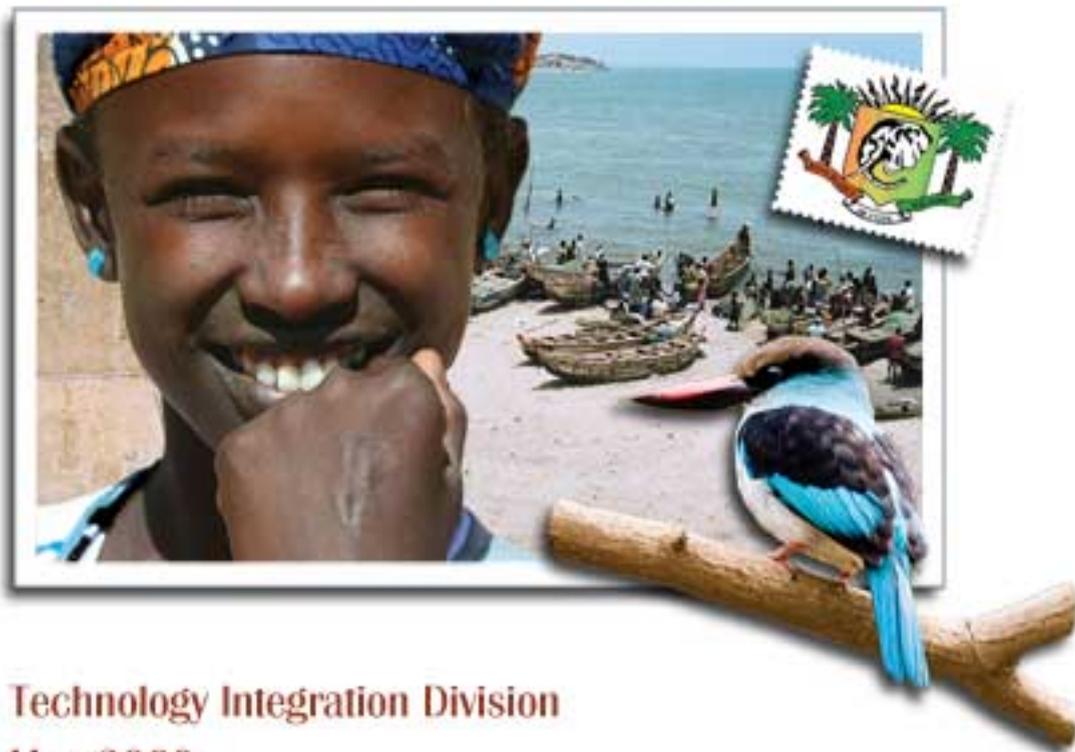


CÔTE D'IVOIRE IN PERSPECTIVE

An Orientation Guide



Technology Integration Division

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DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CENTER

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Map of Côte d'Ivoire



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Chapter 1 Profile

Introduction

For more than three decades after its independence from France in 1960, Côte d'Ivoire—formerly known as the Ivory Coast—was recognized as a model of religious and ethnic harmony. Its market economy, based on export agricultural products, was cited as the reason for its impressive growth. However, economic stagnation in the late 1980s contributed to ethno-regional division and civil war. In 2002, the escalating conflict split the country between the predominantly Muslim north and the historically Christian south. After protracted international mediation efforts, the two sides finally reached a peace agreement in early 2007.



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Ivory Coast Skyline

Facts and Figures:¹

Location:

Western Africa, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean, between Ghana and Liberia

Area:

Total: 322,460 sq km (124,502 sq mi)

Land: 318,000 sq km (122,780 sq mi)

Water: 4,460 sq km (1722 sq mi)

Border Countries:

Burkina Faso 584 km (363 mi), Ghana 668 km (415 mi), Guinea 610 km (379 mi), Liberia 716 km (445 mi), Mali 532 km (331 mi)

Climate:

Tropical along coast, semiarid in far north; three seasons - warm and dry (November to March), hot and dry (March to May), hot and wet (June to October)

Terrain: Mostly flat to undulating plains; mountains in northwest

Natural Hazards:

Coast has heavy surf and no natural harbors; during the rainy season torrential flooding is possible

Environment – Current Issues:

Deforestation (most of the country's forests - once the largest in West Africa - have been heavily logged); water pollution from sewage and industrial and agricultural effluents

¹ The information in this section comes directly from the following source: Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook*. "Cote d'Ivoire." 5 March 2009. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iv.html>

Population: 20,617,068

Note: estimates for this country explicitly take into account the effects of excess mortality due to AIDS; this can result in lower life expectancy, higher infant mortality, higher death rates, lower population growth rates, and changes in the distribution of population by age and sex than would otherwise be expected (July 2009 est.)



Age Structure:

0–14 years: 40.6% (male 4,215,912/female 4,146,077)

15–64 years: 56.6% (male 5,942,642/female 5,720,108)

65 years and over: 2.9% (male 296,074/female 296,255) (2009 est.)

Median Age:

Total: 19.2 years

Male: 19.4 years

Female: 19.1 years (2008 est.)

Population Growth Rate:

2.133% (2009 est.)

Sex Ratio:

Total population: 1.03 male(s)/female (2009 est.)

Infant Mortality Rate:

Total: 68.06 deaths/1,000 live births

Male: 75.17 deaths/1,000 live births

Female: 60.73 deaths/1,000 live births (2009 est.)

Life Expectancy at Birth:

Total population: 55.45 years

Male: 54.64 years

Female: 56.28 years (2009 est.)

Total Fertility Rate: 4.12 children born/woman (2009 est.)

HIV/AIDS – Adult Prevalence Rate: 3.9% (2007 est.)

Major Infectious Diseases:

Degree of risk: very high

Food or waterborne diseases: bacterial diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever

Vectorborne diseases: malaria and yellow fever

Water contact: schistosomiasis

Animal contact disease: rabies

Note: highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza has been identified in this country; it poses a negligible risk with extremely rare cases possible among U.S. citizens who have close contact with birds (2008)

Nationality:

Noun: Ivoirian(s)

Adjective: Ivoirian

Ethnic Groups:

Akan 42.1%, Voltaiques or Gur 17.6%, Northern Mandes 16.5%, Krous 11%, Southern Mandes 10%, other 2.8% (includes 130,000 Lebanese and 14,000 French) (1998)



© Julian Pierre
Children

Religions:

Muslim 38.6%, Christian 32.8%, indigenous 11.9%, none 16.7% (2008 est)

Note: the majority of foreigners (migratory workers) are Muslim (70%) and Christian (20%)

Languages:

French (official), 60 native dialects with Dioula the most widely spoken

Literacy:

Definition: age 15 and over can read and write

Total population: 48.7%

Male: 60.8%

Female: 38.6% (2000 est.)

Country Name:

Conventional long form: Republic of Côte d'Ivoire (RCI)

Conventional short form: Côte d'Ivoire

Local long form: Republique de Côte d'Ivoire

Local short form: Côte d'Ivoire

Note: pronounced coat-div-whar

Former: Ivory Coast

Government Type:

Republic; multiparty presidential regime established 1960

Note: the government is currently operating under a power-sharing agreement mandated by international mediators

Capital:

Name: Yamoussoukro

Note: although Yamoussoukro has been the official capital since 1983, Abidjan remains the commercial and administrative center; the U.S., like other countries, maintains its Embassy in Abidjan

Administrative Divisions:

19 regions; Agneby, Bafing, Bas-Sassandra, Denguele, Dix-Huit Montagnes, Fromager, Haut-Sassandra, Lacs, Lagunes, Marahoue, Moyen-Cavally, Moyen-Comoe, N'zi-Comoe, Savanes, Sud-Bandama, Sud-Comoe, Vallee du Bandama, Worodougou, Zanzan

Independence:

7 August 1960 (from France)

National Holiday:

Independence Day, 7 August (1960)

Constitution:

Approved by referendum 23 July 2000

Legal System:

Based on French civil law system and customary law; judicial review in the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction, with reservations

Suffrage:

18 years of age; universal

Executive Branch:

Chief of state: President Laurent Gbagbo (since 26 October 2000)

Head of government: Prime Minister Guillaume Soro (since 4 April 2007)

Cabinet: Council of Ministers appointed by the president; note - under the current power-sharing agreement the prime minister and the president share the authority to appoint ministers

Elections: president elected by popular vote for a five-year term (no term limits); election last held 26 October 2000 (elections were to be held in 2008 but have been repeatedly postponed by the government; the UN Security Council has extended the government's mandate); prime minister appointed by the president

Election results: Laurent GBAGBO elected president; percent of vote - Laurent Gbagbo 59.4%, Robert Guei 32.7%, Francis Wodie 5.7%, other 2.2%

Legislative Branch:

Unicameral National Assembly or *Assemblée Nationale* (225 seats; members are elected in single- and multi-district elections by direct popular vote to serve five-year terms)

Elections: elections last held 10 December 2000 with by-elections on 14 January 2001 (elections originally scheduled for 2005 have been repeatedly postponed by the government)



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Abidjan

Election results: percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - FPI 96, PDCI-RDA 94, RDR 5, PIT 4, other 2, independents 22, vacant 2

Note: a Senate that was scheduled to be created in the October 2006 elections never took place

Judicial Branch:

Supreme Court or *Cour Suprême* consists of four chambers: Judicial Chamber for criminal cases; Audit Chamber for financial cases; Constitutional Chamber for judicial review cases; Administrative Chamber for civil cases; there is no legal limit to the number of members

Political Parties and Leaders:

Citizen's Democratic Union (UDCY) [Theodore Mel Eg]; Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI) [Henri Konan Bedie]; Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) [Pascale Affi N'guessan]; Ivorian Worker's Party (PIT) [Francis Wodie]; Opposition Movement of the Future (MFA) [Innocent Augustin Anaky]; Rally of the Republicans (RDR) [Alassane Ouattara]; Union for Democracy and Peace in Côte d'Ivoire (UDPCI) [Toikeuse Mabri]; over 144 smaller registered parties



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Ministries Headquarters

International Organization Participation:

Agency for the French-Speaking Community (ACCT), Agency for the French-Speaking Community (ACP), African Development Bank (AfDB), African Union (AU), Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS), Entente, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Franc Zone (FZ), Group of 24 (G-24), Group of 77 (G-77), International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Criminal Court (ICt) (signatory), International Committee for Radionuclide Metrology (ICRM), International Development Association (IDA), International Development Bank (IDB), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), International Finance Corporation (IFC), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRCS), International Labor Organization (ILO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Maritime Organization (IMO), Interpol, International Olympic Committee (IOC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), United Nations (UN), United Nations Commission on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Union Latina, United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), United Postal Union (UPU), West African Development Bank (WADB) (regional), West African Economic and Monetary

Union (WAEMU), World Confederation of Labor (WCL), World Customs Organization (WCO), World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), World Health Organization (WHO), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), World Trade Organization (WTO).

GDP – Real Growth Rate: 2.5% (2008 est.)

GDP – Per Capita (PPP): USD 1,700 (2008 est.)

GDP – Composition by Sector:

Agriculture: 27.9%

Industry: 21.9%

Services: 50.1% (2008 est.)

Labor Force:

7.035 million (68% agricultural) (2008 est.)

Labor Force – by Occupation:

Agriculture: 68%

Industry and services: NA

Unemployment Rate:

Unemployment may have climbed to 40–50% as a result of the civil war

Inflation Rate (Consumer Prices):

6.1% (2008 est.)

Exports:

USD 11.96 billion f.o.b. (2008 est.)²

Exports – Commodities:

Cocoa, coffee, timber, petroleum, cotton, bananas, pineapples, palm oil, fish

Export Partners:

Germany 9.7%, Nigeria 9.2%, Netherlands 8.4%, France 7.3%, U.S. 7%, Burkina Faso 4.4% (2007)

Imports:

USD 7.948 billion f.o.b. (2008 est.)

Imports – Commodities:

Fuel, capital equipment, foodstuffs



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Pineapple plantation

² Freight on board (f.o.b.) includes the cost of shipping to Côte d'Ivoire.

Import Partners:

Nigeria 31.1%, France 16.7%, China 7.3% (2007)

Telephones – Main Lines in Use:

730,000 (2007)

Telephones – Mobile Cellular:

7.05 million (2007)

Radio Broadcast Stations:

AM 2, FM 9, shortwave 3 (1998)

Television Broadcast Stations:

14 (1998)

Internet Hosts:

5,569 (2008)

Internet Users:

300,000 (2006)

Airports:

34 (2007)

Airports – with Paved Runways:

Total: 7

Over 3,047 m (1.89 mi): 1

2,438 to 3,047 m (1.51–1.89 mi): 2

1,524 to 2,437 m (0.95–1.51 mi): 4 (2007)

Roadways:

Total: 80,000 km (49,710 mi)

Paved: 6,500 km (4,039 mi)

Unpaved: 73,500 km (45,671 mi)

Note: includes intercity and urban roads; another 20,000 km (12,427 mi) of dirt roads are in poor condition and 150,000 km (93,206 mi) of dirt roads are impassable (2006)

Waterways:

980 km (609mi) (navigable rivers, canals, and numerous coastal lagoons) (2008)

Military Branches:

Côte d'Ivoire Defense and Security Forces (FDSC): Army, Navy, Air Force (2006)

Military Service Age and Obligation:

18 years of age for compulsory and voluntary military service (2008)



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Train

Manpower Available for Military Service:

Males age 16–49: 4,369,735

Females age 16–49: 4,287,042 (2008 est.)

Manpower Fit for Military Service:

Males age 16–49: 3,122,106

Females age 16–49: 2,936,391 (2009 est.)

Manpower Reaching Militarily Significant Age Annually:

Male: 236,159

Female: 232,617 (2009 est.)

Military Expenditures:

1.6% of GDP (2005 est.)

Chapter 2 Geography

Introduction

Côte d'Ivoire is located on the Gulf of Guinea in southern West Africa. The country demonstrates notable geographical diversity; its terrain transitions from equatorial rainforests in the south to grassy and shrub-covered savannah in the north. Its elevation pattern also follows a latitudinal trend, as the predominantly flat landscape rises from the southern coast to the northern plateau and northwestern highlands. Historically home to diverse plant and animal species, the nation's ecosystems have been subject to substantial pressures over the last several decades. Foremost, the region's rich soil and tropical climate have made it ripe for agricultural production. As a result, a large percentage of the country's once dense and extensive rainforests has been cleared for cultivation or timber. In addition to habitat loss, the illegal wildlife trade has also affected many native species.

Area

Situated on the southern rim of West Africa, Côte d'Ivoire shares borders with five other nations. To the west, it is bounded by Liberia and Guinea. Much of its border with Liberia is formed by the course of the Cavally River.³ On its northern edge, it is bounded by Mali, its largest neighbor, and Burkina Faso. Its entire eastern border is shared with Ghana. Finally, on its southern edge, it possesses an extensive coastline (515 km or 320 mi) on the Gulf of Guinea. With a total area of 322,460 sq km (124,502 sq mi), Côte d'Ivoire is slightly larger than the state of New Mexico.⁴

Geographic Divisions

Côte d'Ivoire has three natural regions: a narrow coastal strip dominated by large lagoons, a forest belt extending from the coastal fringe to the central interior, and a northern savanna.

The Coastal Lagoon Region

Running along the Gulf of Guinea, the country's coastal strip stretches from the Ghanaian border in the east to the mouth of the Sassandra River in the west.

(Beginning west of the mouth of the Sassandra, the forest region extends to the coast.) In addition to beaches and marshes, the terrain consists of numerous islands and sandbars interspersed by an extensive series of lagoons, many of which are interconnected. Several of the country's major rivers empty into the gulf in this region, forming large estuaries within the lagoon network. Human settlements and farmlands have replaced much of the natural vegetation along the coast; the existing plant life ranges from palm trees and



© kepi.cncplusplus.com
Ivory Coast Sunset

³ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. *A Country Study: Ivory Coast*. Byrnes, Rita M. "Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment: Physical Setting: Rivers." Handloff, Robert E., Ed. 1988. [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+ci0043\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+ci0043))

⁴ Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook*. "Cote d'Ivoire." 5 March 2009. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iv.html>

shrubs to small patches of mangrove forest.⁵ Sandbars—the products of strong waves and currents—make much of the lagoon region difficult or impossible to navigate by ship.^{6, 7}

The Forest Belt

Côte d’Ivoire’s dense forest belt extends from the southern coast to the central interior, where it transitions into the grass and woodlands of the northern savanna. In the southwest, this region encompasses the coastal area between the Liberian border, where the Cavally River empties into the gulf, and the mouth of the Sassandra River. In the south and southeast, it begins north of the lagoon region.⁸



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Ivory Coast Jungle

The belt extends inland approximately 265 km (165 mi) in the east and west and 100 km (62 mi) in the central region of the country.⁹ As a whole, the forest belt has been severely affected by high rates of deforestation, as its valuable hardwood trees and fertile soil have been exploited by loggers and farmers. Most notably, cocoa and coffee plantations have replaced expansive tracts of dense forest.¹⁰

The Savanna

A vast expanse of savanna—broadly defined as grassy plains scattered with scrub and occasional woodlands—covers the northern half of Côte d’Ivoire. In general, this region has a lower population density than the southern half of the country.¹¹ The region, as a whole, serves as a transitional zone between the tropical rainforest to the south and the Sahara Desert to the north.¹²

Topographic Features

Côte d’Ivoire largely consists of flat or undulating plains that gradually rise from the coast to the upland plateau of the northern savanna. The majority of the northern plateau

⁵ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. *A Country Study: Ivory Coast*. Byrnes, Rita M. “Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment: Physical Setting: Physical Features: The Lagoon Region.” Handloff, Robert E., Ed. 1988. [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+ci0040\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+ci0040))

⁶ MSN Encarta Online Encyclopedia. “Côte d’Ivoire: Land and Resources.” 2008. http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761578055/Cote_d'Ivoire.html

⁷ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. “Côte d’Ivoire: Land: Relief.” 2009. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/139651/Cote-d'Ivoire>

⁸ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. *A Country Study: Ivory Coast*. Byrnes, Rita M. “Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment: Physical Setting: Physical Features: The Forest Region.” Handloff, Robert E., Ed. 1988. [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query2/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+ci0041\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query2/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+ci0041))

⁹ Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. FAO Forestry Country Profiles. “Côte d’Ivoire: Geographic Description.” 3 September 2007. <http://www.fao.org/forestry/18310/en/civ/>

¹⁰ MSN Encarta Online Encyclopedia. “Côte d’Ivoire: Land and Resources: Environmental Issues.” 2008. http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761578055_2/Cote_d'Ivoire.html

¹¹ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. “Côte d’Ivoire: Land: Relief.” 2009. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/139651/Cote-d'Ivoire>

¹² Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. *A Country Study: Ivory Coast*. Byrnes, Rita M. “Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment: Physical Setting: Physical Features: The Savanna.” Handloff, Robert E., Ed. 1988. [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query2/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+ci0042\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query2/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+ci0042))

measures at least 300 m (984 ft) in altitude,¹³ with some areas reaching upwards of 500 m (1640 ft).¹⁴ The country's most pronounced relief is in the northwest, where low-elevation mountain ranges spread throughout the region. The nation's high point, Mount Nimba (1,752 m or 5,748 ft), is found in the Nimba Range of the western borderlands. The peak itself is located on the Guinean–Ivoirian border, and is the high point for both countries. East of its high point, the Nimba Range extends to the area surrounding the city of Man; this mountainous region is sometimes referred to as the Massif de Man.¹⁵ Overall, much of the western Ivoirian border follows the jagged and meandering course of the regional mountain chains. Elsewhere, there are additional peaks in the northeast, and scattered rolling hills and outcroppings in the forest belt and northern savanna.

Climate

The Ivoirian climate demonstrates several regional variations as it transitions from equatorial conditions in the south to savanna-style conditions in the north. For the most part, these variations concern precipitation levels, which generally decrease as one moves northward from the coast. In the south, the two rainy seasons are April–July (the major wet season) and late September–November. They provide an average annual rainfall of 200–325 cm (79–128 in), with the heaviest rains falling along the coastal strip. The region's primary dry season runs from December to March.¹⁶ Due to its equatorial climate and low elevation, the south is generally warmer and more humid than the north; temperatures in this region typically range between 22° and 32°C (72° and 90°F).¹⁷

In the central region of the country, the dry season (November–March) grows slightly longer and the wet seasons are less marked. Average annual rainfall remains substantial, however, ranging between 100 and 250 cm (39 and 98 in). Precipitation in the mountainous western region around Man is particularly abundant; only January and December see limited levels of rainfall in this area.¹⁸ Temperatures also grow more extreme in the central region, with daytime lows of 15°C (60°F) and highs of 38°C (100°F).¹⁹ Humidity remains relatively high.

In the north, the dry season—influenced by the northeast wind from the Sahara—generally runs from November to March. The sole rainy season lasts from April to October, although in the northeast, it may be limited to the period between June and

¹³ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. “Côte d’Ivoire: Land: Relief.” 2009.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/139651/Cote-d'Ivoire>

¹⁴ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. *A Country Study: Ivory Coast*. Byrnes, Rita M. “Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment: Physical Setting: Physical Features.” Handloff, Robert E., ed. 1988.

[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query2/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+ci0039\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query2/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+ci0039))

¹⁵ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. “Man.” 2009.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/361034/Man>

¹⁶ Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. FAO Forestry Country Profiles. “Côte d’Ivoire: Geographic Description.” 3 September 2007. <http://www.fao.org/forestry/18310/en/civ/>

¹⁷ MSN Encarta Online Encyclopedia. “Côte d’Ivoire: Land and Resources: Climate.” 2008.

http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761578055/Cote_d'Ivoire.html

¹⁸ Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. FAO Forestry Country Profiles. “Côte d’Ivoire: Geographic Description.” 3 September 2007. <http://www.fao.org/forestry/18310/en/civ/>

¹⁹ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. “Côte d’Ivoire: Land: Climate.” 2009.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/139651/Cote-d'Ivoire>

September.²⁰ Precipitation levels decrease as one moves from the northwestern highlands (150 cm or 60 in) to the northeastern region (110 mm or 45 in).²¹ Temperatures range between 12°C (54°F) in the dry season and 40°C (104°F) in the rainy months.²²

Major Rivers

Côte d'Ivoire has four major river systems: the Cavally, the Sassandra, the Bandama, and the Comoé. Following the country's sloping elevation pattern, all four of these rivers flow from north to south and ultimately empty into the Gulf of Guinea—three of them into the lagoon region. During the dry season, many of these rivers' northern tributaries dry up, resulting in reduced flow downstream.

The Cavally River, also known as the Cavalla, originates north of the Nimba Mountains in Guinea and flows south into western Côte d'Ivoire. Beginning south of the Ivorian city of Toulepleu, the Cavally's course delineates the border between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia until the river empties into the gulf. Of the river's 515 km (320 mi) course, only the final 50 km (31 mi) are navigable. The Cavally takes its name from the Portuguese "cavalla," a type of mackerel found in the river's mouth.²³



© Ferdinand Reus
Boats on a river at sunset

The sources of the Sassandra originate in the northwestern highlands; the river is further fed by several tributaries on its course through western Cote d'Ivoire. A dam on the river near Buyo has created an artificial lake named after the city. The river ultimately empties into the gulf through an estuary near the port city of Sassandra, which is found at the far western edge of the lagoon region. Only the final 80 km (50 mi) of its course is navigable.²⁴

With a total length of 800 km (497 mi), the Bandama River is the longest in the country. The river's upper section is known as the Bandama Blanc, which originates in the northern highlands, west of Korhogo. After flowing east and then south through the center of the country, the river is dammed at Kossou to create the country's largest body of water, Lake Kossou. Fisheries and a hydroelectric plant have been built in the Kossou area to utilize the reservoir's collected waters. South of the lake, the river is known as the Bandama Rouge. It is again dammed near Taabo, and it ultimately drains into the gulf through the Tagba Lagoon near the city of Grand Lahou. Overall, the river and its various

²⁰ Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. FAO Forestry Country Profiles. "Côte d'Ivoire: Geographic Description." 3 September 2007. <http://www.fao.org/forestry/18310/en/civ/>

²¹ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Côte d'Ivoire: Land: Climate." 2009. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/139651/Cote-dIvoire>

²² MSN Encarta Online Encyclopedia. "Côte d'Ivoire: Land and Resources: Climate." 2008. http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761578055/Cote_dIvoire.html

²³ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Cavalla River." 2009. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/100547/Cavalla-River>

²⁴ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. *A Country Study: Ivory Coast*. Byrnes, Rita M. "Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment: Physical Setting: Rivers." Handloff, Robert E., Ed. 1988. [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+ci0043\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+ci0043))

tributaries are responsible for draining most of the central region of the country. The river's final 56 km (35 mi) are navigable, with the lower reaches and lagoon used to transport timber.²⁵

Originating in Burkina Faso to the north, the Comoé River forms a small portion of the northern Ivorian border before entering northeastern Côte d'Ivoire. Flowing generally south, the river runs through Comoé National Park, a World Heritage Site, and receives the waters of several tributaries on its way to the coast.²⁶ It ultimately flows into the Ebrié Lagoon near the city of Grand-Bassam.²⁷ The Comoé is navigable on its final stretch from Alépé to the lagoon, a distance of some 48 km (30 miles).²⁸

Major Cities

Yamoussoukro

Situated in south-central Côte d'Ivoire, Yamoussoukro was a town of fewer than 20,000 people until the late 1970s. However, in 1983, it was designated as the new national capital, with plans to develop it as an administrative and transportation center. This was because the city was the home of Côte d'Ivoire's long-time president, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, who ruled from 1960 to 1993. He orchestrated the city's rapid growth, which included the construction of luxury hotels and a large highway connecting Yamoussoukro to the former capital of Abidjan, where most government offices and foreign embassies remain to this day. Houphouët-Boigny, a Catholic, also presided over the construction of the world's largest Christian cathedral, the local Yamoussoukro Basilica. It rises to a height of 149 m (489 ft) and was dedicated in 1990 by Pope John Paul II. Population: 186,000 (2003 est.).²⁹



© Felix Krohn
Yamoussoukro

Abidjan

Nicknamed “the Paris of West Africa” for its ambience, Abidjan is the de facto capital and largest city of Côte d'Ivoire. It is located on the southeastern coast, in the lagoon region. The city's urbanization was the result of French colonial rule, but unlike many colonial cities, Abidjan was not a traditional market center that later evolved into a metropolis. In 1920, its population consisted of the inhabitants of a few dozen villages located on scattered islands and lagoon peninsulas. The French recognized the location's

²⁵ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. “Bandama River.” 2009.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/51470/Bandama-River>

²⁶ The Encyclopedia of Earth. “Comoé National Park, Côte d'Ivoire.” 24 August 2008.

http://www.eoearth.org/article/Como%C3%A9_National_Park,_C%C3%B4te_d'Ivoire

²⁷ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. *A Country Study: Ivory Coast*. Byrnes, Rita M. “Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment: Physical Setting: Rivers.” Handloff, Robert E., Ed. 1988.

[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+ci0043\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+ci0043))

²⁸ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. “Komoé River.” 2009.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/321633/Komoe-River>

²⁹ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. “Yamoussoukro.” 2009.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/651631/Yamoussoukro>

potential as both an administrative capital and a railway terminus to transport tropical produce from the interior to the coast.³⁰ The latter function was especially important as the French interest in developing colonies was primarily driven by the economic gains to be made through plantation agriculture.

The city's modern port was constructed in 1950 when the Vridi Canal was dug through a sandbar; today it serves all of French West Africa. The port provides large ships from the Gulf of Guinea and the Atlantic Ocean with access to the sheltered and relatively deep Ebrié Lagoon. Population: 3.6 million (2005 est.),³¹ although some estimates place the number as high as 5 million.³²



© Bob Harvey
Abidjan

Bouaké

Located in central Côte d'Ivoire, Bouaké has long been an important trading center (it was once a large slave market for the Portuguese).³³ The French founded the city as a military post in the late 1890s, and since the early 20th century, it has functioned as the major market for the central region. The city is on the Abidjan-Niger rail line, as well as on road routes to the de facto capital, Abidjan, in the south, and the city of Bobo-Dioulasso in Burkina Faso to the north. Following the 2002 partition of the country, Bouaké served as the unofficial capital of the rebel movement. Population: 574,000 (2005 est.).³⁴

Korhogo

Believed to be founded in the 14th century by a Senufo chief, Korhogo is the cultural capital of the Senufo people. It is located in north-central Côte d'Ivoire, in the eastern reaches of the northwestern highlands. The city evolved as a stop on a major trade route to the Atlantic coast. It remains the primary marketplace for Senufo farmers of the savanna. Population: 115,000 (2003 est.).³⁵

³⁰ The African Studies Association of Australia and the Pacific. Freund, Bill. "Globalisation and the African City: Touba, Abidjan, and Durban" (paper presented at the Annual Conference: 'African Renewal, African Renaissance': New Perspectives on Africa's Past and Africa's Present, University of Western Australia). 26–28 November 2004. <http://www.afsaap.org.au/Conferences/2004/freund.PDF>

³¹ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Abidjan." 2009.
<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1280/Abidjan>

³² Population figures for Abidjan vary widely between two and five million. The range reflects the difficulties of counting the city's migrants, who typically lack identification and live in slum housing that has been built without appropriate permits.

³³ MSN Encarta Online Encyclopedia. "Bouaké." 2008.
http://uk.encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761569289/Bouake.html

³⁴ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Bouaké." 2009.
<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/75354/Bouake>

³⁵ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Korhogo." 2009.
<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/322470/Korhogo>

Man

Man is located in the mountainous region of western Côte d'Ivoire. The surrounding area is densely forested, although many tracts have been cleared to create coffee and cocoa plantations. Mining operations are carried out in the nearby mountains, and the city serves as a trading hub for several local ethnic populations. Man came under rebel control in 2002. Population: 117,000 (1998 est.)³⁶

Environmental Issues

Historically, the southern half of Côte d'Ivoire was covered in dense tropical rainforests, which were at one time considered the most extensive in West Africa.³⁷ However, the region's many valuable species of hardwoods, semi-hard woods, and softwoods all have long had well-known international market value.³⁸ (Among them, African mahogany and teak (*iroko*) are particularly valuable.) As a result, huge tracts of forest have been cleared—either legally or illegally—for international sale. At the same time, farmers have also cleared large swaths of forest land to expand their areas of cultivation, thereby quickly replacing virgin forests with plantations.³⁹ The principal effect of deforestation is soil erosion. This in turn contributes to the country's flood problems, which are often caused by heavy rains. In addition to threatening people's homes and livelihoods, flooding also increases the number of mosquitoes that spread malaria.⁴⁰



© Lukas Vermeer
African Elephant

Pollution has also affected many of the country's waterways. This is largely the result of industrial and agricultural waste, as well as the discharge of raw sewage along the coast.⁴¹ For example, in 2006, the blatant dumping of a large amount of chemical waste near Abidjan caused sickness in tens of thousands of local residents, with at least 10 reported fatalities.⁴²

³⁶ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Man." 2009.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/361034/Man>

³⁷ Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook*. "Cote d'Ivoire." 5 March 2009.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iv.html>

³⁸ Food and Agriculture Organization, Corporate Document Repository. "Forest Problems in Africa." 1949. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/x5349e/x5349e03.htm>

³⁹ GRID-Arendal, United Nations Environmental Programme. "Deforestation in West Africa: Case Cote-d'Ivoire." 2002. http://maps.grida.no/go/graphic/deforestation_in_west_africa_case_cote_d_ivoire

⁴⁰ The Atlantic Monthly. Kaplan, Robert D. "The Coming Anarchy: How Scarcity, Crime, Overpopulation, Tribalism, and Disease are Rapidly Destroying the Social Fabric of Our Planet." February 1994.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/ideastour/archive/kaplan.mhtml>

⁴¹ Yale-New Haven Teacher's Institute, Yale University. Kirkland-Mullins, Waltrina. "A Story, A Story - Embracing Geography, Culture, and Diversity through Film," 2003.

<http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/2003/1/03.01.05.x.html>

⁴² Reuters Alertnet. Murphy, Peter. "U.N. Launches Ivorian Toxic Waste Clean-Up Fund." 14 December 2006. <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L14283567.htm>

Natural Hazards

The *harmattan* (also called “Harmattan Haze”) is an extremely dry, dusty wind that blows from the Sahara Desert in the north toward the coast of West Africa.⁴³ It typically occurs between November and April, the dry season. During this period, airlines are frequently forced to make route detours because of reduced visibility. In the words of a traveler who paddled across Lake Volta in neighboring Ghana: “The haze made the lake’s surface merge seamlessly with the sky. We seemed to be traveling through white, undefined space. Only two men paddling a fishing boat far in the distance gave us a sense of where water met air.”⁴⁴ This phenomenon was noted by the earliest travelers to Africa.⁴⁵

Droughts and floods—the latter occurring most frequently during the rainy season—are additional potential hazards. The strong tidal surf on the southern Ivorian coast can also be dangerous.⁴⁶

Wildlife

Côte d’Ivoire’s rainforests and savanna grasslands historically provided habitat to a wide range of species, many of which are now threatened by habitat loss and poaching. Among these species is the African elephant, which traditionally inhabits open savanna and deep forest habitats, where animal head counts have been difficult to conduct. As a result, steep declines in population have often become apparent only after it is too late to introduce measures



© Ferdinand Reus
The baobab tree and elephant

to stave off extinction.⁴⁷ Indeed, a report issued by both the World Wildlife Fund and Traffic, a wildlife trade monitoring organization, revealed that, in 2003, investigators located more than 4,000 kg (4.4 tons) of illegally harvested ivory on public display in nine cities in Côte d’Ivoire, Nigeria, and Senegal. This amount represents the tusks of more than 760 elephants, although research led some experts to conclude that there were at most 543 elephants remaining in the three countries as of 2003.⁴⁸

Commerce within a country is regulated by national legislation. Côte d’Ivoire banned the lucrative ivory trade in 1997. However, in a land plagued by poverty and civil unrest,

⁴³ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. “Harmattan.” 2009.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/255457/harmattan>

⁴⁴ afrol News. “New Study Counters Bid to Commercialise Ivory.” 28 February 2003.

<http://www.afrol.com/articles/24524>

⁴⁵ *PAGEOPH*, Vol. 119. Prospero, Joseph M. and Toby N. Carlson. Saharan Air Outbreaks Over the Tropical North Atlantic.” 1981.

http://www.rsmas.miami.edu/divs/mac/People/Faculty/Prospero/Publications/Publications/Prospero_Carlson_SaharanAirOutbreak_Pageoph119_1980-81.pdf

⁴⁶ Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook*. “Cote d’Ivoire.” 5 March 2009.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iv.html>

⁴⁷ LiveScience. Lloyd, Robin. “DNA Tests of Illegally Traded Ivory Could Save Elephants.” 14 October 2004. http://www.livescience.com/animalworld/041014_ivory_origins.html

⁴⁸ BBC News. Kirby, Brian. “West Africa’s Ivory Trade Thrives.” 15 December 2003.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/3314069.stm>

wildlife protection laws are a low priority. Moreover, they are easily subverted by cash-strapped local officials who see the profit potential.⁴⁹ As someone involved in conservation observed, “as with high-value illegal narcotics, the high bounty on these animals will always attract criminals willing to take risks for what is seen as quick money. With such large animals involved, the poachers come armed with automatic weapons and even rocket launchers.”⁵⁰ Most recently, the country’s West African chimpanzee population has been identified as another native species that has suffered “alarming” losses in recent years. The local population is thought to have decreased by 90% between 1990 and 2008, leaving only 1,200 chimps in the country. Experts cited deforestation and poaching as the major contributing factors to its decline in numbers.⁵¹

⁴⁹ National Public Radio. Payne, Katy, et al. “Lifting the Ivory Ban Called Premature.” 31 October 2002. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=3879214>

⁵⁰ Animal Defenders International. “Endangered Animals Lose Out as Trophy Hunters Make Gains at Conference for Endangered Species.” October 2004. <http://www.ad-international.org/conservation/go.php?id=82&ssi=14>

⁵¹ BBC News. “African Chimps Decline ‘Alarming.’” 17 October 2008. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/7673914.stm>

Chapter 3 History

Introduction

Côte d'Ivoire was settled by migratory tribal groups that established kingdoms in various parts of the region over the centuries. The details of much of this early history remain unknown, however. In the 19th century, after West Africa had long been exposed to European interests, France's colonial efforts to assert administrative control over the region moved from the coast to the interior. Thereafter, Côte d'Ivoire was officially administered as a French colony from 1893–1958. After it gained its independence, the country appeared to make a smooth transition to stable governance and prosperity. These circumstances, which were unique for the region, attracted large numbers of immigrants, particularly from Burkina Faso to the northeast.



© Brian J. McMorrow
Silhouette of boys

The sociopolitical situation changed, however, after the death of Félix Houphouët-Boigny, a benign dictator who ruled for over three decades (1960–1993). Houphouët-Boigny was succeeded by a series of leaders who promoted divisive social issues, most notably xenophobia, as a means to gain electoral success. This ultimately pushed the country into civil war, which led to the partition of the nation into northern and southern halves—a division that remained in place for five years (from 2002–2007). Although the two factions have officially reconciled, an election has yet to be held that would provide the basis for a truly representative government to come to power.⁵²

Early History

Archeological excavations in present-day Côte d'Ivoire have provided evidence of prehistoric human settlements. The current configuration and demography of tribal groups suggests that migration played a major role in the development of the local population. Specifically, the region's early history is characterized by the migration of tribal groups that broke off from the dominant West African kingdoms of the 12th to 17th centuries.⁵³

The dense forests covering the southern half of the region served as a natural barrier against the political consolidation of the territory by any group. Moreover, in the northern savanna region, the different local groups had little need or coercive means to create larger administrative structures. Thus, until the 18th century, the regional communities were largely comprised of villages or village clusters in which long-distance traders were the conduit for knowledge of the world beyond the immediate surroundings.⁵⁴

⁵² African Policy Forum, Center for Strategic and International Studies. Dukulé, Abdoulaye W. "Shaky Home Stretch to Peace in Côte d'Ivoire." 2008. <http://forums.csis.org/africa/?p=191>

⁵³ Institute for Security Studies. "Côte d'Ivoire: History and Politics." No date . <http://www.iss.co.za/AF/profiles/IvoryCoast/Politics.html>

⁵⁴ Country-studies.com. Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. *A Country Study: Ivory Coast*. Handloff, Robert E. "Introduction." Handloff, Robert E., Ed. 1989 (Updated 1990). <http://www.country-studies.com/ivory-coast/history.html>

As a consequence of these factors, Côte d'Ivoire was relatively isolated from outside influences for much of its early history. The spread of Islam, which made major inroads through most other regions of West Africa prior to the 16th century, was stymied by the Ivory Coast's impenetrable forests. The region was also largely insulated from the European development of the Guinean coast, where the gold and transatlantic slave trade flourished in the 17th and 18th centuries.⁵⁵ Its forbidding coastline and dearth of natural harbors caused European explorers to set their sights on easier terrain until the mid 19th century, when the scramble for colonies intensified.⁵⁶

The French Colonial Period

The French colonization of Côte d'Ivoire occurred in stages. A French protectorate was initially established over the coastal zone in 1842. The interior, however, did not come under European control for another five decades, when the greater region officially became a French colony in 1893. Captain Louis Gustave Binger, who had explored the Gold Coast frontier and depicted it as an agricultural landscape endlessly contested by feuding kingdoms, was named the first governor.⁵⁷ Initiating the establishment of the region as a defined geographical entity, Binger negotiated boundary treaties with Liberia and the United Kingdom, which was then in control of the Gold Coast. In addition, he oversaw a military campaign against Almany Samory, a powerful Malinké tribal chief, who resisted French encroachment until he was vanquished in 1898.



Courtesy of wikipedia.org
A house from colonial time in Grand Bassam

By the early 20th century, the French had established authority over most of what would come to be known as Francophone West Africa, which included the territory comprising present-day Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, and Niger. The French appeared fully cognizant, even at this early stage, that the cultural assimilation of West Africans was unlikely. The tenacity of indigenous peoples and their traditions posed a significant obstacle to such a goal, as did the large amount of resources needed to implement such a program. Instead, the French settled on the more modest goal of controlling the West African population through a centralized system of colonial administration.

Accordingly, the area was divided into *cercles*, or administrative units that were overseen at the regional level by *commandants de cercle* (district commissioners) and at the local level by *chefs de subdivision*. Villages were governed under the authority of an appointed chief, a practice that drew villagers into the national system of governance while

⁵⁵ Geographia. "Côte d'Ivoire." 2005. <http://www.geographia.com/ivory-coast/>

⁵⁶ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. *A Country Study: Ivory Coast*. Warner, Rachel. "Chapter 1: Historical Setting." Handloff, Robert E., Ed. 1988. [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+ci0012\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+ci0012))

⁵⁷ *The Peasant Cotton Revolution in West Africa: Côte d'Ivoire, 1880-1995*. Bassett, Thomas. "Chapter Two: The Collision of Empires, 1880-1911: European Accounts of Pre-Colonial Northern Côte d'Ivoire [p. 27]." 2001. New York: Cambridge University Press.

circumventing traditional channels of tribal authority. This practice provoked resistance, which was met with a sentence of either forced labor (*corvée*) or imprisonment (*indigent*).⁵⁸



© Claudia Wanner
Ivory Coast Village

From 1904 to 1958, Côte d’Ivoire was part of the Federation of French West Africa. It was a colony and an overseas territory of the French Third Republic. The nature of this arrangement was embodied in France’s policy of “association,” which provided the legal justification for colonial rule.⁵⁹ In effect, Africans were considered French subjects (*sujets*) who were unready for citizenship, which would have accorded them the right to political representation in Africa or France. Governmental affairs for French West Africa were administered from Paris until after World War II.

The first Constituent Assembly of the French Fourth Republic was held in 1946 when the French implemented far-reaching reforms with respect to their colonies. Owing to the loyalty that the African “subjects” had exhibited during World War II, French citizenship was granted to all inhabitants of Francophone Africa, as was the right to organize politically. Several forms of forced labor that had favored French plantation owners were also abolished.⁶⁰

In December 1958, Côte d’Ivoire became an autonomous republic within the French community. This was the result of a referendum that brought community status to all members of the old Federation of French West Africa, with the exception of Guinea. The Republic of Côte d’Ivoire (RCI) became independent on 7 August 1960, and it subsequently allowed its community membership to lapse.

Independence

In a region where governments and even political systems have proved to be short-lived, Côte d’Ivoire stood apart for its extraordinary political stability during the first four decades of its independent existence. During this time it maintained a close political allegiance to the West. In contrast, many of its post-colonial neighbors experienced successive military coups, experimented with various Marxist economic systems, and developed ties with the Soviet Union and China.

⁵⁸ African Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania. Wooten, Stephen. “French in West Africa: Early Contact to Independence.” 1992. http://www.africa.upenn.edu/K-12/French_16178.html

⁵⁹ *Politics in Francophone Africa: The States of West and Equatorial Africa*. LeVine, Victor T. “Chapter Two: The Colonial Context [p. 46].” 2004. Boulder: Lynne Reiner. http://books.google.com/books?id=ZVlzpwhGqC&dq=citizenship+francophone+africa&source=gbs_summary_s&cad=0

⁶⁰ Western and North African Database, Air Combat Information Group. Cooper, Tom and Alexander Mladenov. “Cote d’Ivoire, since 2002.” 5 August 2004. http://www.acig.org/artman/publish/article_463.shtml

Côte d'Ivoire's post-independence fortunes are difficult to separate from those of Félix Houphouët-Boigny, president of the republic and leader of the *Parti Democratique de Côte d'Ivoire* (PDCI). He first assumed a leadership role in 1944 as founder of the *Syndicat Agricole Africain*, an organization that focused attention on the plight of African farmers.



© Robert Knudsen
Félix Houphouët-Boigny

After World War II, he was elected by a slim margin to the first Constituent Assembly. While representing Côte d'Ivoire in the French National Assembly from 1946 to 1959, he devoted much of his time to raising the profile of former colonies and improving conditions for plantation agricultural workers. He served for 13 years in the French National Assembly, including an almost three-year stint as a minister in the French Government, before returning home to become prime minister in 1958, and president in 1960.⁶¹

The son of a well-to-do Baoulé farmer, Houphouët-Boigny realized that agriculture was the key to his country's economic future. Under his leadership the RCI became one of the largest global producers of coffee and cocoa and it developed the third largest economy in sub-Saharan Africa. Immigrants from surrounding countries were encouraged to resettle in Côte d'Ivoire, where land user rights conferred ownership and, as a result, the amount of land under cultivation continuously expanded. The country also attracted considerable foreign direct investment from the West, particularly France, whose nationals provided technical assistance.⁶²

During this period of growth and stability, Houphouët-Boigny presided over a one-party state in which he simultaneously served as head of state, head of government, and leader of the PDCI. Despite his consolidation of power, he brought members of the opposition into the party rather than subjecting them to official persecution. He referred to this process as "reconciliation."⁶³ Representatives of all major ethnic groups were incorporated into Houphouët-Boigny's cabinet as well as the important policy-making bodies of the PDCI.⁶⁴ Furthermore, in what became known as *le modèle houphouëtiste*,

⁶¹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State. "Background Note: Cote d'Ivoire." January 2009. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2846.htm>

⁶² Google Books. *The Roots of African Conflicts: The Causes and Costs*. Akokpari, John. "Chapter Two: You Don't Belong Here [p. 98]." Nhema, Alfred and Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, Eds. 2008. Athens: Ohio University Press. http://books.google.com/books?id=Dx6ZOObZ9gWAC&pg=PA97&lpg=PA97&dq=Houphou%C3%ABt-Boigny+patronage&source=bl&ots=WwOsIKsixZ&sig=V1_qPj6T84x6UDMxxh416cparxI&hl=en&ei=gmjSZORMpGksQP-spG8CQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=1&ct=result#PPA98,M1

⁶³ San Jose State University. Watkins, Thayer. "The Economic History and Economy of Ivory Coast." No date. <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/watkins/ivory.htm>

⁶⁴ Country-studies.com. Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. *A Country Study: Ivory Coast*. Handloff, Robert E. "Introduction." Handloff, Robert E., Ed. 1989 (Updated 1990). <http://www.country-studies.com/ivory-coast/history.html>

he used the country's wealth to dispense patronage to supporters while distributing punishment to critics and disloyalists.⁶⁵

Political Liberalization

The introduction of democracy in the form of competitive elections occurred during the final years of Houphouët-Boigny's rule. Opposition parties were authorized for the first time in 1990, and all residents were allowed to vote. However, a new law required all immigrants to carry a visa (*carte de séjour*) that identified them as non-Ivoirian nationals.⁶⁶

The aging incumbent easily defeated an opposition candidate in that year's presidential election. Three years later, Houphouët-Boigny died and Henri Konan Bédié of the PDCI was chosen as his successor. In 1995, two years after Houphouët-Boigny's death, there was some potential for the opposition party to claim the presidency in a contest with Bédié. However, Bédié, who like Houphouët-Boigny was a Baoulé Catholic, prevailed by launching a national identity campaign known as *Ivoirité*. This move represented a radical departure from the early Houphouët-Boigny era, when rights were conceived of in individual rather than group terms. *Ivoirité*, in short, provided a cover for a witch hunt to root out "foreigners" and deny them the right to vote and compete in elections.



Courtesy of wikipedia.org
Félix Houphouët-Boigny

A 1994 law stipulated that all presidential candidates must be born in the Ivory Coast to parents who were themselves born in the country. The immediate casualty of this legislation was Bédié's northern Muslim rival for the presidency, Prime Minister Alassane Ouattara, an American-educated former economist with the International Monetary Fund.⁶⁷ Ouattara's detractors claimed that he, as well as his mother, had been born in neighboring Burkina Faso and that he had previously held Burkinabe citizenship. Although the law denied Ouattara the right to stand for election, Bédié's maneuver backfired against his own interests. On Christmas Day 1999, he was overthrown in a coup staged by a group of military officers. Retired General Robert Guei, a Muslim and the former chief-of-staff of the armed forces, emerged as the new president, although his tenure, too, proved short-lived.

⁶⁵ Nordiska Afrikainstitutet. *Discussion Paper 39: Perspectives on Cote d'Ivoire: Between Political Breakdown and Post-Conflict Peace*. Almas, Guro. "The Political Implications of Economic Adjustment: Crisis, Reform and Political Breakdown in Côte d'Ivoire [p. 11]." Obi, Cyril, Ed. 2007. <http://www.nai.uu.se/publications/download.html/978-91-7106-606-0.pdf?id=25251>

⁶⁶ Foreign Policy in Focus. Dukulé, Abdoulaye. "Violence Returns to Côte d'Ivoire." 15 November 2004. <http://www.fpif.org/fpiftxt/1048>

⁶⁷ *Managing Migration: The Promise of Cooperation*. Martin, Philip L, Susan F. Martin, and Patrick Weil. "Chapter Six: Migration and European-African Relations [p. 146]." 2006. New York: Lexington Books.



VOA Photo - M. Motta
President Laurent Gbagbo

After learning of a military plot to overthrow him in the early 1960s, Houphouët-Boigny came to the conclusion that the maintenance of a smaller army could prevent against coup attempts staged by the military. He therefore retained a small military for most of his presidency.⁶⁸ As a result, years later, the fledgling military government headed by Guei, which lacked legitimacy, proved unable to govern in the face of widespread public opposition. Guei was forced out of office in a contested election, which brought Laurent Gbagbo, an evangelical Christian and longstanding opponent of Houphouët-Boigny's ruling party, into office.⁶⁹ He, too, quickly resorted to "the politics of exclusion" in order to secure his hold on power. In doing so, he proclaimed himself the people's choice in an election in which Ouattara had again not been allowed to run.⁷⁰

Ethnic unrest mounted. In September 2002, a failed coup led by soldiers from the Muslim north resulted in the death of General Guei. The Gbagbo government's heavy-handed response to the coup led to full-scale rebellion.⁷¹ The rebel group, calling itself the *Mouvement Patriotique de Côte d'Ivoire* (MPCI), asserted control over the cities of Bouaké and Korhogo.⁷² Within two weeks, the MPCI had extended its power over the remainder of the northern half of the country. Côte d'Ivoire was thus divided between the historically Christian south, the heartland of Laurent Gbagbo's government and popularity, and the predominantly Muslim north. The North was also the political base of opposition leader Alassane Ouattara.

In the view of many observers, Ivorian politicians in the post-Houphouët-Boigny era resorted to ethnic and nationalistic rhetoric in order to rally their supporters after the state was no longer able to provide a social contract that included entitling land to the tiller.⁷³ Indeed, *Ivoirité* was initiated during a period of economic crisis that was exacerbated by a growing population in competition for scarce resources.⁷⁴

⁶⁸ Country-data.com. Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. *A Country Study: Ivory Coast*. Warner, Rachel. "Chapter 1: Historical Setting: Internal Dissent and Further Consolidation of Power: Consolidation of Power in the 1960s and 1970s." Handloff, Robert E., Ed. 1988. <http://www.country-data.com/cgi-bin/query/r-6904.html>

⁶⁹ Institute for Security Studies. "Cote d'Ivoire: Fact File: Political History and Governance." 2007. http://www.issafrica.org/index.php?link_id=14&slink_id=5264&link_type=12&slink_type=12&tmpl_id=3

⁷⁰ The Perspective. Hodge, Theodore. "The Dirty Politics of Africa: The Crises in the Ivory Coast - Part III." 6 February 2003. <http://www.theperspective.org/dirtypoliticspartthree.html>

⁷¹ Christian Science Monitor. Itano, Nicole. "Ivory Coast Braces for War." 30 September 2002. <http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/0930/p06s01-woaf.html>

⁷² In late September, heavy fighting broke out in Bouaké. More than 100 American students and staff at a missionary boarding school were caught in the crossfire. U.S. Special Forces from the military's European Command were dispatched at the request of the U.S. Ambassador. Ghana was the staging base for the 200 U.S. troops involved in the evacuation. Global Security. "Ivory Coast Conflict 2002." 15 August 2006. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/ivory-coast-2002.htm>

⁷³ *The Myth of "Ethnic Conflict": Politics, Economics, and Cultural Violence*. Crawford, Beverly and Ronnie Lipschutz, Eds. 1998. Berkeley: University of California Press.

⁷⁴ Political instability resulting from inter-ethnic conflict has been a widespread phenomenon in Africa. The case of Côte d'Ivoire is neither unique nor the most extreme to date when contrasted with the ethnic cleansing that occurred in Rwanda and, more recently, Darfur. What makes the situation noteworthy is that

A Country Divided

Government and MPCCI representatives negotiated a ceasefire in mid October 2002. (French military forces, which were already present in the country, as well as African troops fielded by UN Peace Keeping Forces, continue to monitor the ceasefire line.) In January 2003, the major political parties and the MPCCI signed the Linas-Marcoussis Accord, which created an interim Government of National Reconciliation. Every political party in the RCI was given a seat in the new government; the MPCCI gained control of seven ministries, including those of Justice and Information. However, this government in fact exercised authority only intermittently, with various opposition parties suspending their participation for long periods of time.⁷⁵



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Government fighter

New rebel groups emerged in the western part of the country in 2003, thereby complicating national unity efforts. The *Mouvement Populaire du Grand Ouest* (MPIGO) and the *Mouvement pour la Justice et la Paix* (MJP) claimed that they were fighting to avenge the death of General Guei. In reality, however, they were former Revolutionary United Front (RUF) soldiers from Sierra Leone and troops from Liberia's army that remained loyal to then- President of Liberia, Charles Taylor. Moreover, it was "pillage, not politics," that motivated them,⁷⁶ as profiteering from war was "the only business many of them had ever known."⁷⁷

The three rebel groups subsequently formed a political-military alliance called the New Forces (*Forces Nouvelles*). However, while the MPCCI exercised control over the North and established itself as a professional force in key cities, the authority of the MPIGO and MJP was distinguished by vandalism and terror.⁷⁸ As a result, tens of thousands of Ivoirians fled the western region where Liberian mercenaries and local armed militia are also present.⁷⁹

In November 2004, escalating tensions resulted in renewed fighting after the government bombed rebel-controlled Bouaké, killing nine French soldiers in the process.⁸⁰ Paris

the RCI's decline was more drastic, thereby providing lessons on how stable and prosperous states can fail. Project Syndicate. Granville, Brigitte. "The Ivory Coast Shipwreck." 2005. <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/granville12>

⁷⁵ Montreal Research Group on Ethnic Conflict, McGill University. Rothchild, Donald. "Power Sharing Institutions as a Response to Insecurity after Africa's Civil Wars [p. 14]." 2005. <http://mrgec.mcgill.ca/Papers/rothchild,%20feb%2005.pdf>

⁷⁶ ZSpace. Gberie, Lansana. "The Crisis in the Ivory Coast." 24 June 2004. <http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?ItemID=5769>

⁷⁷ *Les Petites Nouvelles*, Friends of Côte d'Ivoire. The New Republic. Merrill, Austin. "Duékoué Dispatch, Citizen Soldiers." 17 October 2005. <http://www.friendsofcotedivoire.org/docs/FOCnewsletter0906.pdf>

⁷⁸ *Nine Hills to Nambonkaha: Two Years in the Heart of an African Village*. Erdman, Sarah. "Chapter Four: A War [pp. 315–316]." 2003. New York: Henry Holt, 2003.

⁷⁹ OpenDocument Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. March 2003. [http://www.internal-displacement.org/idmc/website/countries.nsf/\(httpEnvelopes\)/C9D01F76187AA630802570B8005A6FDD?](http://www.internal-displacement.org/idmc/website/countries.nsf/(httpEnvelopes)/C9D01F76187AA630802570B8005A6FDD?)

⁸⁰ BBC News, International Edition. "AU Condemns Ivory Coast Air Raids." 6 November 2004. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3987787.stm>

responded with a military strike that destroyed the small Ivoirian air force.⁸¹ The French, ironically, earned the hatred of both sides, who agreed on little else.⁸² Each accused the former colonial government of supporting the other side, and each believed that without the intervention of French troops, military victory would have been theirs.⁸³



VOA Photo - M. Motta
Northern rebels

The retaliation angered southerners who felt that the French were interfering in their country's internal affairs.⁸⁴ Rampaging Abidjanis destroyed French-owned property and assaulted French expatriates (*tubabu*), including women.⁸⁵ Ivoirians could not positively identify which Caucasians were *tubabu*, of course. Other nationalities reported harrowing encounters with vigilante groups composed of young men who operated according to the "act first and ask questions later" mentality.⁸⁶ Most non-African foreign nationals fled the country, and embassies were downsized to only essential staff.⁸⁷ The UN Security Council issued an immediate arms embargo on the RCI, and it gave the nation's feuding leaders 30 days to renew the peace process or face a travel ban and a freeze on their assets. Despite the resurrection of the peace process, however, no agreement was reached between the two sides.⁸⁸

Recent Events

The troubled RCI and its unstable political situation received renewed international attention in September 2006. News organizations reported that hazardous waste from the industrialized world was being haphazardly disposed of in a developing country with few

⁸¹ Washington Post. Farah, Douglas. "Road to Violence: Ivory Coast's President Divided His Country." 22 November 2004. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A3155-2004Nov21.html>

⁸² The Perspective. Nabakwe, Ruth. "Côte d'Ivoire, Africa and the Policy of the 'Third Man.'" 8 October 2002. http://www.theperspective.org/ivory_coast.html

⁸³ The New Republic. Kahn, Jeremy, "Ivory Keys." 17 November 2004. <http://www.tnr.com/doc.mhtml?i=express&s=kahn111704>

⁸⁴ It has been suggested that Laurent Gbagbo feared loss of power in any type of settlement. Council on Foreign Relations. Pan, Esther. "Ivory Coast Mission Imperiled." 21 January 2006. http://www.cfr.org/publication/9620/ivory_coast_mission_imperiled.html?breadcrumb=%2Fpublication%2Fpublication_list%3Fgroupby%3D0%26page%3D1%26type%3Ddaily_analysis

⁸⁵ American Renaissance. The Independent. Selva, Meera. "Rioters Rape Europeans as They Flee Ivory Coast." 13 November 2004. http://www.amren.com/mtnews/archives/2004/11/rioters_rape_eu.php

⁸⁶ In the words of a British journalist, "Loyalists at impromptu roadblocks around Abidjan's otherwise deserted streets stopped cars and frisked passengers. At one checkpoint, a bare-chested young man whose breath smelled of alcohol leaned in the window, saw I was a foreigner, and drew his finger across my throat." The New Republic. Peel, Michael. "Abidjan Dispatch: Rumbblings." 20 December 2004. <http://www.tnr.com/doc.mhtml?i=20041220&s=peel122004>.

⁸⁷ Washington Post. Timberg, Craig. "Colonial Tensions Reemerge in Ivory Coast." 19 November 2004. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A60915-2004Nov18?language=printer>

⁸⁸ Realistically, the mediation process can only fulfill its mandate if the interested parties agree in principle about the final goal and remain divided only on how best to achieve it. However, the limited progress achieved in the process reflected the reality that those in power found the conditions of a divided country (which remained in a state of "neither peace nor war") preferable to a political settlement. Spectrezone. Dévérin, Yveline. "Ivory Coast: The Crisis is Good for Business." 24 May 2006. <http://www.spectrezone.org/Africa/IvoryCoast.htm>

prospects for foreign investment.⁸⁹ Specifically, 500 tons of toxic sludge from a Dutch tanker was off-loaded around Abidjan under cover of night. The widespread outbreak of sickness resulting from exposure to the pollution sparked violent demonstrations.⁹⁰ It took little to convince many Abidjanis that their own leaders, who had initially refused to acknowledge the problem, may have been complicit in the dumping. The uproar forced the prime minister and his government to resign, although most members were subsequently reinstated.⁹¹



In December of that year, Interim Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny publicly criticized President Gbagbo's decision to reinstate three senior officials. These individuals had been deemed partially responsible for allowing the shipment, which was ultimately linked to ten deaths, to enter the country. Gbagbo, who was given a seventh successive year in power in November 2006 under a new UN plan to establish lasting peace, responded by dismissing the head of Ivoirian television for broadcasting Banny's statement. An international review committee considered Gbagbo's actions to be in violation of the UN-backed peace process that aimed to reunite the country through elections. Subsequent street demonstrations left one person dead, allegedly due to the police's violent suppression of the crowd.⁹²

In late 2006, Gbagbo repudiated the peace plans backed by the UN and France. He opted instead to use African mediators to bring an end to the political stalemate with the rebels. Talks between the two sides began in Burkina Faso in early 2007. In contrast to earlier efforts, these talks resulted in an agreement in early March. According to the terms of the deal, which was signed by President Laurent Gbagbo and rebel chief Guillaume Soro, a new government was to be set up within five weeks. Contentious issues—such as the disarmament of the rebels and the integration of their forces into a national army—were addressed. An agreement was also reached in April to offer amnesty for all non-economic crimes committed during the civil war, with the period of forgiveness backdated to September 2000. In effect, this exonerated soldiers loyal to the Gbagbo government for crimes committed before the coup that divided the country in 2002.⁹³

⁸⁹ Slate. Kahn, Jeremy. "How First World Garbage Makes Africa Sick." 22 September 2006. <http://www.slate.com/id/2150243>

⁹⁰ Spiegel Online, International. Knauer, Sebastian and Thilo Thielke, Gerald Traufetter. "Profits for Europe, Industrial Slop for Africa." 18 September 2006. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/spiegel/0,1518,437842,00.html>

⁹¹ New York Times. Polgreen, Lydia. "Global Sludge Ends in Tragedy for Ivory Coast." 2 October 2006. <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/02/world/africa/02ivory.html?ex=1317441600&en=289499925513d443&ei=5088&partner=rssnyt&emc=rss>

⁹² International Herald Tribune. Associated Press. "Police Fire on Protestors in Ivory Coast, Killing 1, Witnesses Say." 5 December 2006.

http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2006/12/05/africa/AF_GEN_Ivory_Coast_Protests.php

⁹³ BBC News, International Version. "Amnesty for Ivory Coast Conflict." 13 April 2007. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6553547.stm>

The main sticking point in previous negotiation efforts—the determination of who is Ivoirian and therefore eligible to vote—was vaguely addressed. The enforcement mechanism for compliance with the terms of the agreement was also underspecified. Nonetheless, the agreement did call for the gradual withdrawal of French and UN peacekeepers (who were to provide security for the election and then withdraw), as well as the free circulation of goods and people for the following ten months.⁹⁴

The dismantlement of the buffer zone was subsequently initiated as per the agreement.⁹⁵ However, slow progress in other areas has simply reinforced the view of some observers that this sudden agreement in fact represented a continuation of the status quo, which serves the interests of leadership on both sides. For Gbagbo, it was a means to undermine the power of Banny and what he perceived as UN meddling. Moreover, by appointing Soro to serve as Prime Minister, he was able to deflect criticism that there were no northerners in the government. For Soro, it resolved the stalemate in a way that enhanced his political stature.⁹⁶ In June 2007, a rocket attack on Soro’s airplane killed four people but failed to harm the Prime Minister; the assault was attributed to disgruntled northern militia. This incident provided Gbagbo with an opportunity to postpone the agreed-upon elections under the claim that the country was not ready for political reconciliation.⁹⁷



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Ivory Coast rebels

In preparation for the planned election of 2007 (which was never held), specially appointed magistrates were dispatched throughout the country to preside over mobile courts (*audiences foraines*) designed to ascertain the eligibility of residents who lacked appropriate documentation. Those able to demonstrate that one parent was born in the country could use a supplemental birth certificate (*jugements supplétifs*) to obtain a national identity card that would enable them to vote.⁹⁸ While the postponed election was initially scheduled for 2008, it was subsequently deferred again until early 2009 owing to delays in voter registration (which were attributed to a strike by registration personnel).⁹⁹ In January 2009, the elections were once again postponed, with plans to hold them by the end of the year.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴ Voice of America News. Colombant, Nico. “Ivory Coast President, Rebel Leader Sign New Deal to End Stalemate,” 4 March 2007. www.voanews.com/english/2007-03-04-voa17.cfm

⁹⁵ International Herald Tribune. Reuters. “France to Cut Troop Levels in Ivory Coast.” 28 January 2009. <http://www.iht.com/articles/2009/01/28/africa/paris.4-418147.php>

⁹⁶ World Politics Review. Lambert, Blake. “Ivory Coast Anticipates Elections in Fragile State of Peace.” 17 July 2007. <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/Article.aspx?id=934>

⁹⁷ Stratfor. “Gbagbo Gets More Time.” 29 June 2007. http://www.stratfor.com/cote_divoire_gbagbo_gets_more_time

⁹⁸ National Democratic Institute. “Cote d’Ivoire.” No date. http://www.ndi.org/content/cote_divoire

⁹⁹ Relief Web. Reuters. Coulibaly, Loucoumane. “Ivory Coast to Delay Poll to 2009, Official Says.” 17 October 2008. <http://www2.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/KKAA-7KJ3KY?OpenDocument>

¹⁰⁰ Reuters UK. Lewis, David. “Patchy Progress in Ivorian Pre-Poll Unity Moves.” 15 January 2009. <http://uk.reuters.com/article/africaCrisis/idUKLF753533>

Chapter 4 Economy

Introduction

In contrast to some of its neighbors, Côte d'Ivoire long lacked a natural resource base until a small quantity of oil was discovered. As a result, its economy is dominated by small-holder agriculture.¹⁰¹ The RCI is the world's largest supplier of cocoa beans, the source ingredient for chocolate. Owing to strong demand, national resources were funneled for several decades into expanding production. Other exports include coffee, cotton, palm oil, pineapples, and tropical woods. Yet these are all primary products that render the Ivoirian economy vulnerable to price swings in the international commodity market, as well as to adverse weather conditions.¹⁰²



© Felix Krohn
Place de la République, Abidjan

Until 1999, a marketing board, CAISTAB (*Caisse de Stabilisation des Prix des Produits Agricoles*) controlled cocoa production. CAISTAB provided inputs and paid farmers a pre-established price for their harvest, which was collected and sold to international buyers. The difference represented the government's revenues.¹⁰³ As world market prices declined, the government found itself paying farmers more than it received from international buyers. After 2006, oil and natural gas replaced cocoa and coffee as the country's top sources of revenue.¹⁰⁴

Standard of Living

The French transformed the Ivoirian countryside into a producer of cash crops. They also encouraged migration, in some cases forcibly relocating people from neighboring colonies to work in plantation agriculture.¹⁰⁵ After independence, the expansion of export agriculture, as well as the country's political stability, continued to draw immigrants from Côte d'Ivoire's poorer neighbors. According to some estimates, 30% of the country's population is comprised of first, second, or third generation immigrants.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ Foreign Policy Research Institute. Radu, Michael. "Ivory Coast and Zimbabwe: Two Tales of Self-Destruction." 4 August 2000.

<http://www.fpri.org/enotes/20000804.radu.ivorycoastzimbabweselfdestruction.html>

¹⁰² African Studies Center, UCLA. "Ivory Coast." No date.

<http://www.international.ucla.edu/africa/countries/article.asp?parentid=96732>

¹⁰³ *The Political Economy of Economic Growth in Africa, 1960–2000, Vol. 2: Country Case Studies*. Ndulu, Benno, et al, Eds. "Economic Growth in Africa [p. 326]." 2007. New York: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁰⁴ Economy Watch. "Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast) Economy." 2007.

http://www.economywatch.com/world_economy/cote-d-ivoire/

¹⁰⁵ The labor requirements of plantation agriculture are described in the following source: The Field Museum. Heaney, Lawrence and Jacinto C. Regalado, Jr. *Vanishing Treasures of the Philippine Rain Forest*. "Chapter 5: The Causes and Effects of Deforestation: Negros Island: A Case Study in Deforestation." 1998. http://www.fieldmuseum.org/Vanishing_Treasures/Deforestation_2.htm

¹⁰⁶ Nordiska Afrikainstitutet. Obi, Cyril I., Ed. *Perspectives on Cote d'Ivoire: Between Political Breakdown and Post-Conflict Peace*. Almos, Guro. "The Political Implications of Economic Adjustment: Crisis, Reform and Political Breakdown in the Ivory Coast [p. 12]." 2007.

<http://www.nai.uu.se/publications/download.html/978-91-7106-606-0.pdf?id=25251>

The Ivoirian economy began to perform poorly in the 1980s when the international price for its principal exports fell. This problem was exacerbated by the fact that the Ivoirian currency, the CFA franc, was pegged to the French franc, which was rising in value against the U.S. dollar—the currency in which international commodities are bought and sold. As a result, the government was forced to devalue the national currency by 50%.¹⁰⁷ Ivoirians suffered a 25% decline in per capita income between 1987 and 1993.¹⁰⁸ This, coupled with high population growth, resulted in a continuing drop in living standards.

Land Allocation and Use

The principal exploitable resources of Côte d'Ivoire are its relatively rich soils, which are conducive to abundant harvests, and its forests comprised of commercially valuable hardwoods. After independence, the government actively promoted the development of oil palm and rubber plantations as a means of diversifying the economy away from cocoa and coffee. Open forest could be claimed by anyone who cleared it to farm.



© Y-Voir-Plus / flickr.com
Traditional House

Less concern was given to the land's carrying capacity.¹⁰⁹ The overreliance on agriculture as a means for sustenance has hastened the rate of desertification. Trees are chopped down to create fields where the same crops are planted year after year, with the land never allowed to lay fallow (unused) and recover.¹¹⁰ This is particularly important when farmers utilize the shifting cultivation method of farming.¹¹¹

Cash-Crop Agriculture

Cocoa trees, which are indigenous to the Amazon basin and can only grow 20 degrees north or south of the equator, were introduced to Côte d'Ivoire under colonial rule. Today, the RCI supplies 70% of America's cocoa beans and nearly 100% of the chocolate in American candy bars.¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ The CFA currency became so overvalued that it distorted market incentives. Goods smuggled in from Nigeria, for example, were often cheaper than their locally made equivalents. International Herald Tribune. James, Barry. "In Africa, Both Money and Paris's Role Shrink," 24 January 1994. http://www.iht.com/articles/1994/01/24/cfa_3.php

¹⁰⁸ Baptist International Missions, Inc. Parker, Franklin. "Ivory Coast." No date. <http://www.bimi.org/countries/ivorycoast.php>

¹⁰⁹ Global Change Program, University of Michigan. "The Tropical Rain Forest." 2 November 2005. <http://www.globalchange.umich.edu/globalchange1/current/lectures/kling/rainforest/rainforest.html>

¹¹⁰ Global Fire Monitoring Center. International Forest Fire News, No. 20. "Management and Prevention of Forest Fires in Côte d'Ivoire: SODEFOR's Forest Fire Protection Programme." March 1999. http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/iffn/country/ci/ci_2.htm

¹¹¹ The most common form of shifting cultivation is known as slash-and-burn agriculture. Land is cleared by burning so that crops can be grown. After a few planting cycles, soil fertility is reduced and cultivators need to clear a new area to allow the old land to recover its fertility, a process that can take years.

¹¹² Cal Poly Public Affairs, California Polytechnic State University. "Cal Poly Professor Heading to Africa to Investigate Chocolate - Slave Labor Ties." 10 August 2005. http://calpolynews.calpoly.edu/news_releases/2005/aug_05/neuhaus.html

Immigration, as well as migration from other parts of Côte d'Ivoire, has exacerbated this problem by accelerating the rate of forest conversion. According to the UN Environmental Program, the arrival of people from the north, where the effects of desertification are already evident, accounts for the disappearance of forests in the southwest.¹¹³

The trees, which grow best when shaded by hardwoods, produce oblong pods that contain cocoa beans. When the shell is broken, the beans are covered in a creamy pulp. They are scooped out, put in covered baskets (to complete the fermentation process), and dried for several days in the sun before being sold. Most of the country's cocoa crops are cultivated on 450,000 small farms with an area of 12 acres or less.¹¹⁴ Farmers, working in isolation, have little knowledge of world market prices.¹¹⁵ Cultivating the delicate crop is a labor intensive activity, and thus children are frequently involved in agricultural production.¹¹⁶ Their tasks include carrying heavy loads, applying pesticides and fertilizers, and using machetes to cut the ripe fruit.



© BBC World Service
A woman collects dried coconut shells

In recent years, NGOs involved in promoting fair trade have focused a harsh spotlight on the conditions under which cocoa is grown in Côte d'Ivoire.¹¹⁷ In an effort to help West African cocoa farmers improve their economic, social, and environmental standards, the World Cocoa Foundation and the U.S. Agency for International Development announced the creation of the "Healthy Communities" program in October 2006. A central goal of the program is to educate farmers about crop management.¹¹⁸ Overall, it was designed to provide assistance to as many as 150,000 farm families over a period of five years. However, with 700,000 farmers in Côte d'Ivoire alone, it is unlikely that the program will bring vast improvements in the near future.¹¹⁹

¹¹³ Inter Press Service News Agency. Zamblé, Fulgence. "West Africa: From Desertification, to Migration, to Conflict." 4 January 2007. <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=36067>

¹¹⁴ Organic Consumers Association. Tiger, Caroline. "Valentines and Fair Trade." 14 February 2003. http://www.organicconsumers.org/Starbucks/021603_fair_trade.cfm

¹¹⁵ Salon.com. Tiger, Caroline. "Bittersweet Chocolate." 14 February 2003. <http://dir.salon.com/story/news/feature/2003/02/14/chocolate/>

¹¹⁶ School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, Tulane University. The New Wave. "Payson Team to Lead Child Labor Study." 9 October 2006. http://www.sph.tulane.edu/pressroom/fall2006/newsf06_11.htm

¹¹⁷ International Reporting Project, Johns Hopkins University. Kahn, Jeremy. "The Chocolate War." Fall 2003. http://www.internationalreportingproject.org/stories/ivorycoast/ivorycoast_chocolate.htm

¹¹⁸ World Cocoa Foundation. "'Healthy Communities' Program Expands Work to Improve Life for Cocoa Farm Families." 4 October 2006.

http://www.worldcocoafoundation.org/for-the-media/wcf_pr-06-10-4.asp

¹¹⁹ BBC News, International Version. Hawksley, Humphrey. "Child Cocoa Workers Still 'Exploited.'" 2 April 2007. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6517695.stm>

Moreover, reform efforts have had little success in addressing the most troubling issue tied to the West African cocoa industry: the use of child labor under conditions of involuntary servitude.¹²⁰ Brand name corporations buy cocoa from middlemen (*pisteur*) who purchase it from numerous cultivators. This process ensures that the final cocoa product is a mix, thereby enabling buyers to claim ignorance of the conditions under which it was produced. In other words, chocolate products may contain cocoa from both farms utilizing slave laborers (often boys who have been abducted from neighboring Mali) and farms where laborers are all voluntary workers (often from the same family).¹²¹



© missbax / flickr.com
Boy in a coco Tree

Public relations firms have argued that putting pressure on chocolate manufacturers to stop buying cocoa beans from Côte d’Ivoire would only hurt poor growers and reinforce the underlying factors—e.g., illiteracy and a lack of economic alternatives to farm labor—which perpetuate exploitation in the cocoa sector.¹²² International buyers have also voiced concerns over their reliance on the RCI, where years of strife have impeded the investment needed to replace ageing trees.¹²³ Accordingly, there has been an effort to find other suppliers (most notably Vietnam), which may be due to concerns over stability as well as a desire to escape the scrutiny generated by the use of child labor.¹²⁴

During the 1990s, Côte d’Ivoire was poised to establish itself as a major coffee-producing country. It was the largest coffee producer in Africa and fifth-largest in the world. But the Ivorian coffee industry remains geared toward producing large volumes of *robusta* coffee beans, rather than the better quality *arabica* beans, which yield higher value-added specialty coffee.¹²⁵

¹²⁰ Present-day slavery is typified by the “control of a person for economic exploitation by violence (or the threat of violence) or coercion (loss of choice and freedom).” Human Rights and Human Welfare, University of Denver. Topical Research Digest: Human Rights and Contemporary Slavery. Sackett, Marjje. “Forced Child Labor and Cocoa Production in West Africa.” 2008.

<http://www.du.edu/korbel/hrhw/digest/slavery/africa.pdf>

¹²¹ Global Exchange. Knight Ridder News Service. Chatterjee, Sumana. “Much of America’s Sweets Made Possible Through Slave Labor on Ivory Coast: Part I: How Your Chocolate May Be Tainted.” 25 June 2001. <http://www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/fairtrade/cocoa/knightRidder062501e.html>

¹²² Yale Global Online, Yale University. Aaronson, Susan Ariel. “Globalization and Child Labor: The Cause Can Also Be a Cure.” 13 March 2007. <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=8907>

¹²³ Financial Times Deutschland. Green, Matthew. “Ivory Coast’s Cocoa Industry Stares Hard at a Bleak Future.” 12 February 2009. http://www.ftd.de/karriere_management/business_english/:Business-English-Ivory-Coast-s-cocoa-industry-stares-hard-at-a-bleak-future/472453.html

¹²⁴ International Herald Tribune. Leow, Claire. “Vietnam Raises Cocoa Ambitions.” 5 August 2005. <http://www.iht.com/articles/2005/08/04/bloomberg/sxcocoa.php>

¹²⁵ Ringsurf. “Africa – Arabia.” c. 2003–2009. http://www.ringsurf.com/online/2088-africa_arabia.html

Foreign Investment and Business Outlook

Agricultural products are relatively price inelastic. This means that if prices go up, consumers cut back on their consumption. But if prices go down, consumption does not increase dramatically, since there is only so much coffee and chocolate that people want to consume. Plunging commodity prices coupled with government corruption and fiscal mismanagement brought the Ivoirian economy to its knees at the end of 1999. A military coup d'état resulted in the loss of foreign assistance. Private foreign investment declined precipitously. Internal and external debt ballooned as the government spent more than it took in from cash crop sales. Without genuine stability, Côte d'Ivoire is unlikely to be attractive to investors now coming into sub-Saharan Africa.¹²⁶ Some farmers have found Indian and Chinese buyers for jatropha seeds, which mature into oilseed plants with the potential to boost biofuel output. Since land ownership remains the primary source of conflict, however, foreign investment in expanding production remains a risky proposition.¹²⁷ The Ivoirian Army has been called in to provide security for returnees who want to reclaim their ancestral land after fleeing violence.¹²⁸



The plateau, the first world trade center

Notwithstanding the civil war that divided the country from 2002 to 2007, Côte d'Ivoire did not offer an attractive environment for large-scale foreign investment. Corruption is rampant and property rights are not enforced by an independent judiciary. Commercial regulation and bureaucratic formalities are stifling and provide opportunities for public officials to solicit bribes.¹²⁹

The marketing board system for cocoa and coffee has been replaced with a combination of public and private actors, the former of which have the right to strike. They pay the farmers a below market price and the majority of the profits are supposed to be channeled back into agriculture. This arrangement has had the ironic effect of heightening the opportunity for corruption. Yet in cases where charges have been brought, they are vague, leaving the impression that their prosecution was politically motivated.¹³⁰

¹²⁶ Washington Post. McCrummen, Stephanie. "Foreign Investors Recognize Allure of Sub-Saharan Africa." 29 August 2008. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/08/28/AR2008082803534.html>

¹²⁷ African Agriculture. "Land Tensions Fester in Ivory Coast Before Election." 13 October 2008. <http://africanagriculture.blogspot.com/2008/10/land-tensions-fester-in-ivory-coast.html>

¹²⁸ AlertNet, Reuters. Aboa, Ange. "Ivory Coast Sends Army to Secure Cocoa-Growing Area." 31 December 2008. <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/LV115173.htm>

¹²⁹ Heritage Foundation. 2009 Index of Economic Freedom. "Côte d'Ivoire." 2009. <http://www.heritage.org/Index/Country/CoteDiviore>

¹³⁰ Voice of America. Colombant, Nico. "Ivory Coast Cocoa Investigation Implicates Top Officials." 13 June 2008. <http://www.voanews.com/english/archive/2008-06/2008-06-13-voa46.cfm>

Natural Resources

The RCI's main natural resource is petroleum. Diamonds, the hardest known mineral, are also important. The mining industry has not contributed greatly to the country's economy, however. Similarly, relatively small amounts of oil have been extracted from offshore sources. Additional oil and natural gas resources have been discovered, but they have yet to be exploited.¹³¹ Still, given the prospects for the price of oil to climb, even a small amount of the natural resource translates into a significant sum in monetary terms. Indeed, in 2007, oil accounted for 28% of the government's export revenues, more than coffee and cocoa.¹³² In 2008, the government reaped a windfall of USD 374 million between January and September owing to the unprecedented increase in prices.¹³³

Transportation

Compared to most developing countries, especially those in West Africa, Côte d'Ivoire has exceptional infrastructure. The RCI boasts a network of more than 12,875 km (8,000 mi) of paved roads. It also maintains a solid telecommunications sector, including a public data communications network, cellular phone services, and internet access. From Abidjan there is regular air service to destinations within the region as well as to and from Europe.



© liquidrage2007 / flickr.com
Night shot of Abidjan

Abidjan is also known for its modern port facilities, the best in West Africa. It is the largest port between Casablanca and Cape Town on the West African littoral, and it has the capacity to serve all of land-locked West Africa.¹³⁴ After the country was split in two and security became precarious, some perishable freight was diverted to Ghana. Among other problems, the lack of consolidated control over the country increased the “road fees” that truckers have to pay to move their goods. Even after expanding its infrastructure, however, Ghana's Tema Port only has 17 ship berths, whereas Abidjan has 70.¹³⁵

Tourism

Although the country's daily operations have stabilized to some degree since a peace agreement was concluded in 2007, many countries, including the U.S., have travel advisories in effect for non-essential travel to Côte d'Ivoire. The security situation remains volatile since the country was divided in 2002, and violent street crime is an ever

¹³¹ University of Guelph. Van Straaten, Peter. *Rocks for Crops: Agrominerals of Sub-Saharan Africa*. “Côte d'Ivoire [pp. 125–127].” 2002. http://www.uoguelph.ca/~geology/rocks_for_crops/21cote_divoire.PDF

¹³² Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy. “Country Analysis Briefs: Cote d'Ivoire: Background.” July 2008. <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/cdivoire.html>

¹³³ Africa News. Mensah, Kent. “Cote d'Ivoire: Oil Income Booms.” 14 January 2009. http://www.africanews.com/site/Cote_dIvoire_Oil_income_booms/list_messages/22651

¹³⁴ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State. “Background Note: Cote d'Ivoire.” January 2009. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2846.htm>

¹³⁵ BBC News, International Version. Simpson, Sarah. “Ghana's Trade Gains from Conflict.” 29 October 2003. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/3205723.stm>

present threat. If visitors were assured of stability and a reasonable degree of safety, Côte d'Ivoire would have plenty of viable tourist attractions, including world-class beaches.

Banking and Credit

The Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO) governs banking and other financial institutions in the RCI. Like the other seven BCEAO countries, Côte d'Ivoire uses the CFA franc, which is pegged to the *euro*. In 2005, there were 17 commercial banks. Those in the rebel-held North were closed after the outbreak of civil war. As a result, money circulated more informally in the breakaway part of the country.¹³⁶ Banks have since resumed service as part of national reunification efforts.¹³⁷

Lending to individuals without political connections is non-existent. However, the poor's capacity for entrepreneurship has been tapped to a limited extent through the availability of small loans known as microcredit.¹³⁸ Microfinance institutions offer loans to people in developing countries who lack access to the credit needed to start small businesses. The main focus of these institutions is the development of networks in which members are responsible for group formation, loan disbursement, and enforcement of repayment rules.¹³⁹

Microfinance in Côte d'Ivoire is represented by many different credit unions and small savings and credit associations. Most microfinance institutions developed in the early 1990s in response to the risk posed by so-called "mobile saving bankers." Practitioners of this scheme offered to retain the client's money for a set period of time, but often disappeared when clients returned to claim their deposits.



© Rick Boyne
Shopping center Abidjan

According to the UN, "in 1995 alone, the microfinance sector contributed over 20% to Côte d'Ivoire's GDP and provided almost 30% of the country's employment."¹⁴⁰ Private interests have set up microcredit projects as a demonstration of corporate social responsibility.¹⁴¹ The practice has enabled the poor to become more self-reliant by creating employment opportunities and engaging women in economically productive

¹³⁶ International Herald Tribune. Associated Press. "War Divided Ivory Coast Risks Unity in Bid to End Restive Stalemate." 9 April 2007. <http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2007/04/09/africa/AF-GEN-Ivory-Coast-Grasping-at-Peace.php>

¹³⁷ AllAfrica.com. Inter-Press Service News Agency. Zamblé, Fulgence. "Côte d'Ivoire: Formal Economy Returns to the North." 2 February 2009. <http://allafrica.com/stories/200902030002.html>

¹³⁸ Grameen Bank. Yunus, Muhammed. "What is Microcredit?" February 2009. http://www.grameen-info.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=28&Itemid=108

¹³⁹ Women Aid International. "Microcredit: Rapid Growth Threat." 1998. <http://www.womenaid.org/press/info/microcredit/micro3.html>

¹⁴⁰ UN Capital Development Fund. "Countries and Regions: Côte d'Ivoire." No date. http://www.uncdf.org/english/countries/cote_divoire/index.php

¹⁴¹ Optimist World. "Benetton Funds Micro-Credit Scheme in Senegal." 15 May 2008. [http://optimistworld.com/Articles2.aspx?id=0891fa22-74d1-4487-9ed3-](http://optimistworld.com/Articles2.aspx?id=0891fa22-74d1-4487-9ed3-874ed196e8e4&style=companies&IsMpu=No)

[874ed196e8e4&style=companies&IsMpu=No](http://optimistworld.com/Articles2.aspx?id=0891fa22-74d1-4487-9ed3-874ed196e8e4&style=companies&IsMpu=No)

activities. Access to credit, however, is still a major obstacle that prevents individual entrepreneurs from achieving their full economic potential. The political instability that has wracked the country has also disrupted commerce, hurting the poorest entrepreneurs the most.

Chapter 5 Society

Introduction

The name Côte d'Ivoire was bestowed by French merchants who traded their wares for ivory with indigenous peoples. Today, the elephant population has been largely eradicated, and the country is better known as a source of agricultural products, such as cocoa, coffee, and timber. As in the past, Côte d'Ivoire remains ethnically and culturally diverse.



© escalepade / flickr.com
Mask

Migration has long played a major role in the settlement and development of the region, resulting in

the dispersion of numerous ethnic groups across national borders.¹⁴² Today, most Ivoirians have ties and allegiances that extend from kinship group to tribe to nation.

The people of Côte d'Ivoire have retained distinct music, dance, and storytelling traditions. Although the population is largely comprised of Muslim and Christian majorities, many Ivoirians also continue to practice indigenous religions. Life's major milestones—birth, adolescence, marriage, and death—are all marked with ceremonies and rituals. Among the most important of these are initiation rites, during which participants undergo endurance tests and secret ceremonies.

Ethnic Groups and Languages

Côte d'Ivoire is home to over 60 ethnic groups. Many of these groups share cultural and ethnic affinities, especially after years of internal migration and intermarriage.¹⁴³ Broadly, the Ivoirian population can be divided into four general groups, which in turn have various subgroups.¹⁴⁴

In the northwest savanna region, the Mandé peoples form the major ethnic group. Subgroups of the Mandé include the Malinké, Dioula, Bambara, and Juula. Historically, these groups have earned their livelihoods in agriculture, animal husbandry, and trade. Among them, the Dioula are particularly known for their history as active and successful merchants. In the past, they operated a major trade network linking the southern forests with the Sudan in the north.¹⁴⁵ Overall, the Mandé peoples are predominantly Muslim, and they maintain strong ethnic and cultural links with groups in neighboring countries.

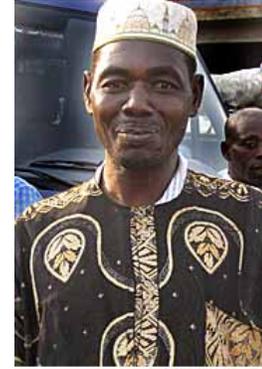
¹⁴² International Organization for Migration. Badiane, Cheikh (International Labor Organization). "Regional Workshop on Migration Management in West Africa" (paper presented at the ECOWAS-IOM Seminar on Irregular Migration in West Africa, Dakar). 6–8 February 2007. http://www.iom.int/senegal/doc/oimcedaao/B4_Pr%C3%A9sentation%20de%20M%20Cheikh%20BADIANE%20-%20ILO%20AN.pdf

¹⁴³ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Côte d'Ivoire: People: Ethnic Groups." 2009. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/139651/Cote-dIvoire>

¹⁴⁴ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. *A Country Study: Ivory Coast*. Byrnes, Rita M. "Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment: Ethnic Groups and Languages: Ethnic Diversity." Handloff, Robert E., Ed. 1988. [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+ci0048\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+ci0048))

¹⁴⁵ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Dyula." 2009. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/175341/Dyula>

Predominant in the northeast, the Voltaïque, or Gur, group includes the subgroups of the Senufo, Lobi, and Bobo tribes. For the most part, these tribes practice either Islam, animism, or other indigenous faiths, although some may be Christian converts.¹⁴⁶ The Senufo tribes, who comprise the largest of the Voltaïque groups, work primarily in agriculture. They are known as talented musicians and wood sculptors.¹⁴⁷



© BBC World Service
Ivoirian Man

The Akan are the dominant ethnic group of the southeast. Many of them are descendents of migrants from the historic Ashanti Kingdom, and they therefore maintain strong cultural ties to Akan groups in Ghana and Togo. Major subgroups of the Akan include the Baoulé and Agni peoples. The Baoulé are agriculturists whose primary crops include coffee, cocoa, and yams, the latter of which hold great cultural significance for the tribe. They retain indigenous religious practices and are known for their wood sculptures.¹⁴⁸

In the southwest, the Kru peoples comprise the major ethnic group, with the Bété tribe forming the largest subgroup.¹⁴⁹ Known as fishermen, stevedores, and skillful navigators, the Kru are thought to derive their name from a corruption of the English word “crew.”¹⁵⁰ Many of them also work in agriculture in the forest region. The Bété peoples are predominantly Christian.¹⁵¹

Over 60 languages are spoken in Côte d’Ivoire. The official language, French, is used in government and is the medium of instruction in all educational institutions. Dioula is the language of commerce.¹⁵² In addition to French and Dioula, Akan is spoken in and around Abidjan. Baoulé is the native tongue of the nation’s largest tribe, and Malinké and Senufo are also widely spoken, particularly in the north.

Religion

In terms of population distribution, Côte d’Ivoire has historically possessed a Christian-dominated south and a Muslim-dominated north. (This specific distribution pattern is common throughout West Africa.) However, as a result of the civil war, as well as immigration, migration, and interethnic marriages, the country’s once concentrated

¹⁴⁶ Peoplegroups.org. “People Groups of Côte d’Ivoire.” No date.

<http://www.peoplegroups.org/MapSearch.aspx?country=C%C3%B4te%20d'Ivoire>

¹⁴⁷ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. “Senufo.” 2009.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/534930/Senufo>

¹⁴⁸ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. “Baule.” 2009.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/56453/Baule>

¹⁴⁹ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. Handloff, Robert E., ed. *A Country Study: Ivory Coast*. Byrnes, Rita M. “Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment: Ethnic Groups and Languages: Ethnic Diversity.” 1988. [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+ci0048\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+ci0048))

¹⁵⁰ Institute for Security Studies. “Côte d’Ivoire: History and Politics.” No date.

<http://www.iss.co.za/AF/profiles/IvoryCoast/Politics.html>

¹⁵¹ Peoplegroups.org. “People Groups of Côte d’Ivoire.” No date.

<http://www.peoplegroups.org/MapSearch.aspx?country=C%C3%B4te%20d'Ivoire>

¹⁵² Pilot Destination Guides. Colbourne, Jenna. “Introduction to Ivory Coast (Cote d’Ivoire).” No date.

http://www.pilotguides.com/destination_guide/africa/west_africa/ivory_coast.php

Muslim and Christian communities are now more widely dispersed.¹⁵³ According to a 2008 estimate, Muslims comprise 38.6% of the total population and Christians account for 32.8%.¹⁵⁴ Other estimates suggest that the Muslim and Christian populations each comprise between 35% and 40% of the population.¹⁵⁵

A large number of Ivoirians, including many that claim to follow either Islam or Christianity, are also practitioners of indigenous faiths. For example, the traditional view that the spiritual and physical worlds are inseparable remains widely embraced, even among Muslims and Christians. According to varying estimates, practitioners of indigenous religions represent between 12% and 25% of the Ivoirian population.^{156, 157} In general, they are more likely to be found in rural areas.



© Brian J. McMorrow
Afternoon call-to-prayer
the old way

For many followers of the dominant religions, those who still practice traditional belief systems represent potential converts. Moreover, the collapse of governmental authority during the civil conflict heightened the desire to seek protection from a divine source.¹⁵⁸ These factors create an atmosphere of competition between various religions.¹⁵⁹

The Catholic Church has made the African continent a priority. Likewise, Pentecostal and Evangelical Christian churches send members of their congregations overseas to work as missionaries. In Côte d'Ivoire, adherents of Evangelical faiths are now estimated to comprise over 9% of the total population.¹⁶⁰ Iran has also made substantial efforts to promote its religious and political views on the continent.¹⁶¹ Saudi Arabia, too, has spent large amounts of money to spread the Muslim faith in West Africa.¹⁶² The ethical issues

¹⁵³ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State. *International Religious Freedom Report 2008*. "Cote d'Ivoire." September 2008.

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2008/108364.htm>

¹⁵⁴ Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook*. "Cote d'Ivoire." 19 March 2009.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iv.html>

¹⁵⁵ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State. *International Religious Freedom Report 2008*. "Cote d'Ivoire." September 2008.

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2008/108364.htm>

¹⁵⁶ Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook*. "Cote d'Ivoire." 19 March 2009.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iv.html>

¹⁵⁷ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State. *International Religious Freedom Report 2008*. "Cote d'Ivoire." September 2008.

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2008/108364.htm>

¹⁵⁸ The Atlantic. Grizwold, Eliza. "God's Country." March 2008.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200803/nigeria>

¹⁵⁹ Foreign Policy Research Institute. *Watch on the West*, Vol. 3, No. 1. Jenkins, Philip. "Globalization and the Transformation of Christianity." January 2002.

<http://www.fpri.org/ww/0301.200201.jenkins.globalizationtransformchristianity.html>

¹⁶⁰ Serving in Mission. "Côte d'Ivoire." 2008. <http://sim.org/index.php/country/CI>

¹⁶¹ National Intelligence Council. "Mapping Sub-Saharan Africa's Future." March 2005.

http://www.dni.gov/nic/confreports_africa_future.html

¹⁶² U.S. Institute of Peace. Muslim World E-Bulletin. Chirot, Daniel. "Could there be Muslim-Christian Wars in West Africa?" May 2005. <http://www.usip.org/muslimworld/bulletin/2005/may.html>

related to spreading one's faith, however, can become a source of tension between different religious communities and a potential basis for conflict.¹⁶³

Gender Issues

According to the nation's legal and constitutional code, discrimination on the basis of gender is prohibited in Côte d'Ivoire. Ivoirian women have had the right to vote and run for office since 1952. In 1965, an Ivoirian woman was first elected to Parliament, and just over a decade later, President Houphouët-Boigny established the Ministry of Women's Affairs.



© missbax / flickr.com
Little girl

Despite these gains in the realm of political representation, the status of women in Ivoirian society remains subordinate. In terms of education, boys often receive priority over girls, especially if a family's resources are limited. As a result, the adult literacy rate for Ivoirian men is 60.8%, while for women it is 38.6%.¹⁶⁴

Female genital mutilation (FGM) has been banned in Côte d'Ivoire since 1998. But the dissemination of information is slow, leaving many communities unaware of the reforms. As one member of an isolated community pointed out, "There are people in the village who have never seen a television. Only a few fortunate ones have radio sets. Our road is impassable year round. We almost never go anywhere. Given such conditions, how do you think we can get any information or news?"¹⁶⁵

There is also resistance on the part of those who are aware of the law but, nevertheless, wish to continue the practice of FGM. Its persistence is in part due to cultural tradition, but there is also an economic logic to the practice, which explains why it remains widespread. For most girls, the only way to secure future stability is through marriage. A girl who is not circumcised will have difficulty finding a partner and may thus face an unknown future.

Spousal abuse is still widely treated as a private household matter. Official intervention only occurs when the victim is seriously injured or in the unlikely event that the victim files a formal complaint. For women in urban areas who seek work outside the home, employers often discriminate against female applicants because they do not want the inconvenience of pregnant workers.

The civil war severely endangered the health and livelihoods of Ivoirian women. Approximately 80% of the Ivoirians displaced during the conflict were women and children. As internal refugees, they were exposed to increased risks of violence, sickness,

¹⁶³ World Council of Churches. "Christian Code of Conduct on Religious Conversion Wins Broader Backing." 15 August 2007. <http://www2.wcc-coe.org/pressreleasesen.nsf/index/pu-07-23.html>

¹⁶⁴ Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook*. "Cote d'Ivoire." 19 March 2009. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iv.html>

¹⁶⁵ Inter Press Service News Agency. Munkanouan, Doua D. "Renewed Fight against Female Circumcision." 24 September 2002. <http://www.aegis.com/news/ips/2002/IP020917.html>

and exploitation.¹⁶⁶ In such circumstances, many women and girls were forced to turn to prostitution as a means to support themselves and their families.¹⁶⁷

Even women who remained in their communities faced heightened risks. As symbols of a family's honor, unmarried females have been raped by both government security forces and members of armed opposition groups. The purpose of this practice is to bring shame to the women, which in turn humiliates their male relatives and their village as a whole. One observer described this practice as "part of a deliberate strategy to instill terror in the civilian population."¹⁶⁸

Cuisine

Côte d'Ivoire has many regional cuisines. In the northern savanna a common dish is rice with a peppery peanut sauce. Closer to the coast, fish with fried plantains is popular. In general, Ivoirian cuisine consists primarily of braised meat and fish and a variety of sauces served with rice or ground manioc, also known as cassava.



© Andymod / McDee at flickr.com
Chilled Avocado Soup

Starchy vegetables (roots and tubers) are a primary food source for people in regions where cereals are not cultivable. Originating in South America, cassava (known elsewhere as yucca) is one of the most important of these staples. Others include potatoes and yams. Often produced in high yields, these foods are rich in carbohydrates but low in protein.¹⁶⁹

There is some danger to preparing cassava, as its roots contain poisonous compounds that can be converted into cyanide when eaten with certain foods, such as almonds. Thus, they need to be specially prepared before they can be eaten. One method of preparation is to shred the roots and ring out the juice; this flushes out many of the toxic compounds. Drying them with heat removes any remaining compounds.¹⁷⁰ Once washed and cooked, the tubers are pounded into a starchy paste or porridge (*foutou*). This paste is basic to the human diet across all of West Africa. Similar pastes can be made from other starchy staples.

¹⁶⁶ Doctors Without Borders. "International Activity Report: Ivory Coast 2005."

<http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/publications/ar/i2005/ivorycoast.cfm>

¹⁶⁷ United Methodist Women's Action Network. "Action Alert: Côte d'Ivoire: A Country in Distress, An Opportunity to Act." June 2003. http://gbgm-umc.org/umw/action_ivorycoast.html

¹⁶⁸ Amnesty International. "Ivory Coast: Sexual Violence against Women Ignored in Conflict." 12 March 2007. http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news_details.asp?NewsID=17291

¹⁶⁹ Country-Studies.com. Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. *A Country Study: Ivory Coast*. Handloff, Robert E. and Judith Timyan. "Chapter 3: The Economy: Agriculture: Food Crops." Handloff, Robert E., Ed. 1988. <http://www.country-studies.com/ivory-coast/food-crops.html>

¹⁷⁰ School of Biological Sciences, Illinois State University. "Cassava—*Manihot esculenta*, a Low-Protein, Starchy Staple." No date. <http://www.bio.ilstu.edu/Armstrong/syllabi/cassava/cassava.htm>

A typical feature of Ivoirian kitchens is a set of huge *calabashes*, or hollowed-out gourd halves. These large containers are used for a variety of tasks, including food preparation, washing dishes and clothes, and even bathing young children.¹⁷¹

Traditional Dress

Ivoirians wear both traditional and Western clothing. In urban areas, Western clothing is more common, with most men wearing pants or blue jeans and shirts. Many women still prefer to wear brightly colored wraparound skirts (*pagne*) with matching blouses and a head scarf.¹⁷² These wraps feature a profusion of designs and are named after whatever adorns them. Prints may include images of politicians, religious leaders, animals, flowers, or events and holidays. Reflecting the globalization of American pop culture, fabric designs have begun to sport the faces of internationally recognized celebrities like Michael Jordan or brand name product labels. The fabric, however, might also be decorated with footprints to indicate that a woman follows her husband around to prevent him from finding a mistress.¹⁷³



© Y-Voir-Plus / flickr.com
Traditional dress

Pagne reflect a woman's dignity and wealth. After she dies, it is customary for the family's female elders to inventory her possessions. The more *pagne* skirts she acquired in her lifetime, the greater her stature. Similar to the Western convention of bequeathing the family silver and china, *pagne* are passed down from mother to daughter.

Traditional dress is more common in rural areas. In these cases, men wear shorts or cloth wraps. For ceremonial occasions, they don long, elegant robes.¹⁷⁴ Muslim men and women both wear a *boubou*, a flowing, sleeved robe or dress, on special occasions. Veiling is optional for Muslim women in Côte d'Ivoire. Some believe that Allah cares more about a person's individual faith and actions than his or her adherence to "cultural practices" such as wearing a veil. Others believe that veiling is an essential part of Islamic religious practice for women.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ The Worldwide Gourmet. "Flavors of Ivory Coast." No date.

<http://www.theworldwidegourmet.com/countries/flavors-of-ivory-coast/>

¹⁷² Wax-printed fabric, or *pagne*, is an Indonesian creation that found its way to Africa via Dutch colonialists at the beginning of the 20th century. It quickly displaced the indigenous hand-woven cottons, which are more expensive and time-consuming to make. Pangaea.net. News From Ivory Coast. "Pagne, the Fabric of Life." October 1995. <http://www.pangaea.net/country/ivorycst.htm>

¹⁷³ Rutgers Focus, Rutgers University. Cornell, Diane. "Silent No Longer: Stories Told in French by the Women of Africa and the Caribbean islands." 13 October 2000.

<http://ur.rutgers.edu/focus/article/Silent%20no%20longer/215/>

¹⁷⁴ Every Culture.com. "Ivoirians: Clothing." No date. <http://www.everyculture.com/wc/Costa-Rica-to-Georgia/Ivoirians.html>

¹⁷⁵ U.S. Embassy, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. "Women Muslims in Yamoussoukro." No date.

http://abidjan.usembassy.gov/women_muslims_in_yamoussoukro.html

Folklore

Folklore plays an important role in the culture of each tribal group. A popular tale of the Baoulé tribe is the story of their historic migration from their original home in the Ashanti Kingdom of Ghana to the region comprising present-day Côte d'Ivoire.¹⁷⁶

According to the legend, the Baoulé had prudently stored a reserve supply of grain while living in Ghana. However, when famine struck the region, the tribe was attacked by other groups who lacked a similar reserve. Rather than give up their grain and face starvation, their queen, Abla Pokou, led the Baoulé people west.¹⁷⁷ When they reached the impassable Comoé River in Côte d'Ivoire, Abla Pokou sacrificed her own child to the spirits (*genies*) of the river. The *genies* responded by causing the nearby trees to bend across the river, forming a bridge that enabled the Baoulé to reach the other side. After the tribe crossed, the trees straightened, preventing others from following them in pursuit. Alluding to the queen's sacrifice, the name Baoulé means "the little one dies."¹⁷⁸

For the Dioula tribe, an important aspect of village life is the totem. Often taking the form of a specific animal, the totem is a revered figure that a family makes sacrifices to and lavishes with care. They are not to eat the totem under any circumstances, even if their abstinence requires them to go hungry. Families are paired with particular animals in different ways.

In one case, a family's totem was the chicken. This pairing occurred because a baby chick had hopped into the mother's mortar while she was pounding corn. The mother was in a fast rhythm and could not stop before she pounded the chick with her pestle and killed it. That night she had a dream in which the mother hen spoke to her. The hen said that because the woman had killed one of her chicks, she would take one of her children. Later that week the family's baby came down with a fever and died. From that day forward, the mother embraced the chicken as her totem. As long as she took care of the family flock, her children thrived.¹⁷⁹



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Boys and Boat

The Arts

Storytelling, music, and mask-dancing play an important role in the lives of Ivoirians. It is noteworthy that in most African tribal languages there is no word for "art," a term that emphasizes aesthetic appeal. Instead, an object's value is based on its cultural connection to sacred rites and the spirit world.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ Demographers acknowledge that this migration represented a population shift toward the region comprising present-day Côte d'Ivoire. CaapAfrica. "The Queen Pokou Fondatrice of the Kingdom Baoulé." <http://www.caap-afrika.com/enlareine.html>

¹⁷⁷ The Suppressed Histories Archive. "Women in Global Perspective: Liberators." No date. <http://www.suppressedhistories.net/articles/liberators.html>

¹⁷⁸ EveryCulture.com. "Ivoirians: Folklore." No date. <http://www.everyculture.com/wc/Costa-Rica-to-Georgia/Ivoirians.html>

¹⁷⁹ Personal recollection of a Peace Corps volunteer who served from 1993 to 1996.

¹⁸⁰ Anansi Travel, Anansi NGO. "Art and Music." 2003–2008. <http://www.nas.com/afrika/anansitravel/culture/artandmusic.htm>

Storytelling

Oral tradition has a revered place in African culture. Storytellers (*griots*) may sing or tell folk tales, riddles, and proverbs late into the night. Practitioners must demonstrate a mastery of complex verbal, musical, and memory skills. Such knowledge is acquired through years of specialized training that includes a strong spiritual and ethical component. Such training is needed to control the supernatural forces that are thought to be released by the spoken or sung words of the performance.¹⁸¹

Music

In 2001, UNESCO declared the “Gbofe of Afounkaha” a “masterpiece of the oral and intangible heritage” of humanity.¹⁸² The Gbofe of Afounkaha are side-blown trumpets constructed from tree roots and cowhide. They are used in rituals and traditional ceremonies in the Tagbana community. The trumpet players perform in groups of six, with the fifth trumpet playing lead. They are accompanied by traditional drums and costumed male dancers. Song themes include love, mourning, religious praise, and moral or educational lessons. The term *gbofe* may refer to the instrument, the players, the music, or the entire performance. The crafting of the instruments is a ritual in itself. Traditionally, the Tagbana hold a ceremony with costumed female dancers when a tree’s roots are cut to make the trumpet.¹⁸³



© Steve Evans / flickr.com
The “kora” is a stringed musical instrument from West Africa.

Masks

Masks are used by many Ivoirian tribes for a variety of traditional ceremonies and rituals. The masks themselves often represent the souls of the dead, certain deities, or animal caricatures. They are highly revered objects, and thus only specific individuals or families of a certain standing may own them. Likewise, only specially trained individuals are permitted to touch or wear them. It is considered dangerous for those without such training to wear them because each mask is believed to have a soul, or life force. Similarly, it is believed that when a person dons the mask, he is transformed into the spirit or being that the mask represents.

Because of the sacred nature of these masks, there are also restrictions on who can merely see them. For example, certain masks may only be viewed by members of secret societies. Also, women and non-tribal members may not be allowed to see specific masks. Some masks may be viewed by anyone, however, as they are used in public festivals. Masks may be involved in initiation rites, weddings, funerals, spiritual or magical ceremonies,

¹⁸¹ Humanities Department, Central Oregon Community College. Agatucci, Cora. “African Storytelling.” 31 August 2008. <http://web.cocc.edu/cagatucci/classes/hum211/afrstory.htm>

¹⁸² UNESCO. “Africa: Cote d’Ivoire.” 17 January 2009. http://portal.unesco.org/geography/en/ev.php-URL_ID=2332&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

¹⁸³ UNESCO. “The Gbofe of Afounkaha: The Music of the Transverse Trumpets of the Tagbana Community.” May 2001. http://www.unesco.org/bpi/intangible_heritage/cote.htm

festivals, entertainment activities, or other events.¹⁸⁴ They may also have meanings or functions that are known only to initiated or privileged members of the community.¹⁸⁵

Sports

In Côte d'Ivoire, soccer is a national pastime that transcends class, religion, and region.¹⁸⁶ Losses by the national team, which is known as the Elephants, can have ramifications in the highest echelons of government. In 2000, General Robert Guei, who had just come to power through a military coup, had the national team remanded into police custody for two days as punishment for their elimination in the first round of the African Nations Cup.¹⁸⁷



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Soccer

The team has typically comprised players from both the North and South, even when the country was divided by civil war. During the conflict, the Elephants were regarded by many as an example for the rest of the country to follow.¹⁸⁸ Some players have become national heroes after securing lucrative contracts in Europe. The political problems at home have often taken precedence in public appearances, however. One Ivoirian who played for a British team broke off an interview on Italian TV after he realized that the reporter was completely unaware of the situation in his homeland.¹⁸⁹

The country and its national team are so interconnected in Ivoirian minds that when the Elephants qualified for the World Cup in 2005, jubilant fans raced through the streets of Abidjan shouting, "The war is over! The war is over!"¹⁹⁰ The man given credit for the victory was neither a politician nor a military general. Instead it was Didier Drogba, the team's captain and star striker, who is held in great esteem by his adoring compatriots.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁴ Highlands of Ohio. Craft, Kathryn Williams. "Masks and Mask Culture: Mask Dance Tells Story of Ivory Coast Music and Folklore." 16 February 2002.

http://www.highlandsofOhio.com/images/Masks_and_Mask_Culture.pdf

¹⁸⁵ African Art at the Ralph Procter Gallery. "Masks of the Ivory Coast." Summer 1997.

<http://www.introspecinc.com/gallery/exhibit4.htm>

¹⁸⁶ As a film director observed, "Soccer is a game people can play anywhere, anytime, with a single ball. It's simple, and you don't need a lot of space. The superstar players often come from the least-privileged neighborhoods all over the world...[It] ends up being a gateway to a future of possibility and to leaving poverty behind." *LA Weekly*. Khazeni, Dorna. "The Beautiful Game." 21 March 2007.

<http://www.laweekly.com/2007-03-22/film-tv/the-beautiful-game>

¹⁸⁷ National Geographic Magazine Online. "The Beautiful Game: Why Soccer Rules the World." Laity, Paul. "The Way to Win: Juju on the Field." June 2006.

<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/print/2006/06/soccer/soccer-text>

¹⁸⁸ BBC News, International Edition. Copnall, James. "Soccer Unites Divided Ivory Coast." 21 January 2006. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4633688.stm>

¹⁸⁹ Spiegel Online International. Fichtner, Ullrich. "The Ivory Coast's War of the Elephants." 29 May 2006.

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/spiegel/0,1518,417940,00.html>

¹⁹⁰ The Nation. Zirin, Dave and John Cox. "Hey Guys, It's Just a Game." 20 June 2006.

<http://www.thenation.com/doc/20060703/zirin>

¹⁹¹ Vanity Fair. Merrill, Austin. "Best Feet Forward." 10 July 2007.

<http://www.vanityfair.com/culture/features/2007/07/ivorycoast200707>

Chapter 6 Security

Introduction

In West Africa demographic settlements are horizontal. Population concentrations increase as one moves south, away from the Sahara and toward the fertile, tropical landscape near the Atlantic Ocean. However, the national borders established by European colonial governments, whose presence enabled Christianity to spread among coastal peoples, are vertical and therefore at odds with demography, topography, and religion.¹⁹²

Internal and transnational migration has been a longstanding tradition in the region.¹⁹³ Côte d'Ivoire (RCI) has been a major recipient of these regional population flows. For several decades, the country was a model of political stability and economic prosperity. During this time, it welcomed foreign immigrants to participate in its development, most notably in agricultural production. However, this changed when the market for its agricultural products collapsed while the country was democratizing in the early 1990s. In an effort to garner votes, the southern-based presidential candidate, Henry Konan Bédié, became an "ethnicity entrepreneur" by creating a concept called *Ivoirité*, which limited citizenship, and the right to vote, to those born of Ivoirian parents. All northern Muslims were assumed to be foreigners unless they could prove otherwise. The introduction of controversial identity issues into politics proved destabilizing. Social unrest led to a coup d'état, an army mutiny, and a civil war that, in 2002, resulted in national partition.¹⁹⁴

U.S.–Ivoirian Relations

Relations between the United States and Côte d'Ivoire have historically been cordial. Through the mid 1980s, the RCI was Africa's most loyal backer of the U.S. in the UN General Assembly. Abidjan strongly supported American moves against Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi, especially after evidence surfaced that Libyan agents based in Burkina Faso were training recruits to infiltrate Côte d'Ivoire.¹⁹⁵



© kepi.cncplusplus.com
Street scene

¹⁹² The Atlantic. Kaplan, Robert D. "The Coming Anarchy: How Scarcity, Crime, Overpopulation, Tribalism, and Disease are Rapidly Destroying the Social Fabric of Our Planet." February 1994. <http://www.theatlantic.com/ideastour/archive/kaplan.mhtml>

¹⁹³ UNESCO. Adepaju, Aderanti. "Creating a Borderless West Africa: Constraints and Prospects for Intra-Regional Migration." January 2005. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001391/139142E.pdf>

¹⁹⁴ Global Policy Forum. Refugees International. "Côte d'Ivoire: Address Root Causes of Conflict to Prevent and Reduce Statelessness." 15 February 2007. <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/ivory/2007/0215statelessness.htm>

¹⁹⁵ Federal Research Division, U.S. Library of Congress. *A Country Study: Ivory Coast*. Handloff, Robert E. "Chapter 4: Government and Politics: Foreign Relations: Relations with the United States." Handloff, Robert E., Ed. 1991. [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+ci0144\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+ci0144))

The U.S. is Côte d'Ivoire's second largest trading partner after France. Policymakers in Washington long pointed to the RCI as an example of the benefits of capitalist development.¹⁹⁶ In reality, the West African nation followed a French statist model of development, but one that never compelled its leadership to flirt with Soviet-style Marxist governance.¹⁹⁷ When the Cold War ended, the interests of the U.S. shifted from halting the spread of communism on the African continent to preventing conflicts that create millions of refugees.¹⁹⁸ After the Ivoirian civil war broke out in 2002, there was some debate about whether the U.S. should get involved.¹⁹⁹ It was decided that France should take the lead.

As its relations with France deteriorated owing to the need for a costly French military presence to keep the peace, the Gbagbo government sought to improve ties with the U.S. This opportunity offered Washington the prospect of besting Paris in Francophone Africa, as France could endorse neither the government nor the rebels. In order to improve bilateral ties, Abidjan dispatched a succession of envoys to curry favor with lawmakers on Capitol Hill. It also hired big-name K Street lobbying firms to make its case, and Ivoirian officials even took part in Washington's annual National Prayer Breakfasts. However, this investment did not pay any dividends, nor is it likely to do so in the future, given the RCI's low profile in America's capital.²⁰⁰ The U.S. has maintained its support for French efforts to end the political stalemate and foster national reconciliation. Some give the French presence credit for averting genocide.²⁰¹

Relations with Neighboring Countries

West Africa is the poorest region on earth, where life for the average citizen was chillingly described in Robert Kaplan's *The Coming Anarchy*.²⁰² Despite the fact that some West African governments are democracies (e.g., Ghana, Mali), they have all been characterized by weak governance. Some qualify as failed states and are, therefore, susceptible to conflict.²⁰³ The strong tribal ties between people living in neighboring

¹⁹⁶ Capitalism Magazine. Sowell, Thomas. "From Marxism to the Market." 2 January 2002.

<http://www.capmag.com/article.asp?ID=1331>

¹⁹⁷ American Diplomacy, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Mak, Dayton S. "The Nature of French Diplomacy: Reflections of American Diplomats." 2003.

http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/archives_roll/2003_07-09/mak_french/mak_french.html

¹⁹⁸ CNN News. "Cold War Chat: Chester Crocker Former US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs." 14 February 1999. <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cold.war/guides/debate/chats/crocker/>

¹⁹⁹ Black Star Journal. "Will the Bush Administration Push for Enforcement of UN Resolution in the Ivory Coast?" 29 January 2004. http://blackstarjournal.blogspot.com/2004_01_01_archive.html

²⁰⁰ Africa Policy Forum, Center for Strategic and International Studies. Hennemeyer, Christian. "Ivory Coast: What a Difference a Decade Makes." 2 March 2007. <http://forums.csis.org/africa/?p=27>

²⁰¹ Air Command and Staff College, Air University. Boyer, Timothy E. "Ivory Coast: A Case Study in Intervention and Prevention of Genocide." April 2006.

https://www.afresearch.org/skins/rims/q_mod_be0e99f3-fc56-4ccb-8dfe-670c0822a153/q_act_downloadpaper/q_obj_ff0c15f9-38f1-4f5a-bf1d-18000fed4864/display.aspx?rs=enginespage

²⁰² The Atlantic. Kaplan, Robert. "The Coming Anarchy: How Scarcity, Crime, Overpopulation, Tribalism, and Disease are Rapidly Destroying the Social Fabric of Our Planet." April 1994.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/199402/anarchy>

²⁰³ Christian Science Monitor. McLaughlin, Abraham and Michael Peel. "Push to Limit Ivory Coast Conflict." 12 November 2004. <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/1112/p06s02-woaf.html>

countries have facilitated the recruitment of mercenaries across national borders.²⁰⁴ Likewise, conflicts in one country may easily spill across into others because of tribal allegiances.²⁰⁵

Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa. While its citizenry shares many cultural and ethnic characteristics with Muslim Ivoirians, bilateral relations between the two countries have been tense over the past decade. During the civil war, Côte d'Ivoire accused Burkina Faso of backing the rebel government in the north, a claim that has been denied despite the high profile presence of some rebel leaders in Burkina Faso.²⁰⁶ In



© Felix Krohn
Burkina Faso border

turn, the Burkina Faso government has accused its neighbor of mistreating Burkinabe, who comprise the largest ethnic immigrant group in Côte d'Ivoire.

An estimated three million Burkinabe sought work in Côte d'Ivoire between 1960 and 1993. They were welcomed and offered squatter's rights to farmland. Moreover, their labor contributed to the nation's wealth. When the market for Ivoirian agricultural products fell, the immigrants from Burkina Faso were no longer welcomed. They become scapegoats for the declining fortunes of Ivoirians, and their right to own land was challenged.²⁰⁷ "They lost everything, they became beggars," explained the head of a cocoa cooperative. At the same time, he cautioned, "It's not finished. They will return."²⁰⁸ Some ethnic Burkinabe have been repatriated to Burkina Faso, including many who had never set foot in the country but, nonetheless, do not qualify for Ivoirian citizenship since their parents are immigrants. Four million Burkinabe remain in Côte d'Ivoire.²⁰⁹ In November 2007, the Gbagbo government abolished legislation that required immigrants to carry resident permits. This move was an important step toward reconciliation, since ID checks by police are routine.²¹⁰

²⁰⁴ Voice of America News. Tran, Phuong. "New Peace Deal Signed, Demobilization to Begin in Ivory Coast." 5 March 2007. <http://www.voanews.com/english/2007-03-05-voa36.cfm>

²⁰⁵ U.S. Institute of Peace. "Prospects for Peace in the Ivory Coast: Testimony by Timothy Docking." 12 February 2003. http://www.usip.org/congress/testimony/2003/0212_docking.html

²⁰⁶ Voice of America News. Colombant, Nico and Zoumana Wonogo. "Ivory Coast Rebels Have Double Life in Burkina Faso." 28 February 2006. <http://www.voanews.com/english/2006-02-28-voa11.cfm>

²⁰⁷ New York Times. Sengupta, Somini. "Life in Ivory Coast, Once an Oasis, Now Unsettles Immigrants." 23 January 2003.

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9E03EFDF1E30F930A15752C0A9659C8B63&fta=y>

²⁰⁸ New York Times. Sengupta, Somini "Land Quarrels Unsettle Ivory Coast's Cocoa Belt." 26 May 2004. <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C01E5D8153EF935A15756C0A9629C8B63&sec=&spoon=&pagewanted=all>

²⁰⁹ IRIN News, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. "BURKINA FASO: Would-be Migrants Stuck on Border." 4 February 2009. <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportId=82732>

²¹⁰ France 24 International News. "West African Neighbours Signal Reconciliation." 29 July 2008. <http://www.france24.com/en/20080729-west-african-neighbours-reconciliation-ivory-coast-burkina-faso>

Liberia

In times of unrest in either Liberia or Côte d'Ivoire, refugees have flooded across the border between the two countries. The Liberian Civil War (1989–1996) was one of Africa's bloodiest conflicts. It claimed the lives of more than 200,000 Liberians and displaced one million more who sought refuge in neighboring countries, including Côte d'Ivoire. However,



© Peter Lockyer
Liberia's border

Liberians fleeing the regime of Charles Taylor found themselves unwelcome in Côte d'Ivoire, where rebels also sought safe haven.²¹¹ When civil war broke out in Côte d'Ivoire in 2002, Liberian mercenaries fought in the western region of the country and terrorized the civilian population. Indeed, mercenaries have been identified as Liberia's most important "export."²¹² At one point during the civil conflict, the Ivoirian armed forces were recruiting Liberians into their thinning ranks.²¹³

Ghana

Relations between the Ghanaian and Ivoirian governments have been tense owing to their respective geopolitical alignments and support for governments that the other finds objectionable. However, they successfully worked together to end smuggling (in both directions) across their common border. Ghana is the world's second largest producer of cocoa after Côte d'Ivoire. When purchase prices are higher in the RCI, where the price reflects the market and is no longer set by the government, it creates an incentive for Ghanaians to smuggle cocoa beans across the border.²¹⁴

Guinea

The early relations between Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire, both former French colonies, were strained as a result of antipathy between their respective strongman leaders.²¹⁵ In recent years, Guinea has been wracked by severe economic problems, spillover from instability in neighboring states, and uncertainty over installing a successor to its authoritarian president, who died in 2008.²¹⁶ The military has since taken over the nation, without international support. It remains unclear if the new leadership will be able to usher in stability, and many fear that Guinea could plunge into the same type of unrest that has engulfed some of its neighbors. If that were the case, Côte d'Ivoire might find itself involved in the conflict.

²¹¹ InterAction. Refugees International. "Liberian Refugees Threatened in the Ivory Coast." 10 March 2003. <http://www.interaction.org/newswire/detail.php?id=1366>

²¹² The Perspective. Kamara, Tom. "Liberia's Mercenary Virus and Ivory Coast." 30 October 2000. <http://www.theperspective.org/mercenaryvirus.html>

²¹³ BBC News, International Version. "Ivory Coast Recruiting Liberians." 28 October 2005. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4384570.stm>

²¹⁴ BBC News. Welsh, Paul. "Ghana Battles with Cocoa Smugglers." 17 September 2002. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/2263247.stm>

²¹⁵ CASCON System for Analyzing International Conflict, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Bloomfield, Lincoln P. and Allen Moulton. "Cascon Case GIC: Guinea-Ivory Coast 1966-67." 1999. http://web.mit.edu/cascon/cases/case_gic.html

²¹⁶ International Crisis Group. "Guinea." 2009. <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=1236>

Mali

Mali, the largest country in West Africa, is also one of the poorest. Côte d'Ivoire is its largest trade partner and a source of remittances from expat Malians who have sought work in Ivoirian territory. An unknown number of Malian youths labor in Ivoirian cocoa plantations where they receive no wages for their work. These boys are typically befriended by traffickers (*locateurs*) who they encounter while begging or looking for work. Instead of receiving the paid jobs promised to them, they are taken captive and hauled to the Ivoirian border, where they are transported by motorbike to remote farms that are short of labor. Their presence fills a niche in a market where cocoa farmers have little means to influence their product's prices and can only improve their profit margins by squeezing labor.²¹⁷

In 2000, the two governments signed an agreement in which Abidjan committed to prosecuting persons exploiting child labor; the government also pledged to repatriate abducted minors back to Mali.²¹⁸ However, the enforcement of labor laws is problematic as children routinely help their parents with farm work and many villages are difficult to reach. The cause has been taken up by international NGOs.²¹⁹

The Prospects for National Reconciliation

Because wars require substantial funding, it is common for sustained conflicts to occur in areas endowed with abundant natural resources. (The connection between civil war and resource control was established long ago.)²²⁰ Following this pattern, the civil conflict in Côte d'Ivoire thrived upon the exploitation of resources. Although the UN barred Côte d'Ivoire from trading in "blood diamonds," the enforcement of the ban met with mixed success. More importantly, it was "blood chocolate" that enabled the country's warring factions to finance their operations, thus prolonging the conflict.²²¹



© hdpstar/flickr.com
Youth rebel

Because the exploitation of resources proved lucrative, observers questioned whether the two sides were committed to ending the conflict. For example, during the civil war, prominent government figures were routinely accused of using public funds for personal gain and the procurement of weapons and mercenaries. Members of the rebel *Forces Nouvelles* (FN) were similarly accused of dominating

²¹⁷ Yale Global Online, Yale University. Aaronson, Susan Ariel. "Globalization and Child Labor: The Cause Can Also Be a Cure." 13 March 2007. <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=8907>

²¹⁸ Human Rights Watch. "Borderline Slavery. Child Trafficking in Togo." April 2003. <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2003/togo0403/togo0403.pdf>

²¹⁹ Trade Environmental Database Projects, American University. Chanthavong, Samlanchith. "Chocolate and Slavery: Child Labor in Cote d'Ivoire." 2002. <http://www.american.edu/ted/chocolate-slave.htm>

²²⁰ *The Political Economy of Armed Conflict: Beyond Grievance and Grievance*. Ballentine, Karen and Jack Sherman, eds. Ross, Michael. "Chapter 3: Oil, Drugs and Diamonds: The Varying Roles of Natural Resource in Civil War [p. 3]." 2003. Boulder: Lynne Reiner.

²²¹ Fortune, CNN Money. Parenti, Christian. "Chocolate's Bittersweet Economy." 15 February 2008. http://money.cnn.com/2008/01/24/news/international/chocolate_bittersweet.fortune/

lucrative economic activities, including the cocoa, cotton, and weapons trades, within their area of control.²²²

As the country hovered between peace and war, national politicians were not the only parties to benefit from the country's indeterminate status. Other beneficiaries included private business interests with ties to local political bosses. Such connections enabled them to run commercial ventures under the protection of militias, which would have been disbanded under a peace agreement.²²³

Eight months after the two sides reached such an agreement in March 2007, a college professor observed, "What we have here is a cold peace...The situation looks like it has improved, but it's almost the same, and the real problems that caused the war have never been solved."²²⁴ Ceremonies commemorating the breakthrough agreement have been held with great fanfare.^{225,226} However, constitutional issues related to citizenship, voting rights, land tenure, and eligibility for political office have not been sorted out.²²⁷

The two sides agreed to an electoral "goodwill code," which bars candidates from running campaigns that accent racial, ethnic, and religious cleavages.²²⁸ Elections, however, which were last held in 2000 and originally scheduled for 2005, continue to be pushed back. President Laurent Gbagbo remains in power while former FN rebel leader Guillaume Soro serves as Prime Minister of the coalition government.²²⁹

In June 2008, Gbagbo declared, "We need to elect a president," before adding, "I hope, of course, that they re-elect."²³⁰ Joking aside, few observers believe that he would allow an election to go forward if he was not certain he would be reelected. The stakes are high because the constitution vests extensive power in the office of president.

²²² Global Witness. "Hot Chocolate: How Cocoa Fueled the Conflict in Cote d'Ivoire." June 2007. http://www.globalwitness.org/media_library_detail.php/552/en/hot_chocolate_how_cocoa_fuelled_the_conflict_in_co

²²³ International Crisis Group. Africa Report, No. 82. "Côte d'Ivoire: No Peace in Sight." 12 July 2004. <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=2858&l=1>

²²⁴ Washington Post. Deibert, Michael. "In Ivory Coast, a Fragile Peace is Framed by Promises Unfilled." 16 November 2007. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/11/15/AR2007111502287.html>

²²⁵ Global Policy Forum. Mbachu, Dulue. "Ivory Coast: Flames of Peace." 14 August 2007. <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/ivory/2007/0814flames.htm>

²²⁶ Council on Foreign Relations. Hanson, Stephanie. "In Africa, Hunting for Elusive Peace." 31 July 2007. http://www.cfr.org/publication/13904/in_africa_hunting_for_elusive_peace.html?breadcrumb=%2Fpublication%2Fpublication_list%3Fgroupby%3D0%26type%3Ddaily_analysis%26filter%3D159

²²⁷ The Perspective. Dukule, Abdoulaye W. "Liberia and Ivory Coast: Two Different Paths to Peace." 30 December 2004. http://www.theperspective.org/2004/dec/liberia_ic.html

²²⁸ France24 International News. Agence France Presse. "Ivory Coast Signs Fair Vote Pact for November Poll." 25 April 2008. <http://www.france24.com/en/20080425-ivory-coast-election-november-fair-vote-ban-ki-moon-UN>

²²⁹ Global Policy Forum. Houreld, Katharine. "The Cost of Peace in Ivory Cost." 15 February 2006. <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/ivory/2006/0215cost.htm>

²³⁰ Boston Globe. Lederer, Edith M. "Key Players Back Nov. 30 Ivory Coast Election." 9 June 2008. http://www.boston.com/news/world/africa/articles/2008/06/09/key_players_back_nov_30_ivory_coast_election/

Foreign Troops

The UN and France each maintained troops in Côte d'Ivoire during the civil war. The UN's mandate ended in January 2008, and it was extended for six months after the elections were postponed again.²³¹ In January 2009, the mandate was again extended, although UN troop strength was reduced by one battalion.²³² In April 2008, the French declared that their 1,800 troops, which reinforce the UN's 8,000, would remain in Côte d'Ivoire until the country carried out its election later that year.²³³ After the election was again postponed, the French began to make plans to withdraw their troops. They cited budget constraints and an improved security situation as reasons for the drawdown.²³⁴

Armed Forces

The creation of a joint command center was part of the March 2007 peace agreement. Government soldiers and rebel fighters, many of whom served together before the mutiny in 2002, were to form a new unified army by early June. Both sides had reservations. Rebel troops worried about being demoted from the ranks that they were promoted to five years earlier when they formed their own army. The government also owed its own troops several months of back pay, which raised



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Armed forces

questions as to how it could add more soldiers to the payroll.²³⁵ As a result, the integration of northern rebel forces into the national army did not begin until April 2008. The so-called “active phase” of disarmament was expected to take five months.²³⁶ While some former rebel soldiers were to be incorporated into the army, others were to be provided with career training in non-military professions, such as carpentry.²³⁷

Militias, such as the fearsome Young Patriots (*Jeunes Patriots*), were also to be disbanded. In the past, the Gbagbo government dispatched them to silence his critics.²³⁸ Militants were to be paid for turning in their weapons. However, as earlier efforts to disarm them were unsuccessful, many observers were skeptical that militia members would turn over all their weapons. Finally, in addition to the national army, there are paramilitary police (*gendarmes*) who perform both civilian and military functions.

²³¹ BBC News, International Version. “UN Extends Mandate in Ivory Coast.” 16 January 2008. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7191231.stm>

²³² Spero News. IRIN. “UN Mission in Ivory Coast Extended.” 29 January 2009. <http://www.speroforum.com/a/17913/UN-mission-in-Ivory-Coast-extended>

²³³ Agence France Presse, Google. “‘Crisis Is behind Us’, Says French FM in Ivory Coast.” 14 June 2008. http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5gl444BmYo-2Nd_thrVVVYr-SIqA

²³⁴ International Herald Tribune, Reuters. “France to Cut Troop Levels in Ivory Coast.” 28 January 2009. <http://www.iht.com/articles/2009/01/28/africa/paris.4-418147.php>

²³⁵ Voice of America News. Tran, Phuong. “Ivory Coast Army Reunification Faces Challenges.” 15 August 2007. <http://www.voanews.com/english/archive/2007-08/2007-08-15-voa38.cfm>

²³⁶ BBC News. James, John. “Ivorian Ex-Rebels Begin to Disarm.” 3 May 2008. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/7381704.stm>

²³⁷ Agence France Presse, Google. “Ivory Coast Rebels to Relaunch Disarmament: Official.” 22 April 2008. http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5iZEJRscyoErDPc7eTG3gF2_jS_VQ

²³⁸ Washington Post. Farah, Douglas. “Road to Violence: Ivory Coast’s President Divided His Country.” 22 November 2004. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A3155-2004Nov21.html>

Corruption

Corruption is rampant in Côte d'Ivoire. In terms of bureaucracy and administration, poorly paid civil servants expect compensation for facilitating transactions. Moreover, the country's division during the civil conflict created two sets of security forces, both of which demanded bribes in various circumstances. This division did not immediately disappear after the peace agreement was drawn up in March 2007. "Every week I make this trip, and every week it is the same," said one trucker who is forced to pay off security personnel on his delivery routes. "The rebels stop me and demand money. The government soldiers demand money. They say we are one country now, but it is not a reality yet."²³⁹

According to World Bank estimates, between 95 and 150 billion CFA francs (USD 187 to 296 million) is extorted annually in Côte d'Ivoire.²⁴⁰ While rebel soldiers no longer man checkpoints on the northern side, they have been replaced by unemployed youths who demand hand-outs from passersby.

Poverty

An Ivoirian government publication released in early 2009 stated: "Today one person in two is poor, against one in 10 in 1985, and in the space of a generation the number of the poor has been multiplied by 10."²⁴¹ This trend has several causes: population growth, a collapsing market for agricultural commodities, and the impact of civil war. The country's impoverished conditions do not bode well for future stability. Indeed, a motivating factor in the civil war was a fight over who should enjoy the declining returns of the cash-crop agriculture economy.²⁴²



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Children in the street

Poverty also prevents many Ivoirians from purchasing vegetables and protein-based food that would diversify their diets, which are dominated by starchy staples like cassava. Access to a wider range of foods would greatly reduce their children's vulnerability to malnutrition. Little food is grown in equatorial Côte d'Ivoire, thereby compelling the

²³⁹ New York Times. Polgreen, Lydia. "A War Ends in Ivory Coast but Peace, Order and Unity Are Flickering Dreams." 10 June 2007.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/10/world/africa/10ivory.html?n=Top/Reference/Times%20Topics/People/G/Gbagbo,%20Laurent>

²⁴⁰ Agence France Presse, Google. "Ivory Coast Corruption Crackdown Prosecutor Faces Death Threats." 7 February 2009.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5idcwfMhnh28Nq2t3wbKwWGgDK8NQ>

²⁴¹ Haaba. Agence France Presse. "Half Ivory Coast's Population Lives in Poverty: Report." 5 January 2009. <http://www.haaba.com/news/2009/01/05/7-237141/half-ivory-coasts-population-lives-in-poverty-report>

²⁴² Cambridge Journals. The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 41, No. 4. Woods, Dwayne. "The Tragedy of the Cocoa Pod: Rent-Seeking, Land and Ethnic Conflict in Ivory Coast," (Abstract). March 2003.
<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?jsessionid=C0910DFF0206991A1BD31F8E4C3F93A9.tomcat1?fromPage=online&aid=190489>

government to import millions of tons of rice each year.²⁴³ NGOs are working on developing food crops that can grow in a variety of climates and different types of soil.²⁴⁴

Terrorist Groups

There are a number of rebel groups in West Africa and, more specifically, Côte d'Ivoire that have engaged in terrorist acts to advance a domestic political agenda. They claim to be fighting to improve local conditions rather than on behalf of a global cause. But in their efforts to find backing they have sometimes accepted assistance from outside groups who want to create chaos in the region.²⁴⁵ Although the peace agreement has not led to elections, the cessation of fighting reduces the opportunity for terrorists to find support.



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Rebel fighter

²⁴³ News and Communication Services, Oregon State University. Stauth, David. “‘Free’ Trade, Corruption A Curse for Agriculture in Africa.” 17 October 2003.

<http://oregonstate.edu/dept/ncs/newsarch/2003/Oct03/ivory.htm>

²⁴⁴ Global Development Program: Agricultural Development, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. “Working to Break the Cycle of Hunger and Poverty.” May 2008.

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/topics/Documents/agricultural-development-fact-sheet.pdf>

²⁴⁵ Voice of America News. Colombant, Nico. “Sahel Region Sees Rise in Violence, But Links to Terrorist Threat Debatable, Experts Say.” 13 February 2007. <http://www.voanews.com/english/2007-02-13-voa30.cfm>