



CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Expected Council Action

The Council is currently holding further informal consultations on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire, following a briefing by the head of UNOCI, Choi Young-jin, via videoconferencing today. The tensions resulting from the disputed 28 November presidential elections are of increasing concern and Council members have been engaged in deliberations aiming at coming out with a relevant statement on the matter.

UNOCI's mandate needs to be renewed before 31 December and a Council resolution is also required soon.

Key Recent Developments

On 2 December the Council was briefed by the head of the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) Choi Young-jin, on the electoral process in the country. The Council subsequently issued a press statement welcoming the holding of the election and taking note of the assessment of the Special Representative.

On 2 December the Ivorian Independent Electoral Commission announced that former prime minister and veteran opposition leader Ouattara had won the presidential run-off with 54.1 percent of the vote and incumbent president Laurent Gbagbo received 45.9 percent. (A previous attempt by the head of the commission to announce the outcome on 30 November was foiled when a supporter of Gbagbo snatched the published results from the commissioner and tore it up.)

On 3 December the Constitutional Council disputed the outcome saying Gbagbo had won the presidential run-off. The Council also argued that the electoral commission's results were null and void because the legal limit of three days for the Commission to pronounce itself on the provisional results had been exceeded by the electoral commission.

On 3 December Choi, acting pursuant to his Security Council mandate in resolution 1765, certified the results of the elections recognising Alassane Ouattara as the winner, based on his independent assessment.

On 4 December both Ouattara and Gbagbo separately took oaths of office. Ouattara appointed Guillaume Soro as prime minister, who had a few hours earlier resigned as prime minister in Gbagbo's government.

The AU warned that there could be incalculable consequences if Côte d'Ivoire did not follow the Independent Electoral Commission and UN assessment. The Economic Community of West

African States (ECOWAS) recognised Ouattara as the legitimate winner of the polls, suspended Côte d'Ivoire from the organisation and asked Gbagbo to step down. The World Bank and the African Development Bank have said Ivory Coast had to resolve its political crisis or face having its aid frozen. The EU has threatened sanctions if Gbagbo did not step down.

On 5 December former South African president, Thabo Mbeki, arrived in Côte d'Ivoire on an AU mediation mission. He subsequently met with key leaders in the Ivorian electoral process, including Gbagbo, Ouattara, the head of the electoral Commission, the head of the Constitutional Council and Choi.

Key Issues

The key issue for the Council is preventing the tense security situation from igniting a return to civil war—or even worse—the outbreak of mass atrocities based on ethnic divisions. (The ethnic dimension of the tensions between supporters of Gbagbo and Ouattara predominantly drawn from the northern and southern parts of the country, respectively, has been particularly troubling.)

A related issue is the Council role in sustaining international cohesion and leadership on the issue, and the imminent need to renew the UNOCI mandate.

Given the UNOCI certification and the position of the AU, ECOWAS and the UN Secretary-General, a key issue is the role of the UN mission which has a Chapter VII mandate and has assumed a role of protecting the new civilian government that has been certified.

Another key issue for the Council is the potential regional destabilising effect that the fragile security situation in Côte d'Ivoire could have on peace and security in the West African region, especially on the fragile countries such as Liberia and Guinea.

Options

Options for the Council include:

- leaving leadership on the issue to others;
- adopting a clear statement of support for the certification of the election consistent with the AU and ECOWAS position and signalling its clear determination to extend the UNOCI mandate under Chapter VII;
- reminding players that sanctions (travel ban, assets freeze) apply to obstructing the peace process, and tasking its Côte d'Ivoire sanctions committee with initiating concrete action towards applying sanctions to those deemed to be implicated;
- bringing forward the adoption of the resolution renewing the UNOCI mandate as a signal of the Council's serious intent;
- reiterating its position about the unacceptability of any delays in the peace consolidation process; and
- dispatching a small Council mission to Côte d'Ivoire to demonstrate support for Mbeki's mediation and the Council's resolve to prevent a return to conflict.

Council Dynamics

Most members (including the African members, the US, the UK and France) are in favour of a clear statement of the Council's united support for Choi's certification of the election result. Russia and China have reportedly been hesitant and are apparently anxious about the "precedent setting" nature of such action for international law. They also argued that the issue is an internal matter for Côte d'Ivoire as the sovereign state. However, other Council members have pointed out that the certification was mandated by its own resolution (in response to the

requirement of the 2005 Pretoria Peace Agreement reached between the Ivorian parties) as part of providing the UN's impartial verification of elections results and bridging the lack of confidence between them.

At press time it seemed the issue reportedly had been discussed at the ministerial level among various permanent members of the Council, with a view to subsequently communicating a united Council position on the situation.

Developments on the ground, including results of ongoing mediation efforts by the AU and action by ECOWAS, are also expected to influence the Council's actions.

France is the lead country on this issue in the Council.

UN Documents

| Selected Council Resolutions |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S/RES/1951 (24 November 2010) authorised the temporary deployment of troops from UNMIL to UNOCI. • S/RES/1946 (15 October 2010) renewed the sanctions and the mandate of the group of experts until 30 April 2011. • S/RES/1942 (29 September 2010) authorised the deployment of 500 additional troops to UNOCI to help with security during the election period. • S/RES/1933 (30 June 2010) extended the mandate of UNOCI until 30 December 2010. • S/RES/1765 (16 July 2007) renewed UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire's mandate until 15 January 2008 to support elections and the full implementation of the Ouagadougou agreement. • S/RES/1528 (27 February 2004) established the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire. |
| Presidential Statement |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S/PRST/2007/8 (28 March 2007) endorsed the Ouagadougou Agreement. |
| Latest Secretary-General's Report |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S/2010/600 (23 November 2010) |
| Selected Letters |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S/2010/601 (22 November 2010) was the request by the Secretary-General to the Council for approval of the redeployment of troops and aviation assets from UNMIL to 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. • S/2010/486 and S/2010/485 (17 September 2010) was the exchange of letters between the Secretary-General and the Council on raising the level of authorised UNOCI military and police personnel leading up to the presidential election. • S/2008/834 (30 December 2008) contained the fourth supplementary agreement to the Ouagadougou Agreement. • S/2007/144 (13 March 2007) contained the Ouagadougou Agreement. |
| Other |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC/10100 (2 December 2010) was the latest press statement by the Council on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. • S/PV.6415 (3 November 2010) was the briefing by Special Representative Choi |

to the Council on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire.

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