

## A FRAGILE PEACE

### WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR CÔTE D'IVOIRE ONE YEAR AFTER PRESIDENT OUATTARA TOOK POWER?

*Maria Zandt*

More than a year after the end of the civil war that cost the lives of some 3,000 people, the situation in Côte d'Ivoire remains tense. Its economic development suggests that the country is heading in the right direction in its bid to be the driving force behind the economy of West Africa. However, unless it can fully restore security and begin a process of reconciliation throughout the country, this goal is still a long way off.

The first year of Alassane Ouattara's presidency has been mixed. While great strides have been made in rebuilding the country's economy and infrastructure, the people are still worried about the security situation and the rising cost of living. The handing over of ex-president Laurent Gbagbo to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Hague, just twelve days before the parliamentary elections at the beginning of December, only served to ramp up political tensions in the country. The Gbagbo camp still does not recognise Alassane Ouattara's presidency and opted to boycott the parliamentary elections. The two greatest challenges to the country's stability are suspicions of "victor's justice", which until now have only been levelled at the Gbagbo camp and not at the former soldiers of the Forces Nouvelles (FN) close to Ouattara, and a lack of integration and professionalism within the security sector.

#### PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS WITHOUT OPPOSITION

While the parliamentary election of 11 December 2011 passed off largely peacefully, the boycott of the elections by the Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI), the party closest to ex-president Laurent Gbagbo, posed a new challenge to



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Côte d'Ivoire's democratic structures. Alassane Ouattara's party, the Rassemblement des Républicains (RDR), won 127 seats in parliament, half of the 254 seats available. Henri Konan Bédié's Parti Démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI), which entered into a coalition with Ouattara in the presidential elections, won 77 seats, while 35 seats went to independent candidates.

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After the elections and in recognition of its support in the second round of the presidential elections, President Ouattara made good on his promise to the PDCI to allow the position of Prime Minister to be filled from among its ranks. On 13 February 2012, Jeannot Kouadio-Ahoussou, a close ally of Henri Konan Bédié and Justice Minister in the previous government, was sworn in as successor to Guillaume Soro as Prime Minister. Soro, a former rebel leader, was appointed President of the National Assembly, even though he was just under the minimum age of 40 stipulated in the constitution.

The very low turnout of only 36 per cent means that the parliamentary elections cannot really be considered a great victory for Ouattara. But neither are they a victory for the Gbagbo camp as the FPI camp seems to think. The turnout for parliamentary elections is traditionally low. In 2000 the turnout was only 33 per cent. Although President Ouattara has a large majority in parliament in the absence of any real opposition, it will nevertheless be important in the future to integrate former Gbagbo supporters into the political landscape as a de facto opposition because representation by both groups in parliament is an important step along the road to reconciliation.

### **THE GBAGBO CAMP'S POLITICAL LEGACY**

Following the arrest of former president Laurent Gbagbo and his handing over to the International Criminal Court in the Hague on 30 November 2011, the Gbagbo camp has been without a real leader and is split over what its future attitude to the government under President Ouattara should be. For Gbagbo's former supporters, the boycott of the parliamentary elections by the FPI, the largest party in the former presidential coalition, has meant growing

marginalisation. The party is suffering from its unconditional reliance on one leadership figure, something which is quite common in Africa. Following Gbagbo's arrest, the party has fallen into a kind of "lethargy",<sup>1</sup> and its members have been searching without success for some form of new political legitimacy, which until recently had been provided by Laurent Gbagbo himself. Since the elections, the party no longer has any seats in parliament. If the government wants to avoid the FPI becoming a kind of extra-parliamentary opposition which might under certain circumstances be prepared to use violence, then it is important to convince the FPI to take part in the regional and local elections that are due to take place at the end of 2012.

Gbagbo's supporters are still questioning the legitimacy of President Ouattara's election and indeed the constitutional court declared Laurent Gbagbo the victor. Without a new leader and weakened by financial problems, the party is finding it difficult to reposition itself. Differences within the FPI in the lead-up to the parliamentary elections served to further weaken the party. The resignation from the party of Mamadou Koulibaly, who had been President of the National Assembly, and the fact that he formed his own party (Liberté et démocratie pour la République, LIDER), are clear indicators of the dissatisfaction and deep divisions that exist within the FPI. Eleven other party members spoke publicly of their opposition to the boycott and stood as independent candidates in the elections. The formation of the party alliance Ligue des mouvements pour le progrès (LMP), in January 2012, can be seen as an attempt by three parties that used to be close to Gbagbo to seek dialogue with the Ouattara camp. The LMP has promised to commit to reconciliation for the Ivorians and an end to violence. One of the alliance's founders, Gervais Coulibaly, was once Gbagbo's official spokesman.

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Many of Laurent Gbagbo's political allies are now in exile in Ghana. Former Gbagbo supporters like Damana Adia Pick-ass, once an FPI representative on the electoral commission and now leader of the Coalition of Ivorian Patriots in Exile

1 | Cf. Macaire Dagry, "La Côte d'Ivoire recherché désespérément une opposition au régime Ouattara", *La Nouvelle Tribune*, 31 May 2012.

(COPY), or Watchard Kédjébo, Gbagbo's former campaign boss in the Bouaké region, still dream of exacting revenge at some point for Gbagbo's arrest. Even if a serious attempt at a putsch appears unlikely, Gbagbo's supporters in exile still pose a threat to Côte d'Ivoire's stability.

## ECONOMIC RECOVERY ON THE HORIZON

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The economy in this former West African business metropolis has started growing again. Given that in 2011 the country's economy collapsed and growth stood at minus 7.3 per cent, the International Monetary Fund's estimate of growth in the region of eight to nine per cent in 2012 is little short of extraordinary.<sup>2</sup> However, many of the bigger, predominantly French companies did stay in the country during the political crisis and have now begun doing business and investing again. Many large infrastructure projects have been initiated, especially in the capital Abidjan.

President Ouattara's trips to the capitals of the world in search of new investors are beginning to pay off. The international community has agreed to huge amounts of aid for Côte d'Ivoire. After Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire is the second-largest economy in West Africa and so has a key role to play in the development of the whole region. It is the world's second-largest coffee exporter and the largest cocoa exporter and last season's cocoa harvest of 1.5 million tonnes was exceptionally good. At the same time, the Côte d'Ivoire also plays an increasing role on the regional stage. The country has held the presidency of ECOWAS since February 2012 and is currently playing a critical role in helping to resolve the political crises in Mali and Guinea Bissau. Along with Côte d'Ivoire's strategic significance, its geostrategic role in the region is also one of the reasons for the international community's strong interest in rebuilding the country. The possibility that is under consideration of moving the headquarters of the African Development Bank back to Abidjan from Tunis<sup>3</sup> is also an indication of Côte

2 | Cf. OECD, *African Economic Outlook 2011*.

3 | The headquarters of the African Development Bank was moved from Abidjan to Tunis in 2003 in the wake of Côte d'Ivoire's political crisis.

d'Ivoire's regional significance and not least of the sense of hope in the country felt by the international and African community.

What is particularly important for this heavily indebted country is partial debt relief. The Paris Club has agreed debt relief in the amount of 78 per cent until 2014 (Côte d'Ivoire owes 1.8 billion U.S. dollars to the Paris Club). The IMF has also approved loans of 616 million dollars.<sup>4</sup> By 30 June 2012 it is expected that Côte d'Ivoire will have met all the criteria for heavily indebted countries and will therefore be entitled to substantial foreign debt relief.

The historical connection with France as a former colonial power continues. Therefore, it is no surprise that it is especially French companies that are the main investors in Côte d'Ivoire. In July 2011, a variety of French investments were agreed during a visit by a delegation of around one hundred businessmen, headed up by the French prime minister at that time, François Fillon.<sup>5</sup> However, while big investors such as the large French companies Bolloré and Bouygues already seem to have regained their trust in Côte d'Ivoire, many medium-sized companies remain somewhat reticent. They still consider the security risks to be too high. However, these medium-sized companies are quite important, as around 50 per cent of all jobs in the formal sector in Abidjan are dependent upon medium-sized French businesses.<sup>6</sup>

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The situation in the education sector remains critical. While most schools have opened again, the country's largest university in Cocody in Abidjan, which was badly damaged in the fighting, has been closed since March 2011. President Ouattara has announced that the university is due

4 | Cf. "Le Club de Paris réduit la dette ivoirienne", *Jeune Afrique*, 16 Nov 2011, <http://jeuneafrique.com/Article/ARTJAWEB20111116095106/france-fmi-dette-exterieure-alassane-ouattara-club-de-paris-reduit-la-dette-ivoirienne.html> (accessed 12 Jun 2012).

5 | Cf. Benjamin Soro, "Après la visite de Fillon: Les contrats juteux de la France", <http://abidjandirect.net/index2.php?page=poli&id=1852> (accessed 12 Jun 2012).

6 | Cf. Michel Galy, "La Côte d'Ivoire selon le Risque Pays", *Slate Afrique*, 12 Apr 2012, <http://slateafrique.com/85519/cote-d%E2%80%99ivoire-selon-risque-pays> (accessed 11 Jul 2012).

to re-open in September 2012 following rebuilding work. Students have therefore lost two years of studies and not everyone has been able to enrol in private universities or to go abroad in the meantime. There is also something of a political element to the re-opening of the university, as it was the stronghold of the student union Fesci, which supported Gbagbo during the civil war and formed an armed militia against Ouattara supporters.

The Kouadio-Ahoussou government is now faced with the task of improving the living conditions of the Ivorian people on a long-term basis. Poverty in Côte d'Ivoire increased significantly during the years of political crisis and civil war. By 2013, the government hopes to reduce poverty from the current level of 48.9 per cent to the level it was at in 1999, before the political crisis began (33.6 per cent). It is aiming for a further reduction to 15 per cent by 2015,<sup>7</sup> but there is still a long road ahead. According to the United Nations *Human Development Index*, Côte d'Ivoire is one of the poorest countries in the world, and in 2011 it was ranked 170<sup>th</sup> out of 183 nations.<sup>8</sup> Inflation has caused food prices

to double in some instances, causing real suffering for many of the country's inhabitants.

In 2011, the inflation rate was approximately 4.5 per cent.<sup>9</sup> Youth unemployment has also reached critical levels. According to figures

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published by the National Employment Office, 25 per cent of under-35s are unemployed, an age group that makes up 64 per cent of the population as a whole.<sup>10</sup> The actual percentage is probably much higher, as many young people are not registered as unemployed but work under precarious circumstances in the informal sector. As in many countries, the lack of prospects for young people is a potential source of social unrest and instability, something which needs to be avoided in Côte d'Ivoire at all costs.

7 | OECD, *African Economic Outlook*, <http://africaneconomicoutlook.org/fr/countries/west-africa/cote-divoire> (accessed 11 Jul 2012).

8 | UNDP, *Human Development Index*, [http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR\\_2011\\_EN\\_Table2.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2011_EN_Table2.pdf) (accessed 12 Jun 2012).

9 | Cf. Edmond Gomon, "Taux d'inflation au sein de l'Uemoa: La Côte d'Ivoire dans le peloton de tête", <http://news.abidjan.net/h/409338.html> (accessed 13 Jun 2012).

10 | Maurice Koffi et al., "Chômage et entrepreneuriat des jeunes en Côte d'Ivoire", *Pensées Noires*, 8 Aug 2011, <http://penseesnoires.info/2011/08/08/chomage-et-entrepreneuriat-des-jeunes-en-cote-divoire> (accessed 12 Jun 2012).

President Ouattara and his government need to prove that they are better than their predecessors by improving the country's infrastructure and expanding its welfare safety net. The budget passed in June 2011 includes 840.1 billion FCFA<sup>11</sup> (1.3 billion euros) for poverty reduction programmes. Within this, a total of 45 billion FCFA (69 million euros) is earmarked for the President's own emergency programme, which calls for investment in areas such as health, education, drinking water, electricity supplies and urban development.<sup>12</sup> Many infrastructure projects have already been initiated and Ouattara's presidency can be seen as generally positive in this respect at least. However, the Ivorians have already been disappointed by the promise to provide free healthcare. After just nine months, the programme was restricted to pregnant mothers, children under five and treatment for malaria because of the costs involved.

## DIFFICULT REFORMS TO THE SECURITY SECTOR

Reform of the security sector is currently one of the greatest challenges for Ouattara's presidency. Even though the security situation in Abidjan has clearly improved, there are still tensions in the north and west of the country. Many headaches have been caused by attempts to amalgamate the two armies that were fighting each other a year ago – the Forces de Défense et de Sécurité (FDS) from the Gbagbo camp and the former rebels from the north, the Forces Nouvelles (FN), who supported Ouattara – into a new army, the Forces Républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire (FRCI), which was formed on 17 March. So far, the integration process is proving to be very difficult. One of the main stumbling blocks has been the lack of hierarchy and integration within the command structure of the FRCI. The former rebels of the Forces Nouvelles (FN), who made a significant contribution to Ouattara's military victory, are disproportionately

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11 | FCFA (Franc de la Communauté Financière d'Afrique) is the currency of the West African Economic and Monetary Union. It is the official currency of Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

12 | Gustave Agbanyan, "Budget 2011: 3050 milliards fcfa pour redresser la Côte d'Ivoire", *Economie & Finances*, 9 Jul 2011, <http://suite101.fr/article/budget-2011-3050-milliards-fcfa-pour-redresser-la-cote-divoire-a29810> (accessed 12 Jun 2012).

represented and currently make up the bulk of the soldiers. This makes it more difficult to integrate the formerly hostile FDS soldiers. Contempt for the hierarchy has apparently reached such a point that soldiers who were formerly loyal to the FN now refuse to salute former FDS officers.<sup>13</sup> The decision to give so many top positions in the new armed forces to former rebel leaders has attracted widespread criticism.<sup>14</sup> Another problem is that many of those former FN rebels who are now part of the FRCI lack basic military training. Also, outside of the new army, there are still around 9,000 former FN rebels from the north who have not yet been integrated into the regular army, as was envisaged under the terms of the Ouagadougou agreement of 2007.<sup>15</sup> What is also unclear is just how

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many of the armed “volunteers” remain from those who joined Ouattara’s offensive at the beginning of 2011. It is estimated that they might still number around 2,000. Many of them have no regular income and resort to robbery and theft to feed themselves. If these non-integrated units are indeed incorporated into the regular army, then the prevalence of former FN troops in the FRCI would be even more pronounced, with all the problems of integration that this would bring.

Another problem for the government is deciding how to allocate areas of responsibility amongst the military, the police and the gendarmerie. A key consideration here are the so-called “commandants de zone”, who were heavily involved in the Ouattara offensive and who subsequently took over police stations and gendarmeries. Some of them are still active in some parts of the country and they act outside of any recognised hierarchy, which makes them very difficult to integrate. In many parts of the country they have taken on the role of both the police and the gendarmes, who are only allowed to carry weapons with the permission of the local “commandant”, as is the case in the city of Duékoué.<sup>16</sup>

13 | Cf. International Crisis Group, “Côte d’Ivoire: poursuivre la convalescence”, *Briefing Afrique*, 83, 16 Dec 2011.

14 | Cf. IRIN, “Analyse: La Côte d’Ivoire un an après”, 5 Dec 2011.

15 | Cf. n. 12.

16 | Ibid.



The situation in the north and west of the country remains critical. Security forces are finding it difficult to gain a foothold in the north, which has been under the command of the FN rebels of Guillaume Soro since the attempted military coup in 2002. While state security forces are present in all parts of the country, they are often not armed well enough to be effective. Most of the north continues to be controlled by young volunteer FN rebels who have not yet been disarmed.

The situation in the west of the country is also still unstable. There is a great deal of inter-ethnic tension in the region. There are constant reports of violent incidents and there

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are still a great many weapons in circulation. The west of the country, which produces most of the cacao harvest, has traditionally been a region of interethnic tension and disputes over land ownership between the Bété hunting people (and other Krou peoples) and immigrant Baoulé farmers.<sup>17</sup> These tensions were reflected in numerous political and military disputes during the civil war after the 2010 presidential elections, with the Bété<sup>18</sup> and the Guéré supporting Laurent Gbagbo, and the Baoulé siding with Allasane Ouattara. But even after the war has ended, there are still violent clashes in the region.<sup>19</sup> Further ethnic tension has been caused by the arrival of traditional Dozo hunters who took part in the advance of the Ouattara-supporting FN rebels from the north. They are now being accused of being partly responsible for the massacre of Guéré civilians in Duékoué<sup>20</sup> and of illegally occupying land in the region.

17 | Cf. Alfred Babo and Yvan Droz, "Conflits fonciers: de l'éthnie à la nation, Rapports interethniques et ivoirité dans le Sud-Ouest de la Côte d'Ivoire", Colloque international "Les frontières de la question foncière – At the frontier of land issues", Montpellier, 2006, [http://www.mpl.ird.fr/colloque\\_foncier/Communications/PDF/Babo.pdf](http://www.mpl.ird.fr/colloque_foncier/Communications/PDF/Babo.pdf) (accessed 11 Jul 2012).

18 | Laurent Gbagbo himself has Bété ethnicity.

19 | At the beginning of November there were clashes between Bété and Baoulé fighters in the towns of Pelezi and Bahé Sebon, which resulted in two deaths. Cf. "Côte d'Ivoire : des violences intercommunautaires font deux morts dans l'ouest", *Jeune Afrique*, 3 Nov 2011.

20 | Cf. Amnesty International, "Ils ont regardé sa carte d'identité, et l'ont abattu, Retour sur six mois de violences post-électorales en Côte d'Ivoire", 2011, [http://amnesty.fr/sites/default/files/AFR\\_31\\_002\\_2011\\_ext\\_fra.pdf](http://amnesty.fr/sites/default/files/AFR_31_002_2011_ext_fra.pdf) (accessed 12 Jun 2012).

The city of Duékoué is symbolic of the crisis that is besetting the country. During the crisis following the presidential elections, Duékoué provided a graphic illustration of the battles that were raging between Gbagbo and Ouattara supporters. On 29 and 30 March 2011, after the city had been taken by the Forces Républicaines loyal to Alassane Ouattara, a massacre occurred that according to United Nations estimates cost the lives of 800 people. The violence was aimed mostly at the Géré people, who had supported Gbagbo during the elections. The Carrefour residential district was largely destroyed. According to the United Nations, around one thousand people died in the west of the country alone. When President Ouattara visited Duékoué on 23 April 2012, he promised that all alleged crimes would be investigated, without exception.<sup>21</sup> There is clearly a long way to go before he makes good on that promise, as so far none of those responsible have been called to account.<sup>22</sup>

A further threat to the country's security comes from militias loyal to Gbagbo that have crossed the border into Liberia. FRCI forces are often powerless against strikes from these militias. A good example of the type of threat posed by these militias in Liberia is the attack that took place on 9 June against civilians and United Nations peacekeeping forces (ONUCI), in which seven Nigerians from the ONUCI and numerous civilians were killed. This attack was the latest in a series of such incidents on the border with Liberia since the end of the war. An ONUCI spokesman admitted after the incident that the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programme (DDR) in Côte d'Ivoire had so far been unsuccessful.<sup>23</sup>

In addition to improving security, it is also important for essential public services to be restored and infrastructure to be improved in this largely isolated region in order to guarantee the area's reconstruction and security. Ongoing

21 | Cf. AFP, "Côte d'Ivoire – Ouattara promet la fin de l'impunité dans l'ouest".

22 | Cf. Matt Wells, "Ouattara n'a pas tenu ses promesses de justice impartiale", *Human Rights Watch*, 29 Mar 2012.

23 | César Ebrokié, "César, Désarmement, démobilisation et réinsertion des ex-combattants / Albert Caramès (Onuci): 'Le DDR a échoué'", *Abidjan.net*, 11 May 2012, <http://news.abidjan.net/h/433191.html> (accessed 12 Jun 2012).

security problems in the shape of regular attacks and road blockades are not just an issue in the north and the west, but also in Abidjan itself. The fragile security situation and reports of constant attacks on civilians by the FRCI have so far done little to foster trust in the state security forces amongst the people.

### **AN INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY?**

President Ouattara promised that there would be an independent judicial enquiry into the crimes committed during the crisis following the presidential elections. However, beyond all the rhetoric about reconciliation and national unity, Ouattara and the newly-established Commission on Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation (CDVR) need to demonstrate by concrete actions that there will indeed be an independent and impartial investigation into the crimes committed during the crisis of recent years. However, this seems more and more unlikely: so far, not one of the FN leaders has been arrested and many former Gbagbo supporters have accused Ouattara of dispensing a kind of “victor’s justice.”

In July 2011, President Ouattara appointed a commission to look into the crimes committed during the post-election crisis, but it only actually began work in mid-January 2012.

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The human rights organisation Human Rights Watch condemned the investigations, which only lasted two months, as being too short to take on board all the complaints made by the people. They were also critical of the fact that there was no representative from the Gbagbo camp, as they have been boycotting the commission.<sup>24</sup> Their report has not yet been published, but many Ivorians already suspect the commission is guilty of partisanship. In June 2011 a commission of inquiry set up by the United Nations had already concluded that serious acts of violence had been committed by both sides during the political crisis after the presidential elections.

24 | Human Rights Watch, “Côte d’Ivoire: Les méthodes expéditives de la Commission nationale d’enquête suscitent des inquiétudes”, 23 Feb 2012, <http://hrw.org/fr/news/2012/02/23/c-te-d-ivoire-les-m-thodes-exp-ditives-de-la-commission-nationale-denqu-te-suscitent> (accessed 12 Jun 2012).

On 31 May 2012, more than a year after the end of the civil war, the first hearings began against those allies of Laurent Gbagbo that had been captured at the end of the war. The government had been the target of much criticism before the hearings started because the accused had been held without charge in prisons in the north of the country. The first to be summoned were the president of the FPI, Pascal Affi N'Guessan, and Gbagbo's son Michel. Others close to Gbagbo, such as his wife Simone, will be tried in the coming months.

There is growing evidence that Ouattara is playing for time, as there have so far been no investigations into people from his own circle or from amongst the former FN rebels. Many Ivorians' hopes of impartial judicial proceedings are resting on the investigations being carried out by the International Criminal Court. Although Côte d'Ivoire is not a signatory to the International Criminal Court treaty, it recognises the ICC. In October 2011, the ICC was given permission to investigate crimes against humanity and war crimes in Côte d'Ivoire. Former president Laurent Gbagbo has been in prison in the Hague since 30 November, having initially been held in Côte d'Ivoire since his arrest on 11 April 2011. He is facing four criminal charges for "murder, rape and other sexual violence, persecution and other inhuman acts allegedly carried out in the territory of Côte d'Ivoire between 16 December 2010 and 12 April 2011".<sup>25</sup>

While Gbagbo supporters condemn his imprisonment by the ICC as illegal, Ouattara supporters are all in favour of the ICC. But there is also some uneasiness in the Ouattara camp. There is a lot on the line for the president himself; because, if the investigations begin to focus on his own supporters, it is not beyond the realm of possibility that people such as Soro, the former rebel leader and current President of the National Assembly, will also be made to face charges in the courts. So the government is currently happy to maintain the status quo, not least because of fears over security implications.

According to the human rights organisation Human Rights Watch, there is plenty of evidence that war crimes were

25 | "Ex-Präsident der Elfenbeinküste nach Den Haag überstellt", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 30 Nov 2011.

committed by FN rebels during the 2011 civil war. In a recent report, the organisation named four FN rebels who it believes played an active role in massacres and human rights violations.<sup>26</sup> It claims that Fofana Losséni, who commanded the troops that took the city of Duékoué, was primarily responsible for the massacre that took place there.<sup>27</sup> Human Rights Watch is also of the opinion that 149 civilians in Abidjan were killed by FRCI soldiers on 11 April 2011. Chérif Ousmane, who today is a high-ranking FRCI officer and a close confidant to Ouattara, allegedly gave the order for 29 prisoners to be shot in May 2011.<sup>28</sup>

The fact that the army has still not been reformed or integrated makes it difficult to identify and arrest FN suspects. Hopes therefore now lie with the work of the ICC, which has given its chief prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo (and in future chief prosecutor Fatou Bensouda) the task of investigating all the crimes committed since the failed coup against Laurent Gbagbo in 2002. Earlier, there had been some criticism that the ICC only wanted to look into crimes committed during the recent political crisis.<sup>29</sup> As a result, investigations into former FN rebels and people close to the Ouattara camp cannot be excluded.

## A DIFFICULT RECONCILIATION

In terms of the challenges facing the country, achieving some kind of reconciliation in a country ravaged by civil war is going to be very difficult. The legal aspects of dealing with the crimes are closely bound up with coming to terms with them on the political and social front and with reconciliation, but this is something that has barely begun to happen. In September 2011, the Commission for Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation (CDVR), based on the South African model, was set up under the

**In September 2011, the Commission for Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation, based on the South African model, was set up under the chairmanship of former Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny.**

26 | Cf. Human Rights Watch, "They killed them like it was nothing: The need for justice for Côte d'Ivoire's post-election crimes", 6 Oct 2011, <http://hrw.org/fr/reports/2011/10/04/ils-les-ont-tu-s-comme-si-de-rien-n-tait> (accessed 10 Jun 2012).

27 | Ibid.

28 | Cf. Côte d'Ivoire (ed.), "HRW demande des sanctions contre des commandants des FRCI", *RFI*, 4 Jun 2012, <http://rfi.fr/afrique/20110604-cote-ivoire-hwr-demande-sanctions-contre-commandants-frci> (accessed 10 Jun 2012).

29 | Cf. n. 13.

chairmanship of former Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny. However, the Commission has so far failed to achieve meaningful results. Many Ivorians have little faith in the success of the reconciliation process and bemoan the fact that the commission has little or no presence outside of the capital, as so far nothing has been done to begin setting up the 36 planned local commissions.

Political dialogue between the Ouattara and Gbagbo camps remains informal at present, and so far has produced no results. The FPI continues to accuse Ouattara of applying victor's justice and is demanding the immediate release of all imprisoned FPI supporters. The political relations of the two camps are shaped above all by thoughts of revenge. Incidents such as the one on 21 January 2012, when young Ouattara supporters stormed a meeting of the FPI party (which is loyal to Gbagbo) in the working-class Yopougan district, serve to illustrate just how divided Ivorian society still is. At least one person was killed in the incident and several more were injured. This sort of thing does not make it any easier for the FPI to return to the political stage nor for putting an end to the political boycott by participating in the local elections scheduled for the end of 2012.

The success of the Commission's work and the ability to come to terms with the crisis in politics and society will stand or fall by the extent to which it fulfils its promise of an independent and impartial judicial investigation. For it is only if the crimes on both sides are investigated and punished in equal measure that some kind of reconciliation between the victorious Ouattara camp and the defeated Gbagbo camp will be possible.