



Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

Provisional

6113th meeting

Tuesday, 28 April 2009, 10 a.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Heller	(Mexico)
<i>Members:</i>	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Tiendrébéogo
	China	Mr. La Yifan
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Viločić
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Shalgham
	Russian Federation	Mr. Demin
	Turkey	Mr. İlkin
	Uganda	Mr. Mugoya
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Quarrey
	United States of America	Ms. Rice
	Viet Nam	Mr. Hoang Chi Trung

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Twentieth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations
Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2009/196)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Twentieth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2009/196)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Côte d'Ivoire, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Djédjé (Côte d'Ivoire) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I propose, with the consent of the Council, to extend an invitation under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Choi Young-Jin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Choi to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the twentieth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, contained in document S/2008/196.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Choi Young-Jin, to whom I now give the floor.

Mr. Choi: In 2008, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) focused much of its attention on the electoral process in Côte d'Ivoire, in particular with regard to the identification and voter registration operation, for which it has provided technical, logistical and financial support. Despite the slow pace of the electoral management body, strong political will among the Ivorian political leaders for early elections enabled the electoral process to move forward.

Yet, at the outset of 2009, the momentum for an early election appears to have considerably weakened. In the background is the change of political priority among the protagonists of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement. The fourth supplementary agreement to that Agreement, known as Ouaga IV, has reversed the priority between elections and the reunification of the country. Under Ouaga III, which provided the political framework for the electoral momentum in 2008, elections were to take place before reunification. Under Ouaga IV, to the contrary, the de facto reunification is to take place before the elections.

Within the framework of Ouaga IV, the measures to be taken at least two months prior to the elections include, inter alia, the transfer of authority from zone commanders to préfets, the centralization of the treasury, the completion of the profiling and integration of Forces nouvelles elements into the military, police, gendarmerie and ex-combatants, and the payment of about \$1,000 to each ex-combatant and militiaman. Those are tall orders. Consequently, any new electoral timeline is now predicated on the progress of the reunification process.

The experience of the year 2008 has proved that, given the electoral management body's slow pace, speedy progress in the electoral process would be possible only if there were strong political encouragement and urging. The events of 2009 so far have confirmed such a pattern. For the past four months, since the signing of Ouaga IV in December 2008, the protagonists of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement have been focusing on the reunification issue. As a result, the electoral process has been struggling with a slower pace, which has resulted in further delays.

To repeat, progress in the electoral process is now contingent upon the evolution of the reunification issue. UNOCI has been assisting, as best it can, to

move the reunification issue forward. Unfortunately, however, critical elements of the reunification, such as the transfer of authority from zone commanders to préfets and the centralization of the treasury, are not progressing as envisioned in Ouaga IV. Deadlines and target dates have repeatedly been missed. The main reason for that can be found in the difference in the vision for and strategy of reunification among the protagonists of the Ouagadougou Agreement. In sum, as it stands now, the prospect for early elections and reunification cannot be described as encouraging.

However, this rather sombre reality regarding elections and reunification should not eclipse the continuing positive developments that have occurred in the field of peace and stability. In Côte d'Ivoire, we are witnessing an ever higher degree of return to normalcy of daily life, including of commercial activities. The restoration of peace is also evident in that not a single major incident has so far occurred in the identification process, which to date has crossed the threshold of 6 million people.

In that respect, the contribution made by the impartial forces in providing the general framework for security is important. Yet, within that framework, it is the Ivorian Government and the Ivorian people themselves who have made the real difference with their refined political culture of compromise. Although hampered by the transitional and coalition nature of the Government, various ministries and State institutions remain in place, and there exist around 40,000 State security forces, supported by about \$200 million out of a total annual budget of over \$5 billion.

The international financial institutions have made a positive move. Côte d'Ivoire has begun to benefit from the financial support programme of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Already in April 2009, a first batch of over \$200 million of direct budget support was delivered to Côte d'Ivoire. In addition, a Heavily Indebted Poor Countries debt cancellation process for Côte d'Ivoire has been initiated by the World Bank and the IMF. Money being fungible, that input will lessen the financial burden of the Côte d'Ivoire Government in the field of elections and the identification process.

This complicated and mixed picture of the Ivorian political and electoral map requires some hard thinking on our part. It is now necessary for us to focus our attention both on progress in the elections process

and on the negotiations on reunification. The international community and UNOCI, by virtue of their significant contribution, including my certification mandate, have been deeply engaged in the electoral process. On the other hand, in the field of reunification, our involvement has been much less, principally because of the sensitivity involved in military and security matters.

Now that the electoral process is predicated on the reunification issue, we may have to engage in some deep reflection on the Ivorian reunification problem, with a view to making some meaningful contribution to the reunification of the country and, by extension, accelerating the electoral process.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Choi for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Djédjé (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): First of all, allow me to congratulate the Secretary-General on the high quality of his twentieth report (S/2009/196), which gives an update on the main developments in my country over the past three months.

Taking the opportunity offered by this meeting of the Security Council on that report, my delegation would like to outline for the Council the prospects for the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement in the coming months, culminating in the holding of presidential elections in 2009, since none of the signatories of the Ouagadougou Agreement, be it President Laurent Gbagbo, Prime Minister Guillaume Soro or the facilitator, President Blaise Compaore, have any agenda other than the successful holding of presidential elections in 2009.

First, on behalf of my Government, I wish to reaffirm that political will and the genuine willingness of the major actors in the process to overcome the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, despite what some outsiders have suggested in recent weeks.

As acknowledged in the Secretary-General's report, in the two years since the Ouagadougou Agreement was signed in March 2007, significant progress has been made towards a return to normalcy in Côte d'Ivoire. That progress was reinforced by the signing on 22 December 2008 of a fourth supplementary agreement to the Ouagadougou Agreement, which

paves the way for completing the reunification process and holding elections.

It is true that, despite the significant strides made in the process of emerging from the crisis, we have noted a number of difficulties and constraints regarding its implementation. Most of those difficulties — essentially logistical and financial — are being resolved. Indeed, I am pleased to announce that, as of 31 March 2009, the executive boards of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have agreed that Côte d'Ivoire is eligible to benefit from debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative (HIPC). I take this opportunity to express once again the appreciation of President Laurent Gbagbo to all our development partners, including the French Government, for their tireless support. He encourages them to continue their efforts until HIPC is concluded. With this support from the international community, we can now be less apprehensive about the rest of the process of emerging from the crisis.

The restoration of State authority and the redeployment of State administration throughout the country are nearly complete. The 156 *préfets* and *sous-préfets* for the central, northern and western zones have been nominated and appointed.

With regard to the centralization of the treasury, the redeployment of financial administration — including the treasury bank — in the central, northern and western zones is also under way. Missions have been organized to consider the feasibility of opening branches of the Central Bank of West African States in those areas.

The problems related to the transfer of authority from zone commanders to the corps préfectoral will be resolved in the coming days thanks to the deployment of 8,000 personnel seconded to the integrated command centre, including police officers, gendarmes and members of the armed forces of the Forces nouvelles. A list of those individuals will be issued this week.

To date, 6,081,625 people, out of a population of 8.6 million potential voters, have been registered to vote. With the improvements in the State's financial situation, we hope to complete the registration of nearly all potential voters by mid-June 2009.

In accordance with the recommendations made at the fourth meeting of the Permanent Consultative Framework of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, held on 10 November 2008, the Independent Electoral Commission proposed a timetable for the electoral process to the Prime Minister, who passed it on to the President on 15 April 2009. According to the timetable, the presidential election could be held between 11 October and 6 December 2009. The exact date of the elections will be announced by the President in the next few days.

In conclusion, I should like to urge the United Nations not to become discouraged and the Security Council to continue its efforts to assist the people and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire in effectively emerging from the crisis through the holding of elections in 2009. The most difficult phase is behind us, and we must work together to hold credible elections in Côte d'Ivoire, the first round of which should be held no later than 6 December 2009.

Once again, I wish to emphasize that the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire is not at an impasse. The political decision has already been made. The first round of the presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire will be held no later than 6 December 2009.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are no further speakers on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.