



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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09 December 2005

### CIV100870.FE

Côte d'Ivoire: Situation of former public servants and members of the Parti démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI) (2001-05)

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#### Background

Corroborating sources indicate that the Parti démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI), also known as the Parti démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire-Rassemblement démocratique africain (PDCI-RDA) (PDCI-RDA 6 Apr. 2002; *Les Nouveaux mondes rebelles* 2005, 143; ICG 12 Oct. 2005, 21; *Political Parties of the World* 2005, 145), has 94 members (*ibid.*, 146; *Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, sect. 3; *Les Nouveaux Mondes rebelles* Jan. 2005, 144; *Elections Around the World* 19 Oct. 2004) in the Ivorian national assembly, which is made up of 225 members (*ibid.*; *Political Parties of the World* 2005, 146; *Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, sect. 3). It is the second largest political party after the Front populaire ivoirien (FPI), which is currently in power (*ibid.*; *Elections Around the World* 19 Oct. 2004) and which is represented by 96 members (*Elections Around the World* 19 Oct. 2004; *Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, sect. 3).

The PDCI is part of the current transitional government in Côte d'Ivoire (*Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, sect. 3; *Elections Around the World* 19 Oct. 2004; *The Europa World Year Book 2005*, 2005, 1361). However, recent reports indicate that Charles Konan Banny, the former governor of the Central Bank of the West African States (BCEAO), was appointed prime minister of Côte d'Ivoire in early December 2005 by international mediators (*Afrik.com* 4 Dec. 2005; *Xinhua* 6 Dec. 2005; *ibid.* 5 Dec. 2005; *BBC* 5 Dec. 2005). Charles Banny is, according to those same sources, a member of the PDCI (*ibid.*; *Afrik.com* 4 Dec. 2005; *Xinhua* 6 Dec. 2005).

The PDCI is run by Henri Konan Bédié, former Ivorian president (1993-96) (*Political Parties of the World* 2005, 145; *Jeune Afrique / L'Intelligent* 9-15 Oct. 2005, 46), who returned to Côte d'Ivoire on 11 September 2005 (*Jeune Afrique / L'Intelligent* 9-15 Oct. 2005, 46). He had been living in France since the December 1999 coup d'état (*ibid.*). The president of the PDCI has considerable support from the Baoulé ethnic group (*Africa Confidential* 4 Nov. 2005, 6; *US* Nov. 2005), which is the majority ethnic group in the country (*Xinhua* 5 Dec. 2005) and which is the ethnic group that he belongs to (*US* Nov. 2005). The newly appointed prime minister also belongs to the Baoulé ethnic group (*Xinhua* 5 Dec. 2005). Alphonse Djédjé is filling the position of secretary general of the PDCI (*ibid.*, 6; *Political Parties of the World* 2005, 145).

Leading up to the 2006 election, the PDCI formed an electoral alliance with other opposition parties, including the Rassemblement des républicains (RDR), l'Union pour la démocratie et la paix en Côte d'Ivoire (UDPCI) and the Mouvement des forces de l'avenir (MFA) under the Rassemblement des houphouétistes pour la démocratie et la paix (RHDP) (ICG 12 Oct. 2005, 21; *Xinhua* 6 Dec. 2005).

#### Situation of members

Information on the situation of PDCI members was limited among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate. An 8 April 2004 Amnesty International report states that Ivorian security forces suppressed unarmed demonstrators, particularly those from the PDCI, during an unauthorized demonstration in Abidjan on 25 March 2004 (see also *Afrique-Express* 6 Apr. 2004; *Afrik.com* 25 Mar. 2004). That demonstration was organized by a number of opposition political parties, including the PDCI, to reclaim the application of the Marcoussis peace agreements (*ibid.*; *AI* 8 Apr. 2004; *Africa Confidential* 2 Apr. 2004, 4). Without identifying any of the victims, sources estimated that between 37 and 500 people were killed during that demonstration (*ibid.*; *Afrique-Express* 6 Apr. 2004; *AI* 8 Apr. 2004; *Jeune Afrique / L'intelligent* 9-15 Oct. 2005, 48; *Afrik.com* 25 Mar. 2004).

According to *Country Reports 2004*, a crowd of Jeunes patriotes (a militia associated with President Gbagbo) attacked and raided the homes of the PDCI secretary general and of the PDCI president's son on 5 and 6 November 2004 (28 Feb. 2005, sect. 2.c). That same report, which does not give the names of the attackers, adds that at an earlier date, the headquarters of the PDCI, located in Abidjan, were vandalized (*ibid.*). In addition, a 29 June 2005 Inter Press Service (IPS) article reports, without identifying the perpetrators, that Jean-Marie Gervais Kacou, a PDCI member, was accosted in front of his home on 16 April, and that, a few days later, Jérôme Sery Assia, former minister and member of the PDCI was tied up in his house and beaten (IPS 29 June 2005). That article explains

that he and members of his family were abused (IPS 29 Apr. 2005). Mathias Ngoan, another PDCI member, was also attacked at the beginning of the month (ibid.).

No corroborating information for the IPS article could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate, and no information on the situation of former public servants could be found among those same sources.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

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