



COMMUNIQUE
MINISTERIAL MISSION ON PREVENTIVE
DIPLOMACY
TO THE REPUBLIC OF COTE D'IVOIRE


1. As a follow up to a recent joint Mission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN) from 4th to 7th October 2020, an ECOWAS ministerial mission on preventive diplomacy visited the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire from 17th to 19th October 2020, as part of efforts by the ECOWAS to promoting an inclusive, credible, transparent and peaceful presidential election in the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire.


2. The previous joint mission mentioned above had, among others, made the following recommendations:
 - The Joint Mission encouraged IEC to continue meetings with the various candidates to find solutions to the outstanding issues.

 - The Joint Mission urged all stakeholders to promote dialogue and to commit themselves to the organization and holding of a credible, transparent, and inclusive election, respectful of human rights and taking into account the preventive measures related to the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic.

 - It encouraged them to secure the electoral process as well as the protection of the physical safety of candidates and their supporters before, during and after the election of 31st October 2020. Lastly, it urged them to review and comply with the existing Code of Good Conduct for Political Parties, Political Forces and Election Candidates, in order to foster the creation of an environment conducive to the holding of a democratic election, a guarantee of peace, national cohesion and development of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire.



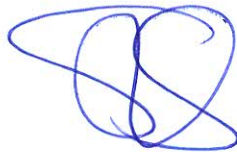
3. The purpose of this Ministerial mission was to further engage key stakeholders in the election process, particularly the presidential candidates, to ensure inclusiveness, transparency and credibility in the process in order to maintain the peace and stability before, during and after the scheduled presidential election.
4. H.E. Shirley Ayorkor **BOTCHWEY**, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of the Republic of Ghana and Chairperson of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers led the Mission. She was accompanied by General Francis A. **BEHANZIN**, ECOWAS Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security.
5. The Mission paid a courtesy call on His Excellency Alassane Dramane OUATTARA, President of the Republic. In welcoming the mission, President OUATTARA expressed his gratitude to ECOWAS for accompanying the electoral process and reiterated his commitment towards the promotion of peace and stability in Cote d'Ivoire and the conduct of an inclusive, peaceful and transparent presidential election.
6. The Mission held consultations with key stakeholders, including the Prime Minister, Mr. Hamed BAKAYOKO, former President Henri Konan BEDIE, Mr. Pascal Affi N'GUESSAN and Mr. Bertin Kouadjo KONAN. In addition, the Mission met with the informal group of **A**mbassadors accredited to Côte d'Ivoire, which included Ambassadors of the Permanent Members of the UN Security Council.
7. The mission noted the persistence of differences relating to the electoral process, including the complaints by the Democratic Party of Ivory Coast (PDCI) and the Ivorian Popular Front party (FPI) about the weak representation of the opposition political parties within the Independent Electoral Commission (C.E.I.) 

8. The Mission observed continued mistrust of the candidates and political actors to undertake constructive dialogue initiatives for a lasting solution to their differences on the current electoral process. To this end, the mission urged the candidates to focus on realistic issues that should help resolve their differences with a view to having an inclusive, transparent credible and violent-free presidential election.
9. The Mission admonished the candidates for the presidential elections and the political parties to deploy hard efforts to move from their intractable position in order to reach agreement on the election.
10. The Mission reiterated its call on the IEC to continue meetings with the various candidates to find solutions to the outstanding issues.
11. The Mission urged the Presidential Candidates of the PDCI and the FPI to carefully consider the decision to boycott the election and the call on their supporters to embark on civil disobedience in protest against the electoral process but rather work harder towards reaching consensus on the electoral process since they may not be able to control the excesses that would arise out of their call for civil disobedience.
12. The Mission strongly condemned the recent acts of violence and further urged the parties to exercise maximum restraint.
13. The Mission also urged the authorities to encourage the security forces to continue to remain neutral, show impartiality and professionalism in the discharge of their duties. Similarly, the mission called on all the candidates and their supporters to exhibit tolerance and to avoid the use of hate and inflammatory speeches which could lead to violence, for which perpetrators would be held liable either individually or collectively for their actions. 

14. The Mission assured the Ivorian authorities and stakeholders of the continued support of ECOWAS in accompanying the electoral process and in ensuring the maintenance of peace and stability that the country has been enjoying.
15. The Mission expressed its gratitude to the Ivorian authorities for the warm and fraternal welcome and for all the facilities made available during the stay of the mission.

Done at Abidjan, this 19th October 2020

THE ECOWAS MINISTERIAL MISSION

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and curves, positioned below the text 'THE ECOWAS MINISTERIAL MISSION'.