

## AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

### Côte d'Ivoire Briefing April 2021

#### Côte d'Ivoire Summary 16 April 2021

*President Alassane Ouattara (2010-present) appoints a 41-member cabinet with 37 ministers and 4 secretaries of state, on the recommendation of Côte d'Ivoire's new prime minister, Patrick Achi. The Court of First Instance of the International Criminal Court (ICC) at The Hague (Netherlands) confirms the January 2019 acquittal of former president Laurent Gbagbo (2000-2010) and his former youth minister, Charles Blé Goudé, on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity allegedly committed during the 2010-2011 post-electoral crisis. OCP Africa, a subsidiary of Morocco-based and state-owned phosphate group OCP, has signed a partnership agreement with the Islamic Trade Finance Group (ITFG) and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) to boost rice cultivation. The Société Africaine de Plantation d'Hévéas de Côte d'Ivoire (SAPH), a branch of Côte d'Ivoire-based agro-industrial firm Sifca, has launched construction of a rubber transformation factory at Soubré in southwest Côte d'Ivoire, worth 17 billion FCFA (\$33m). The health ministry has vaccinated 83,425 individuals since the start of its Covid-19 vaccination campaign, which the government has extended beyond Greater Abidjan to the interior regions.*

#### Ouattara appoints his cabinet

President **Alassane Ouattara** (2010-present) has appointed a 41-member cabinet put forward by Côte d'Ivoire's new prime minister, **Patrick Achi**. Ouattara dissolved cabinet on 24 March, and on 26 March confirmed Achi as prime minister after he had served as interim prime minister for just under a month following the death of former prime minister **Hamed Bakayoko**.<sup>1</sup> Ouattara selected **Abdourahmane Cissé** on 29 March to replace Achi as presidency secretary general.<sup>2</sup>

Cissé announced the names of the 41 cabinet members on 6 April.<sup>3</sup> The new cabinet includes 37 ministers and four secretaries of state, slightly smaller than the previous 46-member candidate. Most individuals in charge of strategic cabinet portfolios have retained their positions, with just 13 new faces in the cabinet. **Kandia Camara** (external relations) is the second-highest ranking member of government after Achi and was made a minister of state.<sup>4</sup> Camara, Côte d'Ivoire's first female foreign affairs minister, was criticised for her performance as national education minister before her recent promotion.<sup>5</sup> However, she is a long time Ouattara ally and secretary general of the ruling **Rassemblement des Houphouëtistes pour la Démocratie et la Paix (RHDP)**. Her election as an MP in the **Abidjan** commune of **Abobo** in the March legislative elections has added to her political clout and legitimacy.<sup>6</sup>

**Kobenan Adjoumani** and **Birahima Téné Ouattara** were respectively named ministers of state for agriculture and defence.<sup>7</sup> Adjoumani is the RHDP spokesperson and has taken a leading role in the party since leaving the opposition **Parti Démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI)** in 2018. Téné

<sup>1</sup> La Tribune Afrique, 26 Mar 2021

<sup>2</sup> Jeune Afrique, 29 Mar 2021

<sup>3</sup> Abidjan.net, 6 April 2021

<sup>4</sup> Abidjan.net, 6 April 2021

<sup>5</sup> Abidjan-based African Development Bank analyst

<sup>6</sup> Abidjan-based African Development Bank analyst

<sup>7</sup> Abidjan.net, 6 April 2021

Ouattara, President Ouattara's younger brother, is popularly referred to as "*Photocopie*" due to his close physical resemblance to his elder brother. His promotion to minister of state came as a surprise to political observers but can be interpreted as another move by the president to give his brother more influence in executive affairs.<sup>8</sup>

In what appears to be a move to maintain continuity in the execution of the national economic agenda, Ouattara retained all ministers in the economic clusters.

Côte d'Ivoire cabinet – economic clusters, March 2021	
Minister	Cabinet position
Nialé Kaba	Planning and Development
Adama Coulibaly	Economy and Finance
Souleymane Diarrassouba	Trade and Commerce
Moussa Sanogo	Budget and State Portfolio
Emmanuel Esmel Essis	Investment promotion and private sector development

**Jean Sansan Kambilé** (justice and human rights) and **Gen. Vagondo Diomandé** (interior and security) also retained their positions.<sup>9</sup> **Eugène Aka Aouele** was moved from the health ministry to become president of the **Conseil Economique, Sociale, Environnemental et Culturel** (economic, social, environmental and cultural council). **Jean-Claude Kouassi** lost his portfolio as mines and geology minister. Along with former culture minister **Raymonde Goudou**, Kouassi's defeat in the legislative elections could explain his dismissal from government.<sup>10</sup> Before the legislative elections, Ouattara told his ministers that their performance in the legislatures would be a criterion for their reappointment.<sup>11</sup> Ouattara nevertheless retained **Sidi Touré** as animal resources minister, **Siandou Fofana** as tourism minister and **Gilbert Koné Fofana** as minister of institutional relations despite all three ministers losing in their respective constituencies.<sup>12</sup> Touré has worked closely with Ouattara since the latter was in the opposition, making his removal from cabinet unlikely. Koné Fofana had worked in the presidency and has a good working relationship with the current prime minister, in addition to his grassroots popularity as mayor of the opposition **Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI)** stronghold of **Youpougon**. Siandou Fofana, who lost both the 2018 municipal and 2021 legislative elections in the PDCI stronghold of **Port-Bouët**, has been hailed for his work promoting the Ivorian tourism industry. Since 2019, he has been in charge of coordinating Côte d'Ivoire's tourism development master plan, "*Sublime Côte d'Ivoire*".<sup>13</sup>

New appointees include **Pierre Demba** (health), **Thomas Camara** (mines, petroleum and energy) and **Amadou Coulibaly** (communications/government spokesperson).<sup>14</sup> Demba was director general of the state road development agency, **AGEROUTE**, prior to his nomination, while Camara, a trained engineer, was the head of Ivorian state refining company **Société Ivoirienne de Raffinage (SIR)**. Coulibaly is the cousin of late prime minister **Amadou Gon Coulibaly** and has been a communications adviser at the presidency and at the office of the prime minister.<sup>15</sup>

According to an Abidjan-based **African Development Bank** analyst, there are two major takeaways from the newly appointed government. Firstly, while Ouattara ensured the promotion of political

<sup>8</sup> Abidjan-based African Development Bank analyst

<sup>9</sup> Abidjan.net, 6 April 2021

<sup>10</sup> Abidjan-based African Development Bank analyst

<sup>11</sup> Abidjan-based African Development Bank analyst

<sup>12</sup> Abidjan-based African Development Bank analyst

<sup>13</sup> Abidjan-based African Development Bank analyst

<sup>14</sup> Abidjan.net, 6 April 2021

<sup>15</sup> Abidjan.net, 6 April 2021

heavyweights and longstanding allies such as Kandia Camara, he selected a mostly technocratic government as exemplified by the trio of Achi, Cissé and presidential director of cabinet **Fidele Sarassoro**, all of whom will have leading roles in coordinating government action. Achi and Cissé have significant experience in the economic and financial domains, while Sarassoro spent 20 years of his professional career working as a high-ranking official in the **United Nations**.<sup>16</sup> Secondly, the new cabinet retains most of the key figures in Gon Coulibaly's cabinet, guaranteeing a degree of continuity in the functioning of those ministries.<sup>17</sup>

### ICC confirms acquittal of Laurent Gbagbo and Charles Blé Goudé

The **Court of First Instance of the International Criminal Court (ICC)** at **The Hague (Netherlands)** has confirmed the January 2019 acquittal of former president **Laurent Gbagbo** (2000-2010) and his former youth minister, **Charles Blé Goudé**, on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity allegedly committed during the 2010-2011 post-electoral crisis.<sup>18</sup> The verdict effectively ends the trial that commenced on 28 January 2016<sup>19</sup> and opens the door for Gbagbo and Blé Goudé to return to Côte d'Ivoire, for which President Ouattara has indicated his support.<sup>20</sup>

ICC Court of First Instance presiding judge **Chile Eboe-Osuji** on 31 March declared that the court had rejected the appeal lodged by ICC chief prosecutor **Fatou Bensouda** against Gbagbo and Blé Goudé's acquittal.<sup>21</sup> Eboe-Osuji said the court believed that the appeal, made by Bensouda in September 2019 after Gbagbo and Blé Goudé's initial acquittal in January 2019, did not provide sufficient evidence to prove the guilt of the accused.<sup>22</sup> Eboe-Osuji said all conditions attached to the provisional release of Gbagbo and Blé Goudé should be revoked, instructing the ICC registrar to ensure the safe transfer of the two individuals to their desired destinations.<sup>23</sup> Following the verdict, Bensouda Tweeted:

*"As an officer of the court, I respect the integrity of this process and the decision of the Appeals Chamber."*<sup>24</sup>

Blé Goudé, who had been in custody at The Hague since 2014, thanked his supporters and said he would speak to his family and lawyers about his potential return to Côte d'Ivoire.<sup>25</sup> Gbagbo, who was accompanied to the courthouse by his second wife, **Nady Bamba**, did not make a public pronouncement but his lawyer, **Emmanuel Alit**, described the acquittal as,

*"The victory of a man, unjustly accused and who today sees his innocence fully recognised."*<sup>26</sup>

Gbagbo arrived at The Hague in November 2011 following his arrest in Abidjan in April 2011.<sup>27</sup> He has resided in **Belgium** since his first acquittal.<sup>28</sup> The ICC eased his provisional release conditions in May 2020, allowing him to choose his place of residence, with the authorisation of the host country.

The news of the duo's acquittal elicited a wide range of reactions. Dozens of Gbagbo and Blé Goudé supporters, some who had travelled from other **European** countries, gathered outside the courthouse and greeted the acquittal confirmation with jubilation.<sup>29</sup> A festive mood also prevailed in the Abidjan commune of Youpougon and the **Blockhauss** neighbourhood, reputed Gbagbo strongholds, as well as

<sup>16</sup> Abidjan-based African Development Bank analyst

<sup>17</sup> Abidjan-based African Development Bank analyst

<sup>18</sup> France24, 31 Mar 2021

<sup>19</sup> Koaci.com, 31 Mar 2021

<sup>20</sup> Abidjan.net, 7 Apr 2021

<sup>21</sup> France24, 31 Mar 2021

<sup>22</sup> France24, 31 Mar 2021

<sup>23</sup> RFI, 31 Mar 2021

<sup>24</sup> RFI, 31 Mar 2021

<sup>25</sup> RFI, 31 Mar 2021

<sup>26</sup> Jeune Afrique, 31 Mar 2021

<sup>27</sup> RFI, 31 Mar 2021

<sup>28</sup> Jeune Afrique, 31 Mar 2021

<sup>29</sup> RFI, 31 Mar 2021

at the Abidjan headquarters of Gbagbo's political party, the Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI).<sup>30</sup> Gbagbo's eldest son, **Michel Gbagbo**, recently elected as an MP in Youpougon and arrested alongside his father in 2011, stated:

*"We must be delighted with this acquittal and now seek those who are the perpetrators of these killings ... the real culprits must be found."*<sup>31</sup>

Gbagbo's former wife and ex-first lady, **Simone Gbagbo**, stated on her website that justice had been done and that "*the truth has triumphed*".<sup>32</sup>

Opposition PDCI leader and former president **Henri Konan Bedié** (1993-1999) suggested that Gbagbo's return would significantly help to calm political tensions.<sup>33</sup> **Pascal Affi' N'Guessan**, president of the government-recognised faction of the FPI, praised the triumph of law over all considerations.<sup>34</sup>

The government did not release an official statement regarding the verdict. State lawyer **Abdoulaye Ben Méité** clarified during a television interview on 4 April that the state was not a party to the trial before the ICC.<sup>35</sup> Méité added that Côte d'Ivoire only authorised the ICC to carry out investigations in the country, which led to the extradition of the concerned individuals.<sup>36</sup> Méité suggested that while he recognises the judgement, Gbagbo and Blé Goudé's release does not prevent other courts of law from pursuing them for committing the alleged crimes.<sup>37</sup>

Ouattara announced on 7 April his willingness for Gbagbo and Blé Goudé to return to Côte d'Ivoire.<sup>38</sup> Ouattara pledged that the government would assume the travel expenses for Gbagbo and his family's return to Côte d'Ivoire and make the necessary arrangements to ensure Gbagbo receives the benefits available to former heads of state.<sup>39</sup>

Months of speculation about Gbagbo's possible return preceded the ICC ruling. In November, the late prime minister, Hamed Bakayoko, coordinated government discussions with Gbagbo about his return. In December, Gbagbo received two Ivorian passports, one diplomatic and the other ordinary. However, in February, **Assoa Adoa**, secretary general of the FPI's Gbagbo-aligned faction, noted that little progress had been made regarding Gbagbo's return, while Michel Gbagbo accused Ouattara of delaying the process. Members of the FPI **Gbagbo ou Rien** (Gbagbo or nothing) faction, led by Adoa, established a committee to prepare for Gbagbo's imminent return. Adoa returned from **Brussels** (Belgium) on 8 April after a three-week visit during which he met Gbagbo.

One major obstacle to Gbagbo's return is the 20-year jail sentence he received for his alleged role in the robbery of the Ivorian branch of the **Banque Centrale des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (BCEAO)** (central bank of West African states) during the 2010-2011 post-election crisis. However, government spokesperson and communication minister Amadou Coulibaly said that President Ouattara is committed to facilitating Gbagbo's return.<sup>40</sup> Ouattara is reportedly open to granting an amnesty or presidential grace for the crimes of which Gbagbo was convicted, similar to the general amnesty he accorded 800 individuals, including Simone Gbagbo, in August 2018 (see *ARC Briefing Côte d'Ivoire August 2018*).

<sup>30</sup> Jeune Afrique, 31 Mar 2021

<sup>31</sup> L'Intelligent d'Abidjan, 4 Apr 2021

<sup>32</sup> Jeune Afrique, 1 Apr 2021

<sup>33</sup> Jeune Afrique, 1 Apr 2021

<sup>34</sup> Jeune Afrique, 1 Apr 2021

<sup>35</sup> Abidjan.net, 6 Apr 2021

<sup>36</sup> Abidjan.net, 6 Apr 2021

<sup>37</sup> Abidjan.net, 6 Apr 2021

<sup>38</sup> Koaci.com, 7 Apr 2021

<sup>39</sup> Koaci.com, 7 Apr 2021

<sup>40</sup> Jeune Afrique, 7 Apr 2021

Despite his nearly decade-long absence from Côte d'Ivoire, Gbagbo remains a popular figure in the country.<sup>41</sup> With the resurgence of the FPI, it is likely that he will become involved in Ivorian politics upon his return and take over the FPI presidency from Affi N'Guessan.<sup>42</sup>

While Gbagbo supporters and fellow opposition leaders believe his return can help to foster much needed reconciliation, victims of the 2010-2011 violence, which left an estimated 3,000 dead, feel otherwise. **Issiaka Diaby**, president of the **Collectif des Victimes en Côte d'Ivoire** (collective of Ivorian victims) decried Gbagbo and Blé Goudé's release, claiming it enshrines impunity and sets a precedent for future non-conviction related to the conflict.<sup>43</sup> Diaby called on state prosecutor **Richard Adou** to arrest the pair upon their return to the country.<sup>44</sup> **Amnesty International West Africa** researcher **Michele Eken** echoed Diaby's sentiments, indicating that the failure to hold anyone accountable will disappoint the victims of the 2010-2011 violence.<sup>45</sup>

### Boost for commercial rice and rubber production

Côte d'Ivoire is taking steps to improve its commercial rice and rubber production. **OCP Africa**, a subsidiary of **Morocco**-based and state-owned phosphate group **OCP**, has signed a partnership agreement with the **Islamic Trade Finance Group (ITFG)** and the **Islamic Development Bank (IDB)** to boost rice cultivation and agriculture value chains in Côte d'Ivoire.<sup>46</sup> Côte d'Ivoire currently produces only half of the rice it consumes, importing 1m-1.5m tonnes to cover its production deficit. Imports amount to 300 billion FCFA (\$553.3m), with most coming from **China** and **Vietnam**.<sup>47</sup>

Under the agreement, concluded on 7 April, the IFTC and IDB will support OCP's **Agribooster** programme.<sup>48</sup> Agribooster is OCP's flagship farmer support initiative and aims to assist 20,000 small-scale rice farmers improve rice productivity and revenue generation by providing high quality fertilisers and hybrid seeds.<sup>49</sup> The programme will provide training in the latest agricultural practices, such as improving soil fertility. Since its inception in 2018, Agribooster has benefitted 630,000 small-scale farmers in Côte d'Ivoire, **Ghana**, **Nigeria** and **Senegal**, with beneficiaries' yields increasing by an estimated 40%.<sup>50</sup>

This is not the first agreement that OCP Africa has signed in a bid to promote rice production in Côte d'Ivoire. In September, the rice promotion ministry signed an MOU with OCP Africa as part of a **Public-Private Partnership (PPP)** that will see OCP assist the Ivorian government with fertiliser research and development support and promote the use of digital techniques in rice farming.<sup>51</sup> The agreement will complement the **Stratégie Nationale de Développement de la Riziculture (SNDR 2020-2030)** (national strategy for rice production development), a 150 billion FCFA (\$276.6m) programme that aims to make Côte d'Ivoire self-sufficient in rice production by 2025 and a net exporter of rice by 2030.<sup>52</sup> The government has concluded several agreements with foreign private sector operators and regional financial institutions to help them attain their objectives. These include **Yara Côte d'Ivoire**, a branch of **Norway**-based chemical firm **Yara**, and **Bayer West-Central Africa**, a branch of **Germany**-based pharmaceutical company **Bayer**, and the **Banque d'Investissement et de Développement de la CEDEAO (BIDC)** (see *ARC Briefing Côte d'Ivoire January 2021*).

<sup>41</sup> Abidjan-based African Development Bank analyst

<sup>42</sup> Abidjan-based African Development Bank analyst

<sup>43</sup> Koaci.com, 31 Mar 2021

<sup>44</sup> Koaci.com, 5 Apr 2021

<sup>45</sup> Amnesty International, 31 Mar 2021

<sup>46</sup> North Africa Post, 9 Apr 2021

<sup>47</sup> Sika Finance, 3 Dec 2020

<sup>48</sup> Sika Finance, 7 Apr 2021

<sup>49</sup> North Africa Post, 9 Apr 2021

<sup>50</sup> North Africa Post, 9 Apr 2021

<sup>51</sup> Agence Ecofin, 7 Sep 2020

<sup>52</sup> Sika Finance, 3 Dec 2020

In further good news for Côte d'Ivoire's agriculture sector, the **Société Africaine de Plantation d'Hévés de Côte d'Ivoire (SAPH)**, a branch of Cote d'Ivoire-based agro-industrial firm **Sifca**, has launched construction of a rubber transformation factory at **Soubré** in southwest Côte d'Ivoire.<sup>53</sup> SAPH director general **Marc Gérot** said the plant will cost 17 billion FCFA (\$33m) and completion is projected for November 2022.<sup>54</sup> The factory will have an initial transformation capacity of 60,000 tonnes per year, which can be increased to 120,000 tonnes.<sup>55</sup> The Soubré transformation unit will be the sixth transformation facility built by SAPH<sup>56</sup> and forms part of the long-term investment plan initiated by the **Société Internationale des Plantations d'Hévés (SIPH)**. SIPH is the holding company that oversees Sifca's rubber production activities in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, **Liberia** and Nigeria.<sup>57</sup> SAPH produced 218,000 tonnes of rubber in 2020 and intends to increase this figure to 230,000 tonnes in 2021.<sup>58</sup> SAPH currently produces 25% of Côte d'Ivoire's natural rubber output and operates 24,000 hectares of rubber plantations.

Côte d'Ivoire is a significant player in the global rubber industry and is currently the fourth largest producer of rubber and exporter after **Cambodia, India and Thailand**.<sup>59</sup> Côte d'Ivoire registered output of 950,000 tonnes in 2020.<sup>60</sup> The sector employs 168,000 planters.<sup>61</sup> However, Côte d'Ivoire's rubber transformation capacity is currently at 664,000 tonnes, meaning that 35% of its produce is exported unprocessed.<sup>62</sup>

Rubber industry stakeholders have taken steps to remedy this shortcoming. In June 2020, a collective of 12 local rubber producers led by SAPH concluded an agreement to invest 56.5 billion FCFA (\$98.3m) in the sector, during the period 2020-2023.<sup>63</sup> This investment will enable Cote d'Ivoire to raise its annual rubber production and transformation capacity to 2 million tonnes and around 1 million tonnes per year, respectively by 2023.<sup>64</sup> As part of the initiative, which is expected to lead to the creation of 1,819 jobs, the government has committed to grant tax exemptions and adjustments to the firms concerned (see *ARC Briefing Côte d'Ivoire July 2020*).<sup>65</sup> The **Association of Natural Rubber Producing Countries** indicates that global demand for rubber in 2020 was 12.8m tonnes, a 6.9% contraction compared to 2019, but an anticipated global economic recovery could see an increase in demand from the automobile and pharmaceutical industries.<sup>66</sup>

### Côte d'Ivoire pursues national Covid-19 vaccination campaign

Côte d'Ivoire commenced its vaccine roll out on 1 March<sup>67</sup> after receiving 504,000 doses of the **United Kingdom**-manufactured **AstraZeneca/Oxford** vaccine on 26 February through the **World Health Organisation (WHO)**-coordinated **Covax** vaccine procurement initiative.<sup>68</sup> Côte d'Ivoire became the second **African** country after Ghana to obtain Covid-19 vaccines using the Covax facility.<sup>69</sup> Presidential director of cabinet **Fidele Sarassoro** said Côte d'Ivoire would receive another 1 million

<sup>53</sup> Financial Afrik, 9 Apr 2021

<sup>54</sup> Financial Afrik, 9 Apr 2021

<sup>55</sup> Financial Afrik, 9 Apr 2021

<sup>56</sup> Financial Afrik, 9 Apr 2021

<sup>57</sup> Jeune Afrique, 13 Apr 2021

<sup>58</sup> Financial Afrik, 9 Apr 2021

<sup>59</sup> Sika Finance, 24 Mar 2021

<sup>60</sup> Financial Afrik, 9 Apr 2021

<sup>61</sup> Financial Afrik, 9 Apr 2021

<sup>62</sup> Financial Afrik, 9 Apr 2021

<sup>63</sup> Jeune Afrique, 17 Jun 2020

<sup>64</sup> Jeune Afrique, 17 Jun 2020

<sup>65</sup> Jeune Afrique, 17 Jun 2020

<sup>66</sup> Sika Finance, 24 Mar 2021

<sup>67</sup> APA, 1 Mar 2021

<sup>68</sup> UN News, 26 Feb 2021

<sup>69</sup> UN News, 26 Feb 2021

doses of the AstraZeneca/Oxford vaccine through the Covax initiative by the end of the first semester.<sup>70</sup>

Côte d'Ivoire's national vaccine strategy will be carried out in three phases.<sup>71</sup> The first phase entails vaccinating health workers, members of security forces and teachers, amounting to 3% of the population.<sup>72</sup> During the second phase, Covid-19 vaccination will be available to individuals over the age of 50 and those who have underlying health conditions, representing 17% of the population.<sup>73</sup> The third phase will see vaccination of those between the ages of 18 and 49.<sup>74</sup> The goal is to vaccinate 19.6m people, 69.4% of the population.<sup>75</sup> Health and public hygiene ministry director of health **Samba Mamadou** reported that Côte d'Ivoire had vaccinated 83,425 individuals as of 13 April.<sup>76</sup>

Until recently, vaccination was administered almost exclusively in Greater Abidjan where 95% of Covid-19 cases have been recorded. However, newly appointed health minister **Pierre Dimba** officially launched vaccination outside of Abidjan on 15 April at an event in the political capital, **Yamoussokro**.<sup>77</sup>

The **Conseil National de Sécurité (CNS)** (national security council) decided at its meeting on 26 March to extend the national health state of emergency until 30 June.<sup>78</sup> As of 14 April, Côte d'Ivoire had recorded 45,444 positive cases, 44,925 recoveries and 273 Covid-19-related deaths in its population of roughly 26 million people <sup>79</sup> since confirming its first case on 11 March 2020.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> AIP, 26 Mar 2021

<sup>71</sup> APA, 1 Mar 2021

<sup>72</sup> APA, 1 Mar 2021

<sup>73</sup> APA, 1 Mar 2021

<sup>74</sup> APA, 1 Mar 2021

<sup>75</sup> APA, 1 Mar 2021

<sup>76</sup> Abidjan.net, 13 Apr

<sup>77</sup> AIP, 15 Apr 2021

<sup>78</sup> AIP, 26 Mar 2021

<sup>79</sup> Worldometer, accessed 16 Apr 2021

<sup>80</sup> RFI, 12 Mar 2020

## Planner

Jul 2021 **Montpellier (France)** Africa Intelligence. **France-Afrique** summit

## Chronology

12 Apr 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Sika Finance*. **Société Générale Côte d'Ivoire**, a branch of France-based bank **Société Générale**, records a profit of FCFA 48.4 billion FCFA (\$87.7m) in 2020, a 3.6% year-on-year decrease;

10 Apr 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Jeune Afrique*. Former president **Henri Konan Bédié** encourages the government to take the necessary steps to ensure the return of exiled former president **Laurent Gbagbo**, during celebrations to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his party, the opposition **Parti Démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI)**;

9 Apr 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Sika Finance*. **Tunisia-based Bayahi** announces it will invest 6.56 billion FCFA (\$11.8m) in an amusement park in the coastal town of **Grand Bassam**;

8 Apr 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Financial Afrik*. Côte d'Ivoire-based rubber producer **Société Africaine de Plantations d'Hévéas (SAPH)** launches construction of a 17 billion FCFA (\$30.7m) rubber transformation plant at **Soubré**, which will have annual transformation capacity of 60,000 tonnes, and can increase to 120,000 tonnes;

8 Apr 2021 **Abidjan (Cote d'Ivoire)** *The North Africa Post*. **OCP Africa**, subsidiary of Moroccan state-owned phosphate group **OCP**, teams up with the **International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation** of the multilateral development bank **Islamic Development Bank** to boost rice farming and enhance agriculture value chains in Côte d'Ivoire;

7 Apr 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Jeune Afrique*. President **Alassane Ouattara** declares during first council of ministers meeting with newly appointed cabinet that former president **Laurent Gbagbo** and former minister **Charles Blé Goude**, whom the **International Criminal Court (ICC)** acquitted of crimes against humanity in March, are free to return to Côte d'Ivoire when they desire;

6 Apr 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Abidjan.net*. Presidency secretary general **Abdourahmane Cissé** announces the appointment of a new 41-member cabinet;

31 Mar 2021 **Washington D.C (United States)** *World Bank*. The **World Bank's** bi-annual report, *Africa Pulse*, identifies **Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Niger** as the three **African** countries that will attain economic growth above 6% in 2021;

30 Mar 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Abidjan.net*. **Amadou Soumahoro** is re-elected president of the **Assemblée Nationale** (national assembly) after winning 158 votes from 243 MPs;

29 Mar 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Abidjan.net*. **Abdourahmane Cissé** is appointed presidency secretary general, replacing **Patrick Achi**, who was named prime minister;

29 Mar 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Koaci.com*. Senate president **Jeannot Ahoussou Kouadio** returns to Côte d'Ivoire, after undertaking eight months of medical treatment in **France and Germany**;

29 Mar 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *RFI*. An armed attack at **Kafolo**, near the border with Burkina Faso, reportedly by 60 individuals believed to belong to the **Katiba Macina** terrorist cell linked to **Malian** jihadist **Amadou Koufa**, leaves six dead including an Ivorian gendarme;

26 Mar 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *7info.ci*. Ivorian rubber producers association **Association des Professionnels du Caoutchouc Naturel de Côte d'Ivoire (APROMAC)** president **Eugène Krémien** says Côte d'Ivoire improved its rubber production from 783,000 tonnes in 2019 to 950,000 tonnes in 2020, making it the fourth largest producer in the world

26 Mar 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Abidjan.net*. **Patrick Jérôme Achi** is confirmed as prime

minister, after serving as interim prime minister following the death of his predecessor, the late **Hamed Bakayoko**;

26 Mar 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Amnesty International*. **United Kingdom**-based NGO **Amnesty International** reports that hundreds of individuals arrested during election-related violence in 2020 are being held in dire conditions and without access to lawyers;

26 Mar 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Koaci.com*. The **Conseil Constitutionnel** (constitutional council) annuls results of the 6 March legislative elections in four districts;

25 Mar 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Koaci.com*. The government agrees to construct a pilot floating solar power plant of 20 MW on the unexploited surface of the **Kossou** reservoir dam;

25 Mar 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Agence Ecofin*. The government has validated a credit agreement worth €98m (\$115m) allocated by the **Agence Française de Développement (AFD)** to finance the **Projet d'Accès à l'Electricité, aux Réseaux Intelligents et à l'Energie Solaire (PARIS)** (access to electricity, smart grids and solar energy project);

24 Mar 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *AIP*. President **Alassane Ouattara** dissolves cabinet and declares a new government will be formed after the appointment of a new prime minister;

22 Mar 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Sika Finance*. **Ecobank Côte d'Ivoire**, a branch of **Togo**-headquartered **Ecobank Transnational Inc**, reports turnover of 30 billion FCFA (\$54.5m) in 2020, an 18% increase from the 2019 figure of 25.4 billion FCFA (\$46.1m);

22 Mar 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Sika Finance*. Côte d'Ivoire-based **Bridge Bank Côte d'Ivoire** obtains 10 billion FCFA (\$18.1m) loan from the **Banque Ouest Africaine de Développement (West African Development Bank)** which it will use to support small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) negatively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic;

18 Mar 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Abidjan.net*. The **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)** has provided \$19.5m over five years to **Equal Access International (EAI)** to build community resilience against violent extremism in northern Côte d'Ivoire through the **Resilience for Peace (R4P)** initiative

18 Mar 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Koaci.com*. Local press reports suggest Côte d'Ivoire's second largest port, the **Port Autonome de San Pedro** (San Pedro autonomous port), will undergo extension;

17 Mar 2021 **Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)** *Financial Afrik*. Côte d'Ivoire raises 44.1 billion FCFA (\$80.1m) through the issue of an "*obligation de relance*" (ODR) (stimulus bond) on the **West African Economic Monetary Union (WAEMU)** regional financial market;

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