SIGHTS I NEVER WANTED TO SEE.

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Category: Observations

I knew that Ivory Coast was divided in two; that there was a civil war in 2002 and that there have subesquently been major anti-French riots in some of the bigger cities. But reading about something on the interenet, or even in letters from friends doesn't quite convey information the way that seeing it face to face does. Here are four pictures I took in Abidjan this last week which capture some of the changes that have happened over the last few years.

A big security door at the front of the SIL building. We used to pride ourselves that we didn't live in a walled compound cut of from the outside world. Well, there is still no wall, but security has been significantly beefed up.

Barbed wire around an armed UN camp - this used to be Sam and Dave's primary school. A number of schools in the city are now used to house UN troops and tanks.

The burned out remains of David's secondary school. French soldiers shot a number of protestors at a rally against the French intervention in the Ivorian civil war, in turn Ivorian protestors destroyed some of the French institutions in the city.

Kouya New Testaments being stored in a lock up alongside spare materesses. Because of the insecurity, the New Testament's can't easily be distributed, so they sit in boxes and wait for better days.

In different ways each of these scenes hurts me deeply - but spare a thought for our Ivorian brothers and sisters who are living with this every day and not just making quick visits to discuss mission strategy.

