

**UNHCR**  
**Centre for Documentation and Research**



**WRITENET Paper No. 01/2000**

**CÔTE D'IVOIRE:**  
**IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECEMBER 1999 COUP D'ETAT**

**By Tom Kamara**

**Independent Researcher**  
**The Netherlands**

**April 2000**

**WriteNet is a Network of Researchers and Writers on**  
**Human Rights, Forced Migration, Ethnic and Political Conflict**

**WriteNet is a Subsidiary of Practical Management (UK)**  
**E-mail: [writenet@gn.apc.org](mailto:writenet@gn.apc.org)**

THIS PAPER WAS PREPARED MAINLY ON THE BASIS OF PUBLICLY AVAILABLE INFORMATION, ANALYSIS AND COMMENT. ALL SOURCES ARE CITED. THE PAPER IS NOT, AND DOES NOT PURPORT TO BE, EITHER EXHAUSTIVE WITH REGARD TO CONDITIONS IN THE COUNTRY SURVEYED, OR CONCLUSIVE AS TO THE MERITS OF ANY PARTICULAR CLAIM TO REFUGEE STATUS OR ASYLUM. THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THE PAPER ARE THOSE OF THE AUTHOR AND ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF WRITENET OR UNHCR.

ISSN

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. SUCCESSION AND CRISIS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 PRELUDE .....	3
2.2 SUCCESSION CRISIS .....	5
<b>3. ELECTIONS, POLITICAL RIVALRY AND THE BÉDIÉ PRESIDENCY</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1 ELECTIONS UNDER HOUPHOUËT-BOIGNY .....	5
3.2 ELECTIONS OF 1995.....	6
3.3 TOWARDS ELECTIONS 2000.....	7
3.4 TOWARDS COUP D’ETAT 1999 .....	8
<b>4. WAS THE MILITARY COUP D’ETAT INEVITABLE? .....</b>	<b>10</b>
4.1 WARNINGS AND SIGNALS .....	10
4.2 COUP D’ETAT: REGIONAL LINKAGES AND INTERNATIONAL PERCEPTIONS .....	13
<b>5. CHALLENGES AFTER THE COUP D’ETAT.....</b>	<b>15</b>
5.1 DEMOCRATIZATION AND POLITICAL STABILITY.....	15
5.2 RELIGION AND ETHNICITY .....	19
<b>6. CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>7. BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>23</b>

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
CP 2500, CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland

E-mail: [cdr@unhcr.ch](mailto:cdr@unhcr.ch)  
Web Site: <http://www.unhcr.org>

## 1. Introduction

Côte d'Ivoire's rare standing within West Africa as a beacon of stability, a factor tied to its economic prosperity in the midst of impoverished and ungovernable neighbours, was shattered on 24 December 1999 in a bloodless coup d'état greeted by exuberant and celebrating crowds, raising the spectre that the country could become another centre of instability in a conflict-ridden region. For people demanding change, the leader of the coup d'état, General Robert Guei, suddenly became known as *Père Noël* (Santa Claus).<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, Guei denied his seizure of power was a coup d'état: "I am saying and repeating that I did not prepare a coup", because, he added, according to "traditional rules [of staging a coup d'état], I would have informed major states such as France, the United States or Britain to be 'in agreement of certain principles'". Signalling an end to one-party rule, entrenched for four decades, Guei, as head of the governing junta, *Comité national de salut* (CNSP), which replaced the *Parti démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire-Rassemblement démocratique africain* (PDCI-RDA), declared: "Whatever the duration of our mission, we will do our best to ensure that Ivoirians who want to engage in politics in the interest of the whole country can do so."<sup>2</sup> In reference to a wave of ethnic and anti-foreign xenophobia under the rule of ousted President Henri Konan Bédié, Guei pledged that "from now on, no one should think that they are superior to anyone else".<sup>3</sup> But three months after his seizing power and promising democratization, speculation that Guei was reneging on his pledge for democratization was rife.<sup>4</sup>

The man at the centre of the political upheavals which contributed to the coup d'état, Alassane Daramane Ouattara, agreed that it "was not a coup d'état" but a "revolution supported by all the Ivorian people".<sup>5</sup> Denying any involvement in or prior knowledge of the coup d'état, Ouattara praised the plotters as "...brave soldiers [who] carried out what the Ivorian people wanted, a peaceful change...".<sup>6</sup> He immediately called for international support to put into place the mechanism for democratic elections.<sup>7</sup> "We were in an outlaw state", he told journalists upon his return home.<sup>8</sup> But other political leaders were sceptical and pointed to the plotters' possible links to Ouattara. "If it is an RDR coup d'état they should tell us", demanded Laurent Gbagbo, leader of the socialist *Front populaire ivoirien* (FPI) in the scramble for positions within the junta that ensued.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *New African* [London], "Is it Africa's 'good coup'?", February 2000, p. 10

<sup>2</sup> Agence France Presse, "Guei, junta chief in Côte d'Ivoire, on coup that 'never was'", 27 December 1999

<sup>3</sup> Agence France Presse, Judi Rever, "Ivorian political parties favor joining junta-proposed government", 30 December 1999

<sup>4</sup> See *Oxford Analytica*, "Senegal election tightrope", 2 March 2000

<sup>5</sup> United Nations, Integrated Regional Information Network for West Africa, "Côte d'Ivoire: End of year coup", 24-31 December 1999 (electronic format <[www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)>)

<sup>6</sup> Agence France Presse, "Ivorian opposition leader returns home", 29 December 1999

<sup>7</sup> Reuters, "Former Ivory Coast premier urges vote by June", 30 December 1999

<sup>8</sup> Reuters, "Ouattara flies in after Ivorian 'revolution'", 29 December 1999

<sup>9</sup> Agence France Presse, "Socialists join Côte d'Ivoire government with six ministries", 14 January 2000

Nevertheless, the seeds of “ivoirité” (an explosive doctrine that questioned the nationality of many Ivorians, particularly Muslims from the North) sowed by President Bédié, and which was partly responsible for his overthrow, showed signs of germinating long after a coup d’état, staged ostensibly to stamp out ethnicity from the evolving political contest. In February, despite the junta’s denunciation of “ivoirité”, the campaign against non-Ivorians accelerated, with the pro-PDCI newspaper *Fraternité Matin* publishing figures, purporting to show that Côte d’Ivoire is swamped by foreigners. An organization of Ivorian women urged opposition politician Laurent Gbagbo to ensure that the wife of a future president be an Ivorian, indicating their disapproval of Ouattara’s wife, a Tunisian carrying a French passport.<sup>10</sup> By March, the constitutional sub-committee recommended that candidates for the presidency, along with their wives, must have Ivorian parents and grandparents.<sup>11</sup> More obstacles aimed at narrowing the involvement of “foreigners” in the political process surfaced when the subcommittee proposed that persons of non-Ivorian nationality would not be eligible to participate in the political process, unless they had renounced such nationality 12 months prior to elections. (If approved, this stipulation would exclude significant numbers of voters from the scheduled October 2000 elections.) The committee also reduced the voting age from 21 to 18, a decision previously opposed by President Bédié whose relations with students were strained.<sup>12</sup> Such steps are likely to help the socialist leader Laurent Gbagbo backed by militant students and youths. Thus Côte d’Ivoire entered the twenty-first century with new political realities and challenges of unpredictable proportions.

This new political landscape had gradually evolved after the country’s brief period of smooth but potentially unstable transition in 1993 following the death of its founding father, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, and pointed to a now familiar pattern of the military usurping power after the exit of a charismatic leader. And as an indication of its fragility, the PDCI-RDA, which had ruled the country and its 16 million people since independence, became a “spent force”, with its leaders lining up to pledge loyalty to the new team of leaders, thus signalling the beginning of a new era, fraught with uncertainty.<sup>13</sup>

Côte d’Ivoire’s notable economic and political success over the years had largely been the result of the triumph of one side in a contest between two strands of political opinions that dominated the African political scene on the eve of independence from colonial rule in the 1960s. As one writer puts it, the country did what others “refused to do - investing in agriculture, opening its arms to foreign workers to build Africa’s third largest economy”.<sup>14</sup> Determined to foster an environment conducive to economic growth, Houphouët-Boigny argued that cooperation, not confrontation, provided the better opportunities for the emerging African nation-states. However, as pro-independence euphoria swept across Africa, he would finally yield to nationalist sentiments, declaring his formal break with France in August 1960, while at the same

---

<sup>10</sup> Pan African News Agency, “Ivoirité vis-à-vis Ivorian elections”, 23 February 2000

<sup>11</sup> Pan African News Agency, “Bédié still lays claims to party stool”, 2 March 2000

<sup>12</sup> Pan African News Agency, “Sub-committee recommends single ballot paper”, 2 March 2000

<sup>13</sup> *Oxford Analytica*, “Guei’s government”, 6 January 2000

<sup>14</sup> *Washington Post*, Karl Vick, “Ivory Coast revels in ‘good coup’: African nation welcomes end of one-party rule”, 12 January 2000

time forging ahead with closer Ivorian-French politico-economic ties. He maintained that his country, because of its prosperous economy, would go it alone, amidst calls for a West African federation. “We refuse to be the milking cow of West Africa”, he stated.<sup>15</sup>

The son of a Baoule planter, Houphouët-Boigny had served in the French Assembly, and founded the PDCI-RDA, which was active during the colonial era. He led it as Côte d’Ivoire’s only governing political party with remarkable success in ensuring stability on a politically chaotic continent. This achievement was buttressed by his ability to harness internal divisions to yield economic and political results that surpassed those of his radical ideological opponents. In spite of these achievements, his monolithic political policies, which left no room for dissent and did little to foster continuity, would emerge as a major weakness with the potential of undoing decades of economic gains.

## 2. Succession and Crisis

### 2.1 Prelude

Houphouët-Boigny may have been remarkably successful with the economy while ensuring stability, but as events have shown, there were inherent dangers and weaknesses in the personalization of politics, a policy that would set the stage for a bitter succession war among his lieutenants, key among them Henri Konan Bédié and Alassane Daramane Ouattara, president of the National Assembly and the only prime minister during Houphouët-Boigny’s reign respectively.

The contest over Houphouët-Boigny’s succession revealed that what was missing in his Côte d’Ivoire was a political institution that looked beyond the individual for stability that adapted to changing times and fostered continuity. Instead, he personally became the epicentre of politics and life. Inevitably, disenchantment with the old order steadily contributed to an undercurrent of dissent, signalling an abrupt change in the absence of transparency. “What was going on instead was a melange of misrule and political trickery familiar for many countries in the 1990s, the decade that was supposed to bring the continent democracy ... a masquerade that called itself a democracy but left the same people in charge”, declared one observer.<sup>16</sup> As events have indicated, only Houphouët-Boigny’s presence arrested the threatening chaos. His exit engendered a fluid political environment latent with uncertainties in a political culture that found it difficult to accommodate a vice president (or heir apparent).<sup>17</sup>

But continuity and stability in Côte d’Ivoire were not exclusively tied to Houphouët-Boigny’s charisma. France, which had troops stationed in the country for years, remained a trusted ally and was always in the shadows as a watching parent, with the cynical view that the capital of the country was not Abidjan, but Paris. (Key Ivorian political actors, including General Guei, maintain homes in the French capital.<sup>18</sup>)

---

<sup>15</sup> *West Africa* [London], Adama Gaye, “War over nationality”, 29 November- 4 December 1999

<sup>16</sup> *The Washington Post*, 12 January 2000

<sup>17</sup> I. William Zartman and Christopher L. Delgado, “Stability, growth and challenge” in Zartman and Delgado (eds.), *The political economy of Ivory Coast* (New York: Praeger, 1984), p. 50

<sup>18</sup> *New African* [London], February 2000

Intransigent opponents were forced into exile, notably in Paris. Criticism was dangerous and severely punished. Hence, change outside Houphouët-Boigny's vision became an unlikely option, and this was clearly articulated in 1966 by the man who would succeed him nearly 30 years later, Henri Konan Bédié:

Ivory Coast, under the leadership of President Houphouët-Boigny, has an independent policy, providing it with stability and credit abroad. But after he is gone, will young people follow this policy....? Will they feel the need to change for the simple pleasure of change? Will it be worth it to change a policy, which has provided the population of this country with a standard of living, which many African nations envy? A standard of living which gave Ivory Coast great respect and great prestige abroad? No, no, the young people in the PDCI who in turn will be the elders will not feel the need to change our practice of stability and continuity.<sup>19</sup>

Bédié would therefore ensure that change would be suffocated, ignoring signals, which clearly indicated that under his predecessor resistance to change was politically viable only for as long as everything seemed fine, as long as the population was content since the economy was on the upward trend. And this was indeed the case. Within 20 years, the country enjoyed an economic boom, with a recorded growth in GDP of 11% between 1960 and 1970 and 6% to 7 % between 1970 and 1980, thus qualifying the West African state as a middle income developing economy.<sup>20</sup>

Opposition to change therefore meant that competitive political participation outside the PDCI-RDA would be outlawed until over three decades later. As the economy declined due to, among other reasons, falling cocoa prices and corruption within the system, dissent grew, becoming more violent during Houphouët-Boigny's last days, though he himself was spared the gloomy fate of others of Africa's founding fathers such as Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda, ignominiously thrown out of power by a younger generation of politicians. However, Houphouët-Boigny's eventual exit from Côte d'Ivoire's political scene did not mean the withering of his legacy, in particular the one party hegemony, which made the PDCI-RDA an inward-looking institution that rewarded like-minded cronies, creating an environment that would make continuity difficult. Like in many African states, change would have been delayed or averted, but for the end of the Cold War and its accompanying redefinition of alliances and interests, as one writer observed:

Then came the 1990s. The world had suddenly gone through a period of political change. The Berlin Wall had collapsed along with the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe. Totalitarianism was rejected, as was the communist ideology. Nobody was defending the one party system any more. The political seism, coming in the wake of the 1980s, which marked a deep recession for the national economies in Africa, left no alternative but to bow to the international trend toward political pluralism and economic liberalization. Côte d'Ivoire didn't escape the call for change. Its leader's authority was suddenly criticized by students and

---

<sup>19</sup> Zartman and Delgado, p. 55

<sup>20</sup> Pierre Englebert, "Recent history" in *Africa South of the Sahara 1998* (London: Europa Publications, 1998), p. 379

political activists who took to the streets in protest. Houphouët-Boigny was forced to opt for democracy. But this was not sufficient for a country whose economic fortunes had taken a sharp downturn...”<sup>21</sup>

## 2.2 Succession Crisis

As President of the National Assembly, Henri Konan Bédié had become the dominant figure in the PDCI-RDA, a party now slowly crumbling under waves of protests and internal squabbles. Flanked by top military and security officers, he swiftly declared himself president in accordance with the constitution, bypassing Prime Minister Ouattara and setting the stage for a gruelling power struggle. Cracks emerged in the PDCI-RDA, with a breakaway faction, Ouattara’s *Rassemblement de républicains* (RDR), formed one year after Houphouët-Boigny’s death.<sup>22</sup> Ouattara had opposed Bédié’s unilateral proclamation of himself as president, arguing then that the Supreme Court should have presided over the transition.<sup>23</sup> A coup d’état of some sort was then contemplated, but, according to General Guei, then head of the army, he dissuaded Lansana Palenfo (then security minister in Ouattara’s government), from halting Bédié’s assumption of power.<sup>24</sup> However, the antagonism between Ouattara and Bédié would heat up later, although the former left for Washington to become deputy director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). After all, in Côte d’Ivoire, Houphouët-Boigny’s “word was law”, according to one European paper.<sup>25</sup> Replacing such a god-like figure was difficult, and Bédié, as events would indicate, was an unfortunate choice. He had declared 30 years earlier that change was not necessary. He now showed that he meant it, and the stage was set for PDCI-RDA disintegration which would lead to his own exit. In readiness for the first elections without Houphouët-Boigny in 1995, Bédié’s government, in 1994, had passed a constitutional amendment stipulating that only “born” Ivorians who had lived in the country continuously for five years would be eligible to contest election. As the October 2000 elections approached, this stipulation would be used to declare Ouattara, his main challenger, a foreigner and therefore disqualified from contesting, while Bédié advised the RDR to present another candidate,<sup>26</sup> making a succession war virtually inevitable.

## 3. Elections, Political Rivalry and the Bédié Presidency

### 3.1 Elections under Houphouët-Boigny

As earlier stated, the PDCI-RDA, from its inception and after independence, remained an exclusive club, a “family” in Bédié’s words. It “never developed the characteristics of a mass-based organization even at [its] apogee”, notes one analyst. “It evolved from ‘the top down’, catering to a clientele predominantly southern monetized and

---

<sup>21</sup> *West Africa* [London], Gaye, p. 42

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Agence France-Presse, “Ivory Coast coup offers hope to Ouattara”, 26 December 1999

<sup>24</sup> Reuters, Nicholas Phythian, “Who wants what from Ivory Coast coup?” 26 December 1999

<sup>25</sup> *NRC Handelsblad* [The Hague], “Coup places Africa in a dilemma”, 28 December 1999

<sup>26</sup> Pan African News Agency, “Shooting by Ivorian soldiers in Abidjan”, 23 December 1999

Baoule.”<sup>27</sup> Thus, the party, insulated against criticism, grew unaccustomed to political pluralism and therefore opposition. Challenge to Houphouët-Boigny’s authority was inconceivable, but this would soon change in view of new demands for reforms within various sectors of the society and political upheavals in neighbouring countries, where ruling elites were thrown into disarray in often violent coups d’état. One of the earlier signs of cracks in the system had come already in 1980 when Houphouët-Boigny, citing corruption and mismanagement, opened the party up for new faces, allowing the holding of the first municipal elections in 25 years. Bédié, who was among party heavyweights, but who had been dropped before the 1977 party congress (with Houphouët-Boigny castigating him and others for economic mismanagement), was elected President of the National Assembly.<sup>28</sup> A newcomer to the party hierarchy in 1966, he had risen through party ranks, becoming Minister of the Economy and Finance for 11 years and also the country’s ambassador to Washington.<sup>29</sup>

These factors, among others, were to gradually alter the character of politics and elections. Houphouët-Boigny had won the 1985 elections with the customary 100 % of votes since he was the sole candidate.<sup>30</sup> But as democratization and political pluralism became catchwords throughout the world, he subjected his lieutenants to public scrutiny that year, and of the 546 all PDCI-RDA loyalists contesting the elections for 175 parliamentary seats, only 64 of the incumbents were returned.<sup>31</sup> With sustained demands for multi-party elections, the PDCI-RDA agreed to the first ever multi-party elections in the country’s history in October 1990, with Houphouët-Boigny winning a lesser 81.7 % on a 69.2 % turnout. Claims of fraud from the opposition *Front populaire ivoirien* (FPI) and the *Parti ivoirien des travailleurs* (PIT) followed, although the Supreme Court refused to invalidate the results.<sup>32</sup> The elections nevertheless left the PDCI dented, and Houphouët-Boigny’s victory left many wondering as to the fairness of the process and his commitment to democracy:

“The evidence of widespread electoral fraud in Côte d’Ivoire...demonstrates not only insincerity on the part of rulers to the multi-party system, they make it clear they are being pressed into the system by donors and do not mind showing it does not work”, noted *West Africa*.<sup>33</sup> FPI’s Laurent Gbagbo, threatening civil war and describing the elections as a “masquerade”, nevertheless admitted that the basis for a multi-party system had been established.<sup>34</sup>

### 3.2 Elections of 1995

For Bédié the real test of the consolidation of his grip on power began during the 1995 elections, which were marred by violence as he openly manipulated the law and used the state apparatus to suit his political designs. The main parties boycotted the polls,

---

<sup>27</sup> Richard E. Stryker, “Political and administrative linkage” in Philip Foster and Aristide R. Zolberg (eds.) *Ghana and the Ivory Coast: Perspectives on modernization* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), p. 83

<sup>28</sup> Zartman and Delgado, p. 7

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* and p. 40

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> Englebert, p. 374

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *West Africa* [London], “Testing democracy”, 5-11 November 1990

<sup>34</sup> *West Africa* [London], Chris Simpson, “Houphouët gets home”, 5-11 November 1990

thus casting doubts on his legitimacy as president after the elections.<sup>35</sup> There were allegations against Bédié of widespread fraud, and that he “arbitrarily changed the Constitution to thwart his main rival”.<sup>36</sup> The process led to mounting opposition protests, and several demonstrations followed demanding electoral reforms. Although the RDR had invited Ouattara to contest the presidency on its ticket during the 1995 elections, he declined, arguing that despite his desire to contest the presidency, he would not want to violate the law (which barred those who had been declared non-Ivorians from contesting).<sup>37</sup> But the panic within the PDCI-RDA at being challenged sparked the application of draconian legislation, which had originally been drafted when Ouattara was Prime Minister. The hastily applied law held political leaders responsible for acts committed by their followers. It further decreed that “groups or organizations responsible for organizing such assemblies are jointly and severally liable for any physical or material damage caused thereby”.<sup>38</sup> This opened the floodgate, and provided justification, for further clampdown on opposition leaders. Political tensions, already intense before and after Houphouët-Boigny’s death, led to the arrest of hundreds of opposition supporters, students and journalists, one on a mundane charge of printing a story from a foreign publication revealing Bédié’s request to the French for money for Houphouët-Boigny’s funeral.<sup>39</sup> “Some were held incommunicado and tortured, others [were] imprisoned for months without trial. Dozens were convicted under repressive legislation which had never previously been applied in Côte d’Ivoire”, Amnesty International reported. Political leaders, their wives, and other family members were arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned without evidence of their participation in demonstrations.<sup>40</sup> When the elections were finally held, Bédié was declared the winner, with 95.2 % of the votes.<sup>41</sup> But the power struggle was far from over.

### 3.3 Towards Elections 2000

If the 1995 elections were held without the participation of the main political opposition, the scenario for the scheduled 2000 election would be fundamentally different. This time, Ouattara had a change of mind in testing the law. He resigned his top IMF post and declared his intention to enter the contest, and this generated more panic within the already shaky PDCI. Perhaps the panic was, to a significant extent, unwarranted because Ouattara, handpicked by Houphouët-Boigny to put a crumbling economy back in gear between 1991 and 1993, had many perceived drawbacks. Determined to cut down spending, he had relied on austerity measures, moving against the elite beneficiaries of the one-party system and its spoils. For example, they were compelled to pay taxes, telephone and electricity bills, etc. The reform process also affected ordinary civil servants unaccustomed to productivity, and those refusing

---

<sup>35</sup> *Washington Post*, 12 January 2000

<sup>36</sup> See *The New York Times*, Norimitsu Onishi, “With Africa watching, Senegal casts votes that count”, 27 February 2000

<sup>37</sup> Englebert, p. 376

<sup>38</sup> Amnesty International, *Côte d’Ivoire: Government opponents are the target of systematic repression* (London, 28 May 1996)

<sup>39</sup> Amnesty International, *Côte d’Ivoire: Freedom of expression and association threatened* (London, 13 July 1994)

<sup>40</sup> Amnesty International, *Government opponents*

<sup>41</sup> Englebert, p. 376.

to work were also sacked.<sup>42</sup> These policies, whatever the real or perceived economic benefits, made him significantly unpopular.

Bédié however felt the need to act against “foreigners”, and proceeded to rely on his slogan of “*ivoirité*” as weapon. His policy of exclusion of suspected foreigners from political participation was a radical departure from Houphouët-Boigny’s granting of the vote to non-Ivorians during the 1990 elections under protest by the opposition FPI.<sup>43</sup> While his predecessor enlisted foreigners and relied on them to boost his political standing in the face of mushrooming opposition, Bédié waged a consistent campaign to isolate them, seeing them as a political threat now made more ominous by the Ouattara challenge. As one analyst notes:

Increasingly he played the cynical role of a nationalist, stirring up xenophobic sentiments while making it seem inevitable that elections [October 2000] would follow a well-worn African tradition of returning the incumbent. The stream of nationalist rhetoric was raising tensions between Moslems and Christians, as well as between Ivorians and the many Burkinabe migrant cocoa farmers. More than 4m of Ivory Coast’s 16m people originate from neighbouring states.<sup>44</sup>

The confusion within the PDCI led to the finalization of security plans for the deployment of 1,650 specially trained Republican Security Companies, specialized in keeping public order, throughout the country in anticipation of the October 2000 elections. This all-encompassing security apparatus was to be complemented by the “economic police”, “special surveillance groups”, with the mandate to “control angry crowds and crowds who are enthusiastic in their expression of joy...”, according to the government. Although the government officially refused to link these preparations to the scheduled elections, the state Security Minister admitted having “first signs” of trouble, referring to past demonstrations around the country. The opposition protested, claiming that the government was bent on turning the country into a “police state.”<sup>45</sup> These panic-driven decisions dented Bédié’s political standing and presented Ouattara as a viable alternative, capable of arresting further plummeting of the economy and ensuring stability. A man “not so popular as Prime Minister” because of political repression and the austerity measures adopted by his government, according to one European newspaper, became a threat<sup>46</sup>

### **3.4 Towards Coup d’Etat 1999**

Tension heightened. By November 1999, 17 of Ouattara’s supporters, including his party’s secretary-general, were arrested, tried, and jailed for two years for public disorder.<sup>47</sup> The battle lines between the PDCI-RDA and the RDR were drawn “with unexpected fierceness”, as the RDR secretary-general, Henriette Diabate, a history

---

<sup>42</sup> *West Africa*, Gaye

<sup>43</sup> *West Africa*, Simpson

<sup>44</sup> *Financial Times* [London], William Wallis, “Ivory Coast loses its immunity to coups over army pay”, 28 December 1999

<sup>45</sup> *Africa Research Bulletin*, “Opposition leader jailed”, November 1999

<sup>46</sup> *NCR Handelsblad* [The Hague], “Côte d’Ivoire is now an ordinary African country”, 27 December 1999

<sup>47</sup> *Africa Research Bulletin*, “Côte d’Ivoire: Ouattara-Bédié stand-off”, September 1999

professor, once minister of culture in the PDCI-government, led violent demonstrations, and clashed with police.<sup>48</sup> These developments and moves raised concerns within international circles, and two weeks prior to the coup d'état, the U.S. State Department warned that the scheduled elections must be fair and democratic, adding that evidence against Ouattara's non-Ivorian citizenship, which it said had not been publicly produced, must be "available for scrutiny by qualified legal experts".<sup>49</sup> Ouattara insisted he was an Ivorian, although he admitted representing Burkina Faso [then Upper Volta] within international organizations, maintaining that there was nothing abnormal in this.<sup>50</sup> "My father, Dramane, was born in Dimbokro [an Ivorian village] in 1898. I am Ivorian by right of blood and soil. To exclude me from this election would mean that there are criteria other than those of nationality. It would be a dangerous precedent", he warned.<sup>51</sup> Dismissing the annulment of his citizenship papers, he said he "had no concerns since I cannot have any other nationality other than Ivorian...".<sup>52</sup>

He fled to France, citing threats on his life (and returning immediately after the coup d'état).<sup>53</sup> But he became the target of a witch-hunt, and was repeatedly held responsible for the government's persistent economic woes and tarnished relations with international financial institutions such as the IMF, which described the allegations that its policies against the government were influenced by Ouattara as "baseless and unacceptable".<sup>54</sup>

As the euphoria of the coup d'état subsided, "*ivoirité*" once again emerged as a potent political issue. Responding to public pressure on the nationality issue, FPI leader Laurent Gbagbo declared that there "was no point in crying wolves over the nationality question" since the "appropriate electoral body would be made to act when the time came". In an indirect reference to Ouattara, he warned that "if someone wins an election with a stolen identity card, he will rule the country with stolen money".<sup>55</sup>

The coup d'état has altered the political landscape but left lingering questions, such as the possible candidacy in future elections of General Guei, who told journalists one day after seizing power that he "was not a power seeker" and had "come to the house with a broom. When we have swept the house [clean] they [the political parties] will be widely included".<sup>56</sup> Some weeks later, Guei's tone had changed: "I cannot talk of my destiny, for my destiny is in the hands of God. I know you want to ask me if I would be candidate. For the time being, I have a mission to accomplish. Snatching power from civilians is not our mission."<sup>57</sup> Guei had become ambivalent, saying that

---

<sup>48</sup> *The New York Times*, Norimitsu Onishu, "Abidjan journal: Political woman goes from ivory tower to street", 3 November 1999

<sup>49</sup> African News Online, "US concerned at arrest warrant for Ivorian opposition leader", 13 December 1999

<sup>50</sup> *West Africa*, Gaye

<sup>51</sup> *West Africa*, Hohn Mawuri, "'No citizenship discrimination'", 29 November- 4 December 1999

<sup>52</sup> *New African* [London], "Côte d'Ivoire: Ouattara - no joy", December 1999, p. 13

<sup>53</sup> *New African*, February 2000, p. 11

<sup>54</sup> *Africa Confidential* [London], "Côte d'Ivoire: Fighting the Fund", 16 April 1999

<sup>55</sup> Pan African News Agency, 23 February 2000

<sup>56</sup> Dow Jones Newswires, "Ivory Coast: Ouattara elections timetable soon", 1 January 2000

<sup>57</sup> *New African* [London], "Côte d'Ivoire: Guei for president?", March 2000

after tackling the economy, he would then proceed “to consider my future role”.<sup>58</sup> But this qualified answer was rejected by the French magistrate who was acting as a quasi-official liaison point between Guei and the French Government: “It is evident to me he will run for the presidency. It is something I do not find shocking as long as he presents himself as a civilian and promises to observe a truly democratic election.”<sup>59</sup> Ouattara was quick to give a conditional response: “Guei has said that the role of the army is to bring democracy to Ivory Coast and then return to barracks. That said, he is a citizen and has rights. We wouldn’t want to prejudice the people’s wishes.”<sup>60</sup> These comments signal possible problems if General Guei decides to follow the now common pattern of generals or warlords forcibly seizing power as a prelude to their presidential candidacy. Bédié’s insistence on contesting the elections was dismissed by his party’s chair, Laurent Dona Fologo, who told him to “stop dreaming”, while France expressed the belief that Bédié’s political position had been “seriously undermined”.<sup>61</sup> Nevertheless, Bédié fought back, accusing the PDCI of staging “another coup” in a party that “has remained a unified family”.<sup>62</sup>

## 4. Was the Military Coup d’Etat Inevitable?

### 4.1 Warnings and Signals

When an independent commission appointed by President Houphouët-Boigny in 1991 concluded that the then Colonel Robert Guei was responsible for brutalities, including rape, against students at the University of Abidjan, the President rejected the findings, contending that Guei was the “best” army officer around and that to reprimand him would be to divide the army.<sup>63</sup> Houphouët-Boigny praised Guei for his “firmness” in dealing with the students, and swiftly promoted him to the rank of Brigadier-General with the added reward of a splendid Abidjan villa. But in 1993, following Houphouët-Boigny’s death, General Guei would refuse similar orders from another president, Bédié, to use the same “firmness” in dealing with more unrest.<sup>64</sup> As relations between the two men deteriorated, Guei was dismissed from the army prior to the 1995 elections on allegations of fomenting a coup d’état. Four years later, the “best” soldier would again be sought after, this time by mutineers demanding better living conditions, to provide leadership in toppling the government. Then, in four days, Guei and his soldiers buried a political party that had dominated life in the country during four decades.

Fears and rumours of a French counteroffensive against the military uprising were received with threats of reprisals against a once overpowering ally. “One thing is sure, if there is any counter-attack, we will begin to slash the throats of those we have put in

---

<sup>58</sup> *NRC Handelsblad* [The Hague], Koert Linder, “Côte d’Ivoire loves its military regime”, 9 March 2000

<sup>59</sup> *New African* [London], March 2000

<sup>60</sup> Dow Jones Newswires

<sup>61</sup> *Oxford Analytica*, 6 January 2000

<sup>62</sup> Pan African News Agency, “Bédié still lays claims”

<sup>63</sup> Amnesty International, *Côte d’Ivoire: Silencing the opposition - 77 prisoners of conscience convicted* (London, 2 July 1992)

<sup>64</sup> *Africa Research Bulletin*, “Indifference as Bédié is ousted”, December 1999

our custody, before facing any assault from the outside”, Guei warned Paris, hinting a dent in French influence which had dominated Ivorian politics.<sup>65</sup>

For decades, a façade of stability helped to conceal earlier signs of dislocations within the system, which date back to as early as between 1963 and 1965 when reports emerged of possible plots against the Houphouët-Boigny dynasty.<sup>66</sup> In one instance, the reports led to the arrest of 200 persons and public trial of 86 others. Another attempt to seize power was made in 1973, and in 1980 there was a reported attempt to assassinate Houphouët-Boigny.<sup>67</sup> In 1993, the elite presidential guards mutinied for better salaries, but unlike Bédié, Houphouët-Boigny succeeded in calming the situation and the soldiers peacefully returned to barracks.<sup>68</sup> Years after some of these incidents Houphouët-Boigny would admit that many of these plots were fabricated as a means of strengthening his rule and grip on the country.<sup>69</sup>

Hence, the departure of Houphouët-Boigny, who had maintained a delicate political balance through co-option and coercion, would create difficulties for a not-so-crafty successor. After all, Houphouët-Boigny and Côte d’Ivoire were indivisible. He had occupied leading positions within the fledgling country’s political structures, learning how to reconcile different forces and making compromises when necessary. Bédié thought differently. When the mutineers approached him for dialogue, he is reported to have demanded compliance with the law, instructing the mutineers to return to barracks as a precondition for negotiations on their demands.<sup>70</sup> Guei, then out of the capital when the mutineers abducted his wife and demanded his presence, attributed the coup d’état to Bédié’s intransigence since, he added, the ousted president “is hermetically closed to dialogue”.<sup>71</sup> Upon his return to the capital, Guei discovered how popular he was in Abidjan and he swiftly seized the opportunity to transform Ivorian politics.<sup>72</sup>

Nevertheless, there are contentions that the coup d’état was not, after all, spontaneous and that Ouattara was the brain behind it, a claim he denied.<sup>73</sup> The London-based publication *New African* claimed it has evidence that Guei was in France in November and again two weeks before the December coup d’état.<sup>74</sup>

Whether or not the coup d’état was orchestrated, a series of political and economic developments provided the signals and the impetus, prime amongst them the intense public disenchantment with the government, the declining economy, corruption and mismanagement. As early as 1992, the European Union (EU), sensing high level

---

<sup>65</sup> Agence France Presse, Judy Rever, “Ivorian junta announces army shakeup, awaits opposition leader”, 29 December 1999

<sup>66</sup> Aristide R. Zolberg, “Political development in the Ivory Coast” in Foster and Zolberg (eds.), *Ghana and the Ivory Coast*, p. 15

<sup>67</sup> Zartman and Delgado, p. 4

<sup>68</sup> Englebert, p. 375

<sup>69</sup> *Idem.*, p. 379.

<sup>70</sup> *Financial Times*

<sup>71</sup> Agence France Presse, “Guei, Côte d’Ivoire’s new leader, longtime foe of Bédié”, 27 December 1999

<sup>72</sup> *New African* [London], February 2000

<sup>73</sup> *The New York Times*, Donald G. McNeil Jr., “Ivory Coast’s leader offers signs of democratic revival”, 28 December 1999

<sup>74</sup> *New African*, February 2000

impropriety, had warned the government about its unusual accounting practices, such as the use of photocopied receipts and other elaborate measures aimed at circumventing rules governing the tendering for US\$ 28 million of EU aid money. During a subsequent visit to Japan Bédié denied these claims (which were, however, later admitted), thus securing US\$ 16 million from Tokyo in aid.<sup>75</sup> Bédié moved to mend fences with the European Union by sacking three ministers over the scandal.<sup>76</sup> It is only after the coup d'état that details have come to light about the degree of entrenched corruption within the government. One of the junta's first moves was the freezing of Swiss accounts belonging to Bédié and some of his key lieutenants.<sup>77</sup> In another case, the junta blocked the account of the health minister who had deposited US\$ 3 million in two separate Swiss banks.<sup>78</sup> A post Bédié audit of the country's oil refinery uncovered how its directors swindled millions of francs in the form of gifts, travels and entertainment, rising from 59.5 million CFA in 1997 to 94.5 million in 1998. In 1999, the cost of entertainment and travels was 176.1 million CFA, with directors receiving 500,000 CFA daily for missions, while 219.5 million as gifts to unspecified persons was discovered. Between 1991 and 1999 the company spent 195.2 million CFA on travel and 172.1 million on gifts.<sup>79</sup> Thus, the soldiers may have provided the rationale for the coup d'état, but its coming was long expected. As one journalist notes:

The spark that precipitated the coup d'état was a dispute over military pay. But the pent-up anger felt by military and civilians alike was directed at a corrupt government that had spent its way into bankruptcy. The government ... had abused its power. As it grew more and insecure, it did what insecure governments do: blame the foreigners and opposition political figures for the problems it created, and clamped down on dissent."<sup>80</sup>

Pure greed was blamed for a state of affairs where the government, by some accounts, had made Côte d'Ivoire "one of the most corrupt states in Africa".<sup>81</sup> "No tears are being shed over Bédié's departure. The previous government had become so corrupt and so autocratic and so anti-human rights. Whatever else we may think of coup makers, if they are true to their word in the long run, it might be a good coup", noted a diplomat from one of the western countries that publicly condemned the coup d'état,<sup>82</sup> while a banker commented that "his [Bédié's] government was cynical and corrupt. There was no vision, only exclusion. Tension was on the increase everyday".<sup>83</sup> Discontent fuelled by falling cocoa prices, along with capital flight led to warnings by visiting members of the US-based National Democratic Institute for International

---

<sup>75</sup> *Africa Confidential* [London], "Côte d'Ivoire: EU exports", 9 July 1999

<sup>76</sup> *Africa Confidential*, "Ado Ado", 27 August 1999

<sup>77</sup> *BBC News*, "Ivorian leader Swiss account frozen", 10 March 2000

<sup>78</sup> United Nations, Integrated Regional Information Network for West Africa, "Côte d'Ivoire: Former minister's accounts blocked", 22-28 January 2000 (electronic format <[www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)>)

<sup>79</sup> Pan African News Agency, "Refinery in operational scandal", 18 March 2000

<sup>80</sup> *The Washington Post*, J. Brian Atwood, "For lack of preventive diplomacy", 8 January 2000

<sup>81</sup> *New African*, February 2000

<sup>82</sup> *The Washington Post*, 12 January 2000

<sup>83</sup> *Financial Times*

Affairs of rising political tension, calling for reconciliation ahead of the 2000 elections.<sup>84</sup>

## 4.2 Coup d'Etat: Regional Linkages and International Perceptions

Publicly, international condemnation of the coup d'état was swift and unanimous while its reverberations were immediately felt within the region.

Although Bédié's relations with former colonial power France were tainted, Paris immediately announced a reduction in military cooperation with the junta.<sup>85</sup> Washington followed with the suspension of aid.<sup>86</sup> The UN's Kofi Annan called on the junta "to move swiftly towards constitutional rule", while South Africa's former president Nelson Mandela, backing the OAU's refusal to admit the new government to a seat, declared that "under no circumstances should a democratically elected government be overthrown by force."<sup>87</sup>

Repercussions of the coup d'état within the region were understandable, since the country, home for millions of immigrants and a safe haven for thousands of refugees fleeing conflicts in surrounding countries, was likely to affect developments amongst neighbours. Many of the refugees share tribal links with other ethnic groups along the Liberian-Ivorian border. Moreover, Côte d'Ivoire over the years had played pivotal roles in a number of destabilizing regional conflicts, including that of Angola, where Houphouët-Boigny had established longstanding personal ties with rebel UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi.<sup>88</sup> A United Nations panel report on UNITA's African connections and supply of arms also mentioned Côte d'Ivoire's involvement in diamond transactions with the rebel UNITA movement.<sup>89</sup>

But the most immediate impact of the coup d'état was visible in bordering states. The Liberian authorities were quick to react, sending troops to border areas, although this was later denied, with Liberia's President Taylor giving assurances of non-interference while asking Guei to ensure regional stability, an indirect request for safeguards against possible granting of permission to Liberian dissidents to use Côte d'Ivoire as a springboard for attacks on Liberia.<sup>90</sup> Guei, who served as Chief of Staff of the Ivorian army when Côte d'Ivoire militarily backed Taylor's insurrection, praised the Liberian as a "great warrior and politician".<sup>91</sup> Nevertheless, Taylor's main worries centred on the ethnic background of some of the key players in the coup d'état. Guei, a Yacouba, has ethnic links across Liberia and Guinea, while some of his lieutenants are Krahn (Guerre in Côte d'Ivoire), two ethnic groups difficult to ignore

---

<sup>84</sup> *The Washington Post*, 8 January 2000

<sup>85</sup> United Nations, Integrated Regional Information Network for West Africa, "Côte d'Ivoire: France scales down military cooperation", 12 January 2000 (electronic format <[www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)>)

<sup>86</sup> United Nations, Integrated Regional Information Network for West Africa, 24 - 31 December 1999

<sup>87</sup> Associated Press, "UN Annan: OAU pushes Ivory Coast's junta toward elections", 19 January 2000

<sup>88</sup> See Victoria Brittain, *Death of dignity: Angola's civil war* (London: Pluto Press, 1998), pp. 31 and 71

<sup>89</sup> United Nations, Security Council, "Report of the Panel of Experts on Violation of Security Council Sanctions Against UNITA" in S/2000/203 (March 2000) (electronic format: <[www.un.org/news/dh/latest/angolareport\\_eng.htm](http://www.un.org/news/dh/latest/angolareport_eng.htm)>)

<sup>90</sup> United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network for Africa, "Liberia: Government denies sending extra troops to border", 29 December 1999 (electronic format <[www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)>)

<sup>91</sup> *Oxford Analytica*, "Liberia: Taylor made predicament", 21 March 2000

for Liberia's long-term stability in view of the fact that they composed opposing militias in the country's civil war and have since remained at odds. However, during an official visit immediately after the coup d'état, Guei tried to allay these fears, indicating that he was seeking political advice from Taylor.<sup>92</sup> Taylor's ties to the Ivorian political establishment date back to the Houphouët-Boigny years when mercenaries and arms for the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) passed through Ivorian territory accompanied by Ivorian soldiers.<sup>93</sup> Infiltration of Liberian refugee camps in Côte d'Ivoire by Liberian rebels was frequent, although the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Ivorian authorities signed a US\$ 100 million aid package for refugees.<sup>94</sup>

Furthermore, security along the Ivorian-Liberian border, manned by underpaid or unpaid Liberian security personnel, has been shaky before and after the coup d'état, as evidenced by its temporary closure in February following a shooting incident which caused Ivorian villagers to flee. Abidjan demanded an investigation. This web of connections and inter-relationships based on mutual interests, now shaken by the coup d'état, extended to Burkina Faso's Blaise Campaori, Houphouët-Boigny's son-in-law.<sup>95</sup> Although Campaori may have politically benefited from Houphouët-Boigny, Bédié's moves against foreigners generated fears in Burkina Faso, since large numbers of its citizens work in Côte d'Ivoire, remitting much needed funds back home. Hence, the coup d'état led to immediate security problems for Burkina Faso and Liberia, with the two countries expressing concern over the escape of as many as 6,500 prisoners, many of whom were Burkinabes or Liberians.<sup>96</sup> The links extended further, with a report this year linking Côte d'Ivoire to the dealings in Sierra Leone diamonds. The report recommended a UN embargo on diamond exports from Côte d'Ivoire (a non-diamond producing state) until a full review of the origin of its diamonds.<sup>97</sup> Moreover, Sierra Leone rebel leader Foday Sankoh lived in Abidjan for a protracted period as guest of the Ivorian authorities. Côte d'Ivoire's backing of Charles Taylor in the Liberian civil war also contributed to strained relations with Guinea. In 1995, Guinean troops had occupied Ivorian territory, almost sparking a border war, followed by another occupation in March 1996.<sup>98</sup>

Calls from the Senegalese opposition for a coup d'état Ivorian style if the ruling party maintained its hold on power through subterfuge, significantly influenced President Diouf's and his party's recent defeat. With reports of rebel attacks in some parts of Senegal a day before polling in February, the opposition leader, Abdoulaye Wade, declared he would not accept any defeat, and called for military intervention as in Côte d'Ivoire if Diouf, the candidate of a party which has also been in power for 40

---

<sup>92</sup> *Oxford Analytica*, "Guei meets Taylor", 15-21 January 2000

<sup>93</sup> See Stephen Ellis, *The mask of anarchy: The destruction of Liberia and the religious dimension of an African civil war* (London: Hurst, 1999), pp. 161-5

<sup>94</sup> Englebert, p. 379

<sup>95</sup> See Pan African News Agency, "Guinea yet to reopen border with Liberia", 22 February 2000

<sup>96</sup> United Nations, Regional Integrated Information Network for Africa, "Côte d'Ivoire escaped prisoners worry Burkina Faso, Liberia", 13 January 2000 (electronic format <[www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)>)

<sup>97</sup> Partnership Africa Canada, "The heart of the matter: Sierra Leone, diamonds and human security", January 2000 (unpublished document)

<sup>98</sup> Englebert, p. 379

years, were to be returned to power.<sup>99</sup> In advance of the election results, fears gripped Senegal, with apprehension that General Guei's coup d'état could lead to the return of about one million Senegalese living in Côte d'Ivoire, a move with serious economic implications for Dakar, such as the halt in the money transfer vital to the Senegalese economy.<sup>100</sup> The similarities between Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal were increasingly becoming striking. In April 1999, Senegalese soldiers had protested the government's failures to pay wages earned in peacekeeping duties in the Central African Republic. Speculation mounted that sooner or later, Senegal would "go down the same road as Côte d'Ivoire" under the weight of demands for reforms aimed at ending 40 years of one-party rule.<sup>101</sup>

Mali's president, Alpha Oumar Konare, is likewise worried because Malians have been among the targets of Bédié's anti-foreigners campaign.<sup>102</sup> President Konare, whose country's economy significantly relies on the money transfers of thousands of Malians in Côte d'Ivoire, was furious about the Bédié inspired violence against Malians.<sup>103</sup> Guei, pledging protection for foreigners, had indicated his regime will foster "African brotherhood" and maintain Houphouët-Boigny's traditional hospitality under the banner of "*L'Afrique est l'Afrique*".<sup>104</sup>

There were also implications for Nigeria which had just emerged from 17 years of military rule. A Nigerian government spokesman said regional leaders had warned Bédié to lower the intensity of his attacks on the opposition, but he had ignored the warning.<sup>105</sup> Ghana's President, Jerry Rawlings expressed fears that Bédié's policies would lead to economic collapse that would precipitate cross border migration, and that the coup d'état helped to "avoid the worst". Thus the dilemma that confronted regional leaders in backing Bédié's request for help was that they would then be opposing a coup d'état that was popular at home.<sup>106</sup>

## 5. Challenges after the Coup d'Etat

### 5.1 Democratization and Political Stability

The coup d'état presents a number of challenges, among them creating the environment for democratization, meeting the economic expectations of the population, and addressing the ethnic and religious issues. Thus, establishing a framework for political participation acceptable to the various opposition and interest groups, particularly on those issues linked to the scheduled elections, entail implications for the long-term stability from which the country had benefited.

---

<sup>99</sup> See *BBC News*, "Tense Senegal goes to the polls", 27 February 2000 and *CNN News in Brief*, "Africa on mobile", 27 February 2000

<sup>100</sup> *Bridge News* [London], Ogo Opkara, "Military takeover causes ripples in Senegal", 29 December 1999

<sup>101</sup> Reuters, Diadie Ba, "Coup talk spices Senegal election outlook", 18 January 2000

<sup>102</sup> *Bridge News*

<sup>103</sup> *Africa Confidential*, "Côte d'Ivoire: Bédié's flashpoints", 19 November 1999

<sup>104</sup> *NCR Handelsblad*, 9 March 2000

<sup>105</sup> *NCR Handelsblad*, 28 December 1999

<sup>106</sup> *Oxford Analytica*, 6 January 2000

Military intervention may have been popular, secretly welcomed by a number of leading nations that publicly denounced the coup d'état, but this was far from endorsing an entrenched military regime. General Guei initially indicated a preference for tackling economic problems before submitting to elections. Under intense pressure for commitment to democratic rule, he declared that: "elections are good, yes, but help us first to enable Ivorians to live, to make sure that all public servants receive their salaries at the end of the month, that the debts contracted abroad are reimbursed, that we do not always have to ask our European friends to reschedule our payment".<sup>107</sup> Nevertheless, it would soon become clear that linking democratization to economic recovery was an unlikely option. A 27-member committee responsible for drafting a new constitution, electoral laws and "various measures for the organization of free and fair elections", was swiftly appointed.<sup>108</sup> Another committee of religious groups, trade unions, and representatives of political parties was mandated to draft rules for the restoration of democracy.<sup>109</sup> This was followed by the formation of a referendum committee responsible for submitting the document for public approval when completed.

But developments after the coup d'état raised questions as to whether Côte d'Ivoire can really escape the virus of counter-coups that follows an initial military take-over, a scenario which has led to a spiral of instability and therefore economic disintegration in countries such as Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, etc.

"Many hailed [the coup d'état] as a good coup - swift, bloodless and a fitting end for a corrupt government. Now some Ivorians aren't so sure."<sup>110</sup> The first shock came two weeks after the coup d'état when Guei found himself placating restless soldiers repeating demands for unpaid salaries earned in peacekeeping duties in the Central African Republic.<sup>111</sup> In late February, the former minister of the interior was re-arrested by loyalist soldiers.<sup>112</sup> In early March, the junta announced it had dropped charges of rebellion against former army and paramilitary chiefs, although reports about the harassment of Bédié's family persisted. Amnesty International expressed concern about the continued detention of political prisoners without trial, but the junta claimed the detained ex-officials were linked to the missing US\$ 30 million EU aid money.<sup>113</sup> There were more indications that the country was sliding into a pattern of arbitrariness and human rights abuses which led the Ivorian human rights league to issue a condemnation, charging the security forces with summary executions of alleged criminals without investigation, and harassment of commercial entities, among others. In a statement titled "No brutality, summary executions and other

---

<sup>107</sup> United Nations, Integrated Regional Information Network for West Africa, "Côte d'Ivoire: New head seeks to reassure international community", 28 December 1999 (electronic format <[www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)>)

<sup>108</sup> United Nations, Integrated Regional Information Network for West Africa, "Côte d'Ivoire: Committee set up to draft new constitution", 24 January 2000 (electronic format <[www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)>)

<sup>109</sup> United Nations, Integrated Regional Information Network for West Africa, 13 January 2000

<sup>110</sup> Reuters, John Chihemen, "Ivory Coast army rule off to shaky start", 7 January 2000

<sup>111</sup> Reuters, "Ivorian junta boss acts on rising tension", 6 January 2000

<sup>112</sup> United Nations, Integrated Regional Information Network for Africa, "Former minister re-arrested", 16 February 2000 (electronic format <[www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)>)

<sup>113</sup> United Nations, Integrated Regional Information Network for Africa, "Amnesty expresses concerns for detainees", 25 January 2000 (electronic format <[www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)>)

abuses”, the league reminded the junta of its obligation “to protect the population and not to terrorize them”.<sup>114</sup> These developments point to insecurity, and it remains to be seen how they will affect the economy, since the country’s past economic prosperity had been linked to its security environment.

Political rivalries, so detrimental to stability, linger. Division within the opposition became apparent, with claims from the socialist leader Laurent Gbagbo that the junta favoured Ouattara’s RDR and its supporters, key among them Lansana Polenfo, a known Ouattara ally.<sup>115</sup> Accused of being a member of the RDR, Palenfo, now the number two within the junta, denied this, arguing that he is a soldier who carries no party card.<sup>116</sup> Gbagbo, however, thought otherwise. “We didn’t realize this was an RDR coup”, he commented.<sup>117</sup> He later dropped some of his demands and joined the government, pledging that “we will involve ourselves with the main programmes”. But claims of the coup d’état being hijacked for Ouattara’s benefit persisted, with predictions that the absence of other parties in the administration would prove “a critical, perhaps fatal weakness”.<sup>118</sup> Coming to grips with its ouster, the PDCI-RDA announced it would join the government to consolidate democracy, but warned that, “the battle lines are being drawn. Guei has to be very careful and so does Ouattara”.<sup>119</sup> Unlike other parties, the PDCI-RDA refused to name candidates for political and ministerial appointments, and asked the junta to choose from within its ranks.<sup>120</sup> On the other hand, Ouattara maintained the coup d’état “opened the [way] for national renewal”, indicating he would not take a ministerial position but would prepare himself for the elections. He urged for elections in June 2000, adding, “all the dice are loaded. The electoral lists, the electoral code and even the constitution were changed to favour the former regime.”<sup>121</sup> How these interests will be harnessed to ensure stability will be crucial in moving ahead with economic reforms.

Moreover, it remains uncertain as to whether relations with the French, who in the past were largely responsible for the country’s stability through their military presence, will be the same. Guei had alleged that the French were bent on imposing “an unpopular leader on Ivorians”, and that he had “firmly asked our grandmasters in particular the French to allow Ivorians to deal with their own problems”.<sup>122</sup> But Paris was quick to distance itself from intervention, making it clear that “there is no longer any question of interfering in internal political debates, no longer any question of maintaining this or that leader against popular will”.<sup>123</sup>

Furthermore, the popularity of the coup d’état was primarily based on the normal expectations it engendered for better economic conditions for an increasingly restless

---

<sup>114</sup> Pan African News Agency, “Rightists decry abuses, brutality in Côte d’Ivoire”, 9 March 2000

<sup>115</sup> Reuters, “Ivory Coast ex-PM heads home after coup”, 29 December 1999

<sup>116</sup> Reuters, Alistair Thompson, “Early setback for Ivorian army ruler’s government”, 5 January 2000

<sup>117</sup> Reuters, 7 January 2000

<sup>118</sup> *Africa Confidential* [London], “Côte d’Ivoire: Putsch de Noel”, 7 January 2000

<sup>119</sup> Agence France Presse, “Côte d’Ivoire ousted party ready to work with new junta”, 29 December 1999

<sup>120</sup> Reuters, Anne Boher, “Ivorian ruler chooses government”, 4 January 2000

<sup>121</sup> Agence France Presse, 30 December 1999

<sup>122</sup> Agence France Presse, Rever, 29 December 1999

<sup>123</sup> *The New York Times*, 28 December 1999

population finding it difficult to get accustomed to now fading opportunities. General Guei inherited an economy that was rapidly deteriorating. An IMF team in 1999 found the economy in virtual disarray, with large, unpaid bills to privatized entities such as the postal service and telecommunications, plus a budgetary gap of US\$ 53 million. These irregularities placed Côte d'Ivoire in the same category as many of its neighbours: low investor confidence, and lack of donor enthusiasm, coupled with rising oil prices and falling prices of raw materials upon which the country heavily depends. Bédié's critics were vocal, among them Ouattara who, in Paris in June 1999, declared that the government was bankrupt. "The economic situation had deteriorated. Young people are frightened about their future. Peasants, students, transporters, civil servants all are unhappy."<sup>124</sup> This downward trend persisted despite the cancellation of 80 per cent of the country's public debt by the Paris Club in 1998 with hopes that such steps would reduce the debt total from US\$ 10 billion to US\$ 7.4 billion by 2001.<sup>125</sup> But by the end of 1999, Côte d'Ivoire was receiving only 10 per cent of the funds promised by donors.<sup>126</sup>

Guei's initial reaction to these problems was to suspend all loan payments, contending that the money had been "squandered" and that donors must provide "evidence of what you gave us". But he swiftly succumbed, yielding to warnings from the IMF that the consequences of such a policy would be very severe.<sup>127</sup> He followed up by prioritizing debt repayment in a revision of Bédié's budget, approving 756.8 billion CFA for debts, which represent 39.7 per cent of the country's total resources. The junta also trimmed down the ousted government's spending, allocating 1,786.9 billion CFA, (a reduction of 130.2 billion compared with the Bédié budget) for education, health and debt servicing.<sup>128</sup> By mid February 2000, the junta had paid US\$ 17 million to the World Bank to keep the aid programme from being cancelled.<sup>129</sup> Guei announced plans to cut down government spending and to fight corruption.<sup>130</sup> Prior to these steps, the World Bank and the IMF had linked further bilateral help to the rapid establishment of constitutional rule.<sup>131</sup> Corruption and graft within the Bédié government had soured relations with the IMF and the World Bank, forcing the former to refuse releasing part of its three-year loan of US\$ 167 million, while the latter distanced itself from the government.<sup>132</sup>

Many of the demands for political reform, championed mainly by students, were linked to dwindling economic benefits particularly within the education sector.<sup>133</sup> Economic hardship led to dissatisfaction, which permeated every level of society as the government, feeling insecure and cornered, reacted with force. Anti-establishment

---

<sup>124</sup> *Africa Confidential*, 16 April 1999

<sup>125</sup> *Africa Research Bulletin*, "Côte d'Ivoire: 80% public debt cancelled", April/May 1998

<sup>126</sup> *New African*, "Is it Africa's good coup?"

<sup>127</sup> Associated Press, "Ivory Coast junta leader says will honour foreign debts", 6 January 2000

<sup>128</sup> Pan African News Agency, "New Ivorian budget leaves debt servicing intact", 13 March 2000

<sup>129</sup> *CNN News in Brief*, "Africa on mobile", 15 February 2000

<sup>130</sup> United Nations, Integrated Regional Information Network for Africa, "Constitutional committee to be set up", 13 January 2000 (electronic format <[www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)>)

<sup>131</sup> *Jeune Afrique* [Paris], "FMI-Côte d'Ivoire: L'effect Ouattara", 14 February 2000

<sup>132</sup> *Africa Research Bulletin*, "Indifference as Bédié is ousted"

<sup>133</sup> Agence France Presse, "French agency freezes future aid to Ivory Coast", 6 January 2000

music proliferated. “In weak democracies musicians are like journalists. They talk about things that some journalists wouldn’t dare to because all the papers are owned by political parties. We are the voice of the voiceless”, noted one of the country’s leading musicians, Alpha Blundy, after the coup d’état.<sup>134</sup> How such competing demands will be handled will be crucial in democratization and economic reforms.

## 5.2 Religion and Ethnicity

Ethnicity and religion as political tools in a country so ethnically diverse contributed to Bédié’s problems and his eventual fall, but the persistence of these issues, as shown earlier, contains dangerous implications. A number of factors, including the contentious power struggle and withering economic benefits, may have elevated ethnicity and religion to disturbing levels, but the issues have been deeply rooted in Ivorian life, only exacerbated by Bédié, who, according to one observer, “had grown more authoritarian and had promoted a nationalist doctrine - *ivoirité* - that labelled some people non-Ivorians based on the birth places of their parents or grandparents. The effect was to make southerners the only real Ivorians while calling northern Muslims like Mr Ouattara foreigners ...”.<sup>135</sup>

The need for large numbers of foreign workers to boost the country’s agriculture-based economy set the stage for future confrontation between migrants and Ivorians. Huge numbers of workers from neighbouring countries flocked in, in search of jobs, and they were readily absorbed. Even as its economy declined (the growth rate dropped from 5.6 % in 1998 to 1.4 % in 1999<sup>136</sup>) Côte d’Ivoire continued to attract foreigners, and in February, a report by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) revealed a syndicate engaged in transporting children from Mali to Côte d’Ivoire to work in captivity without remuneration, lulled by promises of the good life.<sup>137</sup>

The country’s image as a land of opportunities is imbued with short and long-term political problems, as observed by one analyst:

As economic pressures trigger outbreaks of xenophobia, so will they create a disaffected migrant proletariat in the large cities. To an increasing extent, the migration south has become permanent, leading to an increasingly large indigenous class of northerners in southern areas. On the other hand, authorities may be tempted to divert attention from other problems by blaming fortunes on the ‘foreigners’.<sup>138</sup>

This was significantly the case by the early 1990s, amplified by Bédié’s clampdown on tribes viewed as backing the opposition. Politically suspect ethnic groups were targeted by the state security establishment, a policy common in a number of African countries. Hence, dozens of people of the Bete tribe (Laurent Gbagbo’s ethnic group) along with supporters from his region, Gagnoa, were detained. Vendetta was inevitable. Amnesty International reported that 8,000 Baoules (Bédié’s tribe) sought refuge and protection in various towns following rumours that the Bete had massacred

---

<sup>134</sup> *The Washington Post*, Karl Vick, “Coup made Ivory Coast elite face the music”, 10 January 2000

<sup>135</sup> *The New York Times*, 28 December 1999

<sup>136</sup> Pan African News Agency, 13 March 2000

<sup>137</sup> Pan African News Agency, “Child trafficking booms between Mali and Côte d’Ivoire”, 17 February 2000

<sup>138</sup> Zartman and Delgado, p. 19

a number of Baoules.<sup>139</sup> The bedrock of Ouattara's support comes from the Dioula people, predominantly Muslims linked to Burkina Faso. They were similarly targeted, which led to claims of ethnic cleansing and exclusion of Muslims from government jobs.<sup>140</sup>

Fears of a foreign invasion circulate, as emphasized by the junta's chair of a sub-committee on national identity cards, who claimed that between 45 and 50 per cent of the population was foreign. "It is our duty to say 'stop' or else our children would one day be chased out of their country".<sup>141</sup> Bédié's determination to bar Ouattara, a Muslim (seen by northerners and Muslims as their best hope for survival and preservation of interests), from the scheduled presidential race contained threatening implications in a society not so ethnically homogeneous. The Baoule account for 39.25 per cent of the inclusive Akan ethnic group, of which the Baoule is only one of the 17 sub-groups.<sup>142</sup> Laurent Gbagbo of the FPI, said to be the largest political party, is a Bete from the western part of the country. Houphouët-Boigny knew these ethnic imbalances, and therefore sought ethnic harmonization instead of confrontation in a country with 60 competing tribes.<sup>143</sup> Houphouët-Boigny "forged the country's image as a haven of stability, by weaving its different ethnic groups in one big ruling family, while Bédié and his entourage [on the contrary], focused on differences between indigenous and the children of new and not-so-new migrants from neighbouring countries", notes a commentator.<sup>144</sup>

The departure from this policy led to the fanning of anti-foreigner sentiments and the encouragement of conflicts between Ivorians and foreign nationals which, according to one publication, "increased since the adoption of new law on rural land, which is often interpreted badly. Pitting Ivorian and Burkinabe people against each other, it resulted in one death in each camp and then a systematic manhunt which pushed nearly 20,000 Burkinabe people out of the area".<sup>145</sup> Open ethnic rivalries soon flared, particularly as the government remained convinced of the correctness of its policies. Protests continued, resulting in the displacement of 3,500 Baoule people, Bédié's and Houphouët-Boigny's tribe. Ethnic tension grew around the country and at least 35 persons were killed during election violence.<sup>146</sup> But the government's main targets continued to be the Burkinabes:

More foreigners living in the Côte d'Ivoire - and foreigners there are mainly from Burkina Faso, nearly 3 million of them in all - do not have land titles and only work the land by authorization, sometimes verbal, from traditional authorities. One member of the Burkina government ... said that the new land code 'comes down to a non-violent expropriation of all the foreigners'. The Côte d'Ivoire always used to encourage

---

<sup>139</sup> Amnesty International, *Côte d'Ivoire: Government opponents*

<sup>140</sup> Amnesty International, *Côte d'Ivoire: Silencing the opposition*

<sup>141</sup> Pan African News Agency, 23 February 2000

<sup>142</sup> See Zartman and Delgado, p. 35

<sup>143</sup> *Africa Research Bulletin*, "Indifference as Bédié is ousted". Others put the number of tribes to 250. *West Africa*, "War over nationality ..."

<sup>144</sup> Reuters, 26 December 1999

<sup>145</sup> *Africa Research Bulletin*, "Opposition leader jailed"

<sup>146</sup> Agence France Presse, 26 December 1999

immigration because it needed manpower but now it says it has 'immigration problems'.<sup>147</sup>

Thus, Bédié's policy of "*ivoirité*" was to shake the foundations of strategies pursued by his predecessor. Playing the ethnic card in a country with such a huge foreign population, many of them brought in during the era of economic boom when their labour was needed, resulted in an exodus of foreigners, mainly Burkinabes, placing strains on the already impoverished Burkina Faso in accommodating the returnees. The European Community moved in, offering US\$ 205,000 in emergency food aid for the victims, 60 per cent of them women and children.<sup>148</sup>

Hopes that the coup d'état would be the beginning of the end of ethnicity and religion as political issues faded weeks after, as the issues resurfaced on political platforms. The FPI and some key players in the coup d'état felt marginalized. Tension rose, forcing the junta to pour extra troops into the streets as rumours of shooting in the city's two barracks and at the airport flared. It emerged that a popular army colonel, Mathais Doue, a Geurre said to be the architect of the coup d'état, was dissatisfied with a lesser function given to him by Guei, who is a Yacouba.<sup>149</sup> The disagreement forced Guei to appeal for calm days after the putsch. "Have confidence in us. We will have confidence in you", he declared.<sup>150</sup> He quickly moved to calm the Baoules who along with the related Agni tribe, make up a third of the population.<sup>151</sup> "There are those who think that Baoules ethnic group went too far. It's not that at all. It was the behaviour of one man [Bédié]", Guei declared.<sup>152</sup>

As with ethnicity, Bédié may have found it difficult to resist religion as a political issue in a country with a population, by some estimates, of about 40 per cent Muslim.<sup>153</sup> "Mr. Bédié should not have taken the liberty of meddling in religious matters ... I was shocked, some times indignant to see that people wanted to use religion to divide the country", General Guei, a Catholic, said after the coup d'état.<sup>154</sup>

But fears and apprehensions of a Muslim political leadership in Côte d'Ivoire, a country boasting the only Catholic Basilica in Africa that many say rivals that of Rome, are real, and this is a task likely to confront Ouattara, regarded as the favourite in any presidential election in the foreseeable future.<sup>155</sup>

## 6. Conclusion

After registering impressive economic gains, Côte d'Ivoire now finds itself at the crossroads in terms of forging ahead with progress or degenerating into a cycle of

---

<sup>147</sup> *Africa Research Bulletin*, "Opposition leader jailed"

<sup>148</sup> United Nations, Integrated Regional Information Network for Africa, "Burkina Faso: ECHO aid for returnees from Côte d'Ivoire", 18 January 2000 (electronic format <www.reliefweb.int>)

<sup>149</sup> Agence France Presse, "Troops unhappy with Côte d'Ivoire junta", 6 January 2000

<sup>150</sup> Reuters, 6 January 2000

<sup>151</sup> Reuters, 5 January 2000

<sup>152</sup> Reuters, "Ivory Coast ex-PM heads home...", 29 December 1999

<sup>153</sup> *Oxford Analytica*, 6 January 2000

<sup>154</sup> Reuters, "Ivory Coast ex-PM heads home ...", 29 December 1999

<sup>155</sup> *Oxford Analytica*, 6 January 2000

chaos so familiar in Africa. Key issues, prime among them ethnicity, religion, and the economy, are likely to pose serious challenges. Houphouët-Boigny was a master at co-opting and compromising. He realized that large numbers of foreigners owed their status to his policy of openness. Many of them, including the present Prime Minister of neighbouring Guinea Conakry, held key cabinet positions. Guei was the first Ivorian to head the army after replacing a general from Benin.<sup>156</sup> A departure from this policy, however appealing to politicians and ordinary people, is fraught with dangers. Bédié, the first victim of an attempt to change this policy, thought he could rely on whipping up sentiments against foreigners to win support against Ouattara, a Muslim, who struggled to fence off allegations that he represented the country's Islamic establishment. "I was seen and respected as someone who has maintained the secularity of the state. I have never asked the Muslims to support me but I observe that President Bédié mobilized imams to obtain their support."<sup>157</sup>

But the dangers inherent in raising ethnicity and religion as issues on the political plane can be seen in Nigeria where the institution of *shari'a* law has led to the death of over 1,000 persons and threats of secession.<sup>158</sup> "If this is democracy, then we want the military back", cried one Nigerian northerner.<sup>159</sup> If as widely predicted, Ouattara emerges as winner in the coming elections, one of his greatest challenges will be placating non-Muslims who have led the country for so long, and ensuring that religion or ethnicity do not become the issues.

The ethnic factor, and the prevailing belief in Côte d'Ivoire that northerners are Muslims and therefore foreigners of mostly Burkinabe origin, however questionable, remains an explosive issue predating Bédié. Foreigners (particularly Africans) in Côte d'Ivoire found themselves under attack as early as 1969, and in 1970 the government passed a law restricting immigration from African countries.<sup>160</sup> A decade later, the number of immigrants, needed in the agricultural sector, stood at 2.5 million or one third of the population.<sup>161</sup> The increase led to fears of an invasion. "From time to time one could hear Ivorians grumbling about the invasion of their country but they were powerless to complain against a one-party system dominated by a strong leader."<sup>162</sup> "We should have done it [expulsion of foreigners] from the beginning. You can't do it after they have been here for years, many of them born here", said one Ivorian. Ouattara, referred to by critics as a "mercenary" from Burkina Faso, increasingly was seen as a symbol of foreigners determined to take over the country. "Do you believe English or French people would have accepted Tony Blair or Lionel Jospin as their leaders if they had previously held another nationality?"<sup>163</sup>

---

<sup>156</sup> Pan African News Agency, 23 February 2000

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>158</sup> See *Time Magazine*, Simpson Robinson, "Falling apart, again", 28 February 2000

<sup>159</sup> EIU Viewswire, "Nigeria politics: Religious rifts put democracy to test", 28 February 2000, quoting *Financial Times*

<sup>160</sup> Michael Crowder and Donal Cruise O'Brien, "Ivory Coast: Recent history" in *Africa South of the Sahara 1972* (London: Europa Publications, 1972), p. 378

<sup>161</sup> Richard Syngé, "The Ivory Coast: Recent history" in *Africa South of the Sahara 1984-85* (London: Europa Publications, 1984), p. 457

<sup>162</sup> *West Africa*, Gaye

<sup>163</sup> *Washington Post*

The implications of the coup d'état were evident within the sub-region, with calls for its replication in Senegal if the ruling party, 40 years in power, had repeated Bédié's mistakes. In the words of Abdoulaye Wade, the opposition leader who emerged as winner:

The army sometimes bursts on the political scene to take power that has been confiscated by civilians who, once they [have] been put in office by elections, take advantage of their control over the levers of the administration, the police, the gendarmerie, the army and the finances to close all access and block the slightest hint of challenge. In that, the role of the army could be positive.<sup>164</sup>

Côte d'Ivoire on the eve of the coup d'état faced this predicament, but challenges lay ahead in moving with democratization, a task made more difficult by instances of human rights abuses linked to the government.<sup>165</sup>

Key to stability and democratization is, among others, addressing the economic question. Ouattara's unpopularity on account of his austerity measures and tough policies of demanding accountability when he served as Prime Minister is noteworthy. If elected, will he yield to demands from groups such as students for more state funding of education? "The situation of the young Ivorians was declining day by day... We were dying bit by bit", decried one youth, hinting at expectations for a better life after Bédié.<sup>166</sup> If the economy continues to decline and austerity measures are applied, will the students, under the leadership of the influential *Fédération estudiantine et scolaire de Côte d'Ivoire* (FESCI) repeat their violent opposition begun under Houphouët-Boigny and intensified under Bédié, which contributed to the latter's downfall? Whatever the answers, Côte d'Ivoire, home of millions of immigrants sustaining families in neighbouring states, cannot afford to slide into economic and therefore political anarchy. The destabilizing ripples will be felt within a sub region already in economic chaos. It may have been a "good coup", but there are reminders: "Remember in Uganda in the early 1970s [when Idi Amin, among others, used anti-Asian sentiments as a political rallying point] there was euphoria when Idi Amin came to power", recalled Paul Olweny, head of the Washington-based Center for International Policy, which is opposed to military intervention in politics.<sup>167</sup> The fear is whether the soldiers will not simply exchange their military uniform for civilian suits, as is overwhelmingly the case on the continent. Examples of military political interventions, which have undermined continuity and stability, are not encouraging.

## 7. Bibliography

*Africa Confidential* [London]. "Côte d'Ivoire: Putsch de Noel". 7 January 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Côte d'Ivoire: Bédié's flashpoints". 19 November 1999.

---

<sup>164</sup> Reuters, 18 January 2000

<sup>165</sup> Pan African News Agency, "Police arrests Bédié's brother-in-law", 22 February 2000

<sup>166</sup> *Washington Post*

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Ado Ado". 27 August 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Côte d'Ivoire: EU exports". 9 July 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Côte d'Ivoire: Fighting the Fund". 16 April 1999.
- Africa Research Bulletin*. "Indifference as Bédié is ousted". December 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Opposition leader jailed". November 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Côte d'Ivoire: Ouattara-Bédié stand-off". September 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Côte d'Ivoire: 80% public debt cancelled". May 1998.
- African News Online. "US concerned at arrest warrant for Ivorian opposition leader". 13 December 1999.
- Agence France Presse. "Socialists join Côte d'Ivoire government with six ministries". 14 January 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "French agency freezes future aid to Ivory Coast". 6 January 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Troops unhappy with Côte d'Ivoire junta". 6 January 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Judi Rever. "Ivorian political parties favor joining junta-proposed government". 30 December 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Côte d'Ivoire ousted party ready to work with new junta". 29 December 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Ivorian opposition leader returns home". 29 December 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Judi Rever. "Ivorian junta announces army shakeup, awaits opposition leader". 29 December 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Guei, junta chief in Côte d'Ivoire, on coup that never was". 27 December 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Guei, Côte d'Ivoire's new leader, longtime foe of Bédié". 27 December 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Ivory Coast coup offers hope to Ouattara". 26 December 1999.
- Amnesty International. *Côte d'Ivoire: Government opponents are the target of systematic repression*. London, 28 May 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Côte d'Ivoire: Freedom of expression and association threatened*. London, 13 July 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Côte d'Ivoire: Silencing the opposition - 77 prisoners of conscience convicted*. London, 2 July 1992.
- Associated Press. "UN Annan: OAU pushes Ivory Coast's junta toward elections". 19 January 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Ivory Coast junta leader says will honour foreign debts". 6 January 2000.
- BBC News*. "Ivorian leader Swiss account frozen". 10 March 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Tense Senegal goes to the polls". 27 February 2000.
- Bridge News* [London]. Ogo Opkara. "Military takeover causes ripples in Senegal". 29 December 1999.
- Brittain, Victoria. *Death of dignity: Angola's civil war*. London: Pluto Press, 1998.
- CNN News in Brief*. "Africa on Mobile". 27 February 2000; 15 February 2000.
- Crowder, Michael and Donal Cruise O'Brien. "Ivory Coast: Recent history" in *Africa South of the Sahara 1972*. London: Europa Publications, 1972.
- Dow Jones Newswires. "Ivory Coast: Ouattara elections timetable soon". 1 January 2000.
- EIU Viewswire. "Nigeria politics: Religious rifts put democracy to test". 28 February 2000. Quoting *Financial Times*.
- Ellis, Stephen. *The mask of anarchy: The destruction of Liberia and the religious dimension of an African civil war*. London: Hurst, 1999.
- Englebert, Pierre. "Recent history" in *Africa South of the Sahara 1998*. London: Europa Publications, 1998.

*Financial Times* [London]. William Wallis. "Ivory Coast loses its immunity to coups over army pay". 28 December 1999.

*Jeune Afrique* [Paris]. "FMI-Côte d'Ivoire: L'effect Ouattara". 14 February 2000.

*New African*. [London]. "Côte d'Ivoire: Guei for President?". March 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Is it Africa's good coup?". February 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Côte d'Ivoire: Ouattara - no joy". December 1999.

*The New York Times*. Norimitsu Onishi. "With Africa watching Senegal casts votes that count". 27 February 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. Donald G. McNiel Jr. "Ivory Coast's leader offers signs of democratic revival". 28 December 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_. Norimitsu Onishi. "Abidjan journal: Political woman goes from ivory tower to street". 3 November 1999.

*NRC Handelsblad* [The Hague]. Koert Linder. "Côte d'Ivoire loves its military regime". 9 March 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Coup places Africa in a dilemma". 28 December 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Côte d'Ivoire is now an ordinary African country". 27 December 1999.

*Oxford Analytica*. "Liberia: Taylor made predicament". 21 March 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Senegal election tightrope". 2 March 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Guei meets Taylor", 15-21 January 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Guei's government". 6 January 2000.

Pan African News Agency. "Refinery in operational scandal". 18 March 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "New Ivorian budget leaves debt servicing intact." 13 March 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Rightists decry abuses, brutality in Côte d'Ivoire". 9 March 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Sub-committee recommends single ballot paper". 2 March 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Bédié still lays claims to party stool". 2 March 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Ivorianité vis-à-vis Ivorian elections". 23 February 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Guinea yet to reopen border with Liberia". 22 February 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Police arrests Bédié's brother-in-law". 22 February 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Child trafficking booms between Mali and Côte d'Ivoire". 17 February 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Shooting by Ivorian soldiers in Abidjan". 23 December 1999.

Partnership Africa Canada. "The heart of the matter: Sierra Leone, diamonds and human security". January 2000. Unpublished document.

Reuters. Diadie Ba. "Coup talk spices Senegal election outlook". 18 January 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. John Chihemen. "Ivory Coast army rule off to a shaky start". 7 January 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Ivorian junta boss acts on rising tension". 6 January 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Allistair Thompson. "Early setback for Ivorian army ruler's government". 5 January 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. Anne Boher. "Ivorian ruler chooses government". 4 January 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Former Ivory Coast Premier urges vote by June". 30 December 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Ivory Coast ex-PM heads home after coup". 29 December 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Ouattara flies in after Ivorian 'revolution'". 29 December 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_. Nicholas Phythian. "Who wants what from Ivory Coast coup". 26 December 1999.

- Stryker, Richard E. "Political and administrative linkage" in Philip Foster and Aristide R. Zolberg (eds.). *Ghana and the Ivory Coast: Perspectives on modernization*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971.
- Synge, Richard. "Ivory Coast: Recent history" in *Africa South of the Sahara 1984-85*. London: Europa Publications, 1984.
- Time Magazine*. Simpson Robinson. "Falling apart again". 23 February 2000.
- United Nations. Integrated Regional Information Network for West Africa. "Former minister re-arrested". 16 February 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Côte d'Ivoire: Former minister's accounts blocked". 22-28 January 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Amnesty expresses concern for detainees". 25 January 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Côte d'Ivoire: Committee set up to draft new constitution". 24 January 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Guei meets Taylor". 15-21 January 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Burkina Faso: ECHO aid for returnees from Côte d'Ivoire". 18 January 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Côte d'Ivoire escaped prisoners worry Burkina Faso, Liberia". 13 January 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Côte d'Ivoire: France scales down military cooperation". 12 January 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Constitutional committee to be set up". 13 January 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Côte d'Ivoire: End of year coup". 24-31 December 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Liberia: Government denies sending extra troops to border". 29 December 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Côte d'Ivoire: New head seeks to reassure international community". 28 December 1999.
- United Nations. Security Council. "Report of the Panel of Experts on Violation of Security Council Sanctions Against UNITA" in S/2000/203. March 2000 (electronic format: <[www.un.org/news/dh/latest/angolareport\\_eng.htm](http://www.un.org/news/dh/latest/angolareport_eng.htm)>).
- The Washington Post*. Karl Vick. "Ivory Coast revels in good coup: African nation welcomes end of one-party rule". 12 January 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Karl Vick. "Coup made Ivory Coast elite face the music". 10 January 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. J. Brian Atwood. "For lack of preventive diplomacy". 8 January 2000.
- West Africa*. [London]. Adama Gaye. "War over nationality". 29 November-4 December 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Hohn Mawuri. "No citizenship discrimination". 29 November-4 December 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Chris Simpson. "Houphouet gets home". 5-11 November 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Testing democracy". 5-11 November 1990.
- Zartman, I. William and Christopher L. Delgado. "Stability, growth, and challenge" in Zartman and Delgado (eds.). *The political economy of Ivory Coast*. New York: Praeger, 1984.
- Zolberg, Aristide R. "Political development in the Ivory Coast" in Philip Foster and Aristide R. Zolberg (eds.). *Ghana and the Ivory Coast: Perspectives on modernization*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971.