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**EIGHTY-SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION
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MECHANISM FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION,
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**REPORT OF THE INTERIM CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMISSION
OF THE AFRICAN UNION ON THE DEVELOPMENTS
IN THE SITUATION IN COTE D'IVOIRE**

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. For over two months, Côte d'Ivoire has faced a serious political crisis, which has led to the loss of hundreds of lives of soldiers and civilians alike. This crisis has severely disrupted administration services and the economy, and created an alarming humanitarian situation. The insurgents responsible for the attacks launched simultaneously in several Ivorian cities, including Abidjan, on 19 September 2002 – who subsequently called themselves the "*Mouvement patriotique de Côte d'Ivoire (MPCI)* " – now control the northern part of the country.

2. The present report gives an account of the efforts made by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), with the support of the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN), to resolve the crisis. The report also contains recommendations aimed at strengthening the support of the AU to regional efforts to end the crisis.

II. POLITICAL ASPECTS

3. Since the outbreak of the Ivorian crisis, sustained efforts have been made to arrive at a peaceful and negotiated solution. On 29 September 2002, ECOWAS held an Extraordinary Summit in Accra, Ghana, in which I and the Chairperson of the AU participated. At the end of its deliberations, the Summit, having reiterated the position of ECOWAS and the AU on the rejection of unconstitutional changes of government, decided to establish a high-level Contact Group comprising the Heads of State of Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Togo, mandated to establish contact with the insurgents, prevail upon them to immediately cease all hostilities, restore normalcy to occupied towns, and negotiate a general framework for the resolution of the crisis. It was agreed that the Special Representative of the African Union would ensure the liaison between the Contact Group and the AU. The Summit requested the insurgents to engage in immediate dialogue with the Contact Group, with a view to laying down their arms and settling their dispute with the government by peaceful means.

4. At its eighty-fifth ordinary session at ambassadorial level, held in Addis Ababa on 11 October 2002, the Central Organ expressed support for the Communiqué adopted by the ECOWAS Summit. The Central Organ stressed the need for an immediate ceasefire, and made an urgent appeal to the

Ivorian government and the insurgents to cooperate fully with ECOWAS for a speedy resolution of the crisis on the basis of the relevant principles stipulated in the Constitutive Act of the African Union, in particular the rejection of all unconstitutional changes of government. For my part, a few days earlier, I had appointed the former President of Sao Tomé and Príncipe, Mr. Miguel Trovoada, as my Special Envoy to Côte d'Ivoire, with the mandate to assist ECOWAS and the leaders of the region in finding a negotiated solution.

5. Pursuant to the decisions of the Accra Summit, a ministerial delegation of the Contact Group visited Côte d'Ivoire from 2 to 6 October 2002. I sent an official of the Commission to Abidjan, to represent the AU in the deliberations of the Contact Group. In Côte d'Ivoire, the ECOWAS delegation met with the Ivorian authorities, as well as the representatives of the insurgents. The delegation submitted a draft Ceasefire Agreement, which, however, could not be signed, since the government considered that the mandate of the Contact Group was to get the insurgents to lay down their arms, and not to negotiate a ceasefire.

6. On 17 October 2002, the "*Coordination des mutins*" signed the "Crisis Settlement Plan" submitted, on behalf of the current chairman of ECOWAS, President Abdoulaye Wade, by the Senegalese Foreign Minister. Under that Plan, the insurgents accepted the cessation of hostilities and dialogue. They pledged to facilitate the restoration of effective administration and a resumption of normal supplies to cities. Subsequently, the government issued a statement, noting the signing of the Plan and confirming its acceptance of the cessation of hostilities and the dialogue.

7. At the request of President Laurent Gbagbo, the French Government agreed to deploy French troops to monitor the cessation of hostilities, pending the establishment of an ECOWAS force for that purpose. It was agreed that the French troops deployed in the operations zone would perform the following functions:

- monitor the cessation of hostilities;
- ensure the safety of the insurgents;
- ensure the safety of the observers;
- facilitate the resumption of public administrative services and normal supplies to cities; and
- contribute toward the implementation of a peace agreement, once it had been concluded.

8. On 23 October 2002, the Heads of State and Government of the ECOWAS Contact Group met in Abidjan. President Thabo Mbeki, as Chairman of the African Union, and my Special Envoy participated in that meeting. The Summit emphasized the need for compromise and sacrifices by all concerned during the process of negotiating for reconciliation – which should, *inter alia*, include identification and consideration of the grievances of the insurgents which are of a professional and political nature.

9. The Summit decided to designate President Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo as coordinator of their group, who, in consultation with other members of the Contact Group and the Chairman of the African Union, would facilitate the day-to-day management of mediation activities. The Summit also agreed on the need for the urgent deployment of an ECOWAS Monitoring Group to monitor the cessation of hostilities in Côte d'Ivoire and to help maintain a conducive environment for dialogue between the government and the insurgents.

10. At its 86th Ordinary Session at Ambassadorial level, held in Addis Ababa on 29 October 2002, the Central Organ welcomed the signing of the "Crisis Settlement Plan", which took place on 17 October 2002, as well as the subsequent statement of the Ivorian government on the cessation of hostilities and its acceptance of the dialogue. The Central Organ further welcomed the decision of the Contact Group Summit to rapidly deploy a Monitoring Group in Côte d'Ivoire. The Central Organ encouraged all the parties to cooperate fully with President Gnassingbe Eyadema, as well as with the Chairman of the African Union and my Special Envoy, in the search for a lasting solution to the crisis. Finally, the Central Organ expressed its gratitude to the French Government for acceding to President Gbagbo's request to deploy French troops at the frontline to monitor the cessation of hostilities, pending the deployment of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group.

11. Negotiations between the Ivorian government and the MPCJ began in Lomé, Togo, on 30 October 2002, under the aegis of President Gnassingbe Eyadema and in the presence of the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General and my Special Envoy.

12. On 30 October, the two parties signed a communiqué in which they acknowledged the need to preserve the territorial integrity of Côte d'Ivoire and respect the country's institutions and constitutional legality. The parties also pledged that their supporters would refrain from all acts of belligerence, such as acts of violence, extra-judicial executions, the recruitment and use of mercenaries, the recruitment of child soldiers, as well as violations of the agreement on cessation of hostilities.

13. On 1 November, the two parties signed a declaration on the “delivery of humanitarian aid in occupied areas”. Under that declaration, they agreed, in particular, not to hinder the activities of the relevant organizations and agencies, to enable the delivery of humanitarian aid safely and effectively to the needy populations throughout Côte d’Ivoire. On the same day, the government and the MPCCI signed a communiqué stating the agreement they had reached on the so-called “corporate demands of the mutineers”, and a statement on the immediate release of all civilian and military prisoners detained in connection with the war.

14. Subsequently, the mediation team submitted a draft Peace Agreement. It focuses on the following points: preservation of peace (cessation of hostilities, monitoring of such cessation, the mandate of the Monitoring Group); political issues (reaffirmation of the integrity of Côte d’Ivoire and the respect for its political institutions, implementation of the recommendations of the National Reconciliation Forum, amnesty, etc.); post-war military and security issues (disarmament, reintegration of MPCCI forces, rejection of the recruitment, use, financing and training of mercenaries, restructuring and training of the Côte d’Ivoire Armed Forces, etc.); humanitarian and human rights issues (release of civilian and military prisoners and the fate of soldiers in exile, humanitarian relief, guarantee and promotion of human rights, etc); socio-economic issues; and implementation of the Peace Agreement.

15. On 9 November, the MPCCI decided to unilaterally suspend its participation in the negotiations, following the assassination, the previous day, of the younger brother of Mr. Dacoury Tabley, coordinator of MPCCI external relations. Informal consultations, however, continued until the return, ten days later, of the Secretary-General of the MPCCI.

16. At the time of finalizing this report, discussions were continuing in Lomé. The MPCCI had abandoned its demand for the resignation of President Gbagbo, demanding instead a “new political order”, while the government of Côte d’Ivoire had expressed its readiness to organize a referendum on the revision of the constitution. Nevertheless, there are still disagreements over a number of other points, including the ways and means of implementing the resolutions of the National Reconciliation Forum.

III. MILITARY ASPECTS

17. As stated above, the Summit of the ECOWAS Contact Group of 23 October 2002 decided to deploy a Monitoring Group in Côte d’Ivoire. On 25 October 2002, the ECOWAS Defense and Security Commission met in Abidjan to consider the report of the reconnaissance mission dispatched to Côte d’Ivoire, from 22 to 24 October 2002, with a view to preparing the deployment of the Monitoring Group. A military Officer of the Commission of the African

Union participated in the meeting. The following day, the 11th meeting of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council convened in Abidjan. My Special Envoy participated in this meeting, which focused mainly on consideration of the report of the ECOWAS Defense and Security Commission. On 6 and 7 November, the Chiefs of Staff and Staff Officers of contingent-providing countries met in Abuja, Nigeria.

18. The mandate of the peace keeping mission to be deployed by ECOWAS is as follows: monitor the cessation of hostilities; facilitate the return to a normal administrative life, as well as the free movement of persons and goods; contribute to the implementation of the peace agreement; implement the decisions relating to the disarmament of the insurgents; and ensure the safety of the insurgents and humanitarian agencies. The major characteristics of the force and its requirements, as stated by ECOWAS at the meeting held in Paris, on 14 November 2002, on the coordination of financial and material contributions to this force, are as follows:

a. Composition of the Force

19. The ECOWAS force would be 1,264 strong, distributed as follows:

- a multinational command post of 66 troops;
- 5 national sub-groups provided by Benin, Ghana, Niger, Senegal and Togo (173 troops per unit);
- a bi-national sub-group provided by Benin and Togo (173 troops);
- a Headquarters company provided by Ghana (52 troops);
- a support detachment in Yamoussoukro provided by Niger (75 troops); and
- a support detachment in Abidjan provided by Senegal (36 troops).

20. It should be noted that this is only the first step of a structure that may be strengthened if the performance of some tasks became possible (extending the supervision to the whole Ivorian territory, disarmament, etc.). 1,500 to 2,000 men structure could then be envisaged.

b. Nature of ECOWAS requirements

21. The requirements of ECOWAS to deploy the force for an initial period of six months are of 3 categories:

- Initial equipment of contingents: It is the responsibility of contingent-providing States to make such equipment available. However, these countries stated that they would need assistance to enable their units to be engaged with an adequate level of individual and collective equipment for an international mission and, in any case, better than the usual level of these units in their own countries. For this purpose, ECOWAS needs US\$ 5,156,700 broken down as follows:
 - US\$ 2,148,800 to supplement the equipment of the contingents;
 - US\$ 2,907,900 to provide the contingents with collective equipment for campaign life (tents, beds, tables, field kitchens, etc.); and
 - US\$ 100,000 to purchase some materials (computers, furniture, etc).

- Projection and deployment of contingents: ECOWAS requested assistance in this respect. The projection and deployment of contingents would be carried out in 4 stages:
 - establishment of an advance detachment of officers;
 - establishment of advance teams of 50 troops per country starting from 20 November 2002;
 - deployment of the main body of the force (approximately 1,000 men), from 23 November 2002;
 - putting in position heavy equipment of national contingents as soon as possible.

- Support for the operation of the force: This support will take the following forms:
 - third-level technical support, deemed essential due to the weak level of support deployed on the ground;
 - support to establish a standing air detachment of 2 transport helicopters and 2 occasional cargo planes;
 - financial support for recurrent operations of the force. This would include an individual daily allowance of US\$ 13.25 to

cover health, fuel and miscellaneous instruction expenditure, and an individual daily flat allowance of US\$ 20; and

- financial support to strengthen the force - as indicated above, the ECOWAS force may increase its strength. An increase from 1,264 to 1,500 troops would entail additional expenses of US\$ 850,000 for per diem and US\$ 562,000 for operational expenses.

22. The cessation of hostilities, which entered into force at midnight on 17 October 2002, has, to date, been generally respected by both parties. The French forces are monitoring the cessation of hostilities pending the deployment of the ECOWAS force.

IV. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

23. The political crisis in Côte d'Ivoire has caused a large-scale humanitarian crisis. Hundreds of thousands of people, Ivorians as well as nationals from neighboring countries, are affected. Hence, the urgent need for specific measures to mitigate the impact of the crisis, including international assistance, more especially as its persistence may have a negative impact on an already volatile regional environment.

24. During the various meetings devoted to the consideration of the situation in Cote d'Ivoire, the Central Organ expressed serious concerns with the situation and urged both the government and the insurgents to protect the Ivorian and foreign populations, as well as their property. In this connection, the Central Organ requested the Commission to closely monitor the situation in order to evaluate the impact of the crisis and take the most appropriate measures in that regard. Thus an AU delegation visited Cote d'Ivoire and other countries in the region to assess the humanitarian situation.

25. On 21 November, the United Nations agencies in Côte d'Ivoire made an urgent appeal for the mobilization of \$15.9 million to assist an estimated 3.9 million conflict-affected people over a three-month period. This would include assisting the Ivorian people as well as foreigners concerned and building regional capacities for crisis response.

V. SUPPORT OF THE AU TO ECOWAS EFFORTS

26. Since the outbreak of the crisis, the AU has supported the efforts of ECOWAS. The current Chairman participated in the Extraordinary ECOWAS Summit in Accra and the Contact Group Summit in Abidjan, thus contributing personally to the efforts to resolve the crisis. Either at my level or that of the Interim Commissioner in charge of Peace, Security and Political Affairs, as well

as at the level of officers and experts, the Commission has participated in all the initiatives taken in connection with the crisis: the ECOWAS Extraordinary Summit in Accra; the mission of the ministerial delegation of the Contact Group in Côte d'Ivoire last October; the meeting of the ECOWAS Defense and Security Commission in Abidjan, followed by the meeting of the Mediation and Security Council, held respectively on 25 and 26 October 2002; the meeting, in Paris, in mid-November, on the coordination of financial and material contributions to the ECOWAS force.

27. For almost two months now, my Special Envoy, former President Miguel Trovoada, has been in the region. He arrived in Abidjan early October, and has worked closely with the ECOWAS representatives to end the crisis. He has maintained regular contact with the Ivorian authorities, including President Gbagbo. Similarly, he has been in contact with the insurgents. Thus, he went to Bouake on 25 October 2002, with the Togolese Minister of Defense and the ECOWAS Executive Secretary. On that occasion, he held talks with two leaders of the insurgents, urging them to favour negotiation.

28. My Special Envoy is currently in Lomé, participating actively in the ongoing negotiations between the government and the MPCJ and giving AU's full support to President Eyadema. I would like to express my deep gratitude to him for this commitment and determination in fulfilling his mission.

29. For my part, I have endeavored, throughout the period under consideration, to facilitate a speedy and negotiated resolution of this crisis and to give the Commission's full support to the ECOWAS efforts. Within this framework, I have been in close contact with the government of Côte d'Ivoire. I went to Abidjan on 27 September with the Interim Commissioner in charge of Peace, Security and Political Affairs. On that occasion, I was received by President Gbagbo, with whom I exchanged views on the Ivorian crisis and the ways and means of a negotiated solution. I also met with political and religious leaders and representatives of the civil society. While reaffirming the well-known principles of our Organization on unconstitutional changes of government, I preached dialogue and negotiation as the most reliable means for a lasting solution to the crisis.

30. Furthermore, I have continuously urged the leaders of the region to strengthen their cohesion, since the success of the mediation efforts greatly depends on it. For this purpose, I have maintained regular contact with these leaders. I have also been in contact with the leaders of other Member States to promote a peaceful solution to the crisis.

31. Considering the difficulties faced by ECOWAS in deploying its force, I wrote, on 28 October 2002, to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of AU partner countries, to officially request their financial and logistical support to the

region's efforts. In this connection, I stressed the need for the international community to seize the existing window of opportunity for the speedy resolution of the crisis, adding that any delay may lead to the prolongation of the crisis, with far-reaching consequences for the entire region. I am glad to note that some of our partners have already reacted to this request for assistance. In general, I have spared no effort to mobilize political or other support from our partners.

32. Immediately after the meeting on 29 October of the Central Organ, the Commission wrote to the AU partners. The Commission seized the opportunity to draw the attention of our partners to the appeal made by that body to the international community to give the necessary assistance to ECOWAS to facilitate the successful conclusion of its peace efforts, particularly by providing the requisite logistic and financial assistance for the deployment of the regional force.

33. On 19 November, I decided to make a contribution of US\$ 100,000 from the Peace Fund to support the Lomé negotiations. At the time of finalizing this report, the Commission was considering the possibility of an additional contribution to facilitate the deployment of the ECOWAS force.

34. On 21 November, I went to Lomé, where I was received by President Eyadema, with whom I exchanged views on the progress of the negotiation process. I also met with the Ivorian government delegation as well the MPCJ delegation to discuss issues that were in abeyance and ways of settling them.

35. The other AU organs have also contributed to the ongoing efforts. The Central Organ, at its last two sessions, considered the situation prevailing in Cote d'Ivoire and gave directives to the Commission on future action.

36. On its part, the Commission on Refugees has sent to the region, since 14 November, a delegation headed by the Permanent Representative of Zambia to the AU and composed of the Permanent Representative of Gabon and an official from the Commission. The objective is to undertake an evaluation of the humanitarian impact of the crisis; to consider, with the authorities of the countries concerned and the appropriate humanitarian agencies, the modalities of AU support to efforts to assist the affected populations; and sensitize the international community.

37. As this report was being finalized, the delegation had already visited Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali and Burkina Faso. This tour would be concluded with a visit to Ghana. In these countries, the delegation met with the relevant authorities and representatives of the humanitarian agencies. It visited the reception centers for the affected populations, and was able to assess the impact of the crisis and the resources mobilized to address the situation. On

the basis of the delegation's recommendations, the AU shall take appropriate measures to contribute to ongoing efforts.

IV. SUPPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO ECOWAS EFFORTS

38. The Ivorian crisis has spawned many international reactions. On 10 October, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the situation prevailing in that country. It firmly condemned the coup attempt, reiterated its commitments to an all-inclusive peaceful solution, in the spirit of reconciliation that was established in October 2001 and within the respect of the democratic institutions and unity of the Ivorian territory.

39. The Ninth Summit of the Heads of State and Government of *La Francophonie*, held in Beirut, Lebanon, from 18 to 20 October 2002, also considered the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. In the Beirut declaration adopted at the end of the meeting, the Summit condemned the attempt to take power by force and call into question the constitutional order in Côte d'Ivoire. It appealed to all the political parties and the people of Côte d'Ivoire to exercise restraint and abstain from resorting to violence and to protect the life of people and goods. Finally, it expressed its support for the efforts made, in particular by ECOWAS, to encourage dialogue, which is the only way to lasting reconciliation.

40. On 31 October, the President of the Security Council, in a Press Statement, strongly condemned the attempt to seize power or overthrow the democratically-elected government of Côte d'Ivoire. The Security Council called upon all the parties to resolve the current crisis peacefully and to abstain from any actions, statements, or demonstrations that might jeopardize or hamper the search for a negotiated solution. The Security Council commended the initiatives and activities undertaken by ECOWAS for the peaceful resolution of the conflict. In this connection, the Council expressed its support to the efforts of ECOWAS Contact Group and appealed to the international community to give support to ECOWAS and provide the necessary assistance for the immediate deployment of its force.

41. On 14 November, the French authorities organized a meeting in Paris to coordinate financial and material assistance to the ECOWAS force. It was attended by several donor countries and multilateral institutions, including the AU. On that occasion, the representatives of the donor countries, including Germany, the United States, France, Great Britain and the Netherlands, gave indications on the amount and nature of their contributions to the ECOWAS force. Other countries, such as Italy, Spain and the Nordic countries, expressed interest in participating in the regional peace efforts.

V. OBSERVATIONS

42. The seriousness of the crisis faced by Côte d'Ivoire and its repercussions for the region cannot be overemphasized. Suffice it to recall the important place of the economy of Côte d'Ivoire in the region - ranked third in Sub-Saharan Africa - and the demographic weight of the foreign communities of the neighboring countries in Cote d'Ivoire.

43. The current situation has already caused the death of several hundred people and has affected the lives of large sections of the Ivorian population and foreigners living in Côte d'Ivoire. It is seriously disrupting the functioning of the economy and administrative services, as well as regional trade with its neighbors, in particular, Burkina Faso and Mali, whose major commercial products pass through the port of Abidjan. It has the potential of weakening the social fabric and unity of Cote d'Ivoire, and affecting negatively the regional environment.

44. In this context, sustained efforts must be made for the restoration of peace and security in Côte d'Ivoire as soon as possible. I should like to express satisfaction at the speed and determination with which ECOWAS reacted to the current crisis. I would also like to express my deep gratitude to President Thabo Mbeki for his commitment, and to the United Nations and our partners for their support. Finally, I would like to express satisfaction at the will shown by President Gbagbo to promote dialogue and negotiation in order to overcome the serious and, in many respects, sensitive situation, faced by Côte d'Ivoire.

45. These efforts should focus on two aspects: support to the peace talks in order to create conditions for their speedy, successful conclusion and to the ECOWAS action; and the mobilization of the resources needed for the rapid deployment of the ECOWAS force.

46. Given the need to intensify the peace dynamics and to better support the ECOWAS efforts, the AU Commission intends, in the coming weeks, to intensify its action to mobilize the international community, including the Member States.

47. I urge the leaders of the region to persevere in their efforts and reinforce their cohesion and unity of action, which are essential conditions for achieving a speedy negotiated solution. I encourage the government of Côte d'Ivoire and the MPCl to fully cooperate with ECOWAS and President Eyadema. For my part, I shall continue to give the total support of the Commission to the search for peace in Côte d'Ivoire, within the framework of the principles of our Organization: respect of the territorial unity and integrity of the country, as well as constitutional legality.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

48. In the light of the foregoing:

- i. the Commission intends to open a Liaison Office in Abidjan. This Office, which would comprise both civilian and military personnel, would, in particular, have the mandate of ensuring regular contact on the field with ECOWAS and the Special Representative of its Executive Secretary, who will direct and coordinate the overall operation of the regional organization in Cote d'Ivoire. The Office would also ensure liaison with the Ivorian authorities and the other actors concerned, and monitor the development of the situation on the ground and its regional repercussions. The related costs would be covered by the Peace Fund and voluntary contributions from the AU partners. I am confident the Central Organ will give its full support to this initiative, and will encourage the Commission to take all the necessary measures to continue to support the ECOWAS, particularly the deployment of its force in Cote d'Ivoire;
- ii. the Central Organ should reiterate its appeal to the two parties to cooperate fully with the mediation;
- iii. the Central Organ should reiterate its appeal to the Member States and the international community to give the necessary assistance to ECOWAS, particularly regarding the deployment of its force;
- iv. the Central Organ should reiterate its concern for the humanitarian situation created by the crisis, and appeal to the international community to mobilize the necessary resources to assist affected populations.

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Report of the Interim Chairperson of the commission of the African Union on the Developments in the situation in Cote D'ivoire

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