

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.  $\frac{24}{1}$  Yes mf

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.

*Tom 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.

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.

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PC  
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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

W  
M.F.

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  
R B Bone

(R B Bone)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
10 Downing Street

Guinea: UK/Guinea Relats Jan 81

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR

22 MAR 1984





FILE

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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.