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Cote D'Ivoire: Domestic Broadcasting Report

February 15th –February 22nd 2011

Government Owned Media

French cooperation minister warns against partitioning Cote d'Ivoire

Text of report by French news agency AFP news agency, Paris, in French 1536 gmt February 15th 2011

- In response to the panel African of states' proposed partition of Cote d'Ivoire as a possible solution to the Ivorian crisis, Cooperation Minister Henri de Raincourt warned that this could lead to a "Balkanization" and "ethnicization" of Africa.
- De Raincourt estimated that economic sanctions are increasing corruption and that "the military option is extremely difficult to put into practice".
- De Raincourt observed that "If the Africans were to decide to intervene, there is now question of helping them" since the French Licorne [Unicorn] force stationed in Abidjan must only intervene if French nationals are threatened".

Two international banks cease activities in Cote d'Ivoire

Source: Radio France Internationale, Paris, in French 0730 gmt February 15th 2011

- Due to pressures from Gbagbo's government to continue transactions despite an order from the West African Central Bank to cease them, BCC and City Bank have temporarily stopped activities.

Ivorian media workers stage strike, demand release of detained journalists

Text of report by UN Mission in Cote d'Ivoire radio ONUCI FM on February 15th 20117

- In an attempt to obtain the release of the two journalists falsely accused of being rebels, 60 members of the Association of Media Men and Women of Korhogo engaged in a peaceful, march of protestation the major streets of Korhogo earlier today.
- The solidarity of the media workers was also demonstrated by the closure of all newsstands and local radio stations.

Cote d'Ivoire: Gbagbo's government to sue two banks over closures

Text of report by Ivorian TV on February 15th 2011

- Despite Laurent Gbagbo's attempt to appeal the decision of the BICICI (International Bank for Commerce and Industry in Cote d'Ivoire) and Citi Bank to cease operations the banks will remained throughout the national territory.
- Gbagbo claims that banks did not respect the law and closed without proper notice. According to Ivorian law banks have to give three months' notice.
- Therefore, in response to this situation, Gbagbo's government made the following decisions:

1. In order to pay the salaries of the month of February, Gbagbo has ordered the general directorate of the treasury and the public accounts office to open, accounts in other banks in which the salaries of civil servants and other state workers will be transferred.
2. The transfer of accounts of state companies and those of parasternal companies in other banks.
3. The minister of justice is instructed to immediately begin legal proceeding against these two banks.
4. A secretariat has been created at the treasury to train and direct the users of the private and public sectors of these two banks.

Ivorian commerce chamber chairman says pessimistic about economy

Text of report by UN Mission in Cote d'Ivoire radio ONUCI FM on February 16th 2011

- Jean-Louis Billon, chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Cote d'Ivoire expressed his concern for Cote d' Ivoire's economic situation. Billon claimed that "the country is slowly moving towards economic and financial chaos".
- According to the economic community, this post-electoral crisis is the worst that the country has so far experienced. Doing Business claimed that the post-election crisis has brought Cote d'Ivoire to the 170th position out of 183 countries in the world.
- Billon claims that many enterprises have closed down and many more will close down if the crisis continues.

Wind" of bank closures reported in northern Cote d'Ivoire

Text of report by UN Mission in Cote d'Ivoire radio ONUCI FM on February 17th 2011

- The closing down of international commercial banks is worsening in Cote d'Ivoire. It has now reached the northern region of Bouake.
- Since the announcement of the closure of several international banks, the Ivorian banking system has been experiencing many difficulties.
- Some banks find it difficult to pay back some amounts of money to their customers. Due to a lack of financing, as well as the closure of some agencies, money transfers are very difficult.
- Ivoirians express their concerns: "We do not understand anything. I have been trying to send money to Abidjan, but I have a lot of problems. I do not understand what is happening. I have come and I have seen a service note which says that UEMOA (West African Economic and Monetary Union) has said that they should limit their transfers. As far as we are concerned, we no longer understand anything"

French bank's Ivorian subsidiary temporarily halts operations

Excerpt from report by French broadcaster Radio France Internationale on February 17th 2011

- Since Monday, Ivorian banks are closing one after the other. The SGBCI (Societe Generale de Banque de Cote d'Ivoire), is the fourth bank this week which has closed its doors. The bank's decision to temporarily halt operations is said to be a result of its inability to provide paper currency to local branches.

Programme summary of Ivorian ONUCI FM radio news 1800 gmt February 17th 2011

- Despite the post-election crisis currently going on in the country, the people of the northern region of Tortilla have arrived at a peaceful cohabitation.

- The sanctions imposed on Cote d'Ivoire by the EU are believed to cause the shortage of drugs in the country.

Gbagbo's government 'takes control' of two French banks in Cote d'Ivoire

Text of report by Ivorian TV on February 17th 2011

- In response to the closure of the BICICI and SGBICI banks, current president Laurent Gbagbo, announced that the by the entire share capital of these banks will be transferred to the state and therefore the control of these banks will be in the control of Gbagbo's government.
- Gbagbo's stated objective is "to ensure that these banks remain open, so as to preserve jobs and to ensure that Ivoirians and the economic operators have access to their assets, given the fact that that these assets are not the property of these banks."

Cote d'Ivoire: Print media regulator warns journalists violating "code of ethics"

Text of report by state-run Ivorian TV on February 18th 2011

- A warning statement against the professional misconduct in Ivorian print media has been issued by the National Press Council (CNP).
- The CNP has observed a number of cases of misconduct and violation of the laws and rules of the code of ethics that regulate the journalism profession and the communication professionals in Cote d'Ivoire.
- The following cases of misconduct were observed: Call for sedition and civil disobedience, incitement of soldiers and law enforcement officers to insubordination and rebellion, attack on national defence secrets and state security, collaboration with the enemy, offending or contempt of the president of the republic, contempt of the prime minister and to the chairmen of republican institutions, statements, communiqués, and decisions coming from institutions or authorities that are not recognized or established in conformity with the Constitution of Cote d'Ivoire.
- The CNP strongly condemns and warns journalists against such actions aimed at creating social conflict with immense consequences.

Ivorian curfew to stay until "rebels" rendered harmless - Gbagbo official

Excerpt from report by French broadcaster Radio France Internationale on February 20th 2011

- Guillaume Soro, Ouattara's prime minister called upon the population of Cote d'Ivoire to follow the footsteps of Egypt and Tunisia and to engage in a revolution in order to force Laurent Gbagbo out of power.
- The crowd of Alassane Ouattara's supporters was violently dispersed by Laurent Gbagbo's security and defence forces claiming that they feared the infiltration of rebels in the neighbourhoods.
- "For some time now we have been noted at Abobo people who have had their throats slit by rebels and we fear a generalization [of the acts] in the neighbourhoods where the RHDP has some militants", says spokesman of Laurent Gbagbo's government, Ahoua Don Mello.
- Casualties resulting from the clashes are estimated to be between 2 and 5 dead.

Cote d'Ivoire: Group plans to lodge complaint against UN, Choi for ONUCI attacks

Text of report by Ivorian TV on February 20th 2011

- The 20 Ivorian young who have mistakenly been fired up by ONUCI (UN Operation in Cote d'Ivoire) soldiers and left two men nearly handicapped in December 2010 and January 2011, intend to file a complaint against the UN representation in Cote d' Ivoire.
- Yet, ONUCI, officials continue to deny these allegations
- The victims request the departure of ONUCI force from Cote d'Ivoire and demand concrete actions are from them towards other victims, especially those of Dignago, where clashes have affected many people.

Employees of closed Ivorian bank said agree to resume work 22 February

Text of report by Ivorian TV on February 21st 2011

- After a meeting with the staff of The International Bank for Commerce and Industry initiated by the minister of economy and finance as well as the minister of budget, The BICICI announced that it will soon reopen its doors and function normally.
- General Managers and supervisory ministers of the national banks promised to collaborate actions so as to “lessen the negative impacts and thus to avoid suffocating the Ivorian economy and deepen the sufferings of the people.”
- One official expressed his commitment: “I can reassure you that we shall be at our workplaces tomorrow at the headquarters [...] you will see that work will resume quietly. I am convinced that 80 per cent of my colleagues are prepared to resume work once security is guaranteed.”

Privately Owned Media

Banking turmoil may spark "large-scale crisis" in Cote d'Ivoire - AFP

Text of report by Thomas Morfin, published by the French news agency AFP February 17th 2011

- Laurent Gbagbo's intention on to "take control" of the Ivorian subsidiaries of the French banks BNP Paribas and Societe Generale is a result of the post-electoral crisis.
- The series of closures is apparently due to the fact that the Central Bank of West African States (CBWAS), has recognized Alassane Ouattara as president of the Republic of Cote d' Ivoire and sanctioned banks working with Gbagbo's government.
- According to Morfin Gbagbo's announced intention to “take control” of the banks is mainly attempt “to ensure the payment of state employees and soldiers, whose loyalty is vital to him, and it is having a go at the former colonial power France through its banks”.