

AMERICAN EMBASSY'S NATIONAL DAILY PRESS REVIEW

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Today's Top Stories

1. President Ouattara's position on the next government and the National Assembly
2. Meeting between Ivorian Army Chief General Soumaila Bakayoko and other army officers on security issues
3. The discovery of human remains believed to be those of a French-Canadian journalist who disappeared in 2004 in Cote d'Ivoire
4. ICC investigations into the crimes committed in Cote d'Ivoire during the recent political crisis
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1. President Ouattara's position on the next government and the National Assembly

"There will be no cabinet reshuffle before April," a front-page headline in Nord-Sud Quotidien quotes President Alassane Ouattara as saying. The president, the report (p. 3) says, was speaking Monday in Abidjan. "Let's move on slowly, we've work to do and the government must continue its work," President Ouattara reportedly said.

President Ouattara's pronouncement on the new government to be formed and the next National Assembly are also subjects of a prominent headline in Fraternite Matin (p. 1). The paper (p. 6) reports that that commentaries and speculation going on regarding the composition of the new cabinet and the first session of the National Assembly are not the President's "priorities." The priorities for the president is to "continue working with Ivorians" because "important tasks are to be completed in the coming weeks, months and years," reports the paper.

Regarding the National Assembly, Fraternite Matin (p. 6) quotes President Ouattara as saying, "The Constitutional Council is examining the electoral disputes; the Independent Electoral Commission should run the Logouale by-election and announce the final results of the parliamentary elections to enable the National Assembly to convey." The President, the report says, has also vowed "not to put pressure on neither the Constitutional Council nor on the Independent Electoral Commission," adding, however, that "the legal deadline will be respected." "The new National Assembly will convene in April," says a front-page headline in Le Patriote, quoting President Ouattara, who is also reported as saying, "I won't succumb to pressure."

In a related development, a front-page headline in *Soir Info* suggests that “there will be no cabinet reshuffle before the end of this month,” while another prominent headline in *L’Inter* (p. 1) indicates that Guillaume Soro, the current Prime Minister, is likely not to retain his post. The paper (p. 4) comments that while speculation on Soro’s possible departure rages on, many political observers believe that the prime minister could be replaced by a cadre from the PDCI-RDA, the party of former Ivorian president Henri Konan Bedie.

In an interview with *Le Nouveau Reveil* (p. 1), Bedie is reported as saying, “The post of the Prime Minister will come to the PDCI-RDA.”

2. Meeting between Ivorian Army Chief General Soumaila Bakayoko and other army officers on security issues

“One cannot put security into the hands of people who are undisciplined,” *Fraternite Matin* (p. 5) quotes the Ivorian Army Chief General Soumaila Bakayoko as saying during a tour of garrisons yesterday in Abidjan. According to the paper, General Bakayoko used the opportunity to remind army officers about their role in order to restore the image of the government forces. He also announced a new uniform for the *Forces Republicaines de Cote d’Ivoire* and vowed “to track down those who will be wearing this new uniform to commit acts that tarnish the image of the army,” the report says.

3. The discovery of human remains believed to be those of a French-Canadian journalist who disappeared in 2004 in Cote d’Ivoire

A prominent report in *Notre Voie* (p. 1) suggests that the human remains uncovered by investigators in the central region of Cote d’Ivoire are “a black person’s human remains.” In the wake of the discovery of human remains believed to be those of Guy-Andre Kieffer, a French-Canadian journalist, who disappeared in 2004 in Cote d’Ivoire, *Le Nouveau Courrier* (p. 1) denounces “a bogus affair.”

4. ICC investigations into the crimes committed in Cote d’Ivoire during the recent political crisis

A prominent report in *L’Inter* (p. 1) suggests that “Presidents Obama and Sarkozy are divided over the case of the Ivorian Prime Minister, Guillaume Soro. “The article (p. 2) also suggests that international human rights groups are pressing for Soro, the leader of the former rebels in Cote d’Ivoire, to be arraigned before the ICC. According to the paper, this prospect does not go down well with French President Sarkozy. “Paris believes that the transfer of Soro to the ICC could have dangerous impact on President Ouattara,” the paper quotes a report as saying.

5. Media-related issues

A report in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 13) says that Ibrahim Sy Savane, the head of HACA, the state-run broadcast media regulatory body, has exhorted heads of religious radio stations to encourage coverage of the entire country.