

Côte d'Ivoire: Continuing the Recovery

I. OVERVIEW

Despite a marked improvement, the situation in Côte d'Ivoire remains fragile. The transfer to The Hague of former President Laurent Gbagbo – indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) – only twelve days before the parliamentary elections of 11 December 2011, has stoked political tensions. After a vote characterised by low turnout, the country remains deeply divided and still faces grave threats. The weakness and imbalance of the security apparatus and the two-tiered justice system, both of which reinforce the convictions of extremists, are the two main challenges the government must overcome in the months ahead. Although voting itself was peaceful, an electoral campaign marred by incidents serves as a reminder that political violence is still an everyday reality. The installation of a new Assembly marks a further step towards normalisation, but the country has yet to escape trouble.

The provisional results of the legislative elections come as no surprise: President Alassane Ouattara's party, the Rally of Republicans (Rassemblement des républicains, RDR), is close to winning a majority of seats, followed by the Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire (Parti démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire, PDCI) of former President Henri Konan Bédié, who supported Ouattara during the 2010 presidential election run-off. Low voter mobilisation mostly reveals the extent of the trauma caused by the recent post-election conflict. But for the Ivorian Popular Front (Front populaire ivoirien, FPI), Gbagbo's party, it reflects the success of its call for a boycott. The Ouattara camp must be modest in its victory and consider the voters' lack of enthusiasm as a sign of the scale of efforts needed to reconcile Ivorians with their democratic institutions, and reach national consensus on necessary reforms.

President Ouattara must personally prioritise the overhaul of the defence sector, and avoid delegating responsibility for this essential reform. Members of the Gbagbo-era Defence and Security Forces (Forces de défense et de sécurité, FDS) coexist uneasily with former New Forces rebels (Forces nouvelles, FN) in the new army, the Republican Forces of Côte d'Ivoire (Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire, FRCI). FN military leaders who were promoted to senior ranks – some of whom continue to conduct criminal activities – wield disproportionate power.

Having endorsed the installation of a democratically elected president by ex-rebel forces, the international community could have predicted the difficulty of pressing them to restore state authority rather than celebrate victory and continue abuses. Security reform, moreover, falls under the purview of their political head, Prime Minister and Defence Minister Guillaume Soro. Côte d'Ivoire's foreign partners, notably France, the U.S. and the European Union (EU), should play a crucial role of assisting disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration (DDR) efforts and security sector reform (SSR).

Many areas have seen major progress since President Ouattara's inauguration on 21 May 2011. The Ivorian economy has re-started, thanks to better governance and significant international aid. But growth in itself will not guarantee lasting stability, especially as the economic revival focuses on urban centers and highlights a reluctance to prioritise the regions and communities that suffered most from the conflict.

Justice is still partisan. To date, none of the ex-rebels incorporated into the FRCI have been prosecuted, despite strong suspicions some committed serious crimes. Prosecutions have targeted only the former president's supporters. International justice is also perceived as biased by many Ivorians, who consider the transfer of Laurent Gbagbo to the ICC as an impediment to reconciliation. The involvement of the ICC is actually a vital step to fight the impunity which has fed political violence over the last decade. But it can only reconcile Ivorians if the ICC prosecutor investigates those responsible on both sides for serious war crimes and crimes against humanity during the recent crisis and also since September 2002.

For now, the following measures must be taken:

- ❑ The president should play a more active role in resolving security issues. He should in particular appeal publicly for all the civilian militants who fought for his legitimate right to the presidency to lay down their arms and reintegrate into civilian life.
- ❑ The SSR working group currently subordinated to the prime minister's cabinet should fall under the president's responsibility. This group will underpin a central structure leading the reform, which will have to develop a plan to overhaul the new army, with short-, medium- and long-term objectives. It will also lead in

implementing immediate measures to enhance cohesion between elements of the former FN and of the FDS, such as community work.

- UNOCI should have the necessary resources to assist the government's SSR. The special representative of the secretary-general should be actively involved in elements essential to reform. He should carefully monitor and report on progress, bearing in mind that only a truly republican army, balanced in representation, can avoid recreating conditions for rebellion.
- France should significantly increase its support to the restructuring of the police and gendarmerie. The European Union (EU) should establish a technical and financial assistance program to strengthen police forces.
- The international community should continue its political and financial support to the government's efforts toward political and economic stabilisation. Côte d'Ivoire's main partners, notably the U.S., France and other EU members, must keep a critical eye on the new authorities and, in particular, reiterate to President Ouattara the need for him to meet his commitments to fair justice, national reconciliation and a genuine SSR. The Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) should also encourage the president to commit personally to SSR and provide political support to this reform.
- The Ivorian authorities should create in the months ahead conditions for normalising democratic political life, by making concessions to their opponents, especially to FPI members, to encourage their return to the political scene for the 2012 regional and local elections.
- Particular effort must be made to develop the battered Moyen-Cavally region, so as to strengthen the state's presence and credibility there. The government should give particular focus to upgrading existing roads, creating new transportation routes and building public infrastructure. More broadly, President Ouattara will have to offer his newly re-elected Liberian counterpart Ellen Johnson Sirleaf a plan to open up and coordinate development in border areas.

II. A FRAGILE GOVERNMENT DESPITE THE ABSENCE OF AN OPPOSITION

A. FEW INCIDENTS AND FEW VOTERS

After the exceptionally fraught presidential election of November 2010,¹ the legislative elections of 11 December

2011 might seem to have been simply one more step in the process of normalisation and a gentle return to normal institutional life.² This election was only a simple formality. The first such electoral consultation in eleven years,³ it was important that it should be held in secure conditions and be well-organised. The results were also important, even though they are not as decisive as the issue of security sector reform (SSR) for a lasting peace. Predictably, given the tragic epilogue to the last electoral exercise, the resentment felt by the FPI electorate and that party's official boycott of these elections, the turnout for the legislative elections of 11 December was low.

This was not a success for the government of President Ouattara, whose party believed this election to be the "beginning of the democratic process".⁴ However, neither was it the "resounding" failure claimed by the FPI, which attributed the electorate's lack of enthusiasm to the success of its appeal for a boycott.⁵ This argument was only partly valid. The boycott certainly persuaded many supporters of former president Gbagbo, rather than those of Ouattara's RDR and his ally's PDCI, to stay away from the polling stations. However, even in the regions where the FPI is not very established, the turnout was also low, for example, in Korhogo in the north, an RDR stronghold.⁶

Two other reasons explain this situation. First, the post-electoral violence is still fresh in the electorate's memory and political competition now provokes fear among many people, who associate elections with confrontation.⁷ The

the Only Option?, 3 March 2011. For an analysis of the political situation and the main issues in the first months of Ouattara's presidency, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°176, *A Critical Period for Ensuring Stability in Côte d'Ivoire*, 1 August 2011.

² 255 seats were at stake in 205 constituencies. Ivorian deputies are elected by universal suffrage from a closed list, in a single ballot.

³ The last legislative elections were held on 10 December 2000.

⁴ "Législatives ivoiriennes: 'début du processus démocratique' (parti Ouattara)", Agence France-Presse, 12 December 2011.

⁵ Close to the FPI, the daily *Nouveau Courrier*, 13 December 2011, gave front page treatment to a statement by Laurent Gbagbo's spokesperson, Justin Koné Katinan, who said that the "boycott of the legislative elections by Ivoirians indicates the rejection of the government's transfer of Gbagbo to The Hague". On the same day, the daily *Notre Voie*, official organ of the FPI, called for the cancellation of the elections and the resignation of President Ouattara. It estimated "an abstention rate of more than 80 per cent in the legislative elections".

⁶ "Scrutin timide à Korhogo, les électeurs se font désirer", Agence ivoirienne de presse, 11 December 2011.

⁷ A feeling summarised by an Abidjan elector in the following words: "The turnout was very low, but it's not because of the boycott. People don't like being told to go and vote and then have to put up with fights afterwards". See "Côte d'Ivoire: faible participation pour des législatives plutôt calmes", *Jeune Afrique*, 12 December 2011.

¹ For a description and analysis of the violent post-electoral crisis, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°171, *Côte d'Ivoire: Is War*

second reason is a constant feature of Ivorian political life: the turnout is always low in elections other than the presidential election. Turnout at the legislative elections in December 2000 was 33.1 per cent.⁸ Like the 11 December 2011 elections, they took place after a presidential election that was followed by serious violence (in October 2000) and were boycotted by one of the three major political parties.⁹ Ouattara's RDR protested at its leader's exclusion from the elections that brought Gbagbo to power.

The legislative elections of 11 December took place in a calm atmosphere. On this point, the government is entitled to claim success. The deployment of 32,000 men (25,000 members of the FRCI, supported by 7,000 UNOCI personnel)¹⁰ had the expected dissuasive effect. Although only a few incidents punctuated the campaign and voting, they were however very serious. They were a sign of the tense atmosphere that still prevails in Ivorian society and also indicative of the determination of extremists. Shortly before the election, a group of PDCI representatives was attacked with a grenade-launcher in Grand-Lahou, in the south of the country, leaving three dead.¹¹ On polling day, armed individuals stole electoral materials in Bonon, in the centre of the country.¹² During the campaign, several candidates ensured their security by surrounding themselves with armed militia, including some who were also members of the national army, the FRCI.

B. THE UNCERTAIN POLITICAL FUTURE OF THE IVORIAN POPULAR FRONT

On the political front, several lessons can be learned from these legislative elections. They confirm the weakness of the parties that supported Gbagbo as president and that should now be providing the opposition to President Ouattara. Electorally and militarily defeated, the Presidential Majority (LMP)¹³ coalition has emerged weakened from these elections. Its main party, the FPI, elected no deputies

to the National Assembly.¹⁴ The party began to fragment last August. One of its most prominent leaders, Mamadou Koulibaly, then president of the National Assembly, left the FPI to form his own party.¹⁵ He left behind him a party torn between radicals and moderates and also geographically dispersed. Some activists remain in Côte d'Ivoire, either at liberty or under arrest, while others are in exile, mainly in Ghana but also in Togo, Benin and probably Gambia.¹⁶

Long undecided on what position to adopt towards Alasane Ouattara's government, the FPI's national leadership finally decided to take a hard line and did not present any official candidates in the 11 December election. By acting in this way, it cut the party off from the electorate and created an additional division within its ranks. Eleven senior members of the FPI publicly decided to disavow the decision made by their leaders and to stand as independent candidates. Without publicising the fact, several dozen other officials also decided to stand at the legislative elections without using the FPI label.¹⁷ They did so either through political conviction, in the belief that participation in the democratic game was the best option, or to defend their personal interests.¹⁸ No doubt because of the confusion surrounding their participation in the election right up until the last minute and also because of the disenchantment of the electorate close to Gbagbo, most of these independent candidates were beaten at the ballot box and will not be in parliament.

Even though it only participates very indirectly in political life, notably through telephone calls, the most extreme wing of the FPI still represents a threat to stability and reconciliation in Côte d'Ivoire. Exiled in Ghana, the representatives of this tendency dream of a return to power

⁸ For an analysis of the presidential and legislative election results in October, December 2000 and January 2001, see Christian Bouquet, *Géopolitique de la Côte d'Ivoire* (Paris, 2005).

⁹ For an account of post-electoral violence in October and December 2000, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°33, *Côte d'Ivoire: Halfway Measures Will Not Suffice*, 12 October 2005.

¹⁰ "Côte d'Ivoire", *Jeune Afrique*, op. cit.

¹¹ "Côte d'Ivoire/législatives: trois morts dans une attaque à la roquette", Agence France-Presse, 7 December 2011.

¹² "Côte d'Ivoire", *Jeune Afrique*, op. cit.

¹³ Created for the 2010 presidential election campaign, the LMP brought together several groups that supported Laurent Gbagbo, including the FPI, the Rally for Peace, Progress and Sharing (Rassemblement pour la paix, le progrès et le partage, RPP) and the Union for the Republic and Democracy (Union pour la république et la démocratie, URD).

¹⁴ The FPI had 96 seats in the outgoing assembly, out of a total of 235 deputies.

¹⁵ Mamadou Koulibaly founded the Liberty and Democracy for Côte d'Ivoire (Liberté et démocratie pour la Côte d'Ivoire, LIDER) party in August 2011. He lost his position as deputy in the 11 December elections.

¹⁶ Clément Nadaud and Damana Pickas, leaders of the patriotic youth, and Justin Koné Katinan and Assoa Adou, former ministers in Laurent Gbagbo's last illegal government, now live in Accra, where they regularly hold public meetings. During a state visit to Accra on 6 October 2011, Alassane Ouattara asked Ghana to execute warrants issued by Côte d'Ivoire for the arrest of individuals alleged to have committed criminal acts during the post-electoral violence. Ivorian justice has issued such warrants for Charles Blé Goudé, Ahoua Don Mello, spokesperson for the last Gbagbo government, Assoa Adou, Justin Koné Katinan, Philippe Attey, ex-Minister of Industry, among others.

¹⁷ See "Le scrutin de la deuxième chance", *Le Monde*, 6 December 2011.

¹⁸ The monthly pay of an Ivorian deputy is around FCFA1.4 million (\$2,800). Crisis Group interview, deputy, Abidjan, October 2011.

by force.¹⁹ Such an option seems impossible considering their military weakness and their regional and international isolation, which is reinforced by the Ouattara government's active diplomacy. However, their virulent and vengeful discourse has a very negative influence on the prospects for reconciliation. It strengthens the idea in the minds of a large proportion of the most hard-line supporters of the former president that war remains an option and that a military victory is still possible. Moreover, these ideas, often communicated through websites,²⁰ lead the most hard-line elements of the FN and Ouattara's party to believe that the Gbagbo camp still wants war.

The internal and external sectors of the FPI, which are in regular communication,²¹ have a complex relationship. The people involved have neither the same origin, nor the same political trajectory. The former, including Laurent Akoun and Augustin Gehoun, belong to the party's old guard, which campaigned for a multi-party system alongside Gbagbo. They are mainly drawn from the teaching profession. The second group is composed of a more nationalist tendency of militants who rose through the ranks during the crises of the 2000s, formed part of Laurent Gbagbo's last illegal government and supported him strongly until his fall.²²

The party leadership remains in Côte d'Ivoire, unwilling to publicly disavow the ideas of the hard-liners in Ghana. Unlike his exiled colleagues, the FPI interim general secretary, Sylvain Miaka Ouréto, has recognised Ouattara as president.²³ However, the party's current leadership privately states its solidarity with the exiles.²⁴ It seems that the hard-liners apply strong pressure on them and their families, including threats, and insist they maintain a rigid position. One FPI leader was forced to abandon his plan to join the government formed by Guillaume Soro last June.²⁵

The transfer of Laurent Gbagbo to The Hague on 29 November has hardened the position of the former president's party. In a communiqué made public on 30 November, the FPI central committee announced it was suspending its participation "in all reconciliation processes".²⁶ The FPI's

allies in the National Congress for Resistance and Democracy (Congrès national pour la résistance et la démocratie, CNRD)²⁷, which, unlike the FPI, had decided to present candidates in the election, reversed their decision. A few hours after the government announced Laurent Gbagbo's transfer to the Netherlands, they announced their "pure and simple withdrawal" from the ballot.²⁸ The ICC's decision is a test for the former president's party. In the short term, there will be a question mark over its capacity to react to and mobilise against Gbagbo's detention outside the country. In the medium term, its ability to rebuild around another leader rather than its historic chief will be a question of political survival.

C. REDRAWING THE POLITICS OF THE POST-GBAGBO ERA

With the FPI out of the race, the only question in the 11 December elections was whether the RDR or the PDCI, the two major parties in the Rally of Houphouëtists for Democracy and Peace (Rassemblement des Houphouëtistes pour la démocratie et la paix, RHDP),²⁹ was going to win. With 127 seats, the RDR gained a clear victory over the PDCI, which won 77 seats. The next few months will test the solidity of the alliance between these two parties. This alliance is important because it provides a guarantee of political stability in a country where the security forces and society remain deeply divided. At the local level, there was some friction between the RDR and the PDCI during the campaign. In some regions, especially in the centre, traditionally PDCI territory, the RDR did not make things easy for its ally and presented strong candidates against those of the former single party, taking the risk of reviving old antagonisms.³⁰

The RDR has no interest in crushing or ignoring the PDCI in the aftermath of these elections. It owes its lead-

¹⁹ Crisis Group email correspondence, pro-Gbagbo militiaman, October 2011.

²⁰ For example, see the website of the Committee for the Liberation of Côte d'Ivoire (Comité pour la libération de la Côte d'Ivoire, CPLCI).

²¹ Crisis Group interview, FPI official, Abidjan, October 2011.

²² Including former ministers Assoa Adou, Justin Koné Katinan and Dosso Charles Rodel.

²³ "Ouattara est le chef de l'Etat, on lui doit du respect", *L'expression*, 15 October 2011.

²⁴ Crisis Group interview, FPI leader, Abidjan, October 2011.

²⁵ Crisis Group interviews, diplomats and politicians, Abidjan, October 2011.

²⁶ "Côte d'Ivoire – CPI: Gbagbo comparait lundi, le FPI rejette toute réconciliation nationale", *Jeune Afrique*, 1 December 2011.

²⁷ The CNRD, founded on 2 March 2006, is a federation of 26 parties and civil society organisations. Supporting Laurent Gbagbo, its main mission is "the resistance struggle for national liberation".

²⁸ "CPI: de petits partis pro-Gbagbo se retirent des législatives ivoiriennes", Agence France-Presse, 29 November 2011.

²⁹ Founded in May 2005, the RHDP brought together the four following political groups: the Rally of Republicans (Rassemblement des républicains, RDR), the Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire (Parti démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire, PDCI), the Union for Democracy and Peace in Côte d'Ivoire (Union pour la démocratie et la paix en Côte d'Ivoire, UDPCI) and the Movement of the Forces of the Future (Mouvement des forces d'avenir, MFA).

³⁰ Alassane Ouattara and Henri Konan Bédié disputed power from Félix Houphouët-Boigny's death in December 1993 to the coup in December 1999. Bédié used the issue of *Ivoirité* to disqualify his rival, whose Ivorian nationality was considered "doubtful" because of his closeness to Burkina Faso.

er's victory in the second round of the November 2010 presidential election to the transfer of votes from the PDCI candidate, Henri Konan Bédié. If the presidential party abuses its dominant position, part of the PDCI will turn its back on it and the RDR will quickly become isolated on the Ivorian political scene, especially as Bédié, whose political career is reaching an end, will have less and less control over his party over the next few years. A large proportion of the Ivorian population would see the government as a northern government motivated by a spirit of revenge. A rapprochement between frustrated PDCI members and Gbagbo supporters wanting to return to politics would then be possible and would strengthen the opposition, which could be tempted to revive a certain idea of *Ivoirité*.

More than the balance of forces in the Assembly, the appointment of a prime minister is a major potential source of division between the two parties. Bédié has several times reminded the government of the president's promise to appoint him to this position.³¹ If this promise is not kept, it might cause the RHDP to break up, and the first consequence of this would be to weaken Ouattara's position. Guillaume Soro is currently prime minister. He has yet to make known his intentions but sees himself staying in the post until well after the legislative elections. His election to the position of deputy under the banner of the RDR³² provides some hope that he could give up the post of prime minister and set his sights on the position of president of the National Assembly. Bédié would not be opposed to this even though his party has a parliamentary majority.³³

The RHPD's supremacy will pose the more general problem of a concentration of executive power and danger that the National Assembly could become a rubber-stamp. Fundamental institutional reforms must however be quickly started, beginning with an overhaul of the Constitution and a re-examination of the land law and the way it is applied. Parliament's involvement will be essential to carry out this work properly, avoid too much of a concentration of power in the hands of the president and promote political practices that are the exact opposite of the manipulation of ethnic and regional identities that fuelled the violence

during the last two decades. The government and the National Assembly must unite all the country's living forces, especially civil society organisations and parties not represented in parliament, in a national dialogue on the reforms necessary for consolidating peace, as well as in the work of the Truth, Dialogue and Reconciliation Commission (CDVR).³⁴

For the sake of reconciliation as much as for a healthy democratic government, it is necessary that a revamped FPI can quickly return to politics and play a counterbalancing role. Such a return is possible for the next regional and municipal elections planned for 2012. Several measures should be taken to achieve this. The first depends on the FPI's willingness to participate in democratic politics and to break loose from the sectarian fringe formed by those in exile, who can only offer verbal and physical violence. The Ghanaian authorities could help their Ivorian neighbour in its efforts to stabilise the country by applying pressure on the exiles to stop disseminating proposals that hamper the process of normalisation in Côte d'Ivoire. Ghana should also execute the international arrest warrants issued by Abidjan against the most fervent elements of the movement. The European Union (EU) should impose financial sanctions against those close to Laurent Gbagbo so that they remain unable to finance any moves to destabilise the government.

President Ouattara's government must continue to dialogue with all political forces, particularly the FPI. It should allow its supporters to express themselves and avoid taking advantage of its current dominance to abuse and curb the press close to Laurent Gbagbo as it did at the end of November.³⁵ The issues of the renewal of the Inde-

³¹ Questioned by a Pan-African weekly about his wish to see a future PDCI prime minister after the legislative elections, he replied: "That is what we agreed". "Henri Konan Bédié: 'Gbagbo devra rendre des comptes au peuple ivoirien'", *Jeune Afrique*, 9 October 2011.

³² A candidate in the Ferkéssédougou constituency, his native region in the north of Côte d'Ivoire, he was elected deputy with around 99 per cent of votes.

³³ "It should not necessarily be the party who wins most seats that should appoint the president of the assembly". "Henri Konan Bédié: 'Gbagbo devra rendre des comptes au peuple ivoirien'", *Jeune Afrique*, op. cit.

³⁴ In a previous report, Crisis Group identified the following questions for consideration in a national debate aimed at finding a lasting resolution to the crisis: the land question; the question of truth and justice in relation to the atrocities committed during the crisis, in response to the expectations of victims and from a perspective of preventing further violence; the problem of the concentration of power; the issue of corruption and governance; the question of national education and the ravages of the culture of violence in schools and universities on the younger generations; relations between Côte d'Ivoire and its immediate neighbours and the West African region; the question of the management of the country's heritage with regard to immigration and inter-marriage; and the redefinition of the relations between Côte d'Ivoire and France. See Crisis Group Africa Report N° 127, *Côte d'Ivoire: Can the Ouagadougou Agreement Bring Peace?*, 27 June 2007.

³⁵ On Thursday 24 November, on the instructions of the state prosecutor, three journalists working for the daily *Notre Voie* were summoned by the police and held for questioning for five days, charged, placed under a committal order and imprisoned. They were only released on 6 December. They were accused of publishing two articles: a report about 40 vehicles allegedly ac-

pendent Electoral Commission (CEI), the electoral register, guarantees of fair access to state television and radio for all parties and the release of pro-Gbagbo leaders who have not committed serious crimes should be put on the table in the weeks and months ahead. Guillaume Soro should not seek to stay on as prime minister and minister of defence at any price.

Finally, the international community, which strongly supports Alassane Ouattara, should keep a critical eye on his actions and possible abuses of power generated by his complete control of state institutions. The current situation and the changes in Ivorian society are no longer favourable to the "houphouétiste" political model that initially brought prosperity to Côte d'Ivoire but then created the conditions for a long political, economic and social crisis.

III. PROMISING ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE

The first months of Alassane Ouattara's government have brought some stability to a country that was on the brink of a generalised civil war. The president was sworn in on 21 May 2011 and a new government was announced on 1 June 2011. Since then, the country has made progress in several areas. There is a widely shared feeling that there has been a significant improvement in governance and more efficient management of the economy and public funds. The new administration generally gives the impression of being relatively competent and dynamic, which compares favourably with the casual manner of the previous government. Decisions are implemented and the government generally does what it says it is going to do, with the exception of its commitments in the crucial but sensitive security field.

It is still very difficult to assess the impact of several ambitious economic programmes launched in recent months.³⁶ Neither will it be possible to quantify the effects of reforms such as that of the cocoa³⁷ and oil sectors until a few years

quired by the Ivorian presidential cabinet and the other about rumours of a devaluation of the FCFA.

³⁶ In a speech made on 11 October 2011, President Alassane Ouattara mentioned some of these key areas, including the presidential emergency programme on water, electricity, free health care and major public works, such as the construction of the Henri Konan Bédié bridge in Abidjan and the Abidjan-Bassam motorway. The government has also launched a programme to conduct a census of civil servants and has opened 56 centres for this task.

³⁷ On 2 November 2011, the government announced the creation of a public agency to manage the cocoa sector and a return to a system of minimum guaranteed prices in order to secure the income of producers. This reform ended the liberalisation of the sector adopted in 1999.

have gone by. However, some initiatives have had an immediate and visible effect. Thanks to the work of the Ministry of the Environment and Urban Health, the appearance of the economic capital has changed in just a few months. Piles of rubbish have disappeared from many major roads and junctions in Abidjan. Similar work has also been undertaken in Yamoussoukro, with positive results.³⁸ In six months, the present administration has done what the previous government was not able to do in a decade.

Road traffic, still congested last May, now flows more easily. Many checkpoints have been gradually removed from the main roads into the major cities and the major inter-urban roads. There are no longer any nocturnal checkpoints in Abidjan and several major roads have been repaired or reopened to traffic.³⁹ Throughout the country, the government has made major repairs or carried out maintenance to several important roads. The government has launched invitations to tender for several important land routes.⁴⁰

Public administration is gradually returning to the central, northern and western areas of the country occupied by the ex-rebellion since 2002 and the centralisation of the treasury is also under way.⁴¹ In Bouaké, the FN have abandoned several symbolic tax payment centres, notably at the entrance to the southern corridor and the wholesale market.⁴² Customs posts have been set up on the border with Burkina Faso, after eight years of absence. Schools have reopened throughout the country and second year exams have been held successfully but the Abidjan universities remain closed for the moment. Police officers and gendarmes can now be seen in most parts of the country. This return has not been without incident, for example, in Bouna, where, in mid-October, the security forces officially reinstalled two weeks previously were not able to begin work because of a lack of decent accommodation.⁴³

³⁸ Crisis Group observation, Yamoussoukro, 15 October 2011.

³⁹ This is particularly evident in the district of Adjamé, where the road that runs alongside the market has been cleared and where it is now possible to travel by car. Crisis Group observation, October 2011.

⁴⁰ The government issued an invitation to tender for the construction of a bridge at the exit to the town of Bouaflé and for the repair of the road that runs through the town.

⁴¹ In its last report, the United Nations group of experts noted that "45 customs agents" had returned to the Côte d'Ivoire/Burkina Faso border, but that they were still having to work alongside "unidentified armed men". "Report of the Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire pursuant to paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 1980", 17 October 2011.

⁴² Crisis Group interview, economic operators, Bouaké, 16 October 2011.

⁴³ "Gendarmes et policiers cherchent maisons", *Nord-Sud*, 12 October 2011.

President Ouattara's government continues to benefit from the international community's support. Significant financial aid was provided to the country immediately after the end of the post-electoral crisis.⁴⁴ Donors still maintain a benevolent attitude, with further promises of loans and debt cancellation.⁴⁵ They have been encouraged by the improvements in governance under a president who has always liked to be judged on his competence as an economist. This progress has also led to a limited but important increase in private investment. For example, in November, the American agro-industrial group Cargill announced an investment of FCFA1.5 billion (\$3.055 million) in the improvement and renewal of cocoa plantations,⁴⁶ a vital step for the number one world producer of cocoa beans.

However, these promising economic signs, which will hopefully result in the creation of jobs for the young people whose careers have been sacrificed during the last two decades, are not enough to guarantee lasting stability. Côte d'Ivoire is certainly now better administered, has ambitions for strong economic growth and wants to become the engine of the francophone West African economy. However, it is also a divided and fragile country that is starting out along the long and difficult path of reconciliation. All of the interwoven political, regional and ethnic fault lines that caused the post-electoral conflict and the long crisis are still present today. Meanwhile, the security apparatus remains riven by imbalances and divisions and represents the most serious threat to peace.

IV. THE SECURITY PROBLEM

A. DIVISIONS, DISOBEDIENCE AND CRIME

The creation of the preconditions for security sector reform remains the country's biggest problem. Very little progress has been made in this area. Six months after the inauguration of Alassane Ouattara, the army, the police and the gendarmerie are still confronted with worrying divisions, inadequate resources and a profound hierarchical imbalance. The main security threat facing the gov-

ernment is no longer the pro-Gbagbo forces, which do not have the military resources necessary to attack the regime. The main threat is posed by the security apparatus inherited from the post-electoral conflict. The president, who is commander-in-chief, has only weak control over the armed forces. He mainly depends on the former FN rebel troops that helped him to power and which in return demand an important role in the new Ivorian army. The current state of the security and defence forces poses a series of short- and medium-term threats to his government and the country.

The post-electoral crisis led to the creation of a new army, which was given the name of the Republican Forces of Côte d'Ivoire (Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire, FRCI). The FRCI is a combination of two different armies: the former rebel army, known as the Armed Forces of the New Forces (Forces armées des forces nouvelles, FAFN) and the Gbagbo government's Defence and Security Forces (Forces de Défense et de Sécurité, FDS).⁴⁷ However, these two armies are finding it difficult to integrate into a new force. They cohabit but have not formed a unified structure. This lack of cohesion could at any moment get out of control and result in violent clashes, like those that took place at the Agban base on 15 October between gendarmes who were supposed to be part of the same force.⁴⁸ It is also an impediment to the capacity of the security forces to carry out their routine duties.

For example, in the town of Duékoué, in the Moyen-Cavally region, gendarmes and police officers who returned to the area in September do not yet have the right to carry arms and cannot therefore participate fully in making the place secure. The local FRCI command, exclusively composed of former FN officers, only allows the gendarmes and police officers to carry arms while on patrol or engaged in joint operations. The arms remain under the FN command's control and are collected on completion of specific missions.⁴⁹ Practically the same system is used throughout the conflict-ridden region of Moy-

⁴⁴ See Crisis Group Report, *A Critical Period for Ensuring Stability in Côte d'Ivoire*, op. cit., p. 15.

⁴⁵ On 4 November 2011, the board of directors of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a loan of \$616 million. On 15 November, Paris Club creditors agreed to reduce Côte d'Ivoire's debt service by more than 78%. See "Feu vert du FMI à un prêt de 616 millions de dollars à la Côte d'Ivoire", Agence France-Presse, 4 November 2011 and "La Côte d'Ivoire et le club de Paris concluent un accord de réduction de dette", Agence France-Presse, 15 November 2011.

⁴⁶ "Le groupe Cargill va investir 1,5 milliards de FCFA pour améliorer le verger ivoirien", Agence ivoirienne de presse, 11 November 2011.

⁴⁷ See Crisis Group Report, *A Critical Period for Ensuring Stability in Côte d'Ivoire*, op. cit., p. 3.

⁴⁸ On the night of 14 October 2011, the gendarmerie base at Agban, in Abidjan, was the scene of violent clashes between gendarmes. These clashes occurred inside the base and, according to witnesses, lasted for between 30 minutes and one hour. Following this incident, twenty gendarmes were arrested on 24 October and held for questioning. They were mostly from an armoured squadron (Groupe d'escadron blindé, GEB). Members of this unit remained loyal to commander Jean-Noël Abéhi, former commander of the GEB and close to former president Gbagbo. Approximately 150 members of this group have since been transferred to the interior of the country. Crisis Group telephone conversation, Ivorian military personnel, 15 November 2011.

⁴⁹ Crisis Group interviews, local politicians and administration officials, Duékoué, Guiglo, October 2011.

en-Cavally. At Toulépleu, another important town in the region, gendarmes and police officers are also unarmed.⁵⁰

Military hierarchy is not always respected within a security apparatus that has several chains of command. Former FN personnel take precedence over the previous government's regular army. The rebellion's military leaders, some of who have been promoted to senior rank,⁵¹ have retained their most loyal and seasoned men.⁵² The latter have still not been assigned to other FRCI units and form autonomous units outside the normal hierarchy. The men in the service of their former zone commanders often refuse to salute or obey orders from senior officers that used to belong to the FDS before the post-electoral crisis.⁵³

This lack of discipline has bred a deep and dangerous feeling of frustration among former FDS senior officers, who are finding it difficult to become integrated into the new FRCI. Some of them, however, joined Alassane Ouattara at the Golf Hotel before the April 2011 denouement and have all the more reason to reject being sidelined in this way.⁵⁴ They believe they have been forgotten or marginalised in the new army. Some of them have no office at the general staff headquarters.⁵⁵ Their opinion is not always taken into account during discussions of the reforms under way. They deplore the fact that the units they used to command have not been reconstituted and that the former rebels continue to occupy military installations. They also deplore the lack of discipline displayed by young men claiming to be members of FRCI and with whom they sometimes clash.⁵⁶

⁵⁰ Crisis Group interview, UNOCI official, Abidjan, 11 October 2011.

⁵¹ Issiaka Ouattara, known as "Wattao", commander of the Séguéla zone, was appointed deputy commander of the republican guard. Chérif Ousmane, who was commander of the Bouaké zone, is now deputy commander of the Security Group of the presidential cabinet. Previously commander of the Korhogo zone, Martin Fofié Kouakou is now in command of the town's Territorial Company. Losseni Fofana, previously commander of the Man zone, was appointed deputy commander of the Special Forces, the new army's elite corps, whose remit remains especially vague.

⁵² Crisis Group interviews, Ivorian army officers, Abidjan, October 2011.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Crisis Group observation at the general staff headquarters, Abidjan, October 2011.

⁵⁶ A senior army officer told Crisis Group about a tense altercation with two young men claiming to be members of the FRCI and who were trying to extort money in an outlying district of Abidjan. Crisis Group interview, Ivorian army officer, Abidjan, October 2011.

The exact number of FRCI troops is not known and neither is it known who belongs to the republican forces. A large number of armed men gravitate in the orbit of the FRCI without anyone knowing whether they are in it or not. The integration of 9,000 members of the FN,⁵⁷ planned by the Ouagadougou Political Agreement (OPA), has not yet taken place and it is therefore very difficult to know who, among them, belongs to the new army.⁵⁸ In addition, there is a great unknown: the number and identity of "volunteers" and other civilian fighters "associated with the conflict" who joined the FRCI during or just after the March and April 2011 offensive.⁵⁹ Their number remains very vague.⁶⁰

Still armed, they are responsible for a crime wave but are or appear to be members of the security forces. The great majority of these volunteers receive no pay and depend on crime to survive.⁶¹ The dismantling of checkpoints in the major cities and along the main roads is a reality. However, far from the public eye, in the rural areas and some outlying districts of Abidjan, such as Abobo,⁶² extortion of the general public remains a daily problem and increases the distrust that has existed for years between the security forces and civilians.

⁵⁷ Annex IV of the OPA provided for the incorporation of 9,000 FN soldiers into the Ivorian security forces: 5,000 in the army and 4,000 in the police force and gendarmerie.

⁵⁸ The exact number of troops in the FAFN was never given by the military leaders of the rebellion. It varied according to the sources and time between 10,000 and 30,000 men.

⁵⁹ Hundreds of young volunteers accompanied the FRCI's victorious offensive against Abidjan in March and April 2011. Others joined the FRCI after 11 April 2011 and Laurent Gbagbo's arrest. The public call them the "ceasefires" or the "to mon nan", which means "the food is ready" in the Malinké language. These last-minute volunteers, often members of the proletariat drawn from the private urban transport sector, and keen supporters of Alassane Ouattara, did not participate directly in the attack on Abidjan but obtained arms during the confused period that followed the conflict. Many ex-convicts, who escaped when the doors of the Abidjan Detention Centre and Prison (Maison d'arrêt et de correction d'Abidjan, MACA) were opened on 31 March 2011, consort with the FRCI. The MACA had more than 5,000 prisoners. Finally, in the outlying districts of Abobo and Anyama, former members of the invisible commando, the secret army whose membership still remains obscure, and which was the first to militarily defy Laurent Gbagbo, continue to carry arms on the public highway. Crisis Group interviews, military officers, academic, politicians, Abidjan, October 2011.

⁶⁰ The Ivorian authorities estimate the number at 30,000. See "En Côte d'Ivoire le gouvernement réfléchit sur la réinsertion des anciens combattants", Xinhua, 11 November 2011.

⁶¹ Crisis Group interview, academic, Abidjan, 8 October 2011.

⁶² Crisis Group interviews, academic, politicians, military officers, NGO staff, Abidjan, Bouaké, Duékoué, October 2011.

This crime wave is encouraged by easy access to weapons of war. Disarmament is slow and takes place in fits and starts. The inadequacies of the security forces allow individuals to carry arms in public even when they do not have the right to do so. The disarmament operations conducted by UNOCI have allowed the recovery of only a very small proportion of the weaponry that proliferated in the Côte d'Ivoire during the post-electoral crisis.⁶³ The UN mission has to contend with the ill-will of those that still carry weapons. The political and ethnic tensions that remain in the country encourage people to retain arms just in case, especially in the west. UNOCI's work is also hindered by a lack of resources.⁶⁴

A much smaller number of members of the FRCI commit crimes on a much greater scale and in a more organised way. This involves former FN military leaders who are trying to perpetuate the mafia system that made them a fortune in the central, northern and western parts of the country. Issiaka Ouattara, alias Wattao, and his men are thought to be mainly responsible for this criminality. Promoted to the rank of deputy commander of the republican guard, Issiaka Ouattara rejects these accusations but there is a lot of corroborated evidence that incriminates him.⁶⁵ This system, gradually set up after the attempted coup in September 2002 gave several rebel leaders enormous economic power, which they do not want to relinquish because it guarantees their military power. Tens of millions of FCFA that certain former zone commanders continue to receive on a monthly basis allows them to maintain personal militia and resist government pressure to fall into line.⁶⁶

⁶³ Crisis Group interview, international military officer, Abidjan, October 2011.

⁶⁴ UNOCI in particular is experiencing problems related to the storage of recovered arms and munitions. Battalions are sometimes reluctant to store unexploded devices of doubtful reliability in their barracks. Crisis Group interview, diplomat, Abidjan, October 2011.

⁶⁵ In the course of a dozen Crisis Group interviews conducted in October 2011 in Abidjan with Ivorian leaders of the political, military and economic world and with several leaders of the international community, Issiaka Ouattara was described as the main instigator of the extortion racket in the economic capital. His name appears regularly in local and international press reports on the illegal activities of the former rebels. See: "Cité dans plusieurs affaires – Wattao dans le viseur de Ouattara et Soro – L'ex-chef de guerre déjà mis en garde", *L'Inter*, 5 October 2011; "Côte d'Ivoire: à Bobi, on exploite le diamant malgré l'embargo de l'ONU", Agence France-Presse, 24 December 2009.

⁶⁶ During the growing season 2009-2010, the income gained by Issiaka Ouattara and Losseni Fofana from cocoa was estimated at \$11 million by United Nations experts. See "Final Report of the Group of Experts submitted in accordance with paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 1893 (2009)", 27 April 2011, p. 37. In addition to raw materials such as coffee, diamonds,

In the economic capital, foreign companies are subjected to extortion by elements claiming to be from the FRCI.⁶⁷ Private individuals are forced to pay to protect their shops or homes.⁶⁸ This racketeering often uses a political alibi: the perpetrators point out that their victim is a supporter of Laurent Gbagbo in order to justify their actions. Car theft is still common in Abidjan. Some of these thefts fuel the international traffic in luxury cars that are moved to Bouaké and then on through Mali and Burkina Faso.⁶⁹ The Ivorian economic capital is not the only place that such practices still occur.⁷⁰

In the west of the country, another group linked to the FRCI poses a problem. The traditional hunters known as "Dozos" exacerbate the ethnic and land-ownership tensions characteristic of this part of the country. Their presence is problematic, particularly in the forests, because they have acted as FN auxiliaries since the beginning of the war.⁷¹ However, until the post-electoral crisis, they remained in their native region in the north and only a small number maintained a discreet presence in the west.⁷² However, in the wake of the conflict that followed the presidential election, the Dozos came en masse from the north to the west of the country, accompanying the

timber and cotton, zone commanders organised a system of road tolls that brought in tens of millions of dollars every year. "Ivory Coast checkpoint bribes cost \$300", BBC, 4 May 2010. The zone commanders also misappropriated all municipal taxes in the towns they controlled and even, as in Korhogo, extorted the chemists, who were forced to pay zone commanders the monthly sum of FCFA500,000 (\$990). Crisis Group interview, chemist, Abidjan, February 2010.

⁶⁷ Crisis Group interviews, diplomats, Abidjan, October 2011.

⁶⁸ Crisis Group interviews, economic operators, politician, Abidjan, October 2011.

⁶⁹ Crisis Group interviews, economic operators and NGO staff Abidjan, Bouaké, October 2011.

⁷⁰ In the interior, FRCI members also continue to pose problems by illegally occupying plantations or by imposing heavy taxes on cargos of raw materials. Crisis Group interview, economic operator, Abidjan, October 2010. In their most recent report, the United Nations experts noted that, at the beginning of September in the former central, northern and western zone "Mobile roadblocks are increasing. Men in uniform still collect taxes on behalf of the zone commanders and La Centrale, even though La Centrale has officially been abolished". "Report of the Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire", op. cit.

⁷¹ A unit of 1,500 Dozos, called "warriors of the light" and led by chief Mamadou Bamba, fought at the side of the FN at the beginning of the armed rebellion. This unit was stationed in Bouaké where Crisis Group interviewed its leaders. In general, the Dozos manned dozens of village checkpoints erected in the areas held by the rebels.

⁷² The populations from the north and from neighbouring countries have used the services of the Dozos to ensure their security in Duékoué. Crisis Group interviews, NGO staff and community representatives, Duékoué, February 2010.

FRCI offensive. They were guilty of atrocities against the local population and are among the main suspects of the Duékoué massacre.⁷³

Since then, they have settled in the west, which they treat as a conquered territory, monopolising and exploiting land that does not belong to them.⁷⁴ They inspire fear in the indigenous Guéré population because of their supposed mystic powers, the fact that they are ostentatiously armed and their presumed role in the Duékoué massacres. This fear generates extreme tension. In November, the Dozos were implicated in at least two violent incidents of an ethnic nature.⁷⁵

The old pro-Gbagbo militias that were the main perpetrators of violence throughout the western region are now a paradoxical threat. Scattered and under surveillance, it is very difficult for them to act. But they have not been disarmed and militiamen are still hiding in the Ivorian refugee camps or on the Liberian side of the border.⁷⁶ These militias threaten the general population rather than the stability of Alassane Ouattara's government, as shown by the massacre at Ziriglo, which left 23 dead on 15 September.⁷⁷

⁷³ Report of the International Independent Commission of Inquiry to investigate the facts and circumstances surrounding the allegations of serious abuses and violations of human rights committed in Côte d'Ivoire following the presidential election of 28 November 2010, United Nations Human Rights Council, 8 June 2011, p. 8.

⁷⁴ According to a traditional chief in the region interviewed by an Abidjan daily: "The Dozo are in the fields with their arms, they exploit our plantations and we can't do a thing about it". See "Le feu couve à nouveau à l'Ouest, Dozos et populations au bord de l'affrontement", *L'Inter*, 18 November 2011.

⁷⁵ At the end of October 2011, residents of two villages in the region of Daloa and Divo came to blows. On 10 November 2011, clashes occurred in the Sinfra region between Dozos and the Gouro population, leaving one dead and eleven wounded. "Deux morts dans de violents affrontements à l'Ouest", Agence France-Presse, 3 November 2011; and "Bazré: Gouro et Dozos s'affrontent: un mort et onze blessés par balles", *Le nouveau réveil*, 11 November 2011.

⁷⁶ Crisis Group interview, local administrative official, Duékoué, October 2011.

⁷⁷ In the night of 15 September 2011, at Ziriglo, a village on the border with Liberia, an armed commando unit from Liberia, composed of at least fifteen men, carried out a murderous attack, leaving 23 dead and more than a dozen wounded. The exact composition of this commando unit is unknown, but several witness statements collected by the local press say that it was formed by former pro-Gbagbo militiamen and Liberians. The victims were mainly villagers but one FRCI soldier guarding a checkpoint at the entrance to the village was killed. "Venu du Libéria: un commando attaque l'Ouest", *Soir Info*, 17 September 2011.

B. SECURITY SECTOR REFORM STARTS BADLY

The prime minister and minister of defence, Guillaume Soro, has the heavy responsibility of laying the foundations of security sector reform (SSR). A working group attached to his cabinet has been created to help him carry out this important mission. However, very little has been achieved in this field so far. There is a list of problems to tackle but no clear plan for reform.⁷⁸ There has been no comprehensive move to begin disarmament or return former combatants to the barracks. Implementation of SSR is currently held up for two main reasons.

First, the ineffectiveness and lack of expertise of the teams created to manage this reform. Several partners in the international community are finding it very difficult to identify an interlocutor among the many often competing structures that are supposed to be managing disarmament and the reintegration of combatants.⁷⁹ Moreover, donors do not trust some of the officials in these structures because of their inexperience or questionable management of previous projects. Donors are therefore hesitating before releasing funds.⁸⁰

Second, the position of Guillaume Soro is ambiguous. His role encroaches on that of the supreme commander of the armed forces, President Ouattara, who seems, at least publicly, to not be paying much attention to this issue. Leader of the FN for the last eight years, Guillaume Soro is certainly well placed to dismantle the former rebel army and incorporate part of it into the new army. However, he is both "judge and party to the dispute" and therefore is

⁷⁸ Crisis Group interview, diplomat, Brussels, October 2011.

⁷⁹ The main state agency dealing with the reintegration of ex-combatants and those "associated with the conflict" is the National Community Reintegration and Rehabilitation Programme (Programme national de réinsertion et de réhabilitation communautaire, PNRCC). Created by the Ouagadougou Agreement, the PNRCC's main mission is the social and economic reintegration of demobilised ex-combatants. The National Reintegration and Reconstruction Agency (Agence nationale de la réinsertion et de la reconstruction, ANARREC) also has a role in the general policy of reintegration because it implements projects established by the National Reconstruction and Reintegration Department (Secrétariat national à la reconstruction et à la réinsertion, SNRR). Several NGOs play an important part in this work. For example, Care participates in the Post-Conflict Assistance Project (Projet d'assistance post-conflit (PAPC)). At a workshop held in Grand Bassam on 3 November 2011, the Ministry of Employment, Social Affairs and Solidarity, Gilbert Koné, agreed that the coordination of these structures was not yet "optimal" and pleaded for the creation of a single coordination structure. See "Réinsertion des ex-combattants: une structure unique pour gérer le processus", *L'Expression*, 4 November 2011.

⁸⁰ Crisis Group interview, diplomat, Abidjan, 13 October 2011.

perhaps too close to his former comrades-in-arms to carry out this task effectively.

One of the medium-term problems of the reform lies precisely in the extent of the power held by the zone commanders who do not observe the military hierarchy and oppose reform of the various components of the security apparatus. Without a single, vertical chain of command, it is difficult to implement decisions taken by ministers and the general staff. The chief of staff of the armed forces, who is supposed to be the supreme authority in the army, does not in practice have full powers, and this is symbolised by the fact that the commander Chérif Ousmane continues to occupy the residence reserved for the chief of staff.⁸¹ The work being carried out by the ministry of the interior and its desire to see the police force and gendarmerie reassume their functions is limited in practice because the zone commanders and their men continue to carry out these roles.

Finally, the wish expressed by a close associate of the prime minister to include more than 2,000 "volunteers" in the new army⁸² as well as the 9,000 members of the FN envisaged by the OPA, poses a more long-term question about the ethnic balance of the FRCI, the organisation of the armed forces and the financial cost to the state.⁸³ Also relevant here is the creation of a special force that is currently being formed,⁸⁴ commanded and recruited mainly from former members of the FAFN.⁸⁵

The common thread running through the history of the Ivorian army is the willingness of successive heads of state to create a unit formed by loyal supporters at the heart of the security apparatus in order to ensure the permanence of their regime and serve their personal interests.⁸⁶ Unless

they are abandoned, the choices made during the last few months, particularly the forced integration of 2,000 volunteers, could give credence to the arguments of those who accuse the prime minister of wanting to copy this model and create an army within an army that he will be able to mobilise when convenient to him. If that is the case, he will waste a unique chance for Côte d'Ivoire to create unified republican defence and security forces, the first precondition for lasting stability.

C. MAKE SECURITY A PRESIDENTIAL PRIORITY

The forthcoming six months should see important and visible progress with harmonisation of the security forces. This reform must be just as much a priority for President Ouattara as economic recovery. The working group currently attached to the prime minister's cabinet should underpin a central structure subordinated to the presidential cabinet. It should of course seek the support of all components of the armed forces for its plan of action, independently of the prime minister and the FN.

Led by a specialist in military affairs, it should prepare a comprehensive plan for reorganising the security forces, with short-, medium- and long-term objectives. It should cover the disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration (DDR) and accommodation in barracks of personnel retained for the new army, and also take immediate practical measures to promote the integration of former FDS and FN personnel, such as community projects, known as civilian-military action in military jargon.⁸⁷ It should base its work on an audit of the Ivorian Armed Forces carried out with the help of French experts who reported to President Ouattara in October.

The president of the republic should play a more active and public role in dealing with security issues. In particu-

⁸¹ Crisis Group interview, Ivorian military officer, Abidjan, October 2011.

⁸² At a workshop on the new army held in June 2011, the assistant minister of defence, Koffi Koffi Paul, announced his intention to incorporate 2,300 volunteers into the FRCI. "Défense nationale: 2 300 volontaires et 8 700 FAFN vont intégrer l'armée", *L'Inter*, 25 June 2011.

⁸³ See Crisis Group Report, *A Critical Period for Ensuring Stability in Côte d'Ivoire*, op. cit., p. 5.

⁸⁴ On 4 August, President Ouattara signed a communiqué on the creation of a new unit called Special Forces (Forces spéciales). This unit will replace the Special Operations Command (Commandement des opérations spéciales, CECOS) created by Laurent Gbagbo and dissolved in May 2011. Several former rebel leaders, including zone commanders Morou Ouattara, Dramane Traoré, Losseni Fofana, Gaoussou Koné and Zacharia Koné have been appointed to senior rank in this unit. Crisis Group telephone conversation, November 2011.

⁸⁵ Crisis Group interview, FN military officer, Abidjan, October 2011.

⁸⁶ In addition to the umbrella afforded him by the French army, Félix Houphouët-Boigny depended on a strongly ethnic repub-

lican guard that sang in the Baoulé language during military parades. Henri Konan Bédié preferred to use the gendarmerie and created the Anti-Riot Brigade (Brigade anti-émeute, BAE) to consolidate his power. General Robert Guei depended on his militias, such as the Cosa Nostra, built around charismatic and violent non-commissioned officers. Laurent Gbagbo created the CECOS, a unit tasked with fighting organised crime. Well-equipped and trained, it was led by a loyal supporter, General Guiai Bi Poin.

⁸⁷ Cohabitation between members of the FDS and FAFN is not something new. The OPA made provision for a structure to help end the crisis. This structure was called the Integrated Command Centre (Centre de commandement intégré, CCI) and was composed of officers from both sides. The CCI created some mixed units but, for financial and political reasons, they never really worked together. The CCI, which should have had 8,000 men – 4,000 from each army – to ensure the security of the presidential election, never reached half this number.

lar, he should address all civilian combatants who fought for his legitimate right to the presidency. In a televised speech, he should solemnly appeal to them to lay down their arms and return to civilian life. The two main targets of such an intervention are volunteers who are still armed and the Dozos, who have no legitimate right to be involved in ensuring the security of the population and who must return to their rightful place in society.

The Ivorian forces, for all the reasons mentioned above, are incapable of reforming themselves in the short-term. The former political and military leaders of the FN, who still have the upper hand in the FRCI, are very unlikely to agree on the imperative need to form armed forces able to ensure the stability of the country and the security of the population, whatever its regional or ethnic origins or political affiliations. The former rebel leaders are not well placed to help the government take the first steps in this reform.

The management structure proposed above must be able to count on the assistance of UNOCI. In accordance with resolution 2000 of 27 July 2011, which redefined its mandate, it must be fully involved in DDR operations and SSR. It should now prioritise these operations. In order to carry out this task, the mission should have the necessary resources, including technical expertise and the development of a strategy for SSR. It should place its military force fully in the service of the unit responsible for DDR-SSR.

The special representative of the secretary-general should be actively involved in elements essential to reform. He should carefully monitor and regularly report on progress, bearing in mind that only a truly republican and ethnically balanced armed forces can avoid recreating conditions for rebellion. The government, led by the president himself, should quickly define a framework for DDR and clarify what it expects from UNOCI. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) should encourage the president to commit personally to SSR and provide political support to the strategic guidelines of this reform.

Another priority is to prepare the police and gendarmerie for a return to their functions, in terms of both training and equipment. The recruitment carried out in the course of the Gbagbo years used dubious criteria, especially in the case of the police force. Rapid restructuring is indispensable. New legal provisions will, moreover, be taken to strengthen the transparency of entry examinations at the training centres of these two forces. France, which has donated equipment to the Ivorian police in recent months, should significantly increase its assistance. The EU should also consider the creation of a programme of technical and financial support aimed at strengthening the Ivorian police forces, within the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP).

In addition, the government must continue efforts to remove clandestine checkpoints and combat extortion and extend these efforts to rural areas, where these phenomena are still widespread. The unit responsible for combating extortion, led by Tuo Fozié,⁸⁸ former director general of the FAFN police and gendarmerie forces, should attack these practices, which are unacceptable but still encouraged by military leaders of the former rebellion. Burkina Faso, facilitator of the OPA, should continue to press the former military leaders of the FN to stop behaving like war leaders and more like senior officers in the Ivorian army. It should strengthen control over its border with Côte d'Ivoire in order to prevent smuggling. The Malian government should do the same.

V. THE OTHER PROBLEM: THE IMPERATIVE OF IMPARTIAL JUSTICE

The current structure of the security forces handicaps the establishment of an impartial justice system. The Ivorian justice system will face a very delicate situation if its investigation into the serious crimes committed following the November 2010 presidential election leads to a decision to arrest any of the all-powerful former zone commanders now in the FRCI. The judiciary has not yet called any FN officer to give evidence, despite the strong suspicions looming over them.⁸⁹ As long as the FRCI is identified as being almost synonymous with the FAFN, it will be very difficult for the judiciary to be completely impartial.

⁸⁸ On 7 October, the Minister of the Interior, Hamed Bakayoko, appointed Tuo Fozié commander of the unit responsible for combating extortion. The unit has 350 men (91 FRCI personnel, 86 gendarmes, 79 police officers, 47 customs officers and 47 forestry and water officers). See "Tuo Fozié est aux commandes", *L'expression*, 8 October 2011.

⁸⁹ In a report published on 6 October, entitled "They Killed Them Like It Was Nothing", Human Rights Watch (HRW) accused four FN leaders of taking an active part in the atrocities that took place in the post-electoral crisis. Captain Eddie Médi, former commander of the Danané sector, led the military offensive from Zouan-Hounien to Guiglo, in the west of the country, in February and March 2011. According to HRW, his men killed many people, raped at least twenty women and burned more than ten villages to the ground. Losseni Fofana, former commander of the Man zone, was Eddie Médi's commanding officer. The soldiers under his command took control of Duékoué on the morning of 29 March, where they are suspected of participating in the massacre of hundreds of people. According to HRW, Chérif Ousmane, commander of the 3rd military region of Bouaké, ordered the deaths of 29 prisoners at the beginning of May in Abidjan. The NGO accuses Ousmane Coulibaly, former commander of the Odienné zone, and his men, of being implicated in murder, torture and arbitrary detentions in the Yopougon district of Abidjan.

The biased justice system imposed by the victors perpetuates the strong social and political tensions in the country. It is one of the main arguments used by FPI hard-liners to justify their refusal to participate in any reconciliation process⁹⁰ or return to Côte d'Ivoire. They also use it to persuade the more moderate members of their party to maintain a hard-line.⁹¹ Unfortunately, the facts give substance to their arguments. This represents an obstacle to national reconciliation and a return to normal political life. No military leader of the former rebellion, junior or senior, has been called to give evidence by a judge. At the end of November, 45 civilians connected to the former regime were detained, but no clear distinction was made between Laurent Gbagbo supporters who played a purely political role in the crisis and those who promoted violence by arming the militias or recruiting mercenaries.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) represents, a priori, greater hope for impartial justice than the national procedures undertaken so far. At the end of September 2011, ICC judges officially authorised the prosecutor to investigate crimes committed during the post-electoral crisis that might be within the court's jurisdiction.⁹² Gbagbo was notified of the charges brought against him on 29 November and immediately transferred from Korhogo, where he has been held since his arrest in April, to The Hague. Although everybody knew during the months of violence that Laurent Gbagbo and his supporters would be particularly exposed to charges, ex-FN leaders are also likely to be prosecuted sooner or later.

However, the facts, as reported by different international human rights organisations as well as the UN International Commission of Inquiry into post-electoral violence would seem to require this.⁹³

⁹⁰ For example, at a meeting of pro-Gbagbo youth held in Accra on 19 November 2011, Damana Pickas said: "We link the success of reconciliation to what happens to Laurent Gbagbo. If Laurent Gbagbo is deported to the ICC, there will be no reconciliation in Côte d'Ivoire". "Damana Pickas élu président de la 'Coalition des patriotes en exil': 'nous allons répondre aux provocations du régime'", *Soir Info*, 21 November 2011.

⁹¹ Crisis Group interview, FPI official, Abidjan, October 2011.

⁹² According to the ICC press release dated 3 October 2011: "On 30 September 2011, Pre-Trial Chamber III of the International Criminal Court (ICC) granted the Prosecutor's request to commence an investigation in Côte d'Ivoire with respect to alleged crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court, committed since 28 November 2010, as well as with regard to crimes that may be committed in the future in the context of this situation [...] Pre-Trial Chamber III [...] also requested the Prosecutor to revert to the Chamber within one month with any additional information that is available to him on potentially relevant crimes committed between 2002 and 2010".

⁹³ See "Le nouveau rapport de l'ONU met en cause les deux camps, pro-Ouattara et pro-Gbagbo", Radio France internatio-

What will happen if the ICC decides to issue a warrant for the arrest of an FN leader, who has meanwhile been integrated into the FRCI? Will the Ivorian state be strong enough to execute such a warrant? The risk would be that FN leaders, their personal power intact despite their integration into the regular army, would react violently against President Ouattara if he were to decide to honour his promise to cooperate fully with the ICC, whoever is charged.

The former military leaders of the FN may disagree with each other on many political and financial issues but the threat or fear of arrest could inspire a kind of solidarity among them resulting in a collective resistance to any attempt to execute an international arrest warrant. They would feel a strong sense of injustice but each officer would also fear that he could be next on the list. Several former zone commanders already feel that the accusations currently levelled against them are "unfair". They insist they were "called on" to ensure respect for President Ouattara's electoral legitimacy in the context of Gbagbo's coup, legitimacy supported by the international community, and that they have therefore only done their duty.⁹⁴

As difficult and dangerous as this exercise is, the delivery of impartial justice is absolutely necessary in Côte d'Ivoire. The justice deficit that followed several serious events after the military transition of December 1999 and the election of President Gbagbo in October 2000, allowed the perpetrators of the most hateful crimes to remain on the political scene, increase their influence and make political violence, in fact violence pure and simple, the norm in Ivorian society.⁹⁵ The country cannot break out of this deadly cycle without impartial justice, national and/or international. The work of the Truth, Dialogue and Reconciliation Commission (CDVR)⁹⁶ over the next two years will not be taken seriously by all the country's communities unless judicial developments show that the victims of the worst violence, whether inflicted by Dioulas, Guérés, Baoulés, Didas or foreign residents, deserve the same recognition of their need for truth and justice.

nale, 11 June 2011, and the Report of the International Independent Commission of Inquiry to investigate the facts and circumstances surrounding the allegations of serious abuses and violations of human rights committed in Côte d'Ivoire following the presidential election of 28 November 2010, op. cit.

⁹⁴ Crisis Group interview, military official, former rebel army, Abidjan, October 2011.

⁹⁵ Neither the violent demonstrations that followed Laurent Gbagbo's election on 26 October 2010, nor those on 25 March 2004, when several dozen opposition militants were killed by the security forces, nor the massacres at Duékoué in 2005, nor the violent purges that punctuated the history of the FN have led to convictions in an Ivorian court.

⁹⁶ For more details on the CDVR, see the Crisis Group Report, *A Critical Period for Ensuring Stability in Côte d'Ivoire*, op. cit., p. 9 and 10.

VI. NOTHING NEW IN THE WEST

The scene of many land and ethnic tensions, the west remains the most unstable part of the country. Intercommunal tensions are still acute and could, as in the case of the attack on Ziriglo, lead to serious violence. The many attempts at dialogue between communities, often undertaken on the initiative of local administration officials or politicians, generally fail. "Each community tells us that the other community should take the first step towards reconciliation", one of them emphasised.⁹⁷ The installation of eight UNOCI military bases in the west has not yet succeeded in fully reassuring these communities.⁹⁸

These problems are not only present in the Moyen-Cavally region, epicentre of post-electoral violence. They are common throughout the western Côte d'Ivoire. In Bas-Sassandra, the town of Taï is in a permanent state of insecurity.⁹⁹ In the coastal towns of Tabou and San Pedro, many war weapons distributed during the post-electoral crisis are still in circulation. Unlike in Abidjan, the "young patriots" militia has not been completely dismantled.¹⁰⁰ In the centre-west, intercommunal violence still occasionally occurs between supporters of Alassane Ouattara and Laurent Gbagbo.

The entire area will remain unstable until the state manages to restore its authority. One local administration official summed it up in these words: "It is a question of doing what is necessary to make the local populations feel they belong to the republic of Côte d'Ivoire and not to the neighbouring state of Liberia".¹⁰¹ More than anywhere else in the country, the security forces must be seen as representatives of the state and no longer as members of a rebel army. The ethnic dimension of the conflicts in this region should not be exaggerated, but the distrust between the different communities that dispute control of the land certainly runs deep. Political and military leaders belonging to the Yacouba ethnic group in the north west (area around the town of Man, formerly under the FN's control) are not, for example, the best placed to take the government's message to the Guéré communities that live more to the south, near the border with Liberia. The disputes between these large groups of people are significant and each has their ethnic allies on the other side of the border.

The government must aim for a quick return of public administration and services. In Guiglo, for example, a court has been reestablished but there is no detention centre to house those sentenced by the court. Finally, the entire border with Liberia remains very badly served in terms of roads and social infrastructure. This contributes to its isolation and the feeling of distance from the state felt by the population, most of which did not vote for Ouattara. The Ivorian authorities should start to upgrade and build roads. In this region, where pro-Gbagbo "self-defence" militias emerged and proliferated after the September 2002 rebellion, the disarmament of young men can only be done by intelligent use of carrot and stick.

President Ouattara must urgently show he has a plan for the region's economy, notably through the establishment of a development zone covering western Côte d'Ivoire and eastern Liberia, where the same frustrations are directed towards Monrovia.¹⁰² The rural populations in the area have noted the many government gestures towards Burkina Faso. The revival of the Abidjan-Ouagadougou axis is excellent news, but the president should also look towards the west and ask the newly re-elected President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to join him in developing a plan to end the isolation of the border regions.

As an interlocutor of Crisis Group from the region explained: "It is only by getting young people from different ethnic communities in the region to work together, channelling their energy and time into development, that we will solve the problems in the west and also in the county of Grand Gedeh on the Liberian side of the border".¹⁰³ The so-called indigenous communities are not inclined to look favourably on Ouattara and the first months of his term in office have done nothing to convince these people that they are included in plans for economic revival.

VII. CONCLUSION

Six months after the end of the post-electoral crisis, Côte d'Ivoire must consolidate its return to stability and plan for long-term stability. The return to economic growth and the government's efforts to improve governance should be recognised but this will not be enough to ensure a lasting peace. The authorities would be wrong to think that the long political-military crisis is over. Unless the welcome message of reconciliation is translated into action, unless there is representation of the political opposition in the country's institutions, unless a justice system worthy

⁹⁷ Crisis Group interview, administration official, Duékoué, 17 October 2011.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Crisis Group interview, UNOCI official, Abidjan, 11 October 2011.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Crisis Group interview, administration official, Duékoué, 17 October 2011.

¹⁰² See Crisis Group Africa Report N°177, *Liberia: How Sustainable Is the Recovery?*, 19 August 2011.

¹⁰³ Crisis Group interview, Ivorian observer, Dakar, November 2011.

of the name is created and unless the security forces are at the service of all citizens, the same causes will have the same effects. Exclusion will be followed by tension and then violence.

The defence and security forces have been the source of all the troubles experienced by the country since December 1999, when a coup overthrew President Bédié. Security sector reform is urgent and must begin in 2012. This must be a priority of Alassane Ouattara's presidency. If it is not conducted firmly and openly, the armed forces and the different groups within it will continue to promote insecurity in the short term and instability in the years to come.

Dakar/Brussels, 16 December 2011

APPENDIX A

MAP OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE



APPENDIX B

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CDVR

Commission dialogue, vérité et réconciliation/Truth, Dialogue and Reconciliation Commission

DDR

Disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration

FAFN

Forces armées des forces nouvelles/Armed Forces of the New Forces

FDS

Forces de défense et de sécurité/Defence and Security Forces

FPI

Front populaire ivoirien/Ivorian Popular Front, party of former president Laurent Gbagbo

FRCI

Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire/Republican Forces of Côte d'Ivoire, the new army

HRW

Human Rights Watch

ICC

International Criminal Court

LMP

La majorité présidentielle/The Presidential Majority

OPA

Ouagadougou Political Agreement (March 2007)

PDCI

Parti démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire/Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire, Henri Konan Bédié's party

RDR

Rassemblement des républicains/Rally of Republicans, Alassane Dramane Ouattara's party

RHDP

Rassemblement des houphouétistes pour la démocratie et la paix/Rally of Houphouetists for Democracy and Peace

RPP

Rassemblement pour la paix, le progrès et le partage/Rally for Peace, Progress and Sharing, Laurent Dona Fologo's party

SSR

Security sector reform

UDCI

Union démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire/Democratic Union of Côte d'Ivoire, Mel Eg Théodore's party

UNOCI

United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire

APPENDIX C

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP

The International Crisis Group (Crisis Group) is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation, with some 130 staff members on five continents, working through field-based analysis and high-level advocacy to prevent and resolve deadly conflict.

Crisis Group's approach is grounded in field research. Teams of political analysts are located within or close by countries at risk of outbreak, escalation or recurrence of violent conflict. Based on information and assessments from the field, it produces analytical reports containing practical recommendations targeted at key international decision-takers. Crisis Group also publishes *CrisisWatch*, a twelve-page monthly bulletin, providing a succinct regular update on the state of play in all the most significant situations of conflict or potential conflict around the world.

Crisis Group's reports and briefing papers are distributed widely by email and made available simultaneously on the website, www.crisisgroup.org. Crisis Group works closely with governments and those who influence them, including the media, to highlight its crisis analyses and to generate support for its policy prescriptions.

The Crisis Group Board – which includes prominent figures from the fields of politics, diplomacy, business and the media – is directly involved in helping to bring the reports and recommendations to the attention of senior policy-makers around the world. Crisis Group is chaired by former U.S. Ambassador Thomas Pickering. Its President and Chief Executive since July 2009 has been Louise Arbour, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and Chief Prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda.

Crisis Group's international headquarters are in Brussels, with major advocacy offices in Washington DC (where it is based as a legal entity) and New York, a smaller one in London and liaison presences in Moscow and Beijing. The organisation currently operates nine regional offices (in Bishkek, Bogotá, Dakar, Islamabad, Istanbul, Jakarta, Nairobi, Pristina and Tbilisi) and has local field representation in seventeen additional locations (Baku, Bangkok, Beirut, Bujumbura, Cairo, Damascus, Dili, Guatemala City, Jerusalem, Johannesburg, Kabul, Kathmandu, Kinshasa, Port-au-Prince, Sarajevo, Seoul and Tunis). Crisis Group currently covers some 60 areas of actual or potential conflict across four continents. In Africa, this includes Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe; in Asia, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burma/Myanmar, Indonesia, Kashmir, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, North Korea, Pakistan, Philippines,

Sri Lanka, Taiwan Strait, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan; in Europe, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Russia (North Caucasus), Serbia and Turkey; in the Middle East and North Africa, Algeria, Egypt, Gulf States, Iran, Iraq, Israel-Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen; and in Latin America and the Caribbean, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti and Venezuela.

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CONFLICT WORLDWIDE

International Headquarters

149 Avenue Louise, 1050 Brussels, Belgium · Tel: +32 2 502 90 38 · Fax: +32 2 502 50 38
Email: brussels@crisisgroup.org

New York Office

420 Lexington Avenue, Suite 2640, New York 10170 · Tel: +1 212 813 0820 · Fax: +1 212 813 0825
Email: newyork@crisisgroup.org

Washington Office

1629 K Street, Suite 450, Washington DC 20006 · Tel: +1 202 785 1601 · Fax: +1 202 785 1630
Email: washington@crisisgroup.org

London Office

48 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8LT · Tel: +44 20 7831 1436 · Fax: +44 20 7242 8135
Email: london@crisisgroup.org

Moscow Office

Kutuzovskiy prospect 36, Building 41, Moscow 121170 Russia · Tel: +7-926-232-6252
Email: moscow@crisisgroup.org

Regional Offices and Field Representation

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