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United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

Case No.: 200701753

MAR 25 2010

I refer to your letter dated March 11, 2007 regarding the release of certain Department of State material under the Freedom of Information Act (Title 5 USC Section 552).

We searched for and reviewed the self study guides that you requested and have determined that all except one of them may be released. They are on the enclosed disc. One of the guides is being released with excisions.

An enclosure provides information on Freedom of Information Act exemptions and other grounds for withholding material. Where we have made excisions, the applicable exemptions are marked on each document. With respect to material withheld by the Department of State, you have the right to appeal our determination within 60 days. A copy of the appeals procedures is enclosed.

We have now completed the processing of your case. If you have any questions, you may write to the Office of Information Programs and Services, SA-2, Department of State, Washington, DC 20522-8100, or telephone us at (202) 261-8484. Please be sure to refer to the case number shown above in all correspondence about this case.

We hope that the Department has been of service to you in this matter.

Sincerely,

for Margaret P. Grafeld, Director
Office of Information Programs and Services

Enclosures:
As stated.

63934 Federal Register/Vol. 69, No. 212
Rules and Regulations

Subpart F – Appeal Procedures

§171.52 Appeal of denial of access to, declassification of, amendment of, accounting of disclosures of, or challenge to classification of records.

(a) *Right of administrative appeal.* Except for records that have been reviewed and withheld within the past two years or are the subject of litigation, any requester whose request for access to records, declassification of records, amendment of records, accounting of disclosure of records, or any authorized holder of classified information whose classification challenge has been denied, has a right to appeal the denial to the Department's Appeals Review Panel. This appeal right includes the right to appeal the determination by the Department that no records responsive to an access request exist in Department files. Privacy Act appeals may be made only by the individual to whom the records pertain.

(b) *Form of appeal.* There is no required form for an appeal. However, it is essential that the appeal contain a clear statement of the decision or determination by the Department being appealed. When possible, the appeal should include argumentation and documentation to support the appeal and to contest the bases for denial cited by the Department. The appeal should be sent to: Chairman, Appeals Review Panel, c/o Appeals Officer, A/GIS/IPS/PP/LC, U.S. Department of State, SA-2, Room 8100, Washington, DC 20522-8100.

(c) *Time limits.* The appeal should be received within 60 days of the date of receipt by the requester of the Department's denial. The time limit for response to an appeal begins to run on the day that the appeal is received. The time limit (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays) for agency decision on an administrative appeal is 20 days under the FOIA (which may be extended for up to an additional 10 days in unusual circumstances) and 30 days under the Privacy Act (which the Panel may extend an additional 30 days for good cause shown). The Panel shall decide mandatory declassification review appeals as promptly as possible.

(d) *Notification to appellant.* The Chairman of the Appeals Review Panel shall notify the appellant in writing of the Panel's decision on the appeal. When the decision is to uphold the denial, the Chairman shall include in his notification the reasons therefore. The appellant shall be advised that the decision of the Panel represents the final decision of the Department and of the right to seek judicial review of the Panel's decision, when applicable. In mandatory declassification review appeals, the Panel shall advise the requester of the right to appeal the decision to the Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel under §3.5(d) of E.O. 12958.

The Freedom of Information Act (5 USC 552)

FOIA Exemptions

(b)(1) Withholding specifically authorized under an Executive Order in the interest of national defense or foreign policy, and properly classified. E.O. 12958, as amended, includes the following classification categories:

- 1.4(a) Military plans, systems, or operations
- 1.4(b) Foreign government information
- 1.4(c) Intelligence activities, sources or methods, or cryptology
- 1.4(d) Foreign relations or foreign activities of the US, including confidential sources
- 1.4(e) Scientific, technological, or economic matters relating to national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
- 1.4(f) U.S. Government programs for safeguarding nuclear materials or facilities
- 1.4(g) Vulnerabilities or capabilities of systems, installations, infrastructures, projects, plans, or protection services relating to US national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
- 1.4(h) Information on weapons of mass destruction

(b)(2) Related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency

(b)(3) Specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than 5 USC 552), for example:

ARMEX	Arms Export Control Act, 22 USC 2778(e)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949, 50 USC 403(g)
EXPORT	Export Administration Act of 1979, 50 App. USC 2411(c)(1)
FSA	Foreign Service Act of 1980, 22 USC 4003 & 4004
INA	Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 USC 1202(f)
IRAN	Iran Claims Settlement Act, Sec 505, 50 USC 1701, note

(b)(4) Privileged/confidential trade secrets, commercial or financial information from a person

(b)(5) Interagency or intra-agency communications forming part of the deliberative process, attorney-client privilege, or attorney work product

(b)(6) Information that would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy

(b)(7) Information compiled for law enforcement purposes that would:

- (A) interfere with enforcement proceedings
- (B) deprive a person of a fair trial
- (C) constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy
- (D) disclose confidential sources
- (E) disclose investigation techniques
- (F) endanger life or physical safety of an individual

(b)(8) Prepared by or for a government agency regulating or supervising financial institutions

(b)(9) Geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells

Other Grounds for Withholding

NR Material not responsive to a FOIA request, excised with the agreement of the requester

COTE D'IVOIRE
SELF STUDY GUIDE

GEORGE P. SHULTZ
NATIONAL FOREIGN AFFAIRS TRAINING CENTER
School of Professional and Area Studies
Foreign Service Institute
U.S. Department of State

The **Self-Study Guide: Cote d'Ivoire** is intended to provide U.S. government personnel in the foreign affairs community with an overview of important Cote d'Ivoire issues related to history, geography, politics, religion, culture, economics, and international relations. The guide merely serves as an introduction and should be used a self-study resource. Cote d'Ivoire is far too complex and diverse a society to be covered in any depth using only the text in this guide. Therefore, the reader is encouraged to explore the questions and issues introduced using the Internet site guide and articles and books listed in the bibliography. Most of the bibliographic material can be found either on the Internet or in Foreign Service Institute or Main State Libraries.

Gilbert J. Donahue (Foreign Service Officer Retired; U.S. Embassy Abidjan 1974-76) prepared this Guide. The views expressed in this guide are those of the author and attributable sources and do not

First Edition
July 2002

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17th to 18th c.	Europeans conducted considerable trade in ivory
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1889	French Protectorate of Cote d'Ivoire established
1893	France made Cote d'Ivoire a colony
1895	Cote d'Ivoire became part of French West Africa
1896 to 1916	Colonial leaders put down many revolts by indigenous people and established French rule throughout country's interior French recruited Ivorians for World War I service France established *Indigenat* legal system and imposed requirement for *corvee* labor
1940 to 1945	Administration loyal to Free French under General de Gaulle
1944	Felix Houphouet-Boigny founded *Syndicat Agricole Africain* (African Agricultural Union - SAA)

1945	Houphouet-Boigny founded the Ivorian Democratic Party (*Parti Democratique de la Cote d'Ivoire* - PDCI)
October 1945	First countrywide elections held in Cote d'Ivoire for delegates for French Constituent Assembly; Felix Houphouet-Boigny chosen as Ivorian African delegate; he successfully sponsored bill to end *corvee* labor and thereby became a hero throughout French West Africa
1946	France formed French Union, granted African members free speech, free association, and free assembly, and eliminated separate legal codes and forced labor requirement; Cote d'Ivoire became an Overseas Territory of France
1947	Houphouet-Boigny and other African leaders founded African Democratic Rally (*Rassemblement Democratique Africain* - RDA)
1958	Cote d'Ivoire became a self-governing republic in the French Community
April 1959	Cote d'Ivoire adopted its first constitution; PDCI won all seats in National Assembly; Houphouet-Boigny became prime minister
1959	Houphouet-Boigny and counterparts in other French West African countries formed the Council of the Entente, aimed at spurring region's economic development
August 1960	Cote d'Ivoire proclaimed independence from France
October 1960	Houphouet-Boigny was elected country's first president
October 1990	Houphouet-Boigny legalized other political parties and permitted first multiparty elections for president and national assembly; first opposition newspaper permitted; Houphouet-Boigny elected to seventh and last term as president; a constitutional amendment provided that the leader of the National Assembly would become president on the death or resignation of the sitting president
December 1993	Houphouet-Boigny died; Henri Konan Bedie succeeded him as president
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October 1999	Opposition candidate Alassane Ouattara was legally barred from running for president
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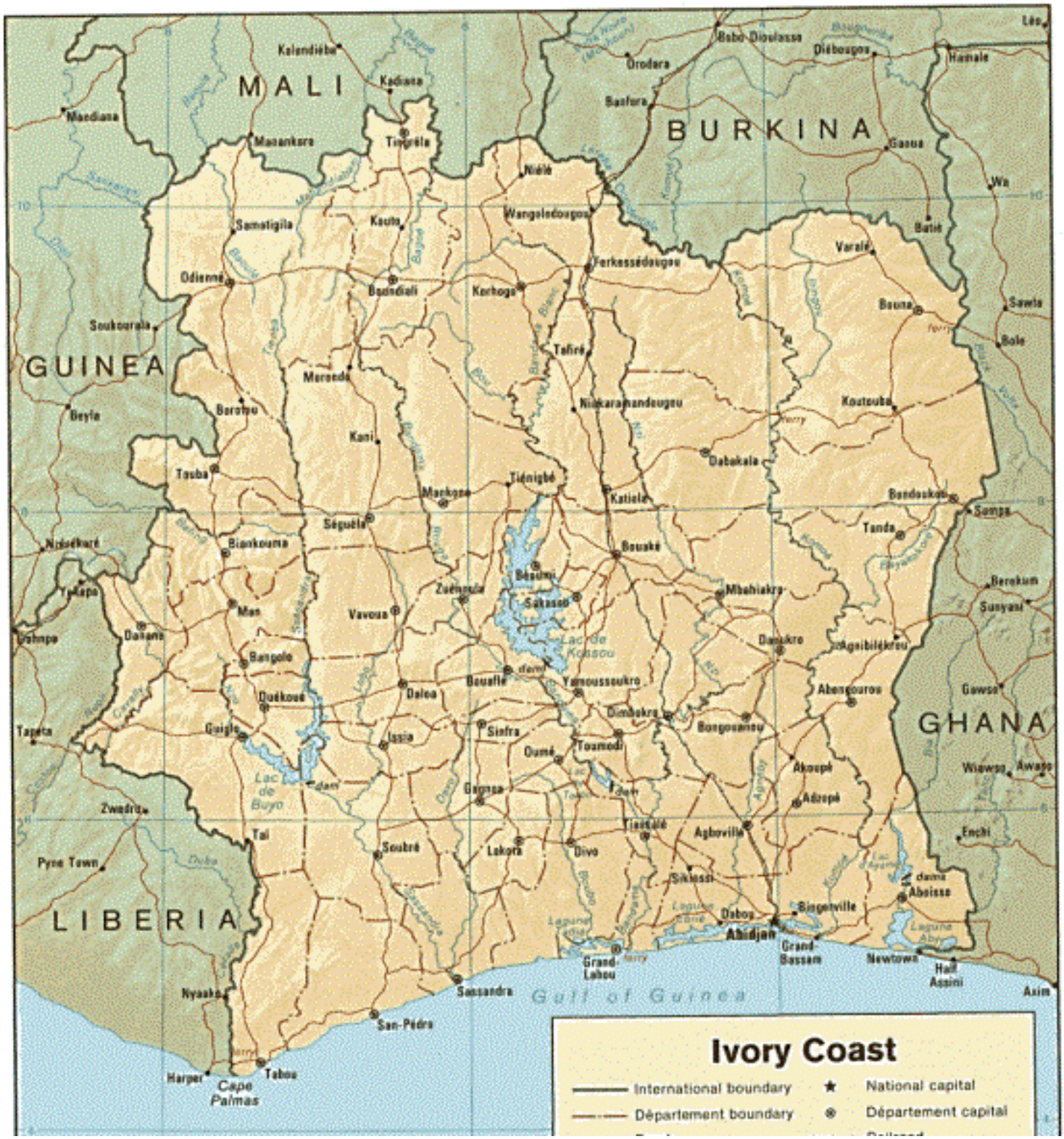
December 2000	Alassane Ouattara was excluded from running for the National Assembly; his party members then boycotted the election
March 2001	Municipal elections were dominated by Ouattara's RDR party and PDCI; Gbagbo's FPI party did not campaign heavily in those elections

IVORY COAST COUNTRY MAP, SOURCE: CIA



INTRODUCTION

Those who have followed African developments closely have witnessed over the past twenty years the steady decline of Cote d'Ivoire, once a shining light of political stability and the pinnacle of economic development in West Africa. As this study attempts to demonstrate, factors that underlay the country's success were also instrumental in its downfall. The experience of Cote d'Ivoire provides lessons for both political and economic management in the process of African development. However, foreign policy and the international markets – especially those for commodities and finance – have also played important roles in bringing Cote d'Ivoire's economic plight.

Cote d'Ivoire is a country of many contradictions. It has been described as "the Jewel of West Africa." Although its people provided some of the most sustained resistance to French colonialism, it became one of France's most loyal clients. Considered by many as a model of democracy and political stability, in reality, Cote d'Ivoire's autocratic government failed to develop democratic institutions and harshly dealt with its opposition. While projecting the image of a modern market economy, the country actually followed a dirigist, plutocratic "state capitalism" economic model. Although Africans were nominally in charge, they operated at the behest of their European (mostly French) backers. Thus, Cote d'Ivoire became a prime example of neo-colonialism.

A treacherous coast and difficult terrain so greatly impeded the country's exploration by Europeans that its inhabitants remained fairly isolated and autonomous until about one hundred years ago. As the French colonizers pushed inland from the coast they increasingly imposed the hard hand of autocratic rule on the people, forcing them to provide free labor for public works as well as private plantations, and subjecting the indigenous people to a separate legal and penal system. Post-World War II France under President de Gaulle provided social, political and economic improvements, greater autonomy, and eventually, independence.

Truly the father of his country and a rare French-African cultural hybrid, Felix Houphouet-Boigny founded the country's first political party in the 1940s and became its most prominent politician. His opposition to French discriminatory policies made him a champion for the colonized throughout French

West Africa. His subsequent willingness to cooperate with the French gave him the opportunity to represent Africa in France itself. In 1960, Houphouet-Boigny led his country into a relatively prosperous independence that was the envy of its neighbors. During its first twenty years of independence, Cote d'Ivoire remained an island of stability in a region rife with military coups, civil war and economic distress. The country's economic prosperity and growth were the necessary underpinnings of its stability. Another factor, however, was the iron hand of President Houphouet-Boigny, who permitted only one political party and increasingly denied civil rights and liberties lest a rival to his power emerge. He also sowed the seeds of the present anti-foreign bias by encouraging the immigration of farm workers from neighboring countries.

The system began to crack in the late 1970s, as official corruption became more noticeable and was less well tolerated, and economic growth and prosperity were affected by a downturn in the international markets for the commodities on which the economy depends. By the late 1980s, Cote d'Ivoire was suffering balance of payments difficulties as well as mounting interest payments for its foreign debt. The international financial institutions called for political liberalization. President Houphouet-Boigny, unwilling to yield power to a successor, and determined to run for a seventh term in 1990, nevertheless did finally allow other political parties to form. When he died in office in 1993, his successor, Henri Konan Bedie, was untested politically. Although popularly elected as president in 1995, Bedie's overt favoritism toward his Baoule ethnic group caused resentment among other groups. His anti-foreign *Ivoirite* policies alienated the economically important one-third of the population with a "foreign" background. Moreover, the Bedie government badly managed the economy and brought the country close to bankruptcy in 1999. His fatal mistake was to delay paying salaries to the military, thereby giving the military a pretext to take political action against him.

In an unprecedented development for Cote d'Ivoire, the old government was swept away by a nearly bloodless coup on Christmas Eve 1999. Retired Chief of the Army General Robert Guei was asked to head a government of national salvation. After assuring the international community he would return the country to democracy, Guei presided over a national convention to draft a new constitution and called for new elections, in which he announced himself a candidate. Although Guei claimed victory in a rigged election that was boycotted by several political parties, he was forced by popular sentiment to flee the country. As a result, Laurent Gbagbo, head of the Ivorian Popular Front and a longtime opponent of President Houphouet-Boigny and his Democratic Party of Cote d'Ivoire, claimed victory and became president, despite calls for a rerun. Gbagbo quickly joined ranks with other "nationalist" parties to embrace President Bedie's *Ivoirite* policies and freeze out of the political process opponents from the Muslim north who had a "foreign" background. Chief among these is former prime minister and opposition leader Alassane Ouattara. The challenges President Gbagbo faces include stabilizing the political situation, restoring economic growth, managing international political and economic affairs, and, if possible, introducing real democracy, while at the same time keeping a watchful eye on the Ivorian military. This is a tall order.

Thus far, Cote d'Ivoire's leaders have maintained a neocolonial dependence on France and blocked effective reforms. It remains to be seen whether the country has now embarked on a new era of its independence in which it is better placed to become self-sustaining as well as politically inclusive.

GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

General Setting and Climate

The Republique de Cote d'Ivoire, or Ivory Coast, has the largest population and strongest economy of the West African Monetary Union (all of which are francophone countries). The head of state is Laurent Gbagbo, and the head of government (prime minister) is Affi N'Guessan. The government is a constitutional democracy. The official language is French, and Dioula is widely spoken.

With a land area of 124,503 sq. mi., Cote d'Ivoire is a bit larger than and roughly the same square shape as New Mexico. Cote d'Ivoire is bordered by Liberia and Guinea on the west, Mali and Burkina Faso on the north, Ghana on the east, and the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Guinea to the south. The country has a tropical hot and humid climate in the south, and is warm and somewhat less humid in the north. The southern region has two wet seasons (March-July and October-November). Cote d'Ivoire is divided into three broad belts running east to west, beginning in the south with coastal lagoons, then rainforest and savannah, and finally highlands in the west and northwest. Mt. Nimba, located near Man and the highest point in the country, rises to 5,750 ft.

The country's political and administrative capital is Yamoussoukro (pop. 120,000), located in the center of the country. The city was the birthplace of the country's first president, Felix Houphouet-Boigny, who designated it as the national capital in March 1983. The largest city and major commercial port is Abidjan, the former capital and chief economic center (pop. 3.5 million). About 25 percent of the country's population lives in or near Abidjan. Abidjan was established as the French administrative center in the 1930s. Composed of four peninsulas converging at a key intersection of lagoons, Abidjan was ideally suited as a trading and transportation center. The French-built Vridi Canal in 1951 made Abidjan the country's premier port and center of industry as well as administration. The U.S. Embassy remains in Abidjan. Other important cities are Bouake (396,000) and Daloa (138,000).

Physical Geography

The Lagoon region in the south is protected by a strip of sandbars separating the brackish lagoon water from the ocean. The sandbars, as well as treacherous ocean currents, made it difficult for European ships to anchor and thus delayed European settlement of the region until the mid-1800s. During the early 20th century, the Tadio, Ebrie and Aby lagoons were connected by canals to further economic development. The flat land to the north of the lagoons is extensively cultivated in tropical plantation crops for export, mostly to Europe, including pineapples and ornamental flowers. There are also large plantations of oil palms and rubber trees.

The rainforest region originally covered one-third of the country. Since the 1970s, however, it has shrunk considerably due to overexploitation of tropical timber resources. The forest cover of 12.5 million

hectares in the 1960s has dwindled to only 3 million ha. now, plus 1.6 million ha. in the national reserves. The only primary forest left is in the Tai reserve in southwestern Cote d'Ivoire and in the Banco protected area near Abidjan. The forest region reaches down to the coast in the country's rocky western region near the port of San Pedro. The new capital Yamoussoukro, located northwest of Abidjan and just southeast of Lake Koussou, is on the northern edge of the forest zone.

The northern two-thirds of the country is a vast and mostly treeless savanna grassland. Since a series of droughts beginning in the 1970s, there has been increasing desertification in this region. The key industries are cattle raising and cotton production. The western area rises toward the Guinea highlands and the eastern area near Ghana has many small hills. The main city of the region is Bouake, the country's second largest, located north of Yamoussoukro. The Komoe National Park is located in the northeastern quadrant of the Savanna.

The country's four major rivers are, from west to east, Cavally, Sassandra, Bandama, and Komoe. All of them run from north to south and only their lower reaches near the coast are navigable. The Bandama was dammed in 1972 creating Lake Kossou, northwest of Yamoussoukro. The dam produces a considerable amount of the country's electricity.

Economic Geography

Cote d'Ivoire had a gross domestic product (GDP) of $22 billion in the early 1990s. The GDP per capita was $588 in 2000. That year, the country had real growth of -2.3%, a balance of trade of $676 million, foreign debt of $14.02 billion, and foreign direct investment of $134 million.

The country's chief exports are cocoa (36% of the total in value terms), coffee, tropical woods, petroleum, cotton, bananas, pineapples, palm oil, and fish. Cote d'Ivoire's natural resources include crude oil, diamonds, manganese, iron ore, cobalt, bauxite, and copper. Land use is as follows: 9% arable land; 4% permanent crops; 9% meadows and pastures; 26% forest and woodland; 52% other. The country has eight national parks.

In addition to the main port of Abidjan-Port Bouet, the other principal seaports are San Pedro (for export of coffee and cocoa), Sassandra (export of tropical timber), and Grand Bassam (for export of plantation production).

Cote d'Ivoire has 46,600 km of highways and a 410-mile-long railroad from Abidjan to the border of Burkina Faso (the rail line continues on to Ouagadougou). The country's extensive inland waterways are economically important, including 980 km of navigable rivers, canals, and coastal lagoons. The country has one of densest and best-maintained highway systems in West Africa, including 43,000 miles, 8% of which are paved.

Cote d'Ivoire's merchant marine has seven ships totaling 71,945 GRT/90,648 DWT: 5 cargo, 1 petroleum, oils, and lubricants (POL) tanker, and one chemical tanker. There are 42 airports in service

and the country's civil aviation fleet has 12 transport aircraft.

Self-Study Questions for Further Exploration

- How did Cote d'Ivoire's relative isolation from the rest of the continent, as well as its geographic protection from European exploration, affect its culture and history?
- How have the different geographic and climatic zones affected economic development in those areas?
- What are some of Cote d'Ivoire's advantages vis-à-vis its neighbors?
- How has Cote d'Ivoire been able to make use of its inland waterways for regional and national development?
- To what extent does the country's terrain still impede Cote d'Ivoire's development?
- How has Cote d'Ivoire been affected by the exploitation of its forest resources and the southward growth of the Sahara desert?

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HISTORY

Early History

Although little is known of Cote d'Ivoire's history prior to the 14th century, recently discovered Neolithic

artifacts indicate evidence of prehistoric civilization. For most of the country's history, its southern forests provided an effective barrier to large-scale development. As a result, Ivorian ethnic groups were isolated and maintained little contact with nearby peoples. In Roman times, Cote d'Ivoire was on the southern extremity of a caravan route going south from the Mediterranean Sea across the Sahara to the northern edge of the rainforest. Trade was conducted in salt, slaves, gold and other items.

After the collapse of the Roman Empire, the country found itself on the fringes of several Islamic kingdoms that flourished south of the Sahara, just touching Cote d'Ivoire's savannah area north of the dense forest near the coast. Under the 11th century Sudanic empires, which developed several well-known centers of Islamic learning, Arab traders from North Africa visited Cote d'Ivoire to spread Islam. The northwest corner of Cote d'Ivoire near the city of Odienne was part of the Islamic Empire of Mali during the 11th to 14th centuries. There was little penetration of Islam in the forest areas, however. Subsistence agriculture developed in clearings in the forest belt and in the savannah grasslands. Ivorian peoples also hunted and grazed livestock.

Extensive European involvement in Cote d'Ivoire was delayed until the modern era due to the country's rugged, harborless coastline. Immediately prior to the period of European exploration, there were five indigenous states in Cote d'Ivoire. The Muslim Empire of Kong (Juula-Senoufo peoples) was founded in the 18th century in the north-central region. Settlers fleeing the Asante confederation in present-day Ghana founded the Abron kingdom of Jaman in the 17th century. That kingdom was located south of Bondoukou, became a major center of commerce and Islam, and produced widely regarded Quranic scholars. The Baoule kingdom was established in the mid-18th century in the central part of the country near Sakasso. Members of this kingdom strongly resisted French domination in the early 20th century. The Agni kingdoms located in eastern Cote d'Ivoire still resist the imposition of outside authority. The kingdoms of Indenie and Sanwi attempted to secede from independent Cote d'Ivoire as recently as 1969.

European Exploration

European coastal exploration began in the 15th century under the Portuguese. They and other Europeans initially traded for gold, ivory, and pepper, and beginning in the 16th century, slaves. Cote d'Ivoire's lack of good harbors caused European traders mostly to bypass it. From the 17th century until the beginning of the 18th century, Europeans maintained profitable trade in ivory, for which the region was named. The first French missionaries landed in the country in 1637 at Assinie on the southeastern coast. Although they established a mission there, they did not remain permanently. French ships continued to visit Cote d'Ivoire and they returned to Assinie in 1701 with Prince Aniaba, an Ivorian who had been taken to France for education by the French navy. At that time, French missionaries and soldiers established a settlement, but it also failed to last, due to climate and disease. In fact, during the 1700s, the Europeans referred to this area of Africa as the "bad man's coast." The difficulty that Europeans had in surviving the climatic conditions delayed further settlement by one hundred years.

French Admiral Bouet met with African leaders in the area during the 1830s to conclude trading treaties to ensure supplies of gold, ivory, rubber and palm oil. In the 1840s, French soldiers negotiated treaties

with the indigenous peoples to establish fortified trading posts on the coast. Thus, the first permanent French settlements in Cote d'Ivoire were military forts. They were eventually replaced by trading posts at Assinie in 1842 and Grand Bassam in 1843. Grand Bassam subsequently became the colony's first capital. The French gradually pushed inland from the coast. During the 1840s-1860s, a welter of treaties provided for French sovereignty within the military posts, as well as trading privileges, in exchange for fees, or *coutumes*, paid yearly to local rulers. During this period, palm oil became an important export.

French Settlement

The French presence in the region was partly geostrategic, i.e., to counter the influence of Britain. After the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War (1871), France withdrew its military garrisons from its West African settlements and turned the posts over to resident merchants. In 1878, Grand Bassam was turned over to Arthur Verdier, a Marseille shipper. Verdier cleared forested areas and established cocoa and coffee plantations, acquiring the plants from Ghana. During that period, the first mahogany logs were exported from Cote d'Ivoire. Lieutenant Louis-Gustave Binger was appointed French Resident in Cote d'Ivoire and in 1882 he founded the Kong Company to manage a coffee plantation.

At the 1885 Berlin Conference, European countries agreed to recognize each other's colonies in the rest of the world. On the coastline of Africa, only permanent European settlements would be recognized. In 1890, this rule was extended to the interior, as well. To ensure the validity of its claims, in 1886 France reassumed direct control of its West African trading posts and pushed into interior regions. The consequent search for gold and other trade goods caused French opportunists to penetrate as far as the northern area of Cote d'Ivoire. In 1887, Binger conducted a two-year exploration of the interior, the first to link Senegal with Cote d'Ivoire. During that same period, Marcel Treich-Laplene negotiated agreements with local rulers to extend French influence beyond the coast. French troops also built forts and posts throughout the territory. In 1889, Britain recognized French sovereignty over the territory. France and Liberia established a border agreement in 1892, and in 1893 France and Britain agreed on the border with Ghana. The country's northern border was not set until 1947.

In 1893, Cote d'Ivoire formally became a French colony, Binger became the first governor, and the capital was located at Grand-Bassam. In 1895, Cote d'Ivoire became part of French West Africa under the overall supervision of the French Governor General in Senegal. At that time French West Africa was comprised of Cote d'Ivoire, Dahomey (Benin), Guinea, Niger, French Sudan (Mali), Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), and Mauritania. The individual colonies were divided into districts called circles, each of which was headed by a commandant who governed with relative autonomy. As advisors, the commandant chose a council of notables, including local rulers with his own appointees. During this period, the French imposed the *Indigenat*, a separate system of law, providing for summary judgments, and applying only to the indigenous peoples, not the French. This system, widely hated throughout the French colonial domain, was finally abolished in 1946.

Before 1900, Samory Toure, a Malinke leader from Guinea, led resistance to French dominion. During 1879-98, he ruled a Muslim empire including much of West Africa. In northern Cote d'Ivoire, Samory

ruled the area between Odienne and Bouna, and had his capital at Dabakala, where he kept a well-trained army. The Senoufo and Baoule people supported him against the French. In 1898, the French captured Samory and exiled him to Gabon. Thereafter, the French rapidly consolidated their position in Cote d'Ivoire.

French Rule

Due to a yellow fever epidemic in Grand-Bassam, the French moved the capital to Bingerville in 1900. Since Paris required colonies to be self-supporting in administration and defense, the French imposed a head tax to fund public works. The indigenous people resisted the tax, viewing it as a humiliating reversal of the previous French agreement to pay a *coutume* to local rulers.

During 1902-1916, there were many revolts against French rule by the forest peoples. In 1906, Governor Louis-Gabriel Angoulvant began the forceful conquest of the entire territory, which included harsh campaigns against the Baoule, Dan and Dida peoples. On January 8, 1910, the Abe Revolt took place in the region near Agboville, to the northwest of Abidjan and near the new rail line to Upper Volta (Burkina Faso). The people tore up the rails and killed everyone who was not an Abe. Governor Angoulvant carried out brutal manhunts throughout the forest in search of the perpetrators. The Abe people conducted guerrilla war for several years before they were subdued. By 1916, Cote d'Ivoire was firmly under French control. France compelled many Africans to fight by its side in various campaigns during World War I.

To improve the colony's economic base, the French government sold land concessions to planters for private plantations. While the concessions were conceived primarily to lure white settlers to the colony, some Africans, mainly colonial administrators, also purchased land. During this period, the French government established state mines, opened lumber operations, and built transportation and other infrastructure. The French also introduced cash crops for export, including cocoa, coffee and millet. The opportunities for Africans to participate in these enterprises gave rise to a wealthy planter class. The rich, better-educated Ivorians adopted French culture and became the vanguard of a new African elite. They were exempt from military and labor service and became accepted as cultural and social equals by the French. Thus, the elites recognized the economic advantages of submission to French rule.

French rule was direct, systematic and authoritarian. Colonial administrators engaged in divide and rule policies, choosing local leaders and even regrouping villages. The French systematically destroyed traditional power relationships among ethnic groups. The colony's inhabitants were considered French subjects with no political rights and a separate system of law applied to them. All adult males had to perform *corvee* labor. That is, they were forced to work ten days for no pay each year, either on French-owned plantations or public works projects. Forced labor was the most hated aspect of French rule. After 1930, a small group of westernized Ivorians was allowed to apply for French citizenship; however, French colonial policies continued to favor the Europeans with higher prices for their produce, access to protected markets, and the provision of free labor under the forced labor system. These differences fueled African resentment. In fact, it has been said that Cote d'Ivoire had the bloodiest, most turbulent colonial

history of any country in West Africa.

Because Cote d'Ivoire's indigenous population was not numerous enough to provide labor for the rapidly growing French-owned plantations, the colonial administrators recruited farm workers from Upper Volta, and they annexed part of that territory in 1932 to ensure the steady supply of laborers. Meanwhile, social changes also resulted from the influx of Catholic missionaries, who established churches and primary schools.

World War II - Promises of Autonomy

In 1934, the French moved the capital to Abidjan near the central coast, a location that was more accessible to interior towns and which offered greater potential for industrial development. In 1936, the new socialist government in France positively addressed many Ivorian concerns, including the desire to raise the minimum wage, and reduce the *corvee* labor time commitment. The Socialist Party of Cote d'Ivoire was founded at that time. The Vichy Government forced the colonies to proclaim loyalty either to Vichy or the Free French. Since most Ivorians favored the Free French after General Charles de Gaulle took control, the Vichy Government punished the colony by extending the *corvee,* conscripting laborers for the military, and forcing farmers to donate food to the military. This was a period of economic exploitation, overt racism, and hardship for Africans.

France's precipitous fall to Germany early in the war gave rise to the Ivorian nationalist movement, and many intellectuals were attracted to Marxist ideas. In 1943, Communist Study Groups organized branches in West Africa, including Abidjan. In response to African planters' complaints about French discrimination, Felix Houphouet-Boigny founded the African Agricultural Union (*Syndicat Agricole Africain* – SAA) in 1944 to seek an end of the *corvee* and improve the situation for African planters and farmers. By 1945, the SAA had 20,000 members from all ethnic groups and areas of Cote d'Ivoire. The SAA provided the core for the Democratic Party of Cote d'Ivoire (*Parti Democratique de Cote d'Ivoire*-PDCI), which was founded after the war by Felix Houphouet-Boigny.

The 1944 Brazzaville Conference, General de Gaulle's meeting with high-ranking colonial officials, recommended significant political, economic and social reforms in an effort to appease the educated African elite. De Gaulle promised that after the war, the colonies would be represented in the French Constituent Assembly. He agreed to draw up a new constitution that would provide the colonies greater autonomy as well as their own elected legislative assemblies. The conference decided that France would respect local customs, abolish the *Indigenat* (1945), adopt a new penal code, end *corvee* labor conscription (1946), improve health and education, and employ more Africans in colonial administration. After the war, the French government fulfilled few of these promises.

Houphouet-Boigny and Limited Self-Government

In October 1945, the first countrywide elections were held in Cote d'Ivoire to choose two delegates for the French Constituent Assembly. Felix Houphouet-Boigny was chosen as the Ivorian African delegate.

By successfully sponsoring a bill to end *corvee*, he became famous throughout French West Africa. France also granted citizenship to all people in its colonies. However, citizenship rights were not defined to enable most of the indigenous population to exercise the full civil rights of French people. In 1946, Houphouet-Boigny supported local self-government and the political equality of the French and Africans in the French Constituent Assembly. Later that year, he founded the *Parti Democratique de la Cote d'Ivoire* (PDCI), and then was reelected as a delegate to the Second Constituent Assembly, which established the French Union. France thereby granted African members free speech, free association, and free assembly, and eliminated the separate legal codes and the forced labor requirement. French African colonies were designated overseas territories. However, the French Government retained all legislative and executive powers. Cote d'Ivoire remained under the administration of the French Ministry of Overseas Departments and Territories.

In 1947, Houphouet-Boigny and other African leaders founded the African Democratic Rally (*Rassemblement Democratique Africain* - RDA), which called for full equality with the French and was therefore viewed as a threat by the colonial administration. Cote d'Ivoire became a center of recruitment for the militant African party. The French also saw the PDCI as a threat, since it opposed the conservative and discriminatory colonial government installed in 1947. Houphouet-Boigny escaped imprisonment only due to his parliamentary immunity. The PDCI organized strikes, and boycotts of French goods and violence erupted in 1949. Because the French Government considered the PDCI a threat to its rule, colonial administrators arrested many leaders and circumscribed the party's activities. Therefore, by 1951, the PDCI was near collapse. Houphouet-Boigny decided to sever relations with the Communist Party, which resulted in a new phase of French political concessions and economic cooperation.

In 1956, under the Fourth Republic, France backed away from the concept of integrating its overseas territories with continental France. Instead, Paris sought to provide autonomy for domestic policy, with France solely responsible for foreign affairs, defense, higher education, and economic assistance. The French Assembly passed an amendment to the constitution called the *loi-cadre,* largely as a result of Houphouet-Boigny's careful maneuvering, to provide all adults the right to vote for representatives to local and district councils and to empower each territorial assembly to make laws. One of President de Gaulle's first acts was to offer the African colonies a choice to become independent or continue as part of Overseas France under the *loi-cadre*.

Process of Independence

The 1958 Fifth Republic Constitution provided for free association of autonomous republics within the French Community. Designed to facilitate the evolution of internal self-government, community status would keep the African states firmly French. Nonetheless, Cote d'Ivoire supported the Community, arguing this was a pragmatic course in view of the lack of trained personnel to run an independent government. In that year, President Charles de Gaulle visited Abidjan and welcomed the Ivorian decision. In September 1958, Cote d'Ivoire voted to become a self-governing republic within the French Community. In April 1959, Cote d'Ivoire adopted its first constitution and the PDCI won all the seats in the National Assembly. Houphouet-Boigny also became prime minister. In 1959, Houphouet-Boigny

and his counterparts in other French West African countries formed the Council of the Entente, in opposition to the pro-independence Mali Federation of Guinea and Mali. After the independence of Guinea, however, the French Community was considered "dead" and there was nothing to keep its remaining members from declaring independence on their own.

Therefore, on August 7, 1960, with Paris' blessing, Cote d'Ivoire followed Senegal and Mali in declaring independence. Cote d'Ivoire enacted its first constitution as an independent country on October 31, 1960, and elected Houphouet-Boigny as president. The country maintained its traditionally close relations with France and kept many French advisors in government positions. The French helped build the Ivorian defense force, based on the French colonial marine infantry. The Ivorian constitution established a democratic government with a presidential system, separation of powers and independent judiciary. The PDCI won all National Assembly seats in the first election and, within a short period, the government became authoritarian under the single party rule of the PDCI. No other political parties were allowed. Houphouet-Boigny limited the powers of the National Assembly and tailored election laws in the PDCI's favor. He established a highly personalized regime, controlling government through the use of patronage and effectively co-opting his political enemies. At the time, Philippe Yace, Secretary General of PDCI and president of the National Assembly, was the second most powerful leader in the country.

Independence – The First Twenty Years

During the first twenty years of independence, Houphouet-Boigny consolidated party and government power. He ensured strict loyalty by party members and military officers. To his credit, he sought to balance the composition in government of ethnic groups, regional affinities, political leanings, and economic power bases, and the president made effective use of state and party patronage. Representatives of each important ethnic group held cabinet posts, but the president himself directly controlled the police and military.

During the 1960s, dissenters against government policy were routinely rounded up and arrested. Houphouet-Boigny pardoned them if they admitted guilt; others were forced into military service. That way, Cote d'Ivoire could claim it had no political prisoners. Some of those arrested chose exile, either to neighboring countries or to France. Houphouet-Boigny justified this policy by arguing that political stability was a requirement for economic prosperity. In 1962, radical PDCI members sought to kidnap the president in order to press for political concessions. This attempt failed, however, and the radicals were arrested and secretly tried. There was another plot by leftists, politicians and northerners in 1963. Also in the 1960s, Kragbe Gnagbe, a Bete, organized an alternative political party based near Gagnoa. The government responded by arresting many organizers. As a reaction, the Bete people carried out a bloody revolt against the government in 1970 and Gnagbe was banished to his village. This did not squash the tradition of Bete criticism inside the government, as well as vocal opposition to Houphouet-Boigny's rule. By 1971, most government opponents were released from prison.

The 1960s and 1970s witnessed the large-scale migration of Africans from nearby countries seeking economic opportunity. Many of these economic migrants were Mossi people from Burkina Faso. They

provided cheap labor for Cote d'Ivoire's coffee and cocoa plantations. However, they also sparked resentment on the part of Ivorian ethnic groups. There were demonstrations in 1969 in Abidjan by unsuccessful job seekers from the countryside. In addition, Ivorian intellectuals and elites chafed at the continued employment of French officials in ministries and industries. Many Ivorians saw the president as favoring Europeans and resisting Ivorianization of the economy. University students demonstrated against the PDCI. Foreign-trained students sought a more socialist approach toward economic development and opposed the government's "neo-colonial" policies. That year, there was a student-government confrontation at Abidjan University organized by the Movement of Ivorian Primary and Secondary School Students (*Mouvement des Etudiants et Eleves de Cote d'Ivoire* – MEECI). The government cracked down hard.

During the 1970s, Houphouet-Boigny refined his style and sought out younger intellectuals and trained technocrats for high level posts. He also campaigned for political support from the middle and lower classes. He conducted a series of public dialogues in the mid-1970s to discuss current issues, including government reforms and business concerns about corruption. However, the dialogues did not result in substantial reform. The president also maintained useful contacts with traditional tribal leaders, after putting down nascent rebellions by ethnic groups in 1969 and 1970. Houphouet-Boigny relied on strong management, pragmatic organization, French political and economic backing, and foreign investment and technology. His style worked. This was a period of economic growth and optimism.

However, the 1970s were a period of political instability in neighboring West African countries, where military forces routinely toppled leaders. There was even an alleged military coup attempt in Cote d'Ivoire in 1973. The president harshly dealt with the military instigators, but recognizing their grievances, subsequently gave the military greater scope in national affairs and Ivorianized its leadership. Following his fourth election in 1975 with 100% of the votes, Houphouet-Boigny reshuffled the cabinet in an effort to root out members fingered for corruption or disloyalty, and he appointed military officers to civil positions in the capital and prefectures.

Nevertheless, just as Houphouet-Boigny attracted more highly skilled people to the government, he provided PDCI sinecure positions to his old guard of loyalists. The PDCI did not embrace democratic procedures, but instead sought to sustain the economically privileged political class. Both party members and government officials engaged in nepotism and corruption, and there were poorly defined and overlapping responsibilities amongst them. Houphouet-Boigny finally allowed the open election of party officials in the late 1970s.

Houphouet-Boigny's Last Twenty Years

By 1980, Cote d'Ivoire had enjoyed twenty years of solid economic growth and political stability. In every way, it was a standout in the region. However, corruption by the wealthy and politically powerful was very apparent. The officials' penchant for lining their own pockets rapidly became a political liability. An economic downturn in the early 1980s caused by the fall of international commodity prices led to economic hardship for most people, caused a rise in urban drug abuse and crime, and served as a

rallying cry for political agitation.

In 1980, Houphouet-Boigny ran unopposed for president and was elected to a fifth term. In addition to corruption, presidential succession became an issue. At the seventh party congress of the PDCI, he abolished the post of secretary general and Houphouet-Boigny himself was installed as the party's executive chairman. Philippe Yace lost favor with the president and was booted out. A constitutional amendment established the post of vice president to succeed the president in event of a mid-term vacancy. However, the office of vice president was not filled until after the 1985 election. Following election to his sixth term that year, Houphouet-Boigny again amended the constitution and eliminated the office of vice president. Houphouet-Boigny's advanced age, coupled with public concern about succession, remained political issues to the end of his life. He was seen as irreplaceable – he had made himself so. But he was not infallible and there were cracks in the country's economic miracle.

Although Houphouet-Boigny's personal position was unassailable, the decade of the 1980s saw rising social discontent that was increasingly manifest in demonstrations against the government. In 1983, 4,000 teachers organized by the National Union of Secondary School Teachers of Cote d'Ivoire (*Syndicat National des Enseignants du Secondaire de Cote d'Ivoire* – SYNESCI), the only union independent of the PDCI, stuck to voice basic opposition to both presidential and cabinet mismanagement of the economy. The president dissolved the union, closed all secondary schools, and sent home 200,000 students.

Anti-government and anti-PDCI political tracts circulated in Abidjan. In an effort to head off further embarrassing disclosures, PDCI leaders made excursions to the countryside to conduct public dialogues and discredit their detractors. By the time of the PDCI's 1985 eighth party congress, a full-blown crime wave affected Abidjan and other cities, a large influx of immigrants from Burkina Faso and Ghana swamped the country and, growing in notoriety, the Ivorian criminal underworld conducted ever more brazen attacks against French and Lebanese business interests. Thus, the 1980s were a period of uncertainty and instability which reflected an increasingly authoritarian government out of touch with the electorate.

Economic mismanagement, and volatile world markets for the country's commodity exports, eventually led to severe balance of payments problems and the decision to default on foreign debt in 1987. That year, Houphouet-Boigny stopped coffee and cocoa exports in order to stabilize the market. Because the policy was poorly implemented and enforced, however, it had no impact on the market but it did cause the government to lose much prestige and support from agricultural interests.

In 1987, Robert Gbai Tagro established the *Parti Republicain de la Cote d'Ivoire*. This was neither recognized nor banned, but its congress was crushed and the leaders were detained. In 1988, there was a plot against Houphouet-Boigny within the PDCI by Dioula businessmen from Touba. The government dealt swiftly with the plotters.

As the 1990s began, many groups demonstrated against government policies and in favor of greater democracy, especially legalization of other political parties besides the PDCI. Prior to the 1990 elections, the World Bank pressed for the free formation of political parties. In response, Houphouet-Boigny

legalized nine political parties and permitted the publication of one opposition newspaper. He also appointed Alassane Ouattara, a Muslim from northern Cote d'Ivoire and an economist with experience in international banking, to work with the IMF on a plan for economic reform. Late 1990 saw the country's first multiparty elections, in which candidates from 26 political parties. Houphouet-Boigny received 85% of the vote for a seventh term. Laurent Gbagbo, leader of the Ivorian Popular Front Party (PFI), was the chief opposition candidate. The PFI won one seat in the National Assembly, which for the first time included twelve opposition members to the PDCI's 163-seat majority. The opposition claimed the presidential election had been rigged.

In November 1990, the National Assembly enacted a new constitutional amendment to clarify presidential succession: the leader of the National Assembly would become president on the death or resignation of the sitting president. At the time, Henri Konan Bedie, a technocrat and fellow Baoule, was National Assembly leader and therefore widely regarded as Houphouet-Boigny's likely successor. Another constitutional amendment provided for the appointment of a prime minister. That position went to Alassane Ouattara.

In May 1991, Ivorian troops violently disrupted a student meeting at Abidjan University, reportedly killing several students, but the government denied there had been any deaths. In 1992, the investigating committee implicated high ranking military officers in the abuses, but President Houphouet-Boigny refused to take disciplinary action against them. A march by 20,000 people demanded that the government step down. During the entire five-month period Houphouet-Boigny remained in Europe.

The post-Houphouet-BoignyEra

The Houphouet-Boigny era ended with his death in December 1993. Following a short power struggle for succession between Bedie and Ouattara, France, the United States, and most other countries backed Bedie's claim of ascendancy. Bedie did not have his predecessor's charisma or political skills. Continued economic hardship during the 1990s and pressure for a greater voice in political issues continued to erode his popular support. Before 1995, the PDCI maintained power despite the multiparty presidential and legislative elections of 1990. The government routinely denied opposition parties the right to meet in public places, citing possible violence if demonstrations got out of hand. The 1992 Anti-vandalism Law held organizers of demonstrations and marches liable for any property damage resulting from those activities. Abandoning Houphouet-Boigny's policy of ethnic balance, Bedie increasingly favored fellow Baoules for government and party positions, thereby sowing the seeds for inter-ethnic rivalry.

In October 1995, many opposition parties boycotted the presidential election, claiming the government had improperly amended the electoral code in 1994 to bar potential rivals from running. The opposition objected to the denial of the candidacy of Alassane Ouattara, head of the Democratic Rally of Republicans (RDR), on the grounds that Ouattara's parents were not Ivorian born. Ouattara was considered Bedie's greatest potential rival, and political enemy. The RDR also levied complaints about the composition of voters' lists and restrictions on demonstrations. The government banned marches and

sit-ins prior to the election, and opposition party members blocked access to polling stations and impeded delivery of election materials. The opposition's boycott was finally lifted after a government agreement with the opposition to revise the voting lists. The opposition parties grouped together under the Republican Front (FR) banner, but did not field coalition candidates for the election. In addition, there was ethnic violence between the Bete (ethnic group of Laurent Gbagbo) and the Baoule (Bedie's group) peoples. Foreign observers considering the voting a relatively smooth process, but Amnesty International complained about violations of right of assembly and free expression during the campaign, as well as arrests and convictions of some students – the Federation of Students and School Pupils (FESCI, which was banned in 1991) – as well as journalists.

Favorable economic conditions in the mid-1990s helped Bedie win the 1995 presidential election, and enabled his party, the PDCI, to win 80% of the seats in the National Assembly. Several Bedie-proposed constitutional amendments adopted by the National Assembly in 1998 were criticized by the opposition parties: an extension of the presidential mandate from five to seven years, authorization for the president to withhold election results during periods of unrest, and the establishment of a senate one-third of whose members would be named by the president. Meanwhile, economic conditions worsened and opposition voices became more strident. Some opposition leaders were imprisoned, and Bedie's campaign against Ouattara became more personal. A combination of political maneuvering and judicial decisions depicted Ouattara as a foreigner since his parents were not born in Cote d'Ivoire and thus again prohibited him from seeking the presidency.

Popular discontent with the government came to a head on Christmas Eve 1999, when General Robert Guei conducted a successful and relatively bloodless coup against President Bedie. However, the coup did not put an end to political uncertainty. Two military mutinies and attempted assassinations followed the coup. General Guei spent his first six months consolidating political power, assuring the international community of his support for a return to democratic government, and dealing with the country's dire financial straits, which included defaulting on its foreign debt. In July 2000, voters approved a new constitution for the Second Republic, which institutionalized nationality requirements for presidential candidates. The new constitution effectively ended Ouattara's presidential ambitions.

In the October 2000 presidential election, Ouattara was constitutionally barred from running and the PDCI candidate lost in the first round. The electoral battle was between General Guei, who had hoped for PDCI support, and Laurent Gbagbo, the "historic opponent" of the PDCI. Both Ouattara's RDR and the PDCI, which accounted for two-thirds of the electorate, boycotted the elections. There were many incidents of military and police action against demonstrators, including major human rights abuses. For example, fifty-seven bodies were found dumped in a mass grave in Yopougon, a suburb of Abidjan. Although the electoral commission gave Guei the victory, he fled the country after massive demonstrations. Laurent Gbagbo proclaimed himself president by default, and refused to rerun the election, despite questions about its legitimacy. Since Ouattara was excluded from running, the RDR party boycotted the election. Although only 33% of registered voters turned out, Gbagbo's FPI won 96 seats in the 225-seat Assembly, and was able to co-opt 22 independents; the PDCI won only 94 seats and became the opposition. Ouattara's RDR, however, continues to challenge the other parties. It dominated the March 2001 municipal elections, together with the PDCI. This was the RDR's first effort to campaign

nationwide. Gbagbo's FPI did not campaign heavily in those elections.

Since the election of 2000, President Gbagbo has attempted to consolidate his government and rebuild relations with the international community as well as with ethnic and regional groups. Although following the election he stressed national reconciliation, he has since taken a highly partisan approach. Gbagbo is dependent on a restive military and is preoccupied with remaining in power. Much of Gbagbo's future success will depend on strong economic growth and his ability to resolve political issues in a country increasingly divided along ethnic, regional and religious lines.

Self-Study Questions for Further Exploration

- What factors in Cote d'Ivoire's early history continue to affect the country's current events?
- How did Cote d'Ivoire's social makeup – i.e., the proliferation and complexity of its ethnic groups – affect its response to European colonialism?
- How did the early history of international trade and the establishment of agriculture-based plantations affect the country's economic and political development?
- To what extent did the French approach to administering its colony influence the governing methods of independent Cote d'Ivoire?
- What is the relationship between the French creation of an indigenous moneyed elite and the current social and economic cleavage in Ivorian society?
- How did the importation of farm labor from Burkina Faso sow the seeds for the xenophobia of the 1980s and 1990s?
- Do Ivorians now have more or fewer civil rights than they enjoyed on the eve of independence from France?

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MAP OF COTE D'VOIRE'S ETHNIC GROUPS

POPULATION AND CULTURE

Population

Cote d'Ivoire's total population is 15,980,950 (2000). This is a considerable increase from the 5.4 million in 1970 and represents a 3.8% annual growth rate. Ivorian life expectancy is 55 years, relatively high for Africa. Infant mortality has been declining.

Ethnic Makeup

Unlike many African countries with a small number of contending ethnic groups, Cote d'Ivoire has more than sixty. They include the following: Baoule (15%), Senoufo (10%), Bete (6%), Lagoon peoples (5%), Agni/Anyi (3%), and a Mande cluster including Juula, Bambara and Malinke (17%). The single largest ethnic group is the Baoule, which produced both President Felix Houphouet-Boigny and his successor, President Henri Konan Bedie. Current President Laurent Gbagbo is a Bete.

With many small ethnic groups, the country has been less prone to domination by a single group. President Houphouet-Boigny was careful to avoid favoring any one group and he ensured that positions of power were shared among all groups. His successors, especially President Bedie, were less scrupulous in avoiding ethnic favoritism, and indeed, ethnic background is increasingly important in politics.

In addition, about 30% of the country's inhabitants are non-Ivorian Africans or non-Africans, including Lebanese, Europeans, and Asians, as well as refugees and immigrants from neighboring African countries, especially Burkina Faso. Although non-Ivorians are economically critical to the country, since the early 1990s, they have faced social, political and economic discrimination.

Religion

Islam, the second most widespread religion in Africa, has the most adherents in Cote d'Ivoire, claiming 60% of the inhabitants. Mosques predominate in towns and villages in the northern half of the country, and several traditional centers of Islamic learning and culture exist in the north.

About 20% of the inhabitants practice Christianity, including both Catholic and Protestant churches. The Catholic faith predominates among the middle class and urban southerners. The first permanent Roman Catholic mission was established in 1895, and the first African priest was ordained in 1934. In the 1890s, the church started seminaries and schools, and St. Paul's Cathedral was built in Abidjan. President Houphouet-Boigny personally funded the construction of the Our Lady of Peace basilica in Yamoussoukro, the second largest church in the world, which can fit 200,000 people within its confines. After its consecration by the Pope in 1990, the church became a pilgrimage destination for Catholics in Africa.

Harrism is the largest and oldest protestant denomination in the country. Founded in 1914 by Liberian William Harris, the church is an Africanized form of Protestantism that won a large following in part because there was no discrimination against women. This was important in Cote d'Ivoire due to the traditional role of matrilineal descent in Ivorian culture. Since the 1920s, Harrism has been recognized as a branch of Methodism. It is a syncretic faith that includes the protestant Bible, Catholic holidays, the Christian cross, the African chief's cane, long white robes, traditional dances, storytelling sermons, group prayer, and emphasis on miracle cures.

About 18% of the population adheres to indigenous religions, which include ancestral worship and

animism, the belief that everything in nature has a soul. Some ethnic groups believe in reincarnation. In addition to a supreme being, some groups worship lesser gods seeking their intervention for good health, harvests, or children. Ancestral spirits are understood to be members of the family or line who were transformed into spirits. They remain in contact with the living and help them in their present lives. Magic is common to many rituals and many Ivorians wear *grisgris*, or charms, to ward off evil spirits or to deter the action of evil spells cast by their enemies. In some parts of the country there are blends of Muslim, Christian and traditional forms of religion.

Historical Migrations and Settlement

Cote d'Ivoire was already inhabited during the Late Stone Age (8000 to 4000 B.C.). Archeological evidence includes ax heads and pottery. There were many settlements along the Bandama River and near Abengourou, as well as Touba, Diva, Fedessedougou and Korhogo in the north. Based on the discovery of shells and pottery from burial mounds, the area near the lagoons was inhabited by 1500 B.C. About 2000 years ago, Cote d'Ivoire had already become a meeting point for many peoples of western Africa. By that time, there were settlements of the Mande, Voltaic, Kru and Akan-speaking peoples. Although the great West African kingdoms of Ghana, Mali and Songhai (A.D. 400-1600) were to the north, trade routes connected them with settlements on the edge of the rainforest in present-day Cote d'Ivoire.

Between 1300-1700, many of the country's current ethnic groups settled there, occupying Odienne, Katiola and Kong. In the 1500s, the Mande or Dioula people migrated from Mali into the northwest region inhabited by the Senoufo. Under them, Kong and Bondoukou became centers of Islam. Bondoukou eventually became the center of the Abron Kingdom, founded by settlers from Ghana. The Baoule and Agni people migrated from the Asante region of Ghana west into central Cote d'Ivoire in the 1700s. The Baoule founded Sakasso as their capital and the Agni established the kingdoms of Indenie and Sanwi, with Abengourou as the capital of Indiene. By 1600, about one million people lived in the present territory of Cote d'Ivoire.

Description of Ethnic Groups

Here follow descriptions of the best-known Ivorian ethnic groups:

Agni/Anyi

The Agni and Abron peoples are related to the Baoule. They still pay allegiance to their kings, have an elite status and have historically wielded considerable political power in Cote d'Ivoire. They are well known for their artwork in metal, wood and clay.

Baoule

These people live in the central part of the country and their economy is based on plantation agriculture, producing coffee and cocoa. The group has a matrilineal social structure and includes many wealthy

planters and politicians.

Bete

This group is the Baoule's chief rival. Primarily Christian, they raise cash crops, believe in the superiority of their culture, and have long supported anti-government movements.

Dan or Yacouba

These people are known for their dances and masks, cloth, baskets and wooden sculptures. They worship a single god, Zran, who is the creator of the universe. Their traditional education consists of an initiation rite to induct its members into secret societies. The people believe that the *gor*, who is responsible for dispensing justice, can turn into animals to survey the forces of good and evil. The Dan masks are important symbols with smooth, delicate lines and sensual features. One famous dance is the stilt dance, in which the dancer stands 20 feet high. Another is the acrobatic and dangerous juggling dance, where the female dancer is tossed into the air and must avoid sharp knives when falling back to earth.

Dioula

These people, who originated in Guinea, live in the far northwest. Their religion is a blend of Islam and traditional beliefs. The Dioula are subsistence farmers, growing rice, millet and peanuts, and raising goats, sheep, poultry, and some cattle. They have a patrilineal society and their villages are grouped around men with the same clan name. Their headmen are also imams or religious leaders.

Kru

These people, located on the southwestern coast, were traditionally fishermen, but they are rapidly becoming assimilated into the mainstream of Ivorian urban society. Like the Bete and Guere, the Kru, all inhabitants of the west central rainforest, originally migrated from present-day Liberia.

Koulango

These people in northeastern Cote d'Ivoire are related to the Lobi and farm and raise cattle. Their main crops are yams, corn, peanuts, cotton and watermelons. They also raise goats, sheep and cattle.

Lagoon Peoples

Prominent among the various groups that inhabit the lagoon area are the Ebrie and the Abidji.

Lobi

These people live east of the Senoufo. They are a proud people known as excellent archers. The Lobi

women have ornamental plates that pierce their lips.

Senoufo

Living in the northern savanna, these are among the oldest ethnic groups in Cote d'Ivoire. They are known for their woodcarving, masks, and hand-painted Korhogo fabrics. Their crops include yams, rice, peanuts, and millet. Culturally, the village is an extended family. The Senoufo's cultural capital is Korhogo, a city that dates from the 13th century. They have secret associations to prepare boys for adulthood. The training takes place in a sacred forest and can last the entire lifetime. The dance of the leopard men is performed when the boys return from the initiation.

Non-Ivorians

For much of the 20th century, French and Ivorian government policies encouraged economic migration from nearby areas, especially Upper Volta, now known as Burkina Faso, northeast of Cote d'Ivoire. Most of those who took advantage of this opportunity were members of the Mossi people. Originally, they were destined to work as farm laborers in Cote d'Ivoire's important and growing agricultural plantations. While most of the economic immigrants still live in rural areas, they form significant communities in Abidjan and other cities and towns.

A large group of Lebanese immigrants, numbering 60,000 – 180,000, are engaged in the country's wholesale and retail trade. Many of the Lebanese arrived in Cote d'Ivoire during the 1960s and 1970s to escape the Lebanon civil war.

A community of French expatriates, numbering 25,000- 30,000, has remained in Cote d'Ivoire since independence. This number includes French and Ivorian government officials and technicians, as well as business administrators and technical experts. Although many French left the country following the death of Houphouet-Boigny in 1993 and also after the 1999 coup, this remains an important group.

Traditional Culture

Cote d'Ivoire's traditional culture includes much unique art – especially masks and textiles – which are among the best in West Africa. Baoule vessels and masks are realistic. The Dan people carve wooden spoons with two legs for serving rice. Their striking masks show a human face with a calm expression and eyehole slits reminiscent of Asian Buddhism. The Senoufo produce ornately carved wooden doors and highly stylized statues of hornbill figures. In many ethnic groups, the masks represent ancestor worship or man-animal connections. Some groups believe that masks and statues collect energy from the dead and serve as "spirit traps" to control spirits for the good of the living. Griots, or oral historians and traditional advisors, are important to the cultural traditions of many groups.

Popular Culture

The Ivorian government owns two daily newspapers, two major radio stations, and the country's two broadcast television channels. Four of the country's radio stations are not under government control and Canal Horizon is a private television subscription service. The main print media are *Fraternite Matin*, the PDCI party newspaper, *Le Jour*, *La Nouvelle Republique*, and *La Voie*.

Cote d'Ivoire has produced several writers of note, including Bernard Dadie, whose novels in English translation include *Climbie* (1971), relating a childhood journey to France, *The Black Cloth*, and *The City Where No One Dies.*

Writer Ake Loba's novel *Kocoumbo* describes his suffering from being uprooted and a time spent in poverty in Paris. Amhadou Kourouma wrote *The Suns of Independence* about a village chief deposed after independence.

Music is an important medium of social expression. It became politicized during Bedie's presidency. Prominent during the 1999 Christmas Eve coup was a reggae beat song by Alpha Blondy entitled, "French Army, get out of here." Many Ivorian popular songs carry an anti-corruption, anti-authoritarian message. An example is a 1999 song called "Dictature," which accused President Bedie of "ruling by dividing, dividing by trickery."

Holidays

Although Cote d'Ivoire obtained its independence on August 7, 1960, the country celebrates its national day on December 7. In addition, all major Christian holidays are official (Christmas, Easter, Ascension Day, Assumption Day, and All Saints Day), as well as New Year's Day. Muslim holidays are also observed in some regions.

Self-Study Questions for Further Exploration

- What are some of the advantages and disadvantages for Cote d'Ivoire as a result of having a large number of diverse ethnic groups?
- In the years since independence, has Cote d'Ivoire developed a national culture?
- What is the role of the French language in the Ivorian culture?
- Has this been a help or a handicap?
- How have Cote d'Ivoire's various ethnic groups and traditional cultures contributed to the national culture?

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SOCIAL ISSUES

Class Structure

Since early in the French colonial period, there has been a marked distinction in Ivorian society between the literate, French-speaking elite, and all other Ivorians. These differences – especially the mastery of the French language – have been a mark of, and prerequisite for, privilege. In traditional times, ethnic groups were ruled by customary heads who followed the matrilineal or patrilineal custom of the particular group. In many ethnic groups, land and other resources were held in common. While some traditional groups maintained formal kingdoms with hierarchical administration, many indigenous groups were governed solely at the village level and maintained only cultural, not political, links with neighboring groups. The advent of a more hierarchical social structure, therefore, parallels the imposition of colonial rule and the establishment of a market economy.

The post-independence period of rapid urbanization in the 1960s-1970s brought about considerable economic and social cleavage. This was apparent especially in cities and towns, and the capital Abidjan. The privileged, urban-dwelling, government officials and heads of private companies received a larger share of national wealth, and the gap widened between them and their compatriots. There was a strong desire to live in cities and towns since their inhabitants enjoyed better government services. There were fewer secondary schools or health clinics in the more distant parts of the country. Since the 1990s, the government has taken steps to improve the provision of government services beyond the main urban centers, and the middle class has been growing.

"Foreigners," which includes both those people born outside Cote d'Ivoire, as well as those whose parents were not born in the country, fall outside Cote d'Ivoire's traditional social structure. This group represents 30% of the country's population, most of whom remain in rural areas performing agricultural work (usually on Ivorian plantations) or inhabit cities and towns where they perform less skilled jobs when employed. There are 3 million "residents of foreign nationality" and 2 million residents of foreign

origin, including migrant workers. Most non-Ivorian Africans face at least some form of social and legal discrimination. There have been attacks on foreigners in the south, something akin to ethnic pogroms, as well as anti-ethnic riots and political demonstrations.

Non-African foreigners, including French and Lebanese, are for the most part temporarily residing in Cote d'Ivoire, do not seek citizenship, and do not encounter active discrimination in Ivorian society. There have, however, been crimes against foreigners and their property, often politically motivated by those calling for Ivorianization of enterprises. Many Ivorians tend to see European residents as economic exploiters.

Family Life

A widely shared characteristic among Cote d'Ivoire's many ethnic groups is respect for family, elderly people in general, and women. The Ivorians are hospitable people, polite, gentle and laid-back. Trust is very important in a relationship. Ivorians feel duty-bound to care for the extended family. This characteristic has seriously strained urban dwellers faced with an influx of relatives from the countryside. In social relations, men shake hands and women kiss each other three times on the cheek, starting with the left cheek. Ivorians consider it impolite to stare at people. While traditional clothing for women includes a head wrap, wearing one is a matter of individual choice in urban areas.

Health and Welfare

Cote d'Ivoire has long had one of the most extensive public health programs in West Africa. In 1960, the average longevity was 39 years. By 1992, it had risen to 53 years for men and 57 years for women. Although there has been a drop in longevity during the past decade as government health budgets suffered, Ivorian longevity is still much higher than the norm for West Africa. Cote d'Ivoire's cities and towns have experienced overcrowding, income disparity has caused a stark contrast between the rich and the poor, and the government has been unable to provide sufficient clean water and sewage services to maintain a healthy environment. There is often malnutrition in rural areas, which also lack sealed water sources, a necessity to prevent parasitic disease. Malnutrition in northern Cote d'Ivoire is among the worst in all of Africa.

Health services, particularly in rural areas, remain inadequate. Common diseases afflicting Ivorians are malaria, hookworm, yaws, and onchocerciasis (river blindness). During the 1990s, AIDS became the leading cause of death. The country's economic difficulties have reduced health budgets, thereby limiting the government's efforts to control these diseases. River blindness, which is particular to West Africa, is caused by a parasite and spread by the black fly. Most of those affected are under 35 years old. Only 40% of households have access to water from a closed pipe which inhibits the spread of the disease. Access to clean water is as important as medicine.

Education

The Ivorian educational system is based on the French model dating from the colonial era. Although public education is free through the university level, the government does not ensure that all children receive education, and it is common for families in rural areas to favor boys over girls. French is the language of instruction throughout the system at all levels and most textbooks are still published in France. There are also Catholic and Muslim schools.

Cote d'Ivoire had an enviable education system during the 1970s. However, due to the country's economic hardships since then, students are required to pay for their educational materials, teachers' salaries have been reduced, and new construction and expansion of schools have halted. Between 1980 and 1992, the percentage of school age children enrolled shrank from 79% to 69%. While 75% boys attend primary school, only 50% of girls do.

Children usually start primary school at age 7 or 8. The schools are often crowded and poorly staffed. Only 20% of primary school graduates continue to secondary schools in towns or cities. Families of students from rural areas must provide housing or pay for boarding at secondary schools. The graduates of secondary schools can become primary school teachers, attend vocational school, or go on to university. The National University of Cote d'Ivoire in Abidjan has 20,000 students, one-half of whom are from other African countries. Some Ivorians attend universities in France, Belgium, Canada and the United States. In the late 1990s, adult education programs emphasized basic literacy and gave priority to women. The goal was to increase the overall literacy rate to 85% by 2010, including 70% of Ivorian women. Currently, the literacy rate is 40%: 50% for males and 30% for females.

Labor Force

Cote d'Ivoire has one of the highest birthrates in the world, 3.8%, and half of the population is under 16 years of age. More than half of the country's population lives in cities and towns. Cote d'Ivoire's labor force is estimated at 5,718,000, with over 85% engaged in agriculture and 11% wage earners. Organized labor accounts for about 20% the wage labor force. Unemployment is high in cities – as much as 25% -- and crime is high. About 15% of Abidjan's residents live in slums. The agricultural sector continues to employ much "foreign" labor. As a group, the 30% of the workforce that is foreign contributes more than half of the country's income.

Self-Study Questions for Further Exploration

- Are social class, ethnic and gender differences becoming more or less important in Ivorian society?
- Are the differences between the village, on the one hand, and the city and town, on the other, growing or diminishing?
- What factors contribute to the high Ivorian birthrate?

- How do government efforts to improve provision of health services and education affect the country's ability to build a modern economy?

- How might the traditional social class structure have affected efforts to build a modern nation and alleviate poverty?

- How do Ivorians square their dislike for "foreigners" with their continuing economic reliance on this labor pool?

ECONOMY

Economic Policy

French colonial policy, which required economic self-sufficiency, helped make Cote d'Ivoire France's most prosperous territory in West Africa by the mid-1950s. The country's economic success was based on agriculture. Underlying the economy and making its performance possible was the French support for the country's currency, the C.F.A. (*Communaute Financiere Africaine*) franc, which was convertible to the French franc (and now the Euro). The French government guaranteed the stability of the franc and established the Central Bank of the West African States to issue currency and control credit for the participating governments. The C.F.A. franc greatly facilitated commercial and financial activities among the countries of the region as well as their international trading partners. At the time of writing, the CFA franc traded at the rate of 791.87=$1.00.

During the first twenty years of independence, Cote d'Ivoire was extolled as a shining economic success story based on its reliance on the "free market" system. At the time, Cote d'Ivoire was one of the few sub-Saharan countries not promoting socialism. And, its success was notable. In fact, Cote d'Ivoire's economy followed a dirigist, state-planned and invested economic model heavily reliant on French direction and assistance. There was considerable government control over the economy, via investment and tax policies. Cote d'Ivoire can be compared to Brazil, not only as an important producer of agricultural commodities, but also as an emergent industrial nation undergoing rapid social as well as economic transformation.

Cote d'Ivoire's agricultural sector provides 80-95% of the country's total exports and is the most important contributor to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). However, the importance of this sector makes the economy heavily dependent on volatile international commodity markets. Since the 1980s, the country's large foreign debt has been hard to manage and led the government to privatize many state enterprises. Nevertheless, Cote d'Ivoire lacked sufficient investment to maintain its high economic growth rate. The economic downturn of the late 1990s demonstrated that the country's widespread prosperity lacked deep roots. Continued availability of foreign investment – especially from the private

sector – and adequate energy sources at stable prices are critical to the country's economic growth in the long-term.

Economic Performance

Ivorian President Houphouet-Boigny's greatest achievement was to make Cote d'Ivoire the wealthiest country in West Africa (per capita). He believed that increasing the agricultural output would make up for the lack of other commercializable resources. Following independence in 1960, the country also spurred development of non-agricultural economic growth in the coastal area near Abidjan. This occurred largely through French private investment and by French technical experts. The government itself was also deeply involved in the economy, not only building infrastructure, but also setting up and managing para-statal enterprises. During the 1960s and 1970s, Ivorians flocked to Abidjan for jobs, thereby increasing the differences between the city and the village.

By end of the 1960s, Cote d'Ivoire had achieved a 50% increase in the production of coffee, cocoa and bananas, and a 200% increase in pineapple production. During the 1960s, the country had an average annual growth rate of 10-12 percent. The Ivorian Caisse de Stabilisation was established to regulate prices for agricultural commodities, to buffer Ivorian producers from the price volatility of the international market, and to make a profit for the government during the good times. The Ivorian government encouraged production of agricultural commodities for export, allowed prices to rise with inflation, welcomed the influx of cheap agricultural labor from neighboring countries, and coddled Ivorian farmers in what would eventually become a heavily debt-laden sector.

However, due to the country's overall high growth rate, agriculture accounted for only one-quarter of the economy by the early 1970s. The discovery of oil in the late 1970s helped diversify and stimulate the economy further. By 1980, per capita income had increased 61% and the country enjoyed a more even distribution of wealth than other African countries. Immigrants from various African countries continued to arrive in Cote d'Ivoire to work in agriculture. Even during this period of strong economic growth, urban populations experienced both unemployment and under-employment, and Europeans continued to dominate the top executive jobs. In addition, there were growing regional disparities.

In the mid-1970s, the government made a major effort to diversify the economy by expanding the production of palm oil, natural rubber, coconut oil, cotton, sugar, and tropical fruits. The Ivorian economic success sustained itself reasonably well through the 1970s, but the overall growth rate dropped precipitously in the following decade.

During the worldwide recession in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the country's economic growth slowed considerably, commodity prices fell internationally, and severe droughts continued to affect Ivorian farmers' yields. The 1973 Sahelian drought especially plagued northern farmers. Desertification resulting from the southward growth of the Sahara, which many believe was hastened by the over-exploitation of forest resources in the country's southern band, continues to worsen economic conditions in the north. The economic slowdown also resulted in rampant unemployment in cities where workers

had previously been lured by economic opportunities. In addition, the country suffered from hyperinflation between 1973 and 1985.

Although Cote d'Ivoire had a 7.2 percent annual growth rate during 1960-81, better than almost any other country during the same period, this was not the result of "economic liberalism." The government was involved in the economy as an owner and manager of agriculture and industry, and as a close regulator of the private sector as well. Since the 1980s, many of the government-invested industries were privatized. During this period, there were calls for the government to Ivorianize the public sector, as well, since many expatriates still held responsible positions in the government and the para-statals. At that time, international coffee and cocoa prices dropped and there were tensions between Ivorian and migrant farmers.

By the late 1980s, even more significant than the fall in international commodity prices was the drying up of foreign and domestic investment needed to sustain economic growth. Offshore petroleum production failed to meet expectations. Meanwhile, the government diverted scarce export income into non-productive investments, such as the immense Catholic basilica in Yamoussoukro. Substantial foreign borrowing increased the country's foreign debt burden and mortgaged its economic future.

In the 1980s, the Ivorian government undertook efforts to stockpile coffee and cocoa in hopes of firming the world market price. This plan failed and caught the government in a position of not being able to repay its foreign loans. The high level of foreign borrowing during the mid-1970s led to debt payment problems. In May 1987, Cote d'Ivoire suspended payments on its foreign debt and held re-scheduling negotiations with the Paris Club, the IMF and the London Club. In the late 1980s, the government undertook a structural adjustment program, putting in place austerity measures, as a result of IMF requirements, but a corruption scandal caused the cutoff of funds from the IMF and other lenders. Furthermore, a decision by the European Union to allow chocolate makers to use less cocoa butter resulted in the potential loss of $1.5 billion in export revenue which caused a reduction in cocoa prices for producers by as much as 20%.

In the run-up to the 1990 election, Laurent Gbagbo's Ivorian Popular Front party called for ivorianizing the public sector and decentralizing municipal governments. President Houphouet-Boigny, however, took a hard line, dissolving unions, closing universities, and arresting the protesters. By the 1990s, there were resentments and frustrations among farmers in northern Cote d'Ivoire, who simultaneously faced the collapse of the world commodity markets, the worsening of their fields due to desertification, apparent corruption, and favoritism to the country's south. Frequent failures of electric power in Abidjan made it impossible for residents to ignore the serious problems in the economy, as well as the implications for continued government rule. The pro-democracy movements in neighboring West African countries, especially Mali and Ghana, also influenced Ivorians in considering changes to their system.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank forced Cote d'Ivoire to agree to a structural adjustment plan as a condition for assistance. The government had to reduce civil service salaries and grants to students. Many Ivorians targeted government officials' corruption as an issue and began to call for an end to one-party rule. Following the 1993 death of President Houphouet-Boigny and during the

first term of his successor, President Henri Konan Bedie, Cote d'Ivoire reached an agreement with the IMF/World Bank to forego 50% of its foreign debt and reschedule the rest as part of a new structural adjustment package, valued $800 million. However, the Fund/Bank also required specific reforms: the end of state-mandated cocoa prices to farmers and the abolition of the state marketing board, the Caisse de Stabilisation.

The Ivorian economy experienced steady growth after 1995 due to French devaluation of the CFA franc, improved cocoa and coffee prices, growth in non-traditional primary exports, limited trade and banking liberalization, offshore oil and gas discoveries as well as external financing and debt rescheduling by multilateral lenders and France. In 1998, the government concluded an enhanced structural adjustment facility (ESAF) with the IMF that resulted in rescheduling a portion of the accumulated debt. The country's $16 billion debt was thereby reduced to $12 billion. Nonetheless, during 1999, approximately 38% of the budget was committed to debt servicing.

When the Ivorian military took over power in January 2000, it canceled Cote d'Ivoire's international debt payments. In March 2001, the World Bank declared Cote d'Ivoire to be in a non-payment status, making it ineligible for new loans and fresh disbursements from the already approved assistance programs. Although the country had achieved a 6% growth rate during 1995-98, by 1999 growth had dropped to 1.6%. In 2000, the country experienced negative growth for the first time, -2.4%.

Following the fall 2000 presidential elections and the establishment of President Laurent Gbagbo's new government in 2001, the World Bank/IMF determined the country had made satisfactory progress towards its economic goals. In March 2002, the Bank/Fund approved a new adjustment program. The Ivorian government recently completed a new Poverty Reduction Strategy Framework in preparation for further donor assistance. Foreign donors have generally agreed to provide broad-based assistance for the environment, especially forestry and national parks, as well as rural development, infrastructure and education. Sustainable growth over the long-term will require the development of a modern labor force, for which universal education is the key, as well as the upgrading of the organizational capabilities of institutions, and dealing conclusively with poverty. Government's ability meet these challenges is a key test of its effectiveness. Economic decisions made in the 1980s and 1990s, which very much limit the options of the current government leaders, continue to dog Cote d'Ivoire.

Agriculture

Cote d'Ivoire's principal resource is its rich, well-watered soil. During the colonial period, especially between 1900-1930, the French established the country's plantation economy, based on coffee and cocoa, bananas and pineapples, which became the chief exports. Pre-independence, most large, commercial plantations were owned by French settlers and farmed by Ivorian *corvee* labor. Generally, Ivorian farmers found difficulty competing with French plantation owners, who received better prices and favorable trade treatment. During World War I, the French relied on Ivorians to produce more cocoa, cotton, rice and rubber destined for the war effort in Europe.

Since independence, Cote d'Ivoire has become the world's largest cocoa producer – one million tons a year, or 40% share of world market. The country is also the leading African producer of coffee -- 175,000 tons annually. The agricultural sector employs more than one-quarter of the population and there are 620,000 cocoa and coffee farmers. At least 20% of coffee, cocoa, rubber and palm oil products are processed in Cote d'Ivoire prior to export. Additional agricultural products are cotton, bananas, rubber, rice, sugar, pineapple, coconut, yams, cassava (which produces tapioca), okra, sweet potatoes, peppers, and plantain bananas. Livestock is restricted to goats and sheep as the incidence of the tsetse fly greatly restricts cattle raising. Despite the country's success in agriculture, Cote d'Ivoire remains one of top 10 food importers in Africa because cultivated land emphasizes commercial cash crops.

Industry

Cote d'Ivoire's main manufacturing industries involve the processing of food and other agricultural materials processing, lumber production, textiles, chemicals, auto assembly, oil refining, and the production of steel containers and aluminum sheets.

Cote d'Ivoire's forest resources, especially the niagou, samba and mahogany trees, were sought after by European cabinetmakers and importers of hardwood plywood. Unfortunately, over-exploitation of the country's forest reserves led to the collapse of the timber industry. What is worse, the excess logging of timer resources also resulted in rapid, unremediated and unremediable deforestation. Although the country's forest resources have been seriously depleted, it still produces the following wood products: plywood, crates, boxes, veneer, cabinets, and furniture.

The country's few extractive industries include the mining of copper, nickel, uranium, and manganese, as well as some diamond production on the Bou tributary of the Bandama River. Oil was discovered in commercializable quantities in 1977. Production began in 1980 and the country currently has an annual output of 2.5 million barrels. In 1990, gold was discovered.

Tourism, which was the most developed in West Africa, fell as a result of political instability in the late 1990s. Since the tourism industry drew on the country's rich cultural heritage as well as its relatively developed infrastructure to facilitate trips to the outlying regions, it is hoped this sector will revive.

Power, Transportation and Communications

Cote d'Ivoire is self-sufficient in electric power and exports power to Ghana, as well. There are two hydroelectric plants, on the Bia and Bandama rivers. There are plans to include Cote d'Ivoire in a five-country regional West African natural gas link up with Nigeria.

During the period of European exploration, Cote d'Ivoire's section of the Gulf of Guinea did not lend itself to trade due to the lack of natural harbors. During 1901-1934, the French constructed wharves at Grand-Bassam to facilitate the export of cash crops. They built the Asagny Canal to connect Grand-Bassam with Abidjan and Grand-Lahou, other key commercial cities. In 1950, the French built the Vridi

canal, which opened up Abidjan to ocean-going ships.

Cote d'Ivoire has a good telecommunications system. There are also two modern ports: Abidjan, one of the busiest in Africa, and San Pedro, in the southwest. The country has excellent national and international air links centered on the Abidjan International Airport at Port-Bouet. Air Afrique was headquartered in Abidjan until its demise in 2002.

Foreign Investment and Trade

Cote d'Ivoire has been a member of the IFC since 1963, and its IFC portfolio totals $115 million, the fourth largest in Africa. Since the mid-1990s, foreign investment has dropped 40%. Cote d'Ivoire's main exports are agricultural commodities, especially coffee and cocoa. In 1995, the country's exports were $3.7 billion, and imports were $2.4 billion. Cote d'Ivoire's main trading partners for exports are the Netherlands, France, Germany, and the United States; for imports, the main trading partners are France, Nigeria, Germany, Italy, and the United States. Imports from the United States include paper products, computer hardware and software, cosmetics, and toiletries.

Because the bulk of Cote d'Ivoire's exports are agricultural commodities, the international terms of trade often go against the country. Doubtless, this fact helped contribute to the balance of payments difficulties the country experienced in the 1980s and 1990s. The devaluation of the CFA franc helped spur exports, which had been held back due to the country's high cost structure. Continued challenges for the government are to lure new foreign direct investment as well as foster the indigenous capital market.

Self-Study Questions for Further Exploration

- What were the most successful economic policies made during the 1960s-1980s?
- Which economic policies during that period were less successful?
- Which sectors are most likely to attract private sector investment?
- Which sectors would benefit the economy the most if public sector spending were increased?
- What is Cote d'Ivoire's current economic policy and what are its prospects for success?
- How can Cote d'Ivoire continue to build a modern economy and society on the basis of the export of agricultural commodities?
- How can Cote d'Ivoire's agricultural plantations continue to depend on "foreign" labor to harvest commodities if that labor force is discriminated against politically and socially?

- What are the prospects for the development of Ivorian industry?

- Will Cote d'Ivoire continue to rely on IMF/World Bank loans or will it be able to attract foreign direct investment and mobilize its internal capital?

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Necklace of West African trade beads from Cote d'Ivoire

POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

Government Structure

The government of Cote d'Ivoire is closely modeled on that of the French Fifth Republic. The 1960 constitution was based on the French constitution of 1958, which provided for a democratic republic with three branches of government. It also bears the strong stamp of first president Houphouet-Boigny's influence. As in the United States, for most of the country's history, the president has simultaneously been head of state, head of government, and commander in chief of the armed forces. Houphouet-Boigny also headed the PDCI, which was the country's only legal political party for most of his rule. Houphouet-Boigny's successor Bedie also headed the PDCI. The current president, Laurent Gbagbo heads his own political party, the PFI.

The constitution called for the president to be elected directly every 5 years. The president was to be assisted by the Council of Ministers and the Economic and Social Council. The councils' purpose was to suggest and vet ideas and laws or programs for the president's consideration.

The 1960 constitution guaranteed freedom, granted equal treatment before the law and permitted no discrimination based on religion, race, gender, or place of birth. People charged with crimes were presumed innocent until proved guilty and had the right to representation by counsel. The right to post bail, however, was not guaranteed, nor were the freedoms of press or assembly.

The legislative branch, the National Assembly, has had 175 deputies since 1985. The deputies are elected for five-year terms at the same time as the president, and they elect their own leader. The function of the deputies is to pass or reject laws proposed by president or other deputies.

The judicial branch comprises the following superior courts: the Supreme Court, which reviews National Assembly laws before they are implemented; the High Court of Justice, which has right to impeach the president and try government officers for crimes in office; and the State Security Court. The judicial branch also oversees various lower courts that try criminal and civil cases. The president appoints all judges.

The constitution of 1960 provided for several layers of local government. The country was divided into 49 prefectures, which were in turn divided into sub prefectures. The prefects and sub prefects were appointed by the national government and normally were not natives of areas they governed. Their purpose was to ensure the proper implementation of laws and provision of government services, such as health care, education, and agricultural assistance to farmers.

The lowest level of local government was villages and cities. The villages could select a leader or chief,

who must then be approved by the prefect and work under the supervision of the sub prefect. Larger cities and towns were permitted municipal councils and mayors. The municipal council was elected by the citizens. The mayors were selected by the council. The Ministry of Interior set guidelines for the selection process as well as the responsibilities of the office holders.

Cote d'Ivoire's legal system was based on French civil law and African customary law. Judicial review was performed in the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court. Cote d'Ivoire has not accepted compulsory jurisdiction by the International Court of Justice.

Houphouet-Boigny's Model

President Houphouet-Boigny was comfortable with the French dirigist model in economics, which requires a strong, centrally driven unitary government with most decision making taking place in the capital by bureaucrats. For the most part, during the period of 1960-90, only PDCI members could be elected to political office, only PDCI publications and media were permitted, and Ivorians did not enjoy freedom of speech or press. The government routinely relied on the army to back up the police in controlling and quashing demonstrations and other forms of public dissent.

The president and the PDCI controlled election to the National Assembly, which became a rubber stamp for the president's preferred policies. The PDCI is organized along the lines of the French Communist Party, which provided technical assistance during the 1940s. However, the PDCI is a mass organization, without restrictions on membership. Prior to the country's independence, the PDCI sought continued association with France in the French Community. The PDCI has been an effective mouthpiece for the elite, and has not been comfortable with democracy or with democratic methods. In its heyday, Houphouet-Boigny maintained autocratic control and enabled the PDCI to remain the country's sole political party for 30 years.

Houphouet-Boigny made effective use of the Ivorian custom of *palaver* (a public discussion of issues involving the leader) to govern. Controversial issues were publicly aired in this environment, which gave all sides a chance to make their positions known. After listening to the debate, the chief executive then made his decision. In most cases, the entire group accepted his decision. Continued public dissent was rare, and usually not permitted by the government. Houphouet-Boigny encouraged farmers and businesspeople to seek positions in local government as well as the national legislature. The president governed through an alliance of Akan-speaking southerners and Muslim northerners.

Fractures in the System

Since the early 1980s, students have protested against the continued role of foreigners in the economy and government, as well as corruption. They also agitated for an end to one party rule. Prior to the election of 1990, other parties were allowed to form and the current president, Laurent Gbagbo, headed a major opposition efforts.

The Post-Houphouet Era

As economic conditions during the 1980s worsened, the perceived slow pace of Ivorization became a political issue among some groups, especially students and urban dwellers. There was a popular call for political choice, but the government was not willing to permit other parties. Economic conditions forced the government to reduce services and freeze wages. Unemployment rose, as did inflation. Attacks against expatriates led to a dropoff of tourism and foreign investment.

Both Ivorians and Cote d'Ivoire's foreign partners, especially France, were concerned about the lack of a clear succession policy and an anointed successor to the president. They also pressed Houphouet-Boigny to legalize other political parties besides the PDCI. In September 1989, Houphouet-Boigny undertook "five days of dialogue" permitting criticism of party and government that called for a multi-party system. Prior to the election in 1990, the president permitted the formation and legalization of other political parties and allowed their candidates to run for office.

After Houphouet-Boigny's seventh election victory in 1990, which followed the government's brutal quelling of frequent demonstrations, he designated fellow Baoule Henri Konan Bedie as the vice president and Muslim northerner Philippe Yace as National Assembly speaker. Under various previous constitutional amendments, the incumbents of one of those positions had been designated as the successor to the president in the event of his inability to govern. In 1990, Houphouet-Boigny had enacted a new constitutional amendment that clearly designated the vice president as his successor.

Politics Under Bedie

President Bedie stressed a policy of Ivorian nationalism known as *Ivoirite*, the overt favoring of citizens whose parents were born in Cote d'Ivoire. Because Bedie gave precedence to members of his Baoule group, politics became defined by ethnicity more than any single other factor. A combination of government corruption, inefficient enterprise management and poor government direction characterized Bedie's term in office.

How the 1999 Coup Changed Politics

Cote d'Ivoire has been changed in many ways since the 1999 Christmas Eve coup. First and foremost is the precedent of a change of government brought about by the military, a first-time occurrence in Ivorian history. Now that the military has demonstrated success in taking over the country, their power can never be discounted by the elected president. This military has, therefore, become a force in politics. This is new for Cote d'Ivoire. Secondly, the country enacted a Second Constitution that enshrines many of the anti-foreign policies that became popular during the 1990s. That is, a significant portion of the inhabitants of the country have been denied the basic political rights of citizens. It remains to be seen whether this can be sustained, especially since these "foreigners" are so important economically. Finally, the coup did bring into the presidency the first "opposition" candidate. However, President Gbagbo governs without the benefit of a clear-cut electoral victory. If he runs in a future presidential election and

wins outright, that would legitimize his administration. However, the nature of future elections is by no means certain, and President Gbagbo's ability to retain sufficient popularity to win one is even more difficult to foresee.

Self-Study Questions for Further Exploration

- How did France's colonial policies affect post-independence governmental organization and functioning?
- How did Houphouet-Boigny's personal background shape him as a political leader?
- Why did Houphouet-Boigny distrust democracy?
- What have been the most important factors affecting the Ivorian political system during the past ten years?
- Has the establishment of a multi-party system spurred the development of democratic institutions?

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Ivorian bronze statue of a king and his courtiers

POLITICAL LEADER PROFILES

FELIX HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY

The future first leader of his country was born on October 18, 1905 in Yamoussoukro, central Cote d'Ivoire. A member of the country's largest ethnic group, the Baoule, Felix Houphouet-Boigny was descended from a line of chiefs. A blend of French and traditional cultures, Houphouet-Boigny became a catholic at age 11 and attended the Ecole William Ponty and the Ecole de Medicine et de Pharmacie in Dakar, Senegal, where he was trained as a *medecin africain*, an African doctor. While in Dakar, Houphouet-Boigny became acquainted with the future political elite of West Africa.

Houphouet-Boigny's early career, during 1925-40, involved serving as a rural doctor and running a coffee plantation in Cote d'Ivoire. He married a woman related to the Agni kings and in 1940 he inherited extensive coffee plantations near Yamoussoukro, whose output he expanded with modern techniques to include cocoa production. After being appointed Baoule chief for that area, he formed the Association of Customary Chiefs, and he eventually became associated with international Marxist organizations. In 1944, Houphouet-Boigny helped found the African Agricultural Union, representing 20,000 African planters, laborers, civil servants, and traders, to counter existing colonial policy favoring French plantation owners. Since that year, Houphouet-Boigny was his country's most prominent politician.

His list of accomplishments is vast:

In 1945 he got the French to abolish *corvee* forced labor on plantations;

He formed the *Parti Democratique de la Cote d'Ivoire* (PDCI), which was to remain the country's sole or main political party until 1999;

In 1945 and 1946 he was elected to the French National Assembly, where he affiliated with the Communist Party;

In 1950 he broke with the Communists and began cooperation with the French;

He made the PDCI part of the *Rassemblement Democratique Africain* (African Democratic Rally), in the pre-independence period a political force throughout French West Africa;

In 1956 he was appointed as a minister of state in the French government and became mayor of Abidjan;

In 1957 he was elected president of the Grand Council of French West Africa in Senegal and speaker of the Territorial Assembly of Cote d'Ivoire;

In 1958 he served as Minister of Health in Paris and he campaigned for self-government within the French Community;

In 1959 he became prime minister of Cote d'Ivoire; and

In 1960 he was elected the first president of Cote d'Ivoire.

To his credit, during his years in office, Houphouet-Boigny maintained Cote d'Ivoire on a western-oriented course. His charismatic personality enabled him to do much, and kept the taint of scandal and corruption from sticking to him. He governed by hard charm and effectively managed a personality cult. He assiduously co-opted political rivals and periodically granted amnesty to political prisoners as well as those in prison for less violent crimes.

After only a few years in office, he was already respectfully known as *Le Vieux*, the "old man." From start to finish, his main political base was his fellow African planters. Houphouet-Boigny encouraged the commercial production and export of coffee and cocoa. He made many trips to the United States, which he admired, and met with eight U.S. presidents.

In the 1960s, Houphouet-Boigny introduced the policy of Ivorization, i.e., replacement by educated Ivorians of French or other expatriate government officials and professionals, teachers, technicians, and managers. Widely hailed during the 1960s and 1970s for managing the "Ivorian miracle," towards the end of his career, Houphouet-Boigny became increasingly unresponsive to the call for political reform, refusing to give up power or to facilitate the succession. During his seventh term as president, he died in

office on December 7, 1993, after a six-month struggle with prostate cancer. His ultimate legacy was to leave his country in the hands of status quo cronies tarnished by corruption and uninterested in democracy.

HENRI KONAN BEDIE

A Baoule and a Christian like Houphouet-Boigny, Bedie is a second-generation politician and a technocrat. He was born in Dadiekro in Central Cote d'Ivoire in 1934, and was educated both in Cote d'Ivoire and France, where he received a doctorate in economics at the University of Poitiers. In 1960 he entered the French colonial service and served as diplomatic counselor at the French Embassy in Washington. Subsequently, he was the first Ivorian Ambassador to the United States for six years. In 1966 he was named Minister Delegate for Financial Affairs, and thereafter was promoted to Minister of Economy and Finance, serving concurrently as governor of the IMF and administrator for the World Bank.

In 1977 Bedie was dismissed from the ministry after the bankruptcy of some state-owned sugar factories. He then became special advisor on African affairs to the president of the International Finance Corporation of the World Bank in Washington. In 1980 he returned to Cote d'Ivoire and was elected president of the National Assembly. During the 1980s, he received support from the younger generation of politicians, except those who favored closer ties with the United States and Germany. As the leader of the National Assembly at the time of Houphouet-Boigny's death, Bedie constitutionally succeeded him as president.

Less self-confident and politically skilled than Houphouet-Boigny, Bedie overtly favored members of the Baoule ethnic group and pushed an exclusionist policy, especially against those born outside Cote d'Ivoire, and aimed primarily at keeping potential rival Alassane Ouattara from holding elected office. Despite successively draconian measures that significantly curtailed civil rights and led to human rights abuses, Bedie was unable to contain the resentments of northerners and others, especially as the economy tanked in the late 1990s. In 1996 he devised a new interpretation of *Ivoirite*, Ivorian identity, separating the population into "pure Ivorians" and "circumstantial Ivorians," i.e., immigrants and their descendants. These policies, which some Ivorian intellectuals labeled "neo-fascist," restricted the civil rights of people whose forebears were not born in Cote d'Ivoire, and resulted in the social as well as political stigmatization of "foreigners." Bedie also ensured that strict nationality rules were enacted in the Ivorian Electoral Code. However popular such policies might have been with Ivorians, the public perception of government corruption and inept economic management resulted in the December 1999 military coup and government takeover by General Robert Guei, and Bedie's subsequent flight to Togo and then France. Bedie's legacy was ethnic polarization, xenophobia, and economic bankruptcy.

ALASSANE DRAMANE OUATTARA

Ouattara, a Muslim, was born in 1942 in Dimbokro in northern Cote d'Ivoire to parents who had immigrated from modern-day Burkina Faso. He studied at the Drexel Institute of Technology in

Philadelphia, and received a M.A. and a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Pennsylvania. A technocrat, Ouattara served his country in many capacities, both inside and outside government. President Houphouet-Boigny, who recognized his capability, named him prime minister. He thus became Henri Konan Bedie's chief political rival.

Ironically, Ouattara laid the foundations for the country's ethnic polarization while prime minister by introducing national Identity cards. The emphasis on the birthplace of Ivorian residents and their parents became his political undoing. In 1994, he founded the Democratic Rally of Republicans (RDR) and remains its leader. In that year, he accepted the appointment of IMF deputy director. In 1995, new electoral rules prevented him from running for president. He also served in several positions at the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO), including as governor. In April 1998, Ouattara announced he would again seek election in Cote d'Ivoire, even if it required a court case to test his eligibility. However, President Bedie successfully manipulated anti-northerner sentiments among southerners and thereby mobilized public opinion against Ouattara. Changes in the 2000 Second Republic constitution, and supreme court decisions, effectively bar Ouattara from elective office in Cote d'Ivoire.

Despite what appears to be an end to his political aspirations, Ouattara remains the single credible opposition leader in Cote d'Ivoire. Although Ouattara can count on a substantial following among Muslims in general and fellow northerners in particular, he is shunned by the nationalists, including traditional PDCI supporters and members of other parties prominent in the south and west.

GENERAL ROBERT GUEI

General Guei, born in 1941, is a member of the Yakouba (Guere) ethnic group in western Cote d'Ivoire, which is related to the Gio group of Liberian President Charles Taylor. There may have been a political relationship between General Guei and President Taylor. He was a French-trained career officer. Under President Houphouet-Boigny, he served as army chief of staff and led Ivorian troops against students at the University of Abidjan to quell demonstrations in 1991. He refused a similar order in 1995 from President Bedie and retired to his plantation leading to rumors he was planning a coup. Although he criticized Bedie for playing ethnic politics, Guei nevertheless supported Bedie's nationalist and anti-foreign policy of *Ivoirite*. Bedie demoted Guei, and then kicked him out of government in 1997, because of the coup rumors. Nicknamed "Le Boss" by his military colleagues, he was long considered a political enemy of Bedie.

When disgruntled soldiers demanding back pay successfully engineered the 1999 Christmas Eve coup, General Guei accepted their appeal to serve as interim leader. He headed the National Committee of Public Salvation comprised of nine senior military officers. During his ten months in power, he stopped Cote d'Ivoire's international debt payments, reassured the international community he would support a return to democracy, held a convention to draft a decidedly anti-foreign Ivorian constitution, and then decided to run for president, despite earlier assurances he had no such ambitions. The latter decision resulted in prolonged student riots.

Although Guei personally welcomed Ouattara on his return to Cote d'Ivoire following the coup, Guei nevertheless backed constitutional changes that barred Ouattara from seeking elective office. Guei himself was denied support by his own party, the PDCI, which boycotted the elections along with Ouattara's RDR. Although Gbagbo won the November 2000 vote, Guei claimed victory, and then fled to Liberia in the wake of widespread opposition-led demonstrations and lack of army support. Although there is little popular support for the military, it continues to be feared, and has become a necessary linchpin of the current president's rule. There continue to be popular concerns voiced about General Guei's relationship with Liberian President Taylor.

LAURENT GBAGBO

Cote d'Ivoire's current president, and the first president of the Second Republic, Laurent Gbagbo is a member of the Bete community, a rival group to Houphouet-Boigny's Baoule. Born in 1945 in the central-western city of Gagnoa, he was a political activist during his student days and spent 1971-73 in prison. He met his wife Simone Ehivet in the mid-1970s. They are both committed socialist activists. Gbago was a young history professor during the 1982 anti-government protest by students at the National University of Cote d'Ivoire. Following the demonstration, Gbagbo sought voluntary exile in France.

At the time, Gbagbo signified a paradigm shift in Ivorian politics. Labeled a "youthful firebrand," he was the only politician of note to publicly challenge President Houphouet-Boigny and he refused to be co-opted. Gbagbo spoke out in favor of a multiparty political system and real democracy and he sought to fight against the "dictatorship of the PDCI." He returned to Cote d'Ivoire in 1988 to help found the Ivorian Popular Front (*Front Populaire Ivoirien* – FPI). As the PFI candidate for president, Gbagbo was beaten by Houphouet-Boigny in 1990, although he received a respectable 18% of the votes. Following student demonstrations in the early 1990s, Gbagbo was jailed again in 1992. As a member of the National Assembly in the mid-1990s, Gbagbo allied with the PDCI in support of a revision of the electoral code to prohibit "foreigners" from seeking office. The alliance was short-lived and both the FPI and Ouattara's RDR boycotted the polls, thereby throwing the presidency to Bedie in 1995.

Although Gbagbo made a favorable showing in the November 2000 presidential election, General Guei claimed victory. However, when the army refused to support him against popular opposition, General Guei fled the country and Gbagbo became president by default. Since Gbagbo refused to hold new elections, his succession to the presidency was won at the cost of legitimacy. Gbagbo's challenge is to govern a country badly riven by ethnic and anti-foreign tensions, and with severe economic strains as well. Time will tell whether he will be true to the democratic ideals he once espoused.

Detail of bronze statue of Ivorian king

NATIONAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN POLICY

Overview

Since independence in 1960, France continued to maintain close relations with Cote d'Ivoire. Indeed, for the first decade, many French administrators remained in place, both in government and business. Cote d'Ivoire drafted a rational and achievable economic development plan that it proceeded to implement. Ever since then, France has maintained considerable economic and political influence. At the time of independence, Cote d'Ivoire faced enmity or strained relations with neighbors Guinea, Mali and Ghana. Therefore, Houphouet-Boigny insisted that France maintain a battalion of marines near Abidjan to buttress his own military.

Under Houphouet-Boigny, Cote d'Ivoire established a tradition of freethinking in foreign policy. It was not afraid to go against the trend of other African countries. Cote d'Ivoire was one of the few African countries with a significant Muslim population to establish relations with Israel. It was one of the last countries in Africa to shift recognition from Taiwan to the People's Republic of China, and Cote d'Ivoire established a dialogue with apartheid South Africa in the 1970s, an almost unprecedented policy move.

Prior to 1989, Cote d'Ivoire was extremely careful in its dealings with communist countries. Since that year, it has unhesitatingly fostered relations with Russia and Eastern European countries.

Although Cote d'Ivoire has generally been responsive to western countries' interests and concerns, and has played a role in support of West African peacekeeping operations, it has nevertheless maintained a complex relationship with Liberia.

Relations with African Countries

Prior to independence in 1960, Houphouet-Boigny and other Ivorian leaders were actively involved in various political movements affecting all of West Africa. In 1959, Houphouet-Boigny founded the Council of the Entente, a grouping of Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Benin and Niger (and which now includes Togo), to foster continued ties to France and French economic aid. Cote d'Ivoire was a founding member of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and in the 1970s, it joined ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States, which has the dual roles of ensuring peace and stability and encouraging trade among member states. Cote d'Ivoire has supported ECOWAS's efforts to maintain a regional military force for peacekeeping.

Cote d'Ivoire's independent line on foreign policy sometimes created problems with neighbors. During the 1966-71 Nigerian civil war, Cote d'Ivoire backed Biafran independence, one of only four African countries to do so. During the 1970s, Cote d'Ivoire maintained a dialogue with the white South African government and opened trade ties during the period of apartheid. Cote d'Ivoire was one of very few African countries, and only one outside of southern Africa, to do so.

Cote d'Ivoire's relations with Liberia, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Guinea have worsened or improved, depending on the policies those governments were implementing at the time. Since the 1970s, Cote d'Ivoire sought to improve its relations with West African countries. Nevertheless, Cote d'Ivoire is considered to have been involved in the internal politics of Burkina Faso and to have helped overthrow President Thomas Sankara. In 1985, Houphouet-Boigny negotiated peace between Mali and Burkina Faso over a boundary dispute. In 1989, Cote d'Ivoire became involved in the Liberian civil war. Charles Taylor, the Liberian rebel leader at the time and currently Liberia's president, amassed his forces and entered Liberia from Ivorian territory. There were allegations at the time that Cote d'Ivoire helped him obtain weapons. In 1991, Houphouet-Boigny hosted a peace conference in Yamoussoukro between Taylor and the then Liberian government.

Cote d'Ivoire has a history of maintaining a dialogue between francophone and anglophone countries of West Africa and attempting to mediate conflicts in other parts of Africa. Following the death of President Houphouet-Boigny, President Bedie continued this tradition. In 1997, Bedie met with Angolan opposition leader Jonas Savimbi to further the peace process. In 1998, Bedie visited South Africa at the invitation of Nelson Mandela to consolidate trade and economic relations.

Relations with France

Cote d'Ivoire's closest and most consistent foreign ties have been maintained with France, especially in the area of security. France is the country's most important trading partner, and has continued to favor Cote d'Ivoire with technical and financial assistance. France also sought to support its significant private sector investment in the country. France trained Ivorian troops and in 1970, French troops helped put down an uprising in the Bete region near Gagnoa. Houphouet-Boigny was able to co-opt the rebels by paying them high salaries in government and PDCI positions, as well as by securing advanced equipment provided by France. Despite the overwhelming importance of the country's relations with France, Cote d'Ivoire sought to diversify its dependence on France by welcoming cooperative relations with other European countries as well as the United States.

Since Houphouet-Boigny's death, and especially since the mid-1990s, the French have changed their approach to the former colonies. There has been a tendency to be much less directly involved in the countries' politics or economy. The French devalued the CFA franc, decreased their financial support and foreign assistance to governments, and encouraged multilateral assistance from the IMF and World Bank, rather than continued bilateral support. Cote d'Ivoire was one of the few countries to have benefited from the devaluation of the CFA franc. The fact that France did not act to quell the 1999 coup demonstrates the extent of the change in its policy toward its client, despite the 20,000 French citizens residing in Cote d'Ivoire at the time and the continued military presence of 550 soldiers.

Relations with Communist Countries

Cote d'Ivoire sought to maintain friendly, but standoffish, relations with the major communist states. This policy resulted from President Houphouet-Boigny's personal experience with the French Communist Party in the 1940s, with the various communist study groups formed in West Africa in the 1950s, and with his concern about socialist influence from his left-leaning neighbors, Guinea and Mali, in the 1960s. Cote d'Ivoire was one of the few West African countries to develop a market-based economy. Therefore, ideologically, it was at odds with communism. The country's officials were also concerned about pressure that the Soviet Union and its satellites might seek to exert on the country's foreign policy, including its votes in the United Nations. Thus, in the early 1960s, Cote d'Ivoire refused development assistance from any communist country.

In the 1980s, Cote d'Ivoire was one of the last African countries to switch diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to the People's Republic of China. And after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of communism in Eastern Europe, Cote d'Ivoire established friendly relations with their successor states.

Relations with Other Countries and the United Nations

In the 1960s, Cote d'Ivoire established diplomatic relations with Israel, but under pressure from other African governments, broke relations in 1973. Israel provided much useful development assistance at the level of the village. Cote d'Ivoire resumed diplomatic relations in 1986 and has maintained them ever since. Cote d'Ivoire has close diplomatic ties with other major commodity producers, especially Brazil

and Malaysia. As has been true for all African countries, the United Nations has played an important role in Cote d'Ivoire, especially as an advisor on economic development.

Relations with the United States

Since independence, Cote d'Ivoire has maintained a close relationship with the United States. Several Ivorian leaders and government officials have lived or studied in the United States and there has been an active cultural exchange program between the two countries. The United States has provided development assistance for energy, health care and micro-credit programs. There have been very few periods of strain, with the December 1999 coup and its aftermath under General Robert Guei being the most recent.

Foreign Relations of the Gbagbo Government

As a result of the post-coup reconciliation forum and the conclusion of the Yamoussoukro Communique, Cote d'Ivoire has improved relations with the European Union, France, the United States and other African countries, and foreign donors have resumed their assistance to Cote d'Ivoire.

Self-Study Questions for Further Exploration

- Why have France and Cote d'Ivoire desired to maintain close relations?
- How is their relationship changing?
- To what extent has the common French language facilitated, and the different English language made more difficult, establishment of good working relationships with Cote d'Ivoire's neighbors?
- What are Cote d'Ivoire's assets in the conduct of foreign policy? What factors work against Cote d'Ivoire?
- Can Cote d'Ivoire continue to play a useful diplomatic and security role in its region?

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Ivory Necklace and Bracelet from Cote d'Ivoire

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- www.usembassy.state.gov/Abidjan

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- http://cweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/citoc.html

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- Travel.dk.com/wdr/ci/mci_poli.htm

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- www.afrika.no

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- www.allafrica.com

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