

# African Elections Factsheet Series: Guinea Presidential Elections

In 2020, a significant number of elections are scheduled or have already taken place in Africa with a large number of them occurring in the last quarter of the year. The CIP Africa Program is tracking upcoming Q4 elections through a factsheet series for researchers, policymakers and the general public who are looking for the key facts surrounding these elections.

AP Factsheet: 16 October 2020 ([click here](#) for interactive version)

## When is Guinea's Election?



Current Guinean President Alpha Conde

## What Type of Election is it?

Presidential

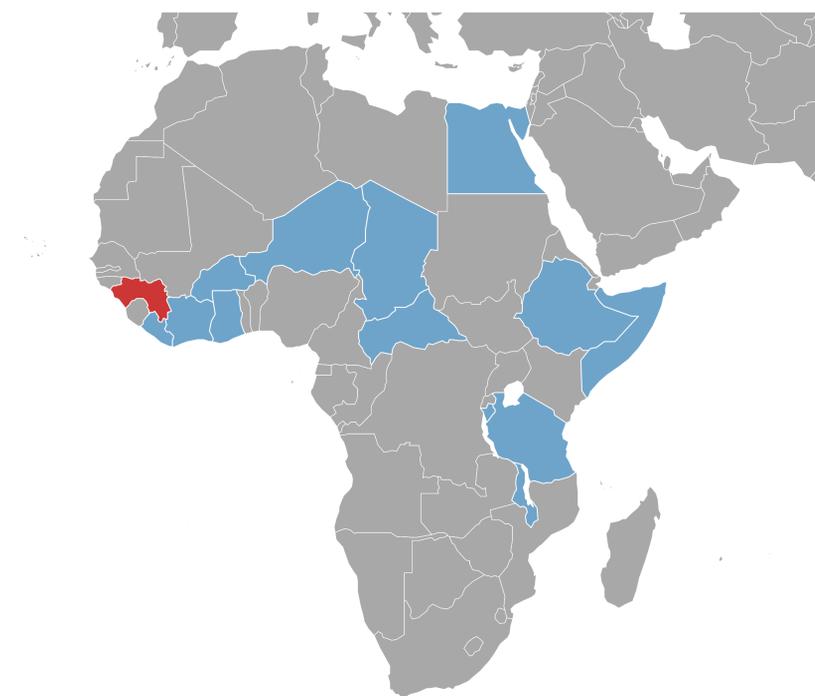
Two round system, with a runoff election if no candidate receives over 50% of the vote in the first round.

## What does the Constitution Say?

- The 2010 constitution of Guinea stated that the head of state's term in office is 5 years and renewable only once.
- In March 2020, the people of Guinea voted to change the constitution in a referendum. The change now extends the president's term to 6 years renewable once. Opposition leaders called for their supporters to boycott the referendum.
- According to the Independent National Electoral Commission, 92% of voters voted in favor of the change. About 2.85 million of 5.2 million eligible voters cast their ballot in favour of the new constitution (61 percent) according to state authorities.

## 2020 Elections Happening in Africa

Countries in blue all have elections in 2020 while red highlights Guinea, the focus of this factsheet.



Country	Type of Election	Date	Head of State Term Limit	Head of State Term Length
Burundi	Presidential and Legislative	20 May	2	7 years
Malawi	Presidential	23 June	2	5 years
Seychelles	Presidential	22-24 October (subject to change due to COVID-19)	2	5 years
Tanzania	Presidential and Legislative	28 October	2	5 years
Ivory Coast	Presidential and Legislative	31 October	2	5 years
Guinea	Presidential	18 October	2	5 years
Burkina Faso	Presidential and Legislative	22 November	2	5 years
Ghana	Presidential and Legislative	7 December	2	4 years
Liberia	Parliamentary	8 December	2	6 years
Chad	Parliamentary	13 December	None	5 years
Central African Republic	Presidential and Legislative	27 December	2	5 years
Niger	Presidential and Legislative	27 December	2	5 years
Somalia	Parliamentary	31 December	2	4 years
Egypt	Parliamentary	TBD (originally meant to take place in May 2020)	2	6 years
Ethiopia	Parliamentary	2021 (formerly Aug 29, postponed due to COVID-19)	None	None

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## Who is Running?

- 12 candidates, including current President Alpha Conde were approved by the constitutional court on 9 September.
- Following the constitutional amendment, Conde is running for a third term as the candidate of the Rally of the Guinean People (RPG), the current ruling party which argues that the new constitution does not apply to previous presidents.
- Other candidates include former premier and leading opposition leader Cellou Dalein Diallo, 68, who is running as the candidate of the UFDG (Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea), the main opposition party and Conde's main opponent in the 18 October election.
- Many believe that President Conde's third term is illegal, since the 2010 constitution provided for a maximum of two 5-year mandates.
- Opponents of the 82-year-old leader do not believe his name should be on the ballot for the elections on 18 October.
- The National Front for the Defense of the Constitution (FNDC), of which Cellou Diallo is a central figure, was among those who called for protests. The FNDC is an alliance of non-governmental and civil society organizations that was formed ahead of the 22 March referendum of the constitution, the group made pleas for that vote to be boycotted.
- Conde and Diallo are from two different ethnic groups and their supporters largely fall within these groups. President Conde's Rally of the Guinean People (RPG) party is largely backed by his ethnic group, the Malinke people. Diallo's party the Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea (UFDG) is backed by Fulani people (the majority ethnic group), although both candidates insist they are pluralist.



Cellou Dalein Diallo, former Prime Minister and Conde's main opponent in the 2020 race.

## Current Climate

- Diplomatic tensions are also now running high due to the elections
- Various governments and international institutions expressed concerns and criticism regarding the referendum including ECOWAS, the AU, the UN, the EU and France.
- Conde's bid has sparked violence across the country, including his party's stronghold of Kankan, the nation's third-largest city. Clashes between protesters and security forces have resulted in several deaths and injuries.
- Amid concerns of election violence, ECOWAS, the African Union and the United Nations led a tripartite mission to Conakry from 30th September to 4th October. Ahead of the elections, the country has closed its border with Guinea Bissau and Senegal.
- The United Nations expressed alarm at the rise in "ethnically charged hate speech" surrounding the elections and believe violence may erupt.
- On Monday 11 October, the anti-Conde coalition, FNDC, published a tally of the number of protesters killed since protests began: 92.

## A Little Bit of History

- In 2010, Conde became Guinea's first democratically-elected president. He was reelected in 2015 for his second and final five-year term under the 2010 constitution, however, critics say he has become increasingly authoritarian, pointing to the arrests of protest leaders amongst other things.
- This could lead to a repeat of the political events of 10 years ago. In the 2010 presidential race, Diallo was initially in the lead but after clashes, Conde won the run-off and became president.