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UN support to SSR in peacekeeping contexts: A case study of Côte d'Ivoire

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Introduction

In Côte d'Ivoire, a decade of tensions from 2002 to 2011 along ethnic, regional, and religious lines profoundly weakened the cohesion, operational capacity, and legitimacy of the security sector. Before this period of instability, a successful coup in 1999 by soldiers claiming unpaid salaries and poor living conditions,¹ as well as an attempted coup in 2002, underlined the declining security governance that preceded the country's 2002–2003 civil war. The presidential election that took place in November 2010, rather than representing the culmination of a long and difficult peace process that started in 2003, marked the onset of four months of turmoil when defeated President Laurent Gbagbo refused to relinquish power to former Prime Minister Alassane Ouattara, resulting in a death toll of 3,000 and an even more deeply polarized society.

In the aftermath, reform of security institutions emerged as an important if challenging process that necessitated a wide range of support from the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI). From 2012–2017, UNOCI engaged in effectively supporting the national SSR process by focusing on holistic changes to the security sector through the development of a national security architecture and the implementation of a comprehensive National SSR Strategy. While UNOCI has contributed significantly to steadily enhancing the country's security governance, the transformative impact of reform has been, and will continue to be, a direct function of the political underpinnings of reform and the quality of social cohesion and national reconciliation, both of which remain a challenge.

This chapter analyses the impact of UNOCI's SSR engagement with the Government and national stakeholders following the 2010–2011 post-electoral crisis. The chapter is divided into five sections. This introduction is followed by an outline of the pre-2010 national context, which defines the framework for the

ensuing analysis. The third section reviews the ‘entry points’ through which UNOCI supported nationally-led SSR efforts in the post-crisis environment. The fourth section focuses on persistent challenges to the SSR process in Côte d’Ivoire, and the fifth and final section offers recommendations to help move the agenda from incremental reform towards holistic transformation.

The national context prior to 2012 SSR engagement

Exclusionary politics and poor governance lie at the heart of Côte d’Ivoire’s recurrent security crises, as manifested by repeated “mutinies” within the armed forces. A decline in the economic prosperity of the 1960s and 1970s was mirrored by the rise of *ivoirité*, “a slogan, a watch-word, [and] a normative category”² aimed at differentiating “authentic” citizens from more recent economic immigrants and other supposed outsiders. At the turn of the century, the pernicious and discriminatory politics of *ivoirité* further evolved from an ethnic and national identifier to a distinction between northerners and southerners.³ The 1990s also saw the erosion of regional representation in the security sector and a trend towards ethnic favouritism, which in turn invited coups and attempted coups from minority junior officers fearing exclusion.⁴ In the decade leading up to the 2002 coup attempt and subsequent civil war, the country’s security forces, which at one time were “arguably among the best trained in West Africa,” ballooned in size while also becoming politicized, fragmented, corrupt, and abusive.⁵ These factors played out in the 2002–2003 civil war, which left the country divided between north and south, with the north controlled by the rebel coalition Forces Nouvelles (FN) under Guillaume Soro, and the south controlled by the government of President Gbagbo.

The signing of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement in January 2003 introduced a coalition government comprised of former belligerents and political and armed groups, and the country’s defence portfolio became the responsibility of the Prime Minister. Several agreements, including the Accra Accords of 2002 and 2003 and the Pretoria Accords of 2005, were subsequently signed, but all failed to properly address the disarmament of FAFN – the military wing of the FN. Following the Ouagadougou Political Agreement (*Accord Politique de Ouagadougou*, APO) of March 2007, brokered through so-called “direct dialogue” facilitated by the President of Burkina Faso, FN’s Guillaume Soro became Prime Minister. Beyond the responsibility to manage defence issues, the APO further delegated to the head of government the responsibility to manage the resolution of tensions, including security issues, social cohesion, and post-crisis reconstruction. As a result, several new institutions were created to implement the Accord, with the aim to hold secure and

fair presidential elections by the end of 2009 (though, due to delays, they were finally held in November of 2010).

The Centre de Commandement Intégré (CCI), a 568-troop joint body comprised of the FDS (government loyalists) and the FAFN (former rebels) was created by Decree No. 2000-82 of 16 March 2007 as part of the implementation of the APO, with the obligation to “unify the forces [...] and to implement the new measures of restructuring of the Defense and Security Forces of Côte d'Ivoire.”⁶ Among other specific tasks, the CCI was to provide security for public venues, including schools, in areas outside the central government's control, as well as for the presidential election. CCI was also to carry out the disarmament and demobilization aspects of DDR. Along with the creation of the CCI to undertake the “DD” tasks, a reintegration structure was established to serve as the third leg of the DDR process. The National Program for Reinsertion and Community Rehabilitation (*Programme National de Réinsertion et de Réhabilitation Communautaire*, PNRRC) was charged with profiling and reintegrating combatants following their demobilization. This was the first time since the DDR attempt of 2004 (*Programme National de DDR*, PNDDR) that DDR responsibilities were divided between two institutions, namely the CCI (responsible for the “DD”) and the PNRRC (responsible for the “R”). From the outset, this created a challenge in defining where demobilization starts, which in turn led to internal competition between the two bodies as the PNRRC effectively undertook demobilization while the CCI limited its action to disarmament. The APO also allowed for the creation of the National Civic Service Program (PNSC) for ex-combatants seeking careers other than those provided by existing socio-economic reintegration schemes.

At the institutional level, a Working Group on Restructuring and Rebuilding the Army (*Groupe de Travail – Restructuration et Refondation de l'Armée*, GT-RRA) was also set up within the Prime Minister's office and was tasked with establishing the foundations for a future Ivorian armed force, building on the work of the CCI.

The disarmament, demobilization, and security sector reunification processes initially envisioned as a basis for reforms and the pre-conditions for elections were not achieved by the time of the 2010 election.⁷ Rather, recruitment continued alongside parallel command structures while the country remained frozen between war and peace, with periodic clashes precluding any serious attempts to improve security governance.⁸ As a result, Côte d'Ivoire and its security sector were dangerously divided on the eve of the elections, and completely unable to deal peacefully with the political crisis when Gbagbo refused to cede power to Ouattara. Instead, as Arthur Boutellis notes, “almost immediately after the announcement of the disputed outcome of the November 28th presidential election [...] the security forces became partisan participants in the political-electoral crisis.”⁹ Ouattara eventually assumed the presidency with UN and international support, but not before four months of

violence exemplified the profound dysfunction of the country's security institutions and military-dominated politics. The security forces, largely loyal to Gbagbo, enabled him to cling to power despite his electoral defeat, while Ouattara relied on the FN to claim power after his victory.¹⁰

Once in place, Ouattara's government faced a daunting reform agenda. Institutions had become ineffective in providing public security. There was a loss of professionalism as well, and the republican ethos of the police, army, and gendarmerie intersected with the emergence of a multiplicity of new (often non-statutory) security actors with multiple and unclear loyalties, including former FN *Comzones* (regional commanders), *Dozos* (traditional hunters), and private security companies. Côte d'Ivoire has also long been challenged by a lack of discipline among security forces, a large number of former combatants, and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. One of President Ouattara's important early acts was to declare on 17 March 2011 that the FN and the Army would be merged into a new Forces Républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire (FRCI), as recommended by the APO. However, parallel command structures persisted among these former antagonistic forces, and ex-Comzones essentially retained control of their personnel.

In 2012, acknowledging the difficult challenges it faced, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, with the support of UNOCI, embarked on the task of establishing a holistic SSR process that honours the commitments adopted as part of the APO.

UNOCI support to national SSR efforts, 2012–2017

From 2011 until its closure in 2017, UNOCI supported various initiatives of Government-led SSR. This section examines the value added by UNOCI to SSR in Côte d'Ivoire over this period, focusing on support for: (i) national SSR policy and strategy, including to DDR; (ii) sensitization and national dialogues on SSR, including advancing the National SSR Strategy; (iii) efforts to decentralize security; (iv) democratic oversight and security legislation; and (v) coordination of UN and international SSR efforts.

UNOCI's mandating resolutions since 2011 – resolutions 2000 (2011), 2062 (2012), 2112 (2013), 2162 (2014), 2226 (2015), and 2284 (2016) – stipulated that it support the Government in designing and implementing a comprehensive SSR strategy. Resolution 2000 (2011) set the stage by mandating that UNOCI “assist the Government in conducting [...] a sector-wide review of the security institutions and in developing a comprehensive national security strategy” and “advise the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, as appropriate, on security sector reform and the organization of the future National Army.”¹¹ It further called on the Mission to contribute to rebuilding national capacities, consolidating peace in the country, and

coordinating international assistance on SSR-related issues. Resolution 2062 (2012) strengthened the previous mandate, tasking UNOCI with supporting the Ivorian government in swiftly implementing its National SSR Strategy and added support for confidence-building within security and law enforcement agencies and between the security sector and the public. These clear mandates and strong Government interest enabled a comprehensive SSR support role for UNOCI in national efforts, detailed below.

Support to SSR strategy

Given the social and security problems facing Côte d'Ivoire in the post-electoral context, reform of its security sector offered an opportunity for the country to be rebuilt around a commonly agreed conception of security and community in a state offering equal prospects to all its citizens under the rule of law. A strategic approach was adopted that placed defence and security matters under the direct authority of the president. A conceptualization and planning phase was launched by President Ouattara on 6 April 2012 through the establishment of the Working Group on SSR (*Groupe de Travail sur la Réforme du Secteur de la Sécurité*, GT-RSS), comprised of all relevant security actors. UNOCI was invited to participate as a major multilateral interlocutor, alongside the EU and the AU. Robust UNOCI support for the Working Group – which was divided into thematic sub-groups covering government institutions, parliament, and civil society – contributed to the adoption several months later of the country's National SSR Strategy as the foundational document guiding the country's SSR process.

The validation of the Strategy in September 2012 was an acknowledgement of the work undertaken by the GT-RSS and a recognition that the SSR process needed to be holistic in order to respond to the security needs and concerns of all Ivoirians. The Strategy, which establishes priorities and identifies areas, actors, stages, and necessary human and financial resources, includes 108 key reforms clustered into six pillars: (i) national security; (ii) post-crisis reconstruction; (iii) rule of law and international relations; (iv) democratic control; (v) economic governance; and (vi) the human and social dimension. These reforms are grouped accordingly under four implementation timeframes: urgent (0–6 months), short-term (0–1 year), medium-term (0–5 years), and long-term (0–10 years).

The National Policy for DDR was also adopted during this period, on 20 July 2012, and subsequently supported by UNOCI and UNDP. This policy focused on the more practical elements of DDR, such as identifying different target groups and developing eligibility criteria and an institutional framework. The earlier Ouagadougou Political Agreement of 2007 had stipulated that a new Ivorian army be composed of 11,000 FAFN and 12,000 FDS troops. This quota was part of the

DDR of ex-combatants, which served as a benchmark and sine qua non condition for the convening of the 2010 presidential election.¹² Yet, during the post-electoral crisis, the number of combatants increased, with new recruits adding to the already existing FAFN database of over 64,000. This left the country with the challenge of adjusting the agreed pre-election database to address the addition of new recruits without losing credibility vis-à-vis the population and the international community.

The decision not to recruit beyond the previously established 23,000-troop threshold initially led the FRCI's "associated elements" to refuse to join the DDR program. This group of approximately 4,000–6,000 combatants was not on the payroll but wore army uniforms, and many were stationed in army barracks and in some public properties. While they had been used in past operations, particularly after the post-electoral crisis, their presence in various neighbourhoods raised fear among local communities due to recurrent alleged human rights abuses and had become a burden for the Government. In February 2015, the FRCI made clear that there would be no further recruitment and that associated elements intending to join the armed forces should vacate any premises they illegally occupied and join the DDR program.¹³ This proved successful and the move was welcomed by the population. Ultimately, a total of 74,000 ex-combatants were officially registered, of which over 80% were reintegrated. The DDR program was constrained to a two-year period and was officially declared closed on 30 June 2015, three months before Ouattara's re-election in October 2015, leaving behind a monitoring cell (*Cellule de Coordination et de suivi de la Réintégration*, CCSR) to handle the remaining caseload for one additional year.

A major challenge was actual implementation of the SSR process, including its DDR component. One of the most important steps in this regard was the establishment on 8 August 2012 of a National Security Council (*Conseil National de Sécurité*, CNS) in charge of SSR at the strategic level, along with a DDR Authority (*Autorité pour le Désarmement, la Démobilisation et la Réintégration*, ADDR), which leads the operational aspects of the DDR process and which implemented the National Policy for DDR. Both of these institutional structures were elevated within the state hierarchy so that they come under direct authority of the president. With the establishment of the ADDR, the Government abolished the various national structures previously tasked with handling DDR, which had lacked coherence. This welcome decision brought "DD" and "R" back together under one body, increasing efficiency and coordination.

On 31 December 2012, a presidential decree defined the role and mandate of the Secretariat of the National Security Council (S-CNS), including implementation of the National SSR Strategy. The S-CNS was further tasked with ensuring the coordination and coherence of SSR activities. The UN worked closely with the S-CNS to support implementation of the National SSR Strategy while

providing strategic advice and technical support, and the S-CNS functioned as the Government's SSR focal point and interface with the international community, including UNOCI. UNOCI's SSR Division met regularly with the S-CNS for working-level thematic discussions, engaged in monthly strategic and monitoring consultations to measure progress, and developed an annual joint work plan to enhance coordination. UNOCI's support to and partnership with the Government were greatly enhanced through the innovative placement of a UN SSR liaison officer within the S-CNS over a nine-month period, thereby improving trust and communications between UNOCI and the CNS.

UNOCI support also played a key role in decentralizing the implementation of the National SSR Strategy at the local level. Due to the short drafting period of the Strategy and the centrality of the Government's leadership, local input was more limited than would have been ideal. UNOCI assisted the Government in outreach efforts, comprising a communications strategy and field visits that were focused on exposing regions outside the capital to the Strategy. While these visits were initially UNOCI-funded, their success led the S-CNS to expand ownership and fully shoulder the funding and activities of this programme. This laid the groundwork for decentralizing the security architecture, and enhanced inclusiveness in the governance of the security sector, as detailed below.

Support to national dialogue

Following the elaboration of the National SSR Strategy, UNOCI launched the Brown Bag Lunch (BBL) initiative in January 2013. This informal platform for dialogue brought together key national stakeholders: political parties, the security sector, and civil society. Given longstanding alienation and dysfunction in the relationship between security institutions and the public in Côte d'Ivoire, the BBLs were an important advance towards wider consultation and civil society input on new security-related legislation and proposed policies. These discussions spanned all six pillars of the National SSR Strategy and served as an important stakeholder-driven, confidence-building forum, with UNOCI acting as a neutral facilitator. Significantly, the BBLs were continued under the S-CNS with international support, demonstrating UNOCI's value-add in providing initial support for what ultimately became nationally owned.

Military Interactive Sessions, which were also initiated and funded by UNOCI in response to a national request, formed an important counterpart to the BBLs by focusing on intra-military collaboration. Following the 2010–2011 crisis, former rebels had been partially integrated into the armed forces, but split loyalties, lingering mistrust, and internal divisions persisted. These sessions enabled officers to discuss SSR issues among themselves for the first time and were then expanded

to encompass the security sector more broadly through the participation of the police, gendarmerie, and military advisors from local embassies. The invitation of women's and youth associations to exchange views helped enhance the connection of security sector actors to the public they serve. Topics included the army-nation concept,¹⁴ gender, discipline, and human rights. As with the BBL series, the success of this UNOCI-supported national security dialogue led national actors to take full ownership of the process. After six months of UNOCI funding, the army began hosting the sessions, with private sector support.

Support to decentralization

Local security governance has been a key focus area for reform in Côte d'Ivoire. UNOCI recommended and facilitated the decentralization of the security governance architecture as well as wider reforms through the sensitization of local populations to the National SSR Strategy and by supporting the establishment of local security committees comprised of civil society leaders, security providers, and local authorities. These committees were headed by regional administrators and local security institutions, enabling them to focus on local security threats and challenges. UNOCI and the S-CNS worked in 2014–2015 to expand these committees into Regional Security Councils (RSCs) that undertook functions similar to the CNS, but at the local level and with the participation of civil society and locally elected figures. The aim was not only to enhance early warning and threat assessment, but also to provide venues for conflict resolution and information-sharing between the central government and the rest of the country, thereby fulfilling key aspects of the National SSR Strategy.

SSR decentralization strengthened the “bottom-up” approach in a process primarily planned and advocated for at the central (capital) level. The main challenge then was to encourage local populations to understand and buy into the new Strategy in order to best support it. This entailed a series of seminars for regional *Prefets* (33 total) outlining their responsibilities in coordinating decentralization efforts and their role in monthly campaigns on SSR and the Strategy to raise awareness and ownership of the process. However, the RSCs have required additional financial and human resources to become functional and efficient, as well as some special logistical arrangements to ensure that all members – some of whom are located far from the *Prefets* premises – can attend regularly.

The structure of UNOCI itself transformed to reflect this focus on local contexts. In September 2014, UNOCI's SSR Division established two regional offices, serving western and eastern Côte d'Ivoire. These offices liaised with local security institutions and civil society, and enhanced UNOCI's ability to support local authorities and

confidence-building measures, including in their preparation for the abovementioned Regional Security Councils.

Support to democratic oversight and legislation

Lasting reform of Côte d'Ivoire's security sector requires the institutional framework to maintain, oversee, and advance reforms: democratic oversight and governance, as guaranteed by national security legislation. To this end, UNOCI pushed for the adoption of several key laws in 2015–2016: The Organic Armed Forces and Defense Organization Law (*Loi Organique Portant Organisation de la Défense et des Forces Armées*), the Internal Security Programming Law 2016–2020 (*Loi de Programmation de Sécurité Interieure*), and the Military Programming Law 2016–2020 (*Loi de Programmation Militaire*, LPM). The LPM is particularly relevant given repeated mutinies by soldiers. Initially a five-year, 1.45 billion US dollar plan, the LPM seeks to fully equip and professionalize the armed forces and improve living and working conditions through the allocation of housing benefits and opportunities to move up equitably in rank. It also aims to correct the great budget imbalance between fixed costs and professionalization costs by bringing them from a ratio of 97% to 3%, to a ratio of 55% to 45%. This will allow more resources to be directed towards training and modernizing the corps. The LPM also seeks to reduce the military from its current strength of 23,000 to 20,000 by 2020; and correspondingly increase the number of gendarmes from 17,000 to 20,000. This restructuring, aimed at better addressing internal security issues in light of new threats to the country (i.e. terrorism, cybercrime, etc.), is envisaged to take place over the five years of the LPM through “an incremental reduction of troops as a result of a re-balancing of budgetary allocations within the Ministries of Defense and Interior and Security respectively.”¹⁵

UNOCI provided strategic advice and training on parliamentary oversight to national assembly representatives, particularly to members of the Security and Defence Commission, which resulted in parliament's increased ability to comment on draft bills and participate in debates with relevant government authorities prior to voting on the laws mentioned above. Positive participation by parliament at this crucial moment marked a new relationship between assembly representatives and the rest of the Government and brought greater confidence in the role of parliament in monitoring the security sector, including as it relates to defence expenditures.

UNOCI coordination of UN efforts

In addition to UNOCI support for national SSR efforts in Côte d'Ivoire, the Mission also played an important role in enhancing the coherence and coordination of UN and related international SSR actors operating in the country. From the start,

SSR benefitted from the organizational placement of the SSR Division in close alignment with the office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) and Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG), enabling higher-level attention to SSR priorities. One of UNOCI's most important intra-UN tasks was to create a UN SSR Working Group in 2014, which brought together UN actors undertaking SSR-relevant activities in Côte d'Ivoire under the co-chairmanship of UNOCI's two DSRSGs.¹⁶ This design mirrored the Inter-Agency SSR Task Force at UN Headquarters, promoting a holistic approach and system-wide attention to the SSR process by encouraging UNOCI and the UN Country Team to share information and coordinate activities.

UNOCI coordination of international efforts

UNOCI also provided important backing to national and international efforts to coordinate SSR activities in Côte d'Ivoire. At the national level, the S-CNS created a Consultative Group on SSR in 2012, based on terms of reference suggested by UNOCI. The Group serves as a strategic advisory body to the S-CNS, consisting of national and international SSR actors, including members of parliament, and meets monthly to assess progress on the National SSR Strategy.

Bilateral efforts in Côte d'Ivoire also benefitted from UNOCI's coordination support, including via the P5+EU framework, which assembled the SRSG, the ambassadors from the US, UK, China, Russia, and France, and the EU representative to coordinate political messaging on topics ranging from electoral issues to security sector concerns. The UNOCI SSR Division provided regular SSR updates to the SRSG in preparation for P5+EU meetings.

Persistent challenges

Despite UNOCI's success in supporting a range of national SSR activities and frameworks in Côte d'Ivoire, persistent challenges and several missed opportunities have limited the transformative impact of reforms so far. Ongoing polarization, limits to seemingly robust political will, and missteps in dealing with immediate security issues have all hampered an otherwise successful UN SSR intervention. These problematic areas are explored below.

Ongoing polarization and the limits of political will

The experience in Côte d'Ivoire indicates that successful UN SSR interventions demand that political opportunities arising from strong national interest are seized, but also that those opportunities have limits. Unlike some other peacekeeping

contexts, UNOCI worked alongside a government that was actively interested in UN support to SSR, starting from its invitation to join the GT-RSS in 2012. However, the speed and urgency with which the National SSR Strategy was drafted and adopted did not allow sufficient national consultations on security institutions that were long viewed by much of the population as ineffective at best and malign at worst. The top-down nature of the Government's approach to SSR has at times made the National SSR Strategy a tool used to redistribute power rather than a platform for reconciliation and national dialogue, and this has made the reform process more presidential than national. As Boutellis noted in 2012, despite positive signs that Ouattara's leadership on SSR and DDR indicated political commitment, these initial efforts "for the most part benefited elements associated with the former FN, and the government has focused its resources on a few well-equipped elite security units rather than undertaking broader reform aimed at rebuilding trusted and accountable security forces."¹⁷ And while the FN aided Ouattara in coming to power, the vast challenges of governing and governance (including of the security sector) logically called for a broad coalition of support. SSR could have been used as an entry point for redefining relationships between the state and the people based on a greater public sense of trust, confidence, and belonging.

UNOCI introduced various innovative support efforts to address the political underpinnings of the reform process in Côte d'Ivoire, including through the BBLs and similar initiatives, and through joint efforts with the S-CNS on regional sensitization outside the capital. Ultimately, however, the public perception was of a victor's peace, and this significantly limited the ability of the SSR process to advance national reconciliation or national representation. Resentments over impunity are often focused on the security sector: Human Rights Watch has noted that "the lack of accountability for human rights abuses is indicative of a wider failure to address a longstanding culture of impunity within the army. Mutinies [...] reflect a wider perception that the army is 'above the law'."¹⁸ Worse, perceptions that only Gbagbo supporters have been punished for crimes committed during the post-electoral crisis undermine the possibility of broader dialogue on security arrangements and governance involving actors outside the ruling party.

Mutinies and other security incidents

In a setback for SSR efforts, large-scale protests by elements of the FRCI broke out in Bouaké on 18 November 2014 and escalated in the main cities of Côte d'Ivoire. Grievances pertained to the retroactive payment of salaries, allowances, hazard pay, and other benefits from 2009 for approximately 8,000 soldiers. Protesters included former FN members subsequently integrated into the FRCI who felt they had not been adequately rewarded for supporting President Ouattara in 2011. These protests

reflected limits to progress on advancing the FRCI's professionalism and discipline and demonstrated that attitudes and behaviours within the security and defence forces are yet to be fully transformed. The Government agreed to an initial payment in 2014, but similar mutinies erupted from 6–7 January 2017 and again from 12–15 May 2017, by the same groups, in the same locations, and for the same claims. Another mutiny followed in the final days of 2017, stretching into early 2018.

These mutinies and the related Government responses reveal lingering SSR issues in the management and governance of the security sector in Côte d'Ivoire. The 2014 mutiny could have served as an opportunity to address the politico-social causes of protestors' grievances. Implementation of the LPM's initiative to professionalize the security sector and improve the quality of life for members of the armed forces would likely have addressed these grievances and potentially resulted in broader social progress. But a long-term SSR perspective fell victim to short-term security responses, as the Government largely acquiesced to the demands of mutineers in order to restore immediate stability. This brought about the sudden promotion of some 8,000 corporals to the rank of sergeant, without corresponding new responsibilities, which contributed directly to the abovementioned 2017 mutinies.

Beyond the mutinies, various other security incidents point to a persistent mistrust between different local communities on the one hand, and between the population and security forces on the other. These incidents underscore the urgency of continued support to efforts to professionalize security providers and the need for sustained confidence-building initiatives. Though somewhat isolated, these incidents are prone to potential political exploitation and constitute a risk factor.

Conclusion and recommendations

With UNOCI support, Côte d'Ivoire has made major strides in developing its security architecture and governance. Many challenges remain, however, following UNOCI's withdrawal in June 2017. Inclusive national ownership and international support will be necessary to implement the more transformative and long-term elements of the National SSR Strategy, and to address unresolved aspects of DDR, the cohesion of security forces, and broader social polarization and inequality. Several tasks particularly require attention, and flow from the challenges discussed above:

Build a broader reform coalition for deeper security sector transformation: UNOCI support to SSR-enabled interventions went far deeper than train-and-equip exercises and were intended to enhance crucial governance and civilian oversight aspects that are essential for the transformative impact of reforms. However, ownership and leadership of the reform process and agenda have been largely limited to the ruling party. SSR has not been sufficiently linked with reconciliation efforts in

order to lead all national actors to engage fully in the process. The reform of security institutions must become an all-of-society process and a shared national priority.

Scale up implementation of the Military and Interior Security Programming Laws to fully transition from a post-crisis approach to defence and security towards “orthodox” governance of the sector: The two five-year planning tools in place in Côte d'Ivoire represent important steps towards overall transformative reform. They both address physical improvements to the security and defence infrastructure, including to equipment, but also include aspects related to the conditions and careers of personnel, which will in turn improve their livelihoods and reduce the risk that they reject the established command and control chain. This will also significantly reduce parallel influences on national forces.

Avoid sacrificing long-term security gains for short-term fixes: The government's ad hoc response, involving the negotiation of financial deals each time disgruntled soldiers mutiny, has proved ineffective, unsustainable, and detrimental to the security and stability of the country. A comprehensive and strategic response to this spate of recurring mutinies is needed and should link SSR and socio-economic reintegration to broader political processes, including national reconciliation, to position it within a strategic perspective. Further acquiescence by the Government to the demands of mutineers not only risks undermining important national security legislation and the National SSR Strategy, but is also unsustainable and invites further mutinies. Côte d'Ivoire's long-term security does not rest on appeasement but on addressing the underlying causes of the lack of cohesion and discipline in the armed forces.

Continue to support Ivorian SSR coordination efforts: The S-CNS's Consultative Group on SSR, which remains active following UNOCI's departure, represents a good model for bringing various national and international SSR actors together and should be continued. The role of the UN Resident Coordinator will be particularly important in advocating for a continued comprehensive approach to SSR going forward. The UN will need to sharpen its tools to address the transition from the UNOCI peacekeeping context to more targeted but long-term support that consolidates the gains made under UNOCI.

Maintain inclusive dialogue on SSR-related issues: Building on the inclusive dialogue model of the BBLs – the coordination of which has been successfully transferred to UNDP following the withdrawal of the Mission – national and international stakeholders should continue to meet on a regular basis to maintain sound lines of communication and share views. This format should be replicated in key areas to allow for participation by local populations as well in the construction of a new relationship with security providers. UNOCI effectively opened up space for continued engagement on SSR following its withdrawal, including UNDP's support

to the S-CNS in establishing new civil-military committees as fora for ongoing dialogue on the army-nation concept. Also, it is critical at this important juncture of the country's SSR implementation to revive dialogue among security and defence forces to foster greater cohesion and unity around the shared goal of protecting the population and the state.

Strengthen women's participation in security sector institutions and increase female enrolment in the Gendarmerie: Building on the momentum of the enrolment of 50 women in the gendarmerie academy since 2015, all national stakeholders must advocate for the greater inclusion of women in security institutions, including at decision-making levels. This will contribute to the transformation of the sector overall, and will positively change perceptions while increasing efficiency.

Notes

- ¹ "Ivory Coast Coup Leader Vows Role for Civilians," *Chicago Tribune*, 28 December 1999, 6.
- ² Siddhartha Mitter, "Ebony and Ivoirite: War and Peace in Ivory Coast," *Transition* 12, no. 4, Issue 94 (2003): 35.
- ³ Maja Bovcon, "France's Conflict Resolution Strategy in Côte d'Ivoire and its Ethical Implications," *African Studies Quarterly* 11, no. 1 (2009): 3.
- ⁴ Arthur Boutellis, *The Security Sector in Côte d'Ivoire: A Source of Conflict and a Key to Peace* (New York: International Peace Institute, 2011), 4
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.
- ⁶ Ouagadougou Peace Agreement, Section 3.1.1, 4 March 2007.
- ⁷ Boutellis, *The Security Sector in Côte d'Ivoire*, 1–2, 11.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 1.
- ¹¹ United Nations, Security Council Resolution 2000, S/RES/2000 (27 July 2011).
- ¹² It is worth mentioning here that the FAFN presented a list of 9,000 elements prior to the 2010 election, while the additional 2,000 were added when President Ouattara formed the FRCI after assuming power.
- ¹³ "Armée ivoirienne: 'il n'y a plus de numéro matricule à donner' pour les ex-combattants associés aux FRCI (Gal Bakayoko)," 12 February 2015, <http://news.abidjan.net/h/525949.html>.
- ¹⁴ The army-nation concept calls for the full dedication of security and defence forces in serving their population, and for these forces to be reflective of the national population. The army is subordinated to civilian rule. The concept is based on democratic governance, inclusive participation, and the rule of law where all citizens trust their security providers as part of the social contract and are equal before the law.
- ¹⁵ Aline Leboeuf, "La réforme du secteur de sécurité à l'ivoirienne," (France/Brussels: Institut Français des Relations Internationales, 2016). Available from <http://www.ifri.org/fr/publications/reforme-secteur-de-securite-livoirienne>.
- ¹⁶ The UN SSR Working Group included IOM, UNESCO UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNMAS, UNOCI, UN Women, and the UNOCI SSR Division, which served as the secretariat.

- ¹⁷ Arthur Boutellis, "Côte d'Ivoire's Ouattara Puts Economic Recovery Ahead of Political Reconciliation," *World Politics Review*, 19 March 2013. Available from www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/12799/Côte-d-ivoire-s-ouattara-puts-economic-recovery-ahead-of-political-reconciliation.
- ¹⁸ Human Rights Watch, "Côte d'Ivoire: UN Peacekeeping Mission Ends," press release, 30 June 2017. Available from www.hrw.org/news/2017/06/30/Côte-divoire-un-peacekeeping-mission-ends.