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Acting UN High Commissioner for Human Rights welcomes opening of trial for massacre in Guinea 13 years ago

28 September 2022

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GENEVA (28 September 2022) – Acting UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Nada Al-Nashif today welcomed the opening of the trial in relation to serious human rights violations committed during the events of 28 September 2009 in Guinea.

On that day, Guinean security and military forces attacked a peaceful political rally at Conakry Stadium, which resulted in at least 156 people disappeared or killed - many of them tortured to death and their corpses buried in mass graves - and at least 109 girls and women victims of sexual violence, including sexual mutilation and sexual slavery.

Eleven men have been indicted in relation to the massacre. The UN Commission of Inquiry in 2009 concluded that there was a "strong presumption that crimes against humanity were committed" and that "there are reasonable grounds to suspect individual criminal responsibility".

"Victims and relatives have been waiting for 13 years for truth, justice and reparations. Today's opening of this long-awaited judicial process is a crucial step for Guinea in its fight against impunity," Al-Nashif said.

In the aftermath of the events, the UN Commission of Inquiry with the support of the UN Human Rights Office was mandated to establish the facts and circumstances of the event, and to identify those responsible and make recommendations.

"Since 2009, we have been advocating for fair and independent trials. We call on all the authorities involved to ensure that this important trial is conducted in a victim-sensitive manner, and in accordance with international standards and due process," Al-Nashif added.

The Acting Human Rights Chief said that such international standards include ensuring judges can carry out their duties independently without interference or obstruction.

The UN Human Rights Office, which will monitor the progress of the trial and respect for international norms and standards, reiterates its

commitment to continue supporting the Guinean authorities' efforts to promote and protect human rights.

"Accountability is essential for wounds to heal and for reconciliation," Al-Nashif stressed.

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