

# PROSPECTS FOR PEACE IN IVORY COAST

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HEARING  
BEFORE THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA  
OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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## PROSPECTS FOR PEACE IN IVORY COAST

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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2003

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA,  
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 2:11 p.m. in Room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Edward R. Royce, [Chairman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Mr. ROYCE. This hearing of the Subcommittee on Africa will come to order.

This is our first hearing of the 108th Congress, and I look forward to a productive 2 years working with Ranking Member Donald Payne and with Vice Chairman Amo Houghton and with the Subcommittee's other Members.

Africa, I believe, continues to draw greater attention in our foreign policy, which this Subcommittee can take great satisfaction in. We convene today, unfortunately, to look at another African crisis, the unraveling of Ivory Coast. Once a pillar of political stability in West Africa, Ivory Coast has now proven vulnerable, falling prey to the type of war that devastated Sierra Leone.

The strife in Ivory Coast, should it continue, has the potential to ensnare other countries in the region in a state of perpetual armed conflict, of lawlessness, of human misery that neighboring Liberia has long suffered. Ivory Coast is, in other words, a disaster in the making.

We all hope the recently signed Marcoussis Agreement is the beginning of this troubling conflict's end. A few caveats, however, need to be raised. It is hard for me to see how this French backed peace plan is not a reward to rebels who fought their way to the negotiating table, and if the plan is followed, into legitimate positions of political power. This may be a realistic policy given the international community's level of commitment to resolving this conflict, but the price paid, legitimatizing the rebels' tactics, is a high price.

It certainly seems to do little to break the cycle of violence in West Africa, and it is not the approach that worked in Sierra Leone. The rebels are threatening to march on Abidjan if their demands on implementing the agreement, including taking the defense and interior portfolios, are not met. Marcoussis should be supported within reason.

This Subcommittee has long condemned President Charles Taylor of Liberia. His regime abuses Liberians. He bears great responsibility for the death and destruction in Sierra Leone, for which I

am hoping he is indicted. For those not aware, that was the conflict in which Taylor backed rebels, cut off the hands and feet of little boys and girls. Taylor's regime today, I am convinced, is backing rebel forces in Ivory Coast.

That the peace pact makes no provision for checking the role of foreign governments stoking this conflict—in fact, it is treated as a non-issue—is a serious flaw. We deceive ourselves by ignoring the role played by Charles Taylor and Burkina Faso President Blaise Compaore. We need a back-up policy should the Marcoussis approach fail.

Building peace in West Africa, once war has broken out, is not easy. The roots of conflict—political, economic, religious and ethnic—in Ivory Coast have been growing for some time, and they run deep. The Gbagbo Government, with its short-sighted politics of exclusion, has been a big part of the problem.

A small band of rebels can do great damage to fragile West African institutions. In fact, it took the world's largest peacekeeping operation, backboned by the British military and with the assistance of the Nigerian military, to give Sierra Leone a shot at peace. We are counting on Ivory Coast being fixed with far less work. I hope it works.

Before turning to Ranking Member Payne for an opening statement, I would like to welcome our new Members of the Subcommittee. Representative Mark Green just left us. He actually in his youth taught in Kenya and lived in a number of sub-Saharan African countries.

With that said, I would now like to recognize Mr. Payne for any opening statement he may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Royce follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE EDWARD R. ROYCE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The following is the opening statement of Africa Subcommittee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA) at this afternoon's hearing on Ivory Coast:

"We convene today, unfortunately, to look at another African crisis: the unraveling of Ivory Coast. Once a pillar of political stability in West Africa, Ivory Coast has now proven vulnerable, falling prey to the type of war that devastated Sierra Leone. The strife in Ivory Coast, should it continue, has the potential to ensnare other countries of the region in a state of perpetual armed conflict, lawlessness, and human misery that neighboring Liberia has long suffered. Ivory Coast is a disaster in the making.

"We all hope the recently signed Marcoussis Agreement is the beginning of this troubling conflict's end. A few caveats, however, need to be raised.

"It is hard for me to see how this French-backed peace plan is not a reward to rebels who fought their way to the negotiating table, and if the plan is followed, into legitimate positions of political power. This may be a realistic policy given the international community's level of commitment to resolving this conflict, but the price paid, legitimizing the rebels' tactics, is high. It certainly seems to do little to break the cycle of violence in West Africa, and it is not the approach that worked in Sierra Leone. The rebels are threatening to march on Abidjan if their demands on implementing the Agreement, including taking the defense and interior portfolios, are not met. Marcoussis should be supported, within reason.

"This Subcommittee has long condemned President Charles Taylor of Liberia. His regime abuses Liberians. He bears great responsibility for the death and destruction in Sierra Leone, for which I'm hoping he is indicted. For those not aware, that was the conflict in which Taylor-backed rebels cut off the hands and feet of little boys and girls. Taylor's regime today, I am convinced, is backing rebel forces in Ivory Coast. That the peace pact makes no provision for checking the role of foreign governments stoking this conflict—it's treated as a non-issue—is a serious flaw. We de-

ceive ourselves by ignoring the role played by Charles Taylor and Burkina Faso President Blaise Campaore. We need a back-up policy, should the Marcoussis approach fail.

"Building peace in West Africa once war has broken out is not easy. The roots of conflict—political, economic, religious, and ethnic—in Ivory Coast have been growing for some time, and run deep. The Gbagbo government, with its short-sighted politics of exclusion, has been a big part of the problem. A small band of rebels can do great damage to fragile West African institutions. In fact, it took the world's largest peacekeeping operation, backed by the British military, to give Sierra Leone a shot at peace. We are counting on Ivory Coast being fixed with far less work. I hope it works."

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let me congratulate you on your reelection as Chairman of the Africa Subcommittee. I think that the expertise that you have gained and the time and the interest that you have shown during your two previous terms bode well for the continuation of the Committee really examining Africa and the problems, and our goal is to attempt to come up with solutions. Congratulations on that.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Don.

Mr. PAYNE. It is good to see your Vice Chairman, Mr. Houghton, here, and our new Members hopefully will get a chance to come. We have one new Member, but, as we know, this is organization time. There are many, many meetings. I have been in meetings today, as you have, with Secretary Powell and been in a meeting with Secretary Chow from Education. We have had all kinds of other meetings, so that is the reason we see the absence of some of our Members by virtue of the starting up.

Let me just say that it is good to see our Assistant Secretary of State, Secretary Kansteiner. We look forward to your testimony. To Dr. Toungara and to Tim Docking we thank you for taking time out this afternoon to give us an appraisal of your analysis of the current situation in Cote d'Ivoire.

The country of Cote d'Ivoire, the region of West Africa and the entire international community was shocked on September 19, 2002, by a failed coup attempt led by rebels and with conflict and chaos that we saw throughout Cote d'Ivoire.

Widely seen as a beacon of stability and economics assessed in the region since becoming independent in 1960, Cote d'Ivoire now finds itself in the grip of a situation that threatens to undermine the recent steps toward democracy made in the last 10 years.

Approximately 40 percent of the residents of Cote d'Ivoire came from neighboring states because of the economic opportunity there, and Cote d'Ivoire was seen as a beacon of stability, of hope, of what was good about Africa, so we are very disheartened and we are shocked when we did hear in September 2002 of the rebel incursion.

First, my heart goes out to the Ivoirian people who have been the victims. As is usually the case in civil conflict, the people are the victims. They have been caught up between the fighting of the government forces and the rebels. People who were seeking reelections, many now find themselves in rebel territory. Most live under precarious conditions where it is unclear whether there will be harmony or continued unrest.

I commend the involvement of the Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS, now under the leadership of John Kufour, with the dispatching of the regional forces, the ECOMOG

forces—as you know, the monitoring military group of ECOWAS—and through diplomatic support to aid and restoring peace in Cote d'Ivoire. This type of regional support and collaboration is so key in finding real solutions for peace in the country and to stem any flaring up in neighboring nations that have seen so much discord as we have seen in Sierra Leone, as we have seen in Guinea, as has already been mentioned, as we see in Liberia, a country still without peace. Stability is important, and we are disturbed at the destabilization that we have seen in West Africa.

The involvement of the French Government also through its use of troops and its role in evacuating French citizens and other foreigners and by hosting the peace talks has also been a key element, and we certainly support their involvement.

The recent agreement reached between the government and the rebels groups was called into question by Ivoirian people demonstrated by their protesting in front of the French Embassy and military bases and in the streets of Abidjan. As the agreement called for a coalition government, yesterday the new Prime Minister, Sedou Diarra, was installed. Hours after his installation, fighting ensued once again. Many fear the new coalition government will be controlled by the Prime Minister, stripping President Gbagbo of much of his power, especially considering the rebels' claim that the accord promises them the posts of Minister of Interior and Defense. However, the regional community confirmed the importance of the installation of the new Prime Minister in a meeting attended by the Presidents of Ghana, Togo and Nigeria, as well as South Africa's Vice President, Jacob Zuma, whose country chairs the African Union. They pledged their support of this move because it was a central feature of the peace accord.

We hope that a quick cease fire can be reached and that the conflict can be worked out and that we can once again move toward stability and elections in the future. I do feel that some of this was brought on when certain candidates were restricted from the elections, particularly Mr. Witari.

I do not even believe in my opinion that he would have been able to win the election. However, by restricting people it then gives legs to rebels who may have some other agenda. They seize on that opportunity to cause disruption and chaos, and I think it was unfortunate that the question of Mr. Witari's father's father's nationality, whether he was Burkina on the other side of the river or whether he was born on this side of the river. As we know, the countries were made by Europeans, and regardless of the side of the river they live on they really are sometimes one and the same people, as we of African descent know. To have these artificial handicaps thrown in I think partly kind of created this destabilization.

I once again thank Chairman Royce for calling this important hearing, and I look forward to the testimony of the witnesses.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Payne follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DONALD M. PAYNE, A REPRESENTATIVE  
IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for calling this timely and important hearing. I appreciate the presence of Assistant Secretary Kansteiner, Dr. Toungara and Tim

Dockings and thank you for taking the time this afternoon to apprise us of their analysis on the current situation in Cote d'Ivoire.

The country of Cote d'Ivoire, the region of West Africa, and the entire international community were shocked when on September 19, 2002, a failed coup attempt led to conflict and chaos throughout Cote d'Ivoire.

Widely seen as a beacon of stability and economic success in the region since independence in 1960, Cote d'Ivoire now finds itself in the grip of a situation that threatens to undermine recent steps towards democracy made in the last ten years.

First, my heart goes out to the Ivoirian people who have been the victims, as is usually the case in civil conflict. They have been caught in between the fighting of government forces and the rebels, who were seeking early elections. Many now find themselves in rebel territory. Most live under precarious conditions where it is unclear whether there will be harmony or continued unrest.

I commend the involvement of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), now under the leadership of John Kufour, with the dispatching of the regional forces, ECOMOG (the ECOWAS monitoring group), and through diplomatic support to aid in restoring peace in Cote d'Ivoire. This type of regional support and collaboration is so key in finding a real solution for peace in the country and to stem any flaring up in neighboring nations that have seen so much discord (Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia which still is not at peace) and whose stability is interdependent.

The involvement of the French government, also through the use of troops, in its role in evacuating French citizens and other foreigners, and by hosting the peace talks has been key as well.

The recent agreement reached between the government and the rebel groups was called into question by the Ivoirian people, demonstrated by their protesting in front of the French embassy and military bases and in the streets of Abidjan. As the agreement called for a coalition government, yesterday, the new Prime Minister, Seydou Diarra, was installed. Hours after his installation, fighting ensued once again. Many fear the new coalition government will be controlled by the Prime Minister, stripping President Gbagbo of much of his power, especially considering the rebels' claim that the accord promises them the posts of Minister of Interior and Defense. However, the regional community confirmed the importance of the installation of the new Prime Minister in a meeting attended by the presidents of Ghana, Togo and Nigeria as well as South Africa Vice president Jacob Zuma—whose country chairs the African Union. They pledged their support of this move because it was a central feature of the peace accord.

We all hope for a quick ceasefire to be reached once again, and for this conflict to be worked out through the regional process.

I thank you once again, Chairman Royce and I look forward to the testimony of the witnesses.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Congressman Payne.

I would like to at this time recognize Ambassador Kokora of Ivory Coast and ask him to stand to be recognized. [Applause.] Thank you, Ambassador. Ambassador, we all wish the best for your country. We have received your statement, which we are going to print in the record. We appreciate you being with us today.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Kokora follows:]

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Washington DC, February 11, 2003

*N° 022Bis/AMBACIW/SP/02*

Congressman Edward R. Royce, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Africa  
House International Relations Committee  
255 Ford House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Royce:

I am writing to you to express my appreciation for the efforts of Mr. Tom Sheehy and Mr. Malik Chaka in providing me the opportunity to brief members of the Africa Subcommittee staff on the current situation in Côte d'Ivoire. We engaged in a lively and open exchange of views which I hope contributed to a better understanding of the issues and concerns confronting my country.

In connection with the hearing on February 12, I would appreciate your courtesy in bringing to the attention of the Subcommittee members the following points:

1. In a troubled region of Africa, Côte d'Ivoire remains a staunch friend and ally of the U.S. We look to America as a beacon of hope and democracy.

2. We, too, are the victims of terrorism, which threatens to undermine our nation and to destabilize the West African region.

3. We believe the solution to the current crisis rests on diplomatic, not military, means. My government is behind every effort to achieve a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

4. Since its election in October 2000 my government has embarked on a broad reconciliation agenda of political inclusiveness, such as institutional reforms. Progress toward these goals, however, was interrupted on September 19, 2002, by a violent coup d'état launched by Army mutineers who were supported with lethal weapons and funds from sources outside my country.

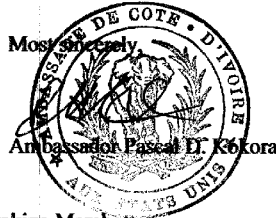
5. President Gbagbo's speech to the nation on Thursday evening was a significant step forward on the road to a peaceful and diplomatic solution to the current crisis. His appointment of Mr. Sedou Diarra, a Muslim from the north of Côte d'Ivoire, as Prime Minister, under the Linas-Marcoussis Accord, has set the stage for the process of reconciliation. The Linas-Marcoussis Accord provides a positive and useful framework for further progress. Implementing conditions must be worked out in harmony with our nation's Constitution and the Rule of Law. In cases of any differences, as in any system of ordered liberty, the Constitution of our nation must prevail. The President called upon the people of Côte d'Ivoire to give the accord time to work, awaiting Mr. Diarra's proposal for a newly appointed members of government to help resolve the conflict. President Gbagbo made it clear that the military would not be disarmed.

6. One difficulty lies in the fact that we cannot reasonably accept the transfer of the leadership of the nation's Defense and Interior Ministries to the very rebel groups who sought to overthrow the elected government at the point of a gun. It should be emphasized that my Government never consented to this proposed transfer, which was not part of the Linas-Marcoussis Accord. We are now actively seeking ways to resolve this issue.

7. We are now in consultation with leaders from West Africa to move the process forward. It is our hope that the rebel forces will take this opportunity to engage in a spirit of responsible cooperation to help attain a durable peace.

8. As the third largest economy in Africa, we are working, even through this crisis period, to resolve fairly and equitably within our capabilities any commercial disputes which have arisen with U.S. investors. My government welcomes these investments as a way to modernize our economy and to lift our people out of poverty. We are in the process of improving the administration of our Justice and Courts systems as well as creating transparent regimes to govern and resolve investment disputes.

In conclusion, I appreciate your allowing me to present these points. We share your view that the conflict be resolved quickly and peacefully so that the people of Côte d'Ivoire can return to their normal pursuits and continue to rebuild our nation as a pillar of democracy and stability in West Africa.



cc: Congressman Donald Mr. Payne, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Africa

Mr. ROYCE. I would now like to introduce Mr. Walter Kansteiner, our Assistant Secretary of State for Africa. He was appointed in June 2001. His previous government service included serving as Director of African Affairs on the National Security Council staff. He also served as the Africa specialist on the Secretary of State's Policy Planning staff and with the Department of Defense as a Member of the Strategic Minerals Task Force.

Mr. Kansteiner has more than 20 years of experience with African businesses. The Assistant Secretary holds graduate degrees from American University and Virginia Theological Seminary in International Economics and Ethics respectively, and it is a pleasure to have him with us today.

**STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE WALTER H. KANSTEINER III,  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS, U.S.  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

Mr. KANSTEINER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much. I am glad to be here today, and I am particularly glad to welcome the new Members of your Committee.

Congresswoman McCollum, your interest in HIV AIDS and the unique ecosystems of Africa are very important to us, and we look forward to working with you on those issues, as well as others.

Congressman Green, as you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, has deep experience and knowledge about East Africa, particularly Kenya, and we look forward to tapping some of that insight that Congressman Green has.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Assistant Secretary. I did want to recognize our new Members' special interest and involvement with respect to the issue of stoning and particularly stoning of women in Nigeria and say that the Congresswoman's effort in focusing the attention of this Committee on human rights abuses, especially human rights abuses to women, is going to be much appreciated.

Mr. KANSTEINER. Lastly, I would like to congratulate you, sir, on your reelection as Chair of this Committee. I look forward to your leadership. We have a lot of issues to cover in these years ahead, and I am glad you are where you are.

As you know, the political situation in Cote d'Ivoire escalated into an international crisis on September 19, 2002, when a coup attempted, but failed, to dislodge the government of President Gbagbo. The violent incidents of September left rebel forces in control of slightly more than half of the country. Only the intervening presence of the French military prevented the rebels from marching on Abidjan.

In response to the attempted coup, the United States worked closely with the French to protect American lives and to take initial diplomatic steps in the regional and international community to encourage a political settlement. ECOWAS acted immediately to form a contact group. That contact group was to bring an early end to the fighting and in fact obtained a cease fire in mid October, large part due to the excellent work of the foreign minister of Senegal.

To monitor the cease fire, the Economic Community of West African States promised to provide a military observer mission. It asked the French to take on the task on an interim basis until such a force might be deployed. In order to provide momentum to the

peace process, which appeared to have become stalemated, French Foreign Minister de Villepin invited the Ivoirian political parties and rebel forces to meet in Paris last month. Out of these intensive negotiations emerged the Marcoussis Agreement signed on January 20.

The Marcoussis Accord provides a format for addressing some of the key contentious issues. I might add these are the very issues that the rebels claim to be at the heart of their complaints. Those issues include citizenship, land ownership and eligibility for the presidency, which Ivoirians have long debated.

To implement the agreement, the parties agreed that a government of national reconciliation would be formed around a consensus Prime Minister. This Prime Minister would be brought in from the outside. He would be viewed as neutral, and he would be considered a technocrat and capable of pulling together the various strains of Cote d'Ivoire society. A transitional power sharing arrangement called for the transfer of some of the presidential powers to this new Prime Minister. Marcoussis did not, however, specify how ministerial portfolios would be distributed.

The Marcoussis Agreement offers a workable framework for moving toward peace and reconciliation in Cote d'Ivoire. The United States has repeatedly affirmed its support for the agreement. We actively supported U.N. Security Council Resolution 1464, which endorsed the accord.

Implementing Marcoussis will not be easy. Important elements among President Gbagbo's supporters have reacted negatively to the proposed participation of rebels in the new government. President Gbagbo has made clear his opposition to awarding certain portfolios in the new government to the rebels.

Last Friday, President Gbagbo addressed his nation, stating that he accepted the spirit of Marcoussis, albeit not all the specifics. He urged his countrymen to give the accord and the new Prime Minister a chance to restore peace. He said he would not, however, transfer his executive powers to the Prime Minister, nor override the constitution.

The Ivoirian rebels insist that, having dropped their demands for Gbagbo's ouster and early elections, they would in fact be awarded certain ministries. As Congressman Payne indicated, those ministries included defense and interior. They claim they were promised these posts in Paris.

To try to break the present impasse, President Kufour of Ghana, the new Chair of ECOWAS, convoked President Gbagbo, the new Prime Minister Diarra and the rebels to meet with him and the ECOWAS contact group in Yamoussoukro Monday of this week. Although the rebels did not participate in the meeting, Prime Minister Diarra was officially installed.

Achieving and preserving peace and stability will require external forces. French forces in Cote d'Ivoire are now approximately 3,000. The French have maintained buffer positions along an east-west axis dividing the government held territory from that held by the rebels.

Regional ECOWAS forces (ECOFORCE) from Benin, Ghana, Niger, Senegal and Togo began arriving in Cote d'Ivoire last month. There are now approximately 800 ECOFORCE troops in

Cote d'Ivoire, and we expect that to rise to 1,300 fairly soon. We have applauded the ECOWAS leaders for their readiness to assume direct responsibility for regional security.

The United States has so far supported the ECOFORCE deployment, both with \$1.5 million contractual and logistical support, primarily in the areas of transportation and communication, as well as with equipment from our regional depot in Freetown, Sierra Leone. That equipment includes trucks and jeeps, other vehicles, generators and some communication gear.

As far as the neighborhood goes, we have made it clear to all of Cote d'Ivoire's neighbors that we cannot tolerate interference and further destabilization of this country. We and others have made this point with particular emphasis to President Compaore of Burkina Faso and President Taylor of Liberia. While both Presidents deny any connection with or support for the rebels, circumstantial evidence suggests there is ample reason to remain concerned and vigilant.

Several of the coup plotters enjoyed sanctuary for some time in Burkina Faso immediately before the coup. The level of coordination and planning, the infrastructure and the weaponry available to the rebels all suggest a pattern of outside assistance.

Liberians are certainly fighting with both rebel groups in the west. President Taylor insists he opposes the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire, but there is no doubt that there is extensive movement across the Liberian/Ivoirian border. Liberians are bringing looted items back home, and mercenaries easily cross into Cote d'Ivoire.

Several ethnic groups straddle the border, and it is easy to recruit fighters ready to settle old grudges. We are looking very carefully at that border; in fact, at all of Cote d'Ivoire's borders, and are maintaining a high level of diplomatic activity to ensure that others are also paying close attention to President Taylor and President Compaore's behavior.

Since the failed coup attempt in September, the United States recognized that civil war in Cote d'Ivoire posed a significant threat to stability and security in West Africa. It threatened important economic interests and might trigger deep-seated ethnic tensions and risk endangering the lives and safety of American citizens.

Our principal political objective in Cote d'Ivoire is the restoration of peace and stability in the country and the region. We believe the best way to achieve the necessary peace and reconciliation is through a more open, transparent and inclusive democratic process. The Marcoussis Accord provides for this type of process, but it is up to Ivoirians to make it work.

We do not want to see civil war destroy the Ivoirian economy. To date, there has not been a great deal of damage to the economic infrastructure, and we are all grateful for that. However, there has been considerable social disruption, and normal transportation and communication routes have been made unusable or unreliable. Cote d'Ivoire has long played a vital and vibrant economic engine for the region. If not dealt with, this conflict has the seeds not only to become a center of political instability, but one which spreads economic stagnation and collapse.

Finally, we are speaking out about the deterioration of the human rights situation. We have witnessed the killing and wound-

ing of the innocent since the first day of the coup attempt in September and subsequent fighting. Moreover, as the conflict has continued to fester, we have noted the emergence of what appears to be cases of extra-judicial killings and disappearances. These must stop, and those responsible must be brought to justice.

In summation, the situation in Cote d'Ivoire is complex and difficult. The country has significant issues with which its leaders must begin to grapple. Some of those issues include ethnic divisions, people that come originally from other countries of the neighborhood, and long histories and rivalries. The leadership has to look to the future and not to the past.

Mr. Chairman, we are anxious to work with all of those that are seeking peace in Cote d'Ivoire, and we look forward to working with this Committee on achieving some of those.

Thank you very much, and I would be pleased to take any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kansteiner follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE WALTER H. KANSTEINER III, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The political situation in Cote d'Ivoire escalated into an international crisis on September 19, 2002, when a coup d'etat attempted but failed to dislodge the government of President Laurent Gbagbo. The violent incidents of September left rebel forces in control of slightly more than half the country. Only the intervening presence of French military forces prevented the rebels from marching from Bouake, in central Cote d'Ivoire, on Abidjan. In immediate response to the attempted coup, the United States worked closely with the French to protect American lives, to draw down our embassy presence and to take initial diplomatic steps in the regional and international community to encourage a political settlement. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) acted immediately to form a "contact group" to bring an early end to the fighting. An ECOWAS team obtained a ceasefire on October 17, and negotiations on a permanent settlement opened shortly afterwards in Lome, Togo, under mediation of Togo's President Eyadema. To monitor the ceasefire, ECOWAS promised to provide a military observer mission. It asked the French to take on the task on an interim basis until such a force might be deployed.

In order to provide momentum to the peace process, which appeared to have become stalemated, French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin invited the Ivoirian "political forces," i.e., the parties represented in the parliament plus representatives of the three Ivoirian rebel groups to meet in Paris in January 2003. Out of these intensive negotiations emerged the Marcoussis agreement, signed on January 24, 2003.

The Marcoussis accord provides a format for addressing some of the key contentious issues—citizenship, land ownership, and eligibility for the presidency—which Ivoirians have debated for some time. The participants in the negotiations made clear their understanding that many of the measures agreed upon would require legislation, and in some instances, changes to the constitution to implement. All parties present pledged to support these measures. To implement the agreement, the parties agreed that a "Government of National Reconciliation" would be formed around a consensus prime minister. A transitional power-sharing arrangement called for the transfer of some presidential powers to the new prime minister. Marcoussis did not, however, specify how ministerial portfolios would be distributed.

The Marcoussis agreement offers a workable framework for moving towards peace and reconciliation in Cote d'Ivoire. The U.S. has repeatedly affirmed its support for the agreement. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs William Bellamy represented the U.S. at the Paris heads of state meeting and expressed support for the agreement. The U.S. actively supported United Nations Security Council Resolution 1464, which endorsed the Marcoussis accord and called on the UN Secretary General to examine ways in which the United Nations could assist in its implementation.

Implementing Marcoussis will not be easy. Important elements among President Gbagbo's supporters have reacted negatively to the proposed participation of rebels in the new government. They have demonstrated vociferously and sometimes violently. In particular, they singled out the French as responsible for perceived flaws

in the agreement. French military forces remain on high alert and the French are acting to protect the lives and property of more than 16,000 French citizens still in Cote d'Ivoire.

President Gbagbo, I believe, walks a narrow line. He has made clear his opposition to awarding portfolios in the new government to the rebels, and his determination to defend the Ivoirian constitution. On Friday, February 7, President Gbagbo addressed the nation, stating that he accepted the "spirit" of Marcoussis, albeit not all of the specifics. He urged his countrymen to give the accord and Prime Minister-Designate Diarra a chance to restore peace. He said he would not, however, transfer his executive powers to the Prime Minister nor override the constitution. He also stated that he was not prepared to accept the rebels as members of the government.

The Ivoirian rebels insist that, having dropped their demands for Gbagbo's ouster and early elections at Marcoussis, they should be awarded the ministries of Defense and Interior in the new government. They claim they were promised these posts in Paris. They have given President Gbagbo until the end of this week to implement Marcoussis fully or face a resumption of hostilities.

To try to break the present impasse, President Kufour, the new President of ECOWAS, convoked Gbagbo, Diarra, and the rebels to meet with him and the ECOWAS contact group in Cote d'Ivoire's administrative capital, Yamoussoukro on February 10. The rebels indicated that they would not appear. Nevertheless, P.M. Diarra was officially installed.

#### PRESERVING PEACE WITH INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING

Achieving and preserving peace and stability in Cote d'Ivoire will require external forces. French forces in Cote d'Ivoire have risen from 600 present on September 19 to approximately 3,000. The French have maintained buffer positions along an east-west axis dividing government-held territory from that held by the Popular Movement for Cote d'Ivoire (MPCI). In the far west, French forces interposed between government forces and the Movement for Peace and Justice (MPJ) and the Ivoirian Patriotic Movement of the Great West (MPIGO) have been confronted on several occasions by rebel forces and have suffered casualties.

Regional peacekeepers from Benin, Ghana, Niger, Senegal, and Togo, under ECOWAS aegis, began arriving in Cote d'Ivoire in January. Approximately 800 are now in country; we expect this number to increase initially to 1,300. We have applauded the ECOWAS leaders for their readiness to assume direct responsibility for regional security. For more than half a decade, we have worked with ECOWAS to develop a regional peacekeeping capability. We are gratified to see large numbers of personnel who have received training under our (old) ACRI (Africa Crisis Response Initiative), (new) ACOTA (African Contingency Operations and Training Assistance), and Operation Focus Relief (OFR) among the units deployed. The readiness of ECOWAS members to participate in Cote d'Ivoire peacekeeping was recognized in the Security Council in UNSCR 1464.

The United States has so far supported the ECOFORCE deployment, both with \$1.5 million in contractor and logistics support, primarily in the areas of transportation and communication, and equipment from our regional storage depot in Freetown, Sierra Leone. That equipment includes trucks, jeeps, and other vehicles, generators, and communications equipment. We envision that this equipment will be returned to the U.S. upon completion of this mission.

A resumption of fighting is, of course, a possibility. That said, we continue to caution all the parties that this would be a tragic mistake that can bring nothing but further suffering to the region. We do not believe that any party is capable of achieving a military victory. Certainly, no party should attempt to pursue one.

#### LAYING DOWN MARKERS TO NEIGHBORING STATES

We have made clear to all of Cote d'Ivoire's neighbors that we cannot tolerate interference to further destabilize the country. We, and others, have made this point with particular emphasis to President Compaore of Burkina-Faso and President Taylor of Liberia. While both presidents deny any connection with or support for the rebels, circumstantial evidence suggests there is ample reason to remain concerned and vigilant.

Several of the key coup plotters enjoyed sanctuary for some time in Burkina-Faso immediately before the coup. The level of coordination and planning, the infrastructure, and the weaponry available to the rebels all suggest a pattern of outside assistance.

Liberians are certainly fighting with both rebel groups in the west, along the Liberian border. While President Taylor insists he opposes the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire, there is no doubt that there is an extensive movement across the Liberian/

Ivoirian border. Liberians are bringing looted items back home and mercenaries easily cross into Cote d'Ivoire. I would point out, in addition, that several ethnic groups straddle the border, and it is easy to recruit fighters ready to settle old grudges.

We are looking very carefully at Cote d'Ivoire's borders, and are maintaining a high level of diplomatic activity to ensure that others are also paying close attention to President Taylor's and President Compaore's behavior.

UNITED STATES POLICY

Since September 19, the U.S. recognized that civil war in Cote d'Ivoire posed a significant threat to stability and security in West Africa, threatened important economic interests, might trigger deep-seated ethnic tensions and risked endangering the lives and safety of American citizens.

Our immediate and continuing concern is the safety of American citizens. Immediately after the failed coup, a European Command (EUCOM) Survey and Assessment Team (ESAT) arrived to assist Ambassador Arlene Render and her staff at the American Embassy in Abidjan to organize and carry out the evacuation of American citizens from dangerous locations and to find safe havens in Abidjan and in other states in the region. To the best of my knowledge, all American citizens are accounted for and are safe. At present, approximately 1,400 of the 3,500 American citizens resident in Cote d'Ivoire on September 19 remain in country. The Embassy remains in very close touch with the American community through its warden system.

In late October, the official American mission in Cote d'Ivoire was placed in a status of "ordered departure." The Embassy was reduced to an essential core of approximately 40 key American officials, including security.

Our principle political objective in Cote d'Ivoire is the restoration of peace and stability in the country and in the region. We believe the best way to achieve the necessary peace and reconciliation is through a more open, transparent, and inclusive democratic process. The Marcoussis accords provide for this type of process, but it is up to Ivorians to make it work. We are prepared to work with Ivoirian leaders to help strengthen democratic principles and governance in Cote d'Ivoire.

We do not want to see civil war destroy the Ivoirian economy. To date, there has not been a great deal of damage to the economic infrastructure. However, there has been considerable social disruption, and normal transportation and communication routes have been made unusable or unreliable. In the past, Cote d'Ivoire's ability to transcend ethnic and political divisions was due in part to its productive economy. National wealth gave the country an infrastructure and economic promise that have been the envy of the region. Preserving and restoring the economy will be no easy task.

It is essential to also make clear the role that Cote d'Ivoire has played as a vital and vibrant economic engine for the region. Cote d'Ivoire has absorbed excess population from its neighbors, providing cash incomes from which they remit substantial sums to their families in the region. The country is the region's major market and transportation hub. Although the conflict has redirected some economic activities to its neighbors, without the dynamism of the Ivoirian economy to bolster the region, over time a diminished Cote d'Ivoire will begin to send workers home, possibly as refugees. If not dealt with, this conflict has the seeds not only to become a center of political instability, but one which spreads economic stagnation and collapse.

Finally, we are speaking out about the deterioration of the human rights situation in the country. We have witnessed the killing and wounding of the innocent since the first day of fighting. Moreover, as the conflict has continued to fester, we have noted the emergence of what appear to be clear cases of extra-judicial killings and disappearances. These must stop, and those responsible must be brought to justice. We are alarmed by rhetoric that incites mob violence, that enhances ethnic distrust, and that preaches hate. This will not restore democracy.

The situation in Cote d'Ivoire is difficult and complex. The country has significant issues of inclusion and participation that it must solve. Its leaders must come to grips with the realities of its current ethnic composition, and again assert leadership that looks to the future, not the past. We are prepared to work with them, as we are with other African peoples, nations, and leaders, towards a better common future for all.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity. I would be pleased to answer your questions.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Assistant Secretary Kansteiner. One of the questions I was going to ask is that you say circumstantial evidence suggests there is ample reason to remain concerned and vigi-

lant regarding support the Governments of Liberia and Burkina Faso may be providing to rebels in Cote d'Ivoire.

One of the observations that I have seen in press accounts in the past is that Foday Sanko of the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone and Charles Taylor of Liberia actually met in a Libyan training camp, a terrorist training camp, and further that that same camp hosted Compaore of Burkina Faso at one point, so you have three individuals who went through the same experience of being trained, and you have a similar modus operandi in terms of the way that they have conducted in the past terrorist activities arguably against their own citizens.

I wanted to ask you in light of that, is there any indication at all of a potential Libyan role in this conflict?

Mr. KANSTEINER. We have not seen any evidence of that, but there has been a long history, as you indicate, between some of the actors in West Africa that do have links to Tripoli. We have seen it with those in leadership positions in Burkina Faso and currently in Liberia, but in this particular case we have not seen anything per se.

Mr. Chairman, I would be happy to go into a closed session and discuss any details of any of this that you would like.

Mr. ROYCE. Okay. I appreciate that.

I was going to ask with the French being neutral, what pressure points exist on the rebels to resolve this conflict diplomatically, and what do we know about their capabilities, about their motives, and how do the Ivoirian rebels differ perhaps from other rebel groups that we have seen operate in this theater like the Revolutionary United Front rebels, for example, in Sierra Leone?

Mr. KANSTEINER. There are essentially four rebel forces. We believe there is a certain degree of coordination among them, probably greater coordination in the north from the northern groups, perhaps less coordination between the northern and western groups, but clearly there is some communication going on there.

Their motivations are varied, and they stem from everything from personal grudges and feeling as if they were relieved of duties or positions when they should not have been to more ideological motivations, so they truly are varied. An overlay to all of that is some ethnic tensions, too, and regional, coastal versus inland, so it is very complex.

It is not as rough as the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) was in Sierra Leone. As crude as that all was, there were probably more clear motivating forces, primarily economic, with the RUF. This situation is a little more complicated.

Mr. ROYCE. But again to go back to what pressure points exist?

Mr. KANSTEINER. The rebels do not have the military capability to move any further than they are right now with the French military there, so it is militarily stalemated. The French thus are able to pressure the rebels to move into a political dialogue.

It looks as if the rebels have at least bought into that enough that they are showing up in Paris and agreeing to Marcoussis. So, I suppose the leverage is that ultimately those French troops will not let them gain any more ground.

Mr. ROYCE. Does the Marcoussis Agreement perhaps send to you the message that political power and legitimacy can be won through the barrel of a gun? Is that a concern?

Mr. KANSTEINER. That is very much a concern. As you mentioned in your opening statement, that is not a signal we want to send to the rest of Africa or to the rest of the world. So it is going to require some real diplomatic and constitutional writing skills to make sure that those benefits that might occur within the society do not occur simply because someone took up a gun.

Mr. ROYCE. My last question would be whether you would perceive that France is committed to staying the course here. As the French Government pulls out the French nationals, that arguably diminishes or reduces the incentive for France to remain engaged in Cote d'Ivoire. What is your perception on that?

Mr. KANSTEINER. My conversations with Paris would suggest that the French government is in this for the long haul.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you.

I will turn to Ranking Member Don Payne of New Jersey.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much.

You know, as this conflict started to evolve I was sort of pressing our State Department to maybe become a little more engaged; not physically, but to try to work diplomatically with some of the factions there, but we seemed to have not engaged ourselves very much in that.

Now, we know that it is certainly a former French colony and that France certainly had many more contacts and influence. However, many of the African countries after decolonization have kind of sought more involvement from the U.S. in spite of their former ties. It would appear to me that we kind of did not feel it was in our interest to try and engage the rebels in a diplomatic way.

Secondly, as you may recall, there were requests from the government for some assistance. They did not want weapons, but they did want to get some assistance in logistics. As a matter of fact, I was in conversation with the government, and they were saying that the rebels outmanned them with weaponry, that they had better weapons. They had better equipment than the government had and were simply requesting some assistance to try to be on par with the rebels. Once again, we did not respond very positively.

Is there any interest that we have there, or are we simply sort of allowing the French to just be the only player from the west in Cote d'Ivoire?

Mr. KANSTEINER. Thank you, sir. We are very engaged. It might not be high profile, but there is constant diplomatic engagement. My senior deputy assistant was in fact at Marcoussis sitting there involved with the negotiations. All sides heard our input, and I would like to think that we helped and we were constructive in that agreement.

As you know, historically Cote d'Ivoire has had a defense pact with France. Hence one reason why Cote d'Ivoire's army and armed forces are so weak is because they historically always relied on the French. In fact, if there was ever a national security threat, by treaty the French were obligated to come to Cote d'Ivoire's assistance. That, of course, is one reason why the French did respond.

They were responding to their defense treaty and their defense pact with Ivory Coast.

We have been responsive to some of the government's requests, particularly on humanitarian assistance. We are actively helping the ECOFORCE now both with financial support and also equipment. We have a number of boats that left Freeport, Sierra Leone, laden with U.S. Army equipment. They have now landed in Abidjan and will be used and moved up country from Abidjan to that front line. All that equipment will go to the ECOFORCE.

Mr. PAYNE. Well, I am glad that we are starting to become involved. I believe that if we had become involved earlier on when the plea came out—you know, if we are going to sit back and allow the rebel forces to take over then we are going to go through a whole phase of that.

Once again, I was not certainly inferring that we should send any manpower or anything like that. We know that is a no-no. However, I think if we had gotten more involved in negotiations—as a matter of fact, at one point I thought that some people in the State Department almost had a preference to the rebels, to be truthful. Someone over there when I talked to them said well, they were courteous or something. I do not know.

I think we really need to be serious about making a clear message that countries cannot be taken over by the barrel of a gun. I was disturbed in Venezuela when we sort of looked the other way when a coup took over and almost recognized the coup plotters until we found they really were not in charge.

You know, we cannot have it where we have a despot like we say Saddam Hussein is, and we want the people to have rule of law and we all support that in one place. However, in the other place we say well, you know, they take over, and by the rule of force it is all right.

I guess I am playing for more consistent policy, and I guess with that I would yield back. Hopefully with giving defense and the interior to the rebels, it just seems to me it would be a pretty hard pill to swallow, and then to have the Prime Minister actually having more control than the elected President. I just hope that we can work with it.

Finally, we cut peacekeeping 50 percent in our 2004 budget, down to \$24 million, from 2 years ago. I do not know how we are going to be able to assist with the gains we have made in Sierra Leone and the Congo and other places with us cutting the budget in half for peacekeeping in Africa. It is sad to me.

Mr. KANSTEINER. First on the cabinet positions, Marcoussis fortunately did not get into cabinet assignments. That would have been inappropriate, I believe, and they did not.

Those specific assignments for various political parties and rebel factions need to be worked out by the Ivoirians. They are the only ones that can decide how that can be distributed and worked out, and we leave it to them. If they are looking for outside guidance, we stand ready to provide it.

On the 2004 budget situation vis-a-vis, the voluntary peacekeeping operation account in Africa, I could not agree with you more, sir, and I will look for all the allies I can. Fortunately, we do have some fungibility in moving some money around, and I

might very well be coming back to this very Committee to ask for that flexibility.

Mr. ROYCE. Congressman Houghton.

Mr. HOUGHTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for having the meeting. It is very worthwhile, and it is good to be with Mr. Payne again.

Mr. Assistant Secretary, thanks very much for all you do. You are a great credit to all of us here.

I would like to try to understand what the forces are here. The French are sort of a buffer group. Is that right? Then you have the other nations that you mentioned—Ghana, Niger, Senegal—coming in and trying to help them. Then we are protecting our own citizens. We are working on the Marcoussis Agreement. We are giving money, \$1.5 million, arms and equipment and things like that.

Is this going to fix the problem? At the end of your statement you said, you know, that there are some underlying issues that are really pretty important. You said the leaders must come to grips with the realities of its current ethnic composition. I do not know whether we are on the road to resolution here or not. Maybe you could help.

Mr. KANSTEINER. I think that the Marcoussis framework has a good chance of working. It calls on a government of national reconciliation. It forces Ivoirian political parties to address the tough questions.

The tough questions for Cote d'Ivoire right now are foreign visitors. Are they citizens? What are they? As Mr. Payne made reference, there are millions from other West African countries now residing in Cote d'Ivoire. What is their status? Are they welcome visitors? Are they citizens of that country? Do they have voting rights? Do descendants from people that were born in other states have leadership rights, i.e., can they run for President? These are the contentious issues.

Marcoussis has a chance of working because it raises up and identifies those tough, sensitive, hard issues. Now, that makes it hard to get a deal because they are tough and sensitive, but if they can reach agreement on these issues they have reached agreement on the toughest issues that this country has to face.

The framework is right. If the people on the ground can use it and make it happen, that remains to be seen.

Mr. HOUGHTON. And driving the diplomatic talks are what nations? The United States?

Mr. KANSTEINER. The French were driving the Marcoussis Agreement. Once that agreement was reached, supported by a Security Council resolution last week, the Secretary General was tasked with assigning a special representative, which he has now done. So some of the responsibility now shifts to the U.N.

They have a specific responsibility. They have taken on a role that they will be observers, mediators, facilitators to make sure this Marcoussis Agreement is fulfilled.

Mr. HOUGHTON. Thank you very much.

Mr. ROYCE. Congresswoman Betty McCollum of Minnesota.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This has been fascinating to listen to, and I appreciate you being here. I am looking forward to learning much more today.

As I said, I am learning a lot. I have two questions. I will do them both, and I will keep them short, although your answer to the first one might become long.

Mr. KANSTEINER. Okay.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. There are three rebel groups. Can you break them out for me and kind of explain kind of their different polarities so I can figure out what everybody is trying to deal with around the table?

Then my second question is we have had a lot of discussion about our French allies and how they have taken a real leadership role in trying to maintain some stability here. I have been told that the French have been told that there are links with al-Qaeda, and I am wondering if our government has any comments on that.

I will sit back and listen.

Mr. KANSTEINER. Okay. Great. I will try to answer. The rebel groups are diverse. The northern based rebel groups were the ones that, in September, originally launched the coup or the attempted coup.

It seems that those rebel groups are made up of disaffected former army people, people from the northern region, some non-Christians, remembering that Cote d'Ivoire is roughly divided regionally Christians in the south, Muslims in the north. That is, by the way, a gross generalization. There are plenty of exceptions and pockets of diversity throughout the country.

The northern groups were dissatisfied with the Gbagbo regime, felt that the Gbagbo regime had reneged on certain commitments and felt they had no recourse except through rebellion and through a military ouster. That is basically how they would describe, I believe, their motivation.

The western rebel groups have a much greater ethnic overtone I would describe. The Guere on the Ivoirian side are cousins to the Krahn on the Liberian side. Interestingly enough, the Krahn are historically very anti Taylor. The Guere are generally pro government, pro President Gbagbo.

The other cousins across the border would be the Yacouba on the Ivoirian side, and they are often identified with former leader General Guei, who his followers very much are part of this rebel group. Their cousins on the Liberian side are the Gio-mano, and so that is how you get these cross border assistances. The Yacouba and the Gio-mano assist each other, both sides of the border, as do the cousins that live further south, the Krahn and the Guere, so there is a lot more ethnic play in terms of the western rebels.

We have not seen any direct links to al-Qaeda to my knowledge. But again we could ask for additional information and go into a closed session and explore that more fully.

Mr. ROYCE. Congresswoman Barbara Lee of California.

Ms. LEE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let me also thank you for being here and thank our Ranking Member for these hearings.

I have had the privilege really to visit Cote d'Ivoire on many occasions, so, like I think everyone, this has been quite a shock to all of us, but understanding a little bit of the history and what has transpired is—you know, I guess I would say I could see how this is occurring now.

I want to find out just in terms of the humanitarian crisis now, given the health care needs of the country and the educational needs and the infrastructure needs. How is this conflict bearing upon the humanitarian situation, and what are we doing? Is USAID there? Is it safe for our folks to be there? What actually are we doing in terms of our aid and diplomacy to help resolve the crisis and deliver services?

Mr. KANSTEINER. Yes. Good question. The situation is such that in parts of the country it is not safe for development agencies and non-government organizations to work. In fact, when this erupted in September we had to extract most of those people.

There is a humanitarian need. When you have such massive dislocation there always is. There are refugees in fact that were Liberian citizens who fled the conflict in Liberia and came across into Cote d'Ivoire and were welcomed and in fact lived in camps, secure camps on the Cote d'Ivoire side of the border. They have now in fact been forced to return to Liberia because it is "safer" in Liberia than it is in Cote d'Ivoire.

There is a humanitarian crisis, and we are working with various U.N. agencies and NGOs in facilitating and making sure that equipment and food and assistance is given to those refugees. There are also internal refugees inside Cote d'Ivoire, and we are working with U.N. agencies and NGOs to get appropriate material to those people.

Interestingly enough, the infrastructure, the roads and the ports, have not been heavily damaged. There has been some damage, but it is not heavy. For instance, most of the cocoa crop, although it was not as good a quality as usual, has been harvested. Cote d'Ivoire produces the finest cocoa in the world probably. I should not say that with the Brazilians listening in, but the Ivoirian cocoa is fantastic. Most of that crop actually got out. Again, it is somewhat degraded because it was not fermented and did not have the time that it needed to get to the ports, but it got out.

Life is going on. You know, this is not a normal situation, and we have to stay focused on the political and diplomatic efforts to resolve the situation.

Ms. LEE. And how is the security situation at the United States Embassy?

Mr. KANSTEINER. Thank you for asking. It is good. Our people are safe. We have drawn down. We probably have about 50 people in our Embassy today, and that is down probably 20 or 30 percent.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you. Shifting gears, Assistant Secretary Kansteiner, I would like to mention a commercial dispute involving a U.S. telecom business in Cote d'Ivoire. It is called Corra de Comstar.

This company has had its facility invaded and its operations disrupted, and it has been reported to me that that occurred at the behest of a Mr. Alexander Galley with the backing of Ivoirian security forces. Mr. Galley I believe has been named on the June 2001 U.N. Security Council resolution which bans international travel for Liberian Government officials and others presumed to be working with that government whose activities have been discussed here today.

I know that this business has communicated with the Ivorian Ambassador here in Washington, and I raise this issue with you to make you aware of it if you are not already with the hope that action can be taken.

Again, I thank you on behalf of the Members of the Committee for appearing today, and I believe our Ranking Member, Congressman Don Payne, has additional questions he wants to raise.

Mr. PAYNE. A very short question or statement that the African Development Bank recently left Abidjan. My question is whether you know is it just temporary? We would hope that we are not going to lose agencies like those that have been there for so long.

We need to come up with a solution and then get back to normalcy, so I would hope you could check into that. I would hope that it is just temporary.

Mr. KANSTEINER. Yes, sir. I share that, and in fact the move to Tunis is strictly known as and we understand it to be temporary only.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you.

Mr. KANSTEINER. Thank you.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you again for appearing today.

Mr. KANSTEINER. Thank you, sir.

Mr. ROYCE. We are now going to go to our second panel.

Mr. KANSTEINER. Thank you very much.

Mr. ROYCE. Dr. Timothy Docking is a Program Officer specializing in African affairs in the Research and Studies program of the U.S. Institute of Peace. He has focused on the study of political development, civil society formation and conflict resolution in Africa. His recent research has examined U.S. foreign policy toward the continent and the regional war in West Africa.

Dr. Docking has held research fellowships at the Boston University African Studies Center and the Centre for the Study of Black Africa at the University of Bordeaux. Dr. Docking was a Fulbright Fellow at the University of Mali. Dr. Docking holds a doctorate in political science from Boston University.

We also have with us Dr. Jeanne Maddox Toungara. She is an Associator Professor of History at Howard University. She teaches courses on West Africa, the African Diaspora and women in Africa at Howard University. Her research interests include West African intellectual history, indigenous thought, pre-colonial state formation, political culture and democratization within Francophone African nations, with particular emphasis on Ivory Coast. She holds a doctorate from the University of California at Los Angeles.

We have your complete testimony for the record, so I am going to ask you just to summarize your testimony at this time, and then we will go to questions from the Members of this panel.

If you want to begin, Dr. Docking?

**STATEMENT OF TIMOTHY DOCKING, PH.D., PROGRAM OFFICER, RESEARCH AND STUDIES PROGRAM, U.S. INSTITUTE OF PEACE**

Mr. DOCKING. Good afternoon. I would like to thank the Chairman for holding this timely hearing on the Ivory Coast and for inviting me to testify today. I would also like to thank the Ranking Member for his leadership in Congress on African affairs.

Please let me make a brief disclaimer. The views I will express today are my own and do not represent those of my employer, the U.S. Institute of Peace, which does not advocate particular policy positions.

I would like to begin by stating that I believe it is difficult to exaggerate the seriousness of the threat that the present crisis in Ivory Coast poses for Ivoirians and the entire West Africa sub-region. As this Committee is aware, the Ivory Coast is just the most recent state to fall victim to the cancer of violent instability that has spread across West Africa for 14 years. If left unchecked, this disease will surely spread again with grievous consequences for Africans and U.S. strategic interests.

One characteristic of these conflicts that leads me to this conclusion is the repeated meddling of regional actors in the internal affairs of neighboring states. From the earliest news from the Ivory Coast following the September 19 army mutiny, there have been reports of English speaking Liberian rebels among northern elements that today are known as the Patriotic Movement for the Ivory Coast or the MPCCI. These reports quickly gained credibility when new fronts in the fighting opened up in the west of the country along the Liberian border.

There is strong reason to believe that the MPCCI has received support from Burkina Faso. While less conspicuous than Liberia's involvement in Ivory Coast, according to various sources, including the French media, Burkina is implicated in the northern rebellion.

Let me turn briefly now to American foreign policy toward West Africa. Since the late 1990s, our policies have been dominated by efforts to contain and isolate the Taylor regime in Liberia, but the sanctions we back are leaky and difficult to enforce, and Liberian forces are currently fighting in the Ivory Coast.

With regards to U.S. foreign policy toward Ivory Coast, it is instructive to review our past policies toward neighboring Sierra Leone where we backed the British who, along with U.N. peace-keeping forces and the Guinean Army, defeated the RUF last week.

With the Sierra Leone model in mind, it appears that U.S. policy makers intend to approach this crisis in Ivory Coast by backing the French in similar fashion. Indeed, this is a wise and prudent starting point for our policy, yet the comparison between the civil wars in Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast should only be taken so far. There are three principal differences between Sierra Leone and the Ivory Coast.

First, the Ivory Coast is sub-Saharan Africa's fourth largest economy and is a linchpin for the region. Second, the Ivory Coast is strategically located, bordering three stable states including two of Africa's brightest democratic stars, Ghana and Mali. Third, the character of the crisis in Ivory Coast is also different, and the potential for religiously based violence is real and, if left unchecked, could fan the flames of religious tensions throughout the region, especially in Nigeria.

In brief, the collapse of Ivory Coast would send shockwaves across the region, dwarfing the effects of state failure in Liberia and Sierra Leone. And at a time when the U.S. is trying to increase oil exports from West Africa and in this age of terrorism

when the threats posed by failed states are clear, a collapse of Ivory Coast would strike at our strategic interests.

So what steps should the United States Government take to mitigate this crisis? The U.S. must do more than just stand behind the French as we did the British in Sierra Leone. We need to put our current geopolitical differences aside with the French and stand shoulder to shoulder with them in Ivory Coast.

Finally, events in Ivory Coast should also cause the U.S. Government to revisit its policy toward Liberia from whence many of the region's problems emanate. Principally, we should return to the missing link of our Liberian policy: The French. And I think this point is very important: For years, the French have viewed Taylor as "part of the solution" in West Africa and, thus, failed to back hard line sanctions against his regime. In return, Liberia was to stay out of the Ivory Coast. Clearly, this deal has now been broken. We should, therefore, intensify our dialogue with the French over Liberia and encourage them to toughen their policy toward the Taylor regime.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I thank you and welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Docking follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TIMOTHY DOCKING, PH.D., PROGRAM OFFICER, RESEARCH AND STUDIES PROGRAM, U.S. INSTITUTE OF PEACE

*The views expressed in this testimony are my own and do not represent positions of my employer, the US Institute of Peace, which does not advocate specific policies.*

INTRODUCTION: THE REGIONALIZATION OF CONFLICT IN WEST AFRICA

I have been asked to speak to you today about the current crisis in the Ivory Coast, in particular, to examine the role that regional actors are playing to both assuage and complicate the situation, and to assess American foreign policy toward the Ivory Coast.

To begin with, I believe it is difficult to exaggerate the seriousness of the threat that present instability in Ivory Coast poses for Ivorians and the entire West African sub-region. As this committee is aware, the Ivory Coast is just the most recent state to fall victim to the cancer of violent instability that has plagued West Africa for fourteen years.

Today, the fifteen-state West African region, with its nearly 240 million inhabitants, houses all the ingredients of the "coming anarchy" that Robert Kaplan described nearly a decade ago. West Africa is the poorest region on earth, where we find 12 of the 22 least developed nations in the world: weak governance, collapsed states, the growing presence of mafias, gun and drug runners, international meddlers (like Libyan President Mohamar Kaddafi) and a surfeit of young, well-armed men, who lie in wait to prey on weak and exposed people and their decaying governments.

The political instability and violent conflict we currently find in the Ivory Coast has numerous socio-economic causes that are important to understand: the politicizing of religious and ethnic differences by opportunistic Ivorian politicians; the absence of a democratic history and the lack of economic diversification of the nation's agricultural-based economy which makes the economy particularly vulnerable to price fluctuations for commodities (especially cacao, coffee and palm oil).

Yet to understand and begin to address the troubling situation in Ivory Coast we must also appreciate the regional context of the current troubles.

For the spread of war in the Ivory Coast is in part a symptom of a larger system of conflict affecting the entire region. This warfare started in 1989 in Liberia when Libyan-trained, and Burkina Faso-backed, militants started a civil war to overthrow Liberian dictator, Samuel Doe. The fighting spread to Sierra Leone in 1991, to Guinea in 2000 and now threatens to engulf Ivory Coast. At the epicenter of this conflict system is the president of Liberia, Charles Taylor.

## REGIONAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE IVORY COAST CRISIS:

From the earliest reports from the Ivory Coast following the September 19th army mutiny—which subsequently led to the annexation of roughly the northern half of Ivory Coast to mutinous Ivorian soldiers—there have been reports of English speaking (Liberian) rebels among northern elements that today are known as the Patriotic Movement for Ivory Coast (or the MPCCI).

These reports quickly gained credibility when new fronts opened up in the west of the country along the Liberian border. Two groups emerged in this region: 1) the Far West Ivory Coast People's Movement (MPIGO) are the rump supporters of General Robert Guei, the former military ruler of Ivory Coast (1999–2000) who seized power in a coup; 2) The Movement for Peace and Justice (MPJ) comprised largely of Liberian rebels and reportedly housing members of Taylor's elite "Anti-Terrorist Unit" (ATU) and National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) regulars. These forces quickly set off to terrorize villagers and loot everything from automobiles to unprocessed cacao.

There is also strong reason to believe that the MPCCI has received support from Burkina Faso. While less conspicuous than Liberia's involvement in Ivory Coast—according to French media sources (including *Le Monde*)—Burkina is complicit in the northern rebellion. The open distain between Presidents Campaoré and Gbagbo, along with Burkina's past adventurism in the region (in Liberia and Sierra Leone), further adds to these suspicions.

Following the September 19th mutiny, the Gbagbo regime immediately suggested that Ouagadougou was behind the northern unrest. Indeed, President Campaoré has expressed sympathy for the northern rebels, many of whom are have ethnic roots in Burkina Faso and Mali, and he has heaped condemnation on the government in Abidjan, stating recently that Gbagbo should step down or be forced out "like Milosevic."

But just as some regional states have meddled in the Ivory Coast's internal affairs, others have actively tried to foster peace. These efforts have been led by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its capable Executive Secretary, Mohamed Ibn Chambas. President Eyadema led a series of talks in Lomé between Ivorian combatants but after reaching an initial cease fire agreement, was unable to achieve a breakthrough in mediation. It was at this point that the French stepped up their involvement in the negotiations and brought all sides together in January for peace talks 30 kms south of Paris in Linas-Marcoussis.

The leadership role played by President Wade in addressing the crisis has also been commendable. Indeed, Senegal has agreed to contribute the largest contingent of peacekeeping troops to the planned 1,200-person ECOWAS force currently deploying in Ivory Coast. Benin, Ghana, Niger and Togo have also agreed to provide troops. Nevertheless, the fifteen-member regional organ has not displayed unity over its handling of the Ivory Coast crisis and has at times been beset by bickering.

## AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD WEST AFRICA:

Since the late 1990s, American foreign policy toward West Africa has been dominated by efforts to contain and isolate the Taylor regime in Liberia. This goal has contributed to the imposition of UN sanctions including an arms embargo and travel restrictions aimed at Taylor and his cabal. In addition to supporting sanctions, the US has attempted to channel support to Liberia's legitimate democratic opposition and to build an independent media. The defined goal of these actions is to strengthen the potential chances for a free and fair presidential election scheduled for later this year.

But by the administration's own admission, sanctions have proven leaky and difficult to enforce; Taylor continues to repress his political opposition and the free press; and, as I've described above, Liberian forces are currently fighting in the Ivory Coast.

The failure to isolate and contain the Taylor regime presents the United States and the international community with a serious problem that must be addressed. We have seen from past activities that the Taylor regime seeks to spread instability beyond its borders and then to loot in the wake of violent conflict. Along West Africa's porous and often vulnerable borders this insidious strategy has at times worked and is being repeated again in western Ivory Coast.

In examining US foreign policy to Ivory Coast it is instructive to review past policies toward neighboring Sierra Leone, where in 2001 the combined forces of UNAMSIL, the Guinean Army and the British military beat the Taylor-supported rebel forces of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) into submission. During that period the US steadfastly backed all three forces that faced off against the RUF.

Most notable however, and perhaps analogous to the current crisis in the Ivory Coast, was our policy vis-a-vis the British.

From the moment the United Kingdom intensified its support for the failing UNAMSIL mission in the summer of 2000, Washington acted in lockstep with London, supporting the British effort financially, politically and by training and equipping African peacekeepers. The end result, as we all know, was the defeat of the RUF and the end to a decade of warfare which culminated last year in the free and fair election of Sierra Leone's current government.

With the Sierra Leone model (of backing a former European colonial power) in mind, it appears that US policymakers intend to approach the crisis in Ivory Coast by supporting the French in similar fashion. Indeed, this is a wise and prudent starting point for our evolving policy toward Ivory Coast.

Yet the comparison between the civil wars in Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast should only be taken so far. To begin with, in comparison to the Ivory Coast, instability in Sierra Leone with its 5.6 million people, anemic economy and clearly delineated enemy (the RUF) posed a smaller immediate threat to the wider West African region.

Along with Nigeria, the Ivory Coast is a linchpin for the region. With nearly seventeen million inhabitants, and sub-Saharan Africa's fourth largest economy, the Ivory Coast has long been a stable and relatively prosperous state. Millions of Burkinabe and Malians and hundreds of thousands of other African migrants constitute the agricultural backbone of the nation and an important source of remittances to surrounding countries. The Ivory Coast is the world's leading producer of cacao.

Abidjan has also become a financial center in West Africa with key banking institutions, and a developed port and road system that serves as a door to the Atlantic for its landlocked northern neighbors.

The character of the crisis in Ivory Coast is also different than it was in Sierra Leone, where the principal engine of violence was access to diamond mines. In the Ivory Coast there are multiple engines driving the conflict including: the cynical quest for political power, ethnic schisms, economic recession, as well as international opportunism and banditry. Yet the most dangerous division—which poses profound consequences for the region—is the divide that has developed along religious lines.

Once latent Muslim/Christian animosities have been stoked and politicized by Ivorian politicians since the mid-1990s. Today, the potential for religiously-based violence in Ivory Coast is real and if left unchecked could fan the flames of religious tensions throughout the region, especially in Nigeria. Massacres have already taken place and a recent UN report has drawn links between death squads based in Abidjan and the Gbagbo regime.

Finally, unlike Sierra Leone which sits between a well-defended and autocratic Guinea, and the collapsed state of Liberia, Ivory Coast touches three stable states including two of Africa's brightest democratic stars, Ghana and Mali. Each of these states and the nearly 45 million people that inhabit them are feeling the pinch of instability in Ivory Coast; the collapse of which threatens to send shock waves across these countries and throughout the entire region.

So US policymakers must do more than just stand behind the French: we must stand shoulder-to-shoulder with them. Rhetorically, financially and diplomatically we need to assertively back the French-brokered Marcoussis Accords and assure President Gbagbo and his supporters that there is no "American alternative." At the same time we need to send a clear message to the northern rebels that the US does not accept a divided Ivory Coast. And that both sides must work towards reconciliation and national unity, a program that was well defined by all sides in the Marcoussis talks. The US government could underscore this point by drawing on various financial tools to penalize any group that tries to renege on the Marcoussis deal.

The clear signs of regional foreign involvement in the Ivory Coast's internal affairs also warrant a US policy response: American intelligence organizations must determine the level of Burkina Faso's involvement in the conflict and penalize it as well.

Events in Ivory Coast should also cause the US government to revisit its policy toward Liberia, from whence many of the region's problems emanate. Principally, we should return to the missing link in our Liberia policy: the French. For years the French have viewed Taylor as "part of the solution" in West Africa and thus failed to back a hard line sanctions regime in the UN against Monrovia. In return, Liberia was to stay out of Ivory Coast. Clearly that deal has now been broken. We should therefore intensify our dialog with the French over Liberia and encourage them to toughen their policy toward the Taylor regime.

Other regional policies that should be considered by the United States include:

- Developing a short-term contingency plan to exploit the possible indictment of Charles Taylor as a war criminal by Sierra Leone's Special Court;
- Developing a mid and long-term regional plan for West Africa that accounts for big-picture economic and human development trends;
- Continuing military assistance to the key regional armies to build capacity and strengthen linkages with the United States;
- Increasing aid to the region as an investment in stability, socio-economic development, and the creation of new markets for the US and to help prevent state collapse;
- Marrying the administration's West Africa program with the ambitious conflict prevention/development programs being articulated at the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Dr. Docking.  
Dr. Toungara?

**STATEMENT OF JEANNE TOUNGARA, PH.D., PROFESSOR,  
HOWARD UNIVERSITY**

Ms. TOUNGARA. I, too, would wish to thank the Committee Chair and Members of the Committee. I am very happy to be with you today and to share my views on this current situation. Having lived in the country for 15 years, I hope I will bring a perspective from those who are closer to the ground and actually living this experience.

A comprehensive and effective peace building initiative in Cote d'Ivoire can be developed through a profound understanding of its ethnography and history. That includes nearly 70 years of French colonialism, 3 decades of one party rule under a benevolent dictator and, alas, its fledgling steps toward multiparty democracy during this last 10 years.

The current disturbances emerge from the failures of leadership to engage fully the difficult task of nation building in the aftermath of colonial rule that merged some 60 odd ethnic groups together into a single country.

Geographical and cultural divisions remain despite the continuing migration of Ivoirians and foreigners from the subregion within this country, moving from east to west and north to south in search of fertile cash crop zones, largely for growing coffee and cocoa, commercial activities, urbanization and education. Such population movement has been a source of productivity and growth, cultural diversity and international tourist attraction, as well as socio-political advances and setbacks.

I have attached at the end of this statement excerpts of an article published in the *Journal of Democracy* in 2001 that explains the persistence of the ethnic factor in national politics.

The question is where do we go from here in the aftermath of the most recent coup attempt resulting in civil war, severe human rights violations, displacement of persons and heightened xenophobia? How can the United States participate in the search for a sustainable and lasting peace in Cote d'Ivoire?

My recommendations are the following. First, the U.S. should support the spirit of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement signed by nine participating political parties in rebel groups on January 24, 2003. Representatives of several African states, international financial institutions, including the World Bank and the IMF and global

and regional organizations such as the UN the EU and AU and ECOWAS were present and witnessed these discussions leading to this agreement. The roundtable was held after the failure of the current regime, led by President Gbagbo, to respond to interventions by African heads of state and ECOWAS mediation. President Jacques Chirac and his government should be praised for accepting to intervene, both militarily to save lives and diplomatically to facilitate discussions that will hopefully lead to a peaceful settlement of hostilities and the appointment of a functional government of reconciliation.

Second, the U.S. should make clear to President Gbagbo and the citizens of Cote d'Ivoire its support for international efforts to achieve peace and should avoid any bilateral discussions that may divide or obfuscate the solidarity of the international community at this time. The U.S. should collaborate with and fully support the multinational steering committee put in place to monitor the implementation of the agreement.

The entire region is plagued by conflicts whose roots lie in the failure of leaders to provide their citizens equitable and fair access to opportunities to thrive within their nations. The international community has an opportunity to show its commitment to democracy, development and the peoples of the subregion if Cote d'Ivoire can serve as an example of exemplary collaboration in this direction.

Third, the U.S. itself must show leadership by refusing any effort to release economic assistance to the Gbagbo regime until he demonstrates concretely his compliance with the demands of the Marcoussis Agreement and supports the efforts to be made by the reconciliation government. All economic support should be delivered through non-governmental organizations, either local or international, or through departmental and municipal representatives, duly elected, to relieve the pain and suffering or assist with relocation and housing, provide food or meet other needs brought about by civil war and human rights violations.

Fourth, the U.S. should participate in building civil society, and it should play a major role through its existing international agencies, USAID and Peace Corps, for example, in educating Ivoirians about civic responsibility. It should support the elimination of all notions of "Ivoirite." This is a form of cultural nationalism initiated by the ousted President Bedie and manipulated for the political purposes that eventually led to discrimination against both foreign Africans and Ivoirian northerners by the peoples of the forest zone.

Fifth, the U.S. should participate in the military plan of the Marcoussis Agreement. Specifically, the U.S. should participate in the remaking of the Ivoirian defense and security forces by developing a sustainable plan to: 1) meet their physical needs for clothing, boots and a living wage—the initial cause of several military coups throughout the region; and 2) to provide for their reeducation as a national force. A military reform effort needs to include ethnic integration of all units.

Sixth, many of the problems leading to the violation of the right to citizenship of Alassane Ouattara were caused by the lack of an independent judiciary. Therefore, the U.S. should provide support

for judiciary reform and the replacement of judges who are incapable of carrying out the will of the Constitution.

Seventh, the U.S. should provide support through its various agencies, judiciary branches and institutions of higher education to assist with rethinking notions of citizenship and the status of immigrants. Foreign Africans born in Cote d'Ivoire must now apply to be naturalized. Africans who have made life-long contributions to the development of the country were disfranchised under the ousted President Bedie. Peoples of northern descent have not been able to acquire identity cards, simple identity cards, due to discrimination. This problem needs review within the entire region, not only Cote d'Ivoire. ECOWAS is seeking to support the freedom of movement of all West Africans and wishes to promote regional poles of development that might relieve the onslaught of immigrants to just a few nations. The U.S. should lean on those countries that have not yet signed to encourage them to accept the ECOWAS proposal.

Last, the United States should support the cost of new elections, wherever and whenever they are judged necessary to advance the cause of democratic reform. Elections and referendums as a means of conflict prevention are a lot cheaper than conflict resolution after war.

If the U.S. had followed through with its condemnation of the fraudulent electoral practices that resulted in the self-proclaimed presidency of Gbagbo and if the U.S. had collaborated seriously with the international community to pay for new elections at that time, perhaps there would have been fewer victims of human rights violations carried out by Gbagbo supporters in the gendamerie and death squads. At the time, Gbagbo was still leader of a very weak minority party, the FPI, and did not have the support of a widespread youth coalition now mesmerized by the prospect of resistance to France, the former colonizers.

To conclude, President Gbagbo has proven time and again that he is unreliable and incapable of promoting national unity. He should not be given any opportunity to further distract this process or ignore the demands of leadership.

The U.S. must be clear and persistent and refuse to compromise on the basic principles of democracy and human rights. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Toungara follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JEANNE TOUNGARA, PH.D., PROFESSOR, HOWARD UNIVERSITY

A comprehensive and effective peace-building initiative in Côte d'Ivoire can be developed through a profound understanding of its ethnography and history; including nearly seventy years of French colonialism, three decades of one-party rule under a benevolent dictator, and, alas, its fledgling steps toward multiparty democracy during the last ten years. The current disturbances emerge from the failures of leadership to engage fully the difficult task of nation building in the aftermath of colonial rule that merged over sixty-odd ethnic groups into a single country. Geographical and cultural divisions remain despite the continuing migration of Ivoirians and foreigners from the subregion within the country, moving from east to west and north to south in search of fertile cash crop zones (largely for coffee and cocoa), commercial activities, urbanization, and education. Such population movement has been a source of productivity and growth, cultural diversity and international tourist attraction, as well as socio-political advances and setbacks. I have attached at the end of this statement excerpts of an article published in the

*Journal of Democracy* (2001) that explains the persistence of the ethnic factor in national politics.

The question is “Where do we go from here?” in the aftermath of the most recent coup attempt resulting in civil war, severe human rights violations, displacement of persons and heightened xenophobia. How can the United States participate in the search for sustainable and lasting peace in Côte d’Ivoire?

First, the U.S. should support the spirit of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement signed by nine participating political parties and rebel groups on January 24, 2003. Representatives of several African states, international financial institutions (World Bank, IMF), and global and regional organizations (UN, EU, AU, ECOWAS) witnessed the discussions leading to the Agreement. The roundtable was held after the failure of the current regime led by President Gbagbo to respond to interventions by African heads of state and ECOWAS mediation. President Jacques Chirac and his government should be praised for accepting to intervene, both militarily, to save lives, and diplomatically, to facilitate discussions that will, hopefully, lead to a peaceful settlement of hostilities and the appointment of a functional government of reconciliation.

Second, the U.S. should make clear to President Gbagbo and the citizens of Côte d’Ivoire its support for international efforts to achieve peace and should avoid any bilateral discussions that may divide or obfuscate the solidarity of the international community at this time. The U.S. should collaborate with and fully support the multinational steering committee put in place to monitor the implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. The entire region is plagued by conflicts whose roots lie in the failure of leaders to provide their citizens equitable and fair access to opportunities to thrive within their nations. The international community has an opportunity to show its commitment to democracy, development and the peoples of the subregion if Côte d’Ivoire can serve as an example of exemplary collaboration in this direction.

Third, the U.S. must show leadership by refusing any effort to release economic assistance to the Gbagbo regime until he demonstrates concretely his compliance with the demands of the Marcoussis Agreement and supports efforts by the reconciliation government. All economic support should be delivered through non-governmental organizations (local and international) or through departmental and municipal representatives to relieve pain and suffering, assist with relocation and housing, provide food, or meet other needs brought about by civil war and human rights violations.

Fourth, the U.S. should participate in building civil society and play a major role through its existing international aid agencies (e.g., USAID, Peace Corps) in educating Ivoirians about civic responsibility. It should support the elimination of all notions of “Ivoirité,” a form of cultural nationalism initiated by ousted President Bedie, manipulated for the political purposes and that resulted in discrimination against foreign Africans and Ivoirian northerners by peoples of the forest zone.

Fifth, the U.S. should participate in the military plan of the Marcoussis Agreement. Specifically, the U.S. should participate in the remaking of the Ivoirian defense and security forces by developing a sustainable plan to: 1) meet their physical needs for clothing, boots, and a living wage (the initial cause of several military coups), and 2) provide for their (re)education as a national force. A military reform effort needs to include ethnic integration of all units.

Sixth, many of the problems leading to the violation of the right to citizenship of Alassane Ouattara were caused by the lack of an independent judiciary. Therefore, the U.S. should provide support for judiciary reform and the replacement of judges who are incapable of carrying out the will of the Constitution.

Seventh, the U.S. should provide support through its various agencies, judiciary branches, and institutions of higher education to assist with rethinking notions of citizenship and the status of immigrants. Foreign Africans born in Côte d’Ivoire must now apply to be naturalized. Africans who have made life-long contributions to the development of the country were disfranchised under Bedie. Peoples of northern descent have not been able to acquire identity cards due to discrimination. This problem needs review within the entire region. ECOWAS is seeking to support the freedom of movement of all West Africans and wishes to promote regional poles of development that might relieve the onslaught of immigrants to a few nations. The U.S. should lean on those countries that have not yet signed to accept the ECOWAS proposal.

Last, the U.S. should support the cost of new elections, wherever and whenever they are judged necessary to advance the cause of democratic reform. Elections and referendums as means of conflict prevention are a lot cheaper than conflict resolution after civil war. If the U.S. had followed through with its condemnation of the fraudulent electoral practices that resulted in the self-proclaimed presidency of

Gbagbo and collaborated seriously with the international community to pay for new elections, perhaps there would have been fewer victims of human rights violations carried out by Gbagbo supporters in the *gendamerie* and death squads. At the time, Gbagbo was still the leader of a weak, minority party (FPI) and did not have the support of a widespread youth coalition now mesmerized by the prospect of resistance to (France), the former colonizers.

President Gbagbo has proven time and again that he is unreliable and incapable of promoting national unity. He should not be given any opportunity to obfuscate, distract, or ignore the demands of leadership. The U.S. must be clear and persistent and refuse to compromise on the basic principles of democracy and human rights.

Excerpt:

“Ethnicity and Political Crisis in Côte d’Ivoire,” by Jeanne Maddox Toungara, *Journal of Democracy*, 2001(July), Vol. 12, no. 3, pp.63–72.

The ethnic factor remains a divisive and disturbing theme in the internal politics of Côte d’Ivoire. Thirty years of one-party rule under Félix Houphouët Boigny (died. 1993) and the *Parti Démocratique de Côte d’Ivoire* have resulted in little change in the way the peoples of this small West African nation perceive themselves. Foremost in their psyches is their identity as members of regional extended family and corporate kin groups competing with others for their share of scarce economic resources and political clout. The latest round of elections (2000–2001) have revealed profound weaknesses in the capacity of the leadership to prevent violence and guarantee the rights of citizens while these disparate groups defend their turf. Houphouët’s carefully crafted ethnic balancing act has been dismantled, leaving primordial ethnic linkages up for grabs and disturbing fragile alliances among the urban middle class as each group battles to protect the positions and advantages gained—individually and collectively—during the First Republic. Only the determination of the international financial community to restrict donor funds when conditions allowing wanton violations of human rights, killings, and insecurity went unchecked seems to have forced the leadership to reconsider its role and responsibilities to the state.

The primary question here is whether and how might processes of democratization pave the way toward collaborative and equitable relationships with the state, given the diversity of the population and the persistence of ethnic and regional rivalry? Are there any lessons or messages that the 2000–2001 elections have revealed to assist in charting the way toward peace and prosperity in Côte d’Ivoire and that might be applied elsewhere? Has the international financial community settled finally into a shared discourse supportive of democratization?

As an artificially constructed enclave, this territory of 15.5 million inhabitants is composed largely of the descendants of immigrants who still identify with ethnic homelands situated beyond the national boundaries that define its autonomy. Several large, extended-family kin groups trace their ancestry to adventurers who, fleeing warfare, seeking freedom from age-old traditions, or navigating toward new economic opportunities, led their followers into the territory that, in 1893, the French carved into a colony. Until 1945, the neighboring country of Burkina Faso was administered from Côte d’Ivoire and was called Haute Côte d’Ivoire (Upper Ivory Coast). More than sixty different groups have been identified within the current borders and most belong to one of four distinguishable linguistic families that share common ethnographic characteristics.

The 1998 census data shows that 44.1% are Akan speakers, mostly inhabiting the southeastern quadrant, whose principal groups migrated in successive waves from Ghana. Baule groups began arriving from the mid-18th century and settled toward the center in savanna woodlands (an area referred to as the Baule “V” for the plunge the savanna takes into the southern forest zone). The 18th-century migrations of the Agni brought them into the eastern forests. The Abron settled into the eastern savannas about half the distance between the northern border and the Atlantic Ocean in the 15th century and were influenced by savanna the cultures with whom they shared lands on the northern side of their enclave. The “Lagunaires,” peoples of the lagoons (composed of some fifteen different groups), stretched from the Ghana border through the lagoon areas, covering about two-thirds of the coast. Catholicism made an early appearance in the southeastern quadrant, bringing Christian mission education, literacy and, consequently, opening access to colonial service positions. About 12% of Ivoirians are Catholic, the majority of whom reside in the southeast (Abidjan, Yopougon, Grand Bassam, Abengourou, Bouake), though a large contingent exists in towns of the southwest (Gagnoa, Daloa, Man).

Kru-speaking peoples inhabit the southwestern quadrant, having migrated from the west (Liberia) around the 14th and 15th centuries, and make up about 11% of the population. They are composed of Bete, We (Guere), Krou, Dida, and Godie groups. Those closest to the border share cultural and family ties with neighboring communities in Liberia. The Mande began migrating into Côte d’Ivoire as early as

the 10th century in response to political transformations due to the rise of ancient empires such as Wagadu (Ghana), Mali and Songhay. The earliest to arrive penetrated the forest fringe and settled in the upper portion of southwestern quadrant. Due to their linguistic specificity they were labeled Southern Mande and include the Dan (Yacouba), the Gouro and the Toura groups. They account for about 12% of the population. Most peoples in the southwestern quadrant practice indigenous religions, though Protestant movements from Liberia have been influential. Some coastal areas underwent massive conversion to the independent church of Prophet Harris during the early years of French colonialism. Catholics claim over 60,000 members.

The tropical zones of the southern quadrants were conducive to cash crop production,—i.e., cocoa, coffee, oil palm, coconut palm, pineapples, and timber exploitation—commodities which continue to generate wealth and attract migrant laborers. Foreigners make up 26% of the population with a vast majority coming from Burkina Faso to produce cash crops.

The northern half of the country with portions plunging into the southwestern quadrant is composed of distinct language families from the north—the Northern Mande and the Voltaic—which in nearly equal proportions make up over 30% of the population. The notion of the “Great North” is a political invention that masks the actual composition of the region. The northeastern quadrant is home to Voltaic speaking peoples. The Senufo moved into the area from Burkina Faso and cover a broad swath of territory through the middle of the northern half of the country. Their arrival dates back several centuries, well before the arrival of the Mande and Baule groups. Likewise, Kulango habitation in the northeastern section dates back to the arrival of their ancestors from northern Ghana several centuries ago. They made way for the arrival in the 18th century of a smaller group composed of the Lobi who today inhabit the borderlands separating Côte d’Ivoire from Ghana and Burkina Faso. For the most part, Voltaic groups practice their own religions though many have been influenced by the presence of Muslim traders and clerics.

The Northern Mande include the Malinke in the northwest and the Dioula (from *jula*, meaning trader) who settled to the east of the Senufo. Whereas indigenous religions and Christianity are practiced among the Southern Mande in the southwestern quadrant, the Northern Mande are nearly 100% Muslim. Muslim merchants have carried Islam into the commercial centers of the southern regions, gaining some conversions among local inhabitants. Internal migration of long-distance traders (*jula*) into southern forest zones was encouraged under French colonialism to establish markets and promote the growth of the colonial economy. A symbiotic relationship between emerged between local ethnics who owned the surrounding lands and town dwellers; Muslim merchants managed the redistribution of imported goods and the transportation sector, assisting in the movement of crops from the farms to collection centers. The establishment of French colonial headquarters near the markets created in an anomaly such that several wealthy towns in the southern regions are controlled by northerners; making it possible for them to dominate in municipal elections today.

The implementation of a democratic electoral process and multiparty politics in 1990 opened the way for competitive elections in which the stakes have assumed new importance after Houphouët’s death. New players had an opportunity to establish themselves and their kin as legitimate successors to the nation’s founder. Henri Konan Bedie, as President of the National Assembly, succeeded Houphouët as head of state in 1993, following procedures set out in the oft-amended Article 11 of the Constitution. The steps leading to Bedie’s removal in 1999 reveal errors of judgment that may have been committed out of fear, but were clearly avoidable if principals of democracy, transparency in governance, and respect for the rule of law had been maintained. Shortsightedness and weak leadership have thrown Côte d’Ivoire into turmoil.

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The notion of *Ivoirité* emerged to justify limiting access to public services and rights of citizenship based on vague perceptions by individuals interested in reducing the influence of northerners and emigrants in Ivoirian politics. Bedie supported a movement within the PDCI-dominated National Assembly to impose a grandfather clause in the new electoral code (8 December 1994) requiring that both parents of candidates for the presidency and the legislature must be Ivoirian by birth. Ouattara, who had left the country to become the Managing Director for Africa at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) fell prey to Bedie’s manipulation of the Ivoirian judicial system which resulted in Ouattara’s disqualification as a candidate on the grounds that he was not truly an Ivoirian citizen. Ouattara, who was born in Dimbokro (Côte d’Ivoire) moved to Burkina Faso from Côte d’Ivoire with his parents in 1952 at age 10 and acquired his first Ivoirian identity card in 1962. The Afri-

can American Institute granted scholarships to African students based on their country of residence, thereby allowing Ouattara to depart with a passport from Upper Volta along with students from Côte d'Ivoire, Niger and other from Upper Volta. He continued to carry a passport issued by Burkina Faso and, according to him, his position as Vice Governor at the Banque Centrale des Etats Africains Occidentaux (BCEAO), reserved for a national of Burkina Faso, was an arrangement between Burkinabe administrators and Houphouët-Boigny. (See interview, *Jeune Afrique L'Intelligent*, no. 2062, 18–24 July 2000.)

Bedie removed many devoted and highly respected technocrats of northern origins and replaced them with less competent persons belonging to his own Baule group. His security forces terrorized northerners and collaborated in the forced removal of numerous Burkinabe laborers from the southwestern region. Conflicts with Kru landowners over Burkinabe exploitation of fertile lands resulted in about 20 deaths and by November 1999, an estimated 12,000 Burkinabe had returned home. Nearly two million Burkinabe who had made Côte d'Ivoire their home and were allowed to vote under the Houphouët regime were disfranchised.

By linking Ouattara to Burkinabe identity, Bedie created a tidal wave of xenophobic reaction throughout the forest zone against foreigners in general and Ouattara in particular. The U.S. Department of State's *Country Report on Human Rights 2000* gives details of numerous human rights violations that began under Bedie and continued during several months under the present regime. In light of the massive human rights violations against northerners, the conditions leading to the emergence of a united opposition from the north coalesced as never before. Northerners fearing for their safety sought refuge behind a leader with whom they identified based on ethnicity, national origins, religion, and a proven record of service to the nation.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you very much for your testimony. Let me go back to a point that I made in my opening comment, Professor, and that was whether the Marcoussis Agreement sends the message that political power and legitimacy can be won through the barrel of a gun.

I want to say that I concur with some of your analysis in terms of Gbagbo's regime and the prevention of candidates from the two major political parties running. I do think the United States went on record at the time criticizing that election.

Coming back to the question of rebel activity and whether or not that excuses what has gone on in the countryside, I would like your view of that, so maybe we could discuss that for a minute.

Ms. TOUNGARA. I think that Congressman Payne, who is a sincere believer in the continent generally and Cote d'Ivoire in particular, put his finger on a very important issue when he asked about the consistency of U.S. policy.

The consistency of U.S. policies must be found in defense of democratic principles and practices and a belief in representatives, the interlocutors of democracy. I do not think that consistency can be found in U.S. collaboration with regimes that oppress those democratic principles and practices.

I remember when President Bush, the first President Bush, supported the idea of rebellion in Iraq during his presidency and called upon the Iraqi people to stand up for their own rights and to act. Today we find ourselves ready to go in to remove a dictator, so the issue of determining the will of the people becomes quite difficult and challenging for a country like ours when the regime itself is a repressive regime.

Given President Gbagbo's inability to control the oppression and violence brought about by the activities of elements within the gendamerie (and the human rights record shows that with the

Yopougon incident and others) the idea that people must continue to support or to lie low under that kind of oppression becomes quite difficult to defend.

Even in our own historical experience in the United States, we rose up against oppression; and so the United States has to find some way to support those who would rise up against oppression. So I think the consistency of our policies and our methods must lie within our principles, and in this case I think we must try that. The Marcoussis Agreement appeals to that effort, and I think that we must support it.

Mr. ROYCE. I wanted to share with you that Congressman Payne and myself were election observers in Nigeria for the presidential elections there, along with now Secretary of State Powell, who joined us for that effort in order to try to ensure that we had some modicum of fair and free and transparent elections.

I want to share with you the observation that it is a very difficult issue in terms of West Africa when you have a situation where rebel groups, and I will take Sierra Leone for an example, are cutting off the limbs of children as a kind of organizing device, and when you light a match in that part of the world, which is already seeing conflict in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau. I mean, we have seen such atrocities that the call for resolving these issues by revolutionary fervor perhaps will not get one to the desired end.

I wonder if now the resolution in Sierra Leone might provide an example of a way in which the international community can engage and bring about democratic governance and do it in a way that does not ignite and further compound the problem, because once there is a recourse to revolution, civil war, it is very difficult to extinguish those flames.

I need not mention to you the rape and pillaging that is going on right now in Cote d'Ivoire. There was not any mention in your remarks about rebel activity. I was just wondering, Dr. Toungara, about that and about your perception on that front?

Ms. TOUNGARA. Yes. According to the human rights reports, everyone is guilty. There is no one with clean hands when it comes to the issue of human rights violations, neither the rapes nor the pillaging, et cetera.

The issue that you bring up pertaining to elections and perhaps even the model of Sierra Leone, but looking at elections first I would like to draw upon the example of Liberia when the Carter team went in. I knew people who were part of that observation effort who did note and did report widespread fraud. The outcome was that the elections were "fair enough." Okay. The ultimate outcome we have with us today.

The question then becomes how good is democracy for some, and how good is it for others? What is the U.S. willing to tolerate for some, but not willing to tolerate for others? Either we defend democracy and its principles or we do not, so "fair enough" is not really good enough when the ultimate outcome is the kind of situation that we have in Liberia.

I think we have to be very careful when we do not take these situations seriously. This is our only early warning system, those very early grumblings on the ground. This is when our people need to be there. This is why I propose the kind of recommendations

that you see that have to do with rebuilding society from the ground up in terms of teaching democratic principles, in terms of creating an independent judiciary, in terms of training a military that is really not well educated about its responsibilities to the nation.

I really did think that the Ivoirians would make it to the next election. This withdrawal of the rebels surprised me a little bit, but then not so very much when I looked more deeply and saw that the government had announced pay raises for itself at the same time that it was eliminating these 700 soldiers. So that issue, in combination with the other series of grievances on the ground, I think, ultimately pushed the rebels in that direction.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you.

Ms. TOUNGARA. The example in Sierra Leone shows the presence of an occupation force, the former colonizers, about which a number of Sierra Leoneans seem to be quite happy.

I do not know to what extent that might be necessary in Cote d'Ivoire, but I do believe that most Ivoirians, and I think we saw this in the Forum, are quite capable of evaluating a situation and seeing the solutions and implementing those solutions. The problem we had here was the lack of good, strong, and consistent and sincere leadership.

There was a Forum for Reconciliation that took place well before this coup attempt. The results of the Forum were never implemented. If they had been implemented, I do not think we would be here today. We would probably be waiting for the 2005 elections.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Dr. Toungara.

I am going to go to Dr. Docking for two questions. One, in your testimony you mention the growing role of international meddlers, including Libya's Muammer Qadhafi and West Africa.

I was going to ask how is the Libyan President active in this region, and do you have reason to believe that he is involved in the current conflict in Cote d'Ivoire? If so, in what way?

Mr. DOCKING. Well, as the Assistant Secretary mentioned, there is a long history of Qadhafi's involvement in the region. And as you mentioned, we know that Charles Taylor received training up in Liberia. Blaise Compaore received training up in Libya. A number of actors who have brought this cancer of instability to West Africa have their roots in Libya. We also know that Tripoli has pretty close ties to Ouagadougou.

Now, we are all aware that there has been a PR campaign, if you will, a campaign to rehabilitate President Qadhafi—his image internationally—and I think that is an error. I think that what we have seen over the last decade is that he has fixed his gaze on sub-Saharan Africa. He has turned away from areas where he used to meddle.

I think the evidence suggests that he continues to meddle in West Africa, as I have mentioned, although there is no hard evidence in the public domain that I know of linking him to this current conflict. There are discussions when you talk to people of weapons transfers coming through Libya, but no one is willing to go on the record.

Mr. ROYCE. No one has really nailed down the source of the weaponry yet, or at least that has not been acknowledged.

You describe Liberian President Charles Taylor as being at the epicenter of West African chaos, and you note his support of the rebels operating in the west of Cote d'Ivoire. Why has the international community generally not recognized this involvement in your opinion, and what are the chances of Taylor's support for the rebels ending under the Marcoussis Agreement, in your opinion?

Mr. DOCKING. The last part of your question was what?

Mr. ROYCE. What is the chance of any support coming from Liberia, coming from Charles Taylor, ending as a result of the Marcoussis Agreement?

Mr. DOCKING. I think you are correct in pointing out that Marcoussis does not address this problem, and so the involvement coming out of Monrovia, out of the western Ivory Coast—I am sorry; eastern Liberia—is not addressed, and that is unfortunate, but I think within the confines of that accord it is probably appropriate.

I highlighted this argument in my oral presentation today because I think it is fundamental; that is, Taylor's role in the instability in the region. I think we need to redouble our efforts to stop that. As I mentioned, I think the French need to be brought on board now that the playing field has changed a little bit, and hopefully they can toughen up their policies with Liberia as well.

Mr. ROYCE. Let me go to our Ranking Member, Mr. Payne of New Jersey.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. I appreciate both of your testimonies, and I think Dr. Toungara really kind of put her finger on about what I raised initially about the inconsistency of our policy.

First of all, the U.S. became involved only late after the Cold War period in Africa. Primarily pro west or pro east was the battle. Following that, it was difficult to know what you were for. I think maybe our government did not know what we were for by virtue of knowing what we were against. We were against the Soviet influence in Africa.

Well, once that left, then the question was well, now what do we do? It was almost like the candidate pictured became President. Now what? I think that the lack of having a real strong policy at that time left us with individual, kind of tailor made, policies.

Now, one sort of piece does not fit all problems. However, if you have an overriding philosophy then you can tailor your policy to the countries. For example, there were some of us who, even though when the election came in Liberia and Taylor was a candidate, the elections were relatively fair and free because Liberians felt they needed to vote for Taylor to end the conflict, so, I mean, there was very little coercion.

I mean, he had the resources. He had the political signs. He had the election day kind of operations, plus he had been feeding people in Lofa County for years, so the ingredients were there for his victory.

However, preceding Taylor, you know, Sergeant Doe killed Tolbert and assassinated or executed the cabinet level people and leaders of Liberia right on the beaches, and our country did not have disdain. As a matter of fact, after Sergeant Doe took over in the early 1980s we tripled the U.S. aid to Liberia. Now, to me that makes no sense.

Then Taylor comes along, and you say gee, the other guy just killed the President and all his people. Can the next guy be any worse? I think the absence of a policy—we should have had some policy against Doe, but Doe was pro west, and we looked the other way about the atrocities of what was happening there. As a result, we have practically no policy there.

I think the people of Cote d'Ivoire show that they went out in the streets when General Guei took over. They marched in the streets and actually repelled the military general, just ousted him by virtue of their saying we are not going to have a military takeover.

Of course, I think that mistakes were certainly made with the question of Outtara being a legitimate candidate by the elections people. They should have allowed him to run because I doubt seriously whether he would have won anyway, but for them to exclude someone creates an issue that is bigger than the individual.

I would just say those things to indicate that we have had a very checkered policy and past, and the French I think are very noble how they went in to save lives in Cote d'Ivoire. I mean, if they had not gone in I think perhaps the rebels probably would have taken over totally, to be truthful.

However, while they were good in Cote d'Ivoire, they would allow their businessmen to do business with Taylor in logging for the French businesses, so in one country what they did was great. The other country they are aiding and abetting a person who turned into a dictator even though he was elected.

Maybe my question would be if either one of you or both were Mr. Kansteiner and you were Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, what would you do there in Cote d'Ivoire in particular and perhaps West Africa in general? Either one.

Ms. TOUNGARA. Go ahead.

Mr. DOCKING. Thank you for your question. I think that as I said in my oral testimony, we really need to back the French at this point for a number of reasons, principally because as we saw a couple of weeks ago, the Ivoirian street is trying to drive wedges between French and American points of view.

That is very dangerous, and I think the French appreciate that more than we do right now because they still have approximately 15,000 citizens in Ivory Coast, and I think the street there, the popular movements based in Abidjan, are trying to drive any sort of wedge they can in between our two policies to discredit the Marcoussis Accord. I think that that is one very strong reason why we need to stand shoulder to shoulder in this endeavor.

I think Marcoussis is a program that is fairly misunderstood as well. I think as Professor Toungara mentioned and Assistant Secretary Kansteiner mentioned, the ministries are not delineated within that agreement and so a lot of talk about the interior ministry and the defense ministry is almost a moot point because it is not binding. That agreement was not signed, so I think that there is room for discussion there.

I think that one thing that we need to do in West Africa that would affect the Ivory Coast is to adopt a regional policy that tries to get at the cancer of conflict; that is, the roots of instability in that area. It means we need to buttress governments like Mali and Ghana. We need to come down on governments like Burkina Faso

that we think are involved in this and take a comprehensive, holistic sort of approach of carrots and sticks to try to turn off this conflict in Ivory Coast before it spreads again.

Mr. PAYNE. Okay. Thank you. Just a little point. You were saying that there was nothing concrete and that this was not so. One perception is reality. There is a perception that the rebels were given military and interior.

Now, you are looking at it a little more closely than most of the people, but one of the reactions against this were people who were supportive of the government just felt how can you give these two important ministries to the rebels.

Materials that I have received say that defense was going to be under the Prime Minister or would not be under the jurisdiction of the President. Could you clarify that with us or with me anyway? I am a little confused.

Mr. DOCKING. I would just say that within the accord itself ministries are not laid out very clearly, and I think Professor Toungara has done some research on this very point and can probably inform us better than I.

I make this point just to go back to the Chairman's questioning about winning power through the barrel of a gun. That is a real concern. That is not a precedent that we necessarily want to support.

I would just say that the Marcoussis Accord does not necessarily award power to the extent that the media has portrayed it as extending to all the sectors. I think it creates and sets out a good framework for a government of national accord, and it addresses a lot more issues as well that need to be addressed.

Ms. TOUNGARA. I would say, to go directly to the issue of this reconciliation government led by Seydou Diarra. Diarra has a sterling history in diplomacy as an Ambassador for Cote d'Ivoire in several countries and international organizations. He also served as manager of government under the junta led by General Guei.

Now he comes back to us as someone who was recommended by President Gbagbo to assume the position of Prime Minister. That was one of the demands of the Marcoussis Agreement. In the discussions that took place after the Marcoussis Agreement (during the discussions with the heads of state and such) exactly who should become members of this reconciliation government did not make it into any text.

Cote d'Ivoire has a constitution that allows for an appointed Prime Minister. The Prime Minister that Gbagbo had appointed before was also the head of the FPI. He went to Marcoussis as a representative of the FPI. So one of the complaints that Gbagbo has taken back to his people now is that his government was not represented, although the person who was his Prime Minister was clearly there and clearly present and representing his party.

The issue with the reconciliation government, and this is what Gbagbo said to his people, is that he will not under any conditions give up any of the powers granted to him by the current constitution. Okay. There are some aspects of the constitution that were put on the table and are included in the Marcoussis Agreement, but among the powers that he does not intend to give up are those

that allow for the Prime Minister to appoint a government and to propose that government to the President.

So theoretically, in keeping with the constitution, he has no obligation to accept members of the rebel groups into those key positions, namely the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior Security. He has no obligation whatsoever. It is up to Seydou Diarra to propose a government. Gbagbo told his people when he finally addressed them a week after the Marcoussis Agreement, to wait for Diarra to come and then see what he will do. Let's see what he will propose. That was his message to them, and now we are in this difficult period where we actually have to see what Diarra will propose. Apparently there are some names that have come forward, and so we are waiting to see.

Now, with regard to what the U.S. should do, I think the U.S. should show a great deal of restraint. What do I mean by that? I mean that this is a critical moment where the moral over the commercial must take precedent because the commercial has driven too many of our policies and driven us into too much trouble; and whatever economic benefits we might derive from this time by rapidly patching something together, in the long run this will play against us and will also play against long-term efforts to establish democracy in Cote d'Ivoire.

If I were the Assistant Secretary, I would look very carefully and attempt to take the moral high ground. I think it is very important for the U.S. to represent what people think it represents. Now, whether we do it or not is another thing, but we at least have to say those things.

Mr. ROYCE. We will go to Mr. Tancredo.

Mr. TANCREDO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As I look at the events unfolding in Africa and the Middle East and a variety of other places around the world, I think about the fact that in many cases, many times in our nation's history and in fact almost every nation's history, it has found itself aligned with unsavory characters in order to accomplish a bigger purpose.

Certainly the case could be made in retrospect that our alliance with the Soviet Union in the Second World War was morally reprehensible because, of course, Stalin was such a horrible person and a bloody dictator, but, of course, a bigger picture and a bigger issue, our own survival and that of the west in general, determined our allegiance.

Many times that happens in countries around the world, and when we were in the midst of a Cold War that really did, I think, have the possibility of challenging our survival, we also made alliances with people who were sometimes less acceptable than others, so I see no purpose in trying to analyze our current foreign policy or analyze the root of the mistakes that we think were made in various areas in Africa by what happened in the 1980s or before.

I am, however, quite interested in determining the extent to which we believe any kind of stable democracy can develop out of the situation in Cote d'Ivoire and am wondering that in light of the fact that we recognize that by their very nature especially newly emerging democracies can be very, very fragile, and if they try to develop in an area in which there is great conflict and where there

is not the long history of this kind of government it is sometimes difficult to get that flower to grow.

What I wonder is whether the French especially, or any of the organizations that have an interest in West Africa, are in it for the long haul; that is to say to what extent do you think, Dr. Docking, in particular, that the French can be encouraged to think about this regional picture that we were talking about earlier, and can they be a major player in it?

I do not understand for the life of me right now. You know, they are looking at Liberia in particular as a source of maybe some stabilizing influence. That is a weird concept in my mind. I cannot understand it, but, you know, is there purpose, do you think, just very localized, or do you think that their interests can be, since they apparently have the ability to work in the area, especially in Cote d'Ivoire, can we expand that at all? Can we hope to? What should we do to try?

Mr. DOCKING. Thank you for your question. It is a very good one, and I probably will not be able to do it full justice, but I will attempt to place the Ivory Coast and the West Africa region in a bit of context.

I think that today if we look across that 15 country region we find more democracies in that area of the continent than in any other area, a higher concentration if we begin with countries like Senegal, Mali, Ghana, Benin, Cape Verde, Nigeria, if you will.

Democracy has its successes in that region, and not just in the Anglophone world. There are a number of Francophone countries there as well, and the French have contributed to that in places like Benin very concretely to the development of that democracy, so I do not think we should give short shrift to their concern about democracy.

But, I think you are correct in pointing out that motives have been mixed sometimes as Professor Toungara has pointed out. There often are commercial motives mixed in with international relations motives and political motives, and we often find that they do not square. That leads to hypocrisy and, unfortunately, governments like we find in the largest chunk of the continent—dictatorships.

I think that you are wise to bring this point up, and I think that speaking from Washington, DC, looking at our foreign policy primarily we just need to be continually concerned about our cooperation with the French because they continue to be the prime player in that region of the world. They give more money than we do. They are more plugged in. They have a longer history in that area. They have more influence, frankly.

That is not saying that we need to defer to them every time or any time, for that matter, but we do need to work hand in hand with them, and we cannot let, I do not think, international affairs in other parts of the world, as we all know are taking place right now, that put us against the French. I do not think that we need to let that interfere with our interests in parts of the world like West Africa.

Mr. TANCREDO. Well, I understand and I agree. I just do not know what exactly—when you say working hand in hand and en-

couraging and that sort of thing, I do not know what that really means there.

I can understand what it means specifically in the area of Cote d'Ivoire, but I do not know what it means regionally. What do we need to do to get them to become a regional player if in fact we agree that it is going to be hard for any democracy to thrive with people like Taylor and others around?

Mr. DOCKING. It may be a bit of wishful thinking on my part to use the metaphor hand in hand, but I think we do need to have good relations with them. We do need to realize the weight that they carry in the region, and we should act cooperatively with them, always trying to strengthen our cooperation.

Concretely, if you want to look at the ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West Africa States, I think that together we can do a lot along the lines of training ECOWAS forces, for example. I do not think that those efforts would be at odds at all. That is just one example I am trying to think of off the cuff.

Mr. Tancredo. Thank you very much. I appreciate your answer.

Mr. DOCKING. Thank you.

Mr. ROYCE. Congresswoman McCollum.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you. I am going to change the topic a little bit. Congresswoman Lee asked a few questions about humanitarian aid and what was going on, and I would like to ask you for your opinion and your thoughts on a few things.

The delivery of food has been extraordinarily difficult in the area, and in order to stabilize, people are being pulled into factions quite often that have food so then you align yourself just to feed your family. One of the questions I have is what should we be doing? What can we do? What needs to be done as far as making food delivery safe and effective getting to those who need it?

Then, as I have been watching this unfold and reading it the number of people that are becoming displaced within their own country, homeless, without health care, are not able to get to jobs, continues the cycle of hopelessness, desperation, and then what does the international community need to be doing about those two issues, as well as refugees in other countries or making plans for when the reconciliation and the peace process moves forward to have everyone fully integrated back into the society to bring it to stability?

If you would both just give me a brief thought or two?

Ms. TOUNGARA. Well, I would say that, and I mentioned part of this in my testimony that it is going to be very important to work with both local and international non-governmental organizations. Communication is still going on within the country. The French have occupied some strategic points almost from site to site, from east to west, almost dividing the country in half. I think that at those various zones one could likely get services to the people that actually need them. Apparently, there are tens of thousands of displaced persons around the area of Yamoussoukro right now, for instance, and that is an area that the French do control. So I would say to do as much as possible, to go directly and as close to those locations where displaced persons actually are to deliver services.

We do know that the MPCI, that is the rebel group in the northern region, has worked very closely with the French and the Ameri-

cans, for instance, in getting the Americans, particularly the young people in the church school from Bouake out of Cote d'Ivoire. So they will likely continue to work with the international community to see that services are delivered appropriately to those area.

I would make sure that we bypass government services and go directly to those that have already shown that they are willing to deliver things to those people in need.

With regard to displaced persons and refugees, I do not think there is much that we can do about that until peace has been established, until peace has been restored, and that may involve the same kind of action that the British have taken in Sierra Leone.

U.S. forces would not do it; but, as my colleague says, we have to support the French and the international community. We know that we have ECOWAS troops on the ground now. We may actually be talking about an occupation of several areas of the country until we get past elections.

Once calm has been restored to the country either by occupation or post elections, people will go home. People want to be at home. Everything that we can do to support peace and the end of warfare will be helpful.

Mr. Kansteiner mentioned the military support for loyalists, for the government, because it is very weak. We do know that the government has been reinforcing its military capacity. It remains to be seen how warfare will end because neither the rebel groups nor the loyalists, the loyalist army, has agreed to disarm. As a matter of fact, each has said that it will not disarm. The rebels say that as long as the government army has not disarmed it will not disarm either, so as we talk about reintegration and as we look toward an end to the hostilities, peace may be directly linked to disarmament. There is a lot of work yet to do before displaced persons and refugees can go home.

Mr. DOCKING. If I could just add to that a little bit? I agree with much of what you just heard. Primarily, though, the conflict needs to remain ceased. We need to maintain a cease fire, and we do not even have a cease fire on all fronts right now. That is the number one, most important consideration when we are thinking about humanitarian affairs, and only then can we bring in the resources that these people need.

We know now that there are one million internally displaced people within Ivory Coast and tens of thousands of refugees in a number of other countries. What I might just add to what Professor Toungara just mentioned is that we need to also, in addition to thinking about Ivory Coast directly, we need to think about how this conflict is affecting countries like Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso.

You all know that many of the workers that work in the fields of Ivory Coast to make it such a productive agricultural center are Burkinabe and Malians, millions in fact, up to a quarter of the population of Ivory Coast. The reason I bring that up is because these people send back very important remittances to their families back home, so I think the economic impact of this conflict is not fully appreciated.

I think we need to think of the effects of this and perhaps how we can help with economic assistance.

Mr. PAYNE. Yes. Before you conclude, I just want to say as I was looking at the slides, you know, there was one interesting one that says, you know, USA, We Need Your Support, making a plea.

I am one that have always felt that we should really have been more engaged, as I said, not to put physical assets of the military there, but that we could have been more supportive of the regional organizations to have diplomacy. Although the Assistant Secretary said there was some involvement, I just do not think it was enough, and not to overshadow France, but to work with them, I think, as we did with the British in Sierra Leone.

The second thing I just want to mention is that Libya certainly has been accused of supporting the rebels in different areas—you know, Burkina, Liberia, et cetera—and I think that is what happens when we in the West really did not—you know, we talk about it passes over. However, if we had continued or started some educational projects or a little more aggressive water projects in Africa where before Libya got involved in a lot of the supplying of military.

They were doing humanitarian issues when South Africa was trying to become free when the U.S. was opposed to Mandela being released from prison. We did not want to oppose the apartheid government. Libya was supporting the front line states of Rhodesia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and the others who were fighting with the ANC against the white apartheid government.

I say that to say that with a little more concentration in the past and even currently, because our development assistance fund is down to about \$600 or \$700 million for 2003, sort of the devil moves in where there is a vacuum created. I hope that we can correct it as we move forward.

Even with Saudi Arabia, in many instances they were coming in to parts of Uganda building roads and putting the name of Saudi princes on development projects, water projects, where I think we could have been a little more supportive of development over the years.

Once again, we talk about we do not want to dwell on the past, but we need to know where we have come from so we know where we are going in the future. I agree, Mr. Tancredo, that we need to see where we are going in the future, but we do have to know where we have been in the past.

Mr. ROYCE. I think Congressman Payne makes a good point. I think that over the long haul the goal of the United States should be to support democratic governance. As we work with the French and as we work with ECOWAS and we work with the international community, we cannot lose sight of that goal as we have discussed today. In the long term, that is in our national interest. That is in, frankly, the interest of Africa.

There are times in our history, as Ambassador Jeanne Kirkpatrick has pointed out, when given the contrast, given the option between an authoritarian regime and a totalitarian regime administrations, we have backed the authoritarian regime with the concept that it is easier to change, to convert an authoritarian society, than it is a totalitarian regime.

That has been the position the United States has given in the past, but as we move forward our goal is to see to it that all soci-

eties have the democratic option of bringing rule of law because under that is going to be the greatest opportunities for those citizens.

At the same time, I think we have to recognize in this theater, in this region, that there are international actors, international forces in play here. Besides some of the state sponsors, you also have drug runners. You have terrorists. You have arms merchants. You have religious extremists.

Unfortunately, though the Saudis may have brought some major roads, they also bring Imans to the local Sufi Muslim mosques that teach something different than Islam. They teach a Wahhabism that is a very radical and new confrontational approach.

This is a portion of the world where child soldiers are common and where opportunists are only too happy to use them in a conflict (people who could care less about West Africa or about Africans are only too willing), so however legitimate a conflict may be, if we support a resort to arms we must do so with extreme caution because it is a lot easier to destroy in this part of the world than to build.

Push for more democracy. Push for leverage for greater transparency in elections. Try to work with the international community to do that, but my fear is that a call for revolution, an excuse for revolution, will bring nothing but more chaos.

I wanted to say on behalf of myself and Congressman Payne, we have made trips to West Africa, and we have met with many African delegations. I think our counsel would be that the United States does need to play a greater role, does need to bring more leverage, more pressure to bear, but I think we have to be very, very cautious in terms of inciting any revolutionary fervor here because we have seen only too clearly the type of tragedy that it has brought to the region.

I want to thank our panelists for the trip here, for their testimony, their contributions to this debate. I want to thank Ranking Member Payne again and the other Members of this Committee. Thank you so much.

This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:05 p.m. the hearing was concluded.]

## A P P E N D I X

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### MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ELIOT L. ENGEL, A REPRESENTATIVE IN  
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Thank you Mr. Chairman:

Let me begin by saying how saddened I am with the ongoing violence in the Ivory Coast. This country has been a leader in Africa with democratic and economic reforms.

My interest in the Ivory Coast centers around my work with Senator Harkin to end the scourge of child slavery. Less than 2 years ago, I became aware that there were child slaves working the cocoa fields of West Africa—especially in the Ivory Coast. Through my efforts and Senator Harkin's, an historic effort was undertaken by the cocoa industry to take responsibility for the working conditions of farms that the industry does not directly own. In the past year and a half, an enormous amount of work has been done to address this problem. I would be terribly saddened to see all of this effort wasted.

Just yesterday, CIA Director Tenet described the frail nature of the Ivory Coast and explained that, in fact, the whole region relies on the Ivory Coast for its economic strength. At the base of this is the cocoa production.

Improving the cocoa farmers' economic state is the key to ending child slavery. In Africa, cocoa farmers get only about 50% of the world cocoa price, which is about \$2,400 per ton today—twice what it was a year ago. It is important to note that Indonesian cocoa farmers get about 80% of the world cocoa farmers. So, even though West African cocoa farmers may be earning more due to higher prices, they still should earn more of the world price. Too much is being shaved off by middlemen.

The world cocoa community has embarked on an effort to improve the living conditions of the farmers and the laborers. Right now they are implementing pilot programs in the Ivory Coast as well as Ghana, Cameroon, Nigeria, and Guinea. These programs are working to improve the cooperatives that farmers can join, which provides higher income to the farmers. As a condition of membership of the coops, the farmers must abide by international labor standards and allow inspections. The farmers also receive education and training on how to better grow their crop, increasing yield and quality of the product.

I want to thank the cocoa industry, the governments of the Ivory Coast, Ghana, Cameroon, Nigeria, and Guinea, Free the Slaves, the Child Labor Coalition, the International Labor Organization and all the other people and organizations that have come together to put together a workable solution this tragedy.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE BARBARA LEE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN  
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Thank you to our Subcommittee Chairman and Ranking member for holding this hearing, our first of the 108th Congress. I look forward to working with you and all of the members this year.

Our subcommittee's jurisdiction includes many of the most pressing and complex challenges facing our world today.

The topic of this hearing is a good example: the prospects for peace in Ivory Coast. We have monitored the very fluid situation on the ground in Ivory Coast with much interest and with great concern.

I am very pleased to have the esteemed panelist before us today to share their insight into the crisis in Ivory Coast. I am anxious to hear from each of you and to explore how the U.S. could do more to alleviate this crisis.

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD, ALONG WITH RESPONSES, SUBMITTED BY THE HONORABLE ELIOT L. ENGEL, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK, TO THE HONORABLE H. KANSTEINER

*Question 1:*

*We have heard rumors that in the western areas of the Ivory Coast, there have been a great many roadblocks and that people transporting cocoa to the ports have had to pay bribes to get the product through.*

*Can the State Department confirm this?*

*Answer:*

The United States Embassy in Abidjan has reported that the numerous impromptu roadblocks that have appeared in much of Cote d'Ivoire since the attempted coup of September 19, 2002 have created serious impediments for the cocoa industry to bringing production to market. These roadblocks have seriously increased the time and cost required to bring the product from farms to port, which can degrade the quality of the perishable product. Generally, bribes must be paid to expedite transit through the roadblocks. Cocoa purchasing, shipping, and processing companies (including three American companies) were forced to hire extra trucks and crews at added expense to ensure that the cocoa got to their ports and the ports. Many local middlemen or wholesalers who would normally purchase the product from the farmers and take it to market are refusing to do so, forcing the farmers also to rent trucks and transport the product themselves. Nevertheless, industry sources report that the amount of product reaching the port is not significantly less than in 2001.

*Question 2:*

*If the bribes are being paid, then this probably means the farmers are still not earning a decent living. I fear this will perpetuate the child slavery problem. What role is the State Department willing to take to counter this problem?*

*Answer:*

Child labor is an important issue in Cote d'Ivoire. The United States Government has raised this issue with the Ivoirian government for a number of years.

While thousands of children and youths work with their parents on cocoa plantations, the vast majority work with their parents on the family farms. Nearly all cocoa is produced on modest family farms of a few acres. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the number of children working on the cocoa plantations has declined since last September, as foreigners have fled. With the cease-fire line separating northern Cote d'Ivoire from the rebel-held north and with the Mali and Burkina Faso border closed, the flow of immigrant labor south to Cote d'Ivoire's cocoa belt is largely cut off.

It is not clear at this point how significant the cost of transiting roadblocks is, or who is bearing the cost. The world price of cocoa fluctuated widely following September 19, 2002, but in general has been substantially higher than prior to the attempted coup. It is not readily evident who is bearing the increased costs, and how much is being passed on to the international purchasers.

At the same time, security concerns have risen markedly among the non-Ivoirian citizen agricultural labor force since September 19, 2002. Many have fled their homes and/or places of employment, while seasonal migrants in neighboring countries have been impeded from traveling into and through Cote d'Ivoire. More than one hundred non-citizen farm workers were allegedly killed in central Cote d'Ivoire by government troops and their bodies placed in a mass grave and two nearby wells. We believe that the general security situation and the growing rate of internal displacement is a serious and direct threat to the well-being of children in the labor force, and may also contribute to an increased workload for local children who are required to replace the foreigner workers who are no longer as readily available.

It is important to note, however, that coordinated efforts to combat child labor on the part of ILO/IPEC (with substantial USDOL funding), the Sustainable Tree Crop Program, and the chocolate industry and contractors of the United States International Development Agency, among others, are continuing to the extent possible with local personnel, despite the conflict and the evacuation of expatriates. These projects are tackling the child labor problem from several directions, from increasing farm productivity and encouraging farmer cooperatives to providing vocational education alternatives for rural children and increasing the income of the women who most often pay the school fees for their children. At this time, the International Labor Organization is recruiting local implementers to replace regional workers who have been moved to Ghana. These efforts will increase the capacity of cooperatives

to package and transport their own crops, which in turn should increase their share of total revenue.

The Department of State and the United States Embassy in Cote d'Ivoire have been active in supporting all international efforts to achieve peaceful resolution of the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire and to minimize its impact on vulnerable populations, including children. We are also advocating implementation of the Marcoussis accords, which provide for resolution of some of the long-standing issues surrounding citizenship and land tenure in Cote d'Ivoire, which will directly affect the child labor issue. We will continue these efforts, and will also consider further contributions as appropriate to support humanitarian relief efforts in Cote d'Ivoire.

*Question 3:*

*One of the pilot projects is to use the daily "farm report" to include social education messages about child labor conditions. This will enable the program to reach thousands of farmers who live in remote areas. The world cocoa community is also purchasing thousands of radios to distribute.*

*Will the State Department work with the government of the Ivory Coast to assist with the distribution of the radios?*

*Answer:*

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is providing support for the development of radio-based dissemination of information covering a range of social, child labor, and vocational agricultural issues as part of the Sustainable Tree Crop Program. The radio programming is being handled from a regional platform, and will reach Cote d'Ivoire from broadcasts in nearby countries, including Ghana and Mali. The chocolate industry is pursuing efforts to make radios widely available.

The first efforts are a pilot. Project partners would like to learn from these before promoting them as "best practice."

The Department of State has not received a proposal to distribute radios to farmers in remote areas of Cote d'Ivoire. We are prepared to review such a proposal to see if there are ways for the Department of State or other appropriate United States Government agency to assist in the implementation of the distribution of radios for the purpose of better dissemination of information in Cote d'Ivoire regarding child labor.

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QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD, ALONG WITH RESPONSES, SUBMITTED BY THE HONORABLE BARBARA LEE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, TO TIMOTHY DOCKING

*Question 1:*

*Do the French or other nations have a backup plan if the Marcoussis Agreement fails?*

*Answer:*

It is likely that the French have contingency plans in the case that one or more sides scrap the Marcoussis Accord. These plans could include a new round of talks in Paris or more covert discussions with the governments in Ouagadougou and Monrovia—the two governments suspected of supporting the rebels in Ivory Coast. However, the French, Americans and the governments of others African nations have correctly adopted the diplomatic course of fully backing the Marcoussis Accords. In my view, this is the best and most prudent approach to the current situation in Ivory Coast for two reasons: first, the Marcoussis plan is a good, comprehensive program of political and social reform; second, in order for this plan to succeed, international partners must not give any of the warring sides in the conflict an excuse to walk away from the peace agreement, i.e. to adopt an alternative program. For this reason all sides involved in attempts to bring peace to Ivory Coast French will closely guard any "back up" plans.

*Question 2:*

*How bad is the humanitarian situation in the Ivory Coast?*

*Answer:*

There are more than 1 million internally displaced people currently living in the Ivory Coast. Tens of thousands more have fled the country to Ghana, Guinea, Mali and even Liberia where, according to the UN's Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN), some 36,000 Ivoirians prefer to stay in the dangerous border areas of war-torn Liberia instead of returning to western Ivory Coast. It is also important

to note that tens of thousands of refugees from Liberia living in Ivory Coast face growing hostility from Ivorians sympathetic to the Gbagbo regime. Moreover, the UN has documented the presence of death squads in Abidjan and surrounding areas (with close ties to the Ivorian government) that are targeting perceived rebel supporters. These two dynamics—the proliferation of refugees and the growth of vigilante groups—make for a volatile mixture.

*Question 3:*

*Dr. Docking, one of your research interests focuses on the connection between HIV/AIDS and conflict in Africa. What are the implications of the conflict in Ivory Coast for the spread of AIDS in that country and the West Africa region? More broadly, how have the armed conflicts that have gripped the sub-region since 1989 affected the spread of AIDS?*

*Answer:*

Empirical evidence from zones of conflict elsewhere on the continent (especially in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) confirms that HIV/AIDS spreads at an increased rate in destabilized/violent settings. Given the explosion of refugees in the Ivory Coast, along with the collapse of central authority (police forces, and traditional protections for women and girls found at the village level of Ivorian society) one can surmise that sexual violence—one of the leading causes of the spread of AIDS in Africa—is on the rise. Indeed, there are numerous reports of widespread rape of Ivorian peasants by rebel forces in western Ivory Coast. The Ivory Coast has by far the highest rates of HIV/AIDS in the West African sub-region with an estimated 11% of its adult population infected (estimated 1999). While data confirming the instability-induced spread of this plague will lag, they will most surely show in the coming years that the current warfare is having a dramatic impact on the spread of HIV/AIDS in Ivory Coast.

The impact of armed conflict on the spread of HIV/AIDS in the region (especially in Liberia and Sierra Leone) is difficult to determine because there is no statistically valid epidemiological survey of the area due to the prolonged conflict and instability. Nevertheless, we know that West Africa's wars have led to an explosion of sexual violence against women. One study estimates that nearly 10% of female internally displaced people (IDPs) in Sierra Leone were victims of sexual violence during the civil war ("War-Related Sexual Violence in Sierra Leone," *Physicians for Human Rights*, 2002.)

*Question 4:*

*What is the worse case scenario for this conflict? Is there any chance it could reach a Rwanda-like state?*

*Answer:*

Unfortunately, a worse case scenario is quite easy to imagine in Ivory Coast. One need just look to the west where the collapsed states of Liberia and Sierra Leone stand as a testament of the evils that can befall African states if violence and rebellion are left unchecked. Indeed, the Ivory Coast, with its deep ethnic and religious divisions could present an even more volatile situation. We have already witnessed the use of hate media, the growth of death squads and youth militias, the construction of the racist notion of *Ivorité*, the disenfranchisement of a large segment of the Ivorian population and the meddling of neighboring states. We also find a government that is not above exploiting religious and ethnic differences for political gain. All of these factors combine to poison inter-regional and inter-religious relations in Ivory Coast, and to create a social context where future mass killings and even genocide is possible.

*Question 5:*

*In your testimony, you mention the growing role of international meddlers, including Libya's Mohamar Kaddafi, in West Africa. How is the Libyan President active in this region? Do you have reason to believe that he is involved in the current Ivory Coast conflict? If so, in what way?*

*Answer:*

The comments I have direct at Kaddafi's role in this crisis are based on his known past involvement in the region. It has been documented that many of the rebels/warlords from West Africa received their start in Libyan training camps. Two of the principal culprits in West Africa's conflicts, Charles Taylor and former leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone, Fodah Sankoh, received training and support from Kaddafi. The President of Burkina Faso, Blaise Campaore, is also known to have a close relationship with Libya's strongman. Indeed, Taylor,

Campaore and Kaddafi were for years the troika of leaders most responsible for destabilizing West Africa's Mano River Union states. During this period they trained, armed, financed and at times acted as a conduit for the flow of illegal weapons and conflict diamonds taken out of RUF-controlled mines of Sierra Leone. While some have suggested that Kaddafi and Campaore have recently distanced themselves from Taylor (especially following revelations that Taylor hosted al Qaeda operatives), there is no concrete evidence of a break in these relations. And until there is, it is prudent to assume that Kaddafi is complicit in the policies adopted in Burkina Faso and Liberia toward the Ivory Coast.

*Question 6:*

*You describe Liberian President Charles Taylor as being the "epicenter" of West African chaos. You note his support of the rebels operating in the west of Ivory Coast. Why has the international community generally not recognized this involvement? What are the chances of Taylor's support for the rebels ending under the Marcoussis Agreement?*

*Answer:*

I believe the West now fully appreciates the extent of Taylor's involvement in the Ivory Coast. Indeed, the Liberian Defense Minister recently publicly acknowledged that Liberian forces are fighting in western Ivory Coast. The problem faced by the West however is how to further punish Liberia for this meddling. The West has already established a series of sanctions against Taylor designed to contain, isolate and weaken his regime. These have only been partially successful and some Liberians (even those within opposition parties) are suggesting that sanctions are not working and therefore should be dropped. So the question of which "stick" to use next to punish Taylor is a real one, and an issue not addressed in the Marcoussis Accord.

*Question 7:*

*In your testimony, you call on the U.S. to reassess its policy toward Liberia. What changes do you recommend?*

*Answer:*

Following on the last answer (question #6), I believe it is clear to the US government that to effectively contain and weaken Taylor, it must have the cooperation of its Western partners—principally the French. Therefore, I suggest that the US press the French to get tough with Taylor. For years the French have worked to weaken sanctions against Taylor in the UN Security Council. The French have consistently objected to sanctions on timber, an important source of funding for the Taylor regime, especially so since the flow of conflict diamonds from Sierra Leone dried up. As part of that deal, Liberia understood that it was to stay out of Ivory Coast. That deal has now been broken and apparently France, keenly interested in US support for its long-term efforts to rebuild Ivory Coast, is reviewing its regional policy, hinting now that it will take a tougher stance on Liberia. So I recommend that our government, while supporting French efforts in Ivory Coast, keep up the pressure on Paris to toughen its line on Monrovia. I also think the US needs to have a sound contingency plan in place to respond to a (apparently forthcoming) war crimes indictment of Charles Taylor by the Special Court in Freetown. The US must also maintain pressure on: Burkina Faso to withdraw any support it has given to the MPCI; the Gbagbo regime to crack down on death squad activity; on all Ivorian actors to abide by the Marcoussis Accord.

*Question 8:*

*In your testimony, you express the hope that the French will face up to the destabilizing role that Liberian President Charles Taylor is playing in Ivory Coast, and no longer treat him as "part of the solution." Why have the French taken this view of Taylor? What are the chances of the French making this reassessment?*

*Answer:*

Building on my previous answer (question #7), it has not always been clear why the French have taken a soft line approach to Taylor. Some have suggested that this approach was designed to frustrate American goals in the region and to preserve French diplomatic dominance in West Africa; others hold that French policy has been dictated purely by economics and that French timber companies profit from the sale of Liberian logs; others have said that French policy toward Liberia is weak simply because France has had very little historical contact with Liberia and limited economic interests; and still others have argued, as I do above, that the French had a deal with Liberia based on Taylor's agreement not to meddle in the affairs of

France's prized former colony, the Ivory Coast. I am confident that there is truth in elements of each of these explanations. I am also confident that the crisis in Ivory Coast will spur France to change its policies toward Liberia, especially if pushed by the US to do so.

*Question 9:*

*What are the regional economic and political consequences of the fighting in Ivory Coast?*

*Answer:*

The current fighting in the Ivory Coast is having profound consequences on the region. Ivory Coast is a regional financial center, home to the African Development Bank (ADB) and other important monetary organizations. Many of these institutions, including the ADB have had to move or suspend operations in Ivory Coast due to security concerns. The Ivory Coast has one of the top four economies in sub-Saharan Africa and home to more than 4 million immigrants whose remittances (principally to Burkina Faso and Mali) form an important component of those economies. The Ivory Coast is also an important transit point for West African commerce, e.g. Malian cotton, and gasoline, which flows over the nation's relatively good roads to/from ports in Abidjan and San Pedro. With the closure of northern borders, the economies of the land-locked countries to the north of Ivory Coast are being severely pinched. The Ivory Coast is also the world's biggest producer of cocoa beans and a large producer of coffee and palm oil. The cultivation and commercial flow of each of these products has been severely constrained by the instability, driving this economy of more than sixteen million people into the gutter. Politically, this conflict is also set to further divide and destabilize the region—complicating relations within the ECOWAS regional body, and stressing relations between neighbors. In short, the conflict in Ivory Coast is having a profound impact on the political and economic stability of the region.

*Question 10:*

*Is the U.S. making a sufficient effort to resolve this crisis?*

*Answer:*

I am confident that the US government appreciates the seriousness of the current crisis in Ivory Coast and, despite the current competing foreign policy priorities, will implement a constructive course of action—involving at least some of the ideas I suggest above—to support peace in the region.

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QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD, ALONG WITH THE RESPONSES, SUBMITTED BY THE HONORABLE BARBARA LEE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, TO JEANNE TOUNGARA

*Question 1:*

*Your testimony, while damning of the Gbagbo government, omits any reference to the rebels, critical or otherwise. Do you believe their resort to arms is justified? What foreign support might the rebels be receiving?*

*Answer:*

As a historian, I have attempted to track the steps leading to the rebels' resort to armed protest in Ivory Coast. First, the rebels' grievances against the Gbagbo regime are legitimate. Following the December 1999 coup d'état, several participating members of the armed forces that removed Bedie and brought General Guei to power as leader of the *junta* were imprisoned, persecuted, and killed. Others fled into exile and are now actively involved in the civil war on the side of the rebels. The opportunity for a peaceful transition from the *junta* to civilian rule failed when Gbagbo revealed himself as a willing collaborator with Guei to prevent candidates from participating in the 2000 presidential elections. On the day of the vote, several parties boycotted the elections, but Gbagbo, having received the most ballots cast in his favor, appealed to the people to take to the streets to run Guei out of town. Everyone, not only Gbagbo supporters, took to the streets. Gbagbo then declared himself the victor. Massive human rights violations followed as the *gendamerie* assaulted and sometimes killed persons of northern origins (by ancestry or patronym-Ivoirians and foreigners). Such violations have continued under Gbagbo's presidency. He is incapable or unwilling to control this unit. Now the "death squads" have added to the daily terror under which Ivoirians must live. It is assumed that since these violations take place during the curfew, they are associated with and protected by the Gbagbo regime. In subsequent elections (legislative, municipal, de-

partmental), the democratic process was thwarted by the Gbagbo administration's refusal to issue the new required voting identification cards to all eligible Ivoirians of northern descent. Ivoirians who speak out against Gbagbo are tortured and sometimes killed.

*Question 2:*

*In your testimony, you call on the U.S. to financially support new elections in Ivory Coast. When should these elections take place?*

*Answer:*

Ideally, the international community should have insisted on new elections immediately following Guei's departure. The West waits too long before responding to crisis. The next opportunity for presidential elections will be based on the decision of the reconciliation government and steering committee for the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. Gbagbo is not cooperating with the spirit of the Agreement. Presidential and legislative elections should be held as soon as order is restored, transparent electoral procedures established, and new candidates given an opportunity to present their platforms.

*Question 3:*

*Professor Toungara, you have worked training African women as peace facilitators. What role can women in Cote d'Ivoire play in bringing a durable peace to that country and reducing the religious and ethnic tensions stirred up by politicians? Are African women involved in peace promotion in West Africa?*

*Answer:*

Yes, there was an active ngo based in the Abidjan area that had benefited from numerous international awards to promote democracy in Ivory Coast and in West Africa. Since the current unrest, I am not aware of any activity.

*Question 4:*

*What is "Ivorité," and why is it so divisive in Ivory Coast? In your testimony, you call for purging it. How might this be done?*

*Answer:*

This concept seeks to determine who among Ivory Coast's sixty-odd ethnic groups and 16.8 million inhabitants is really "Ivoirian" to the exclusion of those who are not. The tendency is for peoples whose origins are in the northern half of the country to be viewed as "foreigners" in their own country by those whose 19th-century ancestors migrated into the southern regions. In reality, Ivory Coast is artificial enclave with only two small groups in the center of the country whose origins cannot be traced to surrounding nations. Now that xenophobia has been unleashed and is manipulated for political ends, it will take reeducation in schools, churches and throughout communities to dissipate the suspicion that has been created.

*Question 5:*

*Does the Marcoussis Agreement send the message that political power and legitimacy can be won through the barrel of the gun?*

*Answer:*

No. It shows that the African heads of States, European governments and international agencies 1) realize the gravity of the situation; 2) understand, respect, and find legitimate the grievances of the rebels and opposition groups; 3) recognize that this opposition speaks for millions of Ivoirians who do not have the means to resist human rights violations; 4) expect the Ivoirians to assume their responsibilities for restoring peace and democracy; and 5) will commit time and resources to assist in this effort. The question is where will the U.S. stand? Will it support the fraudulent reign of the Gbagbo regime or will it stand with the international community on the side of decency, democracy and respect for human rights?

*Question 6:*

*Why did you describe the October 2000 presidential election that put President Laurent Gbagbo in power as a "sham" (December 2001 issue of Journal of Democracy)? How is this election relevant to the current search for peace in Ivory Coast?*

*Answer:*

Yes, see #1 above. Gbagbo is perceived as an illegitimate ruler by two-thirds of the population, including the rebels.

*Question 7:*

*In your testimony, you commend the role of the French government in brokering the Marcoussis Agreement. How do you account for the anger at the French expressed by some Ivorians?*

*Answer:*

I taught at the University in Abidjan for 12 years. Students were easily persuaded to protest against any icon of power. The French, as former colonizers, are a natural target during this period in which local authority is challenged. It is common knowledge that the massive street demonstrations are funded by Gbagbo. A former student protest leader, Blé Goudou is organizing the protests on Gbagbo's behalf.

*Question 8:*

*Why has ethnicity emerged as an increasingly divisive issue in Ivorian politics since President Felix Houphouet Boigny's death in 1993?*

*Answer:*

The multi party system makes it possible for weak leaders and politicians to manipulate preexisting affinities, especially during a period of economic downturn.

*Question 9:*

*How critical are workers from neighboring countries to the economy of Ivory Coast?*

*Answer:*

Workers from neighboring countries are essential for Ivory Coast's export production of cocoa and coffee. About 26% of the population consists of "immigrants," some of whom were born in Ivory Coast, and others who have lived there for several generations. These "immigrants" make important contributions to the economies of their ancestral homelands in surrounding countries, in addition to supporting secondary and tertiary sectors of the Ivorian economy.

*Question 10:*

*How would you describe the human rights situation in Ivory Coast in recent years?*

*Answer:*

Ivoirians are in dire need of relief from the government and the rebel movements. They are suffering from massacres, rapes, hunger, displacement, and death squads. The situation is critical and getting worse. Fear has displaced driven hundreds of thousands of farmers out of the countryside and into areas near French or ECOWAS occupation for protection.

*Question 11:*

*How best can a durable peace and national reconciliation be fostered given the deep political divisions in Ivory Coast?*

*Answer:*

International intervention is necessary. The Linas-Marcoussis Agreement provides a framework for the return to order. The U.S. must support the members of the international community and African governments that are involved in the peace process and encourage the daily monitoring of the Gbagbo regime. I think he should resign in light of the severity of human rights violations and disrespect for the rule of law. No financial assistance should be released to the Gbagbo regime. He is now spending on weapons from Eastern Europe and China to escalate the war. My testimony of February 12 has a number of recommendations for U.S. policy toward Ivory Coast at this time.

