

American Embassy's National Daily Press Review

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JUNE 29, 2012

Today's Top Stories

- 1. Ambassador Phillip Carter III outlines the U.S. assistance plan for Cote d'Ivoire**
- 2. ECOWAS leaders to meet in Yamoussoukro for a summit**
- 3. A leaked UN report alleges that the ambush that killed seven peacekeepers was led by a Liberia-based armed gang**
- 4. Opposition paper says Cote d'Ivoire's admission under the HIPC debt relief program will not impact the lives of Ivorians**

1. Ambassador Phillip Carter III outlines the U.S. assistance plan for Cote d'Ivoire

U.S. Ambassador to Cote d'Ivoire Phillip Carter III outlined the U.S. assistance priorities in the country a year after the violent crisis that claimed the lives of some 3,000 people. In the course of a wide-ranging interview made Wednesday with Ivorian media outlets including *Fraternite Matin*, *Le Nouveau Courrier* and *Nord-Sud Quotidien*, Ambassador Carter said the U.S. government's engagement strategy in Cote d'Ivoire began right after the crisis with some \$70 million made available to respond to the humanitarian crisis. *Fraternite Matin (pp. 2-3)* published a transcript of the interview in which Ambassador Carter recommitted the U.S. government, through programs such as the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the Transition Assistance Priorities, to supporting the reconstruction of the country. Addressing the issue of national reconciliation, Ambassador Carter said he remains upbeat about its outcome despite the complexity of the issue.

In a related development, *L'Inter (p. 11)* noted that U.S. Embassy Assistance Coordinator Kathryn Nash said the U.S. program dubbed Transition Assistance Priorities aims at supporting the Ivorian people to address development challenges and promoting good governance in Cote d'Ivoire. The ultimate goal of the \$33 million program, she reportedly said in the course of her interview with the paper, is to help the Ivorian government and the National Assembly fulfill their roles, adding that the U.S. government remains concerned about the high level of poverty in Cote d'Ivoire.

Still on the U.S.-Ivorian relationship, *Le Temps* (p. 4) noted that there is a malaise between the Obama administration and the Abidjan regime. According to the daily, which cited a report by the weekly French newspaper *La Lettre du Continent*, the U.S. is more and more skeptical about the Ivorian leadership which is failing to address corruption within the judiciary.

Notre Voie (p. 4) carried a similar account with a banner headline suggesting that the United States government and the Abidjan regime are at loggerheads.

2. ECOWAS leaders to meet in Yamoussoukro for a summit

According to a report in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 4) leaders from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) are due to meet today in Yamoussoukro, Cote d'Ivoire for a regular summit. Discussions, the paper said, will focus on security concerns in Mali and Guinea Bissau. The daily noted that the summit comes as the al-Qaida-linked militant group, known as MUJAO (The Unity Movement for Jihad in West Africa), took control of the town of Gao from the Tuareg separatist MNLA (National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad) Wednesday.

3. A leaked UN report alleges that the ambush that killed seven peacekeepers was led by a Liberia-based armed gang

According to an article in *L'Inter* (p. 3) the deadly ambush that resulted earlier this month in the deaths of seven peacekeepers at the country's border with Liberia has been carried out by an unidentified armed gang based in Liberia. The paper noted that the information stemmed from a UN classified investigation that was leaked to the French wire service RFI. According to the leaked report, a heavily armed squad of one hundred people exchanged fire with a UN patrol convoy, killing seven Nigerien blue helmets and a score of civilians in the Saho village in western Cote d'Ivoire. In addition, according to the paper, RFI raised the question of why Nigerien peacekeepers were patrolling the area instead of a Moroccan contingent based near Saho.

4. Opposition paper says Cote d'Ivoire's admission under the HIPC debt relief program will not impact the lives of Ivorians

According to a report by *Le Nouveau Courrier* (p. 9) the country's admission to the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiatives (HIPC) is not likely to impact the lives of rank-and-file Ivorians. The daily argued that the subject program does not directly address development issues and must therefore in no way supersede development plans.

JUNE 27, 2012

Today's Top Stories

1. World Bank and IMF approve Cote d'Ivoire's admission for HIPC debt relief program
2. U.S. Ambassador meets with chairperson of the National Commission of Inquiry
3. NDI trains parliamentarians on capacity building
4. U.S. Embassy organizes book discussion on children's rights
5. Ivorian teachers trained on management of a school in U.S.

1. World Bank and IMF approve Cote d'Ivoire's admission for HIPC debt relief program

A prominent headline in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 1) describes the decision by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to endorse Cote d'Ivoire's admission to the Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) initiative as "a reward for good governance." Another front-page headline explains that this recompense came after 29 years of continued efforts aimed at restructuring the country's debt. The paper (p. 4) also informs readers that after meeting the conditions for the HIPC debt relief program, the IMF and the World Bank have approved a reduction of two trillion FCFA (about US \$3.1 billion) in debt owed by Cote d'Ivoire, which represents a 24 percent reduction of the country's external debt.

"At long last, we've got it!" and "Two trillion FCFA," are some of the front-page banner headlines that run across *Le Patriote*, with a smiling picture of President Alassane Ouattara. Another front-page headline quotes the president's RDR party as saying, "This has happened because the country has a credible president." Cote d'Ivoire's qualification for the HIPC also offers the paper the opportunity to praise President Ouattara who, it says, "is a man who is working for Ivorians," while another headline in this paper (p. 4) claims that "with Gbagbo the country would never have met the HIPC conditions." On reactions from ordinary Ivorians, the paper (p. 4) carries a cartoon showing people from all walks of life celebrating "the end of poverty in Cote d'Ivoire" or "salary increases for workers," as a World Bank-IMF official carrying a heavy bag full of cash arrives in Abidjan.

"Ouattara wins two jackpots as HIPC is here!" says a prominent headline in *Le Nouveau Reveil* (p. 1) which praises the Minister of Economy and Finance, Charles Koffi Diby. The paper also quotes Ivorian opposition leader Mamadou Koulibaly who "congratulates the government." With more on economic issues, a front-page headline in this paper quotes the Minister of Trade, Dagobert Banzio, as saying, "AGOA, MCC: Cote d'Ivoire is winning."

Reporting on the same issue, *L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* (p. 1) calls for "transparency" in the management of public funds. "HIPC and what next?" asks a prominent headline in *Nord-Sud Quotidien* (p. 1) which quotes an Ivorian economist as saying that "Cote d'Ivoire is still indebted" despite its admission to the debt relief scheme. The paper also carries out a public survey on the issue and quotes the head of MIDD, a movement fighting for the rights of primary school teachers as saying, "The time to exercise patience is over," while a businessman said he wants the government "to treat the payment of its internal debt as a priority."

Meanwhile, a prominent front-page headline in *Notre Voie* suggests that Cote d'Ivoire's admission to the HIPC program should be seen as "a reward for the work done by Gbagbo." "HIPC: a victory for Gbagbo," says a front-page headline *Le Nouveau Courrier*.

2. U.S. Ambassador meets with chairperson of the National Commission of Inquiry

A report in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 7) says that the chairperson of the National Commission of Inquiry yesterday voiced her "concerns" when the U.S. Ambassador in Cote d'Ivoire, Phillip Carter III, called on her. The head of the commission, Ezouehu Paulette Badjo, reportedly said that her main preoccupation is how to "successfully investigate the post-electoral crisis." The report says that the commission's mandate is "to ensure that all the victims are taken into account." The U.S. diplomat met with the head of the commission to congratulate her for nomination and to reaffirm the U.S. Government's support for this process, the report says. The Ambassador also expressed his satisfaction that the probe will be conducted in "an equitable and fair manner."

3. NDI trains parliamentarians on capacity building

The National Democratic Institute (NDI) has trained this week members of the ruling RDR party sitting in the National Assembly on capacity building, reports *Fraternite Matin* (p. 8). The training is part of a series designed for Ivorian lawmakers, the report says. The paper also reports that the director of NDI in Cote d'Ivoire, Charles Yaovi Djrekpo, said that the session was to equip the new MPs in order to enable them to play the role that the people have tasked them.

4. U.S. Embassy organizes book discussion on children's rights

"The U.S. calls for the strict respect for the rights of children," says a report in *Le Mandat* (p. 9). The report says that the call was made during a discussion of the children's book "SOS Enfants du Monde," and included exchanges on how to promote the rights of children to health care, education, equality and protection.

5. Ivorian teachers trained on management of a school in U.S.

A report in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 11) says Ivorian teachers and heads of schools, who are currently taking part in an education exchange program in the United States, have been trained on how to manage schools. The training focused on, among other things, how to become a good headmaster and how to run a school efficiently, reports the paper.

JUNE 26, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. "Cote d'Ivoire to reinforce cooperation with Israel," says President Ouattara
2. The security situation in Cote d'Ivoire
3. Former president's son sues the Ivorian National Assembly speaker

4. Government to set up panel to look into land tenure issue
5. World Bank to approve Cote d'Ivoire's admission for HIPC today
6. Ivorian teachers in U.S. as part of an education exchange program

1. "Cote d'Ivoire to reinforce cooperation with Israel," says President Ouattara

A front-page headline in *Fraternite Matin* quotes President Alassane Ouattara as saying that "cooperation between Cote d'Ivoire and Israel is to be reinforced." The president said this yesterday upon arrival from Israel at the end of a four-day visit. Another banner headline in this paper says that the visit focused on security, business, agriculture, mining and energy issues. "We met many businessmen who are expected in Cote d'Ivoire during the period of July 8 – 10, 2012," the paper (p. 6) quotes President Ouattara as saying to reporters. The report also says that during his visit to Israel, the president attended the forum "Facing Tomorrow 2012."

2. The security situation in Cote d'Ivoire

"The entire territory is cordoned off and secured," *Fraternite Matin* (p. 4) quotes Ivorian Chief of Defense Staff General Soumaila Bakayoko as saying after a tour of the troubled south-western region of Cote d'Ivoire. Speaking to reporters, the army commander said: "Our mission is to protect the entire national territory." In another development, a front-page headline in *Notre Voie* claims that the 41 Ivorians who were extradited from Liberia over the weekend are being detained in an "underground cell."

3. Former president's son sues the Ivorian National Assembly speaker

"Soro to appear in court in France," reads a front-page headline in *Notre Voie*. According to the paper (p. 2), a complaint has been lodged before a court in France against Mr. Guillaume Soro by Michel Gbagbo, the son of the former Ivorian president, for "kidnapping, detention and inhumane treatment." The complaint, the article says, has been lodged against Mr. Soro, who is now the speaker of Cote d'Ivoire's National Assembly, as "the leader of the former pro-Ouattara rebel movement and prime minister" during the post-electoral violence in Cote d'Ivoire. The report also says that the same complaint has been lodged against nine former warlords. "Soro and 10 warlords sued in Paris," says a prominent headline in *L'Inter*.

"Winners' justice under Ouattara's administration: More charges against four political detainees," says another headline in *Notre Voie* (p. 2). According to the paper, four top officials under Gbagbo's regime, including former prime minister Gilbert Ake N'Gbo, have been formally charged by a court in Cote d'Ivoire for crimes including "assassination, murder, arson and genocide."

4. Government to set up panel to look into land tenure issue

The government has announced the setting up of a panel tasked with looking into the land tenure issue in Cote d'Ivoire, says a front-page headline in *Fraternite Matin*. According to the paper, this was announced by Prime Minister Jeannot Ahoussou Kouadio yesterday in Yamoussoukro, as the

government met to find a solution to the land issue. This committee will, among other issues, come out with recommendations to be submitted to the government, reports the paper (**p. 7**).

"Land tenure: Will RDR clash with the PDCI?" asks a front-page headline in ***Nord-Sud Quotidien***. The paper (**p. 2**), which describes the land issue as "a time bomb," goes on to suggest that the issue could jeopardize the cohesion among members of the ruling RHDP coalition. Another article on the same page of this paper says that the government has moved to end land conflict.

5. World Bank to approve Cote d'Ivoire's admission for HIPC today

"HIPC: After the O.K. of the IMF, the World Bank's blessing expected today," says a front-page headline in ***Fraternite Matin***. According to the paper (**p. 13**), the board of the International Monetary Fund yesterday approved Cote d'Ivoire's attainment of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries debt relief initiative and that the World Bank will be endorsing the decision today. The paper casts no doubt about the "good news" but quotes Ivorian Economy and Finance Minister Charles Koffi Diby as saying that "The HIPC achievement is very important but is not the end of the road." The paper also comments that the money Cote d'Ivoire will gain from its qualification for this initiative won't serve to increase salaries but will be used to build facilities such as roads, health centers, schools and provide potable water for poor communities.

6. Ivorian teachers in U.S. as part of an education exchange program

"Principals and educators go to American school," writes ***Fraternite Matin*** (**p. 9**). The report says about 20 heads of private schools have been in the United States since June 24 as part of an education exchange program organized by the International University of Grand-Bassam. The program, the report says, will help the participants acquire knowledge on the American education system.



JUNE 25, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. Ivorian chief of defense staff visits western Cote d'Ivoire to boost the morale of the troops
2. Accused of being involved in last year's post-electoral conflict, 41 Ivorians living in Liberia extradited home

3. Dailies express skepticism about the Ivorian reconciliation process

1. Ivorian chief of defense staff visits western Cote d'Ivoire to boost the morale of the troops

A front-page story in *Soir Info* quotes Ivorian Chief of Defense Staff General Soumaila Bakayoko, who has vowed "to go even beyond the borders of Cote d'Ivoire to track down the enemies." According to the paper, the army officer was speaking over the weekend during a visit to the troubled Ivorian western region in a bid to boost the morale of troops tasked with monitoring security and sensitizing the local population there.

Fraternite Matin (p. 5) also quotes General Bakayoko, who called on the population to help restore peace and security in this region as in other parts of Cote d'Ivoire. "We're here to make sure that security should not be a concern anymore," the army commander is quoted as telling the inhabitants of the region.

2. Accused of being involved in last year's post-electoral conflict, 41 Ivorians living in Liberia extradited home

"41 militias handed over to the Ivorian justice system," says a prominent headline in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 4). According to the paper, the Liberian authorities have extradited Ivorian militia members accused of being involved in the 2011 post-electoral violence. The report says that the 41 men, believed to be close to former president Laurent Gbagbo, arrived in Abidjan on Saturday under heavy escort provided by UN and government forces. The report also says that the deportation of the militias followed a Liberian court's decision.

"Deadly attacks in the west: 41 pro-Gbagbo militia members extradited to Abidjan," says a front-page banner headline in *Le Patriote* which publishes the full list of the deportees. "After the extradition of 41 militia members, 70 Liberian mercenaries also expected in Cote d'Ivoire," says a front-page headline in *Nord-Sud Quotidien*. According to the report, the 70 mercenaries were arrested a couple of weeks ago following the deadly attacks along the Liberian-Ivorian border.

Meanwhile, an article in *Notre Voie* (p. 5) suggests that the extradition of the "41 pro-Gbagbo" militia members is another "setback" for the peace process underway in Cote d'Ivoire. The article says that the deportation, the second round of deportations of people accused of being involved in the post-electoral violence, will hinder the "difficult" reconciliation process.

"To satisfy Ouattara's desires, Liberia is persecuting Ivorian refugees," reads a front-page headline in *Le Nouveau Courrier*. The paper (p. 5) explains how Liberian security forces have besieged refugee camps and harassed Ivorians under the pretext of "tracking down militias and mercenaries." The article also denounces "the disturbing silence" being observed by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and "the complicity" of human rights organizations. The paper also discloses that the 41 "Ivorian youths" who were extradited over the weekend were detained for more than a year.

In a related development, *Le Nouveau Reveil* (p. 3) quotes a reported leader of the FS LIMA, “a pro-Gbagbo militia group,” confessing that the group took up arms to fight President Alassane Ouattara’s government after they were “manipulated” by the previous regime.

3. Dailies express skepticism about the Ivorian reconciliation process

“Has Banny confessed his failure to reconcile Ivorians?” asks a prominent headline in the weekend issue of *Le Patriote* (p. 1) with a picture of the Chairman of the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Charles Konan Banny. An article (p. 2) in this paper denounces what the paper sees as “a bad game” that Mr. Banny is playing. Ivorians continue to wonder “when will Banny begin their reconciliation,” comments the paper, which notes that more than a year after its launch, the process has not progressed except for “some meetings that the chairman has been holding here and there.” The article also accuses Mr. Banny of supporting “impunity” to the detriment of “justice.” “One cannot understand that while the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission is working to restore confidence among the population it looks as if there is a bulldozer that is pulling it back,” the paper quotes Mr. Banny’s spokesperson as saying about the judicial procedures underway regarding crimes allegedly committed during the 2011 post-electoral violence.

Another prominent headline in *L’Inter* (p. 1) raises an alarm saying “Reconciliation is going to hit the wall.” According to the paper (p. 5), Mr. Banny’s problem is how “to reconcile justice and pardon” in his efforts to reconcile Ivorians. Regarding the recent arrests of supporters of the former regime, the paper quotes the spokesperson of the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, as saying, “How do you want me to succeed in convincing these people to join the process while they are being subject to arrest.” Another article in this paper (p. 4) cites the “difficult dialogue” between the opposition FPI party and the current government as the other stumbling block to reconciliation in Cote d’Ivoire. In a bid to give a new impetus to the reconciliation process, the leader of the opposition LIDER party, Mamadou Koulibaly, has made “some recommendations,” reports *L’Inter* (p. 6).

In a related development, *Notre Voie* quotes a leader of the PDCI-RDA party calling for “Gbagbo to be brought back home,” in order save the reconciliation process. “Gbagbo played a key role in what happened in Cote d’Ivoire. For the sake of reconciliation, there is a need to listen to him, to see him and to bring him back for him to encourage the reconciliation process,” the paper quotes Amoakon E. Thiemele, a cadre of Henri Konan Bedie’s party as saying.



June 22, 2012

Today’s Top Stories

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1. Ivorian government resumes talks with opposition parties

2. Fugitive leader of the “Young Patriots” Ble Goude says he is ready to appear before the ICC
3. UN top envoy urges political actors to champion reconciliation
4. Gbagbo’s lawyers file case against French Licorne forces
5. Child labor and gender-based violence still pose major challenges in Cote d’Ivoire
6. New president of Ivorian journalists union names cabinet

1. Ivorian government resumes talks with opposition parties

According to a report in *Fraternite Matin (p. 8)* the Ivorian government has resumed talks with opposition parties. The daily noted that the meeting held yesterday at the Prime Minister’s Office offered a platform of exchange between the government and Ivorian political shareholders. According to the daily, the move follows a session held in Grand Bassam last month.

L’Intelligent d’Abidjan (p. 6) carried a similar report adding, however, that the FPI has once again boycotted the event on the grounds that it was not notified in a timely way of the meeting. According to the daily, discussions at yesterday’s session focused on topical political issues highlighted by the volatile security situation along the country’s border with Liberia. Participants also advocated for an official status for Ivorian opposition leaders.

2. Fugitive leader of the “Young Patriots” Ble Goude says he is ready to appear before the ICC

In an interview yesterday with the French wire service RFI, Charles Ble Goude, former president Laurent Gbagbo’s right-hand man and leader of the “Young Patriots,” said he is ready to stand before the International Criminal Court for his alleged role in violence that followed the 2010 presidential elections. “I am ready to turn myself in to the ICC for the truth to triumph...I am not a criminal,” *Le Temps (p. 6)* reported him as saying. “The world must know what actually happened in Cote d’Ivoire,” he reportedly said.

Still on the issue, *Soir Info (p. 3)* noted that Mr. Ble Goude denounced the government’s rhetoric of reconciliation which he said does not go along with its actions aimed at silencing political opponents. According to Ble Goude, only an amnesty ordered by the government can facilitate his return to his homeland country. “It is up to the government to decide whether or not I will be useful for the reconciliation process...As for me, I am watching,” he reportedly said.

3. UN top envoy urges political actors to champion reconciliation

According to a report by *Fraternite Matin* (p. 9) the UN special envoy in Cote d'Ivoire, Bert Koenders, urged yesterday Ivorian political actors to avoid hate speech and rather champion reconciliation efforts. The announcement, the paper said, was made in the course of the mission weekly briefing held yesterday at its Abidjan headquarters. "The UN Special Envoy believes it is necessary to provide an impetus to efforts aimed at promoting dialogue and reconciliation between Ivorians after the tragic events in the west," UNOCI acting spokesperson Mrs. Sylvie Van Den Wildenberg said, adding that Mr. Koenders called on Ivorian political leaders to go personally to the west in order to pass on messages of reconciliation to the population, in order to promote lasting peace and social cohesion in Cote d'Ivoire".

4. Gbagbo's lawyers file case against French Licorne forces

According to *Aujourd'hui* (pp. 2-4) former president Laurent Gbagbo's lawyers have decided to follow up on a case the ex-leader has filed against the French Licorne forces in Cote d'Ivoire. The daily argued that the move, which came ahead of the hearing of the former president by the ICC, primarily aims at shedding light on the role the French army played in the crisis that raged in Cote d'Ivoire until his April 11, 2011 capture.

5. Child labor and gender-based violence still pose major challenges in Cote d'Ivoire

An article in *Le Temps* (p. 8) noted that Ivorian authorities are committed to addressing the issue of child labor. In this respect, a plan of action called the Child Labor Monitoring System was designed and implemented in Zoukougbeu, a cocoa-producing village on the outskirts of Daloa. According to government officials, the community-based project primarily aims at providing tools to fight and eradicate the practice.

In a related issue, *Notre Voie* (p. 9) noted that gender-based violence has become commonplace in western Cote d'Ivoire as a result of the instability. According to the daily, a recent report by the United Nations Population Fund underscored that the phenomenon is spreading in the conflict-stricken zone, hence the call by UNFPA Director for Cote d'Ivoire Mrs. Suzanne Maiga who pleaded for joint action to address the issue.

6. New president of Ivorian journalists union names cabinet

The new president of the Union of Ivorian Journalists, the UNJCI, Mr. Moussa Traore was officially sworn in yesterday in Abidjan. On the occasion, the paper said, the union cabinet was reshuffled.



JUNE 15, 2012

Today's Top Stories

1. **President Ouattara pays tribute to slain peacekeepers**
2. **Gbagbo's FPI rejects allegations of coup plotting and denounces a "rule of terror"**
3. **AGOA summit underscores African potential**
4. **US media expert visits Ivorian outlets**

1. President Ouattara pays tribute to slain peacekeepers

President Alassane Ouattara and UN top envoy in Cote d'Ivoire Bert Koenders yesterday paid tribute to the seven peacekeepers killed last week in an ambush at the country's border with Liberia. Providing details on the memorial ceremony held at the UN mission headquarters in Abidjan, *Fraternite Matin* (p.6) noted that the Ivorian leader said that measures are being taken to put an end to these attacks and that the perpetrators will be brought to justice. "You have been killed in the line of duty, protecting civilians in a foreign country...Cote d'Ivoire will forever remain grateful for your sacrifice," the paper reported President Ouattara as saying in an emotional address.

Following last week's deadly incident, the Ivorian and Liberian governments are working to deal with the recurrent cross border raids. According to an article in *L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* (p. 5) the Liberian government has issued arrest warrants for warlords and other individuals said to be involved in the recent attacks. These people include Gbagbo's right-hand man Charles Ble Goude. "Security forces are looking for a total of ten individuals who have been identified as persons of interest ... We are asking them to turn themselves over to security forces," the paper reported Liberian Information Minister Lewis Brown as saying yesterday at a press conference.

Still on the issue, according to Minister Brown, 41 Ivorian nationals have already been arrested by Liberian forces for their alleged role in the recent cross border skirmishes. "Immediately after their hearing, those individuals will be turned over to the Ivorian authorities," Brown reportedly said.

Still on last week's incident, *L'Inter* (p. 4) noted that there is not enough evidence to trace the raids to Liberian mercenaries. Citing Mr. Rinaldo Depagne, an official from the US-based think-tank International Crisis Group, the paper argued that both the Ivorian and the Liberian governments are to blame for their failure to efficiently monitor security along the 700 km border between the two countries.

2. Gbagbo's FPI rejects allegations of coup plotting and denounces a "rule of terror"

FPI officials denied accusations from Ivorian authorities that they are the masterminds behind a coup aimed at overthrowing the Ouattara regime. *Notre Voie* (pp. 2-3) argued that there is no evidence of a coup attempt. The daily alleged that the government's move is meant to find a scapegoat to hide the problems caused by the lack of real leadership in the country.

Le Quotidien (p. 4) for its part noted that the so-called plot is now a pretense the government is using to arrest FPI partisans and to install what the paper called a “rule of terror.”

3. AGOA summit underscores African potential

L’Intelligent d’Abidjan (p. 6) carried a report on the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) summit in Washington, DC. According to the daily, in his address at the opening ceremony yesterday, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnny Carson noted the commercial incentives that AGOA offers to African states. He also commended Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton who he said has been very engaged in AGOA since its inception. Citing Secretary Clinton, Carson said that there are good growth opportunities in Africa, “a continent full of potential.”

In a related development, the paper (p. 7) noted that Ivorian Prime Minister Jeannot Kouadio Ahoussou, has on the margins of the AGOA summit met with US investors to promote investment in Cote d’Ivoire.

Still on investment, an article in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 13) noted that the American Chamber of Commerce of Abidjan, which was closed as a result of the crisis, will be reopened soon. According to the daily, the announcement was made by Secretary Clinton during her address at the opening of the AGOA Summit.

4. US Media expert visits Ivorian outlets

US media expert Michael Keating visited yesterday Ivorian media outlets. The information was reported by *Le Patriote* (p. 10) which noted that the discussions focused on how to create sustainable media businesses in a post-conflict environment. On the occasion, the paper added, Mr. Keating called on managers of print media to undertake the changes necessitated by the development of the Internet in order to maintain a viable press.

JUNE 14, 2012

Today’s Top Stories

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1. Experts from Cote d’Ivoire and Liberia meet over security concerns at the common border of the two countries
2. Coup plot uncovered by Ivorian authorities sparks controversy
3. Report says President Obama backs plans for economic revival in Cote d’Ivoire
4. Municipal and local elections to be held in Cote d’Ivoire by the end of the year

5. US Embassy trains news publishers on media business
6. A gay couple assaulted in Abidjan

1. Experts from Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia meet over security concerns at the common border of the two countries

Ivorian authorities and their Liberian counterparts are to launch "a huge operation" in a bid to crack down on militias who launched attacks in the western Cote d'Ivoire, reports *Fraternite Matin* (p. 1). The report also says that the clearing exercise will be backed by UN peacekeeping forces stationed in Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia. According to the paper (p. 5), security experts from both countries met yesterday in Abidjan to hammer out plans for this joint military operation. "The government will take the necessary measures to put an end to the continuous attacks in the west," reports the paper (p. 4) which published a statement issued yesterday after a cabinet meeting presided over by President Alassane Ouattara in Abidjan.

A report in *Nord-Sud Quotidien* (p. 2) says that the Ivorian Foreign Minister, Daniel Kablan Duncan, who presided over the meeting, called on the Liberian authorities to help restore security in the troubled western region. The paper quotes Duncan as saying the meeting was also an opportunity to discuss "obstacles" that are hindering the "extradition of ex-combatants in accordance with international law."

"The task force in the west on the offing," says a headline in *Le Nouveau Reveil* (p. 4) which informs readers that the military operation to be launched soon in western Cote d'Ivoire will help strike war criminals and other mercenaries loyal to the former regime. The paper also quotes the Ivorian Security Minister, Hamed Bakayoko, who disclosed that "the joint military operation will include Ivorian and Liberian armed forces as well as UN peacekeeping forces stationed in Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia with the backing of countries such as France and the United States."

Reporting on the security situation in Cote d'Ivoire, *Le Nouveau Courrier* carries a front-page banner headline reading, "Ouattara establishes the rule of terror." The paper also denounces what it sees as "the drift of a panicking regime," and goes on to allege that government forces (FRCI) have "abused" the population living in the western region of the country. The article (p. 3) says that the population is caught between rival forces are fighting in this region.

2. Coup plot uncovered by Ivorian authorities sparks controversy

"This is simply ridiculous," *Le Nouveau Courrier* (p. 3) quotes a minister in the former regime as saying about a statement made by the interior minister saying that the government had foiled a coup to be staged by pro-Gbagbo supporters. "So-called foiled coup: The sad spectacle of a desperate regime," reads a front-page headline in *Notre Voie*. The paper (p. 3) denounces what it describes as "a plot" designed to bring down the opposition FPI party. Another article on the same page of this

paper denounces the “torture” of Mr. Moise Lida Kouassi, a former defense minister, who confessed in a video that he participated in a plan to overthrow the current regime in Cote d’Ivoire.

“I see no credibility in his confession,” *Fraternite Matin* (p. 7) quotes the lawyer of Mr. Lida Kouassi. The paper also quotes the lawyer as saying “I could only trust this if it were made in the presence of a lawyer. However, the fact that the television carried a strange image of somebody who was speaking on television without reserve looked like a fabrication.” Reacting to the same issue, the head of the Ivorian civic groups says that “we’re waiting to see whether Mr. Lida Kouassi will reiterate his confessions during his trial,” reports *L’Intelligent d’Abidjan* (p. 8).

“Coup d’etat, assassination of Robert Guei, killing in the west: The FPI caught red-handed,” says a front-page prominent headline in *Le Nouveau Reveil*. The paper carries another front-page headline wondering whether “Ghana is an accomplice of pro-Gbagbo coup plotters.” An article in this paper (p. 3) deplores that Ghanaian authorities are “too tolerant and complaisant” with the supporters of the former regime who sought refuge in Ghana. The article also suggests that the Ghanaian authorities have yet to execute the arrest warrants issued by the Ivorian authorities seeking the extraction of these people.

3. Report says President Obama backs plans for economic revival in Cote d’Ivoire

With a picture of President Obama on its front page, *Fraternite Matin* carries a prominent headline (p. 19) saying that the American leader has called for “massive support” to Cote d’Ivoire as the country moves forward for an economic revival. According to the paper, this was stated by the head of USAID in Washington during a meeting with Ivorian Prime Minister Jeannot Ahoussou Kouadio. The meeting, the report says, was initiated on the margins of the AGOA Forum. The article also says that President Obama made the call during the recent G8 Summit and this has resulted in American investors showing keen interest in doing business in Cote d’Ivoire.

With more on economic issues, *Fraternite Matin* carries a front-page headline expressing optimism as to the qualification of Cote d’Ivoire for the IMF-backed HIPC debt relief initiative. According to the paper, the Director General of the IMF, Christine Lagarde, who was speaking after a meeting with the prime minister, confirmed Cote d’Ivoire’s qualification by June this year. In a related development, the paper (p. 1) also reports that the country is working for its eligibility for the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC).

4. Municipal and local elections to be held in Cote d’Ivoire by the end of the year

“The municipal and local elections will be held in the last quarter of the year 2012,” says a headline in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 5). According to the paper, this was announced yesterday by the government’s spokesperson, Bruno Kone, after a cabinet meeting.

5. US Embassy trains news publishers on media business

Journalists of *Le Nouveau Reveil* yesterday met with American media and economic expert, Michael Keating as part of the ongoing seminar on “Media and Business” organized by the US Embassy. The

discussion focused on management of media enterprises and marketing plans aimed at making the media more independent, reports the paper (p. 7).

6. A gay couple assaulted in Abidjan

A report in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 13) says that a gay couple was assaulted by an angry mob in the Abidjan neighborhood of Adjame. According to the paper, the incident occurred over the weekend when the couple, whose names have been withheld, was celebrating their marriage.

JUNE 13, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. Ivorian authorities foil a plot to overthrow the government
2. International Criminal Court postpones hearing in the case against Gbagbo
3. Fresh attack on the Cote d'Ivoire-Liberia border

1. Ivorian authorities foil a plot to overthrow the government

The Ivorian state television, RTI1 yesterday broadcast a video showing a group of soldiers claiming to be members of a "Council of National Sovereignty," announcing a coup d'etat. The video also showed the spokesperson of the Council of National Sovereignty announcing "the dissolution" of all state institutions and political parties indefinitely. The video was broadcast during a live program with Interior Minister Hamed Bakayoko who announced that the government has uncovered and thwarted a coup d'etat planned by exiled military officers believed to be close to former President Laurent Gbagbo. According to the minister, the security services had arrested several participants in the alleged plot and seized documents outlining a plan to topple President Alassane Ouattara and put in place a transitional military body.

Another video, which was broadcast during the TV program, quotes former defense minister Moise Lida Kouassi, who was arrested a few days ago in Togo and deported back to Cote d'Ivoire, confessing "I set up a plan designed to destabilize our country." According to the tape, Mr. Kouassi, who was speaking to investigators, also begged for presidential "pardon."

"The FPI confesses its attempted coups," says a prominent headline in *Le Nouveau Reveil* (p. 1). "The confession of Lida Kouassi," says a front-page headline in *Fraternite Matin*. "Coup d'etat against Ouattara's regime: Lida confesses," says a banner headline in *Nord-Sud Quotidien*, while

another banner headline in **Le Patriote** reads: “all about the FPI’s coup attempt.” The paper (p. 1) also mentions officials of the former regime including former ministers such as Katina Kone and Augustin Comoe as the “financiers” of the plan to overthrow the government.

A front-page headline in **Soir Info** describes as “disturbing” the revelations about coup attempts made yesterday by the interior minister. “The one-man-show of prosecutor Hamed Bakayoko,” reads a front-page headline in **Le Nouveau Courrier** which tells readers that the minister was attempting to “demonize” the opposition FPI party. The report (p. 3) also says that the minister wondered why the former ruling FPI was not dissolved, as happened, for example, in Tunisia.

2. International Criminal Court postpones hearing in the case against Gbagbo

With a picture of Laurent Gbagbo on its front page, **Notre Voie** carries a prominent headline saying that the former Ivorian president, who is facing charges of crimes against humanity, has secured “a new victory” as the ICC has postponed his hearing. Through this decision, the ICC has “disapproved of Ocampo,” reads another front-page headline.

“ICC: Gbagbo takes control of the situation,” says a prominent headline in **Le Nouveau Courrier**. According to the paper (p. 5) the confirmation of charges hearing originally planned for June 18 is rescheduled to August 13. The article also suggests that the adjournment would give Gbagbo’s lawyer more time to gather evidence to challenge charges leveled against the former president.

“Two months of reprieve for Gbagbo,” says a front-page headline in **Fraternite Matin**. “ICC rules out Ocampo,” reads a front-page banner headline in **L’Inter**, while a prominent headline in **L’Intelligent d’Abidjan** says, “Gbagbo’s lawyer knocks out Ocampo.” Meanwhile, a report in **Nord-Sud Quotidien** suggests that the decision by the ICC to postpone the hearing of the former Ivorian president is not a victory per se. “This is not a victory,” the paper (p. 3) quotes a leading member of the President Ouattara’s RDR party as saying.

3. Fresh attack on the Cote d’Ivoire-Liberia border

Fourteen persons including three civilians were killed yesterday by militias in the western district of Gohouin, reports **Fraternite Matin** (p. 6). According to the paper, ten assailants and one government soldier were also killed during the attack by militias who were supported by Liberian mercenaries.

On plans underway to restore peace to the troubled Ivorian western region, **Fraternite Matin** quotes the head of the UN mission in Cote d’Ivoire, Albert Gerard Koenders, who vowed: “We’ll discourage those who are killing and causing mayhem.” The head of the UN mission was speaking a few days after seven blue helmets were killed in this region.

Meanwhile, a front-page report in **L’Inter** says that government and UN forces are to launch an operation aimed at clearing the western regions. “Violence in the West: Ouattara declares war on his Burkinabe militias,” says a front-page headline in **Le Nouveau Courrier**.

JUNE 12, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. The UN mission in Cote d'Ivoire reinforces its presence along the country's border with Liberia
2. National reconciliation commission's chairman Charles Konan Banny to meet with former president Laurent Gbagbo at The Hague
3. Ivorian journalists trained on child labor issue
4. US media expert outlines ways to create sustainable media businesses in a post-conflict context

1. The UN mission in Cote d'Ivoire reinforces its presence along the country's border with Liberia

According to a report in *L'Inter* (p. 4) the United Nations Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) is reinforcing its presence along the country's border with Liberia following last week's deadly clash in which seven blue helmets lost their lives. The daily stated that combat aircraft have been sent in support of the UN mission in Cote d'Ivoire ahead of joint military exercises with Ivorian and Liberian forces. These aircraft include helicopters of the MI-24 type, the paper said, adding that a large-scale security operation is to begin on Friday in the forested area.

Still on security issue in this zone, an article in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 6) underscored that the porous 700 km long border between Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia makes it hard to efficiently monitor security in the zone where deadly cross border attacks are often reported.

Providing an update on the situation a few days after the deadly incident, *Le Nouveau Reveil* (p. 4) noted that the death toll could be higher than previously announced. Citing the Ivorian Minister in charge of Defense, Mr. Paul Koffi Koffi, the paper noted that several alleged assailants have been arrested by the Ivorian army. The violence, the paper added, has forced local inhabitants to leave the area, a situation Mr. Koffi said the Ivorian government is addressing.

2. National reconciliation commission's chairman Charles Konan Banny to meet with former president Laurent Gbagbo at The Hague

The chairman of the Dialogue, Peace and Reconciliation Commission (CDVR) Charles Konan Banny will reportedly have a tête-à-tête today with former president Laurent Gbagbo. The information was

released by *L'Inter* (p. 3) which noted that Gbagbo's hearing at the International Criminal Court is due to start next week. Though, not confirmed by Mr. Banny's office, the trip could be a charm offensive to secure the support of the ex-leader in the reconciliation process, the paper added.

Still on the ex-leader, the paper noted in a separate development (p. 3) that Gbagbo could be granted bail. In this event, the paper added the man accused of war crimes could find shelter in Uganda which has agreed to welcome him under a deal with the ICC.

3. Ivorian journalists trained on child labor issue

According to an article in *Notre Voie* (p. 7) Ivorian journalists and reporters were recently trained on the issue of child labor. Jointly organized by the International Labor Organization and a local NGO known as RICAC the session held from June 6 to June 8 in the seaside town of Grand Bassam primarily aimed at raising awareness among media professionals on the phenomenon which poses a real threat to children and violates labor rights provisions. The three-day session was attended by government officials and US Public Affairs Officer Jonathan Cebra, the paper said.

4. US media expert outlines ways to create sustainable media businesses in a post-conflict context

An article in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 18) reported on a training session held Monday in Abidjan by US media expert Michael Keating. Designed for Ivorian editors and press business managers, the one-day session was an occasion for Mr. Keating to outline ways to better manage media businesses in a post-conflict context. For his part, US Embassy Public Affairs Officer Jonathan Cebra stressed the importance of a free press in a democratic country, adding that the US remains committed to supporting the emergence of sustainable media businesses likely to advance democracy. On behalf of the participants, the president of the Ivorian Union of Editors (GEPCI) Amede Assi thanked US Embassy for its initiative.

JUNE 11, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. Liberia closes border with Cote d'Ivoire after Friday's deadly cross-border attack
2. Ivorian PM Jeannot Ahoussou to attend the AGOA Forum in Washington
3. The UN Mission in Cote d'Ivoire to support local elections

1. Liberia closes border with Cote d'Ivoire after Friday's deadly cross-border attack

Several people, including seven UN peacekeepers, were killed in an ambush last Friday by an unidentified armed gang in a small village known as Carrefour Saho in the forested Tai region in western Cote d'Ivoire. The deadly attack made news over the weekend as it underscores the volatile security situation along the country's border with Liberia. Providing details on the incident, an article in the weekend edition of *Fraternite Matin* (p. 5) alleged that pro-Gbagbo militiamen and Liberian mercenaries are to be blamed for the simultaneous attacks on three villages in the Tai region. The paper notes that the raid came few days after a report by Human Rights Watch criticized Liberian authorities for failing to properly address cross-border activities involving mercenaries and militiamen who fought in Cote d'Ivoire during last year's crisis and have since then found shelter in neighboring Liberia. For the Ivorian Minister in charge of Defense, Mr. Paul Koffi Koffi, the attackers came from Liberia. "These people came from the other side of the border...They are militias and mercenaries," he reportedly said in the course of a press briefing on Saturday.

Under mounting pressure as the result of the deadly incident that claimed the lives of seven Nigerian peacekeepers serving with the UN Mission in Cote d'Ivoire (ONUCI), Liberian authorities said yesterday that they were closing their border with Cote d'Ivoire. According to *L'Inter* (p. 4) the measure was announced by Liberian Information Minister Lewis Browne who added that investigations to determine the origin of those responsible for the attack are ongoing.

According to a report in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 5) UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, who has condemned the raid, urged the two neighboring countries to work towards containing and bringing to justice the perpetrators. Similarly, UN special envoy in Cote d'Ivoire Bert Koenders said those responsible will be brought to justice as he paid tribute to the deceased who, he underscored, were engaged in the protection of civilians. The paper highlighted that it is a total of 64 people who have lost their lives in attacks of this sort in the zone since last year.

On its part, the Ivorian government, through the Minister in charge of Defense, Paul Koffi Koffi, said security measures will be enhanced along the country's border with Liberia. "We will increase the deployment of the Ivorian army along the zone and work closely with Liberian authorities to better monitor security," *Fraternite Matin* (p. 4) reported Mr. Koffi as saying.

This incident is, however, diversely commented on in Ivorian press. Thus for *Le Temps* (pp. 6-8) the attack could be traced to a score-settling dispute among soldiers from the FRCI and other pro-Ouattara forces.

According to *Le Nouveau Courrier* (p. 5) this incident is nothing but a scheme designed against former president Laurent Gbagbo who is accused of having recruited Liberian mercenaries during last year's political standoff. According to his spokesperson, Katina Kone, this allegation could be used as evidence against the ex-leader during his hearing next week.

Le Patriote (p. 2) alleged that FPI's leading figures, including its acting secretary-general Laurent Akoun and FPI youth branch leader Justin Koua are, by their inflammatory rhetoric, fueling tension in western Cote d'Ivoire.

2. Ivorian PM Jeannot Ahoussou to attend the AGOA Forum in Washington

According to a report in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 14) Ivorian Prime Minister Jeannot Ahoussou-Kouadio is to attend the African Growth Opportunity Act Forum scheduled for June 12 to June 20 in Washington. Accompanied by the Ivorian Minister of Industry, Mr. Dosso Moussa, and the Minister of Commerce, Dagobert Banzio, the Ivorian Premier is to discuss investment possibilities under the U.S.-sponsored program which provides incentives to promote free markets. A meeting between Mr. Ahoussou-Kouadio and IMF Director Christine Lagarde is also on the agenda, the paper said.

3. The UN Mission in Cote d'Ivoire to support local elections

A report in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 6) noted that the United Nations Mission in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) is to support Ivorian authorities in the organization of local elections. According to the daily, the issue was on the agenda of a meeting between the UN Special Envoy in Cote d'Ivoire Bert Koenders and the President of Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) Mr. Youssouf Bakayoko. "It is important to have fair and inclusive local elections...and the UN Security Council will define the role the UN will play in these elections" Mr. Koenders reportedly said.

JUNE 8, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. The arrest by Togolese police of Gbagbo's former top adviser has triggered mixed comments
2. Gbagbo's lawyers ask the ICC to postpone his hearing
3. Liberian authorities react to criticism that they failed to stop cross-border mercenary attacks
4. Oil found off Cote d'Ivoire boosts hope for future wells as the Ivorian government vows to take additional incentives to crack down on unemployment
5. US-Ivorian cooperation highlighted by the International Visitor Leadership Program

1. The arrest by Togolese police of Gbagbo's former top adviser has triggered mixed comments

The arrest of Moise Lida Kouassi, a former top adviser of Ivorian ex-leader Laurent Gbagbo, continues to dominate the Ivorian news and is diversely commented on. An article in *Le Nouveau Reveil* (p. 2) alleges that Lida Kouassi, who has been living in exile in Lome, Togo since last year, was plotting a coup against the Ivorian government. The plan was discovered by Togolese intelligence agents, the paper added.

This version is however rejected by opposition papers. Thus, for *Notre Voie* (p. 3) the Togolese government has violated international laws protecting political refugees and is backing what it termed as “the victor’s justice” prevailing at present in Cote d’Ivoire. The daily noted that Mr. Kouassi’s residence was raided by the police a few days after he reiterated in the course of an interview his support for former president Laurent Gbagbo.

Le Temps (p. 7) argued that Togolese President Faure Gnassingbe is to be blamed for having given the go-ahead to the extradition of Mr. Kouassi who is now the inmate of the “Ivorian dictatorial government.”

For *Aujourd’hui* (pp. 2-3) the move aims primarily at overshadowing Gbagbo’s hearing scheduled for June 18 at the International Criminal Court.

With more on the issue, *Nord Sud Quotidien* (p. 2) said Mr. Lida Kouassi has been transferred to a detention facility in Abidjan as known as MACA. He has been questioned by law enforcement agents and, according to people close to the case, tangible evidence against the man accused of plotting a coup has been retrieved from his computer and cell phones, the paper reports.

2. Gbagbo’s lawyers ask the ICC to postpone his hearing

According to reports in the press, former president Laurent Gbagbo’s lawyers have asked the ICC to postpone his hearing slated for June 18. Providing details, *Le Nouveau Courrier* (pp. 2-6) published a brief filed with the court by the defense team of the ex-leader in which the lawyers argued that Mr. Laurent Gbagbo is unwell after allegedly being mistreated during his eight-month detention in a windowless room in Cote d’Ivoire. “He has suffered cruel and inhumane treatment in Cote d’Ivoire before he was sent to The Hague... His detention in solitary confinement should be considered a form of ill-treatment as serious as physical abuse and even torture,” the report read.

With more on the issue, *Le Quotidien d’Abidjan* (pp. 8-9) argued that according to Gbagbo’s lawyer Emmanuel Altit, the ex-leader was arbitrarily detained in Korhogo.

L’Inter (p. 4) added that the move is also meant to allow the defense more preparation time given the case’s complexity. The defense also said under the current circumstances the hearing is likely to be biased against the ex-leader. The lawyers also complained that more resources and money are available for the prosecutors whereas the defense is very limited in means and has to work in a rather hostile environment.

3. Liberian authorities react to criticism that they failed to stop cross-border mercenary attacks

According to *Fraternite Matin* (p. 5) a recent report by Human Rights Watch accused Liberian authorities of not doing enough to stop mercenaries operating along the country’s border with Cote d’Ivoire. Reacting to the criticism, Liberian Information Minister Lewis Brown rejected the allegation, arguing that the Liberian government is taking appropriate measures. “There is a high level of commitment and engagement from both sides to rid our border of those operatives,” he reportedly

said, adding that Liberian and Ivorian forces as well as the UN peacekeeping missions in both countries would "very shortly" begin participating in joint exercises to further secure the border area.

This announcement came as a recent raid by an unidentified armed gang resulted in the deaths of two people in Guitrozon, a village in the forested Duekoue region. At least one woman was reported to have been raped and many other people injured during yesterday's assault, the paper added in a separate story on the same page.

With more on security in the volatile western region, *L'Inter* (p. 6) noted that the Ivorian army is to be deployed in the area soon ahead of joint military exercises with Liberian and UN forces.

4. Oil found off Cote d'Ivoire boosts hope for future wells as the Ivorian government vows to take additional incentives to crack down on unemployment

According to an article in *Le Patriote* (p. 6) crude oil was found off Cote d'Ivoire by London-based Tullow Oil. The discovery is the country's first meaningful deepwater reserve and gives confidence that additional wells may be available in the Ivorian waters.

This discovery came as the Ivorian government recommitted to fighting unemployment by enhancing incentives aimed at creating jobs. Speaking yesterday on *RTI*, government spokesperson Bruno Kone said it is a total of 25,000 jobs that the Ivorian government is planning to create every year.

Still on the development perspective, *Le Patriote* (p. 4) noted that the Abidjan port is to be extended with an additional container terminal. According to the port authorities the move will allow for an increase in port traffic.

5. US-Ivorian cooperation highlighted by the International Visitor Leadership Program

According to a report in *L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* (p. 3) Mrs. Massogbe Diakite Toure, an Ivorian national, has been selected by the U.S. State Department to participate in the International Visitor Leadership Program. According to the daily, Mrs. Toure will have the opportunity during her stay in the U.S. to explore political, economic and social factors that influence the development of private enterprise and free trade in the U.S.



JUNE 7, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. "A democracy is not weakened by criticism," says Ambassador Phillip Carter III

2. Top minister of ex-regime extradited to Cote d'Ivoire after his arrest in Togo
3. Reports accuse militia close to the former regime of trying to attack Cote d'Ivoire from Liberia
4. Laurent Gbagbo's hearing at the ICC on June 18
5. Ivorian Prime Minister to attend 2012 AGOA Forum

1. "A democracy is not weakened by criticism," says Ambassador Phillip Carter III

"Freedom of the press: US Ambassador expresses concern," says a front-page headline in *L'Inter*. An article in this paper (**p. 14**) quotes Ambassador Phillip Carter III as saying that "A democracy is not weakened by criticism. If the criticism is valid, it serves as a useful check. If the criticism is contrived, have faith in your people to realize that." The diplomat, who was speaking yesterday in Abidjan during a ceremony designed to present computers to the Ivorian journalists' association, UNJCI, also said: "I'm a friend of Cote d'Ivoire. But friends must speak the truth to each other." "Overreaction by arresting journalists or suspending newspapers does not strengthen a government, it undermines democratic principles," Ambassador Carter is reported as saying.

"Attacks on the freedom of the press: United States slams the regime," says a front-page headline in *Le Nouveau Courrier*. An article in this paper (**p. 4**) says that Ambassador Carter voiced "the truth" to Ouattara's regime as he spoke yesterday in Abidjan. The article also notes that since President Ouattara has assumed power, the rights of journalists have been constantly "soiled," making the profession of journalism "more and more dangerous." The article further suggests that "intimidations, arrests and suspensions of the newspapers close to the opposition have been commonplace." "This is the situation, which the US Ambassador, Phillip Carter III – an ally of Ouattara – deplored yesterday," writes the paper.

"If the criticism is valid, it serves as a useful check," a headline in *L'Expression* (**p. 10**) quotes Ambassador Carter as saying. "US Embassy offers equipment to the computer room of the Abidjan press center," says a headline in *Le Patriote* (**p. 12**) and on the website of the state-run news agency *AIP*. "A free press is one of the pillars of democracy," *Le Nouveau Reveil* (**p. 8**) quotes the Ambassador as saying, while *Fraternite Matin* (**p. 13**) carries a headline reading, "US Embassy offers 20 computers to UNJCI."

With more on freedom of the press in Cote d'Ivoire, *Fraternite Matin* (**p. 13**) publishes a statement issued by the Ivorian Committee for the Protection of Journalists (CIPJ) demanding the authorities to "sanction" two police constables accused of "assaulting" a journalist in Abidjan on Tuesday.

2. Top minister of ex-regime extradited to Cote d'Ivoire after his arrest in Togo

"Arrested in Togo, Lida Kouassi was extradited yesterday," says a prominent headline in *Soir Info* (**p. 1**). The article (**p. 4**) says that the former defense minister under ex-president Laurent Gbagbo's

regime, who sought refuge in the Togolese capital Lome, was picked up at his residence and then handed over to Ivorian authorities. "Compromising documents, leading to a plan to destabilize Cote d'Ivoire, have been found on him," the paper **(p. 5)** quotes Ivorian Interior Minister Hamed Bakayoko as saying.

With a photo of the former defense minister flanked by security agents on its front-page, *Le Patriote* carries a prominent headline explaining "How Gbagbo's security guru was picked up." Reacting to the arrest of the former defense minister, President Alassane Ouattara is quoted by *Fraternite Matin* as saying, "Everybody is aware of his involvement in the crisis." A report in this paper **(p. 7)** says that Mr. Lida Kouassi was arrested and deported in the execution of international arrest warrants issued by the authorities in Cote d'Ivoire against top officials of the former regime. The article also notes that the former defense minister is the first personality to be arrested as part of the application of these arrest warrants that were issued in August 2011.

"Attempted coup d'etat: Lida arrested yesterday," reads a banner headline in *Le Nouveau Reveil* **(p. 1)** which discloses that a plan aimed at "destabilizing" Cote d'Ivoire has been found in his residence in Lome. The paper also reports that supporters of the former regime, who have sought refuge in Togo since the recent post-electoral crisis in Cote d'Ivoire, are now fleeing into neighboring Ghana.

Le Nouveau Courrier hits its headline with what it describes as "the deal between Ouattara and Gnassingbe that led to the arrest of Mr. Lida Kouassi in Togo." A report in this paper **(p. 5)** says that the former defense minister was arrested when President Ouattara was in Togo to attend a summit of the heads of state of West African Monetary and Economic Union. The article quotes insiders as saying that the arrest and transfer of Mr. Kouassi was part of "a deal" between the Ivorian president and his Togolese counterpart. Another article on the same page of this paper says that the former leader of the youth wing of the opposition FPI party, Konate Navigue, was briefly questioned by the Ghanaian authorities yesterday in Accra. "Ouattara tracked down Lida Kouassi during his visit to Lome," reads a front-page headline in *Notre Voie*.

3. Reports accuse militia close to the former regime of trying to attack Cote d'Ivoire from Liberia

"Pro-Gbagbo militias to attack Cote d'Ivoire," says a front-page story in *Le Patriote*. The paper **(pp. 2-5)** published a report documented by Human Rights Watch saying that the militias have established their training bases in neighboring Liberia and are launching deadly raids on villages across the border in Cote d'Ivoire. "Continuous attacks in the west: Human Rights Watch accuses pro-Gbagbo mercenaries," says a front-page headline in *Fraternite Matin*.

In a related development, a front-page story in *Nord-Sud Quotidien* suggests that the United States is concerned about the state of security in Cote d'Ivoire. The paper **(p. 4)** refers to a State Department message informing American citizens living or planning to travel to Cote d'Ivoire about security measures.

4. Laurent Gbagbo's hearing at the ICC on June 18

"Gbagbo has little chance to be released," a front-page headline in *Le Patriote* quotes an international law expert as saying ahead of the June 18 hearing at the International Criminal Court. Meanwhile, *Notre Voie* (p. 1) carries a prominent headline suggesting that "procedures under the ICC could lead to the release of the former president."

5. Ivorian Prime Minister to attend 2012 AGOA Forum

A front-page story in *L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* announces that Prime Minister Jeannot Ahoussou Kouadio will be engaged in lobbying to encourage American businesses to invest in Cote d'Ivoire during the upcoming AGOA Forum. According to the paper (p. 4), the Prime Minister will be at the head of a delegation made up of experts in doing business in the United States.



JUNE 6, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. Policemen stage street demonstration in Abidjan
2. More reactions on infighting within the ruling RHDP coalition
3. Laurent Gbagbo's hearing at the ICC on June 18
4. "Ivorian economy is back," says Economy and Finance Minister
5. US-Cote d'Ivoire bilateral cooperation
6. UNESCO reopens office in Abidjan

1. Policemen stage street demonstration in Abidjan

"To demand the return of their contributions to a housing project, policemen march without permission," says a prominent headline in *L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* (p. 1). A report in this paper (p. 7) says that the policemen, who felt they were defrauded in a housing project, yesterday poured into the streets of Abidjan to express their anger. The report also says that traffic virtually came to a standstill in the commercial center of Plateau, as the protesters marched peacefully through the streets to demand reimbursement of their money. "To voice their anger, some 200 policemen stage street demonstration," says a front-page headline in *Fraternite Matin*.

"Angry policemen march through Plateau," says a front-page headline in *Notre Voie*. According to the paper (p. 7), nearly a thousand policemen in plainclothes took part in the demonstration. "A regime

that swindles its own police,” reads another story on the same page, while another prominent headline says “2.5 billion FCFA [US \$4.8 million] belonging to the police has been embezzled.”

“The police revolt,” reads a front-page headline in *Le Nouveau Courrier*, which reports (p. 3) that the angry protesters yesterday besieged the police headquarters in Abidjan to voice their grievances. *Soir Info* carries the same headline on its front page with a picture of protesters marching through the streets. According to a report (p. 10), the police have threatened to paralyze activity throughout the country.

“Who is behind these 150 policemen?” asks a prominent front-page headline in *Le Nouveau Reveil*. According to the paper, the protesters demanded that the director general of police resign. A comment in this paper (p. 12) suggests that the peaceful demonstration organized yesterday by the police, the first one under the regime of President Ouattara, was “a good lesson in democracy.” “Who manipulates the policemen?” asks another prominent headline in *Le Patriote* (p. 1).

2. More reactions on infighting within the ruling RHDP coalition

“The agony of the RHDP,” reads a front-page headline in *Nord-Sud Quotidien*, which publishes an “inflammatory” document believed to contain “hard criticisms” of Bedie’s PDCI-RDA party against its ally the RDR of President Ouattara. The paper (p. 2) comments that the intensity of the disagreement has brought to light “the difference” between the two principal allies within the ruling RHDP coalition.

“We don’t close our eyes to differences because we are partners,” *Le Nouveau Reveil* (p. 4) quotes Prof. Alphonse Djedje Mady, the spokesperson of the PDCI-RDA party as saying. “Did the RDR want to bury the PDCI-RDA?” asks another prominent headline in this paper, which quotes a leading member of the ruling coalition calling on the leaders not “to betray” the legacy of the Ivorian former president Felix Houphouet Boigny. “Before any attack against Ouattara, we need to look back at where we came from,” a front-page headline in *Le Patriote* quotes Kobena Adjoumani, a leading member of the PDCI-RDA as saying.

A front-page headline in *Soir Info* quotes the RDR spokesperson, Joel N’Guessan, who describes the recent PDCI-RDA criticisms against the party of President Ouattara as “a blackmailing.” *Notre Voie* (p. 2) suggests that these criticisms signal a possible “divorce” between President Ouattara and his ally, former president Henri Konan Bedie.

3. Laurent Gbagbo’s hearing at the ICC on June 18

With a few days before the hearing of former Ivorian president Laurent Gbagbo at The Hague in connection with crimes allegedly committed during last year’s post-electoral violence, judges of the International Criminal Court have arrived in Abidjan, says a report in *L’Inter*. The article (p. 4) says that the visit of the ICC’s judges comes a couple of days after the visit of the ICC chief prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, to Cote d’Ivoire. According to the paper, the judges are here to organize a seminar in order “to inform the public on the role and the mandate of the ICC.”

4. “Ivorian economy is back,” says Economy and Finance Minister

The Minister of Economy and Finance has expressed optimism as to the state of the Ivorian economy, says a prominent headline in *Fraternite Matin*. "Our predictions for growth will be met," the paper quotes Charles Kofi Diby as saying in an interview.

5. US-Cote d'Ivoire bilateral cooperation

A report in *L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* (p. 7) says that the steering committee working on Cote d'Ivoire's eligibility for the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) has met with the Minister of Interior to explain the challenge ahead. The paper quotes members of the committee as saying that there is a need to meet some conditions in different domains including political rights, civic rights, freedom of expression, rule of law, good governance and anti-corruption to enable the country to be qualified for this program.

6. UNESCO reopens office in Abidjan

A front-page headline in *Fraternite Matin* says that UNESCO has re-opened its office in Abidjan. According to the paper (p. 13), the announcement was made yesterday by the Director General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova, after a meeting with President Ouattara in Abidjan. The report says that Bokova also pledged UNESCO's support for the reconciliation process underway in Cote d'Ivoire.



JUNE 5, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. Political atmosphere in Cote d'Ivoire after Bedie's PDCI-RDA party questions its alliance with President Ouattara
2. Government-opposition dialogue
3. Minister in charge of security speaks on security reforms

1. Political atmosphere in Cote d'Ivoire after Bedie's PDCI-RDA party questions its alliance with President Ouattara

With a picture of leaders of the RHDP, the Ivorian ruling coalition, on its front page *Nord-Sud Quotidien* (p. 1) carries a prominent headline suggesting that the alliance is entangled in "a malaise." The paper (p. 2) suggests that the misunderstanding stemmed from criticisms made over

the weekend by the PDCI-RDA, the party of ex-president Henri Konan Bedie. According to the paper, electoral reforms that resulted in the creation of new constituencies before last year's parliamentary elections were one of the bones of contention.

"For the reinforcement of the RHDP alliance, Bedie has avoided the traps," says a banner headline in *Le Nouveau Reveil* (p. 1). An article in this paper (p. 2) describes as "concrete" the proposals made by the PDCI-RDA aimed at "reinforcing" the ruling coalition. Another headline, however, wonders whether "the pill served by Bedie's party is too bitter for the RDR party to swallow," while another headline (p. 4) warns President Ouattara's party not to make "a mistake."

But a banner headline in *Le Patriote* (p. 1) accuses Bedie's PDCI-RDA party of fighting "a bad battle." The paper (p. 2), which describes the PDCI-RDA's recommendations as "an attack" against the RDR party, wonders whether the party is doing the right thing by "washing the dirty linen in public." "The PDCI-RDA talks about its ally like the FPI would," comments the paper, which accuses Bedie's party of playing the role of the opposition FPI party by "tarnishing" the image of the government.

Soir Info (p. 1) notes what it describes as "disturbing signs" within the ruling coalition and announces that the RDR party will be meeting soon to react to the PDCI-RDA's criticisms.

2. Government-opposition dialogue

A report in *L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* (p. 5) announces that formal discussions between the government and the opposition as part of the ongoing dialogue have been postponed until July 13. According to the paper, this was announced yesterday after a meeting between a delegation of the opposition FPI party and Prime Minister Jeannot Ahoussou Kouadio.

Reporting on the same issue, *Fraternite Matin* (p. 4) quotes the head of the FPI delegation who announced a meeting with the prime minister on July 13 "to define the modalities of a dialogue with the FPI party." "Ahoussou Kouadio resumes talks with the FPI," says a headline in *Notre Voie* (p. 6). The paper also quotes the head of the FPI delegation saying that the party is open to dialogue.

3. Minister in charge of security speaks on security reforms

Sixty percent of the security reforms have been executed, says a report in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 5). According to the paper this was stated by the Minister in charge of Security, Paul Koffi Koffi, yesterday at a meeting of a steering committee tasked with making recommendations. "Counting of former combatants will start from June 15," *L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* (p. 6) quotes the minister in charge of security as saying.

In a related development, a report in *L'Inter* (p. 5) says that 202 elements drawn from the New Forces, the former rebel group, have been integrated into the national navy. The report also says that the recruitment was conducted after a training of the contingent.

JUNE 4, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. ICC chief prosecutor's statement ahead of Laurent Gbagbo's hearing sparks controversy
2. Supporters and the son of Laurent Gbagbo appear in court
3. Henri Konan Bedie's PDCI-RDA party criticizes its alliance with President Ouattara

1. ICC chief prosecutor's statement ahead of Laurent Gbagbo's hearing sparks controversy

"Ocampo: Ouattara's agent at the ICC," says a banner headline in *Notre Voie* (p. 1) which describes as "suspicious" the visit of the International Criminal Court's chief prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, to Cote d'Ivoire over the weekend. A report (p. 2) notes that Moreno-Ocampo's visit to Cote d'Ivoire, where he met with President Alassane Ouattara, came a few days before a hearing for former president Laurent Gbagbo at The Hague for crimes allegedly committed during the post-electoral violence in this country. Another report in this paper (p. 3) quotes one of Gbagbo's lawyers as saying, "We'll prove to the court that Gbagbo is not responsible for accusations leveled against him."

"I've serious and strong evidence against Gbagbo," a prominent headline in *Le Patriote* (p. 1) quotes Moreno-Ocampo as saying at a press conference in Abidjan over the weekend. The paper (p. 3) publishes a statement issued by Gbagbo's FPI party denouncing "partiality" on the part of the ICC chief prosecutor. The paper also carries on the same page a reaction from President Ouattara's RDR party which claims that "Killings, rapes and torture inflicted on Ivorians by Gbagbo's camp constitute crimes against humanity."

"Ocampo gets confused," reads a front-page headline in *Le Nouveau Courrier* which claims that the statement made by the ICC chief prosecutor during his visit to Abidjan is evidence that he has colluded with President Ouattara's regime.

"We've enough evidence against Gbagbo," *Fraternite Matin* (p. 5) also quotes the ICC chief prosecutor as saying. According to the paper, Moreno-Ocampo told the press that investigations have led to the conclusion that "Gbagbo was the one who organized attacks against civilians in order to maintain himself in power." "My evidence against Gbagbo is solid," a front-page headline in *L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* quotes Moreno-Ocampo as saying ahead of Gbagbo's hearing on June 18 at the ICC. Another article in this paper (p. 6) quotes the ICC chief prosecutor as saying that "the truth that will come out from this trial will gear up the reconciliation process in Cote d'Ivoire." "A crime is a

crime whether it is serious or less serious," the paper (**p. 7**) quotes the spokesperson of Gbagbo's FPI party as saying in response to Moreno-Ocampo's statement.

"Ocampo's partiality is obvious," the FPI's spokesperson is quoted as saying by *Soir Info* (**p. 4**), while a front-page headline in *L'Inter* quotes the ICC chief prosecutor as saying that "At the moment, former president Gbagbo is innocent. He enjoys the presumption of innocence and if the judges reject charges leveled against him, he will be freed." The paper (**p. 5**) also alleges that the recent visit of the ICC chief prosecutor could be linked to "a deal" between him and President Ouattara over Gbagbo's trial at The Hague. According to the paper, President Ouattara wanted "to have more details" on the issue before the hearing of the former president on June 18. The article also suggests that the ICC's implication in the alleged crimes committed in Cote d'Ivoire has taken "a dramatic turn" after the court issued arrest warrants against "President Ouattara's civilian and military supporters."

Meanwhile, *Le Nouveau Reveil* (**pp. 8 & 9**), which quotes the ICC chief prosecutor as saying "the conclusions of my investigations are credible," predicts that the former Ivorian president could be sentenced to "30 years or life imprisonment."

2. Supporters and the son of Laurent Gbagbo appear in court

A front-page report in the weekend issue of *L'Inter* said that son of the former Ivorian president Laurent Gbagbo appeared in court Friday as part of the initial round of hearings for jailed members of the country's former ruling party. According to the paper (**p. 3**), Michel Gbagbo, who was charged after his admission to a hospital in Abidjan, was air-lifted back to the northern town of Bouna where he has been held in custody since his arrest on April 11, 2011.

Another report on the same page of this paper said that the former chairman of the opposition FPI party, Pascal Affi N'Guessan, who also appeared in court in Bouna on Friday, denied all charges levelled against him in connection with alleged crimes committed during the post-electoral crisis.

3. Henri Konan Bedie's PDCI-RDA party criticizes its alliance with President Ouattara

A prominent headline in today's edition of *Le Nouveau Reveil* (**p. 1**) says that former Ivorian president Henri Konan Bedie, who is also the leader of the PDCI-RDA party, has rebuked President Ouattara's RDR party over some "dysfunction within the RHDP coalition" and "the management of power." According to the paper, Bedie, who was speaking over the weekend at a party meeting said, "Nominations of heads of public offices and ministries should reflect the composition of the RHDP coalition."

JUNE 1, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. President Ouattara calls on African states to stimulate economic growth
2. The Ivorian government commits to fighting illicit enrichment
3. The UN mission in Cote d'Ivoire to help monitor security in Ivorian detention facilities
4. U.S. Embassy sponsors training for Ivorian journalists

1. President Ouattara calls on African states to stimulate economic growth

In an address made yesterday at the African Development Bank summit in Arusha, Tanzania, President Alassane Ouattara said more efforts are needed to stimulate economic growth on the continent. Providing details, *L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* (p. 2) noted that the Ivorian leader called on the African states to invest in the development of basic infrastructure such as roads, ports and airports and other vital facilities needed for the continent to emerge. According to the Ivorian president, another prerequisite underlying the development of the continent is strong support for small business, hence his plea to the bank to promote private investment in this sector.

Still on the AFDB, a banner headline in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 12) said the financial group is to return soon to its Abidjan headquarters. "There are no more hindrances preventing the bank from returning to its Abidjan headquarters," the paper reported President Ouattara as saying upon his return yesterday.

2. The Ivorian government commits to fighting illicit enrichment

According to a report in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 9), the Ivorian parliament is to ratify a bill on illicit enrichment and money laundering. The project, the paper said, is part of incentive reforms initiated by the government to promote good governance. According to Ivorian Labor Minister Gnamien Konan, under these reforms, the public administration is to be streamlined to ensure equitable income distribution and avoid white-collar corruption.

3. The UN mission in Cote d'Ivoire to help monitor security in Ivorian detention facilities

As part of its mandate, the United Nations Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) is to support Ivorian authorities in monitoring security in the country's detention facilities. The information was reported by **L'Inter (p. 3)** which noted that the issue was on the agenda of a meeting yesterday between Ivorian Premier Jeannot Ahoussou and the UN special envoy in Cote d'Ivoire, Bert Koenders. The announcement, the paper added, came in the wake of recurrent incidents which have resulted in the escape of prisoners in Abidjan and upcountry.

Still on justice issues, a hearing for former FPI official Pascal Affi N'Guessan was held yesterday in Bouna, according to **Fraternite Matin (p. 5)**, which noted that the six-hour audition was meant to notify the accused of the charges against him. Additional charges, including blood crimes, have been added to the initial accusations, the paper said. The move was denounced by **Notre Voie (p. 3)** which argued that Mr. Affi N'Guessan is the victim of the victor's justice prevailing in the country.

4. U.S. Embassy sponsors training for Ivorian journalists

An article in **L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (p. 3)** noted that the U.S. Embassy in Abidjan recently sponsored a training designed for Ivorian journalists. Ivorian press veteran Noel Yao was the main speaker during the session, the paper said.

Still on the press, U.S. Ambassador Phillip Carter III is to attend the handover ceremony between the former president of the Union of Ivorian Journalists (UNJCI) Mamery Camara and his successor Moussa Traore. The move, **L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (p. 3)** said, is part of the U.S. Embassy's support for a free and responsible press in Cote d'Ivoire.

Media affiliation and circulation

Fraternite Matin	State-owned daily newspaper	23,000
L'Intelligent d'Abidjan	Privately-owned daily, leans pro-President Alassane Ouattara	7,000
L'Inter	Independent daily	20,000
Nord-Sud Quotidien	Daily close to Prime Minister Guillaume Soro	10,000
Notre Voie	Daily close to the FPI, the party of Former President Laurent	15,000

	Gbagbo	
Le Nouveau Courrier	Daily close to the FPI, the party of Former President Laurent Gbagbo	10,000
Le Nouveau Reveil	Daily close to the PDCI-RDA, the party of Former President Henri Konan Bedie	17,000
Le Patriote	Daily close to the RDR, the party of President Alassane Ouattara	17,000
RTI TV	State broadcaster	
Soir Info	Independent daily	22,000
AIP	State News Agency	

NOTE: Newspaper circulation figures represent the number of copies printed, not actual sales.