

Cote d'Ivoire, 2010 Presidential Elections

UN Integrated Electoral Assistance Case study

Background

Cote d'Ivoire, which had been until 1999 seen as a model for stability in Africa, was catapulted into armed conflict in 2002 with a *de facto* division of the country. The presidential elections that took place in 2010 were the fruit of many years of dialogue and international support, and found many obstacles on the way. The UN was assigned the role of certifying the elections results, which put much pressure on the UN mission on the ground and resulted in its impartiality being questioned and becoming a legitimate target for some forces. The elections results proclaimed by the Electoral Commission were challenged by President Gbagbo and violent clashes erupted in 2011 until his arrest.

The main underlying issue for the conflict was identity and citizenship, which implied also who would be able to vote and stand for office in Cote d'Ivoire. This issue is not exclusive to Cote d'Ivoire and needs to be managed in a careful manner and with a long-term vision to have the chance to be successful in preventing further violence. Providing benefits based on ethnic belonging will continue to be a fertile ground for conflict if remedy is not found and all citizens believe that they have similar chances to improve their lives and access all levels of economic and political life.

Political context for elections

In a region where many political systems were unstable, Cote d'Ivoire showed remarkable political stability from its independence from France in 1960 until the early 1990s. During all this time, the country was under one-party rule and the President was Félix Houphouët-Boigny. In 1990 multi-party politics were introduced and Félix Houphouët-Boigny was elected President of Cote d'Ivoire. After his death in 1993, Aimé Henri Konan Bédié, President of National Assembly, assumed the Presidency. Elections held in 1995 saw him winning the elections without real opposition due to the boycott of the main opposition parties and the barring of his main opponent, Alassane Ouattara, due to a change in the Elections Law which prohibited him from standing for office¹.

The economic downturn due to falling world market prices for Cote d'Ivoire's primary exports of cocoa and coffee, government corruption, the identity issue (Ivoirité) and perceived discrimination of Northerners resulted in the country's first coup on December 24, 1999. The transitional government formed thereafter drafted a new constitution that was ratified by the population in the summer of 2000. It retained clauses that underscored national divisions between north and south and Christians and Muslims and others, including that both parents of anyone wishing to run for president must be born in Cote d'Ivoire, and established stricter eligibility requirements for contesting political office. These constitutional clauses were to trigger the political problems that later arose in Cote d'Ivoire.

Elections were held in October 2000 and saw coup leader Robert Guei claiming to be President. After much popular protest, due to fraud allegations, he was forced to step down and the only significant opposition candidate, Laurent Gbagbo, became

¹ The Electoral Code, passed by Parliament, stated as conditions to run for office permanent residence in Cote d'Ivoire for the past 5 years and both parents being nationals of Cote d'Ivoire

President. A failed coup attempt in September 19, 2002² led to an armed conflict between government forces and a group of breakaway troops under the umbrella of the *Forces Nouvelles* (FN). After French Licorne forces were interposed, the country was effectively divided in two parts, and a ceasefire established a demilitarized *Zone of Confidence*. In an attempt to resolve the political stalemate, in January 2003, the country's major political parties and the New Forces (FN) signed the French-brokered Linas-Marcoussis Accord (LMA), to set up a Government of National Reconciliation (including rebel New Forces - FN representatives) and prepare an electoral timetable for elections to be held in 2005. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) subsequently deployed a peacekeeping force, which was transformed into the United Nations peacekeeping mission for Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) in April 2004. The parties also agreed to work together on modifying eligibility for citizenship, and land tenure laws that many observers considered among the root causes of the conflict. Among the key stipulations of the LMA, agreed to by all parties, was the holding of "credible and transparent" national elections under the auspices of an independent electoral body. Unfortunately, many of the commitments were not met by the government of former President Laurent Gbagbo and hostilities recommenced in November 2004. An agreement was signed in 2005 in Pretoria, which gave the UN the mandate to certify the elections. Another peace deal was brokered in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) in 2007, reiterating many elements of prior agreements, and specifically "free, fair, open and transparent presidential elections." However, the government continued to delay the elections, ultimately postponing the elections a total of six times, until October 31, 2010.

The election pitted President Gbagbo, who had a strong support base in the south, against the long-time opposition leader and former Prime Minister Alassane Ouattara who had overwhelming support in much of the north and former President Bédié. The first round took place on 31 October 2010; followed by a run-off between the two top candidates, Alassane Ouattara and Laurent Gbagbo. Following the second round, held on 28 November 2010, the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) announced the provisional results on 2 December and declared candidate Ouattara as the winner of the run-off election. The Constitutional Council, invoking alleged irregularities, cancelled the elections results in seven departments of northern Côte d'Ivoire on 3 December and announced Mr. Gbagbo as the winner. As requested by the Ivorian parties within the framework of the 2005 Pretoria Accord and mandated by the Security Council, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Côte d'Ivoire certified both rounds of presidential elections, confirming the elections results as announced by the Electoral Commission. The certification was endorsed by the United Nations, the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), France, the United States and many others. However, President Gbagbo refused to step down, which led to a violent post-elections crisis, which only ended after the Forces Republicaines de Côte d'Ivoire (FRCI), who had been created in February 2011, launched a military offensive towards southern Côte d'Ivoire in March 2011. On 11 April 2011, FRCI troops arrested former President Gbagbo in Abidjan.

² For a time line of events please refer to attachment 1

The electoral system and institutions

The national institution in charge of organizing and conducting the elections was the **Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)** of Côte d'Ivoire. The newly constituted IEC began work on 5 March 2010 for elections that were finally held in October of the same year. Set up in accordance with the Pretoria Agreement, the Commission was composed of 31 members appointed by the institutions of the Republic and the signatories of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. To accomplish its mission, the IEC has a decentralized structure at the regional, sous-prefecture and communal level with a total of 415 offices. Abroad, the number of electoral commissions was 15, bringing the total of commissions to 430.

The IEC was seen as ill equipped to manage the elections due to the high level of political polarization amongst the Commissioners, being those appointed by the political factions. The relationship between IEC and international electoral assistance providers was complex. Financial and logistic support was accepted but any other advisory support, particularly to the central IEC, was at times seen as an intrusion on national sovereignty and needed to be managed accordingly. The stakes of the 2010 Presidential Elections were high and presented a large probability of violence after a decade-long crisis. Electoral assistance was, therefore, a complex and intricate process. Originally scheduled to be held in 2005, presidential elections were postponed to November-December 2009, then to February or early March 2010, only to take effectively place in October and November 2010. Due to the repeated postponements, most international partners did not believe the elections would actually happen right up to the last minute. This uncertainty also impacted negatively on working arrangements.

Implementation of the electoral process

As identity (Ivoirité) had been one of the main factors contributing to instability and conflict in Cote d'Ivoire for the past years, it was important to determine how the opposing parties could be brought together on this issue. To do so, a three-layer approach was designed, dealing with identification and voter registration. This process was to improve the civil registry in Cote d'Ivoire on the one hand and create a new electoral register on the other. The French company Sagem was designated as the technical operator for the national identification and the electoral register in November 2007. It worked in coordination with National Statistics Institute (INS) under the authority of the CEI on the electoral register, including delivery of voter's cards, and with the National Identification Office (ONI) and the National Supervisory Commission on Identification (CNSI) on the civil registry.

As a first step, public hearings (audiences foraines) took place as part of the identification process between 2006 and 2008 and were intended for people born in Côte d'Ivoire who did not yet have identification papers and which would allow them to register to vote. UNOPS was heavily involved in this operation, as well as other international partners (i.e. the World Bank). UNOCI deployed staff to support and observe the public hearings. Later on, the civil register was reconstituted, which was finally done in parallel to the set up of the electoral register in the first half of 2009.

The registration of voters took place from 15 September 2008 to 30 June 2009. UNOCI was heavily involved in logistical support during the voter registration phase. The involvement of a private company in the identification process was a confidence-

building measure called for by the opposition to counterweight the involvement of state institutions, which were not perceived to be impartial. The process involved taking the applicants' pictures and biometric features, and so meant the use of laptops with cameras in every registration center. The quality of the provisional voters' lists was good, but a crisis took place when supporters of Gbagbo realized that the results, the number of Northerners included, was not favorable to them. It was difficult for SAGEM to stay clear of politics, and they could only accomplish it by taking on a very technical role and following their Memorandum of Understanding, which had been closely negotiated in the Prime Minister's Identification Working Group.

The final figure for voters was 5.7 million out of an estimated 20 million population, which is extremely low. This was mainly due to the restrictions placed on who could register for the elections, the Ivorian identity being a main issue throughout the process.

Other international electoral assistance providers

ECOWAS was a major partner in providing technical information, advice and assistance to the High Representative for Elections, in close coordination with UNOCI.

The Carter Center, the National Democratic Institute (NDI), and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) supported a variety of election-related activities. NDI supported women and youth leaders conflict prevention and mitigation efforts. IT also supported women candidates and inter-party code of conducts. It also supported political parties in monitoring the electoral process. IFES worked on civic education and IEC capacity building. The Carter Center observed the electoral process, starting with voter registration until beginning of 2011.

UN electoral assistance

Comparing the integration of electoral assistance that took place in Cote d'Ivoire with the other cases of the study and with the letter and spirit of the Policy Committee decision, it can be said that the situation in Cote d'Ivoire was more that of coordination than integration. Sharing of information between the mission and specially the UNDP electoral assistance team took place, but each component worked on its own without the additional efforts needed for integration to take place and deliver electoral assistance as one UN. This assessment is based on the interviews held with international actors and the documentation reviewed for this study.

United Nations mandates and planning

The United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (MINUCI), a political mission, was initially established by Security Council Resolution 1479 (2003) of 13 May 2003³, with a mandate to facilitate the implementation of the Linas-Macoussis Agreement. Having determined that the situation in Côte d'Ivoire continued to pose a threat to international peace and security in the region, and acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the Security Council, by its resolution 1528 of 27 February 2004, decided to establish the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) as from 4 April 2004, which replaced MINUCI. UNOCI was established with the following electoral mandate: UNOCI "shall provide oversight, guidance and technical assistance to the

³ See attachment 2 for more information on mandates and missions

Government of National Reconciliation, with the assistance of ECOWAS and other international partners, to prepare for and assist in the conduct of free, fair and transparent electoral processes linked to the implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, in particular the presidential election". This support is further confirmed in SCR 1609 (2005), SCR 1739 (2007), SCR 1765 (2007), SCR 1826 (2008), SCR 1880 (2009), SCR 1911 (2010) and SCR 1933 (2010).

SCR 1603 (2005) requested the SG to designate, as an exceptional arrangement and until the forthcoming general elections in Côte d'Ivoire, a High Representative for the elections in Côte d'Ivoire autonomous from UNOCI. The High Representative for the elections was tasked with supporting the work of the Independent Electoral Commission and the Constitutional Council, with technical support of UNOCI. This position was terminated at the request of Mr. Gbagbo by SCR 1765 (2007) by which the Council requested that the functions of certification assigned to the High Representative be transferred to the SRSG. The arbitration part was transferred to the ECOWAS Chair. The Facilitator role was expanded to include the whole peace process, based on multiple agreements, which served to trouble shooting throughout identification period. His role was crucial when Mr. Gbagbo closed the government and EMB in 2010.

In view of the recommendations of the Technical Assessment Mission in Côte d'Ivoire from 12-22 April 2010 and further to the conclusions of the 24th SG's Report on UNOCI, the Security Council adopted its resolution 1933 (2010) in connection with the new mandate of the Mission. There are provisions that expressly request UNOCI and the UNCT to work more closely in order to identify how the UN can address peace consolidation and peacebuilding related matters. In order to ensure that UNOCI continued to engage into this exercise, the recruitment of a strategic planning capacity within the Mission was decided so as to engage on a daily basis with the RC Unit of the UNCT.

To bolster security for the elections, on 29 September 2010, the UN Security Council authorized the deployment of 500 additional peacekeeping personnel to increase UNOCI's military and police presence from 8,650 to 9,150. This temporary increase for a period of up to six months reinforced the capacity of UNOCI to contribute to security arrangements for the elections, the responsibility for which rests in the first instance with the Ivorian security forces⁴.

Mandates of UN agencies (support national Government as main partner) ***are different from missions*** (implement Security Council mandate) ***and need to be addressed therefore in different ways***. Mission mentality is therefore different from UN agencies mentality. The first is more event-driven and the other more process driven, including a long-term approach. Both are difficult to put together and to be able to hold over time needs periodic adjustments.

Integration has to be field driven and aim to follow a bottom-up approach building on concrete joint initiatives on the ground. It is therefore important to create, as a first step, an enabling environment that facilitates a common understanding about the

⁴Subsequently, this temporary deployment of 500 additional personnel was extended by Council's resolution 1962 of 20 December until 31 March 2011.
<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unoci/elections.html>

mandates of all UN actors in order to engage in an active collaboration between the peacekeeping mission and the UNCT, thus allowing for a concentration on areas of common interest.

Clear Division of labor necessary within the UN. ***There needs to be a clear understanding who is responsible for what within the UN family.*** Each UN actor should be placed where they have comparative advantages. All experts should be encouraged to work together. Clear division of labor and lines of command and control (CEA – DSRSG – SRSG) are needed, with a clear dissemination strategy within UN staff.

Integration is a difficult task, staff at HQ and field needs to be convinced at an early stage of the process of the added value to spend the additional time needed to make it work, if not they will go for coordination. While coordination is more feasible, integration is more difficult but more efficient. This will allow saving resources, talking with one voice and avoiding confusion of partners.

Integration can be (a) Structural and/or functional and (b) can follow different models and practicalities. Practical integration of UN electoral staff means (i) co-location, (ii) clear chart with both Division of Labor and reporting lines, (iii) same badge among all UN electoral staff, (iv) in the regions all UN electoral staff to report through mission field coordinator. As each team belongs to a different UN body, they feel responsible towards their respective entities. Therefore it is important to formalize the integration. Hierarchy question is important, as the UNDP CTA will not report to Mission CEA if not clearly stated from the start.

The UN Electoral Component

On 27 August 2003, the Government for National Reconciliation filed a request for electoral assistance. The DPA NAM⁵ recommended the creation of an Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) for MINUCI (later on UNOCI) and recommended UNDP to take the lead through an Electoral Assistance Programme for mobilization and management of the funds and of technical assistance through a CTA and an electoral budget expert⁶.

Created in 2004, the EAD in UNOCI supported the establishment of the IEC. UNOCI regularly provided its logistic means to the deployment of all the programmes foreseen in the Ouagadougou Peace Agreement. UNOCI provided technical assistance to the Prime Minister, his Government, the IEC and other relevant agencies or institutions, with the support of the African Union. The example of Cote d'Ivoire 2010 also highlights good inter-mission cooperation, with UNOCI borrowing troops and helicopters from UNMIL

Besides support to logistics and security matters, UNOCI played a key political and technical role, through participation in:

- Identification process - mobile courts hearings were held (and in a subsidiary way, the reconstitution of the civil registers) to identify not only potential

⁵ Took place between 26 January and 6 February 2004

⁶ Project Document *Programme d'Appui au Processus Electoral*, October 2007 - March 2009, p. 4

electors, but also sort out the problem of identity documents, since the crisis was turning into an identity one

- Electoral mapping process of eleven thousand voting centers for voter registration
- Logistical support to the issuance of identity cards and/or an elector cards and support to the drafting of essential electoral laws
- Providing technical support to the Independent Electoral Commission's regional offices in the preparation and the organization of the presidential election
- Undertaking training sessions before and after the election – this included training of the media to cultivate peace by avoiding messages than can bring to violence and intolerance
- Monitoring local media and making sure they are respecting the electoral code of good conduct/behavior to ensure visibility of UNOCI and accurate recording of efforts to create a peaceful electoral environment
- Certification of all steps of the electoral process, in order to guarantee the organization of free, fair and transparent presidential and parliamentary elections. For that purpose, a certification cell, attached to the SRSG's office, as established.
- Coordination of international observers through EAD's International Observers Coordination Cell.

After the elimination of the post of High Representative for Elections (HRE) and with the additional task of certification being given to the SRSG, the EAD of UNOCI worked alongside the Certification Cell to support the SRSG in implementing this mandate. The certification mandate was created by the parties in the Pretoria declaration 2005 because a lack of trust and the fear that the other could manipulate the electoral process in his favor. A certification by an international authority was therefore requested to make sure that an impartial referee would be there who would watch each stage of the process and provide his accord in order to legitimate the electoral process. In this sense, it resembled the supervision of elections mandate given to some UN missions in the past. The certification was perceived by some international partners to be tricky because the mission was providing at the same support to the elections and conflict of interest could take place. Some partners suggest that it would have been better to place the certification outside of electoral support structures with some international partner not involved in providing assistance to the process. However, the role of certification proved in the end vital to bring all international partners together into a joint position after the announcement of the results of the second round and the disagreement between the two parties.

UNOCI was also tasked with the coordination of international observers and an MOU was signed between UNOCI and the observer delegations in order to obtain support with training and equipment.

The Electoral Division was under the DSRSG Political pillar of the mission, while the UNDP PACE project reported to the DSRSG RC/HC. In terms of staffing, UNOCI's ED had some 24 Professional and 146 UNV posts.

SRSG, UNDP RR, CEA and CTA are the main actors, and there is a need to assure proper working relation to make IEA happen. If fully integrated mission with UNDP taking only care of administration of funds and contracts, then there is no need for a

CTA, an administrative official will be sufficient. ***DSRSG in charge of EAD should be also the RR to improve integration.***

Electoral Assistance Division needs to have clearly defined roles as being complementary to UNDP and UNOPS roles. This is easier for UNDP and UNOPS because they base their roles on Project Documents and contracts. There is a need to map out what PKO is mandated to do and what can be done with resources available and which areas are left out and have them covered by other UN or international partners. There is a need to plan together. One option is to leave PKO dealing with operations and logistics, UNDP and others the rest of tasks to create continuity for after-elections. In any case, it seems unwise to mix support to specific areas by different UN actors (i.e. civic education, gender, etc.). For this, it is clear to identify at an early stage who is the lead and who are the supporting UN partners and stick to it.

There was a need for a joint Elections Operations Room either at EMB, UNDP or PKO. For this to happen rules for sharing of information between UN (mission and UN agencies) and other international actors have to be agreed on. If mission structures do not allow for opening up to other partners (UN and external), then have these events happen at EMB or UNDP. Make sure that within mission clarity on who is responsible for what (i.e. HR, Gender, PI).

UNDP developed a project “Programme d’Appui au Processus Electoral” (PAPE) from October 2007 to March 2009, to provide technical and financial assistance to Côte d’Ivoire for the organization of free transparent, credible and inclusive elections. The goal was to strengthen democratic institutions, good electoral governance and support the IEC. UNDP mobilized the necessary material, human and financial resources for the organization of elections in Côte d’Ivoire and administered the contributions from external partners to the Basket Fund. UNDP’s main interlocutor was the Representative of the President’s office inside the IEC.

The management of the basket fund is complicated by too many procedures; UNDP has to work harder on increasing flexibility and transparency of the use of funds. One problem with the management of the UNDP assistance programme is that in advance it is not clear who will contribute how much to the basket fund to be able to implement these areas and sometime support has to be cut down during the process due to missing funds.

The provisional budget for presidential and legislative elections was at some 37 billion CFA francs (USD77 million). The Government was to provide some 16 billion CFA francs (USD33 million) and requested from international partners the difference of USD 44 million. France, Japan, European Union, Germany, ECOWAS, UK and UNDP participated in this fund. Outside of the basket fund, some partners like the EU supported on a bilateral basis (USD22 million) some other electoral activities (Civil registry, national observation, civic education, etc.). The fund was closed down in April 2010 but reactivated once the elections were deemed as possible for October 2010.

UNDP provided electoral assistance to the IEC, supported civil society organizations (CSOs) through training programmes with the IEC, with the aim, that these can sensitize the population about their civic rights and obligations for a massive

participation in the electoral operations, support the inclusion of gender issues in all activities of the IEC. The project unifies UN electoral assistance for the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Accord (APO). UNDP also provided support to the creation of the office of the High Representative for Elections.

PAPE provided financial and technical support in the following areas⁷.

Component 1: Technical support to the IEC and PMU

Component 2: Logistic and operational support

Component 3: Institutional communication, awareness campaign, civic education

Component 4: Training

In terms of staffing, the Programme Management Unit (PMU) had 3 long-term (including CTA) and 2 short-term experts. The Logistic expert of the project was to coordinate support with UNOCI and transfer of knowhow to local partners. Civic education activities were coordinated with other international partners and UNOCI (EAD and Public Information). An integrated Steering Committee for the project was chaired by the IEC and the UNDP Resident Representative. Other members included UNOCI (Director EAD). There was also a Technical working group, chaired by the CTA and the IEC with the participation of other implementing partners.

UN Women's focus was women's participation in the political process in the presidential elections in 2010 with a view to encouraging the participation of women in voter registration, voting, and also as observers and candidates. This helped to increase the registration of women as voters and candidates. On the whole, support to women's empowerment as voters and candidates, was considered to be a success with all UN actors playing together with local CSOs.

UNOPS was heavily involved in logistical support during the identification phase in order to help the various agencies implementing the process to be able to have all necessary materials in place and enable to conduct the operation in an adequate way. This included work on the identity cards but also on birth certificates, supporting the Ministry of Interior. UNOPS supported also the IEC in the transportation of elections materials to the 415 local IEC voting centers.

For the most part the different agencies worked well together. However, there was some competition for funds and chairing of committees. UNDP and UNOPS were sometimes perceived by other partners as being too business-oriented.

Division of work between UNDP and UNOCI

The collaboration and division of work between UNDP, UNOCI and national institutions (IEC) in the provision of electoral assistance, took place according to the recommendations of the NAM of DPA of 2004.

UNDP, EAD of UNOCI and IEC collaborated in (1) the provision of technical support to the IEC and the Management Unit (by strengthening the capacities of the IEC and other management structures related to the planning, organization and management of the electoral process. Hiring experts for the management unit,

⁷ Project Document *Mise à jour du Programme d'Appui au Processus Electoral en Côte d'Ivoire*, p. 9

organize training sessions, elaborate operational plans of IEC and make them available), (2) in the provision of logistical support and support to the electoral operation (operational logistics and deployment plan of electoral material is approved and implemented), (3) in elaborating and implementing IECs institutional communication plan and organizing and holding of electoral civic education campaigns on the whole territory and (4) in the training, adoption and implementation of the operational plan.

The tasks of this project were divided as follows:

UNDP was in charge of the programme management team (provision of CTA, international logistics expert, international management and finance expert, international training, sensitization and communication expert) and for providing the IEC on time with the necessary equipment and material to hold the elections and voter and civic education.

EAD of UNOCI accompanied and supported the process of elaboration of essential electoral laws (bringing in the Gender Division in matters related to women empowerment). It provided advice and technical support to the IEC and the programme management team, including the IEC liaison offices in the provinces.

UN, IEC and international coordination

UN and EMB issues: co-location came up in 2006 and 2008. Throughout this period, international pressure was put on the parties to make progress in the implementation of the peace agreements. Some Security Council members were applying pressure to close the EAD in UNOCI due to the postponement of the elections in the absence of a political commitment by the Government to hold elections. It was a delicate act for the mission to work with the Government, which wasn't open to moving the process forward over three years. In UNHQ it was felt that the mission could be more proactive in working more closely with the IEC, including the EAD to co-locate fully or partially with it (at the field level the working cooperation was better). There was however resistance from UNOCI to co-locate.

For electoral assistance to have the greatest lasting impact, collocation of UN and EMB is ideal. However, for this to happen there is a need for a buying in from the EMB and sometimes Government to make it happen. The security situation may be an issue because this may create problems towards access EMB, different norms for UN staff, etc. Before the start of providing assistance there is the need for the UN leadership to discuss with EMB the best way to support, including in terms of buildings to be used, etc. to assure acceptance and impact. A balance needs to be found between the UN assessed needs and the Government/EMB reaction to UN support/taking over of the process.

With regard to international coordination, UNOCI's mandate was explicit with regard to the importance of working closely with international partners. Security Council Resolution 1528 which established UNOCI specifically notes that UNOCI shall "with the assistance of ECOWAS and other international partners" prepare for and assist in the conduct of free, fair and transparent electoral processes linked to the

implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, in particular the presidential election”⁸.

International partners participated in the Steering Committee and Technical Working Group meetings called in by the IEC and UNDP to exchange information on the status of the process and possible remedies to improve possible difficulties.

UN collaboration with international and regional partners was key to resolving the post-elections crisis in Cote d'Ivoire. The outcome of the election as certified by the SRSG was fully supported by the UN Secretary-General and received the broad recognition by the international community, notably from major international and regional organizations, including the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the European Union (EU). The UN Security Council also endorsed Mr. Ouattara's victory through a press statement⁹. The AU and ECOWAS suspended Cote d'Ivoire's membership until such a time the democratically-elected President effectively assumes State power. The EU agreed to adopt targeted sanctions against Mr. Gbagbo and “those impeding the reconciliation and electoral process” in Côte d'Ivoire.

UN integrated electoral methods

IEA evolved in Cote d'Ivoire between the first phase of operations (voter registration) and the elections. While during the first phase no integration at field level was perceived, this changed. However, the UN electoral assistance provided in Cote d'Ivoire in 2010 can be qualified as coordinated rather than integrated, due to (a) different locations, (b) separate communications and reporting lines and (c) no clear division of labor. Staff at UNOCI and UNDP was not always aware of the need to integrate. Moreover, there was a perception outside the mission that UNOCI was undertaking activities on its own, without bringing on board the other UN agencies on the ground, while also appearing to want to control what the others did. Information sharing was considered to be problematic. When coordination did work well between UNOCI, UNDP and IEC, it was mostly on operational and logistical issues, areas in which the division of labor was clear. For example, UNOCI was charged with transportation of materials to departmental level, UNDP with IEC to Polling Stations.

The fact that the EAD UNOCI was under DSRSG Political and the UNDP EAT was reporting through DSRSG HC/RC created sometimes confusion on the information passed by different UN electoral assistance bodies.

National ownership, sustainability, cost-effectiveness

From a mission perspective, the support provided for the 2010 elections in Cote d'Ivoire is a poor example of cost effectiveness. Given that elections were repeatedly postponed over a period of five years advisors needed to be kept on the ground for a long period of time and as a result the financial implications were significant. For the 2010 election, Cote d'Ivoire depended on international partners to finance a major part of the elections budget. Also, in terms of the UN's own post-elections role, there appears to be a lack of clarity in terms of which will be the roles in the future for the UNOCI EAD and the UNCT, specially UNDP, in supporting the electoral framework.

⁸ <http://www.undemocracy.com/S-RES-1528%282004%29.pdf>

⁹ <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/sc10105.doc.htm>

The general feeling was that UNOCI was overly focused on the 2010 election as an event with a political purpose, by supporting throughout the years the process and helping to solve the crisis, but did not have a long-term electoral approach.

In terms of National ownership, the Ivorian parties to the process were without any doubt the main driving forces, being the parties to the peace agreements but also most notably the IEC. Advisors were accepted as supporting the process, but Ivoirians' were the ones deciding on the implementation, as could be seen in the long delays until the elections could finally take place.

The experience with IEA was unique because it was such a long process and in many cases the same people worked together since 2005 in UNOCI, UNCT and EMB, which strengthened relationships over time. In a sense the sheer duration of the process fostered a natural integration.

Later on there was a change between the 2010 presidential and 2011 legislative elections in the relation between the Government and IEC and the international partners, which made the work a lot easier. At this stage there is the need to nurture the legal system and evaluate the financing problem for elections to see where funds can come from and reducing the dependence for external sources.

On sustainability and cost-effectiveness, one major issue is the logistics support provided for by the mission. It is ***not clear how and if the national authorities will be able to manage logistics in the future without substantial international support.*** It would be good, while providing electoral assistance, set aside some time to train national counterparts into low-cost logistics and operations methods. While sustainability of EMB is also an issue due to the fact that it is unclear if the EMB in place during the elections will be in place later on, other national stakeholders can be supported and this support can have fruits later on, like with women empowerment, civil society, etc. However, it is good to have UNDP involved in first post-conflict elections to be able to take later on the lead.

PKO needs to take care of elections if EMB is weak and there are doubts about the impartiality of the institution. Transfer of knowledge to be improved, it is needed but not done. Expectations should be realistic, while technical transfer is possible, cultural transfer not and this takes much more time to materialize.

There is the need to insert transfer of competencies at each support cycle, even if the expected outcome is low, to be able to build on it for future programmes. If not, the EMB will not be ready for the next elections and the dependence will continue at the same level as before. It is ***important to foster discussions with EMB and Government about exit strategies to support follow up programmes with UNDP and other UN actors staying behind.***

There are different support strategies in first post-conflict and following elections. While in the first PKO is normally heavily involved with support as doubts on impartiality or competence of EMB, later on the focus should be on institutional strengthening, legal framework, let UNDP more in with capacity development.

Improving the capacity & Knowledge of internationals

Documentation needs to be clearer on integration, mandates, roles and tasks to be done by various UN partners. There is also a need to train UN staff to reinforce integration.

Create joint documents (operational, guidelines, etc.) together to avoid confusing partners with different UN documents on the same subject with sometimes different proposals is important. Integration means to work together, not side by side. There is the need to formalize joint committees of PKO and UNDP and other UN agencies.

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July 2012*

Attachments:

1. Cote d'Ivoire elections timeline
2. UN mandates and Security Council resolutions
3. References

Attachment 1

Cote d'Ivoire elections timeline

(Electoral events in italics)

2002	
19 September	Attacks on military installations in Abidjan, political crisis, <i>de facto</i> division of country
2003	
24 January	Signing of the Linas-Marcoussis Peace Agreement
13 May	UN Mission in CDI (MINUCI) created
2004	
February	NAM assess situation, recommends EAD cell in MINUCI, UNDP support basket fund and TA
27 February	UN Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) under Chapter VII, created
2005	
	Creation of post of High Representative for Elections
	Elections planned and delayed
	Pretoria Agreement
2007	
March	Ouagadougou Peace Agreement between Government and New Forces, elections planned for 2008
	Cancel post of High Representative, SRSG to certify stages of elections
October	Start ProDoc UNDP (2007-2009)
December	Start of disarmament process
2009	
	Elections to be held in November - December, postponed, main issue voters identification
2010	
February	Elections to be held, postponed
	Dissolution of Government and IEC
	Appointment of new Government and IEC
April	Start PAPE (until December 2011)
31 October	First round presidential elections
28 November	Second round Presidential elections
2 December	IEC declares Ouattara winner
3 December	Constitutional Council declares Gbagbo winner
	UN certifies, AU, ECOWAS, France, USA and other recognize Ouattara as winner
18 December	Gbagbo orders UN peacekeepers to leave, UN refuses
2011	
11 April	Gbagbo is captured in Abidjan

Attachment 2

UN mandates and Security Council Resolutions

MINUCI, established by Security Council Resolution 1479 (2003), included a military component complementing the operations of the French and ECOWAS forces, and was required to perform the following tasks:

- Providing advice to the Special Representative on military matters;
- Monitoring the military situation, including the security of Liberia refugees and reporting to the Special Representative thereon;
- Establishing liaison with the French and ECOWAS forces for the purpose of advising the Special Representative on military and related developments;
- Establishing liaison with the *Forces Armées Nationales de Côte d'Ivoire* (FANCI) and the Forces Nouvelles (FN), in order to build confidence and trust between the armed groups, in cooperation with the French and ECOWAS forces, in particular concerning helicopters and combat aircraft;
- Providing input to forward planning on disengagement, disarmament and demobilization and identifying future tasks, in order to advise the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and support the French and ECOWAS forces;
- Reporting to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the above issues.

Security Council Resolution 1633 (SCR 1633), based on the Pretoria Agreement of 6 April 2005, was significant in that it established an International Working Group (IWG), which drew up a road map for implementation of SCR 1633 in December 2005. As a result, the tasks for UNOCI were as follows:

- a) Monitoring of the cessation of hostilities and movements of armed groups
- b) Disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation and resettlement
- c) Disarmament and dismantling of militias
- d) Operations of identification of the population and registration of voters
- e) Reform of the security sector
- f) Protection of United Nations personnel, institutions and civilians
- g) Monitoring of the arms embargo
- h) Support for humanitarian assistance
- i) Support for the redeployment of State administration
- j) Support for the organization of open, free, fair and transparent elections
- k) Assistance in the field of human rights
- l) Public information
- m) Law and order

The Council also authorized UNOCI to use all necessary means to carry out its mandate, within its capabilities and its areas of deployment.

On 8 September 2006, the IWG met in Abidjan and adopted a communiqué (S/2006/738), which identified the main obstacles to the peace process and recommended that the Security Council should adopt a new resolution on Côte d'Ivoire that would eliminate the ambiguities in the transition arrangements, and reinforce the effective exercise of the powers conferred upon the Prime Minister under SCR 1633. The IWG also recommended strengthening the mandate of the High Representative for Elections and the use of individual sanctions against individuals who obstruct the roadmap for peace.

SCR 1609 (2005) mandates that UNOCI shall provide support for the organization of open, free, fair and transparent elections, by providing all necessary technical assistance to the Government of National Reconciliation, the Independent Electoral Commission and other relevant agencies or institutes, with the support of the African Union, ECOWAS and other international partners, for the organization of open, free, fair and transparent presidential and legislative elections within the time frames envisaged in the Constitution of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, provide technical information, advice and assistance as appropriate to the High Representative referred to in paragraph 7 of resolution 1603 (2005) of 3 June 2005, contribute, within its capabilities and its areas of deployment, to the security of the areas where voting is to take place.

SCR 1739 (2007) extends UNOCI's electoral mandate for the provision of support for the organization of open, free, fair and transparent presidential and legislative elections by 31 October 2007.

SCR 1765 (2007) requests UNOCI's support for the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement by supporting the integrated command center; 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.

Among other things, the Council decided to terminate the mandate of the High Representative for the Elections, deciding also that the SRSG 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. It requested that the SG take all necessary steps so that the Special Representative has at his disposal a support cell to fulfill his task.

SCR 1826 (2008) renews UNOCI's mandate until 31 January 2009, in particular to support the organization in Côte d'Ivoire of free, open, fair and transparent elections and requests UNOCI "to support the full implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and its Supplementary Agreements, and in particular to contribute to bringing the security needed by the peace process and by the electoral process and to provide logistical support to the Independent Electoral Commission for the preparation and the holding of the elections; mandates UNOC to provide technical and logistical support to the security plan for elections.

SCR 1880 (2009) and SCR 1911 (2010) renew UNOCI's mandate until 31 January 2010 and 31 May 2010 respectively, in particular to support the organization in Côte d'Ivoire of free, open, fair and transparent elections, and requests UNOCI, to support actively the parties in the implementation of the remaining tasks under the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and its Supplementary Agreements, in particular those that are essential to the holding of a free, fair, open and transparent presidential election of 29 November 2009 (...) and to provide technical and logistical support to the Independent Electoral Commission for the preparation and the holding of the elections in a secure environment".

UNOCI shall monitor the implementation of the Code of Good Conduct for elections and the efforts of the Ivorian authorities in guaranteeing an equitable access to public media, in particular in the electoral context, and to keep the Committee regularly informed of the situation, UNOCI shall regularly inform the Security Council of any threat to the electoral process, as defined in paragraph 11 of its resolution 1911 (2010) and to bring to its attention all individuals identified as responsible for such a threat, UNOCI shall contribute to the support provided by the UNCT and other relevant actors to operations of identification of the population.

SCR 1933 (2010) renews UNOCI's mandate until 31 December 2010, to support the parties to implement the Ouagadougou Political Agreement more effectively. SCR 1933 (2010) mandates UNOCI to contribute to the electoral process and to the identification of the population, by providing support to the organization of open, free, fair and transparent elections, providing technical and logistical support to the IEC, enable the IEC to continue the appeals process, to distribute the provisional and the final voters lists, to sensitize the media, to distribute identity cards and voters cards and to distribute and secure sensitive electoral material, notably ballot papers. UNOCI shall as well work with all relevant actors in implementing the agreed security plan for the elections, and contribute to securing the high risks areas where voting is to take place, UNOCI shall ensure the coordination of international observers, and contribute to their security, within its capabilities and areas of deployment, UNOCI shall provide the SRSG the necessary assistance to fulfill his role of certification of the electoral process.

Attachment 3

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N.B. Most of the documentation made available from various sources for this study is not public and can therefore not be referred to