



**Press Release
MINUCI-36**

**Address by M. Albert Tévoédjrè,
Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Côte d'Ivoire**

Ladies and Gentlemen; Dear brothers and sisters from Côte d'Ivoire,

On behalf of the United Nations Secretary-General, M. Kofi Annan, I am honoured to be addressing you today to salute your collective drive for Peace and Reconciliation.

I hope that my address to you today will bring you hope and comfort in these days of palpable anguish.

Over the past three weeks, the political debate has become more intense, harsh, and even tense. But we are also aware that the political forces do not wish to destroy the country.

It is for this reason that a document, entitled "Memorandum of Political, Signatories of the Linas-Marcoussis and Accra II Agreements", was handed over to the Head of State today.

Former President Bedié personally informed me that he had contacted the Head of State and that discussions on points of contention as outlined in said Memorandum, were to begin today at 6:00 pm.

I have noted with satisfaction such a common will for dialogue. On behalf of the United Nations Secretary-General, I appeal to all parties and call upon all citizens of Côte d'Ivoire to throw their weight behind this process so that an appropriate solution would be found to each issue raised in the Memorandum.

The international community supports peace in Côte d'Ivoire and would not tolerate political disorder, civilian or military indiscipline, or public demonstrations that could directly give way to destruction, hooliganism and uncontrollable terror. We are all bound by the political compromise adopted in Marcoussis which has become a national and international agreement. Let us fully abide by it. Laws that would enshrine this agreement should be passed without delay. Free, fair and transparent elections must be held within the timeframe prescribed in the Constitution. We should get out of this crisis that has lasted for too long.

During a conversation with the United Nations Secretary-General on Friday, 19 March President Laurent Gbagbo reiterated his readiness to ensure that normalcy would return as soon as possible. We would like to trust his word. We would also like to express our confidence in the people of Côte d'Ivoire. I salute them with respect and affection.

Long Live Côte d'Ivoire! Long Live the United Nations Organization!

