is possible that Prime Minister Traore will still try to pursue the matter with the Prime Minister and I therefore enclose defensive briefing.

John Austin
R B Bone

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street



CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF GUINEA
AT 4.30 ON 4 JULY

ECGD DEBT

POINTS TO MAKE (if raised)

EITHER (if asked to waive the debt)

1. I regret that to cancel the debt would set an unwelcome precedent which would be seized upon by countries which owe us far greater sums of money;

OR (if undertakes to repay if rescheduled)

2. Understand you have discussed the problem of the debt with Mr Rifkind. You will be aware that we shall do all we can to assist you. We should now leave it to officials to work out how best to resolve the problem.



CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF GUINEA
AT 4.30 ON 4 JULY

ECGD DEBT

ESSENTIAL FACTS

1. The single biggest hurdle to improved commercial relations with Guinea is a debt of £4.8m owed to ECGD since 1976. Until this is repaid or rescheduled ECGD cannot even begin to consider any extension of the short-term cover which they provide for Guinea at present.
2. Should Prime Minister Traoré raise this matter he is likely to suggest either that, while Guinea will honour its obligations, he and the Prime Minister discuss methods of repayment in slow time, or that the debt be cancelled as a gesture of goodwill. ECGD cannot consider waiving the debt since this would set a precedent which would be difficult to defend if other debtor nations requested like treatment. Discussions as to how to resolve the debt will be long and complex and would be best left at this stage to ECGD and the Guineans at official level.

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PRIME MINISTER

Visit by Senior Guinean Government Ministers

The Guinean Prime Minister will call tomorrow with the Foreign Minister and Minister of Information. The Guinean Ambassador will also be present. Bill Squire (AUSS Africa) will be present from the Foreign Office. There will be an interpreter.

Photographers will be in the entrance hall. I suggest meeting in the White Drawing Room. _____

Briefs are attached, together with a card. Although not in the points to make, it seems to me important to ask for our £5 million back (see paragraph 8 of background).

C.D.P.

3 July, 1984.

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RÉPUBLIQUE DE GUINÉE

Le Président

Travail - Justice - Solidarité

CONAKRY, LE 2 JUILLET 1984

Son Excellence Madame le Premier Ministre,

Dans le cadre des relations traditionnelles d'amitié unissant nos deux Peuples, le Comité Militaire de Redressement National de la République de Guinée a l'honneur de dépêcher auprès de Votre Excellence une Importante Délégation conduite par Son Excellence le Colonel DIARRA TRAORE, Premier Ministre, Chef du Gouvernement.

Cette Délégation a pour charge de porter à Votre haute connaissance les raisons qui ont conduit au changement intervenu en République de Guinée le 3 Avril 1984.

Nous sommes convaincu qu'en dépit des multiples et lourdes charges qui sont les Vôtres, il Vous plaira de recevoir la Délégation de Monsieur le Premier

SON EXCELLENCE MADAME
MARGARET THATCHER,
PREMIER MINISTRE DU ROYAUME
UNI DE GRANDE BRETAGNE ET
D'IRLANDE DU NORD -

.../...

L O N D R E S -

Ministre qui Vous entretiendra de vive voix de la situation qui prévaut dans notre pays.

Nous voudrions saisir cette opportunité pour Vous réaffirmer la volonté et la disponibilité du Comité Militaire de Redressement National de poursuivre, d'approfondir et d'élargir les liens séculaires de tous ordres unissant nos deux Peuples au destin solidaire.

Excellence Madame le Premier Ministre, Nous Vous prions d'accorder foi et créance à tout ce que Vous dira de notre part le Chef de notre Délégation et surtout lorsqu'il aura l'honneur de Vous exprimer nos sentiments de très haute considération.-



COLONEL LANSANA CONTE

PRESIDENT DU COMITE MILITAIRE DE
REDRESSEMENT NATIONAL, CHEF DE L'ETAT,
PRESIDENT DE LA REPUBLIQUE DE GUINEE.-

Call by Guinean Ministers

Welcome your strong stand on human rights and democracy.

How are you going about re-establishing this in Guinea?

Glad that we are able to appoint a Resident Charge d'Affaires in Conakry.

Our aid reaches you through the European Development Fund which takes an increasing proportion of our overall aid. In addition, we have doubled our small bilateral programme since your Government took over.

Welcome your pledge to honour existing debt obligations. Hope you will soon be able to clear off the unpaid debt of £5 million owed to our Export Credit Guarantee Department since 1976. Only then can we extend existing short-term cover.

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

2 July, 1984

Mr. prepare a meeting folder done EDP.

John Austin,

Visit by Senior Guinean Government Ministers

In your letter of 22 June you said that the Prime Minister would be prepared to see the Guinean Prime Minister and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation for a courtesy call at 1630 on Wednesday 4 July. We have now been told that the Minister of Information will replace the Minister of Cooperation.

I enclose briefing for the call in the form of Points to Make, Essential Facts and a Background Brief. Also enclosed are personality notes on the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. We shall let you have a note on the Minister of Information as soon as we can. Protocol Department are arranging for an interpreter to be present. The Guinean Ambassador, Monsieur Sompere, may also wish to attend. Mr M F Daly, Head of West African Department, is available to attend if you so wish.

[Handwritten signature]

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

Miss Gifford

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2 JUL 1984

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5 6 7 8 9 10 11



London 22.12.1981
LONDON 22.12.1981



CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER BY A DELEGATION OF SENIOR
GUINEAN MINISTERS AT 1600 ON 4 JULY

POINTS TO MAKE

1. Glad you were able to come to UK despite rather short notice - only dates in July when we are all available. Hope your discussions with Ministers have proved useful.
2. As I said in my message to you, we welcome your determination to establish a form of democracy based on the UN Charter. How are you going about this?
3. Also welcome your unequivocal stand on human rights in Guinea.
4. You will have been told of our decision to appoint a resident Chargé d'Affaires in Conakry. Hope this proposal acceptable to you.
5. Have you visited/will you visit other countries in the European Community?

AID [DEFENSIVE ONLY - IF GUINEAN PM ASKS FOR MORE AID]

6. An increasing proportion of our aid is channelled through the European Development Fund - to which we are major contributors. The European Community will doubtless give careful consideration to your needs, within the limit of resources. Bilaterally we have virtually doubled our aid since your government took over (from £103,000 to £203,000 for 1984/85).



CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER BY A DELEGATION OF
SENIOR GUINEAN MINISTERS AT 1600 ON 4 JULY

ESSENTIAL FACTS

GUINEAN DELEGATION

1. When HM Ambassador to Dakar presented The Queen's message of congratulations to President Conté, the latter said that a delegation comprising amongst others the Prime Minister, Col. Diarra Traoré; and the Foreign Minister, Capt. Facine Touré, would be visiting Europe to explain their reasons for seizing power and to seek political and economic assistance. The President expressed the hope that the delegation would be received in London and we subsequently invited them to come in July. During the visit the delegation, which comprises the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister and the Minister of Information, Capt. Mohamed Traoré, will call on the Prime Minister, and on Sir Geoffrey Howe. They will also have talks with Mr Rifkind, Mr Raison and Mr Channon.

THE COMITE MILITAIRE DE REDRESSEMENT NATIONALE -
MILITARY COMMITTEE FOR NATIONAL RECOVERY (CMRN)

2. Immediately after seizing power in a bloodless coup, the CMRN, as the new government styles itself, pledged a return to a form of democracy based on the UN Charter. It is rumoured that it is considering something along the lines of the Federal German system and has asked for a copy of the FRG's constitution.

3. The CMRN has also pledged to put an end to the corruption and repression prevalent in Guinea during the late President Sekou Touré's regime. As a first step they have released all political prisoners and restored freedom of the Press and the Media. These moves and the coup itself have been welcomed by the populace of Guinea.

DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION

4. At present we have no resident Mission in Conakry, which is covered by visits from Dakar. If we seriously hope to raise our profile in Guinea and to influence the new Government we need some form of resident representation. Our major Western

/partners



partners are already established there and the new regime have intimated that they will remember those who show their support in the early days. There is also the question of a debt of £4.8m owed to ECGD since 1976. The recovery of this is a prerequisite to any consideration of a return to ECGD cover and a physical presence in Guinea will encourage the new regime to regularise the situation. Until this is done British business will be unable to take full advantage of the commercial opportunities which could come with economic recovery.

5. The new Post will take the form of a Chargé d'Affaires of First Secretary grade supported by a small local staff. He will be responsible to HM Ambassador Dakar, who will continue to be accredited to Guinea.

6. The Guinean delegation has already paid visits to France and Belgium.



GUINEA: BACKGROUND BRIEF

JULY 1984

1. The Republic of Guinea covers 94,926 sq miles, (population 1982 5.7m), and ranges from an extremely wet coastal plain to high central plateaux in the north, broad savannas in the east and tropical forest in the south. It is poor with GNP per capita approximately \$33 (1981). However its economic potential, particularly in the mining and agriculture sectors, is enormous. Bauxite is the mainstay of the economy but there are also deposits of iron-ore, diamonds, gold, maganese, uranium and titanium. The major commercial crops are bananas, coffee, pineapples, palm kernels, groundnuts and citrus fruits.
2. Guinea was formerly part of the French West African Federation and achieved independence from France in 1958. It voted against continued association with the metropolitan country and as a result suffered the abrupt withdrawal of French technical assistance and financial aid. In order to fill the gap it turned to the Soviet Union for assistance. However from 1975 onwards there was a perceptible opening towards the West, dictated largely by Eastern Bloc's failure to meet Guinea's needs.
3. Until his death following a heart attack in March 1984 the Parti Democratique de Guinee (PDG) was led by President Sekou Toure who had been in power since Independence. All organs of Government were subordinate to the PDG and Sekou Toure himself, although recognised latterly as one of the elder statesmen of Africa, had a deserved reputation for ruling in an arbitrary, corrupt and oppressive way. But in the latter years of his Presidency purges against opponents of his regime became less frequent and brutal and Guinea's human rights record

/which



which was one of the worst in Africa, improved. Immediately prior to Sekou Toure's death the number of political detainees was estimated at around 400 compared with 1000 or so in 1977.

4. In the days following Sekou Toure's unexpected death it became apparent that a power struggle was developing between leading Ministers for the vacant post of President, but that whoever took over would be a member of the Sekou Toure clan. In order to prevent this and a repetition of the corruption and repression of Sekou Toure's regime the armed forces seized power on 3 April 1984 and set up the Comite Militaire de Redressement Nationale (CMRN) with Colonel Lansana Conte as the new President. The new regime immediately voiced some criticism of Sekou Toure's domestic policies and his scorn for human rights; and although officially declaring itself non-aligned, the CMRN has shown every inclination of intending to continue at an accelerated pace the opening towards the West seen in the latter years of Sekou Toure. One of the new government's first acts was to pledge itself to establish a form of democracy based on the UN Charter and to promise to put an end to corruption and the violations of human rights; it made a good start by releasing all political prisoners and restoring freedom of the Media and the Press.

5. FOREIGN RELATIONS

Since the coup the new Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and Minister of Cooperation have visited a large number of African countries and are at present embarked on a similar tour of Western capitals to explain their reasons for seizing power and to seek political and economic support. The CMRN has demonstrated that it intends to reduce substantially the influence which Eastern bloc countries exercised in Guinea even during Sekou Toure's latter years. The West Germans have been asked to provide replacements for Technical Cooperation posts presently occupied by East Germans and it is reported that the French have been or will be asked to replace existing



Soviet Military Advisers. It is unlikely however that relations with the Soviet bloc will be severed entirely. The new regime has also been active in establishing its bona fides with neighbouring countries, particularly Ivory Coast and Senegal.

6. ECONOMIC SITUATION

Guinea, with its wealth of minerals and fertile soil, is potentially one of the richest countries in Africa. But the economy is in a parlous state. The disastrous economic and agricultural policies pursued by Sekou Toure and his refusal to treat with the IMF have resulted in a serious balance of payments problem, an enormous external debt (SD 1.1 billion in 1982), shortages of all basic commodities and the importation of food (which should not be necessary in a country which was originally a net exporter of agricultural produce). A new IMF programme is urgently required but this would be conditional upon a massive devaluation and urgent reform of economic and agricultural policies.

7. The road to economic recovery in Guinea will be long and hard and there are already signs that corruption is resurfacing. However if the new government adopts sensible policies the long-term prospects for economic expansion are substantial. The CMRN has already invited the World Bank to discuss a complete currency reform and most observers believe that it will apply to join the CFA zone. It is reported that the CMRN has also approached the IMF and is to approach the Paris Club. Discussions with these bodies will not be easy and those with the IMF will not be helped by the Guinean's continued detention of the IMF Executive Director for Anglophone Africa (who they suspect of having used his official position to remit funds to Western countries for Sekou Toure and his family).

RELATIONS WITH THE UK

8. In the past relations with Guinea have been friendly



but insubstantial. The single biggest hurdle to improved relations is an unpaid debt of almost £5m owed to ECGD since 1976. Until this is settled or regularised ECGD will not begin to consider any extension of the existing short term cover they provide for business with Guinea.

However the CMRN has pledged itself to honour existing obligations and we must make the members of the delegation realise that the debt is a real barrier to improved relations.

9. Prior to the coup, the aid programme for 1984/85 comprised a Technical Cooperation programme of £103,000, all of which is committed to training awards. Following the change of government however it was decided to increase this by a further £100,000 which will probably be used to provide English Language Training for Guinean diplomats. We are also to begin a Key English Language Training programme (KELT) following the signature in Conakry of a Memorandum of Understanding containing assurances about accommodation and other logistical requirements for those involved in the programme. A decision to open a resident mission in Conakry has been taken and a delegation comprising the Prime Minister, and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Information will be informed of this by Sir Geoffrey Howe during their visit.

WEST AFRICAN DEPARTMENT
JULY 1984



COLONEL DIARRA TRAORE

PRIME MINISTER

Aged 49, a Malinke, born in Kankan in the Central Plateau. Trained at Frejus and in the Soviet Union. In his early days he was Military Attaché at Moscow and Peking. He was then Commandant of the Artillery School in Guinea. In more recent years he was Military Governor of a number of regions. He was also a member of the National Assembly for 10 years and was well known to Sekou Touré and to members of the previous regime. He is reputed to be a powerful speaker, warm and approachable. He was very much the Government mouthpiece in the early days of the new regime but made one or two minor gaffs and his relationship with President Conté is said to be an uneasy one.



CAPTAIN FACINE TOURE
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

A Malinke, said to be the intellectual force behind the military coup who was instrumental in the early days in creating the right image to the outside world, in particular to the West. He is said to have drafted all the early communiques which stressed the new regime's respect for human rights and international obligations.

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MJ

cc Sir P Cradock

22 June 1984

Visit by Senior Guinean Government
Ministers

BF
Thank you for your letter of 20 June about the proposed call on the Prime Minister by the Prime Minister and Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation of Guinea. The Prime Minister would be ready to see them for a short courtesy call at 1630 on Wednesday 4 July. I should be grateful if you would provide me with the necessary briefing in good time. You will no doubt be making the necessary arrangements for interpretation.

CP

Roger Bone Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

855

XCPC
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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Charles
12.30 - 1700 wed 4 July
CR

20 June 1984

Jon Charles,

Visit by Senior Guinean Government Ministers

In your letter of 25 May you said that the Prime Minister was prepared in principle to receive in July a delegation comprising the Guinean Prime Minister and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation.

The Guinean Ambassador in Paris who is also accredited to the UK has now asked on what dates the visit should take place. We would like to suggest 4 and 5 July, since, to judge from our soundings, these are the dates on which it looks as if we could be confident of arranging a satisfactory programme. Would you let me know whether the Prime Minister would be able to see the delegation for a short courtesy call on either of these dates?

The delegation visited Paris from 12-14 June and were seen by President Mitterrand and M. Cheysson.

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

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LONDON SW1A 2AA



20 JUN 1984





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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

25 May, 1984.

Thank you for your letter of 24 May about the forthcoming visit of a delegation of Senior Guinean Government Ministers. The Prime Minister would be prepared in principle to receive the delegation for a short courtesy call in July, and she has agreed therefore that our response to the Guineans should be along the lines proposed.

BF
no meeting
arranged.

Timothy Flesher

R.B. Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

h



Prime Minister.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Agree to receive this
delegation in July?

24 May 1984

A.C. 24/5.

John Taylor,

Yes not

Visit of Senior Guinean Government Ministers

The new Guinean President has told our Ambassador that a Guinean delegation comprising the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister and the Minister of Cooperation will be visiting a number of European capitals in June or July to explain the new Government's policies. The President expressed the hope that the delegation would be received in London.

Since they seized power in a bloodless coup in April, following the death of Sekou Toure, the new regime in Guinea has declared itself non-aligned and has demonstrated that it intends to reduce substantially the influence which Eastern bloc countries previously exercised in Guinea. The West Germans have been asked to provide replacements for Technical Cooperation posts presently occupied by East Germans, and it is reported that the French have been or will be asked to provide replacements for the existing Soviet military advisers. On the domestic front the new Government have committed themselves to establishing a form of democracy based on the UN Charter, and have promised an end to the repression and corruption prevalent during the late President Sekou Toure's regime; as a first step they have released all political prisoners and restored freedom of the press and the media. HM The Queen, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary sent messages to the Guinean leader after the coup and these messages were very well received.

During the coming European tour the delegation will be received in France, Italy and Germany, although it is not yet known at what level. These countries have greater economic interests in Guinea than we do and have already promised assistance to the new regime. Guinea is potentially one of the richest countries in Africa and it is in our own interest also to devote some attention to the country. We therefore propose to agree to receive the delegation.

/Given



Given the short time the new regime has been in power and the little we know of the members of the new Government, it is difficult to comment on the real influence which individual members of the delegation wield in Guinea. However, it is generally believed that it is the new Foreign Minister who is providing the new regime's intellectual horsepower. The new Prime Minister may have been the military guiding-hand behind the coup and is considered by some observers to be the strong man in the new regime. What is already clear is that both the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister will have a major role to play in the shaping of Guinea's future and we would do well to cultivate them now. Not surprisingly, the new regime is very inexperienced, particularly in economic matters. The proposed visit would provide us with an opportunity to put across our own views at some length and to influence the new government in the right direction at a formative stage in the development of the regime's policies not only on African questions but on other problems such as the Falkland Islands or Law of the Sea, where Guinean support would be useful to us.

The delegation would undoubtedly hope to have talks with the Prime Minister. We consider that courtesy calls on her and the Foreign Secretary, and the offer of more substantive talks with Mr Rifkind and Mr Raison, would suffice. We believe that the delegation would prefer to come in early June when both the Prime Minister and Sir Geoffrey are already heavily committed. Our reply to the Guinean President would make clear that a visit in July would be preferable and that if the Guineans persist in wanting a visit in June they run the risk of meeting neither the Prime Minister nor the Foreign Secretary.

There is no question of inviting the delegation as guests of government nor any suggestion that the Prime Minister should offer them hospitality. However, it is proposed that, exceptionally, we should meet the delegation's in-country expenses as a gesture of goodwill on this their first visit to London.

I should be grateful if you would let me know whether the Prime Minister would be prepared in principle to receive the delegation for a short courtesy call.

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

SUBJECT

cc Nelson
+
Ops

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. 61/84

RESTRICTED

13666 - 1

OO DAKAR
GRS 90
RESTRICTED
FM FCO 171625Z APR 84
TO IMMEDIATE DAKAR
TELEGRAM NUMBER 70 OF 17 APRIL
GUINEA

1. PLEASE DELIVER THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER
TO COLONEL TRAORE:

BEGINS:

I CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR APPOINTMENT AS PRIME MINISTER.
HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT WELCOME THE INTENTION OF THE COMMITTEE
FOR NATIONAL RECOVERY TO ESTABLISH A FORM OF DEMOCRACY IN YOUR
COUNTRY BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF THE UN CHARTER. I LOOK
FORWARD TO THE CONTINUANCE OF THE FRIENDLY RELATIONS WHICH
ALREADY EXIST BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

ENDS.
HOWE

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LIMITED
WAD
PROTOCOL D
NEWS D
PS
PS/MR RIFKIND
PS/PUS
SIR J LEAHY
MR SQUIRE

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The National Archives

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

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ACT 2000

13 April 1984

Yes
no

John John

Republic of Guinea

The new regime in Guinea which took power in a bloodless coup on 3 April and which styles itself the Military Committee for National Recovery has pledged itself to establish a form of democracy based on the principles of the UN Charter and has promised to put an end to the totalitarian system which existed in Guinea under Sekou Toure. As a first step they have already released all political prisoners and have given public and private assurances that none of Sekou Toure's followers will be executed. The Committee have declared themselves to be non-aligned which will be a setback to the Soviet Union, who have hitherto enjoyed great influence in Guinea, but who are now already reducing their presence in the country.

Potentially Guinea is one of Africa's richest countries and if the new regime adopt sensible economic policies, the possibilities for economic expansion and British business could be substantial. We should therefore do whatever we can to ensure that we do not miss out in a country where our major rivals are already well established.

Messages of congratulation have already been sent by the French President and Government. We believe the Americans and Germans will follow suit very shortly if they have not already done so. All three countries have already pledged assistance to the new regime. If we are not to be left behind by our trade competitors, we need to establish good working contacts with the new Government in the near future. The Foreign Secretary

~~in the~~

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ACT 2000

_____ recommends
that HM Ambassador to Senegal, who is also accredited to
Guinea, should deliver the enclosed messages from the Prime
Minister and himself to the new Government.

I should be grateful to know whether the Prime
Minister is content with the action proposed.

*Yours
R B Bone*

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street



Translation of Message to The Queen

We have the honour to inform you that the people of Guinea, through their national armed forces, have decided this Tuesday 3 April 1984, to take in hand the destiny of the Guinean nation. To this end a Military Committee for National Recovery (CMRN) has been charged with the responsibility for directing the affairs of State. The CMRN, desirous of fostering the friendly relations existing between our people and yours, assures you of its complete readiness to reinforce the bonds of fraternal cooperation in the higher interest of our peoples.

With high consideration,

CMRN

Classification and Caveats
RESTRICTED

Precedence/Deskby
IMMEDIATE

ZCZC 1 ZCZC
 GRS 2 GRS
 CLASS 3 RESTRICTED
 CAVEATS 4
 DESKBY 5
 FM FCO 6 FM FCO
 PRE/ADD 7 TO IMMEDIATE DAKAR
 TEL NO 8 TELEGRAM NUMBER

9
 10 GUINEA
 11 1. The Queen has received the following message from the
 12 CMRN.
 13 Begins:
 14 L'honneur vous informer que le peuple de Guinee a travers
 15 ses forces armees nationales a decide ce Mardi 3 avril 1984
 16 de prendre en main les destinees de la nation guineenne.
 17 A cet effet un comite militaire de redressement national
 18 (C.M.R.N.) est charge d'assurer la haute direction des
 19 affaires de l'etat. Le C.M.R.N. soucieux d'entretenir
 20 les relations amicales existant si heureusement entre notre
 21 peuple et le votre, ~~vous~~ assure de sa totale disponibilite
 22 de renforcer les liens de fraternelles cooperation dans
 23 l'interet superieur de nos peuples. En fin haute et
 24 fraternelle consideration.
 25 Le C.M.R.N.

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NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword Ends.
File number	Dept WAD	Distribution
Drafted by (Block capitals) R DALY		
Telephone number 233 4576		
Authorised for despatch		
Comcen reference	Time of despatch	

Classification and Caveats

RESTRICTED

Page

2

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2 Ends.

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12 Ends.

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14 HOWE

15 NNNN

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CLOSED UNDER THE
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
ACT 2000

Over out

NNNN ends
telegram

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Catchword

Classification and Caveats

UNCLASSIFIED *Restricted*

Priority (if any) by

IMMEDIATE

ZCZC 1 ZCZC

GRS 2 GRS

CLASS 3 UNCLASSIFIED *Restricted*

CAVEATS 4

DESKBY 5

FM FCO 6 FM FCO APR 84

PRE/ADD 7 TO IMMEDIATE DAKAR

TEL NO 8 TELEGRAM NUMBER

9 GUINEA

10 1. Please deliver the following message from the Prime Minister
 11 to Colonel Traore:

12 Begins:

13 *congratulate you on*
 I was pleased to learn of your appointment as Prime
 14 Minister. *Her Majesty's* Government welcome the intention of the Committee
 15 for National Recovery to establish a form of democracy in your
 16 country based on the principles of the UN Charter. I look
 17 forward to the continuance of the friendly relations which
 18 already exist between our two countries.

19 Ends.

20

21 HOWE

/// 22 NNNN

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NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword
File number	Dept WAD	Distribution
Drafted by (Block capitals) R DALY		
Telephone number 233 3748		
Authorised for despatch		
Comcon reference	Time of despatch	

Classification and Caveats

Restricted

Precedence/Deskby

IMMEDIATE

ZCZC 1 <<<<
 GRS 2 GRS
 CLASS 3 ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~ *Restricted*
 CAVEATS 4
 DESKBY 5
 FM FCO 6 FM FCO APR 84
 PRE/ADD 7 TO IMMEDIATE DAKAR
 TEL NO 8 TELEGRAM NUMBER
 9 GUINEA
 10 1. Please deliver following message from me to Captain Facine
 11 Toure as soon as possible:
 12 Begins:
 13 I was pleased to learn of your appointment as Foreign
 14 Minister and look forward to working with you towards the
 15 continuance of the good relations which exist between our two
 16 countries.
 17 Ends.
 18
 19 HOWE
 20 NNNN
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NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword
File number	Dept WAD	Distribution
Drafted by (Block capitals) R DALY		
Telephone number 233 3748		
Authorised for despatch		
Comms reference	Time of despatch	

CONFIDENTIAL

MJ

cc Mrs. Ryder

Sir P. Craddock

26 March 1984

Guinea: Visit of President Sekou Toure

Thank you for your letter of 22 March.

The Prime Minister could offer talks and lunch to President Sekou Toure on Wednesday, 25 April. Mrs. Thatcher is content that HM Ambassador at Dakar should suggest that the President's visit to London should be arranged to coincide with that date.

AJC

Roger Bone Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

PC
①



Prime Minister.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Agree to offer talks and
lunch to President Sekou Toure
on Wednesday, 25 April?

London SW1A 2AH

22 March, 1984

John [unclear]

A.S.C. 23/3

Ms
mt.

Guinea: Visit of President Sekou Toure

In your letter of 25 January you said that the Prime Minister would be prepared in principle to see President Sekou Toure should he decide to visit Britain.

During Mr Rifkind's recent visit to Guinea, Sekou Toure said that he would like to pay a working visit to the UK and that he would be happy to consider any choice of dates which we could offer. The Guinean Prime Minister subsequently suggested a two-day visit in March or April, before the OAU Summit in May/June. Mr Rifkind promised that we would suggest dates for a visit soon.

For the reasons explained in my letter of 23 January we should like to respond positively to this approach by President Sekou Toure, who would expect to be able to hold talks with the Prime Minister during his visit. We understand that Mrs Thatcher might be free to offer these, followed by lunch, on 25 April; and we should be grateful for approval for HM Ambassador at Dakar, who is also accredited to Conakry, to suggest that the President's visit should be arranged to coincide with that date. We hope that The Queen would also be able to receive the President at Windsor Castle on the morning of 25 April prior to his seeing the Prime Minister.

I should be grateful to know whether the Prime Minister agrees to these proposals.

John [unclear]
R B Bone

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

Guinea: UK/Guinea Relats Jan 81

ROYAL MAIL

POST OFFICE

22 MAR 1984



Top copy
Oct 82

Sierra Leone
Relations



FUE

(u)

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

28 February, 1984

MR RIFKIND'S VISIT TO SIERRA LEONE,
GUINEA AND GHANA

The Prime Minister agrees that when Mr. Rifkind visits the above countries he may speak as proposed in your letter of 27 February.

R.B. Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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570

TOP COPY Sierra Leone
Oct 82 Relations RESTRICTED

cc Sir P. Chadee

①



Prime Minister.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

May Mr. Rifkind quote
you in the way?

London SW1A 2AH

27 February 1984

Jan Jh

A.S.C. 2 1/2.

Yes mb

Oral Message from the Prime Minister to the
Heads of State of Sierra Leone, Guinea and Ghana

The Prime Minister may wish to know that Mr Rifkind will be visiting Sierra Leone, Guinea and Ghana from 29 February to 6 March. It will be his first visit to West Africa. Mr Rifkind has confirmed appointments with the Heads of State of all these countries and it would add useful impact to these meetings if he were able to give each Head of State a personal oral message from the Prime Minister, especially since it is some time since a British Minister visited their capitals (in the case of Conakry, at least twenty years).

The messages would start with a general expression of goodwill and then be tailored to the recipient; thus for President Stevens a renewal of thanks for the way he stood by us during the Falklands conflict, and hopes that Sierra Leone's agreement with the IMF will help economic recovery; for President Sekou Toure good wishes for his forthcoming presidency of the OAU (at which he is expected to be a force for moderation); and for Fl Lt Rawlings, encouragement to continue his courageously tough economic policies (in cooperation with the IMF) and his rapprochement with the West.

The Prime Minister may be surprised that Nigeria does not figure on Mr Rifkind's itinerary. He had wanted to go there, but the Nigerians regretted that the proposed timing was difficult, as the Foreign Minister would be away.

[Handwritten signature]
(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street



FILE

W7

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

25 January, 1984

GUINEA: VISIT OF PRESIDENT SEKOU TOURÉ

Thank you for your letter of 23 January.

If the President of Guinea visits Britain on a private visit, the Prime Minister would be prepared in principle to see him.

R. I. COLES

P.F. Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

B.F.

Prime Minister.



Would you be prepared to see the President of Guinea if he came at a convenient time?

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

23 January 1984

Dear John,

A.S.C. 24/T

Yes ml

Guinea: Visit of President Sekou Touré

The Guinean Foreign Minister has raised with our Ambassador in Dakar (who is also accredited to the Republic of Guinea), the possibility of our inviting President Sekou Touré to pay an official visit to London in the not too distant future. A British businessman whose company operated in Guinea has told us that Sekou Touré asked him to convey the same message and the Honorary Consul of Guinea in London has written to suggest such a visit might take place during 1984 when the President will be Chairman of the Organisation of African Unity.

Sekou Touré's influence and increasing moderation on international matters could be useful to us during his OAU Chairmanship on such matters as Southern Africa. The most recent example of this moderation was at the recent Islamic Summit in Casablanca, where according to several of those present Sekou Touré played the leading role in gaining acceptance of the principle that Egypt should be readmitted to the Islamic Conference Organisation. There is however no practical possibility of arranging an official visit by him in 1984 or 1985. In explaining this we should like to let the Guineans know that should Sekou Touré ever pay a private visit to the United Kingdom or find himself passing through London Ministers would (subject to diaries) be glad to see him.

It is possible that Sekou Touré will take up this offer and so, before taking this line we should like to confirm that the Prime Minister would be prepared in principle to see Sekou Touré if he came. In order not to raise any false hopes in Guinea we would not make any mention of the possibility of an Audience with The Queen, although one would be appropriate if The Queen were available.

I attach a short note on Guinea and Sekou Touré which goes more fully into our reasons for wishing to pay him some attention if ever he decided to come here.

Yours ever,
Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

BACKGROUND NOTE: GUINEA/SEKOU TOURE

Guinea, under Sekou Touré, has been the maverick state of Francophone Africa ever since independence in 1958 when it refused to join the French community and de Gaulle pulled out all French interests root and branch. In the early years of independence Sekou Touré made no bones about his pro-Soviet/Marxist outlook and policies; the Soviet Union filled the void which French withdrawal had left, and the human rights record was very bad. However, in recent years the position has changed very considerably. Sekou Touré has realised that links with the Soviet Union are more of a liability than an asset, particularly in the area of economic and commercial development of Guinea's vast natural resources. He is thus turning increasingly towards the West and improved his human rights record to the extent that during 1982 he paid official visits to France, the USA and Canada.

Within the OAU Sekou Touré has become a voice of moderation on such issues as Chad and the Western Sahara. His influence on matters such as Southern Africa could be useful to us during his Chairmanship of the OAU in 1984/85 when he is expected to try to assume further the mantle of the wise man of Africa (in terms of length of office he is certainly the doyen). Elsewhere on the international scene, Sekou Touré is, with King Hussein and King Hassan, a leading member of the Islamic Conference's Jerusalem Committee.

Our bilateral relations are presently fairly distant. We should like to do more in the potentially very lucrative Guinea market where our major competitors are already becoming entrenched, but an outstanding debt of almost £2m to ECGD remains a stumbling block to a greater commercial thrust. If Sekou Touré came this matter would figure prominently in discussion with him.


OUT TELEGRAM

	Classification and Caveats RESTRICTED	Precedence/Deskby PRIORITY
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ZCZC 1 ZCZC
 GRS 2 GRS
 CLASS 3 RESTRICTED
 CAVEATS 4
 DESKBY 5
 FM FCO 6 FROM FCO 191500Z JAN 84
 PRE/ADD 7 TO PRIORITY DAKAR
 TEL NO 8 TELEGRAM NUMBER
 9 YOUR LETTER OF 6 DECEMBER: OFFICIAL VISIT BY SEKOU TOURE
 10 1. Lunzer called on the Department on 9 December to say that
 11 Sekou Toure wishes to pay an official visit to the UK in
 12 advance of assuming the OAU Chairmanship in June 1984. On
 13 the same day Ian Nicholls, Managing Director of Davy Mackee Ltd
 14 called on the Department to convey a verbal message from Sekou
 15 Toure requesting an invitation. According to Nicholls, Sekou
 16 Toure did not wish to involve his Embassy in Paris until he was
 17 sure that any request would receive a positive response.
 18 Nicholls also said that Sekou Toure had stressed that he did not
 19 want Lunzer to be involved.
 20 2. Sekou Toure's influence and increasing moderation on
 21 international matters could be useful to us during his OAU
 22 Chairmanship on such matters as Southern Africa. But there is
 23 no possibility of arranging an official visit by him during 1984
 24 or even 1985. You know well enough the constraints on the number
 25

NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword of
File number	Dept WAD	Distribution Limited WAD Protocol Dept OADs PS PS/Mr Rifkind Mr Squire
Drafted by (Block capitals) A Clark		
Telephone number 233 3269		
Authorised for despatch		
Comcen reference	Time of despatch	

OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

	Classification and Caveats RESTRICTED	Page 2
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2 of such visitors and we are sure that you would agree with us

3 that we should not try to substitute him for Diouf who is a

4 reserve visitor for this year.

5 3. However, subject to your views, we believe that it would

6 be best if you were to take an early opportunity to see

7 Abdoulaye Toure in Conakry and, with reference to his

8 conversation with you at the end of November during the PDG

9 Congress, speak to him on the following lines:

10 (a) When we met in Conakry you mentioned the possibility of

11 President Sekou Toure paying an official visit to the United

12 Kingdom. I understand that Mr Lunzer, the Guinean Honorary

13 Consul in London has also written to the Foreign and Commonwealth

14 Office about this matter.

15 (b) We would naturally welcome a visit. But as you are no

16 doubt aware official visits involve an enormous amount of

17 meticulous preparation and organisation. We are sure you

18 appreciated this from your own visit last September, and the

19 arrangements for a Head of State visit have to be even more

20 precise and co-ordinated. Such visits are therefore planned

21 as long as two years in advance and a programme of such visits

22 once organised is very difficult to alter because of the other

23 commitments of those involved.

24 (c) The Foreign and Commonwealth Office have looked very care-

25 fully and sympathetically at the possibility of including

26 President Sekou Toure in the programme of visits for 1984 and

27 1985. But I fear the programme is already fully committed.

28 (d) I should be grateful, therefore, if you would inform

29 the President that whilst we wish to continue to strengthen

30 our political and economic ties with the People's Republic of

31 Guinea, and were very glad to welcome you here as our guest last

32 September, we regret that it is not possible for us to ask

33 him to pay an official visit before or during his Chairmanship

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NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword of
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OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

Classification and Caveats
RESTRICTED

Page
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 2 of the OAU.
 3 (e) However, Ministers would be glad to see the President should
 4 he decide to make a private visit or to pass through London
 5 during his travels elsewhere (subject of course to diaries). It
 6 would clearly be useful to have as much notice as possible of
 7 any proposed visit.
 8 (f) I thought I should speak to you personally on this matter in
 9 order to explain, so that there are no misunderstandings, that
 10 whilst we do not want to place obstacles in the way of a visit,
 11 it is just not possible given the way we arrange official visits
 12 (for which there is a very long waiting list) to invite the
 13 President to London officially this year.
 14 4. We hope that a response on these lines delivered by you will
 15 be the best way of avoiding the impression of giving a rebuff.
 16 In the meantime, we are simply telling Lunzer that you will be
 17 speaking direct in Conakry as soon as you are able.
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 19 HOWE
 20 NNNN
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