

Timeline of BSGR's Simandou saga

1997

- Rio acquires mining rights to blocks 1, 2, 3, and 4 of Simandou in Guinea

2005

- Pentler Holdings is incorporated by BSGR director in the British Virgin Islands
- First of several contracts signed between Pentler, BSGR and Mamadie Touré. Together the documents will promise her millions of dollars and a stake in Simandou in return for helping BSGR to obtain rights to the concession

2006

- BSGR granted exploration permits in blocks adjoining Rio's Simandou concessions
- Official launch of BSGR project in Guinea: Mamadie Touré and BSGR's representative in Guinea, Frédéric Cilins, appear with top BSGR executives in a video not seen publicly until posted online by Global Witness in 2013

July 2008

- Blocks 1 and 2 of Simandou confiscated from Rio Tinto

December 2008

- Blocks 1 and 2 of Simandou granted to BSGR
- Guinea's dictator Lansana Conté dies after 24 years in power and Moussa Dadis Camara seizes power in a military coup

April 2010

- Vale agrees to pay \$2.5bn for a 51 per cent stake in BSGR's interest in Simandou

August 2010

- Agreement between Pentler and Touré's company, Matinda Holdings, promises her \$5 million in two instalments

July-August 2010

- BSGR advisor and Cilins' business partner Avraham Lev Ran wires \$250,000 from Israel to Touré in the US, according to his 2013 indictment. Cilins also paid two cheques for a total of \$150,000 to Touré during 2010, prosecution alleges on 3 July 2013, citing bank records

December 2010

- President Alpha Condé takes office after election following shooting of Camara

October 2012

- Vale puts Simandou project on hold, citing falling iron ore prices, FT reports
- Guinean mining committee writes to BSGR detailing bribery allegations

December 2012

- BSGR responds to mining committee, confirming that Cilins worked for the company in 2006 and saying he “was in no way involved in negotiations for blocks 1 and 2 of Simandou in the second half of 2008”. BSGR says Touré was not Condé’s wife and that it never signed contracts with her

January 2013

- US grand jury opens investigation into potential breaches of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act relating to BSGR’s activities in Guinea

April 2013

- Cilins arrested by the FBI as he tries to leave Florida following meetings with Touré and charged with “obstruction of a criminal investigation”. In FBI surveillance transcripts presented to a US court he tells Touré the contracts must be destroyed “urgently”
- Global Witness publishes September 2006 video of meeting on Simandou attended by Mamadie and Cilins
- Vale says it is “deeply concerned” about allegations involving BSGR and intends to “cooperate fully with the US government and the government of the Republic of Guinea in connection with their investigations”, Reuters reports

May 2013

- Nava Touré tells BSGR Guinea and Vale in a letter that the Guinean government believes the contracts between BSGR, Pentler and Touré are genuine
- BSGR publicly confirms its relationship with Cilins, Lev Ran and a third partner, Michael Noy, saying the three set up Pentler independently. In the same statement, BSGR confirms Pentler held 17.65% of BSGR Guinea and that Touré attended the 2006 meeting. There is no reference to Touré’s relationship with Pentler

June 2013

- The New Yorker, the Israeli website Ynet News and the US website Main Justice identify Beny Steinmetz as CC-1, the “co-conspirator” described in the indictment against Cilins

August 2013

- Global Witness exposes BSGR director’s role in establishing Pentler