

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



Forest River

PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Outreach and Public Affairs Office

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Wednesday, 12 January 2011

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
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Standard Times
Wednesday, 12 January 2011

President Koroma to address UN Security Council

The Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Nigeria's President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan has nominated Sierra Leone's President Ernest Bai Koroma to be among the list of other Sub - regional stake holders to address the United Nations Security Council in New York and the United States of America in Washington D. C about situation in the West African State of Ivory Coast.

"I wish to nominate you as a member of the delegation to the United Nations and United States of America as soon as appointment is set up in New York and Washington D.C respectively".

The delegation which included the Malian President, Amadou Toumani Toure, Sierra Leone's President Ernest Bai Koroma, Nigeria's Foreign Minister Odein Ajumogobia, Nigeria's Ambassa-

dor to the United States of America, Prof. Ade Adefuye and ECOWAS Director of Political Affairs Dr. Jonas Hemou will update ECOWAS partners, particularly the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, on the efforts made so far by ECOWAS and further actions to resolve the impasse.

"I consider this initiative very important in the partnership that we are enjoying with them since the United Nations Security Council will soon meet and ECOWAS will be required to provide the position and plans of ECOWAS on Ivory Coast". Said President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan.

Following the adoption of the Communiqué at the two Extra Ordinary Summit of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of States and Governments, the ECOWAS Chairman, Nigeria's President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan dis-

patched a Mission to Cote d'Ivoire to explore with the outgoing President Mr. Laurent Gbagbo and the President Elect Mr. Alassane Ouattara, the prospects of reaching a Pacific agreement on the manner in which power could be ceded to the duly elected President of Cote d'Ivoire.

The Mission was joined in its second visit on 3rd January 2011 by Prime Minister Raila Odinga of Kenya representing the African Union.

"As you may have already been informed, the mission was not successful because both sides continued to stick to their points of view. "While waiting for an opportunity to resume further initiatives in this direction, I have thought it fit to update our partners, particularly the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council on the efforts made so far by ECOWAS and any further actions

in the matter". Said Dr. Goodluck Jonathan.

Two other delegations will visit France, the United Kingdom, China, India and Russia respectively.

According to ECOWAS Communications Department, the short notice entailed in the request is a direct consequence that resulted from the fast pace in which things are moving in cote d'Ivoire: and there is very little time available to all of us in the discharge of our responsibilities towards the country.

The Minister/ Counselor of the Sierra Leone High Commission in the Federal Republic of Nigeria Mr. Duwai Lungay confirmed the report from ECOWAS and said "we received the official letter from the Chairman of the ECOWAS Commission and it has already been sent to the Foreign Office in Sierra Leone".

BBC Hard Talk

Wednesday, 17 November 2010

Interview with Courtenay Griffiths QC

LEAD-IN: Justice is often depicted as blind, unswayed by bias and prejudice. But how often does reality match that ideal? My guest today is Courtenay Griffiths, an eminent British barrister who says that he relishes defending clients regarded by others as indefensible. Currently he's representing Liberia's former president, Charles Taylor, in his war crimes trial in The Hague. How does a leading defence lawyer navigate the complex waters of legal principle and personal morality?

Courtenay Griffiths, welcome to Hard Talk.

GRIFFITHS: And thank you for inviting me.

It's great to have you here. I'm gonna begin with something you said just a couple of months ago, I'll quote it verbatim: "I enjoy the challenge of defending those who seem to the rest of the world quite indefensible." Why?

GRIFFITHS: Because justice requires that every defendant, however horrific the crimes committed by that individual, should have a proper defence. And it gives credibility to the whole process of justice by ensuring that everyone has a proper defence. And the question of my personal morality or the morality of my client doesn't really come into it, because at the end of the day I'm there to present a case, and nothing else.

It seems to me quite straightforward, your case that everybody deserves a fair trial and that means they have to be properly defended, but my question is really more about why you. Is there something deeply contrarian about you?

GRIFFITHS: Well one of the reasons why I'm attracted to these kind of cases is precisely because oftentimes in these situations the media and public opinion have already decided on the guilt of that individual. And that challenge is something which has always attracted me. So to that extent, yes, I may be described as contrarian.

Hmm. "I definitely like to represent Robert Mugabe," you said if he were ever brought to trial. "He would be an interesting challenge. In the eyes of the world he's a complete power-crazed ogre and I'd like to present another side to him." But is there always another side?

GRIFFITHS: Yes there is. There is always two sides to an argument, which is why we have this wonderful system of adversarial justice in the UK.

(Interrupting) But hang on a minute. Doesn't saying that presuppose that you have some knowledge, particular knowledge, whether it be of Zimbabwe and of Mugabe or indeed as we're gonna be discussing at length, the Sierra Leone brutal war and the association of that war with Charles Taylor. Don't you need to have some special knowledge before you can tell me "of course, there are two sides to the story?"

GRIFFITHS: Well that special knowledge obviously comes from the instructions of your client. I don't have any insider knowledge about Robert Mugabe. But I'm sure if Robert Mugabe were put on trial, he would explain to me what his case was, and armed with that I'd go into battle for him.

And when we talk about Charles Taylor, when you were approached to lead his defence at this tribunal, did you pause for a second thinking “hang on a minute, I don’t know the first thing about Taylor or indeed about the Sierra Leone war.”

GRIFFITHS: No hesitation whatsoever. None whatsoever, because as far as I was concerned, here is someone who’d been demonized in the world’s press for years, but I felt [fairly] certain that there must be a back story, an alternative interpretation of what was going on, and that indeed proved to be the case.

You say that the process has not been fair. I wonder what your evidence is for that.

GRIFFITHS: Well, there’s a number of areas which cause me concern about the fairness of the proceedings. First of all the fact that it was transferred to The Hague, because if, as is suggested by those who set up this court, the whole idea was to leave behind a legacy of respect for the rule of law, one would have thought that that particular lesson would be best learned if the trial was held in West Africa where ordinary West Africans can follow the proceedings.

But with respect, you’ve already told me you do not have a great knowledge of Sierra Leone, and many people who do, who were concerned with the mechanisms behind this trial, felt very strongly that the only way to conduct this safely and securely was to take it away from Freetown, from Sierra Leone.

GRIFFITHS: Yeah, but it’s not been my experience during the several visits I’ve made to West Africa. Nobody’s ever suggested to me that there would be, you know, disorder in West Africa had the trial been conducted there. But in the event, even if it wasn’t held in the court in Sierra Leone, are you honestly telling me that at the beginning of the 21st century there is nowhere on the African continent that an African leader can be tried?

But in a sense, that’s got very little to do with whether the trial is fair or not. I mean, you’re saying it would perhaps be symbolically better if it were on the African continent.

GRIFFITHS: Yeah, but I...

(Interrupting) The point is, all of the relevant witnesses have been brought to The Hague and they have said their piece on both sides of the argument. I just still haven’t heard from you any persuasive evidence that this isn’t fair.

GRIFFITHS: Well, I was going on to make my second point, which is this: We have been particularly concerned by the practice of the prosecution paying their witnesses and offering their witnesses other inducements. We know for a fact that some witnesses have been flown out of Liberia to obtain thousands of dollars worth of medical treatment elsewhere. We know that many witnesses have been paid out of a fund given to the prosecution. Nobody knows where this money comes from. There’s no transparency as to how it’s being spent.

But hang on. The court accepts that witnesses can be paid, not least because many of them are coming from very difficult circumstances in Sierra Leone and have to be supported while they are in The Hague waiting for due process to take place...

GRIFFITHS: No they’re not.

...and appear in the court.

GRIFFITHS: No, we’re talking about necessary expenditure in terms of travel and the like. We’re talking about a fence being built around someone’s orchard. We’re talking about a request by an individual to

have his Volvo motorcar fixed. And bearing in mind of course, that even 25 US dollars in a place like Sierra Leone is a hell of a lot of money.

Yes, well you've been paying your witnesses too on the defence side, haven't you. [Conflicting voices] [It transpired] in court last week, the prosecution claimed you paid \$11,000 to a witness who appeared on your side.

GRIFFITHS: We never paid any money to any witness, because we don't have the funds...

(Interrupting) [One of] your witnesses has been in The Hague for months waiting to testify in a luxury hotel and living on a subsistence allowance.

GRIFFITHS: Not true at all, because that money didn't come from defence funds. That money came from the Witness and Victim Service (sic.) set up by the court.

(Conflicting voices) ...a defence witness who has been receiving money for month upon month, and you're saying it's not fair on the prosecution does it, but when it happens to defence witnesses it's just fine.

GRIFFITHS: Because you're not comparing like with like. Because prosecution witnesses were paid out of this same fund. But over and above that, the prosecution had this additional budget which the defence never had to pay their witnesses.

Yeah, I've seen you make a lot of noise about that, and I've seen you say "I have documentary evidence of this." Why do you not put it before the court?

GRIFFITHS: We did a few weeks ago, and asked the court to hold the prosecution in contempt for debasing the whole system of justice (conflicting voices) testimony.

Your evidence has not persuaded them.

GRIFFITHS: Well, that's a matter for the court at the end of the day. (Conflicting voices) We would not have raised this argument unless we felt there was merit in it. And there was merit in the argument. It seems to be common practice now in these international tribunals effectively to buy testimony, and I find it totally disturbing.

Well it's a very powerful allegation to make. I would just say to you that the court thus far refuses to accept it, and I would add further that it isn't only on this basis of payments made that you seem to have a problem. Here's another quote from you: "I find it very curious," you say, "that we have a situation where the United States of America doesn't want to subject itself to international law, and yet the three most important lawyers in the team prosecuting Mr. Taylor are from where? America." Are you suggesting that somehow illegitimate?

GRIFFITHS: No I'm not. But the point I'm making is the hypocrisy and contradiction at the heart of America's attitude towards international law.

(Conflicting voices) But with respect it's a political point, and from the very beginning you're asking about the fairness of the trial. You're now introducing a political point. You're not telling me that these three particular individuals are incapable of behaving properly in a court, are you?

GRIFFITHS: I'm not suggesting that. What I'm asking is, why is it that we could not have more Sierra Leonean lawyers, for example, presenting the case on behalf of Sierra Leonean victims after all against their alleged chief tormenter? Why not?

I would ask you why can't the chief lead counsel for the defence be Sierra Leonean? You happen to be British.

GRIFFITHS: Well, I was selected to do the job by Mr. Taylor.

I'm sure the prosecution would say the same. They looked around the world. They assessed the quality of Sierra Leone's lawyers, and goodness knows the country has a lot of problems and perhaps its legal system isn't as sophisticated and well-versed in international law as it might be, and they made a choice, just as Mr. Taylor made a choice to go for you, and you're certainly not from Sierra Leone.

GRIFFITHS: Yes, but you see, you appear to be suggesting that somehow I am targeting these particular Americans. I'm not. The point that I was making in the context in which I made it was that America has this hypocritical stance towards international criminal justice, and yet in many of these courts you find many American lawyers.

Now understood. I understand your point. I suppose what I'm getting at is it seems to be you are introducing a political point here, and it goes further, and it's of interest I'm sure to people watching us around the world, that you seem to believe there's a problem with these international tribunals based on trying to find accountability and justice for war crimes and crimes against humanity, because you seem to suggest that they are focused pretty much, solely at the moment, on Africa, and that somehow, something may even be racist about that.

GRIFFITHS: Well it is a concern that I have, because apart from, you know, the special tribunal for Yugoslavia, every other tribunal has been set up to try, you know, war crimes and crimes against humanity...

(Conflicting voices) Yeah but that "apart from" is quite a big clause. You put in a big clause there, "apart from Yugoslavia." I mean perhaps the biggest single legal action taken to pursue this sort of justice was that tribunal looking at the crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia.

GRIFFITHS: Yes, but you can't ignore the fact that when we now look at the permanent international court, the ICC, all defendants currently on trial or awaiting trial from guess where – Africa.

Yeah but...

GRIFFITHS: The vast majority of the investigations being conducted are guess where – Africa. Is it any surprise then that the African Union has decided not to cooperate with the ICC over the arrest warrant for al-Bashir? There's good reason for that.

Do you think that was the right decision?

GRIFFITHS: Well I think it was the right decision, because I actually think the African Union should be thinking about increasing their own capacity to deal with these cases on the African continent.

Let me quote you the words of Desmond Tutu precisely on that issue of African opposition to the Bashir indictment. He said, with some sense of anger in his voice, "are they on the side of the victim, or the oppressor?" Couldn't that question be asked of you?

GRIFFITHS: I'm on the side of justice. I'm not here to represent victims or to represent the prosecution. I'm here to represent the defence and provide the best defence possible for Charles Taylor so that justice is done. And I think, with respect to Desmond Tutu, you know, justice isn't about looking at everything from a victim-centered point of view at all times.

Understood. But when we look at, and you've pointed out to me that there does seem to be a proliferation of cases at the moment that concern Africa nations, but when we look at reality of what has happened in nations like Sierra Leone – one can also think of the Democratic Republic of Congo, one can also look at Darfur in Sudan, and one can go back and look at Rwanda in the 90s as well – isn't it right that the international community should be involved in trying to seek some sort of accounting and justice for the hundreds of thousands if not millions of people involved and suffering as a result of those conflicts?

GRIFFITHS: So why didn't you add to that list Iraq, an illegal war which resulted in great suffering for the Iraqi people? But you know as well as I do: the prospect of a Bush or a Blair being put on trial for their crimes is never gonna happen. And that's why I say, you see, that international criminal justice in contemporary times is mediated by power. Certain powerful countries will never be brought before an international tribunal. Now it's not that I'm against the idea of international justice, and I accept that Africa has seen its, you know, it has a history of atrocities going back as far as Bokassa, Verwoerd, Vorster. Yes there is, and there is a need for justice in Africa, but I would like to see a level playing field, that an American president or a Liberian president can equally be put on trial.

Let's just pursue what you've just said about Bush and Blair, because I do find it interesting and I want to turn this a little bit personal. You know you've always said – you said it on this programme pretty much – that you will not make moral judgments. That's not your job as a defence lawyer. And yet when it comes to Bush and Blair, I just get the sense you do make moral judgments. Of course neither of them is a client. But are you suggesting to me that if – IF, and we're just supposing now – that there were ever an international move to bring either of them before a war crimes tribunal, and if one of them wanted you with your great expertise to be on the defence team, you would rule it out on moral grounds.

GRIFFITHS: I wouldn't rule it out, because as you know we operate what is called the Cab Rank Principle of Bar here in the United Kingdom. So if our former prime minister wanted my services, of course I'd have no option but to represent him.

Well, you know, "I am a defence lawyer," you said recently, "but if Tony Blair came to The Hague I would definitely switch sides and do some prosecuting." Sometimes you don't leave your morality at the courtroom door.

GRIFFITHS: Well, it's not about morality at all, because...

...but why did you say that...

GRIFFITHS: I said that for the simple reason that I would like to see someone like Tony Blair properly prosecuted before an international tribunal for what I perceived to be crimes committed by him in alliance with the United States in Iraq.

Yes, you've made your mind up on that. At the very beginning you told me that there are two sides to every story and you wouldn't assume to know the truth, but on this one, as opposed to Mugabe, you would assume to know the truth.

GRIFFITHS: Well I assume from what I've – we've been told about the lies admitted by (conflicting voices)...

You told me very clearly in the Mugabe case that you should not be guided by the mass media and by general perception. You should not fall into that trap.

GRIFFITHS: But I'm not talking about mass media here. I am talking about proven facts as to the legality of that war in Iraq. There's no issue about that now – or is there? Have I missed something?

If I may, I now want to take you back a little bit. You know, you are now operating both nationally and internationally at the very highest level of the law, but I think it is very interesting to ask you how you got here, because it was by no means easy for a young boy whose family moved from Jamaica to the United Kingdom when you were, I think, even before school, and when being black in Britain was a difficult proposition in many ways. There still was a great deal of racism.

GRIFFITHS: Yes there was, and I arrived there in the United Kingdom when I was five years old. I started infant school here. But I had received some education back in Jamaica where I'm from. And I'm from a very large family, I'm from a family of eight boys and one girl; I'm the second youngest. And my father was a carpenter who moved to Coventry in the Midlands because it had been devastated during the war. So there were many opportunities in the construction industry in Coventry. And I was lucky enough to pass [the] eleven-plus to attend the local grammar school. And in the first couple of years or so there were difficulties, but I came to love the school. And in fact I was invited back there the last year or the year before to speak at their annual prize-giving, which was a moment of great pride for me, because I love public schooling in Coventry. But yes, there was racism. And I think during the 60s and 70s there were serious problems, particularly in the part of the world where I grew up. Remember, there was a Tory MP who in fact bears my surname, Griffiths: "If you want a nigger for a neighbour, vote Labour." That was in the background of my upbringing along with skinheads, racist attacks and the rest of it.

Was anger there for part of your make-up as a young man?

GRIFFITHS: Yes, to an extent there was anger. There was anger that we'd in effect been brought to the United Kingdom to fill a labour shortage and a skills shortage. And yet this was the reception that we were getting. So there was that anger.

Yes, but what interests me is that you chose to enter a profession – and goodness me it must have taken a lot of hard work and academic expertise – but you chose to enter a profession that is a well-trodden path for the largely-white British middle and upper-middle class establishment. And I wonder why you did that, 'cause some in your position with your gifts would have been inclined to be more challenging, maybe to want to tear things down rather than to become an insider within the system.

GRIFFITHS: Well it was precisely because the role while I was growing up, particularly through the actions of the police on the street, tended to target people of my colour. And it was my intention to use the courtroom as a battle-ground for those kind of issues. That's why I decided to go into the profession. Because I felt that black people needed to have representation in the courtroom which understood them, their problems, their history within British society.

This gets back to the heart of our debate. Can you afford to be political when you're got your wig and your gown on and you're in the courtroom?

GRIFFITHS: Yes you can, because at the end of the day much of what goes on in the courtroom is guided by politics outside the courtroom. Mr. Taylor finds himself in The Hague because of politics, and representing the downtrodden and the less advantaged in the courtroom does cause you to take a certain political stance.

Understood. But you cannot tell me that Charles Taylor is part of the downtrodden.

GRIFFITHS: No, not as an individual, but as an African, I do believe that.

Do you think most Africans would accept that, that the President of Liberia, a man whom we now know, through testimony and other sources, commanded major resources – and let's not go into the detail of diamonds and everything...

GRIFFITHS: (Interrupting) Well let's DO get into it...

We can if you want, because (conflicting voices).

GRIFFITHS: Has it been [confirmed]?

The idea that Taylor can be talked of by somebody like you as downtrodden and oppressed seems to be a stretch.

GRIFFITHS: Well it doesn't to me, because I'm talking about global politics now. And I'm talking about where a small country like Liberia fits within the overall scheme of things. And in that sense, they are downtrodden.

You see, correct me if I'm wrong, but I read somewhere that you said after dealing for so long in the British legal system with cases which involved young black men who had fallen foul of the law, who were involved in street violence and other sorts of crime and that you were trying to defend them. You found it actually a relief to go into the international arena and to deal with a different set of problems. Is that something you actually felt?

GRIFFITHS: I did actually feel that, because for the ten to fifteen years prior to taking on the Taylor case I had lived on a diet of murders at the Central Criminal Court at the Old Bailey involving young black men killing each other. And it had got to the stage where I was questioning whether those kind of issues can properly be dealt with in the courtroom or whether other steps outside the courtroom should be taken in order to solve [them]. And so yes, I fancied the idea of a change. But now that I've actually come into...

(Interrupting) Let me [tell] you something. Do you also fancy the idea of a higher profile? You know, lawyers have egos like everybody else.

GRIFFITHS: Well of course. Of course; I'll be frank about that. Of course. And frankly, for the last three years until Naomi Campbell came along, I mean, that aspect did materialize. You know, this is a recent phenomenon now. When I took on the case, the idea that this was going to create a global profile just wasn't there. But having taken on the case I've come to realize that we could well be replicating at an international level what happens at national levels in most first world countries where you have a black population: that black people tend to be disproportionately affected by the criminal justice system. And that concerns me.

Courtenay Griffiths, thank you very much indeed for being on Hard Talk.

Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)

Monday, 10 January 2011

Côte d'Ivoire Standoff Continues

By Jennifer G. Cooke

Reports of violence are mounting in Côte d'Ivoire as incumbent president Laurent Gbagbo continues in his refusal to relinquish power to Alassane Ouattara, broadly recognized by the international community as the legitimate winner of the country's November 28 presidential runoff election. The United Nations estimates the death toll at 210 and has reported some 500 incidents of arbitrary arrests and disappearances. An estimated 18,000 Ivoirians in the country's "Wild West" have crossed the border into neighboring Liberia, and ethnic clashes in the west, which have previously drawn in fighters from Liberia, have escalated in recent weeks. Ouattara, still hunkered down in Abidjan's Golf Hotel, has called for military intervention by the West African regional grouping ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) to remove Gbagbo from power and retake government offices and media outlets. In response, Charles Blé Goudé, leader of the pro-Gbagbo militia, the Jeunes Patriotes, has called on supporters to prepare themselves for combat and "liberate" the country.

Gbagbo has remained obdurate in the face of mounting sanction and isolation, rejecting calls for his resignation and rebuffing offers from the United States and West African neighbors for amnesty or a face-saving exit. The erstwhile president has called these efforts an "attempted coup d'état under the banner of the international community" and insisted that outsiders respect the country's constitution, institutions, and national sovereignty. The international community, including the African Union (AU), which in the past has been swayed by appeals to national sovereignty, is having none of it this time.

Q1: There are many flawed elections in Africa. Why has this one mobilized such a unified international response?

A1: In the first instance, there is a strong legal case for international involvement. In signing the AU-brokered Pretoria Accord in 2005 and the ECOWAS-brokered Ouagadougou Accord of 2007, Gbagbo himself explicitly invited the United Nations and ECOWAS to engage in all phases of the electoral process to ensure free, fair, and transparent elections and to act as guarantors of the agreements. An amendment to the Ivoirian electoral code in 2008, by Gbagbo's decree, gives the UN special representative in Côte d'Ivoire, as well as the ECOWAS facilitator (President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso), a role in certifying the results. Security Council Resolution 1765, issued in 2007, gives the UN special representative in Côte d'Ivoire the mandate of certifying the election processes and results. On the domestic front, the Ivorian Constitutional Court has the power either to annul or endorse election results in their entirety, but it is not empowered to simply cancel results in select precincts and thereby change the final tally.

Second, there is strong aversion from both African and Western leaders to reinforcing the precedent of government by negotiation. The idea that an incumbent who loses an election need only hang on and threaten violence in order to obtain a power-sharing deal is a dangerous blow to democracy in a continent that will see some 15 national elections in the coming year. The African Union, which now fairly unanimously condemns military coups, will need to find more effective ways of grappling with electoral manipulations and standoffs, and Côte d'Ivoire will be an important test of the organization's principles and leverage, as well as those of the broader international community.

Third, Côte d'Ivoire is a major test of the world's capacity to prevent conflict, not simply to intervene once violence escalates. The Ivorian standoff threatens a renewed conflict in Côte d'Ivoire that could be very violent indeed and could undermine progress in the broader West African region, particularly post-conflict Liberia and Sierra Leone, where the international community has invested considerable diplomatic, development, and security resources to pacify and rebuild.

Q2: How effective has the international response been?

A2: In many ways the international response has been exemplary, buttressed by the legal basis for intervention and by the quick response of African regional leadership. ECOWAS and the African Union took an early lead in crying foul, with both organizations recognizing Ouattara as president and suspending Côte d'Ivoire's membership. Their voice was almost certainly critical in bringing China and Russia on board in the UN Security Council in recognizing Ouattara as the winner, although the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Susan Rice, reportedly played an important role in doggedly persuading the initially reluctant Russians to agree. High-level outreach by former South African president Thabo Mbeki, African Union chair Jean Ping, a delegation of three ECOWAS presidents, and former Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo has proved fruitless, and Gbagbo refused to take personal phone calls from both President Nicolas Sarkozy of France and President Obama. A gradual layering on of sanctions—suspension of World Bank assistance and funding from the West African Central Bank, travel bans against Gbagbo and his coterie by the United States and European Union, and most recently freezing of Gbagbo's U.S. assets—have been accompanied by offers of amnesty and a face-saving exit, although international appetite for the latter is quickly waning as the death toll mounts.

Gbagbo's most ardent African supporter is Gambia's kooky president Yahya Jammeh, and there is an effort under way to win support from Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe. Angola, whose president Edoardo dos Santos is close to Gbagbo, has said that it will not interfere in the country's sovereign affairs. There may be room for diplomatic persuasion there by African and U.S. leadership, and bringing Angola in line with the AU and UN stance would be an important signal to Gbagbo of exactly how isolated he has become. Gbagbo's continuing isolation and dwindling financial flow may lead to a revolt by his inner circle or military supporters. This may take time, however, since he reportedly has cocoa and oil revenues on which he can draw. Ultimately, the unfortunate truth is that if Gbagbo is willing to risk a civil war, which will likely be far bloodier than the previous crisis, even the best intentions and most exemplary response from the international community may not be enough to stop it.

Q3: What about a military intervention?

A3: Gbagbo's intransigence has led to increasing talk of a possible military intervention by ECOWAS or the African Union to forcibly remove him. Such a move seems unlikely at present. African Union troops have little experience in that kind of commando operation. (In March 2008, AU troops removed the incumbent president of the semiautonomous Cormoran island of Anjouan, population 280,000, following a disputed election—a precedent of sorts, but not a very strong one.) Nigeria, which would shoulder much of the heavy lifting in an ECOWAS operation, is preoccupied with its own upcoming elections, and Ghana, also a significant troop contributor, has balked at the idea of military intervention. There is good reason to be skeptical. Even if extracting Gbagbo from the presidential palace is successful, it is difficult to predict the potential reaction not only of the Ivorian military but of the multiple militias throughout the country who remain armed and primed. Gbagbo's supporters have said that any military intervention would be a "declaration of war." Leader of the Jeunes Patriotes Blé Goudé, sanctioned by the United Nations for mobilizing attacks on UN peacekeepers in 2006, could very quickly mobilize his supporters to create mayhem in Abidjan. ECOWAS will need to consider whether a forcible removal of Gbagbo may inflame rather than calm the situation.

Peaceful resolution of the standoff will require Gbagbo to quit the scene. He can leave voluntarily, although his opportunities for a soft landing are rapidly evaporating. He can hold on and try to maintain

revenue flows enough to keep his most immediate enablers on his side. In this, he will face a remarkably united international coalition intent on cutting those flows and an increasingly uncertain and unreliable internal support structure. Or he can turn to the streets and the more rabid of his supporters to foment increasing levels of vitriol, resentment, and violence against his opponents and the international community, setting the stage for widespread violence. Unfortunately, the future of peace and prosperity in Côte d'Ivoire seems the last thing on Gbagbo's mind.

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