

Côte d'Ivoire

Côte d'Ivoire's peace process continued throughout 2008 as the parties worked to implement the Ouagadougou Agreement. But despite important elements of progress, Côte d'Ivoire remains precariously close to its conflict-ridden past. Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants, as well as electoral preparations, have lagged as a consequence of logistical and financial shortfalls and uncertain political will. While the country remained largely stable in 2008, sporadic acts of violence, including an increased spate of armed robberies and demonstrations over unpaid allowances by former combatants and the country's military, exposed the fragility of Côte d'Ivoire's security.

Background

Côte d'Ivoire was plunged into conflict in September 2002 following a mutiny and a failed coup attempt by soldiers of the country's armed forces. The country has since played host to peace operations led by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the United Nations, and France. Established in April 2004, the UN Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) was mandated to support implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Accord, signed in 2003. Since then, the mission has supported the implementation of several follow-on peace deals, including, most recently, the Ouagadougou Agreement, signed on 4 March 2007 under the auspices of President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, chairman of ECOWAS. France's Operation Licorne forces, deployed to operate alongside the earlier ECOWAS Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (ECOMICI), continue to complement the UN mission by providing additional rapid reaction capabilities.

UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI)

• Authorization Date	27 February 2004 (UNSC Res. 1528)
• Start Date	4 April 2004
• SRSB	Choi Young-Jin (Republic of Korea)
• Force Commander	Major-General Fernand Marcel Amoussou (Benin)
• Police Commissioner	Major-General Gerardo Cristian Chaumont (Argentina)
• Budget	\$475.4 million (1 July 2008–30 June 2009)
• Strength as of 31 October 2008	Troops: 7,823 Military Observers: 189 Police: 1,144 International Civilian Staff: 366 Local Civilian Staff: 508 UN Volunteers: 286

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Operation Licorne

• Authorization Date	24 January 2006 (UNSC Res. 1652)
• Start Date	February 2004
• Force Commander	General Philippe Houbron (France)
• Budget	\$191.6 million (October 2007–September 2008)
• Strength as of 30 September 2008	Troops: 1,800

The Ouagadougou Agreement laid out a road map for the feuding parties and UNOCI, addressing, among other things, issues of identification and voter registration, holding of elections,

disarmament of militias, reestablishment of state administration throughout the country, removal of the zone of confidence, and perhaps most importantly, the merging of rebel and government forces through the establishment of an integrated command center. It established clear timelines for implementation, and created two follow-up mechanisms. One is a standing consultative mechanism composed of current president Laurent Gbagbo, current prime minister Guillaume Soro, former president Konan Bedie, former prime minister Alassane Ouattara, and President Compaoré in his capacity as facilitator. The second follow-up mechanism—the Evaluation and Monitoring Committee (EMC)—is comprised of the facilitator as the chair, and three representatives from the signatories to the agreement. The consultative mechanism was mandated to address all issues pertaining to the agreement, while the EMC is charged with assessing and recommending ways of enhancing the peace process.

Despite being a bilateral agreement between Gbagbo and Soro, the Ouagadougou Agreement enjoys broad political support from Ivorian opposition parties and civil society. This support is based in part on a popular sense of the agreement being a homegrown initiative, in contrast to previous efforts to secure peace.

Key Developments

Overall, the political and security environments in Côte d'Ivoire remained relatively calm throughout 2008. But the apparent stability belied a potentially volatile situation, and the slow implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement was a cause of concern throughout the year.

Following months of intensive negotiations, in April 2008 the government of Côte d'Ivoire announced its intention to hold the first round of presidential elections on 30 November 2008. While the announcement was welcomed after more than two years of political deadlock on the subject, the actual holding of the elections would be contingent on the successful conduct of contentious civilian identification and voter

registration programs within an extremely tight time span.

With support from UNOCI, the government began to identify and register voters in the second half of 2008. Out of the 9 million anticipated voters, by October 2008 only 5,849 had been registered and only 1,500 of the 6,000 registration kits needed throughout the country in advance of the elections had been delivered. Further complicating matters was the issue of internally displaced persons, who have no identification papers but are regarded as a necessary component of an inclusive electoral process. While observers felt that the initiation of the identification and voter registration processes had set the country on an irreversible path toward the polls, questions about the feasibility of holding the elections as planned began to be raised as the election date grew closer and progress lagged. In mid-November, the signatories of the Ouagadougou Agreement decided to delay the elections, once again citing slow voter registration.

Following the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement, the zone of confidence that had divided Côte d'Ivoire since 2002 was dismantled and replaced by a green line patrolled by new mixed police units, consisting of the national police and those from the Forces Nouvelles, and overseen by seventeen UNOCI observation posts. By July 2008, UNOCI had dismantled all of its observation posts along the green line in reflection of the findings of a technical assessment of the security situation and consultations with all parties involved.

The removal of the observation posts demonstrated significant progress in the reunification process, but the security situation remained fragile, mainly as a consequence of the stalled DDR of former combatants. The government committed to paying the equivalent of three months' allowance to each demobilized combatant. However, complaints of nonpayment of the country's armed forces and demobilized combatants led to demonstrations that required the response of UNOCI and Operation Licorne to calm the situation. This is a critical issue, because

4.4.1 Sierra Leone

UN Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL)

• Authorization Date	31 August 2005 (UNSC Res. 1620)
• Start Date	1 January 2006
• End Date	30 September 2008 (UNSC Res. 1793)
• Acting ERSG	Michael von der Schulenburg (Germany)
• Chief Military Liaison Officer	Colonel Sven-Olof Broman (Sweden)
• Senior Police Adviser	Rudolfo Landeros (United States)
• Budget	\$27.0 million (1 January 2008–31 December 2009)
• Strength as of 30 September 2008	Military Observers: 5 Police: 2 International Civilian Staff: 73 Local Civilian Staff: 198 UN Volunteers: 18

For detailed mission information see p. 289

UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL)

• Authorization Date	4 August 2008 (UNSC Res. 1829)
• ERSG	Michael von der Schulenburg (Germany)
• Start Date	1 October 2008
• Strength as of 31 October 2008	International Civilian Staff: 14 Local Civilian Staff: 1

Following successful presidential and parliamentary elections during 2007, Sierra Leone's peace consolidation efforts continued in 2008 and benefited from the active engagement of regional and international actors. Support from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the United Nations, and other bilateral actors helped create the foundations for socioeconomic and political progress. Meanwhile, the country continued to make contributions to UN peacekeeping operations by deploying twenty police officers with the UN-AU Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) and through other military observers deployed to Timor-Leste and Nepal.

The UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) departed in December 2005 after six years of operation that saw the return to multiparty politics. UNAMSIL was replaced with a special political mission, the UN Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL), mandated to support the government in consolidating its postconflict gains. In July 2007, UNIOSIL supported the national electoral commission in conducting elections that installed President Ernest Bai Koroma. This achievement, along with progress in the development of independent media, implementation of some of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and

prosecution of human rights abuses by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, was matched by a relatively calm security situation.

During 2007 the government identified high youth unemployment, justice and security sector reform, democracy consolidation, and good governance as priority areas for engagement with the international community, most notably the UN Peacebuilding Commission. In December of that year the commission and the government agreed to a peacebuilding cooperation framework that highlighted challenges to existing national strategies and identified the need for a timely and effective implementation based on mutual accountability and sustained engagement. Meanwhile, the official drawdown date for UNIOSIL was set for September 2008.

During its final months, UNIOSIL supported the national electoral commission in conducting local council elections in July 2008, and assisted in the streamlining and professionalizing of the military and police forces in tandem with the UK-led International Military Training and Advisory Team.

In October, UNIOSIL was replaced by the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL), led by the UN's Department of Political Affairs with support from the UN Development Programme. UNIPSIL will support the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and the implementation of the peacebuilding cooperation framework. Meanwhile, Sierra Leone made progress on its development objectives through several new initiatives aimed at strengthening anticorruption, implementing justice sector reform and investment, and establishing strategy and policy units in the office of the president. But economic recovery was severely slowed by global food and fuel crises during 2008. Despite these challenges, Sierra Leone has emerged as one of the success cases for regional and UN peacekeeping efforts during the past decade.

a disgruntled military has been the source of unrest in the past.

Despite its exclusion from the two follow-up mechanisms provided by the Ouagadougou Agreement, UNOCI continued to support DDR efforts in other ways. In April 2008, for example,

it established a DDR operations center focused on building the planning and coordination capacities of the integrated government and Forces Nouvelles contingents.

However, the lack of resources to implement the integration program remained an ongoing

source of tension. In April 2008, the Forces Nouvelles, together with the chiefs of staff of Côte d'Ivoire's national armed forces and government officials, presented its cantonment plan to Operation Licorne and UNOCI force commanders. The plan indicated that 36,000 Forces Nouvelles personnel would be cantoned during a five-month period. By October, 11,364 Forces Nouvelles personnel had been cantoned; 7,598 of these elected to be demobilized, while 3,766, including 28 women, chose to join the national armed forces. UNOCI provided logistical and technical support to this process, but as in the past, financial shortfalls stalled the reintegration process. It was reported that the government had failed to provide a promised \$214 monthly allowance over the course of three months to cantoned combatants. Recognizing this challenge, the World Bank promised the Forces Nouvelles that its \$40 million reinsertion and community rehabilitation program would prioritize former combatants. In this vein, in August 2008, UNOCI launched a \$5 million project aimed at the reintegration of former combatants. Named the "1,000 Micro Projects," the initiative is aimed at ex-combatants as well as youth and women at risk. It will support technical training aimed at providing employment opportunities.

Meanwhile, militia groups in the western region of the country have remained largely outside the DDR process. According to the Ouagadougou Agreement, militias were to have begun disarming in December 2007; however, their leaderships have refused and instead have continued to demand support packages similar to those received by other militias that demobilized under a different agreement during 2006. Furthermore, the handover of Forces Nouvelles weapons proceeded at an alarmingly slow rate. By the end of July 2008, only eighty-six weapons had been turned over, a mere ten of which were serviceable. This is a paltry figure given the large stocks in the hands of the Forces Nouvelles, raising questions as to its commitment to the peace process.

The integrated command center reached its authorized strength in 2008, combining 587

government and Forces Nouvelles personnel. Despite reaching this milestone, the command center remains beset by shortfalls in logistics and financial resources. During the second half of the year, it was reported that this situation resulted in the nondelivery of food and fuel to members of the integrated units for five months, and that members of the Forces Nouvelles had not received salaries since their deployment. Meanwhile, the unification of the forces remained stalled over disagreements about the numbers and ranks of Forces Nouvelles to be integrated into the new force.

The extension of state authority throughout Côte d'Ivoire registered mixed results. Power was gradually transferred to national administrators in the north, but limited progress was made in the deployment of crucial elements such as magistrates and judges. The Ouagadougou Agreement stipulated that state officials from the south were to be redeployed to the north, and that parallel governing and tax structures were to be terminated in the region. But by October 2008, very few judges and tax or customs officials had been redeployed, and even the few who had faced serious obstacles from the Forces Nouvelles, who were not willing to hand over territorial control to national authorities. The prevailing environment remained one of insecurity as crime and banditry increased throughout the country.

Nonetheless, the relatively stable security situation led to the withdrawal of 600 Operation Licorne personnel, leaving the operation's total strength at 1,800. Meanwhile, UNOCI's troop strength remained at the authorized level, pending developments regarding the planned elections.

Conclusion

While no open conflict was reported in Côte d'Ivoire in 2008, competition over representation in both military and public institutions exposed the deep fault lines in the country. Slow progress in implementing DDR, extending state authority throughout the country, registering

voters, and creating a unified military continued to occupy regional and international attention. But it was the postponement of national elections for the third time that was the most

significant source of concern at the end of 2008, as the elections are recognized to be a crucial first step in restoring the legitimacy of the government and consolidating stability in the country.