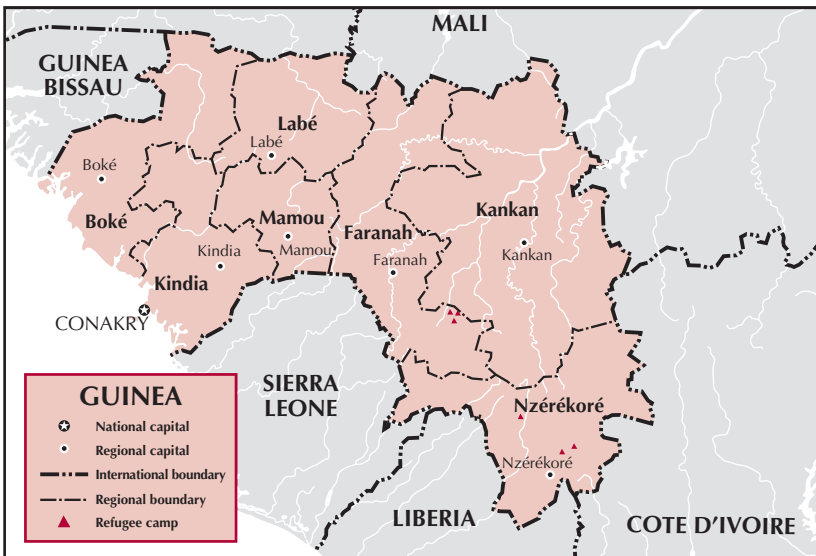


Refugee camps as of March 2000



Refugee camps as of April 2004



## chapter 5

**THE MILITARIZATION AND DEMILITARIZATION OF  
REFUGEE CAMPS IN GUINEA***By James Milner***Introduction**

Following a series of attacks on Guinean border towns by Liberia-sponsored rebels in September 2000, Guinean president Lansana Conté appealed to Guinean citizens to defend their country by repelling the invaders and by rounding up the country's 450,000 refugees, whom he blamed for the outbreak of violence. A wave of harassment of refugees followed, while Conté simultaneously entered into an alliance with a Liberian opposition group and recruited and armed an estimated 7,000–30,000 young Guineans (known as the 'Young Volunteers') in a massive mobilizing effort geared towards repelling the invaders. By March 2001, a tenuous calm had returned to Guinea, but the implications of the events of the previous years were significant. A fifth of the population of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone combined was displaced, Guinea's tradition of generous asylum was shattered, and armed ex-combatants circulated freely in the remaining refugee camps and roamed the country with impunity.

This chapter examines the militarization of refugee-populated areas in Guinea from 1999 to 2004.<sup>1</sup> More specifically, it documents the use of refugee camps as bases for armed groups and the targeting of refugees during fighting. It is divided into three main sections. The first section reviews security and political events from 1999 to 2003 and documents their impact on Guinea's refugee population. The second section assesses a series of governmental and international initiatives undertaken to restore security in the camps. The third section documents the situation as of October 2004, and highlights remaining threats including the continued presence of armed elements and small arms proliferation in refugee-populated areas.

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Much of the information and analysis presented in the chapter is drawn from field research conducted by the author and Astrid Christoffersen-Deb in Guinea from 19 September to 10 October 2004. A total of 50 meetings were held with representatives of the Guinean government, UN agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), donor governments, community and business leaders, civil society representatives, and refugees in Conakry and in the Forest region of southern Guinea, where the author was able to visit Lainé (near N'Zérékoré) and Kouankan (near Macenta) refugee camps. The author also benefited from his experience as a consultant with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Guinea during 2001.

The following findings emerge from this research:

- Refugee camps and settlements were a key target during the Liberia-sponsored attacks on Guinea between September 2000 and March 2001.
- The widely reported military, financial, and logistical support provided by the Government of Guinea to anti-Taylor groups such as Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), and the basing of these groups in and around the refugee camps, contributed to the militarization of the camps from 1999 to 2003.
- The termination of the Liberian civil war, the relocation of refugee camps, and the implementation of camp security arrangements led to the progressive demilitarization of the Forest region's refugee camps.
- Initiatives such as the 'Mixed Brigades' and the deployment of Canadian police officers have had a positive impact on camp security, but their effectiveness remains limited due to a mandate that does not allow them to engage in broader security planning outside the refugee camps and to a lack of basic materials and equipment.
- While the official—UNHCR-supervised—refugee camps are no longer militarized, the continued presence of armed elements and the proliferation of small arms in the Forest region as a whole remain significant sources of criminality and insecurity.
- Refugees are not responsible for the current proliferation of small arms in Guinea. Major sources of weapons in the country include the looting of a

state armoury in Conakry, the non-return of officially issued weapons, local craft production, and trafficking between Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, and Mali.

- More than 3,800 Young Volunteers have yet to be demobilized and reintegrated, contributing to insecurity in the Forest region and raising concerns that they may be recruited by armed political groups.
- The persistent rumours of more lucrative disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) packages in Côte d'Ivoire have contributed to a flow of weapons and armed elements from Liberia to Côte d'Ivoire through southern Guinea.

## Conflict and the militarization of Guinea's refugee camps (1999–2003)<sup>2</sup>

### *Refugees and the outbreak of conflict (1999–2000)*

From the first arrival of refugees from the Liberian civil war in 1990, through the outbreak of the Sierra Leonean conflict in 1991, the 1997 coup d'état in Freetown, and the resumption of the Liberian war in 2000, Guinea provided shelter for more than 500,000 refugees during the 1990s. Guinea's refugee population lived in relative security during most of the 1990s, and was able to pursue economic self-sufficiency through agricultural production and trade with the local community (Van Damme, 1999, pp. 36–42). In 1999 Guinea hosted a total of 450,000 refugees, the highest refugee population in Africa that year (USCR, *World Refugee Survey*, 2000).<sup>3</sup> Some 300,000 Sierra Leoneans lived around Guékédou and 50,000 near Forécariah, and approximately 100,000 Liberians were sheltered in the Forest region of Guinea between Macenta and N'Zérékoré.

This relative stability<sup>4</sup> began to change in the late 1990s following a series of cross-border raids on the settlements by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) of Sierra Leone (Amnesty International, 2001, p. 3), and the reported presence of Sierra Leonean pro-government *Kamajors* militias in Massakoundou camp in southern Guinea (LCHR, 2002, p. 64).<sup>5</sup> The US Committee for Refugees (USCR) reported that refugee camps in the region were 'dangerously close to the border' and that 'following several deadly cross-border

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raids by Sierra Leonean rebels, Guinean authorities declared a midnight-to-dawn curfew in some areas' (USCR, *World Refugee Survey*, 2000).<sup>6</sup> In response to these attacks, UNHCR began to relocate some refugees away from the border, relocating some 14,000 Sierra Leonean refugees before the start of the rainy season in July 1999.

As Sierra Leoneans were being relocated, Liberian refugees were being prepared for repatriation. Following the relatively successful July 1997 elections in Liberia, UNHCR announced that assistance to Liberians in Guinea would be terminated at the end of 1999, and repatriated some 13,000 Liberians in the first eight months of 1999. The repatriation was not, however, sustainable, as over 10,000 Liberians fled to Guinea between April and August as fresh fighting erupted in northern Liberia. This violence again spilled over into Guinea when Liberian elements attacked a Guinean border town near Macenta in September 1999, leaving 27 Guineans dead (FEWER, 2000). As a result the border was closed and the repatriation suspended.

As the Liberian civil war escalated, and responding to LURD attacks in July 2000 carried out into Liberia from Guinea, Liberian president Charles Taylor initiated a series of incursions on Guinean territory carried out by the RUF in conjunction with Liberian armed forces and Guinean dissidents (grouped into the Movement of Democratic Forces of Guinea, RFDG) during September 2000 (Szajkowski, 2004, p. 298). A first attack on 2 September 2000 on the border town of Massadou, to the east of Macenta, resulted in at least 40 Guinean casualties (Amnesty International, 2001, p. 3). On 4 September Madina Woula, on the border with Sierra Leone and south-east of the regional centre of Kindia, was also attacked, resulting in another 40 deaths (Amnesty International, 2001, p. 3). Two days later, on 6 September, Pamalap, a border town near Forécariah and only 100 km from Conakry, was attacked and held, allegedly by the RUF (IRIN, 2000a; 2000b).

These seemingly coordinated attacks, spanning the length of Guinea's border with Sierra Leone and Liberia, caused panic in the capital. On 9 September 2000 President Conté addressed the nation on television and radio as follows:

I am giving orders that we bring together all foreigners... and that we search and arrest all suspects... They should go home. We know that there are rebels among the refugees. Civilians and soldiers, let's defend our country together.  
(LCHR, 2002, p. 74)

According to Amnesty International (2001, p. 3), 'the President's speech is widely seen as a decisive turning point in national policy but also as implicit permission to the military, and the Guinean public, to go on the offensive against refugees in Guinea.' Refugees in Conakry were particularly affected. Approximately 6,000 urban refugees were detained in the capital in the days following the speech. Many more were evicted from their homes and subjected to harassment and abuse, both physical and sexual, by their neighbours, the police, and Young Volunteers.

### *The militarization of refugee populated areas (2000–2001)*

Conté's speech also reflected the feeling within the government that the Guinean army—lacking motivation, poorly trained, and under-equipped—would not be able to repel the invasion without outside support. The government therefore sought support from two groups. First, the alliance between Guinean forces and foreign groups based in Guinea was reinforced. Former fighters from the Liberian anti-Taylor group United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO), which regrouped in 2000 as the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), were mobilized along with the Guinean army in the defence of Macenta and Guékédou (HRW, 2001; 2002). Many of these combatants had previously been refugees in Guinea, were drawn directly from the refugee population, or had family members within the refugee camps, especially Kouankan refugee camp, near Macenta.<sup>7</sup>

Second, thousands of young Guineans were recruited into local militias to reinforce border defences. These Young Volunteers came primarily from the Préfectures located along the border. They were recruited and armed by the local Préfets, and sent to fight at the front line with little or no training.<sup>8</sup>

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No central registry of the Young Volunteers was kept, so it is impossible to know exactly how many were recruited, although estimates range from 7,000<sup>9</sup> to 30,000.<sup>10</sup> In addition to fighting at the border, these Young Volunteers established roadblocks around the country and entered refugee camps and settlements to search for rebel elements.<sup>11</sup>

With the support of the Young Volunteers and ULIMO-LURD, the Guinean military waged a seven-month campaign against the incursions. On 17 September 2000 Liberian-based elements attacked the town of Macenta, resulting in many civilian casualties, including Mensah Kpognon, the head of the UNHCR Macenta Office. A second UNHCR worker, Sapeu Laurence Djeya, was abducted and later released in Liberia. During the attack, the UNHCR office in Macenta was looted.

Additional attacks on Macenta and Forécariah continued throughout September. In October and November the fighting shifted into the Languette region of southern Guinea, a sliver of territory south of Guékédou that juts into Sierra Leone and partially borders Liberia. By the end of November RUF fighters had come close to capturing Kissidougou, an important regional town, after holding the town of Yendé for one week. Refugee settlements were also targeted in the fighting. According to Amnesty International, 'Katkama Camp, where the RUF reportedly attempted to recruit refugees to fight, was one of the camps particularly hard hit' (2001, p. 4).

The fighting reached Guékédou on 6 December. RUF fighters attacked from the south and west, as pro-Taylor Liberians and Guinean dissidents reportedly joined from the east. The UNHCR sub-office in Guékédou, the base for one of the largest refugee operations in Africa, was attacked, looted, and partially burned. Looted UNHCR materials from the sub-office and the regional hospital, especially Land Cruisers and communications equipment, were visibly used by both camps in the fighting, further reinforcing the public perception of a link between the refugee camps and the rebel incursions.<sup>12</sup> The fight for Guékédou lasted several weeks and resulted in the virtual destruction of the town. The hospital, post office, and other public services were destroyed in the fighting. In addition, an estimated 100,000 Guineans fled the fighting and became internally displaced.

Fighting in the area continued until March 2001, when RUF fighters attacked the Nongoa area, 30 km west of Guékédou. This was the last significant attack in the Languette, and brought to a close months of localized fighting in the Forest region of southern Guinea—stretching from Kissidougou to N'Zérékoré—and in and around Forécariah. Government officials estimate that the conflict resulted in the deaths of 1,500 Guineans and the internal displacement of well over 350,000.<sup>13</sup> USCR reported in 2002 that 'aid workers widely considered' the Government's estimate 'to be greatly inflated' and estimated the number of displaced at the end of 2001 to be closer to 100,000 (USCR, 2002, p. 79). During the violence, over 5,000 buildings were damaged or destroyed, mostly in Guékédou, Macenta, and Forécariah.<sup>14</sup>

The Guinean conflict also had significant implications for the refugee population. Tens of thousands of refugees were themselves displaced by the fighting. Following attacks on Forécariah in October 2000, one UNHCR official estimated that some 32,000 refugees were expelled from the town.<sup>15</sup> The majority of the more than 90 refugee settlements in the Languette were destroyed along with the refugees' livelihoods. In the midst of the conflict refugees were subjected to harassment, forced recruitment—both as combatants and as porters to ferry looted goods back into Sierra Leone—physical and sexual abuse, arbitrary detention, and direct attacks by all sides of the conflict (Amnesty International, 2001; USCR, 2001; 2002; HRW, 2002). Finally, the killing of the UNHCR Head of Office in Macenta resulted in the evacuation of all UNHCR staff from Forécariah, Guékédou, N'Zérékoré, and Macenta, and the suspension of all UNHCR activities outside of Conakry, leaving some 400,000 refugees without assistance for months. In addition, an estimated 100,000 Guineans became internally displaced.

### *Guinean refugee camps and the Liberian civil war*

Renewed fighting in northern Liberia in November 2001 further aggravated the plight of Guinea's refugee population. As the fighting drew closer to Monrovia in February 2002, prompting Taylor to declare a state of emergency, some 26,000 Liberian refugees crossed into Guinea, while many others were prevented from crossing the border. Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported that LURD stopped Liberian civilians seeking asylum in Guinea and sent



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them back into Liberia from border crossings at Ouet-Kama and Tekoulo. Many of those sent back to Liberia were forced to carry supplies and arms back into Liberia from Guinea, with the knowledge of the Guinean military (HRW, 2002, pp. 10–15).

LURD activities were based mostly out of the town of Macenta and from the Kouankan refugee camp. HRW reported that ‘numerous refugees gave detailed descriptions of the presence of armed LURD combatants in the refugee camp of Kouankan, where often uniformed and sometimes armed LURD rebels moved freely in and out of the camp’ (HRW, 2002, p. 10). LURD also used the camp as a base for their families, as a destination for rest and relaxation, and as a source for supplies, especially food and medicine. In 2002 the ‘UNHCR urged Guinean officials to remove rebels from the camp and threatened to withdraw from Kouankan entirely, unless the situation improved’ (USCR, 2003).

Although officially denied by the government, there is ample evidence of LURD presence in the country and of tacit Guinean support to the rebel movement (UNSC, 2001, paras. 174–178; 2003a, para. 68; 2003b, para. 105; ICG, 2002, p. 11; HRW, 2002, p. 10; 2003, pp. 18–25). As reported by HRW, ‘the Government of Guinea has long fuelled the Liberian conflict by providing logistical, financial and military support to the LURD rebels’ (HRW, 2003, p. 15). HRW further reported that wounded LURD fighters were evacuated to Conakry for treatment, that Guinean military officials provided technical support to LURD, and that LURD rear bases had long been established in Macenta.

Many also point to the personal link between President Conté and Sekou Conneh, the leader of LURD. Conneh was reportedly ‘based in Guinea for most of the past 13 years’ and enjoyed ‘close links with Guinean President Lansana Conté’ (IRIN, 2003b). Conneh’s wife, Aisha, is Conté’s personal clairvoyant, and Conneh was consequently ‘invited to become chairman of LURD because of his high-level contacts with the Guinean government’ (IRIN, 2003a). It is also significant to note that, when Conneh returned to Liberia in late 2003 to participate in the formation of a transitional government, ‘he travelled in a four-wheel drive jeep with darkened windows and Guinea government license plates’ and was accompanied by ‘a fleet of Guinean government cars’ (IRIN, 2003b).

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Refugees expressing a desire to return to their homelands of Sierra Leone, 11 February 2001.

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Of greater concern, however, is the alleged role that Guinea played in facilitating LURD's access to arms and munitions, in violation of the UN Security Council's arms embargo on Liberia (UNSC, 2001, paras. 174–178; 2003a, para. 68; 2003b, para. 105; ICG, 2002, p. 11; HRW, 2002, p. 10; 2003, pp. 18–25). A November 2002 HRW report provides specific details of how a significant number of Liberian asylum seekers were stopped at border towns by Guinean officials and handed over to LURD commanders (HRW, 2002). These asylum seekers were then forced to carry arms, ammunition, and supplies across the border to LURD bases in Lofa County. Many asylum seekers reported collecting the weapons from Guinean military trucks, some of which were still in their original wrapping, and then were forced to make the return journey several times before being allowed to seek refuge in Guinea (HRW, 2002, pp. 15–17). At the end of 2002, the presence of armed elements in the camps, along with the remaining Young Volunteers in the areas surrounding the camps, resulted in significant protection concerns for refugees and hindered the activities of humanitarian agencies, including UNHCR.

The outbreak of violence in Côte d'Ivoire in late 2002, coupled with the arrival of thousands of Ivorian refugees and some 30,000 Guinean nationals returning from Côte d'Ivoire, added pressure to this volatile situation (USCR, 2003). The Government of Guinea briefly closed its border with Côte d'Ivoire, citing security concerns, but by the end of 2002, the international donor community compelled it to reopen its border to allow Liberian refugees in Côte d'Ivoire to seek protection in Guinea. There was a general concern within the humanitarian community that the combination of ongoing conflict in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire would have serious implications for the militarization of refugee camps near N'Zérékoré, Guinea's second largest city, located less than 100 km from both Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, and the home of a thriving sub-regional market.

## Restoring camp security: a review of responses (2001–2004)

### *Relocation*

As the violence subsided in early 2001, UNHCR began to chart its response to the upheaval. It developed a three-pronged strategy to restore stability to the refugee population and to address the protection needs of the refugees. First, a massive relocation exercise was planned to find scattered refugees throughout southern Guinea and transport them to new refugee camps in Albadaria and Lola Préfectures, both more than 50 km away from the border with either Sierra Leone or Liberia. Second, a series of transit sites was constructed on the road from Kissidougou to Conakry to facilitate the repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees to Freetown by sea. Third, a system was designed to identify and process the estimated 30,000 refugees in need of resettlement to a third country.

The relocation of refugees from the Languette and other border areas to new refugee camps was UNHCR's largest and most ambitious relocation exercise ever undertaken in Africa. It aimed specifically at ensuring the physical security of refugees and restoring the civilian and humanitarian character of the refugee population. It was widely recognized that armed elements had blended in with the refugee population and that the previous model of refugee settlements along the country's southern border was no longer sustainable. Between April and May 2001 some 60,000 refugees were moved from the Languette to the newly established camps of Kountaya (26,000 refugees), Boréah (13,000 refugees), and Telikoro (11,500 refugees) near Kissidougou. Sembakounya camp (7,500 refugees), near Dabola, was established to accommodate refugees relocated from Forécariah and Conakry (UNOCHA, 2002, p. 21). Later in 2001 and into 2002 the Kola and Lainé camps were established north of N'Zérékoré to accommodate refugees from Yomou and Diéké. Kouankan Camp, established in March 2000 before the attacks, remained open. Significantly, however, UNHCR closed Massakoundou Camp near Kissidougou in response to requests from local authorities, who had stated that the camp had become a base for rebels.

Specific activities were incorporated into the relocation exercise to help promote the civilian and humanitarian character of the new camps. The Guinean military, under the supervision of the Bureau National pour la

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Coordination des Réfugiés (BNCR), was involved in the exercise, and responsible for searching the refugees for weapons before the relocation. Military escorts ensured the security of refugee convoys (some as large as 40 trucks) during the relocation.<sup>16</sup> Lastly, the new camps benefited from more proactive planning for refugee security strategies. With the cooperation of the BNCR, a Mixed Brigade (see below) comprising some 100 elements of the police and gendarmerie was formed to maintain security in the camps.

According to a UNHCR official, 'the key strategic decision that resulted in the most significant and overall improvement of the refugees' security in Guinea was the Government's authorization and joint implementation of UNHCR's relocation proposal' (UNHCR, 2002). Visiting the camps in February 2002, a joint mission by the Commission for Human Security and the Emergency and Security Section of UNHCR's Geneva Headquarters 'quickly concluded that the general safety and security of the refugees in the six camps is incomparable to their situation in late 2000/early 2001' (UNHCR, 2002, p. 2). The mission found that the application of the strategies developed by UNHCR and the Government of Guinea resulted in the general maintenance of law and order in the camps. In particular, it was concluded that the formation of the Mixed Brigades helped focus security efforts in the camps and, along with the participation of elected refugee committees, helped ensure the civilian and humanitarian nature of the refugee camps.

Human rights organizations and refugee advocates, however, emphasize that the establishment of the new camps was not the panacea for the problems of refugee insecurity and camp militarization (HRW, 2002). In June 2001 violence erupted in Telikoro Camp, near Kissidougou, between refugees and the Brigade Mixte (BMS). Six officers were injured and 120 Sierra Leonean refugees were arrested, but the six weapons seized from the officers were never recovered. The problem of continued militarization, however, was most acute in Kouankan Camp, near Macenta, where LURD elements circulated freely. The NGO Action for Churches Together (ACT), managing Kouankan as UNHCR's implementing partner, was forced to withdraw in June 2001 after allegations that it was transmitting information to Monrovia on LURD activities based in the camp.<sup>17</sup> Efforts to close the camp in August 2001 and relocate civilians to Kola camp were suspended due to a lack of

funding. Moreover, while 60,000 refugees were relocated, some 75,000 chose to remain in the Languette without UNHCR assistance (USCR, 2002, p. 77) because they had intermarried with Guineans, wanted to remain close to the border, or were distrustful of the refugee camp environment after their experience in 2000–01.<sup>18</sup>

### *Policing refugee camps*

The BMS was formed by the Guinean government following the 2001 relocation exercise to ensure security in the newly established refugee camps. Drawing from both the police and the gendarmerie, the responsibilities and accountability of the BMS were established in November 2001 with the signing of a Protocol d'Accord between the government's BNCR and UNHCR. Working closely with the regional Bureau pour la Coordination des Réfugiés (BCR) offices, the BMS is responsible for policing within the camps, providing security for humanitarian personnel and activities and cooperating with elected refugee committees and the Refugee Security Volunteers<sup>19</sup> to promote law and order in the camps. Building on the success of the 'security package' approach developed in Tanzania and Kenya, UNHCR hoped that equipping and training security personnel specifically responsible for the camps would ensure greater security within the camps.

According to the terms of the Protocol d'Accord, there was to be one BMS officer per 1,000 refugees, including a number of female officers. According to the most recent figures, this ratio has been met in all camps.

**Table 5.1 The Militarization and Demilitarization of Refugee Camps in Guinea**

Camp/transit centre	BMS	Refugee Volunteers	Discharged in 2004 due to misconduct	Refugees	BMS : refugee ratio
Lainé	25	40	3	25,046	1 : 1,000
Kouankan	23	35	4	22,960	1 : 1,000
Kola	7	20	3	6,177	1 : 880
Nonah	4	20	3	3,979	1 : 975
Kuntaya	16	45	3	9,908	1 : 650
Telikoro	9	45	0	6,185	1 : 680
Boréah	7	25	7	4,063	1 : 580

Source: BCR, N'Zérékoré, October 2004

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While the quantity of BMS officers met the standards outlined in the Protocol d'Accord, there was a general concern that they were not operating at a sufficiently professional level.<sup>20</sup> Investigations of incidents were sporadic and inconsistent. Files and statistics were not being kept. Violent incidents between the BMS and refugees, on a smaller scale than the June 2001 incident in Telikoro camp, were documented. More disturbingly, it was found that some members of the BMS were engaged in illegal activities in the camps, including sexual exploitation of refugee women and children. It was concluded that the BMS did not benefit from the operational training required to effectively police the camp populations.

To address this training gap, the Canadian government undertook an agreement with UNHCR to deploy two Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officers to southern Guinea. One officer would be responsible for training the BMS in basic policing and human rights principles. The other officer would be responsible for ensuring effective coordination among UNHCR, BMS, and BCR. Two officers were initially deployed to Kissidougou for 12 months in 2003. Two officers subsequently operated in N'Zérékoré for six months, starting in early 2004.

Canadian and UNHCR officials jointly undertook a mid-term review of the programme in July 2003 (Herrmann, 2003, pp. 1–14). They concluded that the deployment had achieved 'mixed results'. There was concern at the lack of previous training of the BMS and the fact that the RCMP programme had to start with the most basic principles of policing. The policy of rotating BMS officers out of the camps and back into regular duties also meant that the benefits of the training were not retained in the camps. Following the completion of the second deployment to N'Zérékoré in June 2004, the Canadian government was planning an independent review of the programme with a view to possibly replicating the programme elsewhere in Africa.

While gaps in the camp security arrangements remain, especially an official solution to the question of rotation, the contribution of the Canadian deployment has raised the standards of camp security in Guinea to a level unrecognizable when compared to 2001. In fact, the improvement in camp security was one of the most positive and striking findings of the 2004 visit. More specifically, the ability of the BMS to provide statistics on incidents in

the camps was a significant sign of progress. Furthermore, relations between the BMS and the refugees have improved considerably. Refugee committees and refugee women's committees in Lainé and Kouankan both stated that they now have confidence in the BMS to maintain order and professionally respond to incidents in the camps.<sup>21</sup>

A shortcoming of the programme, however, was that it was premised on a distinction between refugee camps and refugee-populated areas. As will be argued below, this distinction is artificial in Guinea. For any reinforcement of policing procedures in refugee camps to have a real impact on the protection environment of refugees, such efforts need to be replicated in the surrounding area. Moreover, the benefits of the training provided by the Canadian deployment will be fully realized only if the BMS is provided with both the equipment necessary to fulfil its duties in the camps and if support is provided for further training. As of October 2004, the BMS lacked the basic equipment to effectively patrol large refugee camps such as Lainé and Kouankan. Basic communication equipment was also lacking. As a result, it can take up to two hours to respond to an incident. Finally, basic materials to support further training, such as paper and pens, are not provided in the current budget. It is also significant that the statistics provided on BMS deployment in the camps showed that 10 per cent of BMS officers have been discharged from their duties in 2004 due to misconduct.

### *Demobilizing Young Volunteers*

The presence of child soldiers among the Young Volunteers motivated the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to take the lead in developing a demobilization programme. In 2002 UNICEF appealed for USD 595,000 to support a programme seeking to address the reintegration needs of 5,000 Young Volunteers in 2002, arguing that a failure to reintegrate them would 'represent a serious threat to the country's stability' (UNOCHA, 2002, p. 59). Due to limited donor response, UNICEF was able to demobilize and train only 350 Young Volunteers from Guékédou and Kissdougou in a pilot project carried out between 2002 and 2004 (Koudougou and N'Diaye, 2004).

UNICEF made a further appeal in 2003 for USD 936,626 to support the reintegration of an additional 500 Young Volunteers and for the protection of



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Guinean and refugee children from kidnapping and recruitment by rebel forces; but the programme received almost no donor support. A final appeal was made in 2004 for USD 778,400 to support four related objectives:

- to stop and prevent the recruitment of children by armed groups;
- to sensitize local authorities, law enforcement agents, and military personnel on the provisions of the Optional Protocol on Children in armed conflict as well as their rights;
- to develop a mechanism and a database to monitor the number of demobilized children; and
- to demobilize and reintegrate 1,000 Young Volunteers and child soldiers.

The appeal reported that the 3,879 remaining Young Volunteers had contributed to 'a phenomenon of youth gangs who intimidate and threaten the population and show complete disregard for any authority'. The appeal further stated that, with the exception of the demobilization of 350 Volunteers in 2002, little had been done to address this issue (UNOCHA, 2004a, p. 56). It also expressed concern that this problem could be further compounded by the return of combatants from Liberia and that this combined population could provide a fertile recruitment base for new armed groups.

While UNICEF is the only UN agency in Guinea that has been following the issue of the Young Volunteers since 2001,<sup>22</sup> it has found it difficult to remain engaged in the issue, for two reasons. First, UNICEF is mandated to work only with children under 18, and many of the Volunteers who were children in 2001 are now adults. Second, there was very little funding from the donor community to support demobilization programmes. As a result, UNICEF's programmes for the Young Volunteers closed in June 2004. UNICEF has, however, had limited success in developing a response. Most importantly, it has convinced the Government of Guinea of the importance of the problem and prompted the Ministries of Social Affairs, Security, and Defence to form a cross-departmental working group to sustain work on the demobilization.

### *Controlling the borders*

As demonstrated by the army's initial response to the 2000 incursions, the Guinean armed forces' ability to prevent cross-border attacks was limited, mostly due to poor training and lack of equipment.<sup>23</sup> In 2004 Guinea had a total active force of 9,700 personnel, consisting mainly of the 8,500-strong army. To these numbers should be added the 1,000 gendarmes and 1,600 Republican Guards (IISS, 2004). In addition to these regular forces, the Government formed the Anti-Criminal Brigade (BAC) in January 2002.<sup>24</sup> Operating under the Ministry of Security, BAC is responsible for monitoring the border areas to combat small arms and narcotics trafficking. While BAC has drawn from the elite of the gendarmerie, it is also woefully under-equipped. The BAC division in N'Zérékoré, for example, has only two vehicles to patrol the Préfecture, both of which are currently being repaired.<sup>25</sup>

The attacks in 2000 prompted the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to authorize the deployment of a multinational force of two battalions to monitor the border areas between Guinea and Liberia. Following initial discussions by members of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council meeting in Abuja in October 2000 (AFP, 2000), the operation was established in December 2000, and Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal offered troops (Berman and Sams, 2003, p. 49).

Meetings in mid-January 2001 to plan the deployment, however, coincided with renewed attacks on Guékédou. Given the delays in the deployment of the force, and concerns about its ability to fulfil its mandate if deployed, Conté grew impatient and pursued a strategy of artillery attacks on northern Sierra Leone and of backing the LURD attacks on northern Liberia to create the buffer zone promised by ECOWAS. In late January 2001 the Guinean army and air force launched a series of attacks on RUF territory in northern Sierra Leone, with the tacit agreement of the government in Freetown (AFP, 2001a). On 3 February the Liberian Defence Minister confirmed that Voinjama, the capital of Lofa County and close to the Guinean border, had been attacked by LURD forces based in Guinea (AFP, 2001b). On the same day that the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) deployment was reported to be in jeopardy (AFP, 2001b), local newspapers in Sierra Leone announced the surrender of 15 RUF commanders in Sierra Leone.

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Two female soldiers stand guard as UNHCR officials review a military guard in Lola, southeastern Guinea, 17 May 2003.

As Guinea's military successes, proxy and otherwise, multiplied in Sierra Leone and Liberia, Conté's support for the ECOWAS force faded and the deployment never materialized. In fact, the deployment of ECOWAS troops after March 2001 would have hindered, not helped, Guinea's objectives in Liberia. By the time the Guinean army, supported by irregular and foreign elements, regained control of southern Guinea in March 2001, Guinea had ceased to support the ECOWAS plan, and fully pursued the defeat of the RUF and Charles Taylor through military means. This strategy seemed to work. The end to the incursions into Guinée Forestière coincided with LURD's capture of Voinjama. In May 2001 reports emerged that the RUF had been forced into a ceasefire by the combined pressure of the Guinean attacks and the expansion of the activities of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). Finally, on 11 August 2003 Charles Taylor stepped down as President of Liberia and went into exile in Nigeria. The following week a peace agreement was signed in Accra, ending Liberia's civil war.

### Refugee-populated areas in the aftermath of conflict (2004)

#### *Guinea's refugee population in late 2004*

In August 2004 UNHCR finalized a verification exercise in Guinea's six refugee camps and one transit camp, and reported that there were 78,318 UNHCR-assisted refugees in Guinea.

Préfecture	Camp/transit centre	Refugees
Kissidougou	Boreah	4,063
	Kuntaya	9,908
	Telikoro	6,185
N'Zérékoré	Kola	6,177
	Lainé	25,046
	Nonah (transit centre)	3,979
Macenta	Kouankan	22,960
TOTAL		78,318

Source: UNOCHA (2004b)

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This total of 78,318 represents a significant reduction in the refugee population from the 103,063 reported in April 2004 (UNOCHA, 2004b). While many refugees agreed that the statistics had been previously inflated, thereby allowing a greater number of people to benefit from UNHCR assistance, they also felt the revised statistics were too low. In Kouankan, for example, the refugee committee believed that, while the pre-verification statistic of 32,000 was inflated, the true camp population was between 27,000 and 28,000, as opposed to the 22,960 claimed by UNHCR.<sup>27</sup> As well, the BCR estimated the camp's population to be closer to 25,000.<sup>28</sup> Even if the statistics from the verification were taken to be a true representation of the camp-based population, the exact number of refugees in Guinea would remain unclear. The government estimates that tens of thousands of refugees remain unassisted outside refugee camps, while UNHCR includes in its statistics only the total number of assisted refugees.<sup>29</sup> For example, the Préfet of N'Zérékoré states that there are 44,000 refugees living in N'Zérékoré,<sup>30</sup> none of whom are reflected in UNHCR's numbers.

While the exact numbers are contentious, it is possible to generally describe the conditions of the various refugee populations in Guinea. The official repatriation programme for Sierra Leonean refugees ended in July 2004. Under the programme over 92,000 Sierra Leoneans were repatriated from Guinea with UNHCR assistance between the emergency returns in late 2000 and the end of the organized repatriation programme. A programme is now being developed for the 1,814 remaining UNHCR-assisted Sierra Leonean refugees, who are currently in the camps near Kissidougou, primarily in Boreah Camp. Hundreds if not thousands of Sierra Leoneans remain in Conakry and in other large urban areas.<sup>31</sup> The majority of the Sierra Leoneans in Conakry who identify themselves as refugees claim that they cannot return to Sierra Leone, have no prospects in Guinea, and consequently seek resettlement in a third country. Guinean officials generally tolerate the continued presence of these Sierra Leoneans who emphasize that, as ECOWAS citizens, Sierra Leoneans benefit from the right to move and work freely in any ECOWAS country.<sup>32</sup>

Given the change in the situation in Liberia since the departure of Charles Taylor in August 2003, the apparent durability of the ceasefire signed in Accra

shortly after Taylor's departure, and the stability of Gyude Bryant's transitional government, the facilitated repatriation of Liberian refugees began in November 2004. Until then Liberian refugees remained in one of Guinea's camps, primarily around N'Zérékoré and Macenta. Interestingly, many of the Liberian refugees said that they preferred their situation in late 2004 to the pre-2000 settlements. All 12 members of the refugee committee in Lainé camp said that they would rather live in the camp than in the neighbouring communities.<sup>33</sup> In fact, conditions in the camps, especially Lainé, are significantly better than in the surrounding villages, and refugees enjoy the freedom of movement necessary to allow them to pursue economic activity outside the camps.

Ivorian refugees in Guinea live in very different conditions. The 3,979 Ivorian refugees recognized in Guinea remain in the Nonah transit camp, more than a year after their arrival in Guinea. Unlike the camps where land is allocated and refugees are supported to build semi-permanent dwellings, the Ivorians in Nonah live in large tents housing up to 50 refugees. As a result there are greater health concerns in Nonah, with a greater number of reported skin infections and respiratory diseases than in the other camps.<sup>34</sup> There are also fewer activities in Nonah, which, coupled with uncertainties related to their status, leads to greater psychological problems among the refugees.

### *Secured camps?*

Representatives from the government of Guinea, UN agencies, NGOs, health practitioners, civil society, and refugees themselves agreed that refugee camp militarization was no longer an issue in Guinea. The research team asked the same question of each informant it interviewed during September and October 2004: 'Do you feel that the presence of small arms or armed elements in the refugee camps in Southern Guinea is a cause for concern today?' In all 50 interviews the answer was 'no'. The BCR<sup>35</sup> and security officials<sup>36</sup> denied any incidents related to small arms in any of the refugee camps in the 12 months preceding September 2004. This was supported by health officials in Laine and Kouankan camps as well as in Nonah transit camp, where no case of small arms-related injuries has been recorded since the opening of the camps.<sup>37</sup> Members of Refugee Committees denied the use of small arms in

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reported cases of intimidation, sexual violence or abductions in and around the camps.<sup>38</sup>

**Table 5.3 Reported incidents in Lainé, Kouankan, Kola, and Nonah refugee camps, 1 January – 31 August 2004**

Camp	Theft	Rape	Fist-fights	Incitement	Extortion	Child abandonment	Petty theft	Murder	Narcotics possession	Hunting accidents	Assault causing bodily harm
Lainé	17	3	28	5	0	4	22	0	2	2	0
Kouankan	11	3	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Kola	16	5	23	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nonah	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	44	12	59	5	3	5	22	0	2	2	1

Source: BCR, N'Zérékoré, October 2004

There has been a noticeable shift in security concerns among the refugee committees in Lainé and Kouankan camps. In 2001 many refugees expressed concerns about physical and sexual abuse, forced recruitment, and theft of limited humanitarian assistance by armed elements. In September and October 2004 refugees attributed their insecurity to their uncertain legal status, their inability to return to their country of origin, and their desire to be resettled abroad. While statistics provided by the BMS indicate that a number of crimes are still being committed in the camps (Table 5.3), the level of crime does not appear to be disproportionate to the size of the population and is not a significant concern among refugee camp inhabitants.

There was, however, also agreement that, while the refugee camps were free of small arms and armed elements, the Forest region in which the camps are located was not. It was generally held that the Forest region of southern Guinea, stretching from Kissidougou to N'Zérékoré and containing all of Guinea's refugee camps, had a problem with small arms and light weapons stemming from the events of 2000–01. Concerns were also voiced regarding the remaining Young Volunteers who have yet to be demobilized. As such, it is important to emphasize that, while refugee camp militarization does not appear to be a cause for concern in Guinea, the militarization of the refugee-

populated area—the towns and villages surrounding refugee camps—is a significant problem.<sup>39</sup>

Informants also drew attention to the prevalence of hunting shotguns outside the camps, citing a recent case where a refugee from Kouankan camp sustained a non-fatal gunshot injury caused by a local. Government officials, UN representatives, humanitarian agencies, civil society, and refugees themselves, however, agree that there is no link between the prolonged presence of refugees in Guinea and the proliferation, or use, of small arms. This lack of refugee identification with the small arms trade in Guinea is also evident in the absence of reported use of small arms in refugee camps and surrounding communities.

### *The continued presence of armed elements*

#### **Young Volunteers**

Government officials openly state that Guinea was able to withstand the incursions of 2000–01 because of the masses of Young Volunteers that came forward following President Conté's 9 September 2000 appeal. More recently, however, they have accepted that the continued presence of the Young Volunteers and the failure of efforts to demobilize them are among the greatest causes of insecurity in the Forest region.<sup>40</sup>

The recruitment of Young Volunteers was highly decentralized. Government officials believe that each Sous-Préfecture recruited a minimum of 150 volunteers.<sup>41</sup> Given that each of Guinea's 11 Préfectures comprises ten Sous-Préfectures, it is likely that a minimum of 16,500 Young Volunteers were recruited and armed. To this estimate, however, should be added the additional recruitment that took place in urban centres along the border and the massive recruitment that took place in Conakry. In N'Zérékoré town alone, for example, 4,500 Young Volunteers were recruited.<sup>42</sup> It is on this basis that estimates on the number of Young Volunteers recruited are as high as 30,000.<sup>43</sup>

Young Volunteers were promised future integration into the Guinean army as a reward for their service.<sup>44</sup> In a country with massive unemployment and few economic opportunities for young people, this was likely a strong motivating factor for volunteering. After March 2001, however, it became clear that not all Young Volunteers could be incorporated into the army, as the



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armed forces could not afford such an increase in its numbers and not all Young Volunteers were fit for regular military service. As an alternative to full military service, the Guinean army formed marching bands—*fanfare*—in N'Zérékoré, Yomou, Lola, Macenta, Guékédou, Kissidougou, and Faranah, and filled the ranks of these bands with Young Volunteers, regardless of their musical ability.

A large number of Young Volunteers, however, were never integrated into either the army or the marching bands. A number remain in the Forest region and are still armed. The recent steep increase of the price of rice, the staple food in Guinea,<sup>45</sup> has led some former Volunteers to pick up their guns and turn to crime. In the words of one humanitarian worker in Conakry, 'they are suffering, they have a gun, and they are willing to use it'.<sup>46</sup>

Research carried out by the Mano River Union Women's Peace Network identified 7,118 former Young Volunteers, many of whom have not been integrated notwithstanding the army's most recent efforts to disarm them in July 2004.<sup>47</sup> Based on information collected on the 1,728 Young Volunteers who registered in the Network's N'Zérékoré office in 2004,<sup>48</sup> it appears that 94 per cent (1,630) of the Volunteers were male, 53 per cent (990) had been integrated into the army or the *fanfare*, and 7 per cent were under 18 during the events of 2000—the youngest being eight.

**LURD**

Estimated to comprise between 3,000 (Brabazon, 2003, p. 7) and 8,000 (IISS, 2004, p. 375) combatants, LURD played a significant role in the fall of Charles Taylor in 2003. Despite Liberia's Disarmament, Demobilisation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration programme (see Chapter 4 on Liberia), the continued presence of LURD fighters has had a significant impact on security in the Forest region of Guinea. Given the inactivity of LURD and the loss of a common objective for its fighters, many LURD fighters have reportedly been drifting back across the border either to benefit from humanitarian assistance<sup>49</sup> or to engage in criminal activity (IRIN, 2004b).

LURD elements were reportedly involved in the June 2004 outbreak of violence between the Mandingo community of N'Zérékore and the Toma and Gherze residents of the surrounding villages, which lasted for two days and

involved the use of small arms and light weapons (IRIN, 2004a). The Commandant of BAC, whose vehicle was hit by machine-gun fire during the incident, believes that LURD gunmen played a role in escalating what was initially a localized inter-group dispute.<sup>50</sup> The Préfet of N'Zérékoré reported that more than 20 AK-47s were seized in the aftermath of the violence, but that the marking of the weapons had been tampered with so as to make it impossible to determine the origin of the weapons.

### **Pro-Taylor and anti-Conté groups**

Rumours abound in the Forest region about the formation of other armed groups, either pro-Taylor militias or anti-Conté factions. IRIN reported in September 2004 that pro-Taylor loyalists were recruiting former combatants in Liberia to travel to Guinea and train in the area around Mount Nimba (IRIN, 2004c). Rumour has it that the ex-combatants were each being paid USD 200 to join armed opposition to Conté.

Associated with this opposition is the little-known Movement of the Democratic Forces of Guinea (RFDG), a group reportedly led by army officers involved in a failed 1996 coup attempt against Conté (Szajkowski, 2004, pp. 147, 298) and estimated to be 1,800 strong (IISS, 2004, p. 375). RFDG elements reportedly fought beside the RUF and Liberia forces in the attacks on Guinea in 2000–01 (Szajkowski, 2004, p. 298). According to IISS (2004), RFDG has now disbanded, but so little is known about the group that this is difficult, if not impossible, to confirm. Government officials in Conakry, however, frequently mention the threat posed by exiled Guinean dissidents, and use this threat to justify limiting domestic political participation and protest. It is also possible that the RFDG existed in name only.

### ***Small arms proliferation and trafficking***

While there was general agreement that the proliferation of small arms and light weapons was a significant problem in the Forest region of Guinea, it was not possible to find any reliable statistics on the scale. Nevertheless, confidential meetings with senior government officials provided a useful overview of the various sources of illegal small arms in Guinea. Most importantly, all government officials interviewed stated that there were no links in their minds

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between the continued presence of refugees in Guinea and the traffic in small arms. A wide range of humanitarian and civil society representatives confirmed this view. While there is a common perception within the government that refugees played a role in the incursions of 2000–01—either by providing shelter to rebels or by acting as guides during the attacks—it is now widely held that the problem of small arms in the Forest region is not linked to the presence of refugees. Rather, the following appear to be the main sources of small arms circulating today in Guinea:

**The looting of a Conakry armoury**

In March 2001, 6 people died and 41 were wounded when an ammunition warehouse exploded at the Alpha Yaya Camp in Conakry (IRIN, 2001). The cause of the explosion was never reported, but it is now generally believed that the armoury was looted shortly after the blast. Arms looted from the armoury have been recovered in seizures throughout Guinea. It is generally believed, however, that some arms have remained within the country and are being used by criminal gangs. While many officials see this as the most significant source of small arms no details on the number and or types of looted weapons are available.

**Young Volunteers and retired military**

The second most significant source of small arms, estimated to account for roughly 5,000 small arms illegally circulating in Guinea, are those arms that were officially issued by the Guinean military but never returned at the end of service. This includes arms issued to the Young Volunteers during the 2000–01 attacks. Yet not all Young Volunteers were armed: according to a government report only 70 per cent of 2,380 Volunteers surveyed in Guékédou handled weapons and participated in combat (Republic of Guinea, 2001, p. 6). Several officials also explained that retiring police or army officers were not always required to return their service weapon upon retirement. These weapons therefore routinely leaked to criminal elements.

**Local production**

There is a significant local craft industry for the production of arms, mostly

shotguns. This is confirmed by the BAC seizure of 52 12-gauge craft shotguns between 2001 and 2003 (Republic of Guinea, 2001–2003). Hunting is an important source of income in the Forest region, and shotguns are a regular sight on the main roadways. There are no estimates of the scale of annual production in Guinea, and it is generally believed that these weapons are not widely used for criminal purposes.

### **Traffic from Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire through Guinea**

The most significant seizures of small arms in 2004 occurred on the border with Mali. From February to September 2004 small shipments of small arms—typically 6 to 12 AK-47s—have been seized en route to Bamako, the capital of Mali. More prolific, however, is the traffic of weapons from Liberia to Côte d'Ivoire, fuelled by differing DDR programmes in the two countries. Current DDR programmes in Liberia offer an initial payment of USD 150 for the surrender of a weapon and a further USD 150 when the participant reports for reintegration support in his or her home area. The programme in northern Côte d'Ivoire is expected to offer two payments of USD 450. This has created a traffic of arms and combatants from Liberia to Côte d'Ivoire through southern Guinea (especially N'Zérékoré), as ex-combatants in Liberia believe that they are able to collect an additional USD 150 for surrendering a weapon without having to ever participate in the reintegration elements of the programme. This traffic has had a significant impact on the security environment in N'Zérékoré, as ex-combatants often engage in criminal activity during their journey.

### **Conclusion**

Guinea's refugee population, which totalled 450,000 in the late 1990s, was severely affected by the 2000–01 cross-border attacks and the Liberian civil war. Not only did both sides target refugees during the fighting, but the infiltration of armed groups into the refugee camps caused suspicion and led to further harassment and displacement of refugees.

The full impact of militarization on refugee protection in Guinea, however, can be understood only in the context of broader refugee populated areas. A

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large proportion of Guinea's refugee population does not live in camps but in nearby villages. Continued small arms proliferation and the presence of thousands of armed and idle ex-combatants in the Forest region demonstrate that, while refugee camps have been relatively secured, significant concerns remain for the protection of refugees living elsewhere and for civilians in general. Furthermore, as the boundaries of refugee camps are not enforced, insecurity and small arms proliferation outside the refugee camps can have a direct impact on refugees inside the camps.

While the responses developed by national and international actors in the camps have achieved meaningful results despite very limited resources, significant threats to Guinea's stability require urgent attention. The failure to mobilize sufficient funds to disarm and reintegrate remaining Young Volunteers has the potential to threaten the country's internal security for years to come, especially given the uncertainty surrounding President Conté's succession (ICG, 2003). Guinea's stability also remains vulnerable to spillover effects from the conflict in neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire, including regional small arms trafficking and the movement of armed elements. In this difficult context increased border control and regional military cooperation stand out as prerequisites to avoid the suffering of the past.

### List of abbreviations

ACT	Action for Churches Together
BAC	Brigade Anti-Criminalité
BCR	Bureau pour la Coordination des Réfugiés (regional branches of BNCR)
BMS	Brigade Mixte (police and gendarmerie)
BNCR	Bureau National pour la Coordination des Réfugiés
DDR	Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
HRW	Human Rights Watch
LURD	Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police

RFDG	Rassemblement des forces démocratiques de Guinée
RUF	Revolutionary United Front (Sierra Leone)
ULIMO-K	United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy – Kromah
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USCR	US Committee for Refugees
WFP	World Food Programme

## Endnotes

- 1 The chapter is based on a more extensive report commissioned by the Small Arms Survey and the Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC) as part of a larger study on the militarization of refugee camps in several African countries. The study will be published during the second half of 2005. In addition to Guinea, it will comprise case studies of Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda.
- 2 Details for this section are drawn from Amnesty International (2001), USCR (2001; 2002), LCHR (2002), and interviews with UNHCR and NGO staff in Geneva and Conakry.
- 3 Many Guinean officials believe that the refugee population at the time was, in fact, more than 1 million.
- 4 Some have argued that this stability in Guinea, relative to Sierra Leone and Liberia, masked both the political conflict within Guinea that was taking place throughout the decade, especially given the 1996 coup attempt in Conakry, and the active role that Guinea is widely regarded as having played in the conflict affecting its southern neighbours. See McGovern (2002).
- 5 During the same period, United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO-K), under the leadership of Alhaji Kromah, was recruiting from the predominantly Mandingo urban Liberian refugee population in N’Zérékoré. Given that this refugee population did not live in UNHCR camps or settlements, this recruitment was largely undocumented. During the campaign of the 1997 Liberian election, ALCOP, the party formed by Kromah, drew the base of its support from refugees in southern Guinea. Based on author’s interviews with Liberian refugees in N’Zérékoré, 2001. See also Ellis (1995; 1998), and Reno (1998).

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- 6 It is important to note that a number of cross-border raids, targeting humanitarian supplies, were recorded in the early 1990s.
- 7 Interviews with UN personnel, Guinea, August 2001.
- 8 Interviews with Government officials, Conakry, 27 September 2004 and 8 October 2004.
- 9 7,000 is the figure used by UNICEF in its planning for demobilization activities for the Young Volunteers. See UNOCHA (2002; 2003).
- 10 Interview with government official, Conakry, 27 September 2004.
- 11 Interviews with local residents, Conakry, Macenta, and N'Zérékoré, 2001, and with Refugee Committee, Kouankan, October 2004.
- 12 Interviews with residents in Guékédou, August 2001. It is important to note that the RUF were more clearly identified as rebels by the Guinean population, while the status of the ULIMO fighters, as rebels or defenders, was much more ambiguous.
- 13 Interviews with government officials, Conakry, 24 September 2004 and 27 September 2004.
- 14 Information gathered by UNOCHA, on file with author.
- 15 Interview with UNHCR official, Conakry, March 2001.
- 16 This security was notwithstanding a number of events during the relocation, as reported by HRW. See HRW (2002).
- 17 Interview with humanitarian workers, N'Zérékoré, September 2004.
- 18 Based on interviews with refugees remaining in the Languette, July 2001.
- 19 Refugee Security Volunteers are representatives of the refugee population who reinforce the supervisory capacity of the BMS by patrolling sectors of the refugee camps. They are not armed but are trained to document incidences and report them to the BMS.
- 20 Interview with UN officials, Conakry, 23 September 2004.
- 21 Meetings with refugee committees in Lainé and Kouankan camps, 2 October and 4 October 2004.
- 22 Interview with UN official, Conakry, 7 October 2004.
- 23 Perhaps the exception to this rule is the four Ranger companies trained by the United States partly in response to the incursions. Another underlying purpose of US assistance was to increase Guinea's military capabilities in an effort to contain Charles Taylor and the RUF. No lethal equipment was provided during the training, which the US undertook in 2002 (Berman, 2002, p. 33). This battalion was not, however, deployed to the border region as initially planned, but has been used to address internal security concerns. Interview with US Embassy staff, Conakry, 7 October 2004.
- 24 Interview with senior government official, Conakry, 8 October 2004.

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**CHAPTER 5** THE MILITARIZATION AND DEMILITARIZATION OF REFUGEE CAMPS IN GUINEA

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- 25 Interview with BAC Commandant, N'Zérékoré, 4 October 2004.
- 26 The problem of reliable and verifiable statistics was repeated throughout the field research. A range of statistics—concerning local and refugee populations, medical data, police reports involving small arms, and details of arms seizures—were either unavailable or lacking in credibility. This problem with statistics is the result of a lack of both the necessary training and resources to gather and maintain baseline data, and has been a long-standing concern in the refugee programme in Guinea (USCR, 2002, p. 76.) As a result, statistics contained in this chapter are meant to substantiate findings derived from interviews and secondary sources.
- 27 Meeting with refugee committee, Kouankan camp, 4 October 2004.
- 28 Meeting with camp administrator, Kouankan camp, Macenta, 4 October 2004.
- 29 This is not an exception, though. Tanzania, for example, has 476,000 UNHCR-assisted refugees and some 180,000 unassisted refugees who have lived in settlements for over 30 years.
- 30 Interview with Préfet de N'Zérékoré, N'Zérékoré, 1 October 2004.
- 31 Meeting with urban refugees, Conakry, 27 September and 8 October 2004.
- 32 Meeting with government official, Conakry, 24 September 2004. While ECOWAS treaties provide for the free movement of ECOWAS citizens between member states, especially according to the 1979 Protocol Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Residence and Free Establishment, this right is only for a temporary 90-day period, after which the stay of the ECOWAS citizen must be regularized according to the nationality and citizenship laws of the individual member state. The spirit of this provision has been rather loosely applied to remaining Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea.
- 33 Meeting with refugee committee, Lainé Camp, 2 October 2004.
- 34 Meeting with refugee health NGO representatives, N'Zérékoré, 30 September 2004.
- 35 Meetings with camp administrators, Lainé camp, 2 October 2004, and Kouankan camp, 4 October 2004
- 36 Meeting with UN staff, Conakry, 23 September 2004
- 37 Meetings with NGO health representatives, N'Zérékoré, 30 September 2004, Kouankan camp, 4 October 2004, and Conakry, 24 September 2004.
- 38 Meetings with refugee committee, Lainé Camp, 2 October 2004, and Kouankan camp, 4 October 2004; and meeting with Refugee Women's Committee, Lainé camp, 2 October 2004
- 39 For a useful overview of the prevailing security situation in the Forest region of southern Guinea, see ICG (2003) and Melly (2003).
- 40 Interview with government officials in Conakry and N'Zérékoré, 24 September, 27 September, and 29 September 2004.



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- 41 Interview with government officials, N'Zérékoré, 29 September 2004.
- 42 Interview with the Préfet of N'Zérékoré, 1 October 2004.
- 43 Interview with government official, Conakry, 27 September 2004.
- 44 Interview with government official, Conakry, 27 September 2004.
- 45 The price of rice has almost doubled in the past year, from GNF 50,000 to GNF 90,000 (USD 25.5 to USD 45.9) for a 50 kilo bag of rice. This rapid rise led to rice riots in Conakry in June 2004. See IRIN (2004b).
- 46 Interview with humanitarian worker, Conakry, 22 September 2004.
- 47 Meeting with the President of the Mano River Union Women's Peace Network, Conakry, 24 September 2004.
- 48 It is important to note that this number represents only 38 per cent of the number of Young Volunteers reported by the Préfet of N'Zérékoré.
- 49 Significantly, however, the head of the World Food Programme (WFP) in Guinea stated that he had not heard of a single report of food assistance being leaked to LURD in the previous 12 months. Interview with Country Director and Representative, WFP, Conakry, September 2004.
- 50 Interview, Commandant of BAC, N'Zérékoré, 4 October 2004.

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