



Florida High Schools Model United Nations

FHSMUN 33 SECURITY COUNCIL

THE SITUATION IN COTE D'IVOIRE

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Abstract: Cote d'Ivoire was considered an African success story for several decades but now is more commonly associated with at least 12 years of continuous conflict. The UN Security Council has taken up the security situation in Cote d'Ivoire quite frequently during the last 12 years, although successes in diplomacy and peacekeeping have often been short-lived or undermined by violent internal power grabs and tensions between Ivorian and French politicians. Achieving a comprehensive settlement to the situation in Cote d'Ivoire is essential to creating viable opportunities for sustainable development throughout West Africa.

Introduction:

Despite being extremely fragmented ethnically and linguistically, Cote d'Ivoire traces its political development and character to the French colonization process and subsequent political culture. With the recorded presence of over 60 tribes at the time of colonization, Cote d'Ivoire perpetuated the concept of a "human puzzle."¹ Because of this, no one ethnic group ever ruled the country entirely, and the colonial government used this fragmentation to their advantage by ascribing positive and negative stereotypes to ethnic groups according to their reaction and adaptation to colonial presence and development. As a result of their acceptance and promotion of colonization, the Agni ethnic group was given preferential leadership, control of economic development, and the ability to name Abidjan the capital of the country in 1933, thereby turning the Southeastern region of the nation into a focal point for the country's seemingly continuous struggles.²

The subsequent development of the plantation economy was a period of fundamental change that set different regions of the country on their specific developmental paths. The plantation economy created a social asymmetry, but it was also a central setting for the successful socialization of the various ethnic groups to create the consensus needed to organize the country as a producer of cash crops, like cocoa. However, the preferential treatment of specific regions created tension between an economically successful East and a violent and poorly developed West.³ While the Eastern and Western regions grew farther apart, the rain-

¹ I. William Zartman, *Governance As Conflict Management: Politics and Violence in West Africa*. Brookings Institution Press, 45-47.

² Zartman, 48-52.

³ Zartman, 53-56.

forest filled North began to produce tradesmen necessary for the expansion of the plantation state.

Economic, social, and political development:

The Southeast region dominated Cote d'Ivoire's economy until the introduction of coffee in the 1930s. The explosion of this cash crop pushed the development of new farmland throughout the Central and Western areas, and the economic power subsequently shifted westward. This shift in farmland development added tension, and ethnic disparity was soon exaggerated by the new importance of the Central Ivoirian inhabitants, the Baule. The ethnic group was known for working in all areas of the economy and variety of social practices and integrated quickly into the cash crop economy. By 1959, over 200,000 African planters were producing large amount of cocoa and coffee in Cote d'Ivoire. Because of the sheer volume of farming activities, the traditionally elite title of plantation owners could not remain a privileged sector of society. Ivoirians of all backgrounds shared the same farming activities and depended upon political alliances for economic growth. Economic security grew to be so important that many emerging conflicts were mediated by economic exchanges while lasting social and political developments were pushed by the wayside.⁴

The nature of the emerging Ivorian social and political community was thus largely shaped by the French colonial system. The ethnic groups considered to be the modernized elites by French stereotypes focused their competition for administrative and political positions available in the territorial institutions. These positions gave the 'elite' Ivoirians control of the colonial structures of allocations of resources and rewards, more simply the power behind politics of distribution. This became the central form of governance as it was the most effective way to retain Ivoirian allegiance and participation in the political system. Positions in administrative and political institutions also represented the first form of social mobility because of its access to economic resources that were so highly regarded.⁵

At the end of World War II, the Ivoirian social elite could be classified as the traditional elites, old chieftains, French administrations, economic elites, planters and traders, or educated elites. With the defeat of Germany and the Axis powers, France offered its colonies greater representation in the French Constituent Assembly, and Cote d'Ivoire sent Felix Houphouet-Boigny, the Baule leader of an organized coalition of planters. Elected on a campaign to end forced labor, Houphouet-Boigny secured the passage of legislation ending the forced labor system in 1946 as a major victory for the Ivoirian population.⁶ Upon his return to Africa, he organized his supporters into a new political party, the *Parti Democratique de la Cote d'Ivoire* (PDCI). The PDCI worked closely with the colonial administration and eliminated colonial support of other political movements. While the PDCI was growing in power, the social elite decided that the Baule, because of their lack of an ethnic label and resulting lack of association with the colonial government, would become the political leaders in the creation of an Ivoirian civil society.⁷

⁴ Zartman, 59.

⁵ Zartman, 60-65.

⁶ Edward Mortimer, (1969). *France and the Africans 1944-1960 - A Political History*. 71-72.

⁷ Mortimer, 87.

Widely popular for his success in France, Houphouët-Boigny joined power with the multi-colony party, the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (RDA), to lobby for parity between African and French citizens. The RDA aligned with the French Communist Party originally, but by 1948, the Communist Party hung like a black cloud over the RDA. Recognizing this issue, Houphouët-Boigny moved away from the Communist Party.⁸ In 1956, he was the strongest advocate for the French Union, a federation of internally self-ruled countries under the executive control of a French president. But because of the African population's demands for complete autonomy, Houphouët-Boigny abandoned the French Union plan and solidified his political power in Cote d'Ivoire for the first independent elections.⁹

Political Independence and the rule of Felix Houphouët-Boigny:

After nearly a century of French governance, Cote d'Ivoire gained its independence on August 7, 1960 and proceeded to elect Felix Houphouët-Boigny, the widely popular political leader of the PDCI, as its first President.¹⁰ With a history of devotion to improving labor conditions and his thirteen year service in the French National Assembly, Houphouët-Boigny's time in office was highly efficient and authoritarian. His highly centralized and personalized regime came under criticism as being an archetype dictator with his rapid consolidation of power, but Cote d'Ivoire's economy grew rapidly during his time in office.¹¹ To create the 'Ivoirian miracle,' Houphouët-Boigny used the civil service of French technocrats and French aid to maintain higher prices, hoping to further stimulate production of cocoa, coffee, and other Ivoirian cash crops. Additionally, Houphouët-Boigny moved the capital from Abidjan to his birthplace, Yamoussoukro. He encouraged foreign investments in manufacturing and oil so much that by 1970 agriculture, a previous economic staple, accounted for only twenty five percent of the gross domestic product. By the 1980s, Cote d'Ivoire's per capita income was second only to the oil producing, sub-Saharan countries.¹²

While the country was thriving economically, the nation's political process and overall development was not accessible to all. Following rumors of coups in 1946, Houphouët-Boigny created an intricate power system that maintained control by both silencing and co-opting dissenters and by creating a group of loyal politicians that were personally indebted to the president for their positions, wealth, and prestige.¹³ This system grew for the next two decades. In order to give the appearance of opening up the political process, Houphouët-Boigny began to listen to the general Ivoirian population through national 'palavers' based on the traditional

⁸ "Biographies des députés de la IV République: Félix Houphouët-Boigny". National Assembly of France.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ronald Segal (1963). *African Profiles*. 287.

¹¹ Robert J. Mundt, (1997). "Côte d'Ivoire: Continuity and Change in a Semi-Democracy". In John F. Clark and David Gardinier. *Political Reform in Francophone Africa*. 187.

¹² Mike McGovern, *Making War in Côte d'Ivoire*, The University of Chicago Press, 2011 and Zartman, I. William. *Governance As Conflict Management: Politics and Violence in West Africa*. Brookings Institution Press.

¹³ Robert J. Mundt, (1997). "Côte d'Ivoire: Continuity and Change in a Semi-Democracy". In John F. Clark and David Gardinier. *Political Reform in Francophone Africa*. 187.

African custom of speaking with one's chief and encouraging indigenous involvement in the bureaucracy and other governmental posts.¹⁴

Although the country has been thriving economically for several decades, the recession of the late 1970s and early 1980s caused widespread problems in Cote d'Ivoire. Abidjan, previously a center of investment, now had a huge population of rural villagers looking for employment and the sudden downturn sparked protests. Additionally, Houphouët-Boigny was criticized with the failure to 'ivoirianize' the public sector, much of which was still run by French expatriates.¹⁵ In the farming communities, with falling prices for cocoa and coffee, farmers and migrant plantation owners suffered. Violence between Ivoirians and migrant workers from surrounding countries, including Burkina Faso, spread, while rampant inflation and severe droughts further exasperated these problems.¹⁶

At first, Houphouët-Boigny was able to deflect public unrest onto other government officials and begin 'ivoirianizing' the public sector while decentralizing municipalities. Regardless, protests continued. Defiantly, Houphouët-Boigny dissolved unions, closed universities and arrested protestors. International pressure from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the late 1980s forced Houphouët-Boigny to tax the impoverished populations, causing more protests.¹⁷ In April 1990, he announced the first multiparty elections in the history of Cote d'Ivoire. Due to the short notice and bureaucratic restrictions, Houphouët-Boigny won with a large majority; he would, however, soon be diagnosed with cancer and would spend much of his last few years in power in the hospital.

After Houphouët-Boigny: Escalating political unrest and the rise of Laurent Gbagbo

After Houphouët-Boigny's death in 1993, Henri Konan Bedie succeeded him as president. Implementing many of the same policies as Houphouët-Boigny, Bedie took measures to silence dissent and criticism. At first, he benefited from a healthy economy and made strategic economic alliances with key groups, like civil servants and rural workers.¹⁸ Falling market prices in the late 1990s, however, for Cote d'Ivoire's export crops cocoa and coffee put pressure on the economy and the president, while corruption and mismanagement led to cuts in foreign aid that only antagonized the situation. By December 1999, the model African county succumbed to its first coup. Military officers led by General Robert Guei overthrew Bedie and established a transitional government with Guei as president.¹⁹

In July 2000, voters approved a new constitution designed to return the country to civilian rule, but electoral elections held later that year were ineffective. After seeing his defeat in the public elections to Laurent Gbagbo, Guei shut down the electoral commission and

¹⁴ I. William Zartman, *Governance As Conflict Management: Politics and Violence in West Africa*. Brookings Institution Press.

¹⁵ "Biographies des députés de la IV République: Félix Houphouët-Boigny". National Assembly of France.

¹⁶ I. William Zartman, *Governance As Conflict Management: Politics and Violence in West Africa*. Brookings Institution Press.

¹⁷ "Economic and Political Issues of the late 1970s and 1980s: Growing Economic Problems" in *Ivory Coast: A Country Study*.

¹⁸ Samir Amin & Bernard Nantet (1999). "Côte-d'Ivoire". *Encyclopædia Universalis*. Paris.

¹⁹ "Ivory coast president facing exile". *BBC News*. 1999-12-25.

declared himself the victor.²⁰ Massive riots followed in Abidjan, killing at least 200 and forcing Guei to step down to allow Laurent Gbagbo to take office.²¹ Under the new constitution, individuals who were not born from two Ivoirian parents would not be considered to be Ivoirian and could not run for president or hold major office. This sparked further violent protests, and political leader Alassane Ouattara of the Rally of the Republicans was removed from the Supreme Court.²² Over fifty died during the outbursts, and a mass grave was discovered near a northern Abidjan suburb afterwards.

The First Ivoirian Civil War:

Despite an alleged coup attempt in January 2001, which was blamed on foreigners and resulted in large numbers of immigrant workers leaving Côte d'Ivoire, scheduled municipal elections were held in March 2001. The municipal elections marked an important turning point for Côte d'Ivoire as all political parties were allowed to field candidates for the elections. Ouattara's RDR party won in the largest number of communes, and following those elections President Gbagbo pursued a policy of national reconciliation and sought to decentralize state authority by organizing provincial elections.²³

In October 2001, President Gbagbo organized a forum for national reconciliation to address the issues that had polarized the Ivorian people, including the questions of nationality, land ownership, the disputed legitimacy of his government and the conditions of service of the security forces. The forum culminated in a summit meeting attended by President Gbagbo, Bedie, General Guei, and Ouattara in January 2002. In an attempt to settle their differences, the four leaders subsequently issued a final communiqué in which, among other things, they agreed to oppose undemocratic avenues to power, and to professionalize the security forces and improve their conditions of service. They further agreed to create a broad-based national electoral commission and a national body to address the question of land ownership.²⁴

Despite this, rebel groups attempted to oust the Gbagbo government in a nationwide attack in September of 2002. After unsuccessfully trying to seize Abidjan, the rebels seized control of most of northern Côte d'Ivoire and based their operations out of Bouaké and Korhogo. Initial reports had former military dictator General Robert Guei as the leader of the coup. The official government pursued claims that rebel reinforcements were entering the country from a bordering nation, most likely Burkina Faso to the north. As such, tensions increased between the two West African nations partly as a result of the status of millions of migrant Burkina Faso citizens living in Ivory Coast seeking jobs.²⁵

A cease-fire began on October 17, 2002 and held until the last week of November as government forces launched a new offensive with recently acquired helicopters and what

²⁰ "Ivory Coast timeline". *BBC News*. 2011-03-31.

²¹ "Cote D'Ivoire 2000 Legislative Election". cdp.binghamton.edu.

²² "Times Topics: Alassane Ouattara. 14 April 2011.

http://topics.nytimes.com/topics/reference/timestopics/people/o/alassane_d_ouattara/index.html

²³ United Nations Mission in Cote d'Ivoire. Cote d'Ivoire – MINUIC – Background.

<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/minuci/background.html>.

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ "Ivory Coast profile." 28 September 2011. *BBC News Africa*. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13287585>

appeared to be a unit of English-speaking mercenaries. Also, a new rebel group appeared, seizing several towns along the western border with Liberia. This group, calling itself the Ivorian Popular Movement for the Greater West, clashed with French peacekeeping forces that were attempting to evacuate Europeans from the area. A second western rebel group emerged, called the Movement for Justice and Peace, at this time as well – with loyalty to the late General Guei and his political leanings.²⁶

From January 15 through January 26, 2003, the warring parties met at Linas-Marcoussis in France to negotiate an end to the war. The parties signed a compromise deal on January 26. President Gbagbo was to retain power and opponents were invited into a government of reconciliation and obtained control over the Ministries for Defense and of the Interior. Soldiers of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and 4,000 French soldiers were assigned to maintain the predetermined boundaries. The parties agreed to work together on modifying national identity, eligibility for citizenship, and land tenure laws, the central political issues for rebel forces.²⁷ The civil war was declared over as of July 4, 2003 when the government and New Forces militaries signed an "End of the War" declaration, recognized President Gbagbo's authority, and vowed to work for the implementation of the agreement and a program of demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of rebels.²⁸

Resurgence of violence:

Despite the written agreement, true reconciliation did not take place, and in November, 2004, President Gbagbo ordered airstrikes against the rebel-held north and hit the city of Bouake. In this attack, an Ivorian plane bombed a French base in Bouake, killing nine French soldiers and an American aid worker while injuring 31 others²⁹. French forces then responded with an overland attack on Yamoussoukro Airport, destroying several planes and attack helicopters on the ground, while two government military helicopters were shot down over Abidjan. One hour after the attack on the camp, the French Army established control of Abidjan Airport. France flew in reinforcements and sent three jets to Gabon on standby.³⁰

Pro-government demonstrators rioted and plundered properties owned by French nationals. Several hundred Westerners, mainly French citizens, took refuge on the roofs of their buildings to escape the mob and were then evacuated by French Army helicopters. France sent in troops as reinforcements from their base in Gabon and from France itself while foreign civilians were evacuated from Abidjan airport on French and Spanish military airplanes. An unknown number of rioters were killed after French troops opened fire on the mobs.

After the French-Ivorian clashes in 2004, the two opposing Ivorian sides settled into a stalemate, which proved conducive to negotiations. On March 4, 2007, a peace agreement was signed between the government and the rebel New Forces in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. New

²⁶ United Nations Mission in Cote d'Ivoire. Cote d'Ivoire – MINUIC – Background. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/minuci/background.html>.

²⁷ "Linas-Marcoussis Agreement: Cote d'Ivoire" <http://reliefweb.int/node/151517>

²⁸ "Ivory Coast profile." 28 September 2011. *BBC News Africa*. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13287585>

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ "Ivory Coast seethes after attack", *BBC News*, 7 November 2004.

rebel forces leader Guillaume Soro was then appointed Prime Minister and assumed that office in early April, 2007. On April 16, in the presence of Gbagbo and Soro, the U.N. buffer zone between the two sides began to be dismantled, and government and New Forces soldiers paraded together for the first time, prompting Gbagbo to declare that the war was over.³¹

Continuing the cycle: The 2010 Presidential election:

Taking place between October 31 and November 28, 2010, the 2010 Cote d'Ivoire presidential election was initially designed to fulfill part of the peace negotiations at the end of conflict to the first Ivorian civil war. While the election itself should have taken place in 2005, the election was delayed multiple times due to continued violence during the first civil war and because of difficulties in organizing and preparing for the election.

Following the signing of a peace agreement between rebel forces and the government in March of 2007, the election was scheduled for the end of 2009. However, this date was pushed back several times before finally landing on 31 October 2010 for the first round of voting.³²

The election did little, however, to stem the growing the unrest within the country. Following the first round of voting, the country was at a tipping point since the former rebels in the north were still armed, there were still militias in the west, and neither armed group was willing to accept defeat.³³

Despite initial allegations of fraud, the date for the second round of elections was announce shortly thereafter. Results of the first round of elections were mixed. Some sources placed current president Gbagbo in the lead while others placed his prime opponent former prime minister Alassane Ouattara ahead in the vote count.³⁴ The difference in the vote count only fueled more speculation and anger on the part of the Ivorian people in fuel speculation that should Gbagbo be defeated in the second round of elections he would not actually step down.

The second round of balloting took place on 28 November 2010 with the results announced the following day. The result of the second round placed Ouattara ahead of Gbagbo with 59% of the vote.³⁵ It did not take long, however, for Gbagbo's supporters to question the validity of the results in the northern part of the country that was controlled by Ouattara supporters; most specifically, claims were leveled that Ouattara used corrupt means to swing the election results into his favor.³⁶ By this point, both sides were accusing the other of trying to win the election through fraudulent means.

By early December 2010, provisional results indicated that Alassane Ouattara had won the election that should become the next president of Cote d'Ivoire, but according to the president of the Constitutional Council, the provisional results could not be verified and the

³¹ "Ivory Coast profile." 28 September 2011. *BBC News Africa*. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13287585>

³² "Africa | Ivory Coast polls 'by December'". *BBC News*. 29 April 2009.

³³ "Polls close in Cote d'Ivoire vote - Africa". Al Jazeera English. 31 October 2010.

³⁴ Thomas Morfin, "Ivory Coast campaign turns aggressive in second round", AFP

³⁵ "Ivory Coast president to contest poll results", Associated Press

³⁶ Ibid.

results of the election in seven northern regions were to be cancelled, thereby swinging the outcome narrowly in favor of Gbagbo who was then credited with 51% of the vote to Ouattara's 48%.³⁷

Ouattara contested the ruling of the constitutional council stating that he was "the elected President" and that the Constitutional Council had abused its authority.³⁸ This proclamation quickly spread around the world and garnered the attention and support of numerous political leaders. In fact an overwhelming out port of support for Ouattara was heard throughout the world. Interestingly enough, Cote d'Ivoire Prime Minister Soro, who at this point was serving with Gbagbo, announced his support to Ouattara's claim to victory and resigned on December 4, 2010.³⁹ Ouattara would appoint Soro to resume his post as Prime Minister the very next day and Soro's position as a former Secretary-General of the New Forces (FN) has strengthened his own position vis-à-vis Ouattara.

The second Ivorian civil war: Shedding light on a growing humanitarian crisis

After months of unsuccessful negotiations and sporadic violence, the crisis entered a critical stage in March 2011 as Ouattara's forces took control of most of the country. During the crisis, numerous international organizations reported severe instances of human rights violations by both sides. In the city of Duékoué, hundreds of people were estimated to have been killed predominantly by advancing pro-Ouattara militias. Furthermore, in Bolequin, dozens of people were killed, reportedly by retreating Liberian militias who had been hired by pro-Gbagbo forces.⁴⁰

Duékoué massacre

Perhaps the most heinous of the humanitarian atrocities that took place during the second Civil War curd in the city of Duékoué, where an estimated 1,000 civilians were killed. The exact identity of the people who committed this atrocity is unknown; however, confirmed reports from the city indicate that the 1,000 civilians killed lost their lives by attacks from machetes and guns.⁴¹ Specifically, Duékoué was largely controlled by forces fighting to install the internationally recognized. According to the UN, forces from both the Ouattara and Gbagbo camps were involved in the killings.⁴²

The exact nature of what happened in Duékoué remains difficult to determine. Officially, the UN mission in Côte d'Ivoire has reported that 330 people were killed by dozos, traditional hunters who support Ouattara, in Duékoué as Ouattara's forces took over the town. Furthermore, "more than 100 of them were killed by Gbagbo's troops." However, N'Gefa said the majority were executed.⁴³ These figures released by the United Nations were significantly lower than

³⁷ "Constitutional body names Gbagbo Ivory Coast election winner", AFP

³⁸ "World leaders back Ouattara as Ivory Coast poll winner", *BBC News*, 3 December 2010.

³⁹ Roland Lloyd Parry, "Defiant Gbagbo sworn in as Ivory Coast president", AFP

⁴⁰ Peter DiCampo, "An Uncertain Future". *Ivory Coast: Elections Turn to War*. Pulitzer Center.

⁴¹ "Charity: More than 1,000 killed in Ivorian town." *Newsday.com*

⁴² Andrew Harding (2011-04-03). "BBC News - Ivory Coast: UN presses Ouattara over Duekoue massacre". *bbc.co.uk*.

⁴³ *Ibid*

reports from other international agencies like the International Committee of the Red Cross which reported that at least 800 died and the Roman Catholic charity Caritas which estimated that “more than 1,000” people had been killed.⁴⁴ On 7 April 2011, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) released a statement reporting that the victims of the Duékou massacre were primarily of Guere ethnicity, traditional Gbagbo supporters.⁴⁵

The reason for the massacre is not believed to be confined to just the violence erupting from the contested presidential election of 2010. The massacre has, in part, been blamed on cocoa land and farming rights and disputes between the Guere, the traditional land-owners, and the migrant workers who perform much of the manual labor on cocoa plantations.⁴⁶ Additional mass killings sites were also found in Bolequin and Guiglo with approximately 100 people found executed between these two sites.⁴⁷

The Capture of Gbagbo: Looking to the future

After a week of intense fighting in the provisional capital of Abidjan as Ouattara’s force advanced on the city, Laurent Gbagbo was arrested by Ouattara forces, with the help of French forces, on 11 April 2011 in his residence. Gbagbo and his family were taken to Ouattara’s headquarters where they were turned over to UN guard.⁴⁸

While the capture of Gbagbo has brought some stability to the region, it remains to be seen whether lasting peace will actually settle over Cote d’Ivoire. While the political situation seems to have stabilized at the moment, the overwhelming economic, social, and humanitarian issues facing the country remain the biggest obstacles to stability in the region today. If Cote d’Ivoire truly wants to establish itself as a stable power within the western Africa, its people, specifically its political leaders, will have to address these key issues and take a hard look at the country’s history and how it has treated and victimized its own people over the years.

Much remains to be done

Cote d’Ivoire’s dozen years of war and ethnic conflict have wreaked havoc on the political climate as well as the human communities and physical infrastructure and rebuilding will take several years at least. Security sector reform must be accomplished swiftly but equitably. This will be no easy undertaking as the new *Forces républicaines de Côte d’Ivoire* (FRCI) is supposed to be comprised of tens of thousands of former enemies from the Defence and Security Forces (FDS) and the New Forces (FN) yet “not surprisingly, these two structures do not share the same vision of what their role[s] should be.”⁴⁹ Integrating these disparate and potentially hostile elements into a cohesive system of police and security forces will further depend on the elimination of a perceived culture of impunity for elements that are loyal to

⁴⁴ "Ivory Coast: Abidjan in grip of fierce fighting". *BBC*. 2 April 2011.

⁴⁵ "Ivory Coast: More than 100 bodies found, says UN". *BBC*. 8 April 2011.

⁴⁶ Peter DiCampo. "An Uncertain Future". *Ivory Coast: Elections Turn to War*. Pulitzer Center.

⁴⁷ "Ivory Coast: More than 100 bodies found, says UN". *BBC*. 8 April 2011.

⁴⁸ Colum Lynch; & William Branigin (12 April 2011). "Ivory Coast strongman arrested after French forces intervene". *Washington Post*.

⁴⁹ International Crisis Group (ICG), “A Critical Period for Ensuring Stability in Côte d’Ivoire” Africa Report No. 176 August 1, 2011 p. 3.

President Ouattara and/or Prime Minister Soro. The International Crisis Group notes that “too many FRCI are ... committing offences that range from the extortion of a few coins to organized crime such as burglaries or car theft. More seriously, FRCI soldiers are also committing extrajudicial executions and organizing reprisals against presumed supporters of the deposed president.”⁵⁰ President Ouattara, Prime Minister Soro, the relevant military and police commanders, and opposition political leaders must all cooperate with the United Nations Operation in Cote d’Ivoire (UNOCI) to effectively retrain the security forces to respect the human rights of the civilian population as well as any prisoners that are captured as well as to refrain from criminal activities as directed in Security Council resolution 2000 (S/RES/2000).⁵¹

Concomitant with security sector reform is the need to remove an alarming number of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) as well as heavy weapons that pro-Gbagbo soldiers and militia leaders stole and/or distributed. Ouattara’s supporters have also armed themselves heavily and many of these weapons are not registered nor effectively inventoried. The complexities and dangers of the situation are exacerbated by presence “of the former pro-government militias [who] are in hiding along with Liberian mercenary allies who controlled the administrative region of Moyen Cavally.”⁵² West Africa has suffered extensively from the predations of mercenaries and private military companies (PMCs) as well as former soldiers and rebels who turn to criminal activities and prey upon the civilian populations. The simultaneously most immediate and pernicious “threat of incursions into Ivorian territory” come from “remnants of pro-government militias intent on criminal or political objectives.”⁵³ Improving the security along the Ivorian-Liberian border, particularly through improved cooperation between the two governments as well as through a more comprehensive mandate for UNOCI peacekeepers, would accelerate the voluntary and peaceful repatriation of Ivorian refugees from at least 13 different African countries. Additionally, the 350,000+ internally displaced Ivorians would have a much greater guarantee of safety for both their current situations as well as their potential returns to their home areas.

As the security situation in Cote d’Ivoire stabilizes, the difficult task of reconciling hostile ethnic groups and political factions must proceed and the work of the recently created Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CDVR) will be essential to achieving this much needed reconciliation. On July 13, 2011, two months after the CDVR’s creation was formally announced, the government’s Council of Ministers adopted an ordinance designed to provide a clearer sense of how the CDVR will operate but critics of this ordinance have noted that “the ordinance does not clearly define the commission’s powers and does not provide sufficient guarantees about its independence from the government.”⁵⁴ On September 28, 2011, the government announced the 11 members of the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CDVR), including former Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny, an ally of Ouattara, as the president, three vice-chairmen, several religious leaders, and international football star Didier Drogba as a representative for Ivorians living abroad.⁵⁵ The intention is for

⁵⁰ ICG, “A Critical Period for Ensuring Stability in Côte d’Ivoire” August 1, 2011 p. 4.

⁵¹ UN Security Council resolution 2000 (S/RES/2000).

⁵² ICG, “A Critical Period for Ensuring Stability in Côte d’Ivoire” August 1, 2011 p. 6.

⁵³ ICG, “A Critical Period for Ensuring Stability in Côte d’Ivoire” August 1, 2011 p. 6.

⁵⁴ ICG, “A Critical Period for Ensuring Stability in Côte d’Ivoire” August 1, 2011 p. 9.

⁵⁵ The Hague Justice Portal, “Cote d’Ivoire reconciliation commission to begin its work” September 28, 2011.

Found at: <http://www.haguejusticeportal.net/smartsite.html?id=12941>

the CDVR to function along the lines of South Africa's famous Truth and Reconciliation Commission of the 1990s but it is still unclear as to whether or not the CDVR can issue amnesties for crimes committed or to hand down punishments and prison sentences. Clarifying the structure, powers, and roles of the CDVR is essential for it to achieve the stated goals, particularly during its current two-year mandate.

International Assistance for Cote d'Ivoire

Cote d'Ivoire's prospects for productive reconstruction from the last twelve years of violence, while greater than some neighboring countries, will be significantly influenced by the developments in western Africa as well as in Europe. Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's reelection in November 2011 was marred by violent clashes between opposition supporters and police and security forces loyal to the government.⁵⁶ The International Crisis Group (ICG) notes that "France, which played a decisive role in Ouattara's military victory, has decided to maintain a long-term military presence in Côte d'Ivoire and to assist with reform of the Ivorian security system. This will not help to alter many Ivorians' perception that the new president is an ally of France or even beholden to it."⁵⁷

Cote d'Ivoire's reconstruction needs are quite significant but its economic potential provides greater incentive for future investment than in many of its lesser developed neighbors. Unfortunately, the current political instability and tenuous security situation, combined with a physical infrastructure that has been ravaged by 12 years of constant warfare, is creating a recessionary climate. The Minister of Finance, Charles Diby, recently projected a 5.6% decline in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for 2011.⁵⁸ Reversing this economic decline will require sustained economic investment from donor governments, international financial institutions (IFIs) including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank Group, and the African Development Bank. President Ouattara, Prime Minister Soro, and civil society representatives must commit themselves to maintaining an environment that welcomes foreign investment while simultaneously ensuring that the money does not foster greater corruption nor is it directed solely towards the political allies and cronies of President Ouattara and/or Prime Minister Soro.

United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI)

The current UN peacekeeping mission in Cote d'Ivoire known as the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) was established in February 2004 when the Security Council determined that it must act under Chapter VII of the UN Charter to address the threats to international peace and security stemming from the violence and conflict in Cote d'Ivoire; previously, the UN Mission in Côte d'Ivoire was strictly a political mission relying on the soldiers provided by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). UNOCI's mandate has been extended through at July 31, 2012 but the Security Council may wish to reauthorize UNOCI for at least another year. Delegates to the Security Council will also wish to carefully examine the

⁵⁶ Emily Schmall, "Political Tensions Dampen Liberia's Runoff Vote" *The New York Times* November 8, 2011.

⁵⁷ ICG, "A Critical Period for Ensuring Stability in Côte d'Ivoire" August 1, 2011 p. 2.

⁵⁸ *The Economist*, "On the mend" October 1, 2011.

various aspects of UNOCI's mandate and how best to accomplish that mandate in a timely manner.⁵⁹

Conclusion

Establishing and maintaining peace and stability in Cote d'Ivoire will require comprehensive and sustained efforts from all sectors of Ivorian society, the Mano River Union (MRU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union (AU), the UN, and international donors who realize that ending the violence in Cote d'Ivoire will take years. President Ouattara and Prime Minister Soro's expressed willingness to cooperate with the investigations of International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo⁶⁰ must not become mere political rhetoric that ceases as soon as the cameras and microphones are pointed towards the next civil war or international crisis. Cote d'Ivoire's political and military leaders must coordinate their efforts effectively with their neighbors and with the UN to lessen the tensions that could lead to renewed armed conflict; furthermore, these coordinating efforts must include Cote d'Ivoire's economic and media leaders as improved economic activities and a climate free from hate rhetoric and fear mongering are absolutely critical to the long-term stability of Cote d'Ivoire and the entire region.

Guiding Questions:

1. What are the most pressing economic factors facing the country of Cote d'Ivoire today?
2. How does your country feel about the recent developments in Cote d'Ivoire and the ascension of Ouattara to president? What, if any, participation did your country have in the most recent round of civil war fighting and why?
3. How can the UN System, the African Union (AU), and neighboring countries assist Cote d'Ivoire in resolving the violent conflicts currently occurring? How might the international community bolster already existing initiatives aimed at providing assistance and relief of Ivorian IDPs and refugees?
4. How should the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) be revised and/or strengthened to accelerate the pace of reconstruction in Cote d'Ivoire?
5. How can the international community most effectively support the work of the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CDVR) and the International Criminal Court?

Recent Security Council Resolutions:

2011 Security Council resolutions: 2000 (S/RES/2000); 1992 (S/RES/1992); 1981 (S/RES/1981); 1980 (S/RES/1980); 1975 (S/RES/1975); 1968 (S/RES/1968); & 1967 (S/RES/1967).

2010 Security Council resolutions: 1962 (S/RES/1962); 1951 (S/RES/1951); 1946 (S/RES/1946); 1942 (S/RES/1942); 1933 (S/RES/1933); 1924 (S/RES/1924); & 1911 (S/RES/1911).

⁵⁹ <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unoci/mandate.shtml>

⁶⁰ *BBC News*, "ICC prosecutor arrives in Ivory Coast to probe abuses" October 15, 2011.