



COMMUNIQUE

JOINT HIGH-LEVEL SOLIDARITY MISSION

ECOWAS-AFRICAN UNION AND UNITED NATIONS FOR THE PROMOTION OF CREDIBLE, TRANSPARENT AND PEACEFUL PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF COTE D'IVOIRE

ABIDJAN, 4th to 7th OCTOBER 2020

ABIDJAN, 7th october 2020

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1. A joint high-level mission visited the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire from 4 to 7 October 2020, as part of preventive diplomacy efforts by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union (AU), the United Nations (UN) and the Council of the Entente, with a view to promoting a credible, transparent and peaceful presidential election in the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire on 31 October 2020.

2. The Joint Mission was consecutive to:
 - the ECOWAS-UN video-conference held by ECOWAS and the UN with the President of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) on 24 June 2020 to review the preparations for the presidential elections of 31 October 2020;
 - the consultative meeting with stakeholders and institutions involved in the organisation of the 31 October presidential election in Côte d'Ivoire, jointly organised by ECOWAS, the AU, UN and Conseil de l'Entente on 31 August 2020;
 - the videoconference training workshop for representatives of political parties, to enable them to build their capacity in the areas of communication, the conduct and financing of an electoral campaign and internal democracy, among others, on 21 and 22 September 2020 organised by the ECOWAS Commission;
 - the visit of the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations in West Africa and the Sahel from 20 to 26 September 2020 in the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire.

3. The delegation of the Joint Mission was composed of the following personalities:
 - 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;
 - H.E. Mohamed Ibn CHAMBAS, Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS);

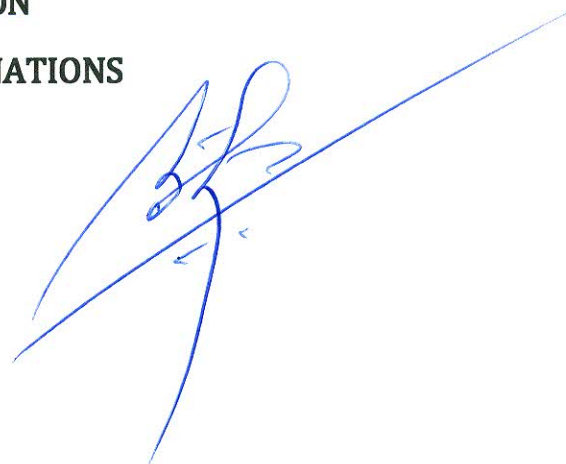
- H.E. Minata Samaté CESSOUMA, Commissioner for Political Affairs of the African Union;
 - General Francis A. BEHANZIN, ECOWAS Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security;
 - Mr. Patrice Kouame, Executive Secretary of the Council of the Entente, also attended all the meeting at the invitation of the President of the ECOWAS Commission.
4. The purpose of the joint mission was to provide Ivorian stakeholders with an additional high level consultative platform, in addition to ongoing efforts to establish communication and interaction among political actors, to agree on consensual commitments for an inclusive, transparent and peaceful presidential election.
 5. During its stay in Abidjan, the Joint Mission was received in audience by His Excellency, Alassane Ouattara, President of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire. He welcomed the members of the Joint Mission and expressed his gratitude for the manifestation of international solidarity with the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire. He reaffirmed to the Mission his determination to promote peace in Cote d'Ivoire and the entire sub-region. In this regard, he assured the Mission that he would spare no effort to ensure the holding of a credible, inclusive, transparent and peaceful presidential election in Côte d'Ivoire.
 6. The Joint Mission held consultations with various institutional actors, including the Prime Minister, the Ministers of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation, Security and Civil Protection, as well as the Presidents of the IEC and the Constitutional Council on the state of preparations for the presidential election of 31 October 2020.
 7. The Joint Mission also held consultations with stakeholders in Côte d'Ivoire, including political parties in the ruling coalition, opposition parties, candidates, the group of African, European and partner ambassadors accredited to the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, as well as various civil society organizations, women and youth associations.

8. The Joint Mission welcomed the commitment and willingness of the authorities to promote an inclusive, transparent, credible and peaceful election in Côte d'Ivoire. It also welcomed the progress made in the preparation of the various technical components for a presidential election whose results would be accepted by all.
9. The Joint Mission expressed deep concern over the lack of trust among Ivorian political actors. It strongly condemned the acts of violence and hate speech with ethnic overtones, which have unfortunately entered the field of political competition and are likely to have a negative impact on the progress made so far in the country.
10. The Joint Mission encouraged IEC to continue meetings with the various candidates to find solutions to the outstanding issues.
11. The Joint Mission urged all stakeholders to use dialogue to resolve all outstanding issues and to commit themselves to the organisation 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.
12. 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 31 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.

13. The Joint Mission informed the Ivorian authorities and political actors of ECOWAS and African Union's intention to deploy election observers for the presidential election of 31 October 2020.
14. ECOWAS, the African Union and the United Nations reaffirm their commitment to accompany the people of Côte d'Ivoire in this critical phase of democratic consolidation.
15. The Joint Mission thanks the Ivorian authorities for the warm and fraternal welcome and for all the facilities made available to them throughout their stay in the country.

Done at Abidjan, this 7th October 2020

**THE JOINT SOLIDARITY MISSION
ECOWAS-AFRICAN UNION-UNITED NATIONS**

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