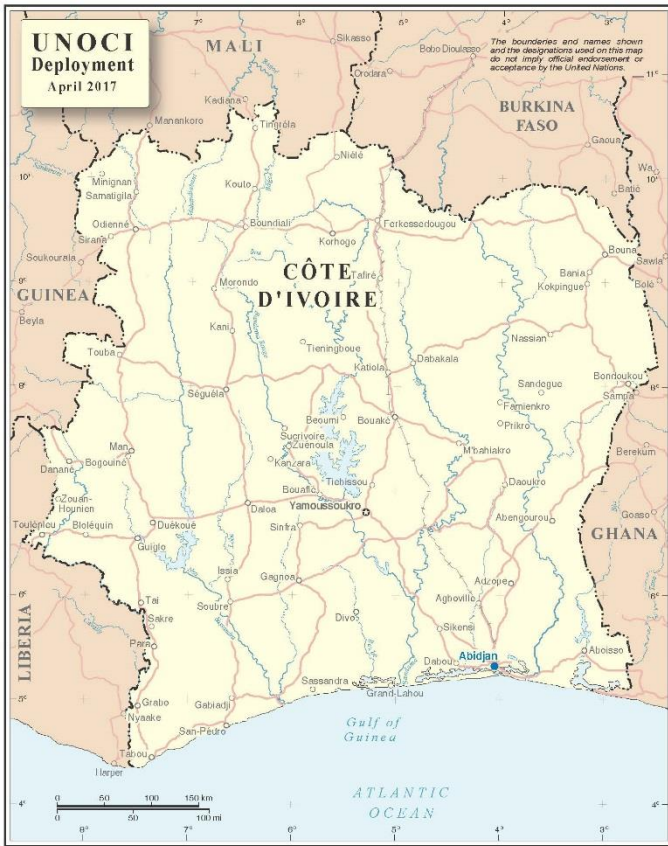**Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI)**
Peace Operations Estimate – UNOCI

United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire
(updated 15 June 2017)

THIS MISSION ENDS ON 30 JUNE 2017

[**UNOCI Deployment Map (April 2017)**](#)
[**UNOCI Mission Website**](#)
[**CIA World Fact Book (Cote d'Ivoire)**](#)

UNOCI Executive Summary

After thirteen years, the UNOCI Mission [formally concludes on 30 June 2017](#). The redeployment of the Mission forces began last year and was complete by February 2017. The civilian staff completed its withdrawal by April 2017.

The UNOCI conclusion marks "the most recent successful completion of a peacekeeping operation in West Africa since the UN mission in Sierra Leone in 2005." However, some remind observers that the UNOCI fulfillment also marks the most recent successful completion of *any* UN peacekeeping mission—regardless of geography.

> *UNOCI is the first UN peacekeeping operation to close since the UN Integrated Mission in East Timor ended in 2012.*

Like many other ongoing—or pending—peace operations missions, the Côte d'Ivoire situation between 2004 and the early 2010s exposed significant ethnic and political divisions that provoked civil war. Therefore, it is useful to determine what factors and actions supported Côte d'Ivoire into stability and economic growth—and the UNOCI influence on the same. At the same time, it is important to note those issues that may not be fully resolved and there are other factors that may hamper continued peace within Côte d'Ivoire and amongst its bordering countries—such as Mali and Liberia.

Other major considerations are:

- While the overall Côte d'Ivoire situation [across all stability sectors](#) permits the conclusion of UNOCI, the UN will still monitor (through a Country Team) "to ensure the sustainability of the gains achieved so far."

> *In January 2017, the [Independent Expert on capacity building and technical cooperation](#) the for Côte d'Ivoire (in the field of human rights by the Human Rights Council) expressed concern at the military and police mutinies, civil servant strikes, and other violent incidents. His concerns were reinforced by the military mutiny in May 2017, following the complete withdrawal of UNOCI members.*

- In her closing report to the UN Security Council, Ms. Aïchatou Mindaoudou, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General Head of the UNOCI, noted the lessons learned through the Mission's deployment. Specifically, she "highlighted the (Mission's) strong political mandate," "hailed the quick reaction force established within UNOCI," acknowledged "the support of the coalition of international partners, all working in pursuit of same goal," and, importantly, noted "**that no peacekeeping operation can substitute for national political will or national efforts to overcome the issues that led to conflict** (emphasis added)."

- While now considered an overall success, UNOCI had its controversies over the years of its deployment: accusations of sexual exploitation and abuse (in 2007 and again in 2011) and improper oversight in the 2010 electoral process; incapacity to effectively provide protection for civilians (particularly after the 2010 presidential elections); and partiality (as opposed to impartiality) to one side of the conflict against another. One observer suggested: "(UNOCI) results are often judged to be low because the expectations perhaps were set too high" and pointed out the inherent conflict in mandate tasks which called for "non-interference" while also expecting UNOCI to "use all necessary means to carry out its mandate."

Mission Overview

1. Background. Like many African nations, Côte d'Ivoire gained its independence from France in 1960. Unlike many of its neighbors, it "was known for its religious and ethnic harmony, as well as its well-developed economy" for three

> President **Felix Houphouët-Boigny** served from independence until his death in 1993.

decades following independence. However, an insurgency (of demobilized soldiers) in 2002 split the country. Eventually, forces loyal to the existing government held the south and the Ivory Coast Patriotic Movement operated in the north).

By 2003, a new "Consensus" government was in place. The UN had a political mission already in place, the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (MINUCI), alongside forces from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) forces, to assist in the implementation of the consensus agreements. However, less than one year later violence again erupted during a government opposition

> The president was **Laurent Gbagbo**, who was a leftist opposition leader for 20 years. He served as president from 2000-10, becoming more nationalist as his terms progressed.

rally in Abidjan, the largest urban center in Côte d'Ivoire. The UN Security Council adopted resolution 1528 (2004), establishing the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI)—alongside French forces—for an initial period of 12 months. (MINUCI and the ECOWAS forces authorities were superseded by UNOCI.)

The first contingent of UN peacekeeping force deployed predominately to monitor the Zone of Confidence —the land between the Government-ruled south and opposition-controlled north. The UN also imposed an arms embargo.

For the next five years, Côte d'Ivoire fluctuated between peace and civil war, as other political opposition and non-state armed groups negotiated against the government and it's military for national influence by violent means. However, by 2009 most northern areas were returned to government administration and the electoral process for the 2010 democratic elections began.

Alassane Ouattara was declared winner of the 2010 UN-certified presidential election. However, the incumbent, Laurent Gbagbo, refused to leave office. He used violence to "entrench his position," which

Alassane Ouattara claims to be a sixth-generation descendant of Sekou, the rulers of (now) Burkina Faso for much of the 18ᵗʰ century. His father was chief of Sindou, now a town in Burkina Faso, just across the border from Côte d'Ivoire, where he graduated from high school in 1962. His birthplace was a source of controversy during the 2010 election campaign, as he was challenged as not a true "Ivorian." He went to college at Drexel Institute of Technology and then to the University of Pennsylvania (both of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) where he earned his PhD in Economics.

He has held many government and international organizational positions over the years, including within Côte d'Ivoire as part of President Felix Houphouët-Boigny's administration. He was also the Deputy Managing Director, International Monetary Fund, (July 1994-July 1999).

While he is Sunni Muslim, he married an American Christian of Jamaican heritage, Barbara Jean Davis, in 1966. They have two children. After their divorce, in 1991 he married a French citizen of Jewish ethnicity, Dominique Nouvian Folloroux-Ouattara, a business woman and widow.

was countered by violence in support of the newly elected president. In May 2011, former-President Gbagbo was arrested and President Ouattara was inaugurated.

Laurent Gbagbo was the first former head of state to appear at International Criminal Court (ICC).

UNOCI remained in position to support the post-election period of the new government, with several renewals (and revisions) of its mandate. Through 2011-2015, President Ouattara's government appeared to address much of the dissent. As an example, he established a Commission for Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation (CDVR) in 2011. By 2012, the UN Security Council adjusted the strength level and priorities in Resolution 2062 (2012) "to meet the evolving situation on the ground" which included "increasing sub-regional security threats, (such as) transnational crime, terrorism and piracy… (and) preserving stability along the border with Liberia." Resolution 2112 (2013) and Resolution 2162 (2014) further reduced the Mission's military presence in the country. In 2014, the UN Security Council also lifted much of the embargoes on Côte d'Ivoire trading.

By Resolution 2226 (2015) the Security Council decided that the priority of the operation would remain protection of civilians, but would transition security responsibilities to the Government. At the time, the Security Council intended to terminate the mandate after the October 2015 presidential election.

In October 2015, President Ouattara won his second five-year term with nearly 84% of the vote (although only 55% of voters turned out). In March 2016, Islamist militants attacked the beach resort near Abidjan, killing 18 people. The attacks were similar to those in the capitals of Mali and Burkina Faso, generating new concerns about the security situation in the region. While not directly related to the attacks, UNOCI was renewed for another year to cover the period through the 2016 legislative elections.

2. Mandate. With Resolution 2284 (2016), the Security Council extended the mandate of UNOCI for a final period until **30 June 2017**, with drawdown of forces to be complete by February 2017. Resolution 2283 (2016) also lifted sanctions.

The last resolution tasked, in part, that until **30 April 2017**:

Protection of civilians. To support the Ivorian security forces to protect civilians in the event of a deterioration of the security situation that could risk a strategic reversal of peace and stability in the country, taking into account UNOCI's reduced capabilities and areas of deployment;

Political support. To provide, by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, political facilitation and political support for the efforts of the Ivorian authorities to address the root causes of the conflict and consolidate peace and stability in Côte d'Ivoire, including in the priority areas of the Security Sector Reform (SSR), reconciliation at both the national and local levels as well as social cohesion, and the reinsertion of the residual caseload of former

combatants, and if needed, to assist the Ivorian authorities in the mitigation of any public incidents of incitement to hatred or violence;

Support to security institutions and border-related challenges. To advise and support the Government in implementing its national strategy on SSR, including through operational-and command-level advice and mentorship to the defence *[sic]* and security forces of Côte d'Ivoire, as appropriate, including on the monitoring and management of weapons, and within UNOCI's reduced capabilities and in close coordination with bilateral and multilateral partners; To support the Government in addressing border security challenges, notably with Liberia, consistent with its protection of civilians mandate, and to this end, to continue to coordinate closely with the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL); (and) To liaise with the FRCI *[Republic Forces of Côte d'Ivoire]* in order to promote mutual trust among all elements composing the FRCI;

One of the unique tasks for the UNOCI, as noted as a "lessons learned", was the responsibility to respond as a Quick Reaction Force in support of the UN mission in Liberia (UNMIL). It was referred to as "among the most forward-leaning intermission cooperation initiatives in the history of UN peacekeeping."

Support for compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law. To contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights in Côte d'Ivoire, including through early warning activities and in close coordination with the Independent Expert established under the Human Rights Council's resolution A/HRC/RES/17/21, and to monitor, help investigate, and report to the Security Council on abuses and violations of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law in order to prevent such abuses and violations and contribute to ending impunity; (and) To support efforts by the Ivorian authorities to strengthen the Ivorian national capacities to promote and protect human rights, with special attention to grave violations and abuses committed against children and women;

Support for humanitarian assistance. To facilitate, as necessary and within UNOCI's reduced capabilities, the provision of humanitarian assistance and to support the Ivorian authorities in preparing for the voluntary, safe and sustainable return of refugees and internally displaced persons in cooperation with relevant humanitarian organizations, and in creating security conditions conducive to it;

Public information. To continue to use UNOCI's broadcasting capacity, through ONUCI FM, to contribute to the overall effort to promote sustainable peace, as well as to provide information about the ongoing transformation of the United Nations' engagement in Côte d'Ivoire;

Protection of United Nations personnel. To protect United Nations personnel, installations and equipment, and ensure the security and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel.

3. Deployment. Regarding force structure and deployment, Resolution 2284 (2016) decreased "UNOCI's military component…to its complete withdrawal by **30 April 2017**" (and corresponding police component) and extended "until 30 June 2017 the authorization that the Security Council provided to the French Forces in order to support UNOCI, within the limits of their deployment and their capabilities."

At one of its largest points in its 13-year history (April 2012), UNOCI consisted of 10,954 total uniformed personnel, including: 9,404 troops, 200 military observers, and 1,350 police. There was also 400 international civilian personnel, 758 local staff and 290 United Nations Volunteers. In January 2017, UNOCI was less than 2,500. The largest Troop Contributing Country was Senegal (739), closely followed by Niger (660). Togo (323) and Bangladesh (213) were next largest in strength. Jordan (148) and Mauritania (139) were the only other countries with more than 100 personnel serving.

4. Casualties. In 13-years, UNOCI experienced 150 total fatalities, of which 105 were military (70%). However, only 10 were due to "malicious acts" (less than 7%). The bulk of fatalities (and other casualties) were due to accidents or illness.

Situation

5. Drivers of Conflict. While most observers suggest that the tensions within Côte d'Ivoire are primarily due to historic religious differences or ethnic division, there are more contemporary factors to consider as well. As suggested: "…the slow progress in addressing the past creates risks of renewed conflict." Among the tensions to consider:

The Integration of Rebels into the Government. Many of the former rebels are earlier allies of President Ouattara and were rewarded with top army and public administration positions, to include commands in the *Republic Forces of Côte d'Ivoire* (FRCI), despite allegations of human rights violations and UN sanctions against individuals. As suggested: "…close proximity between former rebels and the Ouattara regime hinders its ability to fundamentally foster justice and hold former rebels accountable for their crimes."

A (Still) Armed Opposition. In 2012, President Ouattara launched a Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) program as part of post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding. Despite some success, in April 2016, UN investigators observed that opposition leaders had "hundreds of tonnes *[sic]* of weapons" under the control of "loyalists" now integrated in the FRCI.

Potential for Political Instability. While elections of 2015 and 2016 were generally peaceful, it was notable that the participation by eligible voters was low, implying the newly installed political leaders may not enjoy the full support of the population. At the same time, President Ouattara appears interested in distancing himself from his previous (rebel) allies, enacting policies that are not appreciated by them. Coupled with their access to arms, the ingredients for renewed violence are present.

The Gaps in Reconciliation and Justice. The Commission for Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation (CDVR) was intended to address the atrocities committed by both sides of the 2010 conflicts as well as "identify root causes of the conflict, patterns and types of violations, and strategies to fulfill victims' rights." While the CDVR completed its work in December 2014, the government appears to be focused on exclusive prosecution of Gbagbo-supporters. In addition, promised reparations to victims of human rights violations have not yet been enacted [although a number of committees and agencies are established, such as: the National Committee for Reconciliation and Victims' Compensation (CONARIV) and the Ministry of Solidarity, Social Cohesion and Victims Compensation (MSCSIV) and an estimated 60% of displaced persons have returned to their homes].

Potential for Economic Inequities. Since Côte d'Ivoire made remarkable economic progress since 2011, the entire population expects to see "their share" of that recovery and accomplishment. Continued (or renewed) inequities in economic gains will create (or, recreate) resentment between communities. Another conflict driver may be the continued youth unemployment, as economic opportunity appears unavailable to the majority of the population.

Current Regional Instability. Côte d'Ivoire is bordered by other countries with active terrorist organizations or other non-state armed groups. Some of those groups have launched attacks into Côte d'Ivoire—such as the March 2016 Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) attacks on a hotel—and may continue to do so. The government's failure to protect its citizens from terrorist acts or an inappropriately aggressive government response to legitimate opposition groups could contribute to instability in Côte d'Ivoire.

6. Significant Events.

a. Recent Events.

- **2 June 2017**. Secretary-General's Special Representative to UNOCI delivered her final Security Council briefing. Also, Côte d'Ivoire is elected to a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council.
- **18 May 2017.** A joint high-level mission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), African Union (AU) and United Nations "expressed its total support for President Alassane Ouattara, the Ivorian Government and people in the difficult times being experienced by the country" during a military mutiny. They also "revealed concern over the use of violence during the recent happenings and reiterated their commitment to the use of dialogue and legal channels as the sole means for the resolution of disputes."
- **28 April 2017**. The Security Council adopted resolution 2283 that terminated the sanctions regime in Côte d'Ivoire as well as resolution 2284 which extended the mandate of UNOCI for a final period until 30 June 2017.
- **12 April 2017**. UN peacekeeping head Hervé Ladsous briefed the Council on the strategic review of UNOCI that commended the progress made by the Ivorian government since the post-election crisis in 2011 and recommended the further drawdown and near-term exit of the UN mission.
- **8 February 2017**. The Security Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of UNOCI, Aïchatou Mindaoudou, on the latest developments in the country, especially the results of the 2016 constitutional referendum which established the Third Republic and UNOCI drawdown activities.
- **January-May 2017.** A series of military mutinies leads to a promise of bonuses by the government.
- **January 2017**. President Ouattara relieved the military and police chiefs over two-day army mutiny in various cities, which ended when government paid bonuses and pledged to improve working conditions.

b. Upcoming Events.

- **16 June 2017**. The UN Independent Expert will conduct his final assessment of the Côte d'Ivoire human rights situation.
- **30 June 2017**. Formal conclusion of the UNOCI Mission.
- **November 2017**. Côte d'Ivoire will host the next EU-Africa Summit.

Operational Environment (GPMESII)

7. Geographic. Slightly larger than New Mexico, Côte d'Ivoire is tropical along coast and semiarid in far north, It enjoys three seasons: warm and dry (November to March), hot and dry (March to May), and hot and wet (June to October). Torrential flooding is possible during the rainy season. The terrain is mostly flat to undulating plains and mountains in northwest. The coast has heavy surf and no natural harbors.

Current environmental issues include deforestation and water pollution from sewage and industrial and agricultural effluents.
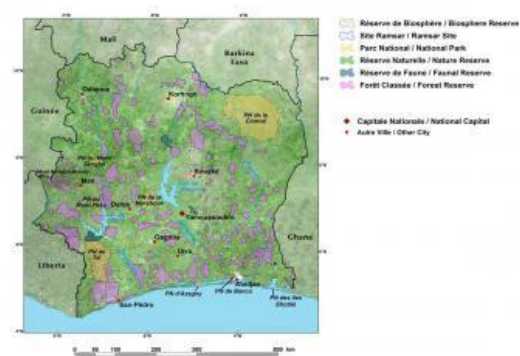
8. Political. Suffrage is universal for all citizens, 18-years or older. There is no birthright citizenship; at least one parent must be a citizen of Côte d'Ivoire. No dual citizenship is recognized. Issues of citizenship (what constitutes Ivoirian?) contributed to the presidential election crisis of 2010 and are still relevant in national policies and considerations today.

> *Who is—or can be--Ivoirian? Almost 700,000 people (estimated in 2016) living in **Côte d'Ivoire as classified as** "stateless." Most of them simply lack documentation to prove their nationality, which in turn prevents them from accessing education and healthcare. Citizenship disputes and related rights "is an ongoing source of tension and contributed to the country's 2002 civil war; some observers believe the government's mass naturalizations of thousands of people over the last couple of years is intended to boost its electoral support base." In February 2015, **Côte d'Ivoire adopted the** Abidjan Declaration to eradicate stateless in West Africa.*

Côte d'Ivoire is a presidential republic with a new constitution approved in November 2016. Alassane Dramane Ouattara has served as president since 2010 and recently won his second five-year term. The cabinet is appointed by the president.

There is a unicameral Parliament with the National Assembly (255 seats; members directly elected in single- and multi-seat constituencies by simple majority vote to serve 5-year terms).

There are almost 150 registered parties.

> *The 2016 constitution calls for a bicameral legislature with the addition of a Senate, with one-third of members appointed by the president.*

9. Military/Security. According to one report:

> The security situation in Côte d'Ivoire remained generally stable but fragile owing to the high prevalence of violent crime and insecurity near the border with Liberia. Insecurity was characterized by armed robbery, banditry and burglary, in many instances committed by elements of the Forces Républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire (FRCI), *dozos* (traditional hunters) and former combatants. Intercommunal violence, particularly in the north and south-east, continued to be reported, while the activities of uncontrolled armed groups and former combatants remained a threat to stability.

In addition to a nascent integrated national armed forces, there are various small non-state armed groups that act on their own initiative—primarily in defense of their communities. There are also elements of transnational terrorist or criminal organizations in Côte d'Ivoire.

a. State Armed Forces.

Armed Forces of Côte d'Ivoire (*Force Armies de Côte d'Ivoire*, FACI). The FACI consists of an Army, Navy, and Air Force (*Force Aerienne de la Côte d'Ivoire*). While citizen conscription (for citizens between the ages of 18-25 years) exists by policy, it is not enforced. Both men and women may serve.

The force was previously called the *Force* Républicaines *de Côte d'Ivoire* (FRCI), a name first used during the 2010 presidential crisis. The FRCI were a northern rebel group (or collection of groups operating under different names) aligned with President Alassane Ouattara in forcing President Laurent Gbagbo from office. It is unclear if President Ouattara encouraged the rebels' support or, instead, merely welcomed it.

The current composition of the FACI includes those integrated rebels as well as elements from the earlier national armed forces. In 2016, the government unveiled plans to modernize the military, part of which would involve the departure of several thousand men, particularly ex-rebels, who would not be replaced. Elements of the FACI have engaged in mutiny, largely due to unpaid wages and bonuses. Allegations that Liberians were recruited for the FRCI persist.

b. Non-State Armed Groups. Like many of its neighbors, Côte d'Ivoire has a long history of non-state armed groups. Many of them were organized as a means for a political or policy end, but most of the current small groups are focused on community self-defense.

Many former rebels are incorporated into the FRCI. Therefore, some observers suggest the non-state armed groups "remain a threat as many of the rebel leaders…still have their hands on weapon's stockpiles and control some of the country's lucrative mines…"
Other non-state armed actors include:

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Elements of AQIM (derivatives and associated) "remain intent on across the (Sahel) region," demonstrating capability and increasing influence. However, attacks of the past two years suggest a move towards West Africa, to include Côte d'Ivoire.

Organized Criminal Elements (Domestic and Transnational). Crime in Côte d'Ivoire exists at all levels of society and many forms. In urban areas, specifically Abidjan, groups of young men called *microbes* (or, germs) are known to conduct crimes of opportunity of increasing levels of violence. At the national level, many of the military and government administrators appear guilty of various degrees of corruption, from the acceptance of bribes to more aggressive predatory activities of commodity smuggling.

c. Other International Actors.

Regional Neighbors. Côte d'Ivoire is bordered by five other countries: Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, and Mali. They each look to the other as a source of instability in the region, due to the presence of transnational terrorist or crime groups within their individual borders as well as traditional enmities between the national populations. Further, they recognize the impact of instability of one nation to the others, particularly in terms of refugees from violence or economic uncertainty. However, there are indications that the region may be adjusting their perspectives of and policies regarding each other in order to address those challenges together.

Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire are repairing their troubled relationship, in part due to shared security concerns as well as continued economic interests.

Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire share a disputed maritime border. The case went to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) last year.

Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire's land borders were closed during each country's civil wars, but were recently re-opened. As the Ivorian Ambassador to Liberia indicated in May 2017: "…The concerted action of our two countries with support from the UNHCR (Côte d'Ivoire-Liberia-UNCHR) led to the signing of the tripartite Agreement in June 2013 for the voluntary repatriation of Ivoirian refugees." He urged the return of the estimated 20,000 Ivoirians still in Liberia to return home in order to "benefit from the numerous programs in the socioeconomic make-up."

Other Countries.

China. China is considered Côte d'Ivoire's biggest financing source and third largest trade partner. China engages with Côte d'Ivoire in mostly economic endeavors, such as China's 2013 Belt and Road Initiative which

> *China's Belt and Road Initiative "aims to build a trade and infrastructure network connecting Asia with Europe and Africa on and beyond the ancient Silk Road routes."*

comprises the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. President Ouattara recently observed: "…Côte d'Ivoire regards China as a stabilizer and catalyst for the peace and

development cause of mankind and would like to maintain communication and coordination with China on issues such as the reform of the United Nations (U.N.) Security Council."

France. France was the historical colonial power in Côte d'Ivoire and continues to have deep economic and security interests there.

International Organizations.

African Union (AU). Côte d'Ivoire is a member of the AU. The AU was deeply involved in Côte d'Ivoire's 2010 presidential crisis, initially in support of (current) President Alassane Ouattara. However, as the crisis continued, several of the member state leaders threw support to President Laurent Gbagbo. One study suggests:

> …the Ivorian crisis led to the collapse of the exemplary African unity among its member states and as a consequence highlighted the limited authority of the organization and the ideological complexity inherent in it…some of the lessons learnt by the AU from the Ivorian crisis were the organization's limited influence in the resolution of conflicts; the need to work towards finding ways to consolidate the commitments of the peace agreements; the relevance of establishing more African conflict prevention mechanisms; and finally, the use of dialogue as a means towards understanding and consensus within the AU, in order to reach fair agreements that benefit the majority.

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Côte d'Ivoire a member of this 15-member regional group with a mandate of promoting economic integration in all fields of activity of the constituting countries. The **United States (US)** funds The West Africa Regional Security Initiative (WARSI) through ECOWAS "to establish and sustain effective, professional, and accountable criminal justice and civilian security sectors…Technical assistance facilitates partner-country efforts to counter transnational threats including illicit trafficking and to strengthen conflict mitigation and state legitimacy. WARSI focuses on security sector reform (SSR) in countries with more foundational assistance needs and criminal justice sector reform to counter transnational organized crime (TOC) in countries with more stable institutions."

European Union (EU). Côte d'Ivoire is one of only two countries in West Africa with a preferential trade agreement with the EU:

> The Stepping Stone Economic Partnership Agreement between the EU and Côte d'Ivoire entered into provisional application in September 2016…The EU is Côte d'Ivoire's main trading and investment partner. In 2015, 28 % of Côte d'Ivoire's imports were of EU origin, and the EU received 34 % of Côte d'Ivoire exports (cacao, cashew nuts, gold). The new trade agreement will provide legal certainty for investors and is expected to boost trade relations between the two parties as well as economic growth in Côte d'Ivoire.

10. Economic. According to the World Fact Book:

> Côte d'Ivoire is heavily dependent on agriculture and related activities, which engage roughly two-thirds of the population. Côte d'Ivoire is the world's largest producer and exporter of cocoa beans and a significant producer and exporter of coffee and palm oil. Consequently, the economy is highly sensitive to fluctuations in international prices for these products and in climatic conditions. Cocoa, oil, and coffee are the country's top export revenue earners, but the country has targeted the agricultural processing of cocoa, cashews, mangoes, and other commodities as a high priority. Mining gold and exporting electricity are growing industries outside agriculture.
>
> Following the end of more than a decade of civil conflict in 2011, Côte d'Ivoire has experienced a boom in foreign investment and economic growth. In June 2012, the IMF and the World Bank announced $4.4 billion

in debt relief for Côte d'Ivoire under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. For the last 5 years Côte d'Ivoire's growth rate has been among the highest in the world.

While Côte d'Ivoire's natural resources are significant (and include petroleum, natural gas, diamonds, manganese, iron ore, cobalt, bauxite, copper, gold, nickel, tantalum, silica sand, clay, cocoa beans, coffee, palm oil, and hydropower), over 60% of the land use is in agricultural. Corruption and illegal use characterizes much of the mining and other industries, with many former rebel leaders assuming command (government-authorized or not) of the entities or other "predatory activities."

Only one quarter of the population have consistent electricity, of which the most is found in the urban areas.

11. Social. Over 40% of Ivoirians are of "non-Ivoirian" descent. In one estimate, by 1998 foreigners from West Africa, Europe (mainly France), and Lebanon composed about 25% of the population. The largest ethnic group is the Akan (28.8%). Other groups include the Voltaique or Gur (16.1%), Northern Mande (14.5%), Kru (8.5%), and Southern Mande (6.9%). French remains the official language, with over 60 native dialects spoken as well. Over 40% of the population is Muslim and another 40% are of some Christian denomination. A surprising 19.1% have no formal religion identity.

According to the World Fact Book:

> Côte d'Ivoire's population is likely to continue growing for the foreseeable future because almost 60% of the populace is younger than 25, the total fertility rate is holding steady at about 3.5 children per woman, and contraceptive use is under 20%. The country will need to improve education, health care, and gender equality in order to turn its large and growing youth cohort into human capital…only 53% of men and 33% of women were literate. The lack of educational attainment contributes to Côte d'Ivoire's high rates of unskilled labor, adolescent pregnancy, and HIV/AIDS prevalence.

The median age of the population is 21 years, with life expectancy of only 59 years on average. While the majority of the population has access to improved drinking water, less than a quarter of the population accesses improved sanitation—mostly in urban areas. Therefore, the risk for major infectious diseases is very high. Over 3% of adults are living with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS).

a. Rule of Law. Côte d'Ivoire's uses a civil law system based on the French civil code. It is part of international legal organizations. The International Criminal Court (ICC) recently announced an assistance program for Côte d'Ivoire as part of its Trust Fund for Victims ("the Trust Fund") "to provide physical, psychological rehabilitation and material support for the benefit of victims of crimes under the ICC's jurisdiction…in 2018…"

b. Human Rights. Côte d'Ivoire is a Tier 2 country in the US State Department's 2016 Trafficking in Persons report because the Government of Côte d'Ivoire does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so. The US State Department also reported:

> The most serious human rights problems were security force abuses, including extrajudicial killings and the abuse of detainees and prisoners, and the government's inability to enforce the rule of law. The Armed Forces of Côte d'Ivoire (FACI), formerly known as the Republican Forces of Côte d'Ivoire, and the gendarmerie were responsible for arbitrary arrests and detentions, including at the informal detention centers they operated.

Prison and detention center conditions were harsh and sometimes life threatening, and lengthy pretrial detention was a problem. The judiciary was inefficient and lacked independence. The government restricted freedom of press and assembly. Corruption in government was pervasive. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) faced insecure and difficult living conditions. Statelessness remained extensive. Discrimination, sexual assault, and violence against women and children occurred. Societal discrimination against ethnic groups, persons with disabilities, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) community, and victims of HIV/AIDS were problems. Employers subjected children and informal-sector workers to forced labor and hazardous conditions, particularly in rural areas.

The government seldom took steps to prosecute officials who committed abuses, whether in the security services or elsewhere in the government, and impunity was a serious problem. Several high-level individuals aligned with the government were reportedly responsible for human rights violations in the 2010-11 postelectoral crisis, and some of those individuals retained senior security force positions.

c. Humanitarian Assistance. While a significant portion of the population live in poverty, the most important issue of humanitarian assistance is refugee and displaced persons. Towards that end:

Côte d'Ivoire was selected as a pilot country for the UN Secretary-General's Policy Committee Decision on durable solutions for IDPs and returning refugees in 2012…in coordination with national authorities and partners for reconstruction, livelihood and reconciliation activities. After the socio-political situation normalized following the 2011 crisis, over 260,000 persons repatriated to Côte d'Ivoire between 2011 and 2016 from 26 countries across Africa, Europe and Asia; nearly 200,000 persons spontaneously, and 60,872 persons through voluntary repatriation facilitated by UNHCR. This has been achieved despite the outbreak of the Ebola virus epidemic in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone between 2013 and 2016, which forced UNHCR to suspend the repatriation. UNHCR's protection monitoring program assures the reintegration of returnees to date. To foster peaceful coexistence in returnee areas in Côte d'Ivoire, UNHCR made an investment in peace-building participatory theatre performances through a partner. In the same period, 480 Ivoirians were resettled to third countries.

12. Information. Information assets in Côte d'Ivoire are "well-developed by African standards." Approximately one-fifth of the population is the Internet, and nearly all the population have mobile devices.

The government operates the outlets with the widest reach: two radio stations, two TV stations and the leading daily newspaper.

13. Infrastructure. Although there exists several airports (paved and upaved), roads and railways, as well as two seaports, much is not useable for modern transportation needs.

Peace Operations Functions

14. Command and Control. As of end of May 2017:

Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of Mission: Aïchatou Mindaoudou (Niger)

Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General: Simon Munzu (Cameroon)

Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UN Resident Coordinator, Humanitarian Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative: M'Baye Babacar Cissé (Senegal)

Force Commander: Major General Didier L'Hôte (France)

Police Commissioner: Nshimiyimana Vianney (Rwanda)

15. Intelligence. There is no current UN mission.

16. Operations. There is no current UN mission.

17. Protection.

a. Mission Protection. There is no current UN mission.

b. Protection of Civilians. There is no current UN mission. However, the UN recently released a report that criticized Côte d'Ivoire's handling of rape cases.

18. Sustainment. There is no current UN mission.

Issues and Considerations

19. Issues. Most of the issues facing Côte d'Ivoire surround the same drivers of conflict that remain unresolved. For the UN and other international organizations, it is imperative to determine the appropriate assistance that respects the legitimacy of the current government yet does not overlook emerging challenges.

20. Considerations.

a. US. Trump Administration has not yet announced any changes or modifications to the United States approach regarding Côte d'Ivoire. According to the US Department of State:

> The U.S. Engagement Strategy in Cote d'Ivoire encompasses both our programs and initiatives under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and our Transition Assistance Priorities. PEPFAR supports the provision of comprehensive HIV/AIDS testing, prevention, treatment, care services, and related health system support throughout Cote d'Ivoire. The Transition Assistance Priorities are the framework that will guide all U.S. Government programmatic and policy work not related to PEPFAR over the next several years. The overarching goal of the Transition Assistance Priorities is to support the Government of Cote d'Ivoire through programs and diplomatic engagement during this post-crisis period as the country recovers and works to establish conditions that will once again make it a stable and prosperous nation.

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) notes:

> The United States Government works in close partnership with the Government of Côte d'Ivoire to support their goal of becoming an emerging country by 2020. The American people, through the United States Agency for International Development, invest in different technical areas to build Ivoirian capacity to achieve this goal. These programs further our global mission of partnering to end extreme poverty and promote resilient, democratic societies while advancing our mutual security and prosperity.

b. UN and Côte d'Ivoire. In April 2017, a panel gathered to conduct an initial assessment of the "lessons learned" regarding UNOCI, noting: "Although challenges remain Côte d'Ivoire is seen as a success story in terms of crisis management and effective cooperation with the United Nations in the management of UNOCI's exit strategy" and:

> Côte d'Ivoire has demonstrated that **not all crises are intractable**, and the country is now presented as a model of crisis recovery on the African continent. With a growth rate nearing 9%, the county's economy is

a major driver for the West Africa region. However, beyond its political and economic successes, the road to reconciliation, essential for sustainable peace, is still long and full of challenges. The 2020 presidential elections will be a measure of the country's capacity and resilience to sustain peace and stability.

Specific insights included:

In order to resolve its sociopolitical crisis and address the root causes of the conflict, the **government quickly sought to own the political priorities of the exit strategy** established by the Security Council. Examples included: the creation of the Truth, Reconciliation and Dialogue Commission in 2011; the reconstruction of national security and defense institutions through disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reform (SSR); the establishment of a National Human Rights Commission; and the adoption of the constitution of the Third Republic in October 2016.

UNOCI's exit process has been subject to **strong ownership by the local population**, a key element in any transition toward sustainable peace. Examples included: the establishment of the National Chamber of Kings and Traditional Chiefs and UNOCI's population-directed social campaigns.

Close cooperation between the government and the United Nations facilitated the mission's exit provided the space for the government to undertake the necessary reforms with UNOCI assistance. The Security Council used "various crisis management instruments" to facilitate the mission's purpose. "These successive measures illustrate the importance of the United Nations regularly reevaluating peacekeeping operations mandates to ensure they can adapt to the realities on the ground."

The preparation of an exit strategy yearly in the design of the mission is also seen as a good practice that should be implemented during the deployment of future UN missions.

Cooperation between UNOCI and the neighboring United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) is a**n innovation that was successful.** Examples included: exchange of analysis and information and joint patrols along the border between the two countries.

The engagement and **firmness of the regional and international community** prevented the escalation of tensions and allowed for the stabilization of the situation.

UNOCI **did not always have a good reputation** in the eyes of the local population, notably because of accusations of sexual exploitation and abuse and the perception that protection of civilians operations were inadequate.

Resources

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