

Conclusions of the Report of the United Nations Security Council Special Mission
to the Republic of Guinea established under Resolution 289 (1970), December 3, 1970.

From the information received and the observations made by the Special Mission during its visit to Guinea an outline of the events of 22-23 November 1970 clearly emerges.

During the night between 21 and 22 November a naval force appeared off the coast of Conakry. It consisted of two troop-carrying ships described as being of the type known as LST during the Second World War, as well as three or four smaller patrol boats.

In the early hours of 22 November troops were taken ashore in a number of motor-boats. The strength of the invading force seems to have been between 350-400 men. They wore uniforms resembling those used by the army of the Republic of Guinea, without any insignia, except green armbands. They were armed with infantry weapons, including bazookas and mortars.

The force split into several groups. Some of the groups were assigned to strategic points in Conakry, such as army camps, the airport, and the electric power station. One group demolished the summer residence of the President of the Republic of Guinea, while another made an abortive attempt to assault the presidential palace. The headquarters of the PAIGC was also attacked. The invaders occupied an army camp in which Guineans imprisoned for activities directed against the government, as well as the Portuguese captured in the fighting with the PAIGC, were being held; the prisoners were released, and some of them, among them the Portuguese prisoners, were apparently taken back to the ships. The motor-boats were seen to make frequent trips between the ships and the shore.

Fighting continued at various points in the city until the morning of 23 November, after which the raiders withdrew to their ships and departed. The number of casualties is not known to the Special Mission with any degree of certainty. According to Guinean authorities, over 100 attackers are being held as prisoners.

The operation seems to have been well planned and carried out with professional skill and precision. The pattern of the operation suggests its possible aims and objectives. The attack against the residence of the President of the Republic of Guinea, coupled with the freeing of the Guinean prisoners, supports the belief expressed by the representatives of the Government of the Republic of Guinea that one purpose of the attack was to overthrow the Government and replace it with dissident elements. Another objective seems to have been to strike at the leadership and headquarters of the PAIGC and thus weaken the liberation movement. A further objective was obviously the freeing of Portuguese prisoners.

As to the origin of the invasion, the use of naval ships indicated that an external power was involved. The representatives of the Government of the Republic of Guinea had no doubt that this power was Portugal. This view was supported by information from other sources, including the prisoners interviewed by the Special Mission, as well as eye-witness accounts of independent observers and material evidence.

After a thorough analysis of all the material it has gathered concerning the external armed attack launched from the sea against the Republic of Guinea, the Special Mission has reached the considered opinion that:

(a) The ships used to transfer the invading force to Guinean waters were manned by predominantly white Portuguese troops and commanded by white Portuguese officers,

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(b) The force consisted of units of Portuguese armed forces, mainly African troops from Guinea (Bissau) under the command of the regular white Portuguese officers, as well as a contingent composed of dissident Guineans trained and armed on the territory of Guinea (Bissau).

In the best judgement of the Special Mission, the invading force was assembled in Guinea (Bissau). The invasion of the territory of the Republic of Guinea on 22-23 November was carried out by naval and military units of the Portuguese armed forces, acting in conjunction with Guinean dissident elements from outside the Republic of Guinea.

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