



Côte d'Ivoire Presidential Elections

31 October – 28 November 2010

FACT SHEET: 25 November 2010

- The second round of presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire is scheduled to take place on 28 November 2010. The national institution in charge of organizing and conducting the elections is the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) of Côte d'Ivoire. These are the first presidential elections in the country in a decade.
- On 4 November 2010, the Chairman of the IEC, Mr. Youssouf Bakayoko, announced the provisional result of the first round of the presidential elections, which was held on 31 October 2010. President Laurent Gbagbo of *La Majorité Présidentielle* (LMP) finished in first place with 38.3% of the vote. Alassane Ouattara of the *Rassemblement des Républicains* (RDR) party was in second position with 32.08%, and Henri Konan Bédié of the *Parti Démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire* (PDCI) came third with 25.24% of the vote.
- Since no candidate won the absolute majority in the first round of elections, a second round was scheduled for a run-off between the top two candidates of the first round. According to the Ivorian Constitution, to be elected, a candidate must have the absolute majority of the vote.
- The turn-out in the first round of voting was large: 85.11%, or approximately 4.8 million voters, out of more than 5.7 million Ivorian people enrolled on the voters' list, cast their vote. (There were over 20,000 polling stations).
- On 6 November 2010, the President of the Constitutional Council, Mr. Yao N'Dri, confirmed the provisional result of the first round of the presidential elections.
- On 12 November 2010, the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Y.J. Choi, certified explicitly the final results of the first round. SRSG Choi assessed that the first round was held in a generally peaceful environment and that the minor irregularities observed could not impact on the final results of the elections.
- The electoral campaign for the second round of the presidential elections started on 20 November at midnight and ended on 26 November, also at midnight.
- The United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), a peacekeeping mission deployed there since 2004, is providing technical, logistical and security support to the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and to the IEC. This support has included transportation and distribution of national identity and voters' cards, transportation of equipment and other electoral materials, and security support.

- To bolster security for the elections, on 29 September 2010, the Security Council authorized the deployment of 500 additional peacekeeping personnel to increase UNOCI's military and police presence from 8,650 to 9,150. This temporary increase for a period of up to six months has reinforced the capacity of UNOCI to contribute to security arrangements for the elections, the responsibility for which rests in the first instance with the Ivorian security forces. The deployment of the additional military and police personnel was completed on 18 October. In addition, on 24 November the Security Council authorized the temporary deployment of a maximum of three infantry companies and an aviation unit comprised of two military utility helicopters from UNMIL to UNOCI for no longer than four weeks.
- In preparation to the second round of elections, UNOCI conducted the national distribution of electoral materials, including non-sensitive electoral materials (ballot boxes, polling booths, electoral kits) by air and road to 70 departments throughout the country, as well as sensitive materials such as the ballot papers, which UNOCI transported by air and by road from Abidjan to the *sous-préfectures* and 415 local electoral commissions.
- By UN Security Council Resolution 1765 (2007), SRSG Choi, who is also the head of UNOCI, is mandated to certify that all stages of the electoral process provide all necessary guarantees for the holding of open, free, fair and transparent presidential and legislative elections in accordance with international standards. As he has done in the first round of presidential elections, SRSG Choi is expected to certify the outcome of the run-off presidential election.
- With a view to assessing the certification under this specific context, the SRSG developed, in consultation with the key Ivorian stakeholders and the peace process "facilitator," Burkina Faso President Blaise Compaoré, a "five-criteria framework" for certification (see para 32 of the 16th progress report of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on UNOCI, S/2008/250).
- The framework defines broad benchmarks that enable the SRSG to assess whether: (a) a secure environment exists during the period leading to the elections and allows for the full participation of the population and the candidates in the process; (b) the electoral process is inclusive; (c) all candidates have equitable access to State-controlled media and whether the latter remains neutral; (d) the voters lists are credible and accepted by all parties; and (e) the results of the elections are determined through a transparent counting process and are accepted by all or are challenged peacefully through the appropriate channels.
- In line with his mandate, the SRSG explicitly certified the final voters list of 5,725,720 persons on 24 September 2010.
- The certification of the final voters list took into consideration six major steps over the past five years in Côte d'Ivoire, such as: establishment of mobile courts, the reconstitution of the civil registry records, the identification of the population,

the voter registration process, the establishment of the provisional voters list and the appeals process.

- At the conclusion of each of the first five steps, SRSG Choi certified each step “implicitly” through a press conference in which he made a positive evaluation of the work accomplished.
- As the UN is providing technical support to the electoral process, the UN did not field observers, but offered some services to support international observers, including briefings, coordination of their arrival and transport in the country.
- International observers from the European Union, the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union, the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, the Carter Center, the United States and Japan are observing the voting process along with national observers.
- The European Union and the United Nations Development Programme are assisting the Ivorian government with funding support for the electoral process.
- The peacekeeping mission’s radio station, which covers 75 per cent of the country, has been broadcasting continuous information on the electoral process in five national languages, and has given equal broadcast time to all candidates for campaign statements.
- On 15 October 2010, the Security Council renewed arms, financial and travel sanctions on Côte d’Ivoire for six months, as well as a ban on trade in rough diamonds. But the Council also pledged to review sanctions within three months, after “open, free, fair and transparent” presidential elections.

Background

- The United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire was deployed in 2004 to monitor a ceasefire between the opposing sides, to assist in the disarmament and demobilization of ex-combatants, and to help bring about stability.
- The Ivorian presidential elections have been postponed six times since the last elections in 2000. The first round of the elections on 31 October were the first since conflict broke out in Côte d’Ivoire in 2002, dividing the country into a rebel-held north and Government-controlled southern region.
- According to the Ivorian Constitution, the President is elected for a five-year term and can be re-elected one time.
- The Electoral Code provides candidates the right to challenge the voting and counting processes by appeal to the seven-member Constitutional Council. The Constitutional Council is appointed by the President and is tasked under the Constitution to receive presidential and legislative candidate nominations and determine candidate eligibility. It proclaims the final results of presidential and legislative elections. It also has powers to rule on the constitutionality of legislation and international treaties, and certifies the good conduct of referenda.

- Two candidates, who had the highest votes in the first-round election, are competing:

Laurent Gbagbo (*Front populaire Ivoirien*, and the current President and candidate of LMP)

Alassane Ouattara (*Rassemblement des Républicains* and candidate of the *Le Rassemblement des Houphouëtistes pour la Démocratie et la Paix* (RHDP))

- The Chairman of the Independent Electoral Commission, Youssouf Bakayoko, a member of the opposition Parti démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire, was proposed by the opposition and appointed by President Gbagbo. Other national agencies have played important roles in the electoral process, in particular in preparing the final register of voters.

[Note: All the press releases and media statements that were issued after the first round of elections are posted on the websites below.]

For more information, Please see:

<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unoci/>

<http://www.onuci.org/>

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