



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

Fourteenth special session

23 December 2010

### **Written statement\* submitted by Amnesty International, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[23 December 2010]

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\* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

## The human rights situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Mr. President,

Amnesty International is alarmed by the human rights situation in the Côte d'Ivoire, which has deteriorated severely in the post-electoral period. Human rights violations and abuses that have come to our attention include extrajudicial killings; unlawful arrests and enforced disappearances; violence against women; incitement to hostility and violence; attacks on places of religious worship; and denial of medical treatment amounting to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. The Human Rights Council must use all means at its disposal with the aim of halting these violations, preventing future ones and holding accountable the perpetrators and the instigators of the violations.

Amnesty International has received information indicating that security forces and militiamen loyal to Laurent Gbagbo have carried out extrajudicial executions, notably during the 16 December march organized by supporters of Alassane Ouattara. Security forces loyal and militiamen to Laurent Gbagbo are reported to have shot at unarmed demonstrators point blank.

Amnesty International has received numerous reports of people being arrested or detained at home or on the streets, often by unidentified armed persons accompanied by elements of the Defense and Security Forces and militia groups loyal to Laurent Gbagbo. The bodies of some have appeared either in morgues or on the streets; the whereabouts of many others remain unknown.

Instances of politically-motivated violence against women by authorities loyal to Laurent Gbagbo have been brought to our attention. On 19 December in Grand Bassam (40 km east of Abidjan), more than 300 hundred women marched in front of the police station demanding the release of supporters of Alassane Ouattara being held there. They were assaulted by the police, and several of them told Amnesty International that police officers beat them, tore their underwear, and put their hands on their vaginas and breasts.

People close to Laurent Gbagbo, including Blé Goudé who is already subject to Security Council sanctions for incitement to violence, have made further statements inciting violence against the UN, all those supposed to support Alassane Ouattara, and France.

According to information received by Amnesty International, people seriously injured during the 16 December mass protests in Abidjan were denied medical treatment amid threats from security forces. Medical staff working at the *Centre Hospitalier Universitaire* (CHU) in Cocody area of Abidjan reportedly received orders from hospital management to stop treating wounded protesters, and some gendarmes threatened several doctors if they continued to treat protesters. Many of the hospital staff fled; some are in hiding. Red Cross ambulances carrying injured protesters to the CHU hospital were reportedly sent away, unable to discharge their patients. The denial of medical care amounts to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, forbidden under article 7 of the Ivorian Constitution and under article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Côte d'Ivoire is a party.

The presence of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) offers the UN the possibility to act decisively to address human rights violations. Through UNOCI's mandate, renewed on 20 December 2010 in UN Security Council Resolution 1962, the international community has tasked the mission with taking necessary measures to end the grave human rights violations currently being perpetrated. UNOCI must live up to this responsibility. UNOCI's mandate includes: protecting civilians under imminent threat of physical violence; facilitating the free flow of people, goods and humanitarian assistance

by helping to establish the necessary security conditions; contributing to the promotion and protection of human rights in Côte d'Ivoire, with special attention to violence committed against children and women; monitoring and helping to investigate human rights violations with a view to ending impunity; and assisting in restoring a civilian policing presence and in re-establishing the authority of the judiciary and the rule of law throughout Côte d'Ivoire.

We urge this Council to join the efforts of the UN Security Council, ECOWAS and the African Union, and use all means at its disposal to halt these violations, prevent future ones and hold accountable the perpetrators – including the instigators. This Council should:

- demand that the security forces loyal to Laurent Gbagbo stop immediately the violations of human rights they have engaged in and impress upon them that perpetrators are accountable for their acts;
- demand in particular an immediate end to incitement to hostility or violence, which is likely to lead to further human rights abuses;
- recall the declaration made by Côte d'Ivoire accepting the ICC jurisdiction with respect to crimes committed on Ivorian territory since the events of 19 September 2002, and call for all those responsible for crimes under international law to be brought to justice.
- call on the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) to act robustly in implementing fully its mandate to uphold human rights in Côte d'Ivoire;
- urge the international community to ensure that UNOCI is immediately provided with all resources needed to implement its mandate and end the alarming escalation in human rights violations in Côte d'Ivoire; and
- make arrangements to be kept regularly and promptly informed of developments in the Côte d'Ivoire and to be ready to resume this Special Session to consider information that indicates new or persistent serious human rights violations.

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