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REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMISSION
ON THE SITUATION IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 73rd meeting held on 19 March 2007, Council decided, among other things, to fully endorse the Ouagadougou Political Agreement signed, on 4 March 2007, by President Laurent Gbagbo and the Secretary-General of the New Forces, Guillaume Soro, under the facilitation of President Blaise Compaoré, President of Faso and current Chairperson of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and recommended to the United Nations Security Council to also endorse the Agreement. Council requested me to take all necessary measures to provide the support of the African Union (AU) to the current Chairperson of ECOWAS and to the Ivorian parties for the scrupulous implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement within the timeframe stipulated therein. Council urged the United Nations Security Council to visit West Africa, Côte d'Ivoire in particular, with a view to giving added momentum to the peace processes in the region.

2. At its 74th meeting held on 29 March 2007, Council decided to endorse the Supplementary Agreement concluded by the parties on 26 March 2007, as well as the appointment of Guillaume Soro as Prime Minister. At the same time, Council invited the United Nations Security Council to endorse this decision and to take appropriate measures, including the adoption of a fresh resolution, with a view to helping the Ivorian parties maintain the momentum generated by the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and the Supplementary Agreement, to enable them to successfully conclude the peace and reconciliation process in Côte d'Ivoire, which should lead to the organization of free, open, transparent and democratic elections.

3. This report provides an account of the situation in Côte d'Ivoire since March 2007. It dwells on the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and the developments in the security, humanitarian and socio-economic situation in that country. The report also covers the activities carried out by the AU in support of the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUAGADOUGOU POLITICAL AGREEMENT

4. Council will recall that the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, which was favourably received by the population and all the political parties, represented a compromise to remove the major stumbling blocks in the peace process. With regard to the identification and electoral process, the Agreement provides for simplified modalities for obtaining the national identity card, as well as the voters' card, and stipulates whose responsibility it is to issue these documents. With respect to the defense and security forces, the Agreement provides for the merging of the forces of the former warring parties and the establishment of an Integrated Command Centre (ICC) charged with the task of unifying and restructuring these forces. The Agreement also provides for the gradual removal of the zone of confidence and consultation between the two signatory parties for the appointment of senior officials in pursuance of the re-establishment of State Administration throughout the country. Other key provisions in the Agreement

include the creation of two follow-up mechanisms and the adoption of a 10-month implementation calendar expiring on 4 January 2008 and culminating in the organization of a presidential election.

5. Following the signing of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, the signatory parties devoted themselves to the implementation of the commitments made. Apart from the formation of a new Government and the convening of a governmental workshop, mention should be made of the resumption of the mobile courts hearings for the identification of the population and the re-establishment of the State Administration. The parties also focused their efforts on re-establishing mutual confidence and promoting reconciliation. However, some delays occurred in the implementation of vital aspects of the Agreement. In order to deal with these delays, the parties signed in Ouagadougou, on 28 November 2007, two Supplementary Agreements aimed at fast tracking the implementation process of their commitments, and at paving the way for the organization of presidential elections not later than the end of the first half of 2008.

(i) Formation of a new Government and Organization of a Governmental Workshop on the Ouagadougou Agreement

6. On 29 March 2007, President Laurent Gbagbo signed a decree appointing Guillaume Soro as Prime Minister. On 7 April 2007, he signed another decree establishing a new Government. It comprises 33 members, including the Prime Minister, drawn from the parties to the Linas Marcoussis Agreement and the civil society, as follows: 9 Ministers for the Ivorian Popular Front (*FPI*), 7 for the New Forces, 5 for the Rally of Republicans (*RDR*), 5 for the Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire-African Democratic Rally (*PDCI-RDA*), 2 for the Union for Democracy and Peace in Côte d'Ivoire (*UDPC*), 1 Minister each for the Democratic and Citizens Union (*UDCY*), the Ivorian Labour Party (*PIT*) and the Movement of the Forces of the Future (*MFA*), and 2 Ministers from the civil society.

7. A government-organized workshop on the Ouagadougou Political Agreement implementation matrix and the draft budget to finance the crisis exit programme was held in Yamoussoukro on 2 May 2007, under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister. Apart from the members of the Government, the workshop also brought together representatives of the President of the Republic, the President of Burkina Faso, in his capacity as Facilitator, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), the AU, ECOWAS, the International Organization of the Francophonie (OIF), the national administrative and technical implementing institutions, the international development partners, the general staff of the Defense and Security Forces of Côte d'Ivoire (*FDSCI*) and the Armed Forces of the New Forces (*FAFN*), as well as those of the Impartial Forces.

(ii) Reconciliation and Confidence-Building Efforts

8. During the period under review, the signatory parties and their sympathizers took a series of measures to re-establish mutual confidence, particularly through successive events aimed at promoting national reconciliation and re-unification of the country. In an address to the Nation, on 13 April 2007, the Prime Minister asked for forgiveness “for

all and on behalf of all” for the destruction occasioned by the war in Côte d’Ivoire. After defining his Government’s mission, he underscored the need to always seek consensus through constant consultation with the President of the Republic and the people. Similarly, the messages to the Nation by the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, the Defense Minister and Chiefs of Staff of the *FDSCI* and of the *FAFN* on the occasion of the ICC inauguration ceremony in Yamoussoukro, the launch of the removal of the zone of confidence in Tiébissou and the deployment of the N’Gattadolikro mixed police unit on 16 April 2007, respectively, reiterated the firm commitment of these leaders to peace.

9. Noteworthy also was the closing ceremony of the peace caravan organized by the President of the Congress of Young Patriots (COJEP) in Abidjan on 21 April 2007. On that occasion, top personalities of the presidential camp and of the New Forces, such as Mme Simone Ehivet Gbagbo, wife of the President of the Republic, and Mamadou Koulibaly, Speaker of the National Assembly, on the one hand, Sidiki Konaté, spokesperson of the New Forces and the newly appointed Minister of Tourism, on the other, took turns on the podium to call for peace, forgiveness and mutual support. On 7 May 2007, the President of the Republic assisted by the Prime Minister, played host to the *FDSCI* and the *FAFN* delegations to engage them to work hand-in-hand towards peace.

10. On 30 July 2007, the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister incinerated about 2,000 weapons at a ceremony christened “Flame of Peace” held in Bouaké in the presence of seven African Heads of State, several other foreign personalities and a mammoth crowd of Ivorians. On his way to Bouaké, President Laurent Gbagbo crossed the ceasefire line for the first time since the eruption of the crisis, a line which had until then represented the *de facto* partition of the country, thus giving symbolic expression to the country’s re-unification and the resumption of free movement for all Ivorians throughout the country. Furthermore, the two former belligerent forces - the *FDSCI* and the *FAFN* - marched side by side in Abidjan and in other cities of the country on the occasion of the commemoration of the 47th Independence Anniversary of Côte d’Ivoire, on 7 August 2007.

11. At the invitation of Charles Blé Goudé, President of COJEP, on the occasion of the organization by his movement of the “Resistance Feast for Peace”, the Prime Minister visited Goagnoa on 20 October 2007, the region of origin of President Laurent Gbagbo. In the statement that he made during the visit, the Prime Minister expressed the wish that their respective followers would not constitute an obstacle to peace. President Gbagbo, for his part, toured the Northern part of the country, which is under the control of the New Forces, from 28 to 30 November 2007. He was received by the Prime Minister in the presence of a huge throng of followers. On that occasion, the President of the Republic reiterated his message on the end of the war and announced a programme for the construction or rehabilitation of road, school, water, sanitary and agricultural infrastructure.

12. In the meantime, President Gbagbo, on 28 October 2007, met with thousands of Burkina Faso nationals residing in Côte d’Ivoire. After underscoring the bonds of history linking Burkina Faso and Côte d’Ivoire, the Head of State announced that residence permits were to be soon abolished for all ECOWAS citizens.

13. Notwithstanding the repeated efforts for reconciliation and the newly found confidence, the period under review was not without difficulties, as evidenced by the tension that characterized the relation between the New Forces and some of their allies in the *Rassemblement des Houphouëtistes pour la démocratie et la paix (RHDP)*. At the root of the problem were sections of the media that support the *RHDP*, which launched a scathing attack on the Prime Minister, whom they criticized for having left to the presidential camp most of the key Ministries, for having failed to obtain a delegation of powers from the President of the Republic and for not respecting the calendar prescribed by the Ouagadougou Agreement, particularly with regard to the dismantling of the militias. The New Forces reacted vehemently to these allegations and even threatened to leave the coalition. Following this escalation, which was deemed to be inopportune between political allies, initiatives were taken to calm the situation, especially at the level of the *G7 Directoire*.

14. Early in November 2007, the political climate became momentarily charged following a disagreement between the New Forces and the *PDCI-RDA* over the 14th report of the United Nations Secretary-General on UNOCI, dated 1 October 2007. In that report, the United Nations Secretary-General expressed deep concern at the fact that the failure to adhere to the timelines set out for implementing the Ouagadougou Political Agreement had led to a slackening of momentum which, if it continues, could undermine the successful implementation of the Agreement. The fact that the *PDCI* agreed with this assessment of the situation did not go down well with the New Forces, and led to bitter exchanges through the media. However, following a meeting between the Prime Minister and the President of *PDCI-RDA* on 12 November 2007, all the misunderstandings were cleared and Mr. Konan Bedié, leader of *PDCI-RDA*, reiterated his party's support for the Ouagadougou Political Agreement.

(iii) Identification of the Population

15. The various components of the identification process were partially executed. Progress was made in terms of the resumption of the mobile courts operations and the appointment of a technical operator to conduct the identification exercise in consultation with the National Institute of Statistics (INS) and under the supervision of the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI).

16. Indeed, the mobile courts operations were launched on 25 September 2007, in line with the 21 September 2007 presidential decision, which put in place special provisions for the mobile courts hearings covering a period of three months. The operation kicked off slowly and was faced with many difficulties for which solutions were eventually found. The difficulties related to the effective deployment of the prefectural corps in the Central, Northern and Western regions, as well as logistical problems arising from inadequate means of transport. For instance, by November 2007, out of the 111 teams envisaged, only 25 had by then been deployed to conduct this operation throughout the country, and about 55,000 duplicates of birth certificates had been issued. However, I am glad to inform Council that, pursuant to the Ouagadougou Political Agreement on the identification and voter registration, the signatory parties agreed under the second Supplementary Agreement on the appointment, by the Government, of a company called *SAGEM Sécurité* (SAFRAN Group) as technical

operator for identification. The parties further decided, under the third Supplementary Agreement, to launch, before the end of December 2007, the reconstitution of destroyed or lost registers, concurrently with the mobile courts operations for the issuance of duplicates of birth certificates.

iv) Re-establishment of State Administration

17. On 5 June 2007, the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister agreed on the appointment of 158 *Préfets* and Secretaries-General of *préfectures* and on the appointment of magistrates. During the same period, the Government launched the re-establishment of State Administration in the areas under the control of the New Forces. To this end, the Interior Minister, on 18 June 2007, installed the *Préfet* of the Department of Bouaké in the presence of the Prime Minister and all the other *Préfets* and Secretaries-General redeployed in the area. Furthermore, after consultation with the Prime Minister, the President of the Republic, on 15 August 2007, signed a decree appointing 296 *sous-Préfets*, and announced that 40 new *sous-préfectures* would be created in due course to accompany the mobile courts operations in the Central, Northern and Western regions of the country.

18. The Director of the Administrative and Technical Department of the National Commission for the Redeployment of the Administration (*CNPRA*) indicated that, by 30 November 2007, over 15,000 civil servants had returned to their posts out of the 24,437 that had left the Central, Northern, and Western regions as a result of the war. Furthermore, 155 prefectural authorities appointed for the 22 departments in the same regions, made up of 6 regional *Préfets*, 16 departmental *Préfets*, 27 *préfecture* Secretaries-General and 106 *sous-Préfets*, had received their allowances totaling 635 million CFA Francs.

19. In pursuance of the third Supplementary Agreement, and in order to speed up the re-establishment of State authority and Administration throughout the national territory, the parties decided to embark upon the redeployment of the tax and customs administration not later than 30 December 2007, based on the single account principle, modalities of which are to be defined by the Government. The two parties further decided that the re-establishment of State Administration and the public services throughout the national territory should be completed by not later than 30 January 2008.

v) Military and Security Aspects

20. With respect to the military and security components of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, the 17 March 2007 presidential decree established the ICC with the responsibility to implement the measures for the restructuring of the *FDSCI*. Composed of officers appointed by the Chiefs of Staff of the *FDSCI* and the *FAFN*, this structure is headquartered in Yamoussoukro. Despite logistical and financial difficulties and inadequate planning capacity and staff, the ICC has carried out a number of activities, including the establishment of the security mechanisms required for the mobile courts operations, the deployment of mixed police units along the green line which replaced the zone of confidence, the study on how best to conduct the dismantling of the militias

and the disarmament of former combatants, as well as the activation of the Joint Commission charged with the task to rebuild the army.

21. On 12 April 2007, and in accordance with the pertinent provisions of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, the President of the Republic issued an ordinance granting amnesty for offences and crimes against State security and national defense committed between September 2000 and the signing date of the Agreement. This ordinance excluded from the amnesty, economic crimes, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

22. Regarding the deployment of mixed units and the lifting of the zone of confidence, the parties had, in mid-September, completed the deployment of six mixed units in various localities in the Western, Central and Eastern part of the zone of confidence. The United Nations, however, indicated that the composition of some of the units was yet to be finalized, as the personnel of the New Forces was yet to join those units; in addition, there were other difficulties linked to the payment of salaries to the members of the New Forces in some of the units and to the issue of the ranks to be assigned to them. With the deployment of the six mixed police units, the UNOCI has set up 17 observation posts along the green line, while maintaining a quick reaction force and the capability to reactivate any former control posts should the need arises. Furthermore, on 14 May, the Defense Minister embarked upon a campaign to explain the Ouagadougou Political Agreement to the *FDSCI* and the *FAFN*.

23. At a ceremony organized in Guiglo on 19 May 2007, *the Front de résistance de l'Ouest (FRGO)* handed in weapons in the presence of the Head of State and the Officer-in-Charge of UNOCI. Hundreds of weapons were handed to UNOCI and about a thousand fighters were demobilized. Furthermore, a ceremony to free the last prisoners of war detained by the New Forces organized in Bouaké on 26 June 2007 was attended by the Defense Minister, the two Chiefs of Staff and authorities of the impartial forces. The New Forces freed 51 detainees, while, on the government side, all those detained in the aftermath of the 2 January 2006 attack on the Akouédo military camps were released.

24. In pursuance of the third Supplementary Agreement, the two parties decided that the cantonment of ex-combatants, the storage of weapons and dismantling of the militias would commence not later than 22 December 2007, under the auspices of the ICC and the supervision of the impartial forces. In order to operationalize the cantonment in accordance with the terms of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, and on the basis of the sites already prepared to that effect, the two parties also decided to commence the enrolment of ex-combatants into the *civic service programme* by 22 December 2007.

25. To facilitate the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) process as stipulated by the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, the two parties agreed to get the Government to pay a lump sum monthly allocation, amount which would be specified by a decree of the Council of Ministers, towards the demobilization, feeding and accommodation of the ex-combatants until such a time they are integrated into the new defense and security forces or reintegrated into civilian life. The two parties further

agreed that all the *FAFN* soldiers who were regular members of the national armed forces of Côte d'Ivoire, the *gendarmérie* and the paramilitary corps would be re-integrated into the new national army and have their careers reactivated. On the question of the number of the *FAFN* personnel that should be absorbed in the new armed forces and the ranks to be assigned to those that had changed category in the *FAFN*, the two parties agreed to avail themselves of the arbitration of the Facilitator.

vi) Follow-up and Consultation Mechanisms

26. The first meeting of the Evaluation and Monitoring Committee (CEA) took place in Ouagadougou on 12 May 2007, with a focus on the implementation of the key aspects of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, such as the identification of the population, the re-establishment of State Administration, the dismantling of the militias and the DDR programme. This Committee is chaired by the Facilitator or his representative, and comprises three representatives of each of the signatory parties.

27. With regards to the Permanent Consultative Framework (CPC), which brings together President Gbagbo, Prime Minister Soro, former President Henri Konan Bédié, former Prime Minister Alassane Ouattara and the Facilitator, it met in Yamoussoukro on 12 June 2007. In the communiqué issued after the meeting, the CPC requested the Prime Minister to launch the mobile courts operations, confirm the designated technical operator and launch the identification process. It also urged the Prime Minister to pursue and speedily conclude the dismantling of the militias and take all appropriate measures to ensure greater openness of the State media. Furthermore, CPC members called upon the Facilitator to appeal to the United Nations Security Council to retain the post of High Representative for the Elections. They further invited the Facilitator to promptly hold talks with the parties signatories to the Ouagadougou Political Agreement with a view to finding a solution to the issue of the ranks to be accorded to the soldiers who had changed category in the *FAFN*, as well as to the question of numbers for the formation of the new national army and the *civic service programme*.

28. The second CEA meeting took place in Ouagadougou on 4 September 2007, and was attended by the members of the international consultative organ established as agreed by the parties and the Facilitator to accompany the Ivorian political forces and the Facilitator in the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement - the AU is a member of this body. The meeting discussed various aspects of the implementation process of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement.

29. It should be noted, lastly, that the Facilitator appointed a Special Representative in Abidjan, in the person of Boureima Badini, who arrived in the country in September 2007, with the responsibility to facilitate follow-up on the Ouagadougou Political Agreement. By resolution 1765 (2007) of 16 July 2007, the United Nations Security Council welcomed this decision and requested UNOCI to assist the representative of the Facilitator.

III. SUPPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

30. While it is clear that the successful implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement depends, first and foremost, on the Ivorian parties, it is also self-evident that the support and backing of the international community are no less critical. I am, therefore, glad to note the continued support of the United Nations and other partners of Côte d'Ivoire towards ensuring the successful conclusion of the peace process, in accordance with the wish expressed by the Ivorian parties.

31. Following the signing of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, the United Nations fielded a technical assessment mission in Côte d'Ivoire from 10 to 22 April 2007, to study how best to re-adjust the UN's role for it to provide effective support to the new phase of the peace process. During its visit, the mission held talks with the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, leaders of political parties and representatives of the international community. These meetings also provided an opportunity to carry out consultations on the future of the International Working Group (IWG) and of the United Nations High Representative for the Elections. The mission also visited Ouagadougou for discussions with President Blaise Compaoré, Facilitator of the Direct Dialogue.

32. From 18 to 19 June 2007, a mission of the United Nations Security Council visited Abidjan. It held talks with the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of Burkina Faso, representing the Facilitator. The main opposition parties, particularly the *PDCI-RDA* and the *RDR*, boycotted the meeting organized by UNOCI in protest against the United Nations Secretary-General's proposal to abolish the post of High Representative for the Elections. At the end of its visit, the delegation expressed satisfaction with the evolution of the peace process and intimated that the Security Council would, in the near future, adopt a new resolution to define the role of the United Nations in the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement.

33. On 16 July 2007, the United Nations Security Council adopted resolution 1765 (2007) which, among other things, renewed the mandate of UNOCI – strength of which stood at little over 10,000 in mid-September - and the Licorne force until 15 January 2008, and endorsed the recommendations contained in the United Nations Secretary-General's report of 14 May 2007, which adapt the role of UNOCI to the new phase of the peace process as set out in the Ouagadougou Political Agreement. Accordingly, the Security Council requested UNOCI, within existing resources, to support the full implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, including by supporting the ICC, the restoration of State Administration throughout the country, the identification and voter registration processes, the electoral process, persons affected by the conflict, efforts to create a positive political environment, protection and promotion of human rights, and the economic recovery process of Côte d'Ivoire.

34. The resolution terminated the mandate of the High Representative for the Elections and decided, therefore, that the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in Côte d'Ivoire shall certify that all stages of the electoral process provide all the necessary guarantees for the holding of open, free, fair and transparent presidential and legislative elections in accordance with international standards.

Whereas the parties signatories to the Ouagadougou Political Agreement were of the view that the new resolution was in line with the Agreement, the *G7 Directoire*, relying on the consensus obtained at the 12 June meeting of the CPC and on the provisions of the Pretoria Agreement, in a communiqué issued on 25 July 2007, indicated that it was dismayed and shocked at the termination of the mandate of the High Representative for the Elections and its arbitration role. The communiqué also stated that resolution 1765 (2007) did not address the concern of the opposition leaders to open the CEA to all the signatories to the Linas Marcoussis Agreement. With regard specifically to the High Representative for the elections, both the Facilitator and the United Nations Secretary-General have emphasized that the termination of this mandate did, in no way, imply the abolition of the certification role of the United Nations, henceforth to be performed by the Special Representative in Côte d'Ivoire. Besides, the Facilitator is entrusted with the arbitration role previously exercised by the High Representative for the Elections.

35. In his 1 October 2007 report on UNOCI, the United Nations Secretary-General, while welcoming the positive atmosphere that has prevailed since the signing of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, expressed deep concern that the failure to adhere to the agreed timelines had led to a slackening of momentum, which, if it continues, could undermine successful implementation of the Agreement. On 23 October 2007, the President of the United Nations Security Council, in a press statement, reaffirmed the full support of Security Council members for the Agreement, paid tribute to the Facilitator and welcomed the initial measures taken by the parties to implement the Agreement. At the same time, he voiced Security Council members' concern over the delays, urging the parties to meet their commitments fully and in good faith, including by taking without delay specific measures to make progress in the identification and registration of voters, the disarmament and dismantling of militias, the DDR, the restoration of State authority, the unification and reform of the defense and security forces, and respect for human rights.

36. On 17 December 2007, the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) transmitted to the President of the Council the report of the Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire established by resolution 1761 (2007). In its report, the Group observed what it characterized as a lack of understanding on the part of certain Ivorian political authorities, who believed that, with the signing of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, the mission of the Experts was out of step with the current reconciliation process. On 29 October 2007, the United Nations Security Council adopted resolution 1782 (2007), renewing, until 31 October 2008, the sanctions regime imposed on Côte d'Ivoire under the terms of paragraphs 7 to 12 of resolution 1572 (2004) – arms embargo, travel restrictions and freezing of funds, other financial assets and economic resources – and of paragraph 6 of resolution 1643 (2005) – ban on the import of all rough diamonds from Côte d'Ivoire. The Security Council, in particular, decided to review these measures in light of the progress achieved in the implementation of key steps of the peace process.

37. In the meantime, the IWG, at its 14th meeting held on 13 April 2007, applauded the determination of the Ivorian parties to appropriate the peace process and reaffirmed the readiness of the international community to support these efforts. The Group requested its two co-Chairs to enter into consultation with the competent organs of

ECOWAS and the AU on the status and role of the IWG and come up with recommendations to the United Nations Security Council.

38. The 9th meeting of the Africa-EU Ministerial Troïka, held in Accra on 31 October 2007, examined the developments in the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire. In the communiqué issued at the end of the meeting, the Ministers reiterated their support for the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and expressed appreciation for the measures taken by the parties to implement the Agreement. They also urged the parties to speed up the implementation process and underscored the need to create conducive conditions for the holding of free, fair, transparent and democratic elections.

39. To mobilize the financial resources required to implement the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, the Government organized a Donors' Round Table in Abidjan on 18 July 2007, chaired by the Prime Minister. Out of a total budget of 178 billion FCFA, 52 billion will be provided by internal resources. Contributions totaling 181,445,000,000 FCFA were pledged by the World Bank, the European Union, the African Development Bank (ADB), France, Switzerland, Japan and Germany - an amount significantly higher than the needs expressed.

IV. SECURITY SITUATION

40. During the period under review, the security situation has remained generally calm. However, some isolated cases of violence are to be deplored, especially in Bouna, where clashes erupted on 21 October 2007 between the youth and elements of the *FAFN*, resulting in one death, several people wounded and considerable material damage. Earlier on, in May and August 2007, members of the Students' Union of Côte d'Ivoire (*FESCI*) were implicated in violent incidents, including the attack on the offices of two human rights organizations in Abidjan, a police post and the offices of a national newspaper. The security situation remains fragile in the North of the country where adequate law enforcement agencies are yet to be put in place.

41. The warm climate prevailing in the relations between the two former fighting forces did not prevent some uneasiness due mainly to complaints about allowances and claims relating to the ranks attained in the *FAFN*. In response to these concerns, the President of the Republic, accompanied by Prime Minister Guillaume Soro, held talks with representatives of the *FDSCI* and the *FAFN*. The President also held a meeting, on 14 August 2007, with representatives of the military. On 22 August 2007, the Chief of Staff of the *FDSCI* toured the military barracks to pursue the awareness-building campaign and re-establish trust and confidence.

42. The most worrying development in the period under review occurred on 29 June 2007, during the visit of the Prime Minister to Bouaké to install magistrates in that area for the resumption of the mobile courts operations. On landing at Bouaké airport, the aircraft in which the Prime Minister was traveling was hit by rocket fire, resulting in the death of four people, with several others wounded. The Prime Minister escaped unhurt. This attack was unanimously condemned by the Ivorian political class and civil society, as well as by the international community. At its 11th Ordinary Session held in Accra from 25 to 29 June 2007, the Executive Council strongly condemned this assassination

attempt and all attempts to undermine the progress achieved in the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire. It emphasized the need to, as speedily as possible, identify the perpetrators of this criminal act and to bring them to justice. In a statement dated 29 June 2007, the Security Council also strongly condemned the attack against the Prime Minister.

43. In the aftermath of the attack, the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister reaffirmed their determination to go ahead with the full implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement. After opening a national judicial inquiry, the Government addressed a request to the United Nations to establish an international commission of enquiry with a view to identifying the perpetrators of the attack. In response to the request, the United Nations fielded a week-long exploratory mission in Côte d'Ivoire. The findings of the mission are still being awaited.

44. Concurrently, the Ivorian armed forces, as well as the impartial forces, clarified their respective responsibilities for the security of airports in Côte d'Ivoire. In this regard, the *FDSCI* and the *FAFN* put in place specific measures to ensure the safety and security of the airports located in their respective areas of control. In addition, the four forces on ground, namely the *FDSCI*, *FAFN*, *UNOCI* and *Licorne* forces, agreed on the need to maintain permanent consultation and a close working relation, particularly with regard to security during the movements of the President of the Republic and of the Prime Minister.

V. HUMANITARIAN AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION

45. The Ouagadougou Political Agreement, which provides for an assistance programme towards the return of those displaced by the war, was highly appreciated by humanitarian organizations. The general improvement in the situation thus generated and the concrete measures taken to achieve reconciliation paved the way for the voluntary return of thousands of displaced persons to the Central and Northern parts of the country. To sustain this momentum, the Government established peace committees and enacted good neighborliness codes in the areas hosting and re-integrating the returnees. However, mistrust and land tenure related litigations persisted, with shortage of resources further constraining this return-home trend.

46. For the first time since the crisis erupted, there was only one start off day for the school year throughout the national territory, on 17 September 2007. On 25 September 2007, the Minister of Education launched in Abidjan the 3rd edition of the sensitization campaign for the return of all children to school, girls in particular. This campaign is aimed at the registration and maintenance in school of 850,000 children, aged between 6 and 12 years, 50% of whom are girls, with special focus on the rural areas. A strategic plan for the education of girls covering the period 2007-2011 was adopted this year with a view to correcting existing inequalities. The Government has embarked upon a programme for school rehabilitation with the support of international NGOs, which have started to rehabilitate and equip several schools in the Central, Northern and Western regions of the country.

47. The school system has, however, been witnessing upheavals since the start of the school year, as a result of strike action by some public secondary school teachers' unions demanding, among other things, the enactment of a decree on their career prospects, and the dissatisfaction manifested by the private secular teachers' unions, due to non-payment of subsidies by the State. The salaries of the identified striking teachers were recently suspended by the Government. On the other hand, on the occasion of his visit to the northern part of the country, the President of the Republic promised to recruit into the public service qualified personnel from voluntary organizations, which provided teaching at schools in the Central, Northern and Western regions.

48. The progress achieved has made it possible to create a conducive environment for the launching of major development projects and influx of foreign investments, as well as for the normalization of relations with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). According to the last report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on UNOCI, the IMF disbursed 60 million dollars last August, within the framework of the first segment of the Fund's emergency post-conflict assistance programme, whilst the World Bank plans to provide 120 million dollars in support of the Government's emergency recovery programme. On its part, the Ivorian Government is working towards clearing the arrears due to the World Bank and the ADB.

VI. ROLE OF THE AFRICAN UNION

49. At its 73rd and 74th meetings held in Addis Ababa on 19 and 29 March 2007, respectively, Council fully endorsed the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, as well as the subsequent Supplementary Agreement. I have, since, seized all opportunities to encourage the parties to fully honour their commitments and to urge the international community to extend all possible support and assistance to the country. Furthermore, in its capacity as member of the international consultative organ, the AU, through my Special Representative in Côte d'Ivoire, participated in the second meeting of the CEA held in Ouagadougou on 4 September 2007.

50. As part of its mission, the AU Liaison Office in Côte d'Ivoire maintains regular contact with the Ivorian parties, namely the signatories to the Ouagadougou Agreements, members of Government, all political players and the executives of the structures that play a vital role in the ongoing crisis exit process, especially the CEI and the CNSI. At the same time, the Office maintains a regular exchange of information and analysis with the members of the international community involved in the ongoing process, in particular the representative of the Facilitator, UNOCI, ECOWAS and other members of the international consultative organ. The Office enjoys good working relations with the Ministries in charge of humanitarian matters, civil society organizations and with the international NGOs operating in this sector. Also, its military component is in permanent link with the impartial forces, as well as with the Military Attachés accredited to Côte d'Ivoire, for effective monitoring of the security situation.

51. A mission of the PRC sub-Committee on refugees visited Côte d'Ivoire from 19 to 23 May 2007. The objective was to obtain first-hand information on the humanitarian situation in Côte d'Ivoire, and to examine the modalities for providing the support of the

AU to the affected population. As a follow-up to this mission, the Commission intends to make a financial contribution towards efforts to provide assistance to the internally displaced persons.

52. From 18 to 22 November 2007, the Women, Gender and Development Directorate of the Commission, in partnership with the NGO *Femme Africa Solidarité (FAS)*, undertook an exploratory solidarity and peace mission to Côte d'Ivoire. The objective was to meet with Ivorian women to ascertain their level of involvement in the crisis exit process and examine with them the modalities of possible support from the AU for their initiatives. This preliminary mission is to be followed by a mission of high-ranking women to Côte d'Ivoire, which will have the responsibility to translate this support into concrete measures.

VII. OBSERVATIONS

53. Significant progress has been achieved in the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement. The commitment of the signatory parties resulted in a new atmosphere in the country and the creation of confidence, without which it will be impossible to move forward. I welcome this development and the concrete measures taken thus far by the parties to implement the Ouagadougou Agreement.

54. I encourage the signatory parties to continue to deploy efforts in promoting lasting peace and reconciliation in their country. In this regard, I wholeheartedly welcome the signing of two Supplementary Agreements in Ouagadougou late in November 2007, with a view to fast tracking the implementation of the March 2007 Political Agreement and resolving the pending issues in the peace process, thereby preparing the ground for the holding of the presidential election scheduled for the first half of 2008, at the latest. Council should seize the opportunity offered by the present meeting to endorse the second and third Supplementary Agreements.

55. More generally, I would like to encourage all the political forces and the civil society in Côte d'Ivoire to do their utmost to consolidate the peace momentum thus generated and to create conducive conditions for the preparation and organization of free, fair, open and transparent elections in a peaceful climate.

56. Clearly, the progress achieved has been made possible by the resilient efforts deployed by the Facilitator, President Blaise Compaoré, as well as by the trust and confidence reposed in him by the parties. I take this opportunity to, once again, assure him of the support of the AU and encourage him to remain actively engaged in the peace process until its logical conclusion. I call upon the international community, including the United Nations, to continue to support the peace efforts in Côte d'Ivoire and to provide the requisite financial, technical and logistical assistance. For its part, the AU, in close cooperation with ECOWAS, the United Nations and other bilateral and multilateral partners, will continue to invest utmost efforts in assisting the Ivorian parties to establish lasting peace and stability in their country and promote reconciliation among the various components of their society.

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