

# CORI

Country of origin research and information

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## ***CORI Research Analysis***

**Date:** 17 August 2016 (COI up to date 02 August 2016)

**Country:** Côte d'Ivoire

**Ref:** IVO0816

**Research focused on French language sources**

**Issues:** **The treatment of Ivorian Popular Front (FPI)/Gbagbo supporters in Côte d'Ivoire by both state and non-state actors; incidents of arrests and/or violence against FPI/Gbagbo supporters in Côte d'Ivoire; the willingness and ability of the State to protect FPI/Gbagbo supporters in Côte d'Ivoire**

*CORI research analyses are prepared on the basis of publicly available information studies and commentaries and produced within a specified time frame. All sources are cited and fully referenced. Every effort has been taken to ensure accuracy and comprehensive coverage of the research issue however as Country of Origin Information (COI) is reliant on publicly available documentation there may be instances where the required information is not available. Research focused on events, which occurred between June 2014 to June 2016. The analyses are not and do not purport to be either exhaustive with regard to conditions in the country surveyed or conclusive as to the merits of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read the full text of each document referred to using the URL provided in the footnote.*

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## 1) The treatment of FPI/Gbagbo supporters in Côte d'Ivoire by state actors

**Note on terminology used:** There are references in the text to 'supporters of former President Gbagbo/ FPI supporters / political opposition members/ opposition activists. The terminology used is the exact translation from French used by the sources consulted. The sources consulted did not appear to refer to any other opposition party than the FPI. Although there were references found as to a split in the FPI, the research focused on the general query of the treatment of all FPI members. In addition, sources did not detail whether FPI supporters were also Gbagbo supporters or supporters of the new leader of the FPI

### 1.1 Incidents of arrests and/or violence against FPI/Gbagbo supporters by state actors

In an interview with CORI in July 2016, *Professor Benjamin Lawrance*<sup>1</sup>, Conable Chair in International and Global Studies at Rochester Institute of Technology stated,

“Evidence suggests that Gbagbo supporters are still targeted by government agents. New reports suggest that some of those at risk are Gbagbo supporters, but not FPI members, rather members of the Student Federation of Côte d'Ivoire (FESCI), the student/youth wing, active on university campuses, particularly in Abidjan.”<sup>2</sup>

In an interview with CORI in July 2016, *Suzanne Dominique Djadja*, Permanent Secretary at LIDHO, reported that on 4 May 2015, Professor Hubert Oulaye and Professor Sébastien Dano Djédjé, respectively president of the control committee and president of the congress of the FPI in Mama, and Justin Koua, FPI youth mobiliser were arrested for planning a FPI meeting in Mama.<sup>3</sup> *Suzanne Dominique Djadja* stated that the meeting had not been authorised, according to a legal decision.<sup>4</sup>

In February 2016 *Fondation Hirondelle*, an NGO of journalists and humanitarian professionals, reported the Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) is split between Aboudramane Sangaré, representing the hardline faction calling for the release of Laurent Gbagbo and other detained FPI supporters and Pascal Affi Nguessan, FPI president.<sup>5</sup>

Reporting in February 2016, according to *Amnesty International* in May 2015,

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<sup>1</sup> Professor Benjamin Lawrance is Conable Chair in International and Global Studies at Rochester Institute of Technology. Professor Lawrance is a legal consultant on the contemporary political, social and cultural climate in West Africa. He has served as an expert witness for over two hundred and ninety asylum claims of West Africans in the U.S., Canada, the U.K, the Netherlands, Israel, and many other countries, and his opinions have featured in appellate rulings in the U.S. and the U.K. He volunteers as a country conditions expert for Amnesty International USA. For further information see <https://www.rit.edu/cla/socanthro/benjamin-n-lawrance>

<sup>2</sup> CORI Interview with Professor Benjamin Lawrance, conducted via written correspondence in response to written questions, 14 July 2016

<sup>3</sup> Note: No detail was given as to the structure of the FPI political party in the interview. The 'control committee' [of the FPI in Mama] is a translation of "Comité de Contrôle ... du FPI a Mama". Amnesty International describes the three FPI opponents arrested as "high ranking members of the FPI" (cadres du FPI) ; Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d'Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html>

CORI Interview with Suzanne Dominique Djadja, Permanent Secretary at LIDHO for the past six years, conducted via written correspondence in response to written questions, 26 July 2016

<sup>4</sup> Note: No further detail was given in the interview as to the legal decision referred to. No information was found on publicly available sources in French as to this specific legal decision; CORI Interview with Suzanne Dominique Djadja, Permanent Secretary at LIDHO for the past six years, conducted via written correspondence in response to written questions, 26 July 2016

<sup>5</sup> Fondation Hirondelle, Le procès Gbagbo réveille les divisions en Côte d'Ivoire, 23 February 2016, <http://www.hirondelle.org/index.php/fr/rss/192-fondation-hirondelle/operations/justiceinfo-net/actualite/1239-justiceinfo-net-le-proces-qbagbo-reveille-les-divisions-en-cote-d-ivoire>

“Sébastien Dano Djédjé, Justin Koua and Hubert Oulaye, high-ranking members of the FPI, were arrested. They had organized a ceremony to inaugurate Laurent Gbagbo as FPI President in Mama, his home town. Sébastien Dano Djédjé and Justin Koua were charged with violation of a court order, violence and assault on security forces, rebellion and public disorder. Hubert Oulaye was charged with killing UNOCI [UN Operation in Côte d’Ivoire] soldiers in 2012. The arresting officers allegedly beat Hubert Oulaye’s 15-year-old granddaughter, who was suffering from malaria, at his home.”<sup>6</sup>

According to *Amnesty International* Sébastien Dano Djédjé was provisionally released and Justin Koua and Hubert Oulaye were detained pending trial in December 2015.<sup>7</sup>

According to *Le Monde* in January 2016, 32 pro-FPI individuals were arrested between January 2014 and December 2015 following attacks against army posts in Grabo in western Côte d’Ivoire.<sup>8</sup> *Le Monde* further reported a further 31 protesters who participated in an unauthorized opposition demonstration were arrested for disturbing public order on 19 September 2015, and 27 others are detained on similar charges.<sup>9</sup>

According to the *US Department of State* and *Amnesty International* Joseph Gnanhoua Titia a journalist with a pro-Gbagbo daily newspaper, *Aujourd’hui*, was arrested and placed in pre-trial detention charged with publishing false news and insulting the President in July 2015; he had claimed that President Ouattara was involved in illicit transfers of funds, money laundering, and misappropriation of development aid.<sup>10</sup> The *US Department of State* and *Amnesty International* reported the journalist was released after six days and the charges against him were dropped.<sup>11</sup>

In February 2016 *Amnesty International* reported that in September 2015, political opponent

“Samba David’s house was ransacked and he was beaten with rifle butts. He was held incommunicado for two days without access to a lawyer or medical treatment.

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<sup>6</sup> Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d’Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html>; Amnesty International, Côte d’Ivoire. L’arrestation d’opposants à l’approche de la présidentielle envoie un signal préoccupant, 7 May 2015, <https://www.amnesty.org/fr/latest/news/2015/05/cote-d-ivoire-l-arrestation-d-opposants-a-l-approche-de-la-presidentielle-envoie-un-signal-preoccupant/>

<sup>7</sup> Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d’Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html>; Amnesty International, Côte d’Ivoire. L’arrestation d’opposants à l’approche de la présidentielle envoie un signal préoccupant, 7 May 2015, <https://www.amnesty.org/fr/latest/news/2015/05/cote-d-ivoire-l-arrestation-d-opposants-a-l-approche-de-la-presidentielle-envoie-un-signal-preoccupant/>

<sup>8</sup> *Le Monde*, Qui sont les 300 prisonniers politiques de Côte d’Ivoire?, 28 January 2016, <http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2016/01/28/qui-sont-les-300-prisonniers-politiques-de-cote-d-ivoire>

<sup>9</sup> Note: Regarding the 27 detained, the article did not state that they participated in an unauthorized demonstration, only that the 27 were detained on charges similar to the 31 referred to in the previous sentence in the paragraph, that is “disturbing public order”. The article did not give a date of arrest for the 27, only that, at the time of the writing of the article (28 January 2016), 27 others were detained on such charges. There is no detail as to whether the 27 were arrested at the same date or same place; *Le Monde*, Qui sont les 300 prisonniers politiques de Côte d’Ivoire?, 28 January 2016, <http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2016/01/28/qui-sont-les-300-prisonniers-politiques-de-cote-d-ivoire>

<sup>10</sup> United States Department of State, 2015 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - Côte d’Ivoire, 13 April 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5716128015.html>; Amnesty International, Annual Report 2015/2016, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/afrika/cote-d-ivoire/report-cote-divoire/>

<sup>11</sup> United States Department of State, 2015 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - Côte d’Ivoire, 13 April 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5716128015.html>; Amnesty International, Annual Report 2015/2016, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/afrika/cote-d-ivoire/report-cote-divoire/>

He was charged with public disorder, violation of a court order and complicity in the destruction of property and sentenced to six months' imprisonment."<sup>12</sup>

In April 2016 *Fondation Hirondelle* reported that despite having served his sentence by 17 March 2016, Samba David was still in prison on 13 April 2016.<sup>13</sup>

In an interview with CORI in July 2016, *Professor Benjamin Lawrance*, Conable Chair in International and Global Studies at Rochester Institute of Technology stated,

“the youth wing of the opposition group, the National Coalition for Change (CNC), organised anti-Ouattara demonstrations on October 1 in Abidjan, Gagnoa, Bayota, and Logouta (west), and Bonoua (east). According to the group, two were killed and a dozen arrested (this has not been corroborated). And on 9 June, CNC-led protests led to between one and four deaths. The government threatened to prosecute those who organized an illegal protest.”<sup>14</sup>

In October 2015 *Human Rights Watch*, *FIDH* and 13 other *NGOs from Côte d'Ivoire* reported there were clashes in June and September 2015 between ruling party and opposition activists, particularly supporters of the former president, Laurent Gbagbo, during which at least three people were killed and dozens injured.<sup>15</sup> The 15 organisations state that arrests took place on 9 September after the security forces dispersed demonstrators in Abidjan and other places<sup>16</sup> inside the country; further arrests took place on 26 September after a demonstration was banned in Abidjan, and at least 51 individuals, mostly supporters and members of the political opposition, including four minors, were detained in total.<sup>17</sup>

According to *Amnesty International*, during the year 2015,

“[T]he authorities banned at least 10 protest marches organized by NGOs and the main opposition party. Tear gas and batons were used to disperse protesters. At least 80 people were arrested in different parts of the country and charged with public disorder, and at the end of 2015, they were still in detention awaiting trial.”<sup>18</sup>

According to *UNOCI*, the authorities banned or dispersed 19 meetings and demonstrations by civil society and the political opposition in 2015, including trade unions and students' associations.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d'Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html>

<sup>13</sup> Fondation Hirondelle, Côte d'Ivoire : les prisonniers du nouveau régime, 13 April 2016, <http://www.hirondelle.org/index.php/fr/rss/192-fondation-hirondelle/operations/justiceinfo-net/actualite/1397-justiceinfo-net-cote-d-ivoire-les-prisonniers-du-nouveau-regime>

<sup>14</sup> CORI Interview with Professor Benjamin Lawrance, conducted via written correspondence in response to written questions, 14 July 2016

<sup>15</sup> FIDH, Côte d'Ivoire : Garantir une élection apaisée et respectueuse des droits humains, 21 October 2015, <https://www.fidh.org/fr/regions/afrique/cote-d-ivoire/cote-d-ivoire-garantir-une-election-apaisee-et-respectueuse-des>

<sup>16</sup> Note : No detail as to which places, other than “some towns inside the country”

<sup>17</sup> FIDH, Côte d'Ivoire : Garantir une élection apaisée et respectueuse des droits humains, 21 October 2015, <https://www.fidh.org/fr/regions/afrique/cote-d-ivoire/cote-d-ivoire-garantir-une-election-apaisee-et-respectueuse-des>

<sup>18</sup> Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d'Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html>

<sup>19</sup> Trente-septième rapport du Secrétaire général sur l'Opération des Nations Unies en Côte d'Ivoire, December 2015, [http://www.un.org/fr/documents/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2015/940](http://www.un.org/fr/documents/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2015/940)

In April 2016 *Mouvement Ivoirien des Droits Humains (MIDH)*, an Ivorian human rights NGO, reported that there were further clashes at the Félix Houphouët-Boigny University in Abidjan in April 2016, following a strike by Fesci members.<sup>20</sup> MIDH stated that on the evening of 13 April, police used excessive, disproportionate and unjustified violence, and noted reports of students injured and female students raped.<sup>21</sup> MIDH further reported the arrest of Fulgence Assi, Fesci Secretary General on 14 April on accusations of disturbing public order.<sup>22</sup>

According to online TV *Abidjantv.net*, two FPI supporters were arrested on 1 May 2016 in Vavoua: Kounta Lacina and Gnahoré Boua Jean Luc were reported to have been beaten up upon arrest and a week later, their whereabouts were unknown.<sup>23</sup>

In an interview with CORI in July 2016, *Suzanne Dominique Djada*, Permanent Secretary at *LIDHO*, reported that in July 2016 three FPI supporters were arrested by a police officer for peacefully organising the signing of a petition asking for the release of ex-President Laurent Gbagbo.<sup>24</sup>

## 1.2 Number of political prisoners/ detainees

**The COI consulted gives no definite figure for the number of political prisoners, as different sources quote different numbers.**

In an interview with CORI in July 2016, Suzanne Dominique Djadja, lawyer and permanent secretary at Ivorian NGO *Ligue ivoirienne des droits de l'Homme (LIDHO)*, stated that as of July 2016, several FPI supporters were still detained in prisons without having been convicted of crimes, even though some criminal trials have now been initiated.<sup>25</sup>

In April 2016 the *US Department of State* reported, "Opposition and government representatives offered differing assessments of the number of politically affiliated detainees remaining in custody. The FPI party split during the year, and the two factions offered differing numbers of party-affiliated detainees remaining in custody. As of November the main FPI branch reported 96 remaining detainees, while the hard-line faction reported 413."<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> MIDH, Violences à l'Université Felix Houphouët Boigny de Cocody : Il s'agit d'actes extrêmement graves sur lesquels le Gouvernement doit faire urgemment la lumière, 15 April 2016, <http://www.midhci.org/action/communiquer/detail?id=40>

<sup>21</sup> MIDH, Violences à l'Université Felix Houphouët Boigny de Cocody : Il s'agit d'actes extrêmement graves sur lesquels le Gouvernement doit faire urgemment la lumière, 15 April 2016, <http://www.midhci.org/action/communiquer/detail?id=40>

<sup>22</sup> MIDH, Violences à l'Université Felix Houphouët Boigny de Cocody : Il s'agit d'actes extrêmement graves sur lesquels le Gouvernement doit faire urgemment la lumière, 15 April 2016, <http://www.midhci.org/action/communiquer/detail?id=40>

<sup>23</sup> Abidjantv.net, Cote d'Ivoire – Terreur signalée sur Vavoua/FPI : Kounta Lacina et Gnahoré Boua Jean Luc introuvables, <http://abidjantv.net/actualites/cote-divoire-terreur-signalée-sur-vavouafpi-kounta-lacina-et-gnahore-boua-jean-luc-introuvable/>

<sup>24</sup> CORI Interview with Suzanne Dominique Djadja, Permanent Secretary at LIDHO for the past six years, conducted via written correspondence in response to written questions, 26 July 2016

<sup>25</sup> Note: The source only mentioned several "plusieurs"); there was no indication of scale or comment on UN figures. CORI Interview with Suzanne Dominique Djadja, Permanent Secretary at LIDHO for the past six years, conducted via written correspondence in response to written questions, 26 July 2016

<sup>26</sup> United States Department of State, 2015 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - Cote d'Ivoire, 13 April 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5716128015.html>



In April 2016 the *US Department of State* further reported that “in December [2015] the government released 38 politically affiliated detainees.”<sup>27</sup>

In April 2016 *Fondation Hirondelle* noted that the political opposition and the government disagree on the number of political prisoners in Côte d’Ivoire, which include not only individuals who were close to Laurent Gbagbo, his wife or the FPI, but also ordinary supporters, students, employees of the former President’s home and journalists.<sup>28</sup> In April 2016 *Fondation Hirondelle* further stated the number of political prisoners was at least 400, according to a list established by relatives of the detainees, and that the government acknowledged only 256, however many were also held in secret detention centres.<sup>29</sup>

In April 2016 the news website *Civox.net*, which appears to relay FPI statements and pro-Gbagbo articles, published a FPI report that placed the number of political prisoners in 2016 at 241.<sup>30</sup>

In March 2016 the *Secretary-General of the United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire (UNOCI)* reported that on 9 March 2016, the government approved the provisional release of 70 out of 300 persons affiliated with the FPI detained in connection with the post-elections crisis, as well as the unfreezing of bank accounts belonging to four associates of Mr. Gbagbo, including his sister.<sup>31</sup>

In February 2016 *Amnesty International* reported that as of early 2016, more than 200 supporters of former President Gbagbo, including more than 30 prisoners extradited from Liberia in 2012 and 2014, remained in detention on charges that include public disorder and genocide, in relation to the conflict after the 2010 elections.<sup>32</sup>

On 28 January 2016 the French daily newspaper *Le Monde* reported there prior to 15 January 2016, there were 311 pro-Gbagbo political prisoners in Côte d’Ivoire, most of them still awaiting trial, according to a document it was able to consult.<sup>33</sup> *Le Monde* reported that on 15 January 2016, 85 of these prisoners were pardoned.<sup>34</sup>

In January 2016 *Le Monde* reported that while some detainees are former military and political Gbagbo supporters, the majority are ordinary individuals including the unemployed, workers, farmers, students, footballers and priests.<sup>35</sup> The same article gives further details about the pro-Gbagbo prisoners, such as:

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<sup>27</sup> United States Department of State, 2015 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - Cote d'Ivoire, 13 April 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5716128015.html>

<sup>28</sup> Fondation Hirondelle, Cote d'Ivoire : les prisonniers du nouveau régime, 13 April 2016, <http://www.hirondelle.org/index.php/fr/rss/192-fondation-hirondelle/operations/justiceinfo-net/actualite/1397-justiceinfo-net-cote-d-ivoire-les-prisonniers-du-nouveau-regime>

<sup>29</sup> Fondation Hirondelle, Cote d'Ivoire : les prisonniers du nouveau régime, 13 April 2016, <http://www.hirondelle.org/index.php/fr/rss/192-fondation-hirondelle/operations/justiceinfo-net/actualite/1397-justiceinfo-net-cote-d-ivoire-les-prisonniers-du-nouveau-regime>

<sup>30</sup> Civox.net, Rapports N° 2-2016 du FPI: Détenus Politiques en Cote d'Ivoire. 30 mars 2016. Combien sont-ils ?, 6 April 2016, [http://www.civox.net/Rapports-N-2-2016-du-FPI-Detenus-Politiques-en-Cote-d-Ivoire-30-mars-2016-Combien-sont-ils\\_a7316.html](http://www.civox.net/Rapports-N-2-2016-du-FPI-Detenus-Politiques-en-Cote-d-Ivoire-30-mars-2016-Combien-sont-ils_a7316.html)

<sup>31</sup> Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Cote d'Ivoire, 31 March 2016, [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/297](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/297)

<sup>32</sup> Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d'Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html>

<sup>33</sup> Le Monde, Qui sont les 300 prisonniers politiques de Cote d'Ivoire?, 28 January 2016, <http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2016/01/28/qui-sont-les-300-prisonniers-politiques-de-cote-d-ivoire>

<sup>34</sup> Le Monde, Qui sont les 300 prisonniers politiques de Cote d'Ivoire?, 28 January 2016, <http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2016/01/28/qui-sont-les-300-prisonniers-politiques-de-cote-d-ivoire>

<sup>35</sup> Le Monde, Qui sont les 300 prisonniers politiques de Cote d'Ivoire?, 28 January 2016, <http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2016/01/28/qui-sont-les-300-prisonniers-politiques-de-cote-d-ivoire>

- Prisoners include Laurent Gbagbo's wife, Simone Gbagbo, as well as ex-Ministers Lida Kouassi, Assoa Adou and Hubert Oulaye;
- Former gendarmerie officers Anselme Séka Yapo and Jean-Noël Abéhi, the ex-commander of the Republican Guard (Garde républicaine), general Bruno Dogbo Blé and about ten high-ranking army members, as well as officers who refused to swear allegiance to President Ouattara, and officers of the army, gendarmerie and police who were arrested for violating orders;
- Four have "disappeared" for the past five years;
- 26 former pro-Gbagbo militia members arrested at the border with Liberia suspected of involvement in attacks against the Ivorian army between 26 June 2011 and 2 July 2012, in one of which seven UN peacekeepers were killed;
- 17 persons arrested following the November 2012 attacks on the Akouédo military camp, East of Abidjan;
- 32 individuals detained between January 2014 and December 2015 following attacks against army posts in Grabo in western Côte d'Ivoire on 1 September 2014;
- 31 protesters who participated in a banned demonstration of the opposition arrested for disturbing public order on 19 September 2015, and 27 persons detained on similar charges.<sup>36</sup>

In January 2016 *Le Monde* newspaper reported that according to the document it consulted, 219 prisoners were detained in the Abidjan Detention and Correction Centre; 92 others were transferred from the Abidjan Detention and Correction Centre either to the Bouaké penitentiary camp, or to Dabou (in the south of the country), or to Séguéla in the north, or to Dimbokro in the centre.<sup>37</sup>

In July 2015 *IRIN News* reported that there were approximately 700 political prisoners in Côte d'Ivoire, whose release was sought by the Gbagbo administration however, the government denied they were detained for political reasons, saying they had broken the law.<sup>38</sup>

### 1.3 Trials and convictions of political prisoners

In May 2016 *Human Rights Watch* reported, "human rights groups acting on behalf of victims have refused to participate in Simone Gbagbo's trial, scheduled to begin on May 31, 2016. They have cited an incomplete investigation into her role in abuses and breaches of Côte d'Ivoire's criminal procedure in the preparations for the trial".<sup>39</sup>

*FIDH*, *MIDH* and *LIDHO* stated on 30 May 2016 that they have withdrawn their participation in Simone Gbagbo's May 2016 trial.<sup>40</sup> The three organisations previously

<sup>36</sup> *Le Monde*, Qui sont les 300 prisonniers politiques de Cote d'Ivoire?, 28 January 2016,

<http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2016/01/28/qui-sont-les-300-prisonniers-politiques-de-cote-d-ivoire>

<sup>37</sup> Note : There is no specific information on these locations by the *Le Monde* article nor information about the significance of the transfers in all sources consulted ; *Le Monde*, Qui sont les 300 prisonniers politiques de Cote d'Ivoire?, 28 January 2016,

<http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2016/01/28/qui-sont-les-300-prisonniers-politiques-de-cote-d-ivoire>

<sup>38</sup> *IRIN News*, Trois sources de préoccupation à l'approche des élections en Cote d'Ivoire, 21 July 2015,

<https://www.irinnews.org/fr/report/101784/trois-sources-de-pr%C3%A9occupation-%C3%A0-l%E2%80%99approche-des-%C3%A9lections-en-c%C3%B4te-d%E2%80%99ivoire>

<sup>39</sup> Human Rights Watch, Cote d'Ivoire: Simone Gbagbo Trial Begins, 30 May 2016, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/05/30/cote-divoire-simone-gbagbo-trial-begins>

<sup>40</sup> *IDH*, *MIDH* and *LIDHO*, Cote d'Ivoire : Pourquoi nous ne participerons pas au procès de Simone Gbagbo, 30 May 2016, <https://www.fidh.org/fr/regions/afrique/cote-d-ivoire/cote-d-ivoire-pourquoi-nous-ne-participerons-pas-au-proces-de-simone>



participated in trial proceedings on behalf of 250 victims of the post-electoral violence of 2010 and 2011. The NGOs stated that the victims' lawyers were not informed of the criminal proceedings initiated against Simone Gbagbo and that trying Simone Gbagbo on her own will not shed light on the mechanisms of the post-electoral violence and the reality of the repressive system put in place by Laurent Gbagbo and his inner circle.<sup>41</sup> They further stated that the trial of Simone Gbagbo is due to the authorities' will to respond to the arrest warrant against her issued by the International Criminal Court.<sup>42</sup>

In March 2016 *Human Rights Watch* stated that,

“The trial and conviction of the former first lady, Simone Gbagbo, in March 2015, for crimes against the state – not human rights abuses – was marred by a number of fair trial concerns. The flaws in the process lent weight to efforts by Simone Gbagbo and her supporters to question the legitimacy of the proceedings and denounce the verdict.”<sup>43</sup>

According to a February 2016 article by *Radio France Internationale (RFI)*, General Dogbo Blé, the former head of the Garde républicaine and Anselme Séka Yapo, former head of the close protection detail<sup>44</sup> of Simone Gbagbo, pleaded not guilty at their trial by a military court for the killing of General Robert Guéï in 2002.<sup>45</sup> In February 2016 news website *allafrica.com* reported both men as well as Séry Daléba, were sentenced to life imprisonment on 18 February 2016.<sup>46</sup>

In their Annual Report 2015/2016 published in February 2016, *Amnesty International* stated that in March 2015,

“78 supporters and relatives of Laurent Gbagbo, including Simone and Michel Gbagbo and Geneviève Bro Grebé, were tried in the Abidjan Assize Court.<sup>47</sup> Eighteen people were acquitted, and some of those convicted received suspended prison sentences. Simone Gbagbo was sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment for undermining state security, participation in an insurrectionary movement, and public disorder. Geneviève Bro Grebé was sentenced to 10 years for similar crimes. At the

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<sup>41</sup> IDH, MIDH and LIDHO, Côte d'Ivoire : Pourquoi nous ne participerons pas au procès de Simone Gbagbo, 30 May 2016, <https://www.fidh.org/fr/regions/afrique/cote-d-ivoire/cote-d-ivoire-pourquoi-nous-ne-participerons-pas-au-proces-de-simone>

<sup>42</sup> FIDH, MIDH and LIDHO, Côte d'Ivoire : Pourquoi nous ne participerons pas au procès de Simone Gbagbo, 30 May 2016, <https://www.fidh.org/fr/regions/afrique/cote-d-ivoire/cote-d-ivoire-pourquoi-nous-ne-participerons-pas-au-proces-de-simone>

<sup>43</sup> Human Rights Watch, Côte d'Ivoire: 5 Years On, Awaiting Justice, 22 March 2016, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/03/22/cote-divoire-5-years-awaiting-justice>

<sup>44</sup> Note: 'close protection detail' is the unit of security guards of Simone Gbagbo. 'close protection detail' is the term used in the UNSG reports to the Security Council on UNOCI: Unies Conseil de sécurité, Rapport spécial du Secrétaire général sur l'Opération des Nations Unies en Côte d'Ivoire (S/2016/297), 31 March 2016, <http://reliefweb.int/report/c-te-divoire/rapport-sp-cial-du-secr-taire-g-n-ral-sur-l-op-ration-des-nations-unies-en-c-te>

<sup>45</sup> RFI, Assassinat de Robert Guéï en Côte d'Ivoire: le jury délibère, 18 February 2016, <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20160218-assassinat-robert-quei-cote-ivoire-jury-delibere>

<sup>46</sup> AllAfrica.com, Assassinat du général Guéï - Trois prévenus condamnés à la perpétuité, 18 February 2016, <http://fr.allafrica.com/view/group/main/main/id/00040412.html>

<sup>47</sup> Note: This refers to 'cour d'assises d'Abidjan', which has been translated by Amnesty International in the English version of their annual report as "Abidjan Assize Court". A "cour d'assises" in judicial systems based on the French system is usually a criminal court, the equivalent is a "crown court" in the British system. It is not the highest court, and in this case an appeal was lodged against its decision; Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d'Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html>

end of the year the implementation of her sentence was suspended pending an appeal.”<sup>48</sup>

In February 2016 *Amnesty International* further reported that the trial of the 78 supporters in March 2015 was marred by allegations of torture in pre-trial detention that the Assize Court did not appear to consider.<sup>49</sup> *Amnesty International* also reported that the Court failed to provide a full written judgement and that the right to appeal of the 78 was undermined by Côte d’Ivoire’s law which restricts appeals to points of law before the Court of Cassation.<sup>50</sup>

According to *Amnesty International* in February 2016 Simone Gbagbo, wife of Laurent Gbagbo, was sentenced to 20 years’ imprisonment on 10 March 2015 on charges of participating in an insurrection, plotting against the State and undermining public order.<sup>51</sup>

In January 2016 *Le Monde* newspaper reported that 36 individuals have been convicted of crimes since the post elections political crisis and sentenced to prison terms varying from three to 35 years. *Le Monde* also reported fifteen others were convicted of lesser crimes with prison sentences varying from three months to 20 years. It further stated that as of January 2016, 54 detainees were awaiting trial.<sup>52</sup>

According to the *United Nations Operation in Cote d’Ivoire (UNOCI)*, on 25 January 2016, the trial of 24 military officers charged in connection with the 2002 assassination of General Robert Guéï and his family resumed, and on 18 February, the military court sentenced General Dogbo Blé, the former head of the Garde républicaine, Commander Anselme Séka Yapo, former head of the close protection detail of Simone Gbagbo, and Daléba Séry to life imprisonment for murder and complicity in murder.<sup>53</sup> According to *UNOCI* ten of the accused were sentenced to 10 years imprisonment and 13 others acquitted.<sup>54</sup>

According to the *US Department of State* in March 2015,

“fifteen of Simone Gbagbo’s co-defendants were acquitted, and the rest received various sentences. Among the convicted was the president of the Ivoirian Popular Front (FPI), Pascal Affi N’Guessan, who received an 18-month suspended sentence with credit given for the two years he was detained while awaiting trial. Michel Gbagbo, Laurent Gbagbo’s son, received a five-year sentence. Two former military allies and the former chief of the navy also received 20-year sentences. All

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<sup>48</sup> Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d’Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html>

<sup>49</sup> Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d’Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html>

<sup>50</sup> Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d’Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html>

<sup>51</sup> Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d’Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html>

<sup>52</sup> *Le Monde*, Qui sont les 300 prisonniers politiques de Cote d’Ivoire?, 28 January 2016, <http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2016/01/28/qui-sont-les-300-prisonniers-politiques-de-cote-d-ivoire>

<sup>53</sup> UN Security Council, Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire, 31 March 2016, S/2016/297, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5703a6c84.html>

<sup>54</sup> UN Security Council, Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire, 31 March 2016, S/2016/297, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5703a6c84.html>

sentenced defendants appealed the verdict, and trial proceedings did not resume during the year.”<sup>55</sup>

In March 2015 the *International Federation of Human Rights (Fédération Internationale des Droits Humains, FIDH)* and two NGOs from Côte d'Ivoire, the *Mouvement ivoirien des droits humains (MIDH)* and the *Ligue ivoirienne des droits de l'Homme (LIDHO)* expressed concern at the trial of Simone Gbagbo and 80 others and the quality of the prosecution, pointing at a lack of elements of evidence and the weakness of testimonies presented to support the charges.<sup>56</sup>

In October 2015 *Amnesty International* also stated that Kouamé Akpalé Richmond and Douadé Gildas<sup>57</sup> were arrested on 9 September 2015 in their home in Yopougon (Abidjan), and detained without charge until 17 September, in contravention of national law which states that the period of pre-arraignment detention cannot exceed 48 hours, renewable once by a judge or prosecutor.<sup>58</sup> According to *Amnesty International*, both men were charged with undermining public order and transferred to the *Direction de la surveillance du territoire (DST, an intelligence agency)*, which detained them without access to legal counsel until their trial on 30 September.<sup>59</sup> *Amnesty International* reported the court decided to drop the charges against them and ordered their release.<sup>60</sup>

*Amnesty International* further stated that more than 50 people, mostly members of the political opposition, were arrested between mid-September and October 2015, ahead of the presidential elections which were held in October 2015.<sup>61</sup> The majority of those arrested were held on charges of public disorder after participating in unauthorized peaceful demonstrations.<sup>62</sup> Although some were later released, more than 20 remained detained at the end of 2015.<sup>63</sup> *Amnesty International* reported that many were ill-treated during arrest and were held in incommunicado detention for several weeks.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> United States Department of State, 2015 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - Côte d'Ivoire, 13 April 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5716128015.html>

<sup>56</sup> FIDH, Côte d'Ivoire : Inquiétudes après un procès insatisfaisant, 12 March 2015, <https://www.fidh.org/fr/regions/afrique/cote-d-ivoire/cote-d-ivoire-inquietudes-apres-un-proces-insatisfaisant>

<sup>57</sup> Note : One press commentary states that these are two “young people” but no further details were found on them. See: La Croix, Côte d'Ivoire, arrestations dans l'opposition avant la présidentielle, 22 October 2015, <http://www.la-croix.com/Monde/Afrique/Cote-d-Ivoire-arrestations-dans-l-opposition-avant-la-presidentielle-2015-10-22-1371438>

<sup>58</sup> Amnesty International, Côte d'Ivoire: Il faut mettre fin aux arrestations arbitraires d'opposants à l'approche de la présidentielle, 5 October 2015, <https://www.amnesty.org/fr/press-releases/2015/10/cotedivoiremettrefinauxarrestationsarbitrairesopposants/>

<sup>59</sup> Amnesty International, Côte d'Ivoire: Il faut mettre fin aux arrestations arbitraires d'opposants à l'approche de la présidentielle, 5 October 2015, <https://www.amnesty.org/fr/press-releases/2015/10/cotedivoiremettrefinauxarrestationsarbitrairesopposants/>

<sup>60</sup> Amnesty International, Côte d'Ivoire: Il faut mettre fin aux arrestations arbitraires d'opposants à l'approche de la présidentielle, 5 October 2015, <https://www.amnesty.org/fr/press-releases/2015/10/cotedivoiremettrefinauxarrestationsarbitrairesopposants/>

<sup>61</sup> Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d'Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html> ; Côte d'Ivoire: Il faut mettre fin aux arrestations arbitraires d'opposants à l'approche de la présidentielle, 5 October 2015, <https://www.amnesty.org/fr/pressreleases/2015/10/cotedivoiremettrefinauxarrestationsarbitrairesopposants/>

<sup>62</sup> Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d'Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html> ; Côte d'Ivoire: Il faut mettre fin aux arrestations arbitraires d'opposants à l'approche de la présidentielle, 5 October 2015, <https://www.amnesty.org/fr/pressreleases/2015/10/cotedivoiremettrefinauxarrestationsarbitrairesopposants/>

<sup>63</sup> Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d'Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html> ; Côte d'Ivoire: Il faut mettre fin aux arrestations arbitraires d'opposants à l'approche de la présidentielle, 5 October 2015, <https://www.amnesty.org/fr/pressreleases/2015/10/cotedivoiremettrefinauxarrestationsarbitrairesopposants/>

<sup>64</sup> Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d'Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html> ; Côte d'Ivoire: Il faut mettre fin aux arrestations arbitraires d'opposants à l'approche de la présidentielle, 5 October 2015, <https://www.amnesty.org/fr/pressreleases/2015/10/cotedivoiremettrefinauxarrestationsarbitrairesopposants/>

## 1.4 Conditions and treatment in detention

In April 2016 *Fondation Hironnelle* reported Kouya Gnépa Eric, a young man who was arrested in April 2015 following an attack on Grabo in south-western Côte d'Ivoire and was tortured, died in detention on 5 December 2015.<sup>65</sup>

In January 2016 *Le Monde* newspaper reported that according to a document it consulted, 49 political prisoners in the Abidjan Detention and Correction Centre suffered from illnesses and trauma due to their long detention, including 13 who have high blood pressure and two who have diabetes, and three who suffered from tuberculosis.<sup>66</sup>

In January 2016 *Le Monde* reported that relatives of most of those detained between January 2014 and December 2015 in connection with the attacks on the army in Grabo (a town in South-Western Côte d'Ivoire) claim that their arrests are based on false claims and are due to their support of the former Gbagbo government. *Le Monde* quoted a trader from Grabo who was pardoned in January 2016, who said that he and other young people were arrested in March 2014, accused of complicity with the attackers and tortured mentally and physically, before being transferred to the Abidjan Detention and Correction Centre (maison d'arrêt et de correction d'Abidjan /MACA). The former detainee also stated that they were many in the same cell, only had one meal per day and never had access to a lawyer until he was informed that he was pardoned.<sup>67</sup>

According to a FPI press release published on the news website *Newsafricanow* in December 2015, Assémian Maturin, a political opponent died in prison on 15 November 2014.<sup>68</sup> Another FPI document published on the news website *allafrica.com* in November 2014 stated that Assémian Maturin was tortured for three months at the hands of the DST after his arrest in October 2012, and after his transfer to MACA did not have access to adequate medical care despite repeated demands from his family, and died of septicaemia.<sup>69</sup>

In April 2015 the *Independent Expert on capacity-building and technical cooperation with Côte d'Ivoire in the field of human rights* reported that prison conditions in the Abidjan Detention and Correction Centre, the main prison situated in the capital Abidjan, and the Abidjan Military Detention Centre reflected the damage to the country's infrastructure caused by two decades of conflict, and that prisons were overcrowded.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Fondation Hironnelle, Côte d'Ivoire : les prisonniers du nouveau régime, 13 April 2016, <http://www.hironnelle.org/index.php/fr/rss/192-fondation-hironnelle/operations/justiceinfo-net/actualite/1397-justiceinfo-net-cote-d-ivoire-les-prisonniers-du-nouveau-regime> ; Also see

Section 1.1 Incidents of arrests and/or violence against FPI/Gbagbo supporters by state actors

<sup>66</sup> *Le Monde*, Qui sont les 300 prisonniers politiques de Côte d'Ivoire?, 28 January 2016,

<http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2016/01/28/qui-sont-les-300-prisonniers-politiques-de-cote-d-ivoire>

<sup>67</sup> *Le Monde*, Qui sont les 300 prisonniers politiques de Côte d'Ivoire?, 28 January 2016,

<http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2016/01/28/qui-sont-les-300-prisonniers-politiques-de-cote-d-ivoire>

<sup>68</sup> FPI, Communiqué suite au décès de Kouya Gnépa Eric à la MACA, 8 December 2015,

<http://newsafricanow.com/2015/12/communique-du-fpi-suite-au-deces-de-kouya-gnepa-eric-a-la-maca/>

<sup>69</sup> *Allafrica.com*, Côte d'Ivoire: Décès du prisonnier politique Assémian Martin - Le FPI dénonce et accuse le pouvoir, 17 November 2014, <http://fr.allafrica.com/stories/201411211121.html>

<sup>70</sup> UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Independent Expert on capacity-building and technical cooperation with Côte d'Ivoire in the field of human rights, 27 April 2015, A/HRC/29/49, para. 64, p. 13, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5583d0fa4.html>, Note: The same report states "A list of names drawn up by a group of wives of the detainees arrested during the post-electoral crisis includes 441 persons, of whom 329 are civilians and 112 are military personnel. The majority are imprisoned in the Abidjan Detention and Correction Centre,

In September 2014 Ivorian news website *Connection Ivoirienne* reported that 370 FPI detainees started a hunger strike in September 2014 to protest about poor prison conditions and their detention without trial.<sup>71</sup> In September 2014 news website *Abidjan.net* reported that 300 FPI supporters staged a hunger strike at the Abidjan Detention and Correction Centre to protest about their detention without charge.<sup>72</sup>

## 1.5 Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) program

In its 'World Report 2016' published on 27 January 2016 and covering events of 2015 *Human Rights Watch* stated that the country's Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR)<sup>73</sup> program officially ended on 30 June 2015, with the government stating that almost 60,000 former combatants were reintegrated.<sup>74</sup> According to *Human Rights Watch*,

“the DDR process, however, has been one-sided, mostly benefitting forces who fought on President Ouattara's side during the post-election crisis. Former rebel commanders who fought with Ouattara had particularly close control over which ex-combatants obtained jobs as customs, prison, and forestry officers.”<sup>75</sup>

The *UN Secretary General's Special Report on UNOCI* reported in March 2016 that an estimated 2,000 former combatants in Liberia may be ineligible for any assistance, as combatants returning from exile cannot benefit from reinsertion activities unless they are registered in an appropriate government database.<sup>76</sup>

**Little information was found regarding the treatment of those who fought on the side of Laurent Gbagbo in relation to the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration program, which ended in June 2015, in the French language sources consulted during the time frame of this research.**

## 2) Treatment of Ivorian Popular Front (FPI)/Gbagbo supporters by non-state actors

### 2.1 Incidents of violence against FPI/Gbagbo supporters

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while others are being held in the Abidjan Military Detention Centre or in regional prisons.” Further research would be needed to establish whether civilians are held in MACA and military personnel in the Abidjan Military Detention Centre

<sup>71</sup> Connection ivoirienne, Grève de la faim de prisonniers en Côte-d'Ivoire “Jugez-nous ou libérez-nous !”, 26 September 2014, <http://www.connectionivoirienne.net/103416/greve-faim-prisonniers-en-cote-divoire-jugez-liberez>

<sup>72</sup> Abidjan.net, Maca, Les détenus politiques en grève de la faim, 23 September 2014, <http://news.abidjan.net/h/511252.html>

<sup>73</sup> According to the United Nations Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS), launched by the UN Secretary-General in December 2006, disarmament is defined as “the collection, control and disposal of small arms and light weapons and the development of responsible arms management programmes in a post-conflict context. Meanwhile, demobilization is defined as a planned process by which the armed force of the government and/or opposition or factional forces either downsize or completely disband. Having been demobilized and transported to their community of choice, the former combatants and their families must establish themselves in a civilian environment. Reinsertion assistance, which is intended to ameliorate the process, often includes post-discharge orientation, food assistance, health and educational support and a cash allowance. Finally, reintegration is the process whereby former combatants and their families are integrated into the social, economic and political life of (civilian) communities” See: United Nations Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Centre, Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards, December 2006, <http://cpwg.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2013/08/UN-2006-IDDRS.pdf>

<sup>74</sup> Human Rights Watch, World Report 2016, - Côte d'Ivoire, 27 January 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56bd994d13.html>

<sup>75</sup> Human Rights Watch, World Report 2016 - Côte d'Ivoire, 27 January 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56bd994d13.html>

<sup>76</sup> UN Security Council, Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, 31 March 2016, S/2016/297, para 38, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5703a6c84.html>



In February 2013 *Amnesty International* described the Dozos as a “state-backed militia group”, who are,

“from a powerful brotherhood of hunters present in several countries in the subregion. They have also been progressively involved in the Ivorian conflict over the past decade. In particular, they have ensured the safety of those who were regularly subjected to threats and attacks by security forces and militias loyal to former President Laurent Gbagbo, including the Dioula (which, depending on the circumstances, means any person with a Muslim family name and from northern Côte d'Ivoire or states of the sub-region including Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Senegal, etc.). These traditional hunters, have formed as a militia, and have consistently fought alongside the FAFN<sup>77</sup> since the attempted coup in 2002 and have committed serious abuses, including during the 2011 post-electoral crisis, the deliberate killing of people often because of their ethnicity.

“Since Alassane Ouattara’s coming to power, the Dozos have gained considerable importance over the whole territory and their presence has increased notably in the west of the country where some of their members ransom the population and carry out arbitrary arrests assuming a self-appointed policing role. Though the Dozos have their own command structure, the state exercises nevertheless a certain control over them. Amnesty International has collected information confirming the existence of a close cooperation and coordination between the FRCI and the Dozos (particularly in the context of numerous joint operations). Besides, the authorities give assistance to the Dozos in the form of equipment and weapons. More fundamentally, the freedom with which the Dozos act with impunity and commit abuses indicates that Dozos act at the instigation or with the consent or acquiescence of state officials.”<sup>78</sup>

According to the *US Department of State* in 2015,

“Particularly in the western part of the country, communities continued to rely on Dozos (traditional hunters) to meet their security needs. After the minister of defense warned the Dozos in 2013 not to interfere in security matters, they were less visible.”<sup>79</sup>

The *US Department of State* further reported that,

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<sup>77</sup> Note: Forces armées des Forces Nouvelles, a coalition of rebel movements that were later integrated in the national army.

<sup>78</sup> Amnesty International, Cote d'Ivoire: The Victors' law, 27 February 2013,

[https://www.amnesty.nl/sites/default/files/public/ci\\_report\\_final.pdf](https://www.amnesty.nl/sites/default/files/public/ci_report_final.pdf), citing, Amnesty International, They looked at his identity card and shot him dead' Six months of Post Electoral violence in Côte d'Ivoire, 25 May 2011,

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AFR31/002/2011/en/>, p. 17. For further details about the Dozos, see *Ibid.* “Box 1: The Dozos: a self-proclaimed police force who ransom populations”. pp. 41 – 42.

<sup>79</sup> United States Department of State, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2015, Cote d'Ivoire, 13 April 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5716128015.html>.



“[The] Dozos, while not an official law enforcement organization, were also involved in arrests and detentions. These groups assumed an informal security role in many communities but lacked the legal authority to arrest or detain individuals.”<sup>80</sup>

In an interview with CORI in July 2016, Suzanne Dominique Djadja, lawyer and permanent secretary at Ivorian NGO *Ligue ivoirienne des droits de l'Homme (LIDHO)*, stated that LIDHO had received no reports of incidents between the Dozos and FPI supporters between mid-2014 and mid-2016.<sup>81</sup> She further stated that *LIDHO* had no information about other non-state actors engaging in mistreatment of FPI supporters.<sup>82</sup>

However, in July 2015 Ivorian online news website *Connection Ivoirienne* reported the Dozos were still visible bearing weapons in several cities in July 2015.<sup>83</sup>

According to Ivorian NGO *Mouvement ivoirien des droits humains (MIDH)*, on 1 September 2014, the FPI headquarters was attacked and ransacked by unknown individuals.<sup>84</sup>

According to the news website *Afrik.com*, on 10 September 2015, young supporters of the National Coalition for Change organised demonstrations in Abidjan and in the west of the country to protest against Alassane Ouattara's candidacy to the presidential elections.<sup>85</sup> *Afrik.com* reported that dozens of young people blocked roads in the Marcody and Cocody areas of Abidjan and were dispersed by the security forces.<sup>86</sup> In the west, including in Gagnoa, several demonstrations occurred and in Bonoua in the east clashes occurred between demonstrators and young supporters of Alassane Ouattara's Rally of the Republicans (RDR), the governing party.<sup>87</sup> According to *Jeune Afrique*, one person was killed and several injured in clashes that ensued pro-Gbagbo demonstrations in Gagnoa, the birth city of Laurent Gbagbo, Bayota, some 50 km North of Gagnoa, and Bonoua.<sup>88</sup>

In November 2015 Ivorian media news website *Ivorian.net* reported a student from the pro-FPI Student and School Federation of Côte d'Ivoire (Fédération estudiantine et scolaire de Côte d'Ivoire, Fesci) died, following clashes on 18 and 19 November 2015 at the Félix Houphouët-Boigny University in Abidjan with a rival student union, the General Association

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<sup>80</sup> Note: There is no specific mention of them arresting FPI supporters during the period of focus for the research; United States Department of State, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2015, Côte d'Ivoire, 13 April 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5716128015.html>.

<sup>81</sup> CORI Interview with Suzanne Dominique Djadja, Permanent Secretary at LIDHO for the past six years, conducted via written correspondence in response to written questions, 26 July 2016

<sup>82</sup> CORI Interview with Suzanne Dominique Djadja, Permanent Secretary at LIDHO for the past six years, conducted via written correspondence in response to written questions, 26 July 2016

<sup>83</sup> *Connection Ivoirienne*, Côte d'Ivoire – A 3 mois de la présidentielle les dozos toujours visibles dans les villes avec fusils, 23 July 2015, <http://www.connectionivoirienne.net/112061/cote-divoire-a-3-mois-de-la-presiden-tielle-les-dozos-toujours-visibles-dans-les-villes-avec-fusils>

<sup>84</sup> MIDH, Situation sécuritaire : attaque et saccage du siège du Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI), 2 September 2014, <http://www.midhci.org/action/communiquer/detail?id=28>

<sup>85</sup> *Afrik.com*, Côte d'Ivoire : heurts après la validation de la candidature de Ouattara, 11 September 2015, <http://www.afrik.com/cote-d-ivoire-la-candidature-de-ouattara-suscite-toujours-la-polemique>

<sup>86</sup> Note : It is not clear from the source consulted if they were acting peacefully or not. *Afrik.com*, Côte d'Ivoire : heurts après la validation de la candidature de Ouattara, 11 September 2015, <http://www.afrik.com/cote-d-ivoire-la-candidature-de-ouattara-suscite-toujours-la-polemique>

<sup>87</sup> *Afrik.com*, Côte d'Ivoire : heurts après la validation de la candidature de Ouattara, 11 September 2015, <http://www.afrik.com/cote-d-ivoire-la-candidature-de-ouattara-suscite-toujours-la-polemique>

<sup>88</sup> *Jeune Afrique/AFP*, Côte d'Ivoire : un mort et des blessés dans des manifestations contre la candidature d'Alassane Ouattara, 10 September 2015, <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/263610/politique/manifestations-contre-candi-dature-president-ouattara-cote-divoire/>

of Pupils and Students of Côte d'Ivoire (Association générale des élèves et étudiants de Côte d'Ivoire, Ageeci).<sup>89</sup>

### 3) The willingness and ability of the State to protect FPI/Gbagbo supporters in Côte d'Ivoire

The *US Department of State* reported that during the year 2015, the Republican Forces of Côte d'Ivoire (FRCI), the country's military, and the gendarmerie were responsible for extrajudicial killings, acts of torture, and arbitrary detentions and that "the government seldom took steps to prosecute officials who committed abuses, whether in the security services or elsewhere in the government."<sup>90</sup> Security force impunity continued to be a serious problem".<sup>91</sup>

According to the *US Department of State* during the year 2015, "continued insecurity and slow political reconciliation continued to complicate the government's efforts to restore the rule of law and address impunity after the 2010-11 violent post-electoral conflict."<sup>92</sup>

According to *FIDH*, little progress had been made to investigate and try the perpetrators of the attack on the Nahibly Camp for internally displaced persons in the west of the country.<sup>93</sup> The camp, which housed over 2,500 people, had been destroyed on 20 July 2012 by local Dozo militias and members of the national army.<sup>94</sup> At least 14 people were killed, hundreds injured and others rounded up and 'disappeared' as they fled the camp.<sup>95</sup>

The *UN Human Rights Committee* expressed concern in March 2015, "about the substantial delays in the investigations into the Yopougon mass grave, the attack on the Nahibly camp near Duékoué and the mass grave at Togueï, and about the fact that persons suspected of involvement in international crimes continue to occupy senior posts in the State party."<sup>96</sup>

The *UN Secretary General* also expressed concern, in a Special Report on UNOCI in March 2016, at the delays in investigations on the attack in July 2012 on the Nahibly camp for internally displaced persons.<sup>97</sup>

*Amnesty International* stated in early 2016 that it remained concerned about "selective accountability" for crimes committed following the presidential elections in October 2010.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Ivorian.net, Côte d'Ivoire - Mort et blessés graves dans des affrontements entre étudiants, 21 November 2015, <http://www.ivorian.net/actualite/p/15518.html>

<sup>90</sup> United States Department of State, 2015 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - Côte d'Ivoire, 13 April 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5716128015.html>

<sup>91</sup> United States Department of State, 2015 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - Côte d'Ivoire, 13 April 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5716128015.html>

<sup>92</sup> United States Department of State, 2015 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - Côte d'Ivoire, 13 April 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5716128015.html>

<sup>93</sup> International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH), Two years after the discovery of the Togueï mass grave in Duékoué, where is the justice promised?, 21 October 2014, <https://www.fidh.org/en/region/Africa/cote-d-ivoire/16279-two-years-after-the-discovery-of-the-toquei-mass-grave-in-duekoue-where-is>

<sup>94</sup> International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH), Two years after the discovery of the Togueï mass grave in Duékoué, where is the justice promised?, 21 October 2014, <https://www.fidh.org/en/region/Africa/cote-d-ivoire/16279-two-years-after-the-discovery-of-the-toquei-mass-grave-in-duekoue-where-is>

<sup>95</sup> International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH), Two years after the discovery of the Togueï mass grave in Duékoué, where is the justice promised?, 21 October 2014, <https://www.fidh.org/en/region/Africa/cote-d-ivoire/16279-two-years-after-the-discovery-of-the-toquei-mass-grave-in-duekoue-where-is>

<sup>96</sup> UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding observations on the initial report of Côte d'Ivoire, 28 April 2015, [http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CCPR/C/CIV/CO/1&Lang=En](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CCPR/C/CIV/CO/1&Lang=En)

<sup>97</sup> Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, 31 March 2016, [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/297](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/297)

*FIDH, MIDH and LIDHO* underlined in December 2014 that two investigations into serious human rights violations committed between December 2010 and May 2011 were still underway, but of the more than 150 individuals charged, only two were from the pro-Ouattara camp.<sup>99</sup> *FIDH, MIDH and LIDHO* further reported that the only pro-Ouattara individual who was arrested gave clear information about the responsibility of high level officials in the FRCI in abuses, such as the attack on Duékoué at the end of March 2011.<sup>100</sup> The three organisations stated that, although several FRCI officials were summoned by the judicial authorities, they did not present themselves for questioning.<sup>101</sup>

In March 2016 *Human Rights Watch* stated that a taskforce of judges and prosecutors, the “Special Investigative and Examination Cell”, created in June 2011 to handle prosecutions of crimes related to the post-election violence, was only provided consistent support from late 2014.<sup>102</sup> *Human Rights Watch* further stated that the special cell made significant progress in 2015 in investigations involving human rights abuses committed during the post-election crisis, including against high-level members of pro-Gbagbo and “pro-Ouattara forces, including those currently occupying key positions in the Ivorian army”.<sup>103</sup>

However, in March 2016 *Human Rights Watch* remained concerned that there is still no system to provide protection to judges, prosecutors, lawyers and witnesses, which “risks exposing these actors to threats or reprisals, compromising their ability to effectively participate in proceedings”.<sup>104</sup>

*Amnesty International* stated that the 2014 report of the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CDVR), established to shed light on post-electoral violence, had still not been made public by the end of the year 2015.<sup>105</sup> In March 2015, the National Commission for Reconciliation and Compensation of Victims (CONARIV) was created to complete the work of the CDVR, in particular to register unidentified victims of the post-electoral violence.<sup>106</sup>

In July 2015 *IRIN News* reported the CDVR is one of the most unpopular institutions in the country, even though it was meant to unite people and end political and ethnic divisions.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Amnesty International, Annual Report 2015/2016, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/africa/cote-d-ivoire/report-cote-divoire/>

<sup>99</sup> FIDH, MIDH and LIDHO, Cote d'Ivoire : choisir entre la justice et l'impunité, December 2014,

<https://www.fidh.org/fr/regions/afrique/cote-d-ivoire/16629-cote-d-ivoire-choisir-entre-la-justice-et-l-impunite>

<sup>100</sup> FIDH, MIDH and LIDHO, Cote d'Ivoire : choisir entre la justice et l'impunité, December 2014,

<https://www.fidh.org/fr/regions/afrique/cote-d-ivoire/16629-cote-d-ivoire-choisir-entre-la-justice-et-l-impunite>

<sup>101</sup> FIDH, MIDH and LIDHO, Cote d'Ivoire : choisir entre la justice et l'impunité, December 2014,

<https://www.fidh.org/fr/regions/afrique/cote-d-ivoire/16629-cote-d-ivoire-choisir-entre-la-justice-et-l-impunite>

<sup>102</sup> Human Rights Watch, “Justice Reestablishes Balance” - Delivering Credible Accountability for Serious Abuses in Cote d'Ivoire, 22 March 2016, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/03/22/justice-reestablishes-balance/delivering-credible-accountability-serious-abuses#290612>

<sup>103</sup> Human Rights Watch, “Justice Reestablishes Balance” - Delivering Credible Accountability for Serious Abuses in Cote d'Ivoire, 22 March 2016, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/03/22/justice-reestablishes-balance/delivering-credible-accountability-serious-abuses#290612>

<sup>104</sup> Human Rights Watch, “Justice Reestablishes Balance” - Delivering Credible Accountability for Serious Abuses in Cote d'Ivoire, 22 March 2016, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/03/22/justice-reestablishes-balance/delivering-credible-accountability-serious-abuses#290612>

<sup>105</sup> Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d'Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html>

<sup>106</sup> Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d'Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html>

<sup>107</sup> IRIN News, Trois sources de préoccupation à l'approche des élections en Cote d'Ivoire, 21 July 2015, <https://www.irinnews.org/fr/report/101784/trois-sources-de-pr%C3%A9occupation-%C3%A0-l-%E2%80%99approche-des-%C3%A9lections-en-c%C3%B4te-d%E2%80%99ivoire>

*Human Rights Watch* reported that at the end of 2015, “President Ouattara pledged to make 10 billion CFA (US\$16.5 million) available for the indemnification of victims. The first group of victims began receiving financial and medical assistance in August 2015, but victims’ groups criticized the lack of transparency of the reparations process.”<sup>108</sup>

The *Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire* (UNOCI) reported that,

“In a televised address to the nation on 31 December [2015], Mr. Ouattara announced the granting of a presidential pardon for 3,100 prisoners, as well as the release of individuals detained in connection with the post-elections crisis.”<sup>109</sup>

The *US Department of State* noted in their 2015 Country Report on Human Rights that,

“in February [2015], President Ouattara granted a collective pardon to approximately 3,000 prisoners. Most of the prisoners identified for release had only a few years left in long prison sentences or were classified as posing no danger to society.”<sup>110</sup>

However, according to *Amnesty International*, although President Ouattara committed to pardoning over 3,000 people detained since the electoral crisis, either totally or partially removing their sentences, at the end of the year 2015, the list of those pardoned had not been made public.<sup>111</sup>

*Fondation Hirondelle* further reported in April 2016 that among the 3,100 persons pardoned, there are figures from the FPI and the CNC, who were arrested before the 2015 presidential elections.<sup>112</sup>

In January 2016 *Le Monde* newspaper reported that according to ex-Justice Minister Gnénéma Coulibaly, most of those pardoned are individuals arrested for disturbing public order and for attacks against the security forces, and do not include individuals convicted of crimes.<sup>113</sup>

The *US Department of State* reported that a government-created platform for dialogue with the opposition met several times during the year 2015 to discuss FPI detainees and occupied housing and frozen bank accounts of some FPI leaders, with some progress acknowledged by representatives from both sides.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Human Rights Watch, World Report 2016 - Côte d’Ivoire, 27 January 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56bd994d13.html>

<sup>109</sup> UN Security Council, Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire, 31 March 2016, S/2016/297, para 4, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5703a6c84.html>

<sup>110</sup> United States Department of State, 2015 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - Cote d’Ivoire, 13 April 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5716128015.html>

<sup>111</sup> Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2015/16 - Côte d’Ivoire, 24 February 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56d05b6420.html>

<sup>112</sup> Fondation Hirondelle, Côte d’Ivoire : les prisonniers du nouveau régime, 13 April 2016, <http://www.hirondelle.org/index.php/fr/rss/192-fondation-hirondelle/operations/justiceinfo-net/actualite/1397-justiceinfo-net-cote-d-ivoire-les-prisonniers-du-nouveau-regime>

<sup>113</sup> Note : The article does not refer specifically to the 3,100 persons pardoned in the immediate paragraph above in the text. *Le Monde*, Qui sont les 300 prisonniers politiques de Côte d’Ivoire?, 28 January 2016, <http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2016/01/28/qui-sont-les-300-prisonniers-politiques-de-cote-d-ivoire>

<sup>114</sup> United States Department of State, 2015 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - Cote d’Ivoire, 13 April 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5716128015.html>

In *Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire* (UNOCI) reported that,

“Mr. Ouattara met with a delegation of the former ruling Front populaire ivoirien (FPI) led by its president, Pascal Affi N’Guessan, on 21 January [2016]. Among the issues discussed were the status of persons detained for alleged violations committed during the post-elections crisis, the unfreezing of bank accounts and the return to Côte d’Ivoire of persons living in exile. Also discussed were structural issues such as political party financing, access to the state media and the demarcation of electoral constituencies. Subsequently, on 9 March [2016], the Government approved the provisional release of 70 out of 300 persons detained in connection with the post-elections crisis whose release had been sought by FPI, as well as the unfreezing of bank accounts belonging to four associates of Mr. Gbagbo, including his sister.”<sup>115</sup>

However, opposition representatives continued to report that some accounts remained frozen and investigations into claims of occupied housing continued.<sup>116</sup> In October 2015 the FPI reported that accounts of 100 persons aligned with the party remained frozen in connection to events during the post electoral crisis.<sup>117</sup>

In March 2016 the *Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire* (UNOCI) reported that President Ouattara met on 21 January 2016 with a delegation of the FPI led by its president, Pascal Affi N’Guessan.<sup>118</sup> Among the issues discussed were the status of persons detained for alleged violations committed during the post-elections crisis, the unfreezing of bank accounts and the return to Côte d’Ivoire of persons living in exile.<sup>119</sup>

The *US Department of State* reported that as of the end of 2015, several supporters of former president Gbagbo, some with pending criminal charges, remained in exile; and in January 2015, Laurent Gbagbo’s sister returned without incident from self-exile in Ghana.<sup>120</sup>

*IRIN News* referred in July 2015 to some 50,000 refugees, including political and military figures in Liberia, Ghana, Togo and other countries, who could not or were not willing to come back to Côte d’Ivoire, fearing prison or persecution.<sup>121</sup>

According to *UNOCI*, of 300,000 Ivorian refugees in neighbouring countries because of the post-electoral crisis in 2010-2011, just under 28,000 remain in Liberia, 11,450 in Ghana,

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<sup>115</sup> UN Security Council, Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, 31 March 2016, S/2016/297, para 6, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5703a6c84.html>

<sup>116</sup> United States Department of State, 2015 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - Cote d'Ivoire, 13 April 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5716128015.html>

<sup>117</sup> United States Department of State, 2015 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - Cote d'Ivoire, 13 April 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5716128015.html>

<sup>118</sup> UN Security Council, Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, 31 March 2016, S/2016/297, para 6, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5703a6c84.html>

<sup>119</sup> UN Security Council, Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, 31 March 2016, S/2016/297, para 6, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5703a6c84.html>

<sup>120</sup> United States Department of State, 2015 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - Cote d'Ivoire, 13 April 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5716128015.html>

<sup>121</sup> IRIN News, Trois sources de préoccupation à l'approche des élections en Cote d'Ivoire, 21 July 2015, <https://www.irinnews.org/fr/report/101784/trois-sources-de-pr%C3%A9occupation-%C3%A0-l%E2%80%99approche-des-%C3%A9lections-en-c%C3%B4te-d%E2%80%99ivoire>



6,560 in Guinea, 1,000 in Mali and 2,270 in Togo.<sup>122</sup> There are also 300,000 internally displaced persons, in the majority in Abidjan and the west.<sup>123</sup>

*Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported at the end of June 2016, there are about 20,000 refugees from Ivory Coast in Liberia, 7,000 in Guinea and 11,000 pro-Gbagbo exiled individuals in Ghana.<sup>124</sup>

*UNOCI* further reported that although most Ivorian refugees in Liberia would like to return home, many are concerned about the security situation, the lack of access to basic services and the occupation of their lands by foreigners, which could exacerbate land disputes and intercommunal clashes in areas of return.<sup>125</sup>

According to *AFP*, on 30 June 2016, four high-profile pro-Gbagbo refugees, ex-Defence Minister Kadet Bertin, Watchard Kedjebo, a leader of the *Galaxie patriotique*<sup>126</sup>, Kacou Brou ("Maréchal KB"), one of the leaders of the students trade union *Fesci* and Franck Yaon, a member of the security guard of Laurent Gbagbo, came back to Côte d'Ivoire from Ghana.<sup>127</sup> In June 2016 *AFP* stated that the Minister of Social Cohesion, Mariatou Koné, welcomed the aforementioned and declared that no one would be arrested upon return; she also said that an amnesty law<sup>128</sup> was being prepared by the government.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> UN Security Council, Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, 31 March 2016, S/2016/297, para 41, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5703a6c84.html>

<sup>123</sup> UN Security Council, Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, 31 March 2016, S/2016/297, para 41 <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5703a6c84.html>

<sup>124</sup> Note : The article uses the terms refugees for Liberia and Ghana and pro-Gbagbo exiled individuals in Ghana but doesn't indicate as to why two different terms have been used. *AFP*, Côte d'Ivoire : retour symbolique du Ghana de quatre réfugiés pro-Gbagbo, 30 June 2016, <http://reliefweb.int/report/c-te-divoire/c-te-divoire-retour-symbolique-du-ghana-de-quatre-r-fugi-s-pro-gbagbo>

<sup>125</sup> UN Security Council, Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, 31 March 2016, S/2016/297, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5703a6c84.html>

<sup>126</sup> Note : The *Galaxie Patriotique* is an organization comprising of various pro-Gbagbo youth groups. See International Criminal Court, Situation in The Republic Of Côte D'ivoire : The Prosecutor V. Charles Blé Goudé, 15 October 2014, [https://www.icc-cpi.int/CourtRecords/CR2015\\_05455.PDF](https://www.icc-cpi.int/CourtRecords/CR2015_05455.PDF)

<sup>127</sup> *AFP*, Côte d'Ivoire : retour symbolique du Ghana de quatre réfugiés pro-Gbagbo, 30 June 2016, <http://reliefweb.int/report/c-te-divoire/c-te-divoire-retour-symbolique-du-ghana-de-quatre-r-fugi-s-pro-gbagbo>

<sup>128</sup> Note: Further information on the status of the amnesty law was not found in the research period

<sup>129</sup> *AFP*, Côte d'Ivoire : retour symbolique du Ghana de quatre réfugiés pro-Gbagbo, 30 June 2016, <http://reliefweb.int/report/c-te-divoire/c-te-divoire-retour-symbolique-du-ghana-de-quatre-r-fugi-s-pro-gbagbo>



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