



SECURITY COUNCIL REPORT

UPDATE REPORT



20 April 2011 No. 3

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

EXPECTED COUNCIL ACTION

With the immediate security crisis in Côte d'Ivoire now less pressing there is a growing sense that the Council and the wider UN need to be active to ensure that Côte d'Ivoire does not disappear from focus.

The enormous peacebuilding needs in the country are an issue, as is the capacity and mandate of UNOCI to cope with these needs in the current phase of the peace consolidation process in Côte d'Ivoire. The end of the fighting between forces loyal to Alassane Ouattara, the widely recognised winner of the 28 November elections, and supporters of former Ivorian president Laurent Gbagbo, after Ouattara's forces detained Gbagbo on 11 April, has opened a new chapter. However at press time, given the other issues on the agenda, it was not clear whether Council members have concrete proposals for a new strategy.

At press time the Council was expected to discuss the sanctions regime and the mandate of the group of experts, which expire on 30 April.

The current mandate of UNOCI expires on 30 June.

KEY RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The month of April witnessed a serious escalation in the scale of violence in Abidjan when pro-Ouattara forces (also known as the Republican Forces of Côte d'Ivoire) engaged in heavy military clashes with pro-Gbagbo

forces. A series of aerial assaults by UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and French forces took place on 4 and 5 April and again on 10 April targeting heavy weaponry at Gbagbo's residence. (The heavy weapons, according to UN sources, were used to target civilians.) Former President Gbagbo's grip on power finally unraveled on 11 April when forces backing internationally-recognised President Ouattara subsequently breached the defences of his residence and captured him, his wife and some members of his family and staff. The humanitarian situation deteriorated dramatically and at one point it seemed as if a full scale civil war had reignited.

At press time it was estimated that about 1,500 people had been killed in the violence since the November 2010 elections and about a million displaced, with emerging reports of sexual violence, summary executions and direct shelling of civilians. Reprisal attacks and incidents of armed resistance were also being reported. Both sides were implicated in attacks against civilians.

On 31 March, Ouattara appealed in a televised address for Gbagbo's soldiers to join him in order to prevent further bloodshed, as his forces closed in on strategic locations in the commercial capital, Abidjan. Many high-level defections from the Gbagbo camp were reported.

On 1 April, the AU Chairperson, Jean Ping, urged Gbagbo to "immediately hand over power" to Ouattara, "in order to shorten the suffering of the Ivorians."

On 2 April, four UN peacekeepers were seriously injured by Pro-Gbagbo forces while on a humanitarian mission in Abidjan.

On 3 April, UN and French peacekeepers secured the international airport in Abidjan, to facilitate evacuation of foreign nationals caught up in the conflict. France increased its troop levels by about 450 extra personnel.

On 3 April, General Mangou, who had defected as army chief of the Gbagbo camp, met with Gbagbo after leaving the residence of the South African Ambassador where he had sought refuge together with his family on 30 March.

On 3 April, the International Committee of the Red Cross indicated that about 800 people had been killed in apparent inter-ethnic violence in the southwestern town of Duekoue, which had been captured by Ouattara's Republican Forces of Côte d'Ivoire.

On 3 April, the UN Secretary-General, concerned about the continuing use of heavy weapons by Gbagbo forces against civilian areas, wrote to French President Nicolas Sarkozy requesting for the support of French troops (who operate in Côte d'Ivoire under

UN mandate) for military operations to be conducted by UNOCI to neutralise heavy weapons used against civilians and UN personnel, in line with resolution 1975. Sarkozy agreed to this request.

On 4 April, the Secretary-General announced that he had instructed UNOCI, in accordance with the provisions of resolution 1975, "to take the necessary measures to prevent the use of heavy weapons against the civilian population, with the support of the French forces". UN and French helicopters fired on the pro-Gbagbo forces occupied Akouedo camp in Abidjan, explaining that it was a strike against heavy weapons stationed there. He informed the Council in a separate letter that the security situation in Abidjan had deteriorated dramatically and that forces loyal to Gbagbo had intensified their use of heavy weapons against civilians and had also attacked UNOCI patrols dispatched to protect civilians. Subsequently, and consequently, UNOCI announced on 5 April that it had launched operation "Protect the Civilian Population."

During the week of 4 April pro-Ouattara forces in Abidjan met strong resistance at the presidential residence area. A counter offensive was carried out by Gbagbo forces, after a call by the latter for a ceasefire which appeared to have been used as a cover to regroup.

On 8 April, the Council was briefed in private consultations by Under-Secretary-General Alain Le Roy on the use of force by UNOCI and developments on the ground.

On 9 April, UNOCI reported that pro-Gbagbo forces were attacking and firing heavy weapons on UN facilities and at the Golf Hotel, which served as the operational headquarters of Ouattara, who was being protected by UNOCI. Gbagbo's camp denied the accusation. On 10 April UN and French troops launched further aerial attacks targeting heavy weapons stationed at the Gbagbo residence.

On 11 April, Gbagbo, his wife and some associates were captured by Ouattara's forces and were subsequently detained at the Golf Hotel in Abidjan under UN protection.

In a televised address on 11 April Ouattara stated that the end had come to a sad chapter in Côte d'Ivoire's history and urged militias and mercenaries to lay down their arms and begin the task of nation-building. Ouattara said that he would set up a national truth and reconciliation commission to highlight human rights violations committed during the post-election period and the ensuing conflict. Ouattara subsequently indicated that his government will use both national and international mechanisms to address justice and accountability issues.

On 11 April, Le Roy briefed the Security Council on the developments in Côte d'Ivoire. Regarding the UN's role in Gbagbo's surrender, Le Roy stressed that the UN operations had focused strictly on the protection of civilians. He also said that while UN action might have cleared the way for the capture of Gbagbo, there had been no coordination with Ouattara's forces. The Secretary-General also stressed that the UN had acted strictly within the mandate of resolution 1975.

On 12 April, Gbagbo was moved from the Golf Hotel to a location in northern Côte d'Ivoire under the protection of UN troops.

On 13 April, the Council was briefed on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire by Head of UNOCI Choi Young-Jin, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Valerie Amos, High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Navi Pillay and Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire Youssoufou Bamba. (Members of OHCHR went to Côte d'Ivoire in early April to investigate the reports of killings and other human rights violations. Amos travelled to Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire where she witnessed the humanitarian impact of the political crisis.) Council members subsequently issued a press statement:

- welcoming that Ouattara was "now in position to assume all his responsibilities as Head of State" of Côte d'Ivoire;
- urging all Ivorians to abstain from any reprisals, revenge and provocation and to work together to achieve national reconciliation;
- commending Ouattara's call for justice and reconciliation in Côte d'Ivoire and his decision to establish a Truth and Reconciliation Committee and encouraging the Ivorian government to cooperate closely with the independent international commission of inquiry on Côte d'Ivoire established by the Human Rights Council (HRC);
- calling upon the Ivorian government to ensure the security of Gbagbo and fair and just treatment for him and his associates;
- expressing concern about reports of widespread violence and intimidation in Abidjan and urging illegal combatants to immediately turn in their weapons to the relevant authorities;
- calling on UNOCI and the French forces to continue to protect civilians; and
- expressing appreciation for the valuable roles played by the UN, AU and the Economic Community of West African States in resolving the post-election conflict and calling for their continued engagement in the overall political process, implemented as soon as possible.

On 13 April, the army chief of Gbagbo's camp, pledged allegiance to Ouattara's administration in a televised statement, while indicating that Ouattara had given instructions for the national security agencies to secure the city of Abidjan and the interior the country. It was, however, unclear whether militias would comply with calls to lay down their weapons.

On 14 April, the Council's Sanctions Committee on Côte d'Ivoire met and reportedly agreed to issue the September report of its group of experts, the issuance which had been delayed due to the presidential elections and the subsequent dispute. It

also decided to remove the name of Désiré Tagro from the individuals sanctions list due to his death, which reportedly occurred when Ouattara's forces captured Gbagbo's residence. (Tagro, who was recently placed on the sanctions list via resolution 1975, was the secretary-general in the "presidency" of Gbagbo and was listed for participating in the illegitimate government of Gbagbo, obstruction of the peace and reconciliation process, rejection of the results of the presidential election and for "violent repressions of popular movements.")

On 14 April, in order to provide UNOCI with necessary additional capacity to protect UN personnel, installations and civilians, the Council agreed to the recommendation by the Secretary-General (through an exchange of letters between the Secretary-General and the Security Council) to temporarily deploy forty formed police unit personnel to temporarily replace a similar number of authorised posts yet to be encumbered, which were originally designated for a similar number of individual police officers.

HUMAN RIGHTS-RELATED DEVELOPMENTS

On 12 April the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights indicated that 530 people had been killed in western Côte d'Ivoire since the end of March 2011, in the towns of Duekoue, Guiglo, Bolequin and Bangolo.

On 12 April, following concern expressed by the HRC at the extent of abuses of international human rights law in Côte d'Ivoire, the President of the HRC appointed three high-level experts as members of a UN Commission of Inquiry. The Commission will "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, in order to identify those responsible for such acts and bring them to justice". The three members are Vitit Muntabhorn (Thailand), Suliman Baldo (Sudan) and Reine Alapini Gansou (Benin).

They will present their findings to the HRC at its next session in June.

KEY ISSUES

A key issue for the Council is to determine how best it can maintain a priority focus on Côte d'Ivoire in the changed context, especially regarding the role of the UN and UNOCI in assisting peacebuilding.

A closely related issue for the Council is ensuring that UNOCI continues to be able to support the resolution of peace and security in view of ongoing reports of pockets of resistance by remnants of pro-Gbagbo forces, to avoid protracted armed resistance that could potentially escalate into a relapse of a full blown conflict. (Currently, four armed groups—the Republican Forces of Côte d'Ivoire, voluntary/vigilante forces aligned to Ouattara with no clear command-and-control structure, pro-Gbagbo forces and mercenaries—will have to be brought in within the ambit of effective state control.)

A related issue is the urgent need for disarmament, demobilisation and security sector reform programmes to be developed.

A further related issue is the potentially destabilising effects of the developments in Côte d'Ivoire on peace and security in West Africa, likely due to availability of arms from the Ivorian theatre, the strain of the humanitarian needs of refugees on host communities in fragile states like Liberia and concerns about the potential movement of armed mercenaries allegedly recruited by the belligerents in Côte d'Ivoire along the porous borders.

A major ongoing issue for the Council is that of balancing its own role and the roles of the regional and sub-regional organisations in consolidating peace in the country.

Another issue is whether the Council should begin active consideration of how best to provide effective oversight for the large and complex peacebuilding needs of the country. It is

unclear whether placing the country on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) is feasible, since the current challenges confronting the country (e.g. issues relating to national reconciliation and rebuilding, including the strengthening of state institutions to enable them to adequately maintain national peace and security, as well as strengthening democratisation and improving socioeconomic situations) suggest the need for enhanced peacebuilding action. A related issue is the need for more effective coordination and coherent resource mobilisation during this period.

UNDERLYING PROBLEMS

The immediate challenges facing the country include the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of combatants, and the disarming and dismantling of militias, as well as the delivery of urgently required humanitarian assistance and restoration of socioeconomic normalcy. Other challenges include the full restoration of state authority throughout national territory, the reunification and restructuring of the defence and security forces and making progress in the areas of human rights and the rule of law.

OPTIONS

Options include:

- adopting a wait-and-see attitude and deferring discussion of strategic issues pending evolution of the situation on the ground;
- deciding to bring forward discussion of the the mandate of UNOCI (scheduled for renewal in June) with a view to considering how peacebuilding elements can be developed that will provide quick impact to assist in the peace consolidation process on the ground;
- implementing the relevant sections of its statements (e.g. S/PRST/2009/24 of 5 August 2009, S/PRST/2010/2 of 12 February 2010, S/PRST/2010/20 of 13 October 2010, S/PRST/2011/2 of 21 January 2011 and S/PRST/2011/4 of 11 February 2011) and deliberations in recent years recognising the importance of introducing peacebuilding elements in peacekeeping

operations before transfer to PBC and/or that sustainable post conflict stabilisation requires an integrated approach, which enhances coherence between political, security, development, human rights and rule of law activities;

- beginning the process of PBC engagement to facilitate enhanced peace consolidation, including the Council seeking the advice of the PBC in reviewing the mandate of UNOCI and utilising the full potential for a preventive role offered by the PBC's existing mandate; and
- renewing the current sanctions regime without any significant changes, as well as the mandate of the groups of experts, and determining an appropriate duration for its mandate.

COUNCIL DYNAMICS

Council members appear interested in developing a new role for UNOCI in the aftermath of the recent violent stand-off between the key Ivorian parties.

During the Council informal consultations on 13 April France called for a technical assessment team to be deployed soon by the UN Secretariat to explore the need for a modification in the mandate of UNOCI from a peace-keeping focus, to adequately address the peacebuilding challenges, including the issues of security sector reform, disarmament and reintegration of the northern and southern parts of the country.

Council members appear to be generally supportive of the idea that they should turn their attention from solely discussing the immediate security situation to looking at UNOCI's future priorities. The general view among members is that recommendations by a technical assessment team will be particularly useful in the now critical peacebuilding phase.

African members of the Council called for an early re-engagement of the regional institutions in the political process. Nigeria expressed concern about the security of Gbagbo in the

northern part of the country and indicated that the other viable alternatives could be explored to ensure his personal safety.

France seems to be circumspect about pushing its views on the next steps. (There is still some reserve generally among Council members, especially in light of concerns expressed by some Council members [e.g. Russia and South Africa] about the UN and French aerial bombardment of the Ivorian presidential residence. France has separately indicated to the press that its military participated in the raids at the UN Secretary-General's request and firmly denied reports that its special forces had captured Gbagbo and handed him over to Ouattara's forces.)

Overall, the Council generally appears to be both determined and cautious about exploring its options regarding next steps.

UN DOCUMENTS

SELECTED COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

- S/RES/1975 (30 March 2011) authorised UNOCI to prevent the use of heavy weapons against the civilian population and imposed sanctions on Gbagbo and his associates.
- S/RES/1968 (16 February 2011) extended the mandate of troops temporarily deployed from UNMIL to UNOCI for another three months.
- S/RES/1967 (19 January 2011) authorised an increase of 2,000 troops in the overall strength of UNOCI military personnel and extended the mandate of troops temporarily deployed from UNMIL to UNOCI.
- S/RES/1946 (15 October 2010) renewed the sanctions and the mandate of the group of experts until 30 April.
- S/RES/1528 (27 February 2004) established UNOCI.

LATEST SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REPORT

- S/2011/211 (30 March 2011)
Selected Letters

- S/2011/248 and S/2011/247 (14 April 2011) was the exchange of letters between the Secretary-General and the Security Council by which agreement was reached to temporarily deploy forty formed police unit personnel to replace a similar number of authorised posts originally designated for a similar number of individual police officers.
- S/2011/221 (4 April 2011) was from the Secretary-General informing the Council about his decision to authorise UNOCI to take necessary measures to prevent the use of heavy weapons against the civilian population, with the support of the French forces.
- S/2011/182 (24 March 2011) was from the delegation of Nigeria, transmitting the ECOWAS resolution of 24 March to the Council and requesting that it be discussed during consultations on 25 March 2011.
- S/2011/5 (7 January 2011) recommended additional military capacity to be authorised for UNOCI.
- S/2010/493 (23 September 2010) was from the Secretary-General, informing the Council about the head of UNOCI's certification of the Ivorian electoral process.

LATEST PRESS STATEMENTS

- SC/10224 (13 April 2011)
- SC/10196 (11 March 2011)
- SC/10191 (3 March 2011)

APPROVED BUDGET

1 July 2010-30 June
2011: \$485.1 million

OTHER RELEVANT FACTS**SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE SECRETARY-
GENERAL AND HEAD OF
MISSION**

Choi Young-jin
(Republic of Korea)

UNOCI FORCE COMMANDER

Major General Gnakoudè
Béréna (Togo)

**UNOCI POLICE
COMMISSIONER**

Maj. Gen. Jean Marie
Bourry (France)

**CHAIR OF THE SANCTIONS
COMMITTEE**

Maria Luiza Ribeiro
Viotti (Brazil)

**SIZE AND COMPOSITION OF
UNOCI**

Strength (as of 28 February
2011): 7,568 troops, 177
military observers, 1,317 police
personnel, 389 international
civilian personnel, 737 local
staff and 257 UN volunteers

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Security Council Report is published with the support of the Governments of Canada, Germany Liechtenstein, Norway, Singapore and Switzerland, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. It is incorporated as a not for profit Organisation and operates in affiliation with the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University in New York.

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