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Rametsi, Shadrack

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South Africa's Diplomatic Involvement as a Peace-broker

In West Africa:

The Case of Cote d'Ivoire

By Shadrack Rametsi

Student Number: 0108593A

Supervised by Dr Abdul Rahman Lamin

Master's Research Report submitted to the faculty of Humanities School of Social and Sciences,

Department of International Relations, University of the Witswatersrand, Johannesburg,

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Cote d'Ivoire, hitherto regarded as the most stable country in a very unstable region was plunged into civil war in 2002, following confrontations between mutineers from the north of the country and forces loyal to president Laurent Gbagbo.This has led to a division of the country into north and south. The self-serving pursuit of money and power is one side of a dual dynamic in this conflict; on the other side, stands a profound disagreement about who is, or who should be considered an Ivorian citizen. Thus, Zolberg notes that politicians in Cote d'Ivoire in search of legitimacy fabricated the issue of who is an Ivorian: an ideology and propaganda directed by those in power, created in the social imagination to exclude their rivals from political office. In light of this, the issue of "us versus them" has become a perennial social gathering to access wealth and power. The politicization of identity to gain or maintain power has become a kind of social cannon that could only be extended to northerners and foreigners[1].

The "Ivorian miracle"-a phrase widely used in the 1960s and 1970s to describe the country's impressive economic record and apparent success as a model developer- was based on equal parts of foreign capital, available labour from neighbouring countries and Ivorian, land and labour policies. Following the economic downturn in the 1980s, the fight for diminishing resources has become increasingly bitter and anti-foreign rhetoric among those who see themselves as "pure" or "true" Ivorians has gained momentum. The politics of identity in the country today represent the product of a complex interaction between deep-seated resentments and transparent attempts to manipulate anti-foreign rhetoric for political ends. For instance, conscious of the legal complexities of indegeneity in a territorial entity whose political boundaries had shifted and that was home to millions of immigrants, Ivorians of southern became more sophisticated in their legal arguments. They excluded Alassane

[1] Aristide R Zolberg, "Political development in Ivory Coast since independence", in Philip Forster and Aristide Zolberg (eds*), Ghana and the Ivory Coast: Perspectives on Modernisation*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971. p.18

Ouattara from the presidential race not because he was not a citizen or had dual nationality, but on the grounds that he had in the past "availed himself of another nationality" by carrying a diplomatic passport from Burkina Faso.[2]

Given this background, President Thabo Mbeki was designated by the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to mediate a peace process in Cote d'Ivoire. Such decision seemed logical since South Africa chairs the Peace and Security Council of the AU. Besides, there is reason to believe that the involvement of a credible third party from outside West Africa might actually be the key to unlock the problem in that country.

Mbeki's involvement came against the backdrop of various failed attempts at brokering a peace deal by othet third parties-France, ECOWAS etc.

1. Significance of study

This study seeks to investigate the rationale behind the designation of South Africa by the AU, as a peacemaker in Cote d'Ivoire. Of major concern here is to attempt to understand reasons why the AU thought South Africa possessed the capacity to broker peace in Cote d'Ivoire where France and ECOWAS had failed.

Could it be that, South Africa's history gave it a moral authority in Africa that many Western countries cannot claim? From Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), through Darfur and now to Cote d'Ivoire, President Mbeki has drawn on his standing to try to spread peace across the continent, demonstrating to the world that Africa can be relied upon to solve its own problems. Since his appointment as mediator, Mbeki has been trying to get the Marcoussis Peace Accords and the Acrra II & III processes back on track.Yet, inspite of the Pretoria meeting held in April 2005 which led to the disarmament agreement between Gbagbo and the New Forces (Force Nouvellle), the road map

[2] Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, "Citizenship, political violence, and democratization in Africa", *Global Governance*, 10, 2004. p.403

has lagged behind as disarmament of rebel groups was expected to be at an advanced group stage in June of the same year.

2. Research Questions

Within the context of this research, the following questions will be addressed:

1) Why did the African Union designate South Africa as mediator in the Ivorian peace process?

2) What difference can South Africa make in Cote d'Ivoire's search for peace, given the failure of other third parties?

3) Why was South Africa mandated to broker a peace deal in Cote d'Ivoire only in November 2004, as opposed to four years ago when the conflict was in its early stages?

4) Can South Africa really export its model of peace-making, namely, power-sharing in politically and socially divided societies such as Cote d'Ivoire?

3. Aim and Rationale

The literature surrounding the root causes of conflict in post independence Francophone countries have laid a lot of emphasis on ethnicity, minority right, religion and corruption as central factors. Whilst this may be true, little attention has been paid to the absence of distributive mechanisms/institutions and the absence of good governance as factors that spark off conflict in the continent.

There is an absence of an early warning system or the refusal by regional and international actors to heed to early warnings in potential conflict zones. The general trend in West Africa as in other regions of the continent is to look for outside intervention after conflicts have erupted and already caused great damage to society. This has been the case in the Cote d'Ivoire, which was once regarded as the oasis of peace in a troubled region.

Like the intervention of the British in Sierra Leone and the United States in Liberia, France as the former colonial power in cote d'Ivoire has been very much involved in the process of resolving the conflictin Cote d'Ivoire. The French position has been the least ambivalent, as they have been accused by the government of Cote d'Ivoire as well as the rebels of taking sides in the conflict. This has therefore sparked anti French sentiments in the country and led to the expulsion of thousands of French citizens. France no longer posseses the legitimacy as a neutral mediator. It was against this background that the AU and ECOWAS mandated South Africa to continue with the process of resolving the crisis.

This project therefore seeks to investigate why South Africa was given the responsibility of bringing peace to the country and to highlight the progress that has been made so far in the resolving the conflict.

4. Organization of work

This paper is divided into seven chapters. Chapter one provides introduction and significance of the study. Chapter two provides a historical background to the post-colonial state of Cote d'Ivoire. In doing so, we outline fundamental issues surrounding the personality of Houphouet Boingy whose presidency and policies have influenced the present crisis in Cote d'Ivoire. This chapter also provides a brief background of the political explanations and reasons why the AU chose South Africa to intervene and establish peace-building mechanisms in Cote d'Ivoire. Chapter three highlights the causes and origins of armed conflict in Cote d'Ivoire. Although conflict is an international phenomenon but Africa remains the most conflict ridden continent in the world, with most of them are intrastate rather than interstate. The widespread nature of poor economic policies throughout Africa is seen as the main source of conflict and begets animosity between various groups leading to civil wars. This chapter therefore brings to light the politics of inclusion versus politics of exclusion and the relative deprivation theory with a particular focus on Cote d'Ivoire. Chapter four examines the failure

of the implementation of the French brokered Linas Marcoussis Peace Accords, the little success achieved by the Accra Accords in addressing the conflict, and how the Pretoria Accords compliments these accords. Chapter five examines the efforts of South Africa in bringing peace to other regions of the continent particularly in the Great Lakes. This chapter also highlights the reasons the AU and ECOWAS bestowed on South Africa the task of bringing once more the belligerents to the negotiating table. It interrogates why member states thought it was wise to involve South Africa in the peace process at this point in the conflict and not fours years ago when the conflict was in its early stages. Chapter six examines South Africa's strategic interests in its attempt to broker a peace deal in Cote d'Ivoire as well as conditions constraining South Africa to successfully pursue its interests in the Ivorian conflict. Finally, Chapter seven concludes the study by setting out lessons for South Africa in its future intervention, in West Africa in particular, and Africa generally.

Chapter 2: Houphouet Boigny and the present Ivrorian conflict

1. Felix Houphouet Boigny's era

Felix Houphouet Boigny dominated political life in Cote d'Ivoire since independence from the French rule in August 1960 until his death in 1993. Until 1990, he was the sole candidate for the presidency at every election and his *Parti Démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire – Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* (PDCI-RDA), was the only legal political party until that same year. During his thirty-three years as president, Boigny guided the economic and political life of the country without any effective challenge to his rule. Sporadic political unrest was usually without cohesion and political patronage was used to diffuse political unrest.[3] At the heart of the Ivorian model was the plantation economy. Under president Boigny, the agricultural sector grew rapidly, partnerships with foreign companies brought an influx of capital into the agricultural sector as well as privileged access to European markets and agreements on cocoa and coffee which guaranteed planters with high prices for their exports.[4]

Economically, the president's policy of encouraging mass immigration of plantation workers from Burkina Faso, Liberia, Guinea and Mali provided planters with a steady labour supply, supported by Boigny's famous dictum of "land belongs to those that cultivate it". This justified the massive acquisition of land by populations foreign to the rich cocoa and coffee belt whether they were Ivorians or foreigners from neighbouring states. This remarkable economic success compelled outside observers to refer to the "Ivorian miracle" as the country remained the world's leader in cocoa production accounting for some 40% of global output.[5] It was also the world's third largest coffee

[3] *Regional Surveys of the World: Africa South of the Sahara* (34th ed), London: Europa Publications, 2005. p.341
[4] International Crisis Group (ICG), "Cote d'Ivoire: the war is not over yet", *ICG Africa Report*, 2003. p.68
[5] "Bertelsmann Transformation Index - Country Reports: Cote d'Ivoire", 2005. Homepage of Bertelsmann Stiftung. Accessed on 18 Feb. 2006. <http://www.bertelsmann-transformation-index.de/88.0,html?L=1>

producer and a significant exporter of bananas, making Cote d'Ivoire the economic powerhouse of West Africa.

The grievances of the country's many ethnic groups were concealed by dividing government appointments among them. Boigny was able to neutralize xenophobia even in the midst of the influx of thousands of foreign plantation workers. Although his enthusiasm for the immigration of these foreigners stimulated resistance from indigenous population notably the *Bete*, and *Kroumen* in the South West, Boigny appeased these groups by offering them positions in the administration, the private sector and the army.[6]

The economic recession of the 1980s and the liberalization of global markets brought a dramatic drop in primary product prices and the country was plunged into a financial crisis that was worsened by government corruption and mismanagement. Faced with the state's inability to absorb increasing numbers of educated youth, rising demands for social services by the middle class and calls for wage increase from the civil service, the army as well as the educational sector, the government was forced to break its compact with planters.Therefore, the economic crisis of the 1980's precipitated the collapse of the political monopoly of the PDCI in state institutions. With these economic constraints, the state was faced with making more dramatic cutbacks in the housing and agricultural sector than had been the case before. This created a social atmosphere in which associations that had traditionally abided by the quasi-corporatist system started to contest the limited range of action that the regime permitted.[7] In 1990, prices paid to planters were cut in half resulting immediately in mass protests. Unemployed youth from the cities went to the rural areas to look for jobs only to discover that much of

[6] "History of Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)", nd. Homepage of Nguni Imports. Accessed on 1 Sep. 2005. <http://www.nguni.com/culture/virtualafrica/cotedivoire/history.html>

[7] Dwayne Woods, "Cote d'Ivoire: the crisis of distributive politics", in L.A. Villalion and P.A. Huxtabvle (eds), *The African State at A Critical Juncture, Between Disintegration and Reconfiguration*, London: Lynne Rienner, 1985. p.225

the land they intended to cultivate was under the control of foreigners. With no work and no land, xenophobia grew.[8]

Soon, Cote d'Ivoire began to experience unprecedented levels of political upheaval. Demonstrations involving students and workers centered on the government's austerity policies which had been introduced to comply with preconditions for assistance by international creditors. Persistent anti-government unrest led to the deployment of troops in Abidjan, and in April 1991 following the death of a student when troops intervened to disperse demonstrations, all educational establishments were closed. Houphouet Boigny's response to the crisis was uncharacteristically repressive, as the police and the *gendarmerie* were deployed to contain the strikes.

These upheavals were partly attributed to the distributional politics that placed a heavy burden on the fiscal solvency of the state. During the last quarter of the 1980s, such strategies of political consolidation became increasingly untenable. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had indicated that public expenditures and foreign borrowings were out of control in Cote d'Ivoire and that if appropriate measures were not taken seriously the country would be solvent. As a result, the IMF suggested the adoption and implementation of an austerity budget in the early years of the 1990s. This austerity budget translated into suppression of free education, cuts in housing subsidy and a general reduction in salaries. Hence, the paternalistic mode of governance that Boigny relied on to maintain a firm grip on the country had become too expensive and had to be discontinued in light of the country's shrinking economic resources[9].

[8] "History of Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)", nd. Homepage of Nguni Imports. Accessed on 1 Sep. 2005. <http://www.nguni.com/culture/virtualafrica/cotedivoire/history.html>
[9] Dwayne Woods, "Cote d'Ivoire: the crisis of distributive politics", in L.A. Villalion and P.A. Huxtabvle (eds), *The African State at A Critical Juncture, Between Disintegration and Reconfiguration*, London: Lynne Rienner, 1985. p.225

Feeling that things were getting out of hand, Boigny introduced multi-party politics.[10] Opposition groups that had previously operated unofficially now acquired legal status and a good number of political parties were formed. Cote d'Ivoire's first contested presidential elections were conducted on October 28 1990, with Houphouet Boigny challenged by Laurent Gbagbo, the candidate for the *Front Populaire Ivoirien* (FPI). The incumbent was elected to a seventh term of office by a large majority of votes. In November of the same year, the National Assembly approved two constitutional amendments. The first effectively strengthened the position of Henri Konan Bedie, who was head of the National Asembly, through the provision for the president of the National Assembly to assume the functions of the president of the Republic, should this office become vacant, until the expiry of the mandate of the incumbent. The second made provisions for the appointment of a Prime Minister, a post subsequently awarded to Allasane Dramane Ouattara.[11]

Houphouet Boingy left the country in May 1993 and subsequently spent six months receiving treatment in France and Switzerland. As the president's health failed, controversy was revived about the question of a likely successor. Allasane Ouattara and Laurent Gbagbo, both of whom had nursed presidential ambitions, were among the prominent politicians who denounced the process defined in the constitution, alleging that it effectively endorsed an "hereditary" presidency because Bedie, like Houphouet Boigny, was a member of the *Baoule* ethnic group. The president died on December 7 1993 and on that same day, Bedie announced his assumption of the presidency in accordance with the constitution. Ouattara resigned as Prime Minister two days after France acknowledged Bedie's legitimacy as president.

2. Henry Konan Bedie's Presidency

Bedie was elected chairman of the PDCI-RDA in 1994. Considerable controversy was caused by the adoption, in December 1994, of a new electoral code in preparation for the 1995 presidential and

[10] "The Change of regime in the Ivory Coast, Houphouet Boigny's era", nd. Homepage of Business Africa ™. Accessed on 1 Feb. 2006. <http://businessafrica.net/africabiz/ezine/wa/newswaf2.php>

[11] *Regional Surveys of the World: Africa South of the Sahara* (34th ed), London: Europa Publications, 2005. p.356

legislative elections. Still concerned about a potential challenge from Ouattara as a candidate for the newly created *Rassemblement des Républicain*s (RDR) in the upcoming elections, and looking to appeal to nationalist elements in a population increasingly angry over the economic crisis, Bedie announced the policy of *"Ivoirité"* (Ivorianess), which had to do with issues of national identity.[12] This included the promulgation of a new electoral code thus essentially creating two types of citizens; those of "true or pure" Ivorian origin, and those of mixed heritage. This was aimed at Alassane Ouattara, who had become leader of the main opposition party, the RDR, and whose father, it was alleged, was from Burkina Faso. Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja argues that incumbents bent on prolonging their stay in power have used exclusionary notions of citizenship to bar their most challenging rivals from the electoral process. The best-known examples of this practice are the disqualification of former president of Zambia Kenneth Kaunda and former prime minister of Cote d'Ivoire Alassane Dramane Ouattara from presidential elections repectively in 1996 and 2002. Because one was a founding father and the other had served as head of government under the venerable Felix Houphouet Boigny, the incumbent regimes felt compelled to resort to constituional gymnastics to justify their political exclusion on the basis of citizenship[13]. In this regard, a good number of northerners equally lost their positions in government. Thus, went away Boigny's vision of an "Ivorian melting pot"

The elections took place as scheduled in October 1995 following a week of violence in several towns, and Bedie won with 95.2% of the votes cast after a boycott by most political parties. After five years under Bedie, Cote d'Ivoire appeared to be slipping inexorably towards violent authoritarianism and economic ruin. In November 1996, the government announced the suspension and the dismissal of several members of the armed forces after investigations by a military commission into what was confirmed as a destabilization plot. In January 1997, General Robert Guei, chief of the armed forces was dismissed. A government communiqué stated that the investigative commission had found that he

[12] Daphnée Dion-Viens, "Cote d'Ivoire a Who's Who", 2 Nov. 2002. Homepage of Alternatives. Accessed on 14 Nov. 2005. <http://www.alternatives.ca/article107.html>

[13] Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, "Citizenship, political violence, and democratization in Africa", *Global Governance*, 10, 2004. p.403

had committed "serious disciplinary offences in the discharge of his duties[14]". In August 1999, Ouattara who had returned to Cote d'Ivoire in July and had obtained a certificate confirming his Ivorian identity was confirmed as the RDR's presidential candidate. Thereafter, the long simmering confrontation between Bedie and Ouattara continued, as Bedie continued to insist that he regarded his rival as a Burkinabe citizen and warned that he would suppress any protests on his behalf. In late October 1997, a court in Dimboko, Ouattara's birthplace cancelled his nationality certificate[15]. The news prompted violent demonstrations in Abidjan during which a number of RDR officials were arrested.

With Bedie's authority and popularity rapidly declining, a mutiny among soldiers who converged in Abidjan on 23rd December 1999 quickly escalated into a national crisis. The president initially sorted to appease the soldiers with the promise of improved payments. However, the troops later altered their demands to include the reinstatement of Guei as chief of staff. Bedie fled to the French embassy from where he moved to a French military base. The unexpected coup was widely welcomed within Cote d'Ivoire where the Bedie regime was viewed as authoritarian and corrupt and Bedie's last hopes of rallying support failed when the commanders of the *gendamerie* announced their support for the coup and deployed their forces in the city of Abidjan on Christmas day, to prevent widespread looting.[16]

3. The regime of Robert Guei

In late January 2000, Guei, who had assumed the baton of command, promised that fresh elections would be held before November 1st of the same year. The central political questions became the new constitution and the electoral code. The publication of a draft constitution in May 2000 provoked renewed political crisis as the articles referring to the eligibility of candidates for the presidency

[14] "The Change of regime in Ivory Coast, Henri Konan Bedie rise to power", nd. Homepage of Business Africa ™. Accessed on 1 Feb. 2006. <http://businessafrica.net/africabiz/wa/newswaf3.php>
[15] Siendou A. Konate, "The Politics of identity and violence in Cote d'Ivoire", 2004. Homepage of the *West African Review*. Accessed on 18 August 2005.<http://www.westafricareview.com/issue5/konate.htm>
[16] "Ivory Coast after the coup", 10 Apr. 2000. Homepage of the *Spark.* Accessed on 29 December 2005. <http://www.the-spark.net/cs/.php?issue=27&article=3>

restated the position that a candidate must be born in Cote d'Ivoire to a mother and father of Ivorian origin. A further amendment was made to the effect that a potential presidential candidate must have been residing in the country for five years prior to any presidential elections.[17] This was once again aimed at excluding Ouattara who had taken up a position as deputy director of the IMF in Washington in 1994, and consequently led to protests from the RDR. This further strengthened the North/South divide. Guei surprised observers by applying to become the candidate of the PDCI-RDA.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court upheld a ban on the participation of both Ouattara and Bedie in the elections leaving the field clear for two main contenders, Guei and Laurent Gbagbo.[18] After the elections, as preliminary reports indicated that Gbagbo was taking the lead, Guei suspended the electoral commission and proclaimed himself winner. This in turn prompted Gbagbo's supporters to stage mass street protests in support of their candidate. This was also at a time when the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was metamorphosing into the AU, and African leaders were very much against rulers who came to power through unconstitutional means. Thus, due to pressure from within and out of the country, Guei abdicated and fled to Benin, while Gbagbo reinstated the electoral commission, which published official results showing that he had received 59.4% of the votes to his opponent 32.7%.[19] When Gbagbo refused Ouattara's request for new elections, several weeks of violence ensured. Ouattara's supporters, largely from the north, clashed with the supporters from the south, loyal to Gbagbo[20]. The targeting of populations which supported the RDR, notably immigrants and northerners, reached unprecedented levels, reinforcing the atmosphere of impunity of the security forces that had begun under the junta, and widening the political and ethnic cleavages created by Bedie's *"Ivoirité"*.

[17] *Regional Surveys of the World: Africa South of the Sahara* (32nd ed), London: Europa Publications, 2003. p.309
[18] *Regional Surveys of the World: Africa South of the Sahara* (33rd ed), London: Europa Publications, 2004. p.333
[19] Ibid. p.334
[20] "Timeline: Ivory Coast", nd. Homepage of the BBC News. Accessed on 17 January 2006. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/10431.stm>

4. Gbagbo's Administration and Events of 2002

The Gbagbo government spent its first years in a constant state of paranoia, concerning a possible coup. An atmosphere of political uncertainty prevailed throughout 2001 amid repeated rumours of attempted coups by disaffected members of the army. Unidentified armed assailants perpetrated attacks simultaneously in Korhogo and Abidjan in January 2001 and on the *gendarmerie* and television stations. The government claimed that insurgents came from the north, implying that Burkina Faso was responsible, and in weeks that followed hundreds of RDR supporters were arrested.[21]

In mid September 2002, while Gbagbo was on a state visit to Italy, Cote d'Ivoire entered its most serious political crisis since independence. The planners and leaders of the coup were former soldiers who had been associated with General Guei's junta in 1999, but had subsequently lost influence and found refuge in Burkina Faso. With limited financial support from President Blaise Campoare of Burkina Faso, the mutineers were able to arm, recruit, organize and launch attacks from Burkina Faso. In Abidjan, they killed the Minister of Interior and Decentralization, Emile Boga Doudou, a close ally of Gbagbo and attacked the home of Minister of Defence Moise Lida Kouassi. Guei was killed in Abidjan, by soldiers loyal to Gbagbo, either out of revenge or panic.[22] Amid renewed inter-ethnic tensions and the upsurge of violence directed against northern Muslims and citizens of neighbouring states, Ouattara sought refuge in the German embassy before taking up residence in the French embassy. At the end of November, following mediation by France, he sought refuge in Gabon.

As the mutiny spread rapidly across the country, *gendarmes* were sent to immigrant shantytowns near Abidjan where they burnt and destroyed homes, killing hundreds of immigrants and northerners.[23] In the northern towns of Bouake and Korhogo, the mutineers asserted their control and distributed

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[21] *Regional Surveys of the World: Africa South of the Sahara* (33rd ed), London: Europa Publications, 2004. p.333
[22] Ibid.
[23] Abdoulaye Dukule, "Violence returns to Cote d'Ivoire", 15 Nov. 2004. Homepage of the Global Policy Forum. Accessed on 14 Sep. 2005. <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/ivory/2004/1115returns.htm>

weapons and uniforms to new recruits. As the situation deteriorated, France sent in two hundreds troops who, established a base at Yamoussoukro airport in the center of the country in order to coordinate the evacuation of expatriates from Bouake. The US for its part deployed the same number of Special Forces in Korhogo, to airlift foreigners from rebel held towns.[24] An emergency summit of ECOWAS convened in the Ghanaian capital, Accra, resolved to dispatch a peace-keeping force to act as a buffer between government and rebel troops, and mandated the presidents of Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Niger, Nigeria and Togo in addition to South African president, Thabo Mbeki, in his capacity as the chairman of the AU to form a "contact group" and undertake negotiations between Gbagbo and the insurgents.

[24] "Ivory Coast conflict", Dec. 2005. Homepage of GlobalSecurity.org – Reliable Security Information. Accessed on 18 Dec. 2005. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/ivory-coast.htm>

Chapter 3: Root Causes of Conflict in Cote d'Ivoire

This chapter will argue that in order to broker a peace settlement in Cote d'Ivoire, there is a need to understand the root causes of conflict and the interests of all the parties involved. Thus, for the purpose of this paper, this section will identify the root causes of conflict in Cote d'Ivoire, and argue that the most noticeable and intractable causes are political and socio-economic issues.

1. Battle over limited resource

The definition of politics by Lasswell provides a clear picture of the causes of conflict in Cote d'Ivoire. He defines politics as being concerned with "who gets what, when and how". This narrow definition is very important as it shows that resources are distributed according to the discretion of those in power and thus unequal allocation of resources begets a struggle, leading to the marginalization of certain sectors of society. For instance, the violence in Cote d'Ivoire stems from identity-based conflicts between different groups, national, religious or lineages over the control of economic, political, or social space. The bone of contention is access to land or other resources, and consequently this confrontation is exarcebated by the growing poverty and declining resources.[25]

The sustained marginalization and state supported injustice have created conditions for the crisis, and collapse that have become commonplace in postcolonial Africa. The government's failure to equally distribute resources to its citizens is rooted in large part in the nature of the governing orders established in Africa after independence. African governments evolved practices that centralized power. Over-centralization has tended to breed predatory and personalized rule, and despite varying capabilities, many over-centralized regimes become repressive in responding to the challenges they face. Thus, understanding the nature of state predation and repression is critical to comprehending the

[25] Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, "Citizenship, political violence, and democratization in Africa", *Global Governance*, 10, 2004. p406

deeper issues that undergrid conflicts, as well as the governance challenges that must be addressed in the constitution of post conflict governing orders.[26]

Two sets of issues resonate through much of the literature on intrastate conflict: one relates to the sources of conflict and the other to the nature of conflict resolution mechanisms and processes. Conflicts in Africa are invariably sparked off by contestations over resources. This is occurring against a background of economic globalization that has had an adverse effect on peripheral economies of the African type. In other words, these conflicts are rooted in the scarcity of resources on the continent, and the absence of, or failure to, craft institutions that could guarantee their equitable distribution[27]. Politics of resources distribution therefore lie at the heart of conflict in Africa.

The presence of kleptocracies and rent seeking regimes in large parts of postcolonial Africa go a long way towards explaining the prevalence of conflict in those areas. It has been realized that conflicts tend to be heightened when resources become scarce and groups are either excluded, or perceive themselves to be excluded from the allocation of resources. Invariably, the more scarce resources are, the more intensely they are contested. This may not necessarily translate into immediate conflict, but may simply be expressed through group rivalries and may initially merely assume forms of ethnic, tribal or religious separatism.[28]

Conflicts in Africa become propelled by problems basic to all populations; the tugs and pulls of different identities, the differential distribution of resources and access to power and competing definitions of what is right, fair and just. Struggles over distribution of resources and the demands for sub national groups often spill across borders. Roger Southall and Henning Melber are quick to point

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[26] Amos Sawyer, "Violent conflicts and governance in West Africa: the case of the Mano River Basin area", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 42(3), 2004. p.438

[27] Rok Ajulu, "African security: can regional organisations play a role?", in Shannon Field (ed), *Peace in Africa, Towards a Collaborative Security Regime*, Johannesburg: Istitute for Global Dialogue, 2004. p.267

[28] C.M Magagula, "Conflict resolution and management: the role of African higher education institutions", 15 Nov. 2002. Homepage of the African Educational Research Network. Accessed on 13 Oct. 2005. <http://www2.ncsu.edu/ncsu/aern/confma.html>

that conflicts are driven by elites's desperation to monopolise the state, given limited economic alternatives, in others they can be more accurately described as resources war in which the government and rebels are competing for control of valuable commodities[29]. Hence, Che Ajulu argues that at the heart of the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire is the battle for the control of the cocoa and coffee belt. These are clear indications that the struggle for scarce resources has been manipulated by the elites to maintain their grip on power and in the process destabilise the region.[30]

In many African conflicts however, identity is usually not the most salient in the bundle of issues that are at the source. Conflicts undergo metamorphosis. This is why initiatives to resolve conflict in Africa must reflect a deep understanding of conflict context, sources and processes going beyond simply working out agreements between belligerents. As important as this is, experience has shown that the critical challenge is not simply to provide incentives to ensure cooperation among antagonistic armed groups and to hold elections. More importantly, the challenge includes understanding the conflict, and creating and implementing appropriate settlements that have the potential to support processes of democratic peace-building and the constitution of post conflict governance arrangements on principles and along patterns that depart from approaches that have failed.[31]

The politics of national identity, religious belonging, ethnic cleavages, feeling of exclusion and perceptions of who is and who is not a "true or pure" Ivorian need to be understood as a by-product of struggle over resources such as the control of coffee and cocoa in Cote d'Ivoire. The struggle for diminishing resources led to the marginalization and exclusion of some government officials from effectively participating in the political future of the country. For example, under Boigny, when resources were abundant and his grip on the political machinery quite firm, it was not difficult to

[29] Roger Southall, Neo Simutanyi and John Daniel, "Former presidents in African politics", in Roger Southall and Henning Melber (eds), *Legacies of Power: Leadership Change and Former Presidents in African Politics*, Cape Town: Human Science Research Council, 2006. p 18
[30] Che Ajulu, "Cote d'Ivoire: a regional quandary", *Global Insight: a focus on current issues*, 37, Sep. 2004. p,3
[31] Stephen John Stedman, "Conflict and conflict resolution in Africa: a conceptual framework", in Francis Deng and Willian Zartman (eds), *Conflict Resolution in Africa*, Washington: The Brookings Institute, 1991. p.368

control competing elites and hence buy their loyalties. However, with his demise and the country's rapidly shrinking economic resource base, partly due to globalisation, the new elites had to find ways of managing those resources. Bedie's strategy was therefore to exclude segments of the political class from sharing in the largesse of the state.[32]

2. Political dimension: Politics of inclusion vs politics of exclusion

The political manifestation of the Ivorian crisis is centred around the politics of nationality and identity that have become exclusionary since the death of Houphouet Boigny. The politics of exclusion has led to the division of the country into North and South. This division has compelled some factions to take up arms to fight their exclusion from the government institutions and therefore, the most fundamental question that needs to be addressed in Cote d'Ivoire is the ever growing animosity between the citizens form the North and those from the South.

Significantly, politics of exclusion in Cote d'Ivoire could be traced back to 1990 when President Houphouet Boingy introduced the multi-party politics. Opposition groups which had previously operated unofficially had by 1990 acquired legal status. A good number of political parties were formed. For instance, the concept of *Ivoirité* reportedly originated in the late 1960s and early 1970s among Ivorian intellectuals who were merely giving a cultural expression to their nationalism. This concept was so popular that even Houphouet Boigny in the 1970s adopted it and used it to ensure that only Ivorians were allowed to serve in the public service of the country. This led to the sacking of foreigners or immigrants who had hitherto served in such capacity. It was the actual beginning of xenophobia in official practice. In the hands of Laurent Gbagbo, *Ivoirité* has moved beyond a mere intellectual concept and has been transformed into a weapon for excluding political opponents like Alassane Ouattara. The concept re-emerged in a more powerful manner on the political terrain with the election of Konan Bedie to the presidency in 1995. Since then it has become associated with

[32] Abdul Rahman Lamin, *Conflict in Cote d'Ivoire: South Africa's Diplomacy and Prospects for Peace*, Johannesburg: Institute for Global Dialogue, 2005. p14

xenophobia and racism, a dangerous instruments in the hands of Laurent Gbagbo to exclude his main political rival, Ouattara, from seeking election to the presidency.[33]

Therefore, incumbent governments tend to uncharacteristically use repressive measures to further exclude some sectors of the society. Ajulu maintains that exclusion from the national democratic processes and the experience of state repression has legitimized violence as a means to effect social change within both the youth and warlord structures. Violence has become intstitutionalised as a means of maintaining internal social cohesion and meeting basic material needs. Leadership within these structures have a strong vested interest in the perpetuation of violent conflict. Thus, violence has been used by both the state and the rebel forces as a means to retard or secure political change[34].

Immdediately upon the death of Boigny, every possible diabolical plan was hatched to prevent Prime Minister Alassane Ouattara from ever becoming president. Henri Konan Bedie, who held the presidency of the National Assembly at the time, eventually succeeded Boigny after a brief power tussle. From that moment onwards Ouatarra's political troubles and victimization began. Bedie, apparently scared of Ouattara's popularity, resorted to the spurious allegation that Ouattara was not a true Ivorian, as his parents were said to be originally from Burkina Faso, thus effectively excluding and disqualifying him from standing for national elections. This began a period of political crisis and instability, punctuated by ethnically motivated bloodshed, from which the country has yet to escape.[35] Hence, when Gbagbo came to power, he maintained article 35 of the Ivorian constituion.

Article 35 of the Ivorian constituion became a bone of political contestation and has led to one of the bloodiest conflict, recently in Africa. The article excludes those who don't have both parents as Ivorians, from citizenship and landownership, as well as being excluded from being elected to the

[33] Alade W Fawole, "Ecowas and the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire: the politics and problems of peace-making in West Africa", *Journal of West African Affairs*, 4(2), 2004. p.15
[34] Rok Ajulu, " Political violence in South Africa: a rejoinder to Morris and Hindson ", *Africa Review of Political Economy*, 55, 1992. p.68
[35] Alade W Fawole, "Ecowas and the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire: the politics and problems of peace-making in West Africa", *Journal of West African Affairs*, 4(2), 2004. p.16

independent electoral body. Therefore, article 35 of the constitution has led to the frustration of many Ivorians from the north since they have been perceived as "half Ivorians" because there is a rumour that their parents came as immigrants from neighbouring countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Guinea and Niger. In fact, Alade Fawole aptly puts it that Cote d'Ivoire has a peculiar demographic characteristic. About one-fifth of its population is made up of immigrants from the neighbouring states of West Africa, mostly Burkinabes, Malians, Guineans, Senegalese, Ghananians and Nigerians. These diverse nationalities had settled and lived in the country for generations, mostly working in the cocoa and other crop plantations. Throughout the country's history since independence, foreign African residents had been subjected to occasional orchestrated xenophobia, discrimination and hostility. In fact, Gbagbo especially had been associated with anti-immigrant political postures, even during Boigny's rule. He openly accused Boigny of allowing foreign residents to vote in the country's general elections. Thus, it is not surprising that Gbagbo was associated with the overt and covert moves to deny Ouattara his citizenship rights and persecute his regional loyalists. Gbagbo's policies and Artcicle 35 have consciously encouraged greater ethnic consciousness and discrimination that is currently tearing the once peaceful nation apart[36]. When Gbagbo, based on Article 35 refused Ouattara's request for new elections, several weeks of violence ensured and the country became a theatre of conflict.

The targeting of populations which supported the RDR notably immigrants and northerners reached unprecedented levels reinforcing the air of impunity of security forces that had begun under the junta and widening the political exclusion, national identity and ethnic cleavages created by Bedie's policy of "*Ivoirité*". As a result, politics of exclusion did not only express themselves on presidential candidancy but also aimed at the communities represented by Alassane Ouattara.

[36] Ibid. p.17

3. Relative deprivation theory and ethnic polarization

The bloodiest civil war in Cote d'Ivoire has led to ethnic polarisation between people from the north and those from the south. Many lives have been lost and many have sought refuge elsewhere. The relative deprivation theory helps to explain the social cleavages between those who want to enrich themselves by tenaciously clinging on to power and those who feel absolutely deprived by the government's decision to determine who should or should not run for presidential election.

The relative deprivation theory shows an intractable element of conflict and a wide political and economic discrimination in the allocation of resources between different ehnic groups living in the same country. As a result, this theory is more concerned with a perception of unequal distribution of resources such as a wide gap in income and occupation. Hence, relative deprivation theory helps to highlight the perception that other ethnic groups are relatively more advantaged than others. Verstegen argues that constitutional inclusion between ethnic religious, or language groups, regional inequalities, class inequalities, the forms in which power relations are institutionalized, and so on…is a consequence of socio-economic exploitation and exclusion and the end result of deliberate actions or a a lack of distributive mechanisms of central authority. Exclusion and downward mobility are here seen as the processes of relative and absolute impoverishment, which is in many cases the reverse image of the enrichment of another group. It is, more, a question of perceptions and relative deprivation.[37]

In all African countries the state is seen as the major distributor of resources to its citizens but more often these resources are allocated according to ethnic, language, location and religious belonging. Subsequently, people with ethnic differences from those who hold power tend to suffer from gaining access to state apparatus and consequently are excluded from gaining a total share of their country's wealth and resources. As a result, features such as ethinicity, language and religion are highly policiticed to ignite a conflict. Maoz explains that "national decision makers wish to satisfy some

[37] Suzanne Verstegen, "Poverty and conflict: an entitlement perspective", 2001. Homepage of the Clingendael Centre of International Relations. Accessed on 7 February 2006.
<http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2001/20010900_cru_other_verstegen.pdf>

tangible needs of their constituencies at the expense of other groups".[38] Conflicts in Africa are exacerbated by perceptions and the feeling of discrimination based on dominance, hostility, xenophobia and perhaps the feeling of superiority and inferiority. For instance, the feeling of discrimination and neglect of the northerners by the southerners intensified after the death of Boigny, forced the incumbent government to design policies that were perceived as favouring forces loyal to Gbagbo. Thus Naomi, Ravenhill, Mortimer and Rothchild collectively argue that:

> Conflicts are concerned not only with the way power is exercised but also with the purposes of governance; they may present challenges to policy, to the incumbents of public office, or to the dominant political vision. At issues, therefore, are question of authority and power as well as legitimacy. Participation, cooperation, dissatisfaction, protest, rebellion and civil war are all ways of reaching to specific regimes[39].

The regional division of communities in Cote d'Ivoire has heightened the perception of national and political identity as well as religious belonging. Indeed, southerners have felt relatively deprived from land ownership and benefiting resources thereof. Subsequently, leaders from both communities sought for a support along ethnic belonging and religious affiliations. Hence, Ousmane Kane explains that a new perspective on citizenship based on *Ivoirité* was promoted in the 1990s under the regime of Konan Bedie. The aim of this approach to citizenship was to prevent Alassane Ouattara, a former Prime Minister under Felix Boingy and a political rival to Bedie from contesting the presidential elections. Yet, this led to the deprivation and marginalization of nearly one-fourth of the people who currently live in Cote d'Ivoire[40].

A further amendment of article 35 of the Ivorian constitution has created a climate of exclusion and cemented the already existing perceptions of alienation and marginalization from accessing the country's limited resources. Provoked by these perceptions, northern leaders have taken up arms to confront their marginalization from the political and election participation.

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[38] Zeev Maoz, *Paths to Conflict: International Dispute Initiation 1816-1976*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1982. P.84
[39] Naomi Chazan, Robert Mortimer, John Ravenhill & Donald Rothchild, *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa*, Boulder: Lynne Reinner, 1992. p.189
[40] Ousmane Kane, "Le mot des redacteur-en-chef", *Identité, Culture et Politique*, 3(2), 2002. p.V.

On the other hand, the languid policy of *Ivoirité* incarnated successively by Konan Bedie, Robert Guei and President Laurent Gbagbo continued to reflect the progressive disengagement of citizens from the north. To worsen matters, Gbagbo, who took power from Guei after a controversial election in 2000, has also been encouraging systematic xenophobia in order to remain in power. At the receiving end of his politics of exclusion are mostly Northern Muslims from Ouattara's home region. One consequence of such ugly political developments is the current civil war in the country. It was sparked by military personnel of northern origin who were cashiered from the army and police forces purely on suspicion of being sympathetic to the opposition, especially to Ouattara. They struck with the intention to overthrow the regime and possibly reverse the egregious political deprivation and marginalisation their region had suffered. But when this initial objective failed, their refusal to lay down their arms subsequently allowed the mutiny to fester into a civil war[41]. The government claimed the insurgents came from the north implying that Burkina Faso was responsible and, in the weeks that followed, hundreds of RDR supporters were arrested. As the unrest grew and mutiny spread rapidly across the country, *gendarmes* were sent to immigrants shantytowns near Abidjan where they burnt and destroyed homes, thereby, killing hundreds of immigrants and northerners. In the northern towns of Bouake and Korhogo, the mutineers asserted their control and distributed weapons and uniforms to new recruits.

Against this backdrop, relative deprivation theory helps to explain the north and south divide and hostilities based on perceptions of national identity and religious beliefs. Given the political and military dominance of the government which is based on southern domination, leaders from north have taken up arms as a last resort to fight their exclusion that is deeply entrenched on perceptions of who is and who is not a "true or pure" Ivorian. As a result, these perceptions have caused one of the bloodiest conflicts in Africa.

[41] Alade W Fawole, "Ecowas and the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire: the politics and problems of peace-making in West Africa", *Journal of West African Affairs*, 4(2), 2004. p.16

Therefore, any third party mediation must ensure that it fully understand issues that undergrid the already existing differences between the north and the south communities.

Chapter 4: Giving Mediators a chance: Perspective on peace

This chapter examines the role of third party mediation in trying to broker a peace agreement in Cote d'Ivoire. It also examines reasons for the failure to implement the French-brokered Linas Marcoussis as well as the little success of the Accra Accords. This failure of both agreements provides an understanding of events that led to the Pretoria Accords under the auspices of South Africa.

In mid September 2002, while Gbagbo was on a state visit to Italy, Cote d'Ivoire entered its most serious political crisis since independence[42].

As the unrest grew and mutiny spread rapidly across the country, *gendarmes* were sent to immigrants shantytowns near Abidjan where they burnt and destroyed homes and thereby killing hundreds of immigrants and northerners. In the northern towns of Bouake and Korhogo, the mutineers asserted their control and distributed weapons and uniforms to new recruits. As the situation deteriorated, France sent in two hundred troops who, established a base at Yamoussoukro airport in the center of the country in order to coordinate the evacuation of expatriates from Bouake. The United States for its part deployed the same number of Special Forces Korhogo to airlift foreigners from rebel held towns.[43] An emergency summit of ECOWAS, convened in Accra, Ghana, resolved to dispatch a peace keeping force to act as a buffer between government and rebel troops and mandated the presidents of Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Niger, Nigeria and Togo in addition to South African President Thabo Mbeki in his capacity as a chairman of the AU, to form a contact group and undertake negotiations between Gbagbo and the insurgents.

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[42] See Chapter 2, section 4, p.13 of this study.

[43] "Ivory Coast conflict", Dec. 2005. Homepage of GlobalSecurity.org – Reliable Security Information. Accessed on 18 Dec. 2005. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/ivory-coast.htm>

1. The Linas Marcoussis Peace Agreement

In January 2003, the French president, Jacques Chirac, organized a round table with the Ivorian political forces in the French resort town of Linas Marcoussis. It brought together representatives of all existing political parties in Cote d'Ivoire as well as non-political representatives. Each delegation gave its analysis of the situation in the Cote d'Ivoire and made proposals aimed at restoring confidence and overcoming the crisis. The vision given by the delegations enabled the round table to come to a consensus, in which all elements, principles and annexes have the same status.[44]

1.1 Ceasefire

The round-table welcomed the cease-fire, made possible and guaranteed by the deployment of ECOWAS forces, supported by French troops, and demanded strict compliance with its terms. The Linas Marcoussis Agreement as popularly known, called on all parties to immediately put a stop to all exactions and concentrate on the peace process. The Agreement reiterated the need to maintain the territorial integrity of Cote d'Ivoire and respect for its political and economic institutions, and to restore the authority of the state. It recalled its commitment to the principle of democratic accession and exercise of power.[45]

1.2 The Government of National Reconciliation

The Linas-Marcoussis Agreement provided for the formation of a Government of National Reconciliation to ensure a return to peace and stability. It was agreed that the Government of National Reconciliation would be led by a consensus Prime Minister who would remain in office until presidential elections were organized, and that the interim prime minister would not be eligible to stand as a candidate in the elections. The government would be composed of representatives from each

[44] "Peace agreements, digital collection: Cote d'Ivoire (English)", 14 Feb 2004. Homepage of the United States Institute for Peace. Accessed on 12 Oct.2005. <http://www.usip.org/library/pa/cote_divoire/cote_divoire_01242003en.html>
[45] Ibid.

of the Ivorian delegations that took part in the round-table. In assigning ministers, a balance was to be struck among the parties throughout the term of office of the government[46]

1.3 Citizenship and identity

On the issue of citizenship, identity and status of foreign nationals, the round-table considered that the issue of Ivorian citizenship as amendend to make broad provisions for naturalization by certificate issued by the public authorities was a generous and well-drafted text. The round table observed a degree of legal difficulty in applying Articles 6 and 7 of the citizenship code. The difficulty was compounded by the fact that in practice, the certificate of citizenship is valid for three months only, and that the person holding it must prove his or her citizenship each time it is renewed, by producing a number of documents.[47] Therefore, the Government of National Reconciliation was called upon to : immediately promote increased recourse of existing naturalization procedures, based on better information and possible cooperation projects which were to be implemented with the support of international development partners.[48]

Furthermore, the Government of National Reconciliation was tasked with coping with the uncertainty and slow pace of the identification process as well as the errors and abuses which arose from the scrupulous nature in which security checks were conducted. It was equally stated that the Government of National Reconciliation had to take further action with respect to registration and identification of individuals in particular. The round-table found that foreign nationals residing in large numbers in Cote d'Ivoire had made a major contribution to national wealth and helped confer on Cote d'Ivoire its special position and responsibility within the sub-region, as it has also benefited the countries of origin of these foreign nationals-and considered that the petty announcements perpetrated by the

[46] Ibid.
[47] Linas Marcoussis Agreement January 2003, Signed by Various Parties To the Ivorian Conflict in the French Resort Town of Linas Marcoussis, English Version.
[48] Claudio Gramizzi, "La Paix s'eloigne de Cote d'Ivoire", 14 Nov. 2004. Homepage of RESO – Réformistes et Solidaires. Accessed on 13 Sep. 2005. <http://www.re-so.net/article.php3?id_article=377>

administration which often disregarded the law and human rights and in turn, affected such nationals could have been caused by willful misapplication of identification provision.[49]

The Government of National Reconciliation was charged with the elimination of the residence permit requirements under Article 8 paragraph 2 of law 2002-03 of January 3 2002 for nationals of ECOWAS countries and was to carry out the immigration inspection needed by using means of identification not subject to fraudulent misuse. Moreover, the Government of National Reconciliation was to consider introducing legislative and regulatory provisions to improve the status of foreign nationals and protect their property.[50]

1.4 The judiciary system

On the question of the electoral system, the round table considered that law 20004-514 of August 2000 in the electoral code raised no difficulties and that the reflected efforts to improve the text of the laws that law 2001-634 of 9 January 2001 which created the Independent Electoral Commission, constituted significant progress in ensuring the organization of transparent elections. The Government of National Reconciliation was therefore called upon to ensure impartiality of the measures taken to identify voters and the drawing up of voter's lists and to submit a bill relating to the status of the opposition and to the public funding of political parties and elections campaign within six months. The Government of National Reconciliation was also to take all appropriate measures to ensure the independence of the judicial system and the impartiality of the media with respect to both election disputes and election propaganda.[51]

[49] Linas Marcoussis Peace Accords, Annex, Programme of the Government of National Reconciliation on the Question of Citizenship, Identity, and status of Foreign Nationals.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Linas Marcoussis Peace Accords, Annex on the Question of the Electoral system.

1.5 Revisiting Article 35

With regard to the issue of eligibility for the Presidency of the Republic, the round-table considered that Article 35 must avoid referring to concepts without legal concept or which are derived from the legislation. The Government of National Reconciliation was therefore called upon to propose that conditions governing eligibility to run for the presidency of the Republic be laid down as follows:

> The President of the Republic is elected by universal suffrage to a five year term of office. He can be reelected only once. The candidate must be in possession of his civil and political rights and be at least thirty five years of age. He must have only Ivorian citizenship and have a father or mother born Ivorian.[52]

The round-table condemned the incitement of hatred and xenophobia propagated in certain quarters by the media, and called on the Government of National Reconciliation to overhaul the general regime governing the press so as to strengthen the role of the regulatory authorities, guarantee neutrality and impartiality of state broadcasters and foster the financial independence of the media. It was to restore immediately the free broadcasting of the international radio and television media.[53]

1.6 Demobilization and disarmament programme

On the subject of regrouping, disarming and demobilizing, the Government of National Reconciliation was called upon to undertake the process of concomitant regrouping of the forces on the ground under the supervision of both ECOWAS and French forces. In the second phase, the Government of National Reconciliation was asked to ensure the social reintegration of military personnel of every origin with the help of Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Resettlement, and Reintegration (DDRRR) type programmes which could be implemented with the support of international development partners. The Government of National Reconciliation was to carry out an audit of its armed forces and determine the level of sacrifice which it could accept in order to meet its obligations with respect to

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[52] Linas Marcoussis Peace Accords, Annex on the issue of eligibility to the Presidency of the Republic

[53] West African Early Warning Network (WARN), "Crisis in Cote d'Ivoire-'Pax Marcoussis': emerging challenges and prospects", 18 Dec. 2003. Homepage of Relief Web. Accessed on 14 Nov. 2005. <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/AllDocsByUNID/edaa3c76b664538fc1256e200045725f>

national defence in a difficult economic context. It would restructure the armed forces and request outside assistance for this purpose.[54]

Finally, the Government of National Reconciliation was to ensure that the constitutional, legislative and regulatory reforms which arose from the decisions it made be introduced without delay.

1.7 Analysis of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement

The Linas Marcoussis Accord was quickly compromised by a lack of commitment and political will by the various parties. The central issues in the conflict notably, nationality and eligibility to run for presidential elections, along with disarmament were not satisfactorily addressed.

In addition, Ministers belonging to the former rebel groups left the Government of National Reconciliation accusing President Gbagbo of failing to delegate executive powers to the Prime Minister and the coalition government as demanded by the Agreement.[55] Thus, opposition parties left the government while *Forces Nouvelles*, remnants of the armed group that attempted a coup in September 2002 and subsequently took control of the north of the country, refused to disarm until after the elections. Laurent Gbagbo had repeatedly repudiated the terms of the Accord, which he referred to as no more than a set of proposals his opponents contend. Hence, the peace process faltered.

After the signing of the accords, pro FPI youth held demonstrations in Abidjan and targeted French residents and their property. This led to the separation of thousands of French citizens from Cote d'Ivoire. The accords, according to the youth loyal to Gbagbo, have legitimized the rebellion.

The Linas-Marcoussis called upon the incumbent government and the rebels to begin the process of disarmament programme, the respect of democracy, end to discrimination based on identity and

[54] Linas Marcoussis Peace Accords, Annex on the issue of Regrouping, Diarming and Demobilizing.
[55] Gail Wannenburg and Nuria Giralt, "West Africa: A review of the region", in *South African Yearbook of International Affairs 2003/2004*, Johannesburg: South African Institute of International Affairs, 2004. p.85

citizenship and the need to restructure the security of the country. These agreements were not implemented because members of the rebel forces resigned from the government citing reasons that Gbagbo had failed to respect and implement the outcomes of the peace accord. Thus, Gbagbo was accused of violating the agreements made in the Linas Marcoussis and the peace process failed. Gail Wannenburg and Nuria Giralt succinctly put it that in September 2003, ministers belonging to the to the former rebel groups resigned because they said Gbagbo had failed to delegate executive powers to the prime minister and coalition coalition government, and had appointed the key security ministers, in contravention of the accord.[56]

In addition, one could argue that from the onset, Gbagbo was unwilling to respect agreements of the Linas-Marcoussis Accords. He has on various occasions delayed the peace process, because he harbours fears that if free and fair elections are organized and held in October 2005, he could be defeated.

2. The Accra Accords

The Accra Accords did not really differ from the issues outlined in the Linas Marcoussis peace Agreement. The meeting in Accra was to persuade Ivorian leaders to recommit themselves to implement the outstanding issues in the Linas Marcoussis Agreement. Therefore, on July 31 the Accra Agreement was signed with the goal of bringing the peace-process back on track. The agreement was the result of heavy pressure from several African leaders and United Nations (UN) Secretary General Kofi Annan. Key elements of the agreement were to make it easier for West African immigrants and their descendants to gain Ivorian nationality as well as title to the land they had worked on for decades. It was also designed to allow their children to inherit that land; to set up constitutional reform that made it easier for immigrants to become president; and, crucially, to come to an agreement calling for

[56] Ibid.

beginning the process of the disarmament, demobilization, and rehabilitation, which was to be completed by October 15 at the latest.

In addition, the agreement also called on President Gbagbo to formalize the specific powers to be held by the Prime Minister Seydou Diarra. The implementation of the agreement was to be closely monitored by the UN and ECOWAS. Soon after the Accra Agreement was reached, power was delegated to Diarra and a mixed police unit made up of rebels and government forces were created. However other reforms were not as successful, having been held up in parliament. Doubt was also cast upon the potential success of the disarmament plan, largely because the insurgents feared that they would lose their political leverage if they were to surrender their weapons. As the October 15 deadline approached, tension grew in the country, as the rebels refused to disarm arguing that the government had failed to implement reforms[57].

Cognizance of this continuous political impasse, President John Kufour, the chair of ECOWAS, invited signatories of the Linas-Marcoussis Accords along with head of states of the AU in Accra on 29-30July 2004 to re-examine the Ivorian crisis. The meeting saw the participation of more than 18 AU heads of states, including Alpha Omar Konare, President of the AU Commission, and Mohammed Ibn Chambas, Executive Secretary of the ECOWAS. The Ivorian parties were called upon by John Kufour to re-present their problems and to postulate to postulate the extent to which the government of reconciliation could accommodate their grievances. After serious robust debates, the participants resolved to fast track the implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis agreement and Accra I and II Accords. They also pledged to support the president in using his discretionary powers to revise Article 35 of the Constitution. Parties at the Accra III also reiterated their commitment to support and guarantee the adoption of legislation, decrees and political reforms before the end of August 2004 as

[57] "Ivory Coast conflict", Dec. 2005. Homepage of GlobalSecurity.org – Reliable Security Information. Accessed on 18 Dec. 2005. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/ivory-coast.htm>

stated in the Linas-Marcoussis agreement. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the militias was to be effected on the October 15 2004[58]

The Accra III was therefore seen as the most comprehensive agreement since Linas-Marcoussis. It stipulated specific time frames and a clear road map for the attainment of peace and security in Cote d'Ivoire. It ordered the disarmament of the militias and rebels, something that the other peace accords on Cote d'Ivoire had failed to emphasize. The Accra III also called for the delegation of executive powers to the prime minister according to Article 56 of the Ivorian Constituion. This position taken by the Ivorian government was unprecedented as many African leaders have always wanted to wield all executive powers even when it seems those powers are slipping away. The Accra III agreement was also hailed as it advocated the creation of an International Commission of Inquiry to investigate the abuse of human rights and insinuated that such abusers should be punished according to the international law.[59]

Unsurprisingly, no stakeholders in the Ivorian debacle adhered to the timeframes put forth by the Accra III accord. In November 2004, rebels had not disarmed neither had they been integrated into the Ivorian army as agreed in various peace accords.

Trampling on the Linas Marcoussis accords and the Accra accords Gbagbo, on November 4 2004, launched "Operation Dignity", an air and land offensive against the positions of the *Forces Nouvelles.* In the course of the operation, the *Forces Armées Nationales de Côte d'Ivoire* (FANCI) air force "mistakenly" bombed a French military camp in Bouake, the zone controlled by the *Force Nouvelles.* The attack left nine French soldiers and a US civilian dead[60]. The French reacted by destroying the

[58] Ibid
[59] Ibid
[60] Jean Nanga, "Ivory Coast: a 'civil war' that is French and neo-colonial, Feb. 2005. Homepage of international Viewpoint – News and Analysis from the Fourth International. Accessed on 12 Sep. 2005. <http://212.67.202.147/~ivnet05/print_article.php3?id_article=553>

aircraft that had carried out the attack, and following orders from the French President Jacques Chirac, destroyed the entire Ivorian air force.

This disproportionate response sparked off a mobilization of Gbagbo's supporters in Abidjan. Anti French and anti-opposition violence took place, and demonstrators headed for the permanent French base of the 43rd Batallion of Marine Infantry (BIMA), as well as the airport and the Hotel d'Ivoire, occupied by the French army.[61] Furthermore, Lamin notes that ideologically, Gbagbo had been mostly opposed to French manipulation of Ivorian politics, since the Boigny's days. He had, therefore, historically been suspicious of France's, and more precisely Chirac's, political involvement in Cote d'Ivoire. Although the French authorities welcomed Gbagbo in Paris following his controversial elections in 2000, and subsequently lifted sanctions imposed on the country after Guei's 1999 coup d'etat, clearly Gbagbo'relationship with the former colonial power was superficial. The Linas-Marcoussis process thus provided an opportunity for Gbagbo and his supporters clearly to undercut France's involvement in Cote d'Ivoire.[62] This is because Gbagbo is perceived by France as a new leader, not prepared to bow down to their interests and privileges in the country. It should also be remembered that Gbagbo led a demonstration against French interests involving students in the 1970s. Thus, the French government would no doubt like to see the major concessions continue in French hands, and are clearly worried about Gbagbo's independence[63].

It was at this point in the crisis that South Africa, under President Thabo Mbeki, was mandated by the AU and the ECOWAS to engage the Ivorian government, the northern rebels and the political opposition in a new process. After his visit to Cote d'Ivoire in November 2004, President Thabo Mbeki announced that an agreement on a four-point plan had been reached. He stated that the Ivorian

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[61] "Cote d'Ivoire: row develops over killing by French troops", 1 Dec. 2004. Homepage of the United Nations Integrated Regional Information Networks – OCHA IRIN. Accessed on 11 Nov. 2005. <http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=44470&SelectRegion=West_Africa&SelectCountry=COTE_D_IVOIRE>

[62] Abdul Rahman Lamin, *Conflict in Cote d'Ivoire: South Africa's Diplomacy and Prospects for Peace*, Johannesburg: Institute for Global Dialogue, 2005. p.19

[63] International Crisis Group (ICG), " Cote d'Ivoire: the war is not over yet ", *ICG Africa Report*, 2003. p.30.

government, President Laurent Gbagbo, opposition parties and the country's main rebel movements had accepted that "specific programmes be carried out".[64] The agreement aimed at reviving the faltering peace process which provided for the government to implement legislative changes, with the rebels required to start making progress with their own disarmament.

One of the key legal challenges to be implemented by Gbagbo's government concerns Article 35 which specifies that the mother and father of presidential candidates must be Ivorian by birth.[65] The purpose of the renewed negotiations was to get the government to change that clause so that only one parent needs to be born in Cote d'Ivoire. Such a change would open the way for opposition leader, Ouattara, and other northerners to contest the forthcoming elections and in the long run diffuse the long-standing division between northerners and southerners in the country. It is important to note that with South Africa's involvement in the mediation process and even Gbagbo had announced a decree repealing Article 35, the peace process stalled afterwards.

3. Pretoria Accords

The South African president Thabo Mbeki, in his attempt to broker a peace deal in Cote d'Ivoire, equally met leaders of various factions of Cote d'Ivoire in Pretoria in April 2005 to further discuss the road map to peace and reconciliation in that country. He received Allasane Ouattara former Prime Minister and leader of the RDR party, Lambert Kouassi Konan, Vice President of the Ivorian Democratic Party and the main rebel leader Gillaume Soro.[66]

Leaders from Cote d'Ivoire went to South Africa in search of a new deal since both Linas-Marcoussis and Accra agreements had failed.

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[64] Integrated Regional Information Network, "Mbeki Reports on Peace Mission as Opposition Accuses Gbagbo of Preparing For War", 11 Jan. 2005. Homepage of the Global Policy Forum. Accessed on 13 Jan. 2005. <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/ivory/2005/0111resume.htm>

[65] "Cote d'Ivoire: all sides pledge commitment to peace process again, but will anything change?", 7 Dec. 2004. Homepage of the United Nations Integrated Regional Information Networks – OCHA IRIN. Accessed on 11 Nov. 2005. <www.irinnews.org/report.asp?reportid=44547>

[66] "Rebels to meet Mbeki again", 17 Dec. 2004. Homepage of News24.com. Accessed on 11 Nov.2005. <http://www.news24.com/News24/Africa/News/0,,2-11-1447_1637312,00.html>

Under the Pretoria Agreement negotiated by Mbeki, leaders from the various parties pledged to commit themselves to end the civil war in Cote d'Ivoire. Consequently, the Pretoria accord mandated all the parties to agree immmediately and to proceed with the disarmament and the dismantling of the various groups. Furthermore, it was agreed, on the one hand, that the Prime Minister will oversee the process of the disarmament and the dismantling of the rebels; President Gbagbo, on the other hand, will have to ensure that the units of the Defence and Security Forces work together with the Prime Minister in the implementation of the disarmament and dismantling program.

The accord also persuaded all belligerent groups to agree that the Chief of Staff of the National Armed Forces of the Cote d'Ivoire and the Armed Forces of the New Forces should set up a meeting as soon as possible to begin the implementation of the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Plan (PNDDR). According to news report The City Press, rebel leaders as well as President Gbagbo all committed themselves towards working together for peace, disarmament, demobilization and the integration of all armed forces into a single force.

With the above-mentioned outcome of the meeting and optimism in the air, the question that needs to be posed is: what difference can South Africa make in Cote d'Ivoire's search for peace, given the failure of other third parties?. First, it is important to note that the French position has also been the least ambivalent, as they have been accused by the government of Cote d'Ivoire as well as the rebels of taking sides in the conflict. This has in the past sparked anti-French sentiments in the country and led to the expulsion of thousands of French citizens. France no longer had the legitimacy as a neutral mediator. Seemingly, ECOWAS failed to provide solution to the Ivorian crisis. Hence, AU and ECOWAS mandated South Africa to continue with process of resolving the conflict.

Essentially, one argues that the Pretoria accord does not bring a new deal to the negotiation table. In fact, Mbeki argued that the French-brokered agreement remains effectively the blueprint for Ivorian peace. Furthermore, Lamin further suggests that the Pretoria Agreement of April 2005 does not in any way differ much from the Linas-Marcoussis and Accra accords. Like its predecessors, the new agreement addresses both political and security issues. Politically, the Pretoria Agreement provides for the reunification of the country by securing commitments from the New Forces to rejoin the power-sharing government agreed to under the Linas-Marcoussis. We should be reminded that South Africa's involvement in the peace process came in the wake of the withdrawal of rebels' ministers from the Gbagbo-led government, on the grounds that the president had failed to delegate, in any substantial way, executive authority to the Prime Minister, as stipulated under Linas-Marcoussis and Accra agreements.[67]

Seeing that South Africa is not coming up with any changes in the peace talks that are already mystified with bad faith and lack of trust amongst warring factors to implement all the accords, the new question appears: why was South Africa designated to broker a peace deal in Cote d'Ivoire in November 2004, rather than four years ago, when the conflict was in its early stages? Moreover, can South Africa really export its model of peacemaking such as power-sharing in politically and socially divide in societies such as Cote d'Ivoire?

The following chapter will highlight why South Africa was given the responsibility of brokering peace in the country, and will analyse the progess that has been made so far.

[67] Abdul Rahman Lamin, *Conflict in Cote d'Ivoire: South Africa's Diplomacy and Prospects for Peace*, Johannesburg: Institute for Global Dialogue, 2005. p.24

Chapter 5: Why South Africa?

The peaceful end of apartheid in South Africa in 1994 and its economic and political developments since then has made the country a model and skilful negotiator and peace-broker in many conflicts in Africa. Thus, the past ten years of diplomatic engagement in conflict zones have prepared South Africa to become not only experienced as peace-broker but, to some extent, experts in conflict management. This has been bolstered by the fact that South Africa remains the economic power-house in the continent.

Therefore, the economic, human resource and international reputation of South Africa's role in conflict management, place the country in a better position to broker a peace deal in Cote d'Ivoire. Hence the AU could not ignore South Africa's ability and capacity to bring peace in Cote d'Ivoire.

Furthermore, South Africa's neutrality and history gives it a moral authority in Africa that many Western countries cannot claim. From Burundi, and the DRC, through Darfur and now to Cote d'Ivoire, President Mbeki has drawn on his standing to try to spread peace across the continent, demonstrating to the world that Africa can be relied upon to solve its own problems. Thabo Mbeki has been trying to get the Marcoussis Peace Accords back on track. Already the road map was lagging behind as disarmament of rebel groups was expected to be at an advanced stagein June 2005.[68]

Prior to 1994, South Africa's involvement in conflict in Africa, particularly in Angola, Namibia and Somalia, was frowned upon by most African leaders since in most cases the government supported mercenary activities thereby, helping to protract such conflicts for economic benefits. The apartheid regime itself did not have any legitimacy as an independent peace broker. The democratic

[68] Integrated Regional Information Network, "Mbeki Reports on Peace Mission as Opposition Accuses Gbagbo of Preparing For War", 11 Jan. 2005. Homepage of the Global Policy Forum. Accessed on 13 Jan. 2005. <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/ivory/2005/0111resume.htm>

transformation that took place in the country in 1994 as well as President Mandela's activities and in recent years President Mbeki's in strengthening regional and continental ties have given the country leverage over other states in Africa.

These have been bolstered by the success of South Africa's peace initiatives in the Great Lakes and the fact that Thabo Mbeki is one of the founding fathers of the NEPAD and has made his vision of African Renaissance public. As a consequence, it came as no surprise that the AU mandated South Africa to bring the Ivorian peace process back on track when the French brokered Linas Marcoussis Accords were trampled upon after president Gbagbo attacked rebel positions in the North of the country in November 2004. The leading role taken by South Africa in trying to resolve the conflict in that West African country goes a long way to indicate that South Africa is committed to peace diplomacy in the continent.

1. AU and ECOWAS's search for a credible and neutral mediator

South Africa was chosen by the AU and the ECOWAS to mediate a peace process in Cote d'Ivoire because South Africa after all chairs the Peace and Security Council of the AU. Besides, there is reason to believe that the involvement of a credible third party outside West Africa might actually be the key to unlock the problem in that country[69]. Politics of hegemony is also important in this area as it helps in analyzing the subtle tensions among France, Nigeria and South Africa in the Cote d'Ivoire peace process. Indeed, these three countries have all been involved in trying to solve the conflict amongst the different factions in Cote d'Ivoire.

1.1 A non-African mediator: France

Contrary to the strong ties between France and Cote d'Ivoire in the days of Houphouet Boingy, the languid approach incarnated successively by Bedie, Guei and Gbagbo reflects the progressive disengagement of France and French interest in Cote d'Ivoire. Relations with France, the country's

[69] Abdul Lamin and David Monyae, «Mbeki's crucial intervention», *Africa Week*, 2004.

major trading partner and provider of bilateral assistance, have been close since independence. French reaction to Gbagbo's elections as president in 2000 was divided along the party lines. President Jacques Chirac demanded that the election be rerun, incorporating those candidates who had been excluded from participating, while the French *Parti Socialiste* generally welcomed the accession to power of Gbagbo and the FPI. Following meetings between Gbagbo and Chirac in January 2001, France announced that full cooperation with Cote d'Ivoire, which had been suspended following the December 1999 coup, be restored.[70] The French position after this period in the crisis has been doubted. Therefore, France's similar unwillingness to use much force, as understandable as it is, has accomplished a similar result, that is, the partitioning of the country between the government and the rebels. To intervene and fight on the side of the government would create an inevitable quagmire for France, and the resultant body count would be politically suicidal for any Western government to accept. Nevertheless even that position of neutrality soon became problematic, as France was perceived as an enemy by both sides. On the one hand the government, which was goaded by France into a hasty compromise with the rebels, failed to see France's position as helpful. The rebels, on the other hand, could not be persuaded by France as an honest broker, since it was the French troops that partly frustrated their desire to take over the capital and remove the government back in 2002.[71]

From late 2000, France dispatched additional troops to supplement the 550 personnel, which were already stationed in the country, and it is obvious that the French government played an active role in diplomatic efforts that led to the signing of the Linas Marcoussis Accords in January 2003. However, France stated that it regarded the civil conflict as the internal Ivorian matter, disregarding Gbagbo's statement relating to the alleged involvement of external forces in the rebellion. Such involvement would have resulted in the invocation of a clause in a defence treaty between the two countries

[70] "France's influence wanes in Cote d'Ivoire", 4 Feb. 2003. Homepage of the Washington Post. Accessed on 10 Sep. 2005. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/world/africa/westafrica/cotedivoire/>
[71] Alade W Fawole, "Ecowas and the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire: the politics and problems of peace-making in West Africa", *Journal of West African Affairs*, 4(2), 2004. p.21

necessitating the active military support of France for the Ivorian authorities.[72] To fuel distrust between France and Gbagbo, there was widespread anti-French feeling particularly in Abidjan following the conclusion of the Marcoussis Accords, and several thousand French citizens resident in the Cote d'Ivoire left the country. Supporters of Gbagbo felt that the Accords brought the rebels on an equal footing with the government and, according to some nationalists in Cote d'Ivoire this revealed the hegemonic influence that France still had over the country[73].

It has been argued that the French government wanted to get rid of Gbagbo because he is a new type of African leader, not prepared to bow down to their interests and privileges in the country. France and Burkina Faso have been accused of showing hegemonic attitude seeking to control Cote d'Ivoire's wealth and potentials. Although this view is said to be demagogic, it nevertheless demonstrates the extent to which the conflict is perceived as a struggle for independence. Hence, France would no doubt like to see the major concessions continue in French hands, and are clearly worried about Gbagbo's independence.[74] With France removed from the possible list of peace-brokers in Cote d'Ivoire, only Nigeria and South Africa remained.

1.2 An African mediator: Nigeria

Another country with interests in the Ivorian peace process is Nigeria. Yet, Nigeria cannot be seen as an honest peace broker in Cote d'Ivoire because of many factors including the fact that Nigeria has always wanted to dominate the West African region. Indeed, Nigeria has been considered a bully hegemony by ECOWAS Member States. According to Adekeye Adebajo, Nigeria has been viewed as a "bull in a china shop" because there is a widespread claim in the region that Nigeria's interventions

[72] Africa Focus Bulletin, "Cote d'Ivoire, Containing the Crisis? African Focus", 16 Nov. 2004. Homepage of Africa Focus. Accessed on 10 Sep. 2005. <http://www.africafocus.org/docs04/ci4111.php>
[73] "Exodus from Ivory Coast as foreigners, citizens flee violence", 10 Nov ; 2004. Homepage of Keep Media. Accessed on 10 Sep. 2005. <http://www.keepmedia.com/pubs/AFP/2004/11/10/645405>
[74] International Crisis Group (ICG), " Cote d'Ivoire: the war is not over yet ", *ICG Africa Report*, 2003. p.30.

in Sierra Leone was undertaken in a bid to dominate its subregion.[75] Moreover, these claims culminated as a result of the fact that Nigeria failed to obtain a mandate from ECOWAS and the UN to intervene in Liberia and Sierra Leone.[76]

Historic rivalry between France and Nigeria explains why these two countries could not be considered as honest peace brokers in Cote d'Ivoire. Different approaches for sub regional integration in West Africa have been going on through complex and unresolved attempts since the 1960s. France's involvement in Cote d'Ivoire is a consequence of its traditional friendship with West African Francophone countries. As an ex-colonial power, France saw itself as bringing political, security and economic stability and cooperation to its former colonies. Thus, the shadow of France has loomed large in the region, through the relationship maintained with its former colonies. The "Cooperation Agreement" found expression not only in the conventional sense of development cooperation, but also included defence agreements by which the African states that are signatories could call upon France for direct security assistance and military material for their armies. Since British presence, though not insignificant in the economic domain in its former colonies was nevertheless less obtrusive and practically uncoordinated, the French shadow has proved very decisive in the pos-tcolonial pattern of cooperation in West Africa.[77]

On the other hand, Nigeria as former British colony, believes that West African countries should solve their own problems without the interference of their former colonizers. The attitude of 'African solutions for African problems' is embedded in the idea that former colonial powers are bent on creating division among Africans. Therefore, one believes that the division in West Africa between Anglophones and Francophones underlines the argument as who has merits of brokering a peace deal in Cote d'Ivoire. For example, one striking feature of all the attempts at regional integration was the

[75] Adekeye Adebajo, *Building Peace In West Africa, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau*, London: Lynne Rienner, 2002. p.139
[76] Ibid. p.138
[77] Olu Adeniji, "Mechanisms for conflict management in West Africa: politics of harmonization", 15 Oct. 1997. p.6. Homepage of Journal of Humanitarian Assistance. Accessed on 20 Oct. 2005. <http://www-jha.sps.cam.ac.uk/a/a258.htm>

perpetuation of the divide between Francophone and Anglophone West Africa. This divide remained virtually intact and preserved the colonial legacy. Thus in spite of having achieved independence, West African states, particularly those which had been colonized by France, continued to depend on their former colonial rulers for trade, investment, aid and security. The few attempts to break this neo-colonial dependence occurred at the bilateral and trilateral levels involving the important experiments by Nigeria, Niger, Ghana, Guinea, Mali and Senegal, Gambia (SeneGambian Conference)[78]

2 The United Nations and South Africa

The politics of identity and constitutional legality that have sparked off the Ivorian crisis and led to the bloody civil war in 2002, have cemented the growing international debate on how and when to make the UN peacekeeping missions more relevant to African conflicts in the 21st century. Hence, implications of a third party intervention need to be scrutinized to ensure that it happens within legal framework of the UN. This is the reason why South Africa was requested to broker a peace deal in Cote d'Ivoire. In fact, South Africa has always worked together with the UN in peacekeeping missions in Africa. Chris Landsberg argues that the Mandela government focused on brokering peace pacts amongst belligerents in conflict situations. Mbeki too promoted this approach, but also showed a willingness to underwrite peace deal with UN peacekeeping operations.[79]

However, early in the post-war era only the UN was in a legitimate position to intervene in the domestic jurisdiction of a state to facilitate deal with internal matters with wider regional and international implications. Yet, the idea that only the UN can intervene to solve domestic problems of a particular state has come under serious attack. Today, it has been noted that AU has been mandated by the UN to initiate a conflict management effort in addressing and preventing a further escalation of conflicts between ethnic groups. Hence, the AU constitutive Act states clearly that « the AU shall have

[78] Senegal and Gambia for example reached an Agreement in November 1981, and pledged to integrate their military and security force and form an economic union.
[79] Chris Landsberg, *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation: International Politics and South Africa's Transition*, Johannesburg: Jacana media, 2004. p.162-163

the right to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity ».[80] According to Rugumanu, the ability of repressive governments to strip citizens of their rights to security of life, often shrouded under a thin veneer of non-interference in internal affairs of the state, is increasingly challenged on a global scale. In fact the norm of sovereignty has been redefined and broadened, in order to respond to the new emerging principles of good governance: The traditional norms of sovereignty, consent and non-interference in internal affairs are no longer defined in absolute terms.[81]

Intrastate conflicts have presented opportunities to revisit the traditional moral values placed on state sovereignty and to expand the concept of intervention. For example, Zounmenou argues that moral and political dilemmas arising from the nature of the state in post-cold war conflicts were not anticipated by the UN's founding fathers and within the UN security system, and this has presented profound moral and political challenges.[82]

This simply means that the UN provided unsatisfactory political conditions and situations to legitimately intervene in order to manage intrastate conflicts between ethnic groups. The aim of the UN was to prevent further escalation of conflict between states. In short, the UN charter did not provide the legal framework for intervention to end intrastate conflicts that are today perceived as a threat to international peace and security. Zounmenou suggests that the UN was established to prevent wars between states, and is rooted in the Westphalian notion of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, and non-interference.[83] Furthermore, Rugumanu argues that the Article 2 (7) of the UN Charter and

[80] "National model AU 2004, Constitutive Act of the African Union", nd. Homepage of the National Model African Union Conference. Accessed on 1 Sep. 2005. <http://www.moau-au.org/constitutive_act_of_the_african_union.htm>
[81] S.M. Rugumanu, "State sovereignty & intervention in Africa", *Conflict Trends*, 4, 2001. p.20
[82] D. D. Zounmenou, *The United Nations Response to the Phenomenon of Child Soldiers in Africa: Case studies of Mozambique and Sierra Leone*, MA Dissertation, Department of International Relations, University of the Witwatersrand, 2001. p.7
[83] Ibid. p.8

the Article 3 (2) of the OAU Charter stipulate that they will not intervene in matters that are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state.[84]

Given the failure and limitations of the UN to prevent deadly conflicts in Africa, sub-regional role players in Africa are compelled to play a constructive role in security and peacekeeping. This is, of course, of special significance for South Africa as a subregional power or hegemony[85]. Therefore, the economic, human resource and the international reputation of South Africa's role in conflict management, place the country in a better position to broker a peace deal in Cote d'Ivoire. Hence, both the AU and the UN could not ignore South Africa's ability and capacity to bring peace in Cote d'Ivoire.

Today there is an existing cooperation between the AU and the UN that enables sub-region organs to intervene and effectively manage conflicts in a broader manner. This provides a synergy between the AU and UN. In West Africa, Cote d'Ivoire in mind, ECOWAS is well placed to enhance conflict management. Thus, ECOWAS is designated with the right to intervene in a Member State to prevent a further escalation of conflicts. This is because ECOWAS is not far from the place where conflict is taking place. It is important to mention that this humanitarian intervention should happen within the context and framework of AU the and UN charters. [86]. Given cooperation between the AU, ECOWAS and the UN, South Africa was mandated to help settle a peace deal in Cote d'Ivoire.

Regional intervention in Africa has been both justified and highly criticized. Indeed, Africa has superficial and complex boundaries since countries are close to each other. Thus, in case of intrastate conflicts, regional organizations have agreed to intervene on behalf of human rights not only to stabilize the member states but also to save lives of civilians. Hence, sometimes political and

[84] S.M. Rugumanu, "State sovereignty & intervention in Africa", *Conflict Trends*, 4, 2001. p.22.
[85] Theo Neetling, "The emerging South Africa profile in Africa: reflections on the significance of South Africa's entrance into peacekeeping", *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 2(2), 2002. p.112-113
[86] The OAU Charter is now defunct and has been superceded by the AU Constitutive Act.

humanitarian intervention do not need a UN mandate before they take place. Consequently, regional intervention can help to minimize the human suffering.

Nevertheless, one could argue that any regional, political and military intervention to save human lives and bring temporary stabilization in the member states should be seen as promoting the aims and objectives of the UN peacekeeping missions. In Africa, repressive governments have trampled upon human rights, leading their countries into states of anarchy. Thus, once a conflict spills over into neighbouring countries (West Africa), subregional blocks (ECOWAS) are justified to intervene where there is a perceived gross violation of human rights. Therefore, if subregional humanitarian intervention takes place, AU and UN missions can follow and make their way to enforce stability and bring peace. The UN mandate should always be respected but often UN is geographically limited.

Given these reasons behind the designation of South Africa to bring a political solution to the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire, it is also vital to examine reasons why South Africa accepted to broker a peace deal in Cote d'Ivoire in November 2004 rather than two years earlier when the conflict was in its early stages. In fact, this is not the first time South Africa was requested to help solve conflicts in West Africa. Intrestingly, at first, South Africa refused to offer mediation in West Africa citing reasons that her resources were overstretched in other peacekeeping missions in Africa. For example, South Africa had deployed twice as many troops in the continent than was orginally envisaged. It became clear that these troops were already overstretched, forcing Pretoria in July 2003 to decline a request from West African leaders and ECOWAS for 1000 soldiers for peacekeeping duties in Liberia.[87] Hence, the logical step is to ascertain reasons why this time around South Africa accepted to mediate a peace deal in Cote d'Ivoire in the backyard of West Africa. What are South Africa's national interests in Cote d'Ivoire?

[87] Chris Landsberg, *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation: International Politics and South Africa's Transition*, Johannesburg: Jacana Media, 2004. p.168

Chapter 6: South Africa and the Ivorian conflict: interests and constraints

1. South Africa's national interests

The end of apartheid posed some serious policy challenges to the foreign policy-makers of the newly elected and democratic ANC led government in 1994. The politics of reconciliation as espoused by Nelson Mandela in the domestic affairs were soon transported to the rest of the continent since South Africa through its racial and draconian policies was insulated from the international community and, more importantly, from its neighbouring countries. Prior to 1994, there was a deep-seated resentment between the apartheid government and the excluded black majority. This caused serious animosity between a white-ruled minority government and a black dominated majority. As expected, the National Party extended its policies of hostility to the sub-region and Africa as a whole. As a result of the destabilization policies pursued by the racist regime, South Africa became a pariah state in the international society.

1.1 Improving South Africa's profile

The demise of apartheid precipitated a shift in the foreign policy of Mandela's government through which South Africa pursued a strategy of reconciliation to engage the entire world. South Africa needed to move away from the isolationist position towards the development a strategy of constructive engagement which became a norm to deal with the rest of the international community. As Neta Crawford pointed out, South Africa's new democratic government has articulated a dramatically different foreign policy vision than the previous National Party government by emphasizing support for human rights, internationalism and a commitment to promoting regional growth[88].

[88] Neta C Crawford, "South Africa's new foreign and military policy: opportunities and constraints", *Africa Today*, 1st and 2nd Quarters, 1995. p.88

The new foreign policy outlook and the regional recognition of its partners compelled South Africa to foster a policy of good friendly relations with the continent. Pretoria was aware that its success to achieve a stable region and economic development would inextricably depend on bridging the gap that was created by the then apartheid regime through its policies of regional destabilization. According to Deon Geldnhuys, previously white-ruled South Africa had the image of being a dangerous state[89]. Hence, the Mandela administration needed desparately to shift from this negative image. Therefore South Africa became a democracy through its first universal franchise elections held in April 1994. The new government quickly moved to inculcate a key objective: to break with a past which saw the country relegated to the status of the world's foremost pariah state. The government wished to inculcate an image of the newly liberated Republic as a good and progressive world citizen[90].

Against this backdrop, Nelson Mandela's foreign policy think-tanks had to craft politics of reconciliation not only to reconcile a divided South Africa but also South Africa with the international society. As argued by many, foreign policy is an extension of domestic policy. In fact, Kuseni Dlamini mentions that foreign policy is, in the final analysis, an articulation of domestic policy. The end of apartheid and the reconciliation efforts that followed gave South Africa a certain degree of moral stature in international affairs[91]. Consequently, Mandela's foreign policy had to draw the human rights card as the guiding principle to interact with other countries, particularly neighbouring countries. Mandela claimed:

> Because I am an African, the emphasis of South African relations should be on promoting peace and the elimination of poverty. In forging links with our neighbours, the ANC will draw on an African tradition, of which we are part, of promoting greater continental unity.[92]

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[89] Deon Geldenhuys, "International involvement in South Africa's political transformation", in Walter Carlsnaes and Marie Muller, *Change and South African External Relations*, South Africa: International Thomson, 1997. p.36
[90] Chris Landsberg, *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation: International Politics and South Africa's Transition*, Johannesburg: Jacana Media, 2004. p.159
[91] Kuseni Dlamini, "South Africa's foreign policy since 1994", in *South African Yearbook of International Affairs 2003/2004*, Johannesburg: South African Institute of International Affairs, 2004. p.2
[92] Neta C Crawford, "South Africa's new foreign and military policy: opportunities and constraints", *Africa Today*, 1st and 2nd Quarters, 1995. p.97

With the new outlook, South Africa was obliged to find compelling ways to win the trust of its neighbours and in the process dismiss fears it would continue to "manhandle" its neighbours. Indeed, while South Africa has often been at pains not to be seen as the "bully" in political, diplomatic and military terms, it was nonetheless seen as the economic "bully" in the region. Yet, both Mandela's and Mbeki's governments rejected hegemonic ambitions in Africa. They adopted a strategy emphasizing that South Africa was a genuine regional partner in Africa, and that it would work closely with fellow African states to achieve common solutions to Africa's common problems.[93]

The new generation of African leaders continued with the baton of Pan Africanism as articulated by Nelson Mandela and transformed it into a serious and formidable initiative-this Pan Africanism then evolved into what Mbeki called African Renaissance. The Mandela foreign policy first echoed its sentiments in the summit of the Organization of African Unity in 1994, when Mandela spoke of the Rwandan genocide: "we know it is as a matter of fact that we have it in ourselves as Africans to change all this. We must, in action, assert our will to do so". Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, Mandela's apparent heir, mentioned that this (South African) government sees itself as committed to peacekeeping for the African continent. Furthermore, Lamin succinctly explains that the progress toward peace in the Great Lakes region, and more specifically Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo, has been largely due to South Africa's commitment towards espousing the vision of African renaissance with which Thabo Mbeki has been famously associated.[94]

1.2 Restoring peace and stability in Africa

Politically, for South Africa, Cote d'Ivoire is very important since the situation provides South Africa with an opportunity to flex its diplomatic muscles on the continent. In addition to the South African desired objective of achieving peace, one of the outcomes of this process may ultimately lead South

[93] Chris Landsberg, *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation: International Politics and South Africa's Transition*, Johannesburg: Jacana Media, 2004. p.186
[94] Abdul Rahman Lamin, *Conflict in Cote d'Ivoire: South Africa's Diplomacy and Prospects for Peace*, Johannesburg: Institute for Global Dialogue, 2005. p.21

Africa to be seen by the international community as one of the African countries credible enough to secure a seat in the United Nation Security Council. Therefore, its intervention appears to be a calculated political decision as this gives South Africa a good standing as an honest peace broker on the continent. If South Africa succeeds in West Africa as it has done in other regions of the continent, this will send a strong signal to North Africa that South Africa can be called upon to mediate conflict in that region whenever needed. This will cement South Africa's image and reputation as aspiring hegemony in the continent. For example, no matter how well intentioned they maybe, external interventions always face certain difficulties. Such interventions are not always seen as led by pure motives, even when conducted by respected international bodies or personalities. Participating states always have their national objectives for what they do[95].

1.3 Enhancing South Africa's business market on the continent

Economically, Lamin locates this analysis within the context of Cote d Ivoire and raised the question of what prompted South Africa to enter the Ivorian crisis as a mediator. In fact, he aptly argues that South Africa's foreign policy decisions are driven by considerations of national interest. With respect to Cote d'Ivoire, South African business, in particular, stands to benefit economically if it succeeds in bringing peace to that country. As a former oasis of economic development in West Africa, Cote d'Ivoire would require massive amounts of foreign investment once it solves its political problems. Given the withdrawal of French business from the country in the wake of the escalation of the conflict, there is a potential void that could be filled by businesses from South Africa, many of which are paradoxically beneficiaries of a free and democratic country, with apartheid era restrictions now removed from their activities in the continent. In the long term, therefore, Cote d'Ivoire offers an opportunity for South African business that have in the last decade increasingly taken advantage of

[95] Alade W Fawole, "Ecowas and the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire: the politics and problems of peace-making in West Africa", *Journal of West African Affairs*, 4(2), 2004.p23

their country's proactive diplomatic posture on the Africa[96]. In fact, Cote d'Ivoire is South Africa's biggest trading partner in Francophone West Africa.

1.4 Facilitating the vision of African Standby Force

South Africa has in the past provided a platform moving beyond the development of norms and principles that have preoccupied the AU in the few years, building the institutions necessary to promote peace and security on the continent is now South Africa's priority. The African Standby Force is one of those institutions. South Africa's involvement in Cote d'Ivoire provides a space to further make the case for the implementation of the standby force concept. It is plausible that in the near future France might withdraw its troops from Cote d'Ivoire thereby creating a vacuum. If and when this happens, the AU will be commissioned to provide manpower. Thus, South Africa's involvement in Cote d'Ivoire is somehow seen by some countries as creating a space for it to exercise its hegemony ambitions in the continent. This has made Western sceptics such as the French president Jacques Chirac to argue that Mbeki would not succeed where the French failed.[97]

1.5 Strategic South Africa's international interests in the United Nations

As for South Africa, the role as a peace broker in Cote d'Ivoire provides an opportunity in a bid to secure a seat in the UN Security Council by showing the international community that its main rival Nigeria is not a suitable candidate. Nigeria has been perceived by some as a bully country with her own national interests and thus cannot be impartial in the process. This is well captured by Mortimer when he pointed out that classic peacekeeping theory assumes the neutrality of the interventionary force; it relies as well on the assumption that the local disputants are willing to cooperate with the

[96] Abdul Rahman Lamin, *Conflict in Cote d'Ivoire: South Africa's Diplomacy and Prospects for Peace*, Johannesburg: Institute for Global Dialogue, 2005. p.23
[97] J. Seepe, "Ivory Coast leaders set eyes on peace", *City Press* 10 Apr. 2005.p.19

peacekeepers or at least tolerate them as buffer. In Liberia, this precondition was never really met, because the shadow of hegemony (Nigeria) loomed over the ECOMOG from the outset. [98]

In addition, South Africa's involvement dispels the notion that no peace deal in the region can be achieved without Nigeria's intervention. Now that South Africa has temporarily ended the conflict and if its succeeds, many West African countries will look up to South Africa in times of conflict because it will have been seen as an honest mediator. Indeed, Gbagbo has already mentioned that "We saw a lot of mediators and countries who wanted to solve our problems, but for the first time we saw one person who respected our positions. Mbeki respected the position of everyone and did not take sides".[99] Despite South Africa's apparent success in temporarily ending the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire, there lie difficult and complex conditions constraining South Africa's success to broker peace in the Ivorian crisis.

2. Conditions constraining South Africa's role in Cote d'Ivoire

South Africa's efforts to bring peace in Cote d'Ivoire were constrained and compromised by many factors before it even entered peace talks in Cote d'Ivoire. Among others, are agreements as stipulated in the Linas-Marcoussis Accords, the lack of consultation of key regional players in the Ivorian Conflict and lastly, the perceived power struggle between Nigeria and South Africa?

2.1 Linas Marcoussis Agreements

The Linas Marcoussis agreement was designed by the French government in order to find a solution to the Ivorian conflict and lead the Gbagbo led government and the rebels to accept a power-sharing deal. Indeed, the French government believed that the inclusive arrangement was the only solution to the Ivorian dispute. However, the Linas Marcoussis agreement was bound to fail as it had many gaps. Citizens loyal to Gbagbo complained that Linas Marcoussis was a French designed project to oust

[98] R. A Mortimer, "ECOMOG, Liberia, and regional security in West Africa", in D. Rothchild and E.J. Keller (eds), *Africa In The New International Order: Rethinking State Sovereingty and Regional Security*, London: Lynne Rienner, 1996. p.161
[99] J. Seepe, "Ivory Coast leaders set eyes on peace", *City Press* 10 Apr. 2005. p.19

Gbagbo as it was perceived to be more favourable to opposition groups. They argued that it compelled Gbagbo to make too many concessions that would be detrimental to his government. The fact that the agreement made provision for the allocation of ministerial positions, including the sensitive ministries of defence and internal affairs, to rebel forces was construed by Gbagbo's followers as a conspiracy orchestrated by France[100]. Upon accepting the job as a mediator in Cote d'Ivoire, Thabo Mbeki announced that he would use the Linas Marcousis as a blueprint to solve the Ivorian crisis. Thus, Mbeki continued with the peace agreement that was built on a lack of faith and lack of trust between the parties. Hence, Mbeki supported a power-sharing deal that was bound to fail. This is one of the major reasons why South Africa's model of power-sharing in Cote d'Ivoire could not succeed.

2.2 Key regional players in the Ivorian conflict

South Africa's peace diplomacy in Africa has always sought to include not only belligerent groups in the conflict but key regional players as well. This approach demonstrates that South Africa's peace efforts are linked to regional security and that it favours a multilateral approach. Regional support is clearly needed in order to broker a durable peace deal in Cote d'Ivoire. For instance, in its attempt to achieve a peace deal in the Congolese conflict, the Mandela administration adopted an ostensibly evenhanded approach. Instead of principally engaging the rebels and their external backers, Uganda and Rwanda, it reached out to one of the DRC alliance members, former President of Namibia Sam Nujoma, and impressed upon him the need for a speedy solution to the conflict.[101] Therefore, taking into consideration the role of neighbouring countries in the region and their intrests in the conflict, Mandela's government realised and recognised that a long lasting peace solution lies in working together with key regional partners. Thus, South Africa managed to temporarily broker a peace settlement and exported its power-sharing model in DRC.

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[100] Abdul Rahman Lamin, *Conflict in Cote d'Ivoire: South Africa's Diplomacy and Prospects for Peace*, Johannesburg: Institute for Global Dialogue, 2005. p.18

[101] Chris Landsberg, *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation: International Politics and South Africa's Transition*, Johannesburg: Jacana Media, 2004. p.166

Having realised that regional actors could be in fact holding the keys to unlock a conflict, Thabo Mbeki too adopted the precedent set by Nelson Mandela. Taking over from Mandela the reign of settling disputes in the Great Lakes, Chris Landsberg argues that:

> Mbeki spent most of the first quarter of 2003 engaging the heads of states of DRC, Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania to try resolve the escalating conflict in DRC. Zuma later confirmed that Mbeki had succeeded in pressuring Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni to withdraw completely his troops from the DRC, and replace them with troops from the UN Mission in Congo. Aware of Tanzania's disquiet about its low profile role in the Great lakes, Mbeki had requested Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa to become more involved in brokering and maintaining peace in Central Africa. Pretoria could achieve these breakthroughs by winning over the trust of sceptics.[102]

Strangely, in trying to solve the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire, Mbeki took a different approach. He met in Pretoria in April 2005 with leaders of various factions of Cote d'Ivoire to further discuss the road map to peace and reconciliation in that country. He received Allasane Ouattara former Prime minister and leader of the RDR Party, Lambert Kouassi Konan, Vice president of the Ivorian Democratic party and the main rebel leader Gillaume Soro and Gbagbo.[103] Yet, he never received nor consulted any representatives of the neighbouring countries of Cote d'Ivoire and this severely thwarted South Africa's success in that country. In fact, the President of Burkina Faso Blaise Compaore has always complained and accused Gbagbo for mistreating the Burkinabe living in Cote d'Ivoire. This is because most people living in the north of Cote d'Ivoire were born out of parents who left Burkina Faso to Cote d'Ivoire in search for jobs during the Ivorian economic boom. On the other hand, Laurent Gbagbo has accused Burkina Faso, Mali and other neighbouring countries for prolonging the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire because they were economically benefiting from it. According to the BBC

> The crisis in Ivory Coast has meant a rapid diversion of trade to neighbouring countries like Ghana who are struggling to meet the increased demand. When the crisis in Ivory Coast broke in September 2002, Ghana's main port at Tema port was inundated with diverted ships looking for somewhere to offload their wares. One year on, business in Tema port is still booming, and what's more, the number of ships using Tema is continuing to rise. Tema is just one of several ports in the region to have benefited from Ivory Coast's misfortune. Ports in Togo and Senegal are also recording increased economic activity.[104]

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[102] Ibid, p,168

[103] "Rebels to meet Mbeki again", 17 Dec. 2004. Homepage of News24.com. Accessed on 11 Nov.2005. <http://www.news24.com/News24/Africa/News/0,,2-11-1447_1637312,00.html>

[104] Sarah Simpson, "Ghana's trade gains from conflict", 29 Oct. 2003.Homepage of BBC News. Accessed on 21 Sep. 2005. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/3205723.stm>

Moreover, Laurent Gbagbo accused Burkina Faso of being puppets of the French government to recolonise Cote d'Ivoire, leading him and his supporters to consistently argue, throughout the conflict, that the rebellion in their country was sponsored by outside forces. In fact, in their opinion, this is essentially a « liberation war » with obvious implications that the struggle for decolonization is still being fought against France. Their contention is that France is using its « agents » in the subregion, notably Burkina Faso, which has a terrible history of supporting rebellions in the neighbourhood, to re-colonise Cote d'Ivoire[105].

Accusations and counter-accusations have surfaced that ECOWAS is purely incapable of brokering a durable peace deal in Cote d'Ivoire. The Francophone and Anglophone divide in the region remains one of the stumbling blocks to unlock the Ivorian crisis. For instance, with Nigeria's bully attitude, some of the remaining countries in ECOWAS are unlikely to play any prominent role either. Ghana shares a contiguous boundary with Cote d'Ivoire, and for the avoidance of the spectre of Anglophone hegemony they have had to tread cautiously. Liberia and Sierra Leone have their own internal political problems to cope with. Burkina Faso is vicariously implicated in Cote d'Ivoire and therefore an unlikely peacekeeper, while Senegal is battling with its own domestic problems in the Casamance region. The remaining, predominantly Francophone states are small, poor and too weak to offer much hope[106]. Therefore, it became clear why South Africa sought to ignore the rest of the regional players and took a unilateral approach. Notwithstanding its size and economic ability, South Africa needs to include other regional actors in the peace process, as it is now clear that Sierra Leone and Liberia have just found peace after long civil wars. It is therefore in the mediators interests and the international community to engage Liberia and Sierra Leone in the negotiations in an effort to craft a durable solution to the entire region of West Africa.

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[105] Abdul Rahman Lamin, *Conflict in Cote d'Ivoire: South Africa's Diplomacy and Prospects for Peace*, Johannesburg: Institute for Global Dialogue, 2005. p.27

[106] Alade W Fawole, "Ecowas and the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire: the politics and problems of peace-making in West Africa", *Journal of West African Affairs*, 4(2), 2004. p.24

2.3 Perceived Power Struggle between South Africa and Nigeria for the soul of Africa.

The South African independence from the apartheid regime was seen by the international community, and especially by African leaders, as an independance for Africa. However, for Nigeria, South Africa's independence and its role in the African diplomacy were perceived as a threat to Nigerian influence in Africa. Given the political and economic dominance of these two countries in Africa, the relationship between South Africa and Nigeria was expected to be a powerful partnership to spread and promote democracy in the continent. On the contrary, Africa became a battleground of power struggle between the two giants. For example, the hope of cordial and collaborative relations between Nigeria and South Africa in the aftermath of apartheid was not immdediately realised. Instead, Nigeria's relationship with South Africa again became frostly. A diplomatic row broke out between the two countries over continued military rule in Nigeria and the gross violation of human rights thereof. The execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni environmental activists by Nigeria's military government in November 1995, irrespective of the plea for clemecy by South Africa, was the last straw that broke the camel's back. South Africa led a concert of other countries to impose sanctions on Nigeria and to effect its diplomatic isolation. South Africa felt isolation was justified based on the premise that the execution of the 'Ogoni nine' without fair trial was a violation of human rights, an area where Nigeria was expected to comform to international standards. The Nigerian government interpreted South Africa's action as a 'gang up' aimed at reducing Nigeria's status in Africa. The stage was then set for a face-off between two African giants[107].

Politics of hegemony also has an adverse impact on South Africa's attempt to broker a peace deal in Cote d'Ivoire. As both countries are contesting for a seat on the United Nations Security Council, the designation of South Africa by the AU to broker a peace settlement in Cote d'Ivoire meant South Africa could now go beyond the Southern region to solve conflicts in West Africa, the backyard of Nigeria. This would be construed by the international community that Nigeria is unable to provide

[107] Ibeanu Okechukwu and Orji Nkwachukwu, "Despotism, democracy and diplomacy: Nigeria-South Africa relations 1993-1999", *Journal of West African Affairs*, 4(2), 2004. p.51

solutions to troubled countries in its region and therefore cannot be seen as a suitable candidate for a seat at the UN Security Council. This could tarnish Nigeria's image in the eyes of the international community.

Moreover, South Africa's involvement also dispel the notion that no peace deal in the region can be achieved without Nigeria's intervention. In fact, this is not the first time South Africa emerged as a suitable candidate for a job to broker peace in Africa at the expense of Nigeria. Chris Landsberg underlines that in April 1997, Mandela announced that Kabila and Mobutu had accepted South Africa's mediation, ostensibly at the expense of a rival mediation bid from Nigeria.[108] It is necessary to trace back events that have culminated in the competitive relationship between South Africa and Nigeria. Their diplomatic relations are characterised by the politics of image, their roles in African politics. Ibeanu and Nkwachukwu note that immediately after attaining independence in 1960, Nigeria assumed a frontline role in the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, leading to frostly relations between Nigeria and the apartheid regime. In the ealry 1990s, there were high expectations that the end of apartheid would usher in cordial and collaborative relations between Nigeria and South Africa. However, in the aftermath of apartheid, relations remained competitive and conflict-prone[109].

Aware of South Africa's interests in West Africa, President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria in November 2005, called an ECOWAS meeting comprising of nine heads of states to revisit and evaluate South Africa's performance as a peace broker in Cote d'Ivoire. As a result, after assessing South Africa's role in the Ivorian crisis, it was announced that South Africa was no longer suitable for the job as a mediator citing reasons that Thabo Mbeki is biased in his mediation and that he does not understand the political dynamics of the region. This reinforced the prophecy made earlier by the

[108] Chris Landsberg, *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation: International Politics and South Africa's Transition*, Johannesburg: Jacana Media, 2004. p.165
[109] Ibeanu Okechukwu and Orji Nkwachukwu, "Despotism, democracy and diplomacy: Nigeria-South Africa relations 1993-1999", *Journal of West African Affairs*, 4(2), 2004. p.50

French president, Jacques Chirac, that South Africa would not succeed in brokering a peace deal in Cote d'Ivoire because Mbeki did not understand the pyschology of the Francophone.

Essentially, many African scholars perceive South Africa as assuming the leadership role that was occupied by Nigeria in many years. This perception was interpreted by Nigeria as a direct competition to its influence in African politics. Furthermore, South Africa's mediation in Cote d'Ivoire was seen as an encroachment upon Nigeria's territory. In the past five years, has emerged a 'division of labour' among Africa's two powerhouses, Nigeria and South Africa. This has become a defining feature of the move toward greater unity and cooperation in continental politics. Before Pretoria's direct involvement in Cote d'Ivoire, it had been generally understood that West Africa remains Nigeria's 'sphere of influence' while Southern Africa remained South Africa's. That leaders of both countries understood this dynamic and respected each other's jurisdiction in dealing with problems in their respective subregions was the rule, until South Africa's direct involvement in Cote d'Ivoire in 2004[110]. To summarize, South Africa's inability to broker a peace deal at this stage emanated from South Africa crossing the lines of jurisdiction and was thus perceived by Nigeria as a threat to its 'sphere of influence'. In fact, under the pretext of evaluating South Africa's performance in the Ivorian conflict, Nigeria's ultimate objective was to undermine South Africa's peace efforts in the Ivorian crisis. Hence, the name of the new Ivorian prime minister was announced by the Nigerian foreign minister in his capacity as a Nigerian official. This demonstrated Nigeria still has immense influence in West Africa.

The different strategies adopted by these two countries in conflict resolution also intensify a competition between these two powerful African countries. As for South Africa, quiet diplomacy and constructive engagement are the most favoured style of diplomacy to settle a dispute between belligerent groups, while, Nigeria has been know for a no-nonsense and aggressive style of diplomacy.

[110] Abdul Rahman Lamin, *Conflict in Cote d'Ivoire: South Africa's Diplomacy and Prospects for Peace*, Johannesburg: Institute for Global Dialogue, 2005. p.21

According to the parties in Cote d'Ivoire during the talks, Obasanjo's no-nonsense of diplomacy resolved the matter of the new prime minister[111]. However, Nigeria's aggressive diplomacy is viewed by many in the West African region as a 'bull in China Shop' because there is widespread claim that Nigeria's interventions are undertaken in a bid to dominate its subregion[112]. Nevertheless, Nigerian style managed to resuscitate hopes of bringing peace in that troubled country.

The war of ideas and the contestation of African diplomacy between South Africa and Nigeria delays and retard the peace efforts and conflict resolution in Africa. There is no doubt therefore that cordial relations between South Africa and Nigeria will precipitate a solution rather than a competition to the Ivorian crisis.

[111] "Cote d'Ivoire: fresh peace hopes as top banker designated interim prime minister", 5 Dec. 2005. Homepage of the United Nations Integrated Regional Information Networks – OCHA IRIN. Accessed on 29 Dec. 2005. <http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=50495&SelectRegion=West_Africa&SelectCountry=COTE_D_IVOIRE>
[112] Adekeye Adebajo, *Building Peace In West Africa, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau*, London: Lynne Rienner, 2002. p.139

Chapter 7: Conclusion

The conflict in Cote d'Ivoire is fuelled by several interconnected issues such as, amongst others, identity, citizenship, nationalism and religious belonging, as well as external actors. The struggle over limited and diminishing resources and political exclusion of certain sectors of society is at the heart of the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire. As a result, a search for a peaceful settlement began as a need for an inclusive government that contains the interests of belligerent groups. Consequently, Linas-Marcoussis, Accra and Pretoria Accords were deemed to be designed to heal the deep-seated animosity and division of the country between south-held government and rebel-controlled north.

Parties involved in the crisis agreed to respect their commitment to the Linas Marcoussis, Accra and Pretoria Accords and to respect their commitments to all resolutions of the UN on Cote d'Ivoire. They also expressed their determination regarding the need to organise presidential elections in October 2005 and legislative elections that follow immediately thereafter.[113]

Irrespective of the efforts made by different personalities, AU, ECOWAS, UN or France, the peace process in Cote d'Ivoire has been hampered by many factors, including a noticeable lack of political will and lack of trust from all the Ivorian parties to implement and commit themselves to the agreements contained in all the peace accords. It is clear by now that there was very little, if any, success achieved in the disarmament process. All parties, without exception, did indeed fail to live up to their committment to disarm, and instead chose to accuse each other of bad faith.[114]

[113] Pretoria Agreement on the Peace Process in Cote d'Ivoire Paragraph 2. The text can be found at <http://www.iss.org.za/pubs/monographs/pdf>
[114] Abdul Rahman Lamin, *Conflict in Cote d'Ivoire: South Africa's Diplomacy and Prospects for Peace*, Johannesburg: Institute for Global Dialogue, 2005. p.20

Given the lack of political will to implement the disarmament process, one could argue that all the Ivorian parties must politically and economically be benefiting from the conflict. For instance,

the politics of identity, exclusion and resource distribution that sparked off the crisis and led to the civil war in 2002, have cemented the growing political divide between populations that predated the war. Thus, two mutually exclusive antagonistic dynamics are present in Cote d'Ivoire. For faction groups, interests alternated around their ability to win political power while simultaneously exploiting natural resources to sustain their struggle. The stakes in such conflicts are equally high for the incumbent government. For the latter, the need to maintain political control of the state, its resources and sovereign prerogatives becomes the critical factor underlying its position as a coherent state[115]. In the North, the Forces Nouvelles have substituted themselves for a state, organizing a parallel army, administration, media network and an economic structure. The political impasse is exceptionally lucrative for almost everyone except ordinary citizens. Major government figures have been accused of using state funds especially from the interlinked institutions within the cocoa marketing system for personal enrichment, purchase of weapons and hiring of mercenaries. Members of the Forces Nouvells monopolize lucrative economic activity in the north, including trade in cotton and weapons. Thus, it might be in the interests of all to ensure that they sabotage efforts made by the international community to broker a peace settlement since the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire is used for personal gains.

The peace processes were a product of compromise, thus containing elements displeasing to all the parties. But all peace Accords highlight the issue central to the conflict; eligibility for the Presidency, land ownership, identity, citizenship and status of foreign nationals. Thus, disagreement around nationality and citizenship culminated to the attempted coup d'etat which was widely condemned by both Western countries and the AU. In the aftermath of the coup, ECOWAS summoned an emergency meeting in the Ghanaian capital of Accra to look into the Ivorian debacle. The Accra meeting was dominated by accusations and counter-accusations as Laurent Gbagbo argue that his was the legitimate

[115] Kwesi Aning, Emma Birikorang and Eboe Hutchful, "The political economy of conflict in West Africa: A contibution to the debate", May 2003. p.7.Homepage of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Accessed on 24 October 2005. <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/19/4/33904808.pdf>

government and that it could not be put on par with the rebels on the negotiating table. Gbagbo also insinuated that the rebels had to disarm before any pact could be signed. The Accra meeting of 29 September 2002 also resolved to dispatch mediators to broker a peace and to send regional peacekeepers to act as a buffer force between government troops and the rebels. The Accra I conference achieved little as Gbagbo's uncompromising stance attracted the wrath of the ECOWAS mediators who voiced their disapproval at the stance taken by his government. The president also made it known that legitimacy was on his side and that the Accra meeting had moved away from the tenets of the ECOWAS spirit.[116]

After carefully considering the precarious security situation in Cote d'Ivoire and considering that the situation was fast developing into a Sierra Leone or Liberia scenario, the French president, Jacques Chirac invited the belligerents of the Ivorian crisis to a round-table in Paris, France from 18-23 January 2003. France's stance in calling the meeting was also informed by the fact that the state of no war no peace and no government was drifting the country towards an eventual showdown between the north and the south with disastrous consequences. The Paris round-table was therefore an effort by the international community to find lasting solutions to the stalemate and assist Ivorian political parties in finding lasting solutions to their common problems. After an intense debate and presentations of parties present, the round-table agreed that a government of National Reconciliation be set up immediately to ensure a return to peace and stability. The government would prepare an electoral timetable with a view to holding credible and transparent elections. A consensus prime minister would be appointed and the government would reflect the representativeness of the participating parties. It was agreed upon that the government would have executive powers.[117]

[116] "Cote d'Ivoire - prevent genocide international", 14 Dec. 2002. Homepage of Prevent Genocide International. Accessed on 15 Dec. 2005. <http://www.preventgenocide.org/africa/cotedivoire/>
[117] "Peace agreements, digital collection: Cote d'Ivoire (English)", 14 Feb 2004. Homepage of the United States Institute for Peace. Accessed on 12 Oct.2005. <http://www.usip.org/library/pa/cote_divoire/cote_divoire_01242003en.html>

Though Seydou Diarra was appointed as prime minister, he did not enjoy the respect of all the belligerents in the conflict. Because of shortcomings identified in the Linas-Marcoussis agreement, the president of Ghana, John Kufour, in his capacity as the seating president of ECOWAS, invited the parties who signed the Linas-Marcoussis agreement to a meeting in Accra on the 06 March 2003. In this meeting, the belligerents reaffirmed their commintments to the Linas-Marcoussis agreement that they considered as the proper framework for the attainment of sustainable peace in the country. The Accra meeting also resolved to form a National Security Council in the country, comprising 15 members, with Laurent Gbagbo as head. The participants also agreed that the ministries of communication and interior would go to the rebels.[118]

The Accra meeting called on the Ivorian government to take immediate action in collaboration with France and ECOWAS troops to ensure the security and safeguard the participants of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement and rebels members of the reconciliation government. An analysis of the Accra II Agreement suggests that the belligerents currently could not arrive at a common consensus on who was the aggressor in the Ivorian crisis. In addition, Accra II failed to institute a concrete timetable for the disarmament of the rebels and their integration into the regular Ivorian army as the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement had prescribed. Little can one argue that since the Accra II Agreement, the precarious security situation still persisted. Despite the enormous work done by the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement implementation committee, the work of Accra I and II Accords, the efforts of the UN, AU, and ECOWAS mediators, the political crisis in Cote d'Ivoire is far from over. The situation became worse in mid 2004 when ministers from Forces Nouvelles left the government. Gbagbo responded by sacking same ministers in May 2004.[119]

[118] "Accra II Agreement – About Ivory Coast political crisis", nd. Homepage of Business Africa. Accessed on 3 Dec. 2005. <http://www.businessafrica.net/africabiz/ezine/wa/accra_agreement.php>
[119] "Accra III Agreements – About Ivory Coast political crisis", nd. Homepage of Business Africa. Accessed on 3 Dec. 2005. <http://www.businessafrica.net/africabiz/ezine/wa/accraIII_agreement.php>

It was at this point that president Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, in his capacity as the chair of the AU Peace and Security Council cluster, and having been mandated by the AU as chief mediator in the Ivorian crisis, invited the Ivorian political leaders to a meeting in Pretoria. The Pretoria meeting that was held between April 2 and 6 2005 and which was attended by the famous four in the Ivorian crisis – Gbagbo, Ouattara, Bedie and Soro – led to an agreement on a timetable to disarm the rebels and the militias. The Pretoria Accord also agreed that the chief of staff of the Ivorian army and of the rebels were to meet immediately in Bouake in order to ensure the implementation of PNDDR agreed upon in Linas Marcoussis, Accra II & III and reiterated in Pretoria. The chiefs of staff did meet in Bouake on the April 14 2005 to begin the disarmament process. Seemingly, rebels accepted to return to the government of national unity. The electoral commission was amended to include at least two representatives nominated by each party signatory to the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. The Pretoria Agreement also mandated the mediator to request the help of the UN in the organization of presidential elections in October 2005.[120]

The board of directors of the national broadcaster, the Radio Television Ivoirienne (RTI), was to be reconstituted by Guillaume Soro, the minister of communication, in consultation with the prime minister, and the programmes of the channel would reflect and cover the national territory. On the question of the famous article 35 of the constitution, it was agreed that the mediator should undertake some consultation with AU Chair Olusegun Obasanjo and the secretary General of the UN Koffi Annan, whose decision on the matter would be communicated to the Ivorian leader[121] The Pretoria Agreement has been praised as significant and more inclusive as it allows everyone to take part in running of the country. The parties, who had previously signed two other peace deals, which they later broke as a result of lack of trust among themselves, promised to ensure that the Pretoria peace agreement succeed. The attainment of such milestone by Mbeki has overshadowed statements Chirac made over *Radio France Internationale* that "Mbeki should immerse himself in West Africa so as to

[120] Beauregard Tromp, "Ivory Coast peace agreement signed", 7 Apr. 2005. Homepage of the Star. Accessed on 10 Oct. 2005. <http://www.thestar.co.za/index.php?fSectionId=129&fArticleId=2473470>
[121] J. Seepe, "Ivory Coast leaders set eyes on peace", *City Press* 10 Apr. 2005.

understand the mentality and souls of West Africans because in times of crisis, you have to really know people's mentalities and what is in people's souls"[122]. It was clear that Chirac's statements meant Mbeki stood no chance of succeeding in the Ivorian conflict. Afro-pessimism has been the major stumbling block Africans have to overcome in order to bring peace in the continent.

Nevertheless, one of the shortcomings of all the peace agreements signed by the Ivorian parties was the non-recourse to timeframes as has been the case with the already postponed October 2005 presidential elections. The peace agreements failed to identify the aggressor in the Ivorian crisis, so the spirit of impunity was very prevalent. The civil society, women and youth groups were not represented in conflict resolutions. Therefore, the Ivorians did not own the peace process, thus, little commitment was shown. Without infringing on the prerogatives of the president, the new prime minister has been designated with executive powers to organize elections in 2006.

The Linas- Marcoussis, Accra II & III, Pretoria I & II failed to disarm the rebels, a situation which the present government is finding very difficult to pursue. These agreements did not indicate how sanctions would be meted out to parties that do not respect agreements stipulated in the accords. To a large extent, all the accords have been described as another loud sounding empty piece of paper with no weigh apart from the ink in which it was written.[123]

Lessons, Challenges for mediators and prospects for peace-building

One of the aspects constraining peace-brokers in Cote d'Ivoire is the need to include the civil society in peacemaking activities. The previous peace agreements all took place on government level and virtually excluded the crucial role that could be played by the civil society during the disarmament process. Adekeye Adebajo argues that "civil society actors in West Africa pressured autocratic military regimes to leave power in Benin, Niger, and Sierra leone in the 1990s. More open political

[122] Ibid
[123] Lansana Gberie, "The crisis in Ivory Coast", 24 Jun. 2004. Homepage of Znet Africa Watch. Accessed on 30 Sep. 2005. <http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=2&ItemID=5769>

systems have emerged in West Africa. Thus, ECOWAS has established one of the world's first security mechanisms to manage regional conflicts. The fact that regional actors took the lead in efforts to manage conflicts in West Africa represents a significant trend in conflict management".[124] In this context, South Africa and other mediators should always strive to ensure that the civil society is represented in future peace settlement in Africa. The civil society as stakeholders in the search for peace should be given more space to proactively strengthen the quest for peace in Cote d'Ivoire.

The inclusive peace settlement will ensure that even though some countries in West Africa seem to be preoccupied with their own domestic problems in West Africa. The conflict in Cote d'Ivoire is so intense that failure to find a durable peaceful solution will spill over to neighbouring countries. Importantly, the peace process should take place within the realm of a comprehensive peace agreement for the entire region. Also South Africa cannot alone provide any lasting solution to the Ivorian crisis if it does not involve other countries in the region that happen to have invested their own interests in Cote d'Ivoire. At the external level is the intrusion of other states and personalities that, perhaps, harbour vested interests in the conflict and whose activities are likely to be inimical to the peace process[125]. There is no doubt that the past is now and will continue to haunt West Africa. Significantly, the biggest challenge for South Africa is to work collectively with all countries in the region to communicate the message that peace in Cote d'Ivoire is for the benefit of ECOWAS. . On the other hand, mediators should bear im mind that some countries in the region have supported the forces Nouvelles. Thus, the exclusion of Burkina Faso in the peace process will hamper the efforts of the international community. This is because it is an open secret that Burkina Faso is the main supporter of the Forces Nouvelles.the President of Burkina Faso Blaise Compaore has repeatedly accused Laurent Gbagbo for badly treating Burkinabes living in Cote d'Ivoire. Therefore, an amicable and genuine solution should be found between these two leaders.

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[124] Adekeye Adebajo and Ismail Rashid, *West Africa's Security Challenges: Building Peace in a Troubled Region*, London: Lynne Rienner, 2004. p.2

[125] Alade W Fawole, "Ecowas and the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire: the politics and problems of peace-making in West Africa", *Journal of West African Affairs*, 4(2), 2004. p.23

Furthermore, with the election of October 2005 postponed to 2006. The new prime minister Charles Konan Banny is mandated by the United Nation Resolution 1633 to prepare the disarmament of the forces loyal to Gbagbo as well as rebels to effectively organize the upcoming presidential elections in 2006.

However, members of the FPI echoed sentiments that the UN Resolution 1633 is an attempt to topple the government of Laurent Gbagbo by calling for the end of his term of office. This resolution was interpreted by the pro-Gbagbo youth as an attempt by France under the auspices of UN to remove Gbagbo from office. Subsequently, pro-Gbagbo youth, led by Charles Ble Goude took to the streets to protest against the UN Resolution by storming UN offices, thus, threatening the already fragile peace process.

Against this backdrop, the major challenge is to find ways and means of implementing the disarmament process of the pro-Gbagbo militia as well as that of the rebel forces. This will ensure that elections are held by October 2006. On the other hand, it is difficult to see how the imposition of sanctions against those perceived to be blocking the peace process will easily facilitate the disarmament process. Of major problem is the lack of political will from both Gbagbo's government and rebel forces to commit themselves to the long lasting peace process.

Finally, prospects for peace-building mechanism will have to bridge the gap that divides the country between north and south in order to achieve any possible peace settlement. Lacks of faith and trust have been an obstacle to conflict resolution in Cote d'Ivoire. Ultimately, the ball is in the hands of the Ivorian leaders to take advantage of the efforts made by the international community to implement all initiatives of peace settlement. The biggest obstacle is for each side to put aside its ambitious personal interests and work towards a marriage between various political parties.