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Statement – Guinea: Killing of peaceful protesters and detention of two human rights defenders

Front Line Defenders condemns the killing of at least five peaceful protesters during the peaceful protests of 20 October 2022 and the detention of two human rights defenders in Guinea. The protest was organised by civil society organisations to denounce the ruling of the military transition authorities and the detention of two leaders of the Front National pour la Defense de la Constitution (FNDC) since 30 July 2022.

On Saturday 30 July 2022, human rights defenders **Oumar Sylla** and **Ibrahima Diallo**, members of the organizations Front National pour la Defense de la Constitution (FNDC) and Tournons la Page Guinée (TLP-Guinée) were arbitrarily arrested at their respective homes for having called for a demonstration on 28 July 2022 against the management of power by the military transition led by Colonel Mamadi Doumbouya. Both human rights defenders are detained at the civil prison of Conakry, after having been charged with "participation in a prohibited assembly, looting, destruction of public and private property, intentional assault and battery".

The FNDC, which mainly led uninterrupted protests across the country from 2018 to 2021, denounce the change in the Constitution to allow former President Alpha Conde to seek for a third term. Alpha Conde's power was overthrown by a military coup in September 2021, which led to the current transition led by Colonel Mamadi Doumbouya. Since in power, Colonel Mamadi Doumbouya, started ruling the country with an iron hand.

On 13 May 2022, the military transition announced a ban on all the protests until the start of the electoral campaign that will take place in two years. The ban ignited the FNDC movement to call for peaceful protests across the country in June and July 2022, to denounce the leadership and ruling of the military transition and ask for a more inclusive dialogue between the civil society and the government. In response to these protests, the transition government banned all the peaceful protest during the transition period, arrested some leaders of FNDC and dissolved the FNDC movement on 9 August 2022.

Front Line Defenders condemns the excessive use of force and killing of all the peaceful protesters during the 20 October 2022 protest. The organization expresses further concern at the dissolution of the FNDC movement, and the ban on all the protests until electoral campaigns, which are a fundamental right consecrated within the Guinea Constitution. Front Line Defenders calls on the Guinea authorities to carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the killings of the peaceful protesters, with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards. It also calls on the release of human rights defenders Oumar Sylla and Ibrahima Diallo, and ensure that human rights defenders in Guinea are free to exercise their fundamental rights granted by the Constitution.