

**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE**  
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

**Enclosed are clippings of the latest local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Press and Public Affairs Office as of:**

Friday, April 22, 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.  
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United Nations



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**UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary  
21 April 2005**

**International Clips on West Africa**

04/21/2005 14:54:35

**Ivory Coast rebels, army begin pulling back heavy  
weapons from front**

By SERME LASSINA

BOUAKE, Ivory Coast (AP) \_ Army troops and rebels began pulling back heavy weapons from front lines in Ivory Coast on Thursday, a crucial step toward implementing a South African-brokered peace deal to end more than two years of civil war.

The pullback sets the stage for a nationwide disarmament campaign due to begin in mid-May that many hope will bring an end to violence sparked after a failed September 2002 coup split the nation into a rebel-held north and government-held south.



## Ivorian weapons pullback starts

**Rebels and loyalist forces in Ivory Coast have started to withdraw heavy weapons from the frontline under a deal agreed earlier this month.**

"There was a feeling of joy," said UN envoy Pierre Schori.

The BBC's James Copnall in Abidjan says both sides want the withdrawal to send a signal that they are not preparing an attack but are moving towards peace.

But he says the task of disarming the rebel forces and pro-president militias may prove more difficult.

### **Cocoa producer**

All guns bigger than 20mm and canons and mortars larger than 60mm will be moved away from the buffer zone separating the rival forces.

But our correspondent says that anti-tank weapons can remain on the frontline.

In the rebel headquarters of Bouake, Lt Col Sinima Bamba told the AP news agency "operation had been going on in a serene atmosphere" although he was not able to say how many weapons had been moved back so far.

Ivory Coast, the world's biggest cocoa producer and West Africa's richest country has been divided in two since September 2002.

Under a South Africa-brokered deal, both sides agreed to stop fighting, disarm militias, hold presidential elections in October and resurrect a power-sharing government.

Last Friday, two rebel New Forces ministers took their seats for their first time in almost six months.

On Wednesday, South African President Thabo Mbeki effectively called on President Laurent Gbagbo to let opposition leader Alassane Ouattara contest presidential elections due in October.

### **Missed deadlines**

This was a key rebel demand, as his exclusion on the grounds that he had foreign origins, symbolised the marginalisation of many in the mainly Muslim north, controlled by the rebels.

However, Mr Gbagbo has not yet said whether he will override the constitution to let Mr Ouattara stand - a move which would spark anger among his supporters.

The details of the disarmament process are due to be hammered out in a meeting early next month.

Several previous deadlines for disarmament have been missed, our correspondent says.

Some 10,000 French troops and UN peacekeepers currently patrol a no-weapons buffer zone which separates the rebels from the rest of the country.

Story from BBC NEWS:  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/4467775.stm>

Published: 2005/04/21 14:04:48 GMT

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## UN body fails to condemn Sudan

**The United Nations Human Rights Commission has approved by consensus a resolution condemning human rights violations in Sudan.**

The resolution, which was agreed after long negotiation, does not condemn the Sudanese government by name for atrocities committed in Darfur.

It does, however, call on all parties to immediately end all violence.

At least 180,000 people have died and two million fled their homes, in what some say is genocide against non-Arabs.

The Sudan government denies accusations that it armed the Janjaweed militias blamed for the worst atrocities.

### Reform

African countries say Sudan's government had to make painful concessions in this resolution.

But the BBC's Imogen Foulkes in the Swiss city of Geneva where the meeting was held, says that human rights groups are disappointed that it doesn't go further.

A vote on human rights in Sudan was originally scheduled for last week, but it was postponed and postponed again while intense negotiations took place between European and African members of the commission.

The Europeans wanted what is known as a naming and shaming resolution clearly condemning the government of Sudan for its responsibility for some of the atrocities taking place in Darfur.

The African group, among them Sudan itself, opposed this, so the final resolution is milder.

It condemns human rights abuses by all parties in Sudan without specifically naming the government, but it does contain a key demand of human rights activists - the approval of a special investigator on human rights to Sudan who will report to the UN General Assembly.

Our correspondent says it is a compromise that prevented a messy row, something all sides wanted to avoid at a time when many say the commission lacks credibility.

But the fact that it took so long to agree on a resolution which does not even go as far as the UN Security Council which has already referred Sudan to the International Criminal Court is, human rights groups say, simply another sign that the UN's top human rights body needs reform.

04/20/2005 10:03:01

## **Ivory Coast's rival armies count on politicians to raise trust**

Source: Agence France-Presse English Wire Date: April 20, 2005

by Serge Daniel

DAOUKRO, Ivory Coast, April 20 (AFP) - Government military officers in Ivory Coast and rebels who hold half the country discussed a newly revived disarmament plan in a relaxed atmosphere Wednesday but said real trust depended on political leaders.

Meeting in this southern government-held for the third time in a week, both sides in the west African nation split in two since September 2002 handed out goodwill messages concerning the scheme hammered out anew with South African mediation, an AFP correspondent said.

Already, with a sharing of jokes, jibes and family photos, the enemy "brothers in arms" had hammered out the main details of withdrawing heavy weaponry from tense front lines, military sources said a day ahead of the move expected on Thursday to mark a first step in renewed disarmament.

Army and rebel soldiers strolled down a Daoukro street close to the imposing residence of former president Henri Konan Bedie, whose successor Laurent Gbagbo faced a failed coup bid led to all-out civil war and then frequent deadlocks in peace processes since early 2003.

At the same time, however, troops who talked to AFP made clear their own trust and confidence in former foes had to be backed by politicians locked in their own power-sharing conflict and deep dissent about a nationality issue and voting rights in a country with a large foreign immigrant population.

All attempts to ease tensions and reunite the former French colony and regional powerhouse, the world's leading cocoa producer, nearly collapsed last November after an army offensive against rebel positions.

South Africa's President Thabo Mbeki, with a mandate from the African Union, has revived a peace process initially signed at Marcoussis-Linas in France in January 2003, while French and other foreign troops, mainly west Africans now under a UN mandate, monitor the ceasefire lines.

Distrust on both political and ethnic grounds, in a country with a mainly Muslim north and Christian south and big immigrant worker population, had eased in Daoukro on Wednesday to an extent almost unimaginable six months ago when the Ivorian military also killed nine French peacekeepers and France riposted by taking out the country's air strike capacity.

One rebel, overheard making rude remarks about the bad state of a government soldier's battledress, disclosed that the two were cousins who had not seen one another since the war broke out.

"Really, you're seeing it: we're brothers in arms," another rebel soldier told AFP. "We've decided to haul the big guns back from the front lines, But now it's up to the politicians to give out a strong signal."

At that level, problems remain.

"There will be at least two problems," an official involved in planning the national Disarmament, Demobilisation and (social) Reinsertion programme, said.

"There's confidence, so the politicians must give guarantees to the soldiers. Then, there are just 1.4 million CFA francs (2,130 euros / 2,780 dollars) in the coffers of the DDR.

"We need, right now, 10 billion (CFA francs / 15 million euros)," he added, concluding that the DDR would inevitably run into trouble without the funds.

"There will also be the problem of Laurent Gbagbo's militias," a rebel said, referring to a firebrand force known as the Young Patriots, who profess loyalty to the head of state, frequently harass foreigners and immigrants, and consisting of several thousand youths due for immediate disarming and dismantling under the Pretoria agreements.

Asked whether disarmament could ever be pulled off, a member of the foreign forces deployed in Ivory Coast pointed out that "soldiers on both sides were nearly there last year.

"Today, because of the last outbreak in fighting (in November), it's back to square one. What a waste!"