



Cote d'Ivoire - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Friday 11 April 2014

Information on effectiveness of police/security forces

A report issued in January 2014 by the *United Nations News Service* includes noting that:

“...urgent steps need to be taken in security sector reform...” (United Nations News Service (27 January 2014) *Security sector reform, national reconciliation needed in Côte d'Ivoire ahead of 2015 polls, UN says*).

In February 2014 a report published by the *United States Department of State* commenting on events of the preceding year notes:

“The most serious human rights problems were security force abuse and the government’s inability to enforce the rule of law. The Republican Forces of Cote d’Ivoire (FRCI), the country’s military, were responsible for extrajudicial killings, acts of torture, and arbitrary detentions. Dozos--traditional hunters who often assumed unofficial security roles, particularly in the west of the country--were involved in human rights abuses including killings, torture, and arbitrary detention” (United States Department of State (27 February 2014) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2013, Cote d'Ivoire, Executive Summary*).

This report also points out that:

“The police (with assistance from a special mixed unit of police, gendarmerie, and FRCI called the CCDO) and the DST, all of whom are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Interior) and the gendarmerie (under the Ministry of Defense) are responsible for law enforcement. The DST is responsible for collecting and analyzing information related to national security. The police, who lacked sufficient equipment and training, have not performed effectively for more than 10 years. As a result, the FRCI performed many functions normally associated with the police and took the lead in security matters. FRCI forces generally lacked basic training and had an inadequate command and control structure. Impunity and corruption were endemic, and security checkpoints throughout the country often were used to extort bribes. Particularly in the west, communities often relied on Dozos, who operated without effective civilian controls or accountability, to meet their security needs” (Ibid, Section 1d Arbitrary Arrest or Detention/Arbitrary Arrest or Detention).

This document also states:

“Security forces failed at times to prevent or respond to societal violence, particularly in the west, where there were several incidents of intercommunal clashes during the year” (Ibid, Section 1d Arbitrary Arrest or Detention/Arbitrary Arrest or Detention).

A report issued in January 2014 by the *United Nations Human Rights Council* states:

“The Independent Expert notes an improvement in the overall security situation in the country. Since the attack in March 2013, there have been no reports of major

incidents resulting from external threats” (United Nations Human Rights Council (13 January 2014) *Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Côte d’Ivoire, Doudou Diène, p.8*).

This document also points out that:

“Domestically, the security situation remains fragile, as protest movements composed of former fighters are pushing for the authorities to keep the promises made to them, in particular in respect of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. The situation is tenuous owing to attacks and robberies committed mainly by former fighters and dozos, and by the prevalence of weapons, a legacy of the crisis” (ibid).

In December 2013 a publication released by the *United Nations Security Council* notes:

“Notwithstanding gradual improvements, the overall security situation in Côte d’Ivoire remained fragile, particularly along the border with Liberia. The security situation was characterized by high levels of violent crime throughout the country, including banditry committed by elements of the Forces républicaines de Côte d’Ivoire (FRCI), dozos (traditional hunters), former combatants and others, as well as recurrent incidents of intercommunity violence” (United Nations Security Council (24 January 2013) *Thirty-third report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire, p.4*).

A report issued in January 2014 by the *International Crisis Group* states that:

“Western Côte d’Ivoire is the country’s most unstable region. This vast area, which stretches along the Liberian border, from the coast to the Nimba mountains, suffers from almost all the ethnic, land, political, security and identity problems that afflict contemporary Côte d’Ivoire. Two administrative regions are especially problematic: Cavally and Guémon” (International Crisis Group (28 January 2014) *Côte d’Ivoire’s Great West: Key to Reconciliation, p.1*).

Think Security Africa in February 2014 points out that:

“The law and order situation, particularly in Western Cote d’Ivoire, is both serious and enduring, due to the continued presence of militia groups in the region (Think Security Africa (February 2014) *Security briefing, Cote d’Ivoire*).

References

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

Sources Consulted

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Freedom House

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Lexis Nexis

Minority Rights Group International

Online Newspapers

Refugee Documentation Centre E-Library

Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database

Reliefweb

Reuters

United Kingdom Home Office

United States Department of State

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