NEWS FROM IVORY COAST

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Category: Africa

The mainstream media in the UK now seem to be picking up on the situation in Ivory Coast more frequently. There was a report on the Today programme this morning that made interesting listening. However, the British media seem always to be a day or two behind the actual events and there is very little by way of good analysis of the situation. Thankfully, by following the #civ2010 hashtag on Twitter, it is possible to come across some extremely good analysis - as well as a fair bit of hysteria and an awful lot of vitriol.

Here are quotes from two good pieces that I've come across in the last day or two. The first if from Think Africa Press.

> *Events in Libya and CÃ´te d'Ivoire are moving too fast for international policymakers. This is why the international response to the violence has so far been so incoherent. The key questions in these two situations are how to halt the current violence, how to address large-scale refugee flows into neighbouring countries that are themselves politically volatile, and how the next government should be formed.*
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> *Gaddafi and Gbagbo are prepared to fight to the end to remain in power, which makes political negotiations extremely difficult. The South African proposal of a Zimbabwe- or Kenya-style power-sharing arrangement in CÃ´te d'Ivoire is ill-conceived. Gbagbo won't buy it and that model of government has simply allowed the same repressive leaders in Zimbabwe and Kenya to continue calling the shots. As if to underscore this point, Mugabe has reportedly been shipping arms to Gbagbo since Christmas, right under the noses of his power-sharing partners.*
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> *The intelligent, localised use of force appears the best option. The aims should therefore be a popular overthrow of Gaddafi in Libya and a regional military campaign by ECOWAS to restore Ouattara to power in CÃ´te d'Ivoire. International military intervention would be too slow and could embolden Gaddafi's and Gbagbo's supporters even further. The most effective international response would be to support the popular uprising in Libya politically and with military aid to the rebels. In CÃ´te d'Ivoire, the UN mission should encourage ECOWAS toward an agreed political position (given the deep divisions within the regional body) and a regional military force on the ground with a sufficiently strong mandate to repel Gbagbo's troops and protect civilians.*
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> *None of this will happen quickly or smoothly but in the meantime diplomatic dithering is making things worse.*

And from the always excellent, Until Our Independence.

> *CÃ´te dâ€™Ivoire is now on the verge of the worst case scenario, where the explosive post-*

> *election status quo has allowed both sides to radicalize and arm their troops, and completely shut down the economic activity. The most likely scenario now seems to be a return to an all out war, such as the one which divided the country in 2002. The civilian involvement in the 2002 violence was limited, despite the hundreds maybe thousands of casualties that followed. But the situation is much worse now and we might witness an unprecedented and unlimited wave of violence in the country. Unlike the 2002 conflict, the political and ethnic violence is likely to erupt within the communities, increasing exponentially the number of victims. Read the whole article.*

Please pray for peace.