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06 May 2005

CIV43531.FE

Côte d'Ivoire: Update to CIV41292.F of 14 March 2003 on the treatment of Ivorian citizens born abroad by government authorities and by the population in general (2004-May 2005)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

Information on the treatment of Ivorian citizens born abroad by government authorities was limited among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate. According to *Country Reports 2004*, being born in Côte d'Ivoire does not automatically confer citizenship there (28 Feb. 2005, Sec. 5). A recent article in *Le Potentiel*, a Congolese newspaper, indicated that in Côte d'Ivoire, [translation] "exclusions can apply ... to entire groups whose right to nationality, although historically justified or attested through certified and previously uncontested legal documents, is strongly being challenged in the run-up to the elections" (24 Mar. 2005). The same article also indicated that the Ivorian government had questioned the nationality of many Burkinabe Ivorians (*Le Potentiel* 24 Mar. 2005).

It is estimated that over five million West African immigrants live in Côte d'Ivoire (*Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, Sec. 5); these people, mainly from Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Guinea (ibid.; IRIN 3 Mar. 2005; HRW 4 Nov. 2004), are often subject to human rights violations by security forces and pro-government militia (ibid.; IRIN 3 Mar. 2005; see also *Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, Sec. 1.b.). As Human Rights Watch (HRW) indicated, [translation] "the Ivorian security forces and other pro-government forces often, and sometimes systematically, executed, arrested and attacked civilians belonging to ethnic groups in the northern part of the country, as well as Muslims and West African immigrants" (4 Nov. 2004). Sources mentioned that raids are often conducted by police in certain neighbourhoods where a majority of West African nationals live; in those cases, police destroyed the houses and looted (HRW 4 Nov. 2004; *Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, Sec. 1.b).

Recent articles indicate that violent clashes often take place between members of certain native ethnic groups and immigrants, namely the Burkinabe (IRIN 26 Apr. 2005; *Le Patriote* 25 Mar. 2005; *Fraternité Matin* 14 Mar. 2005). According to a 27 October 2004 Agence France Presse (AFP) article, in the Côte d'Ivoire town of Guiglo, [translation] "the Burkinabe, Malians and Guineans, who have been in Guiglo for years, feel rejected by the native populations."

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.

References

Agence France Presse (AFP). 27 October 2004. Lauren Gelfand and Zoom Dosso. "Ouest ivoirien : violences xénophobes et frustration chez les miliciens." (Dialog)

Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2004. 28 February 2005. United States Department of State. Washington, D.C. <<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrprt/2004/41599.htm>> [Accessed 28 Apr. 2005]

Fraternité Matin [Abidjan]. 14 March 2005. "Pacification de l'Ouest : les coupeurs de routes perpétuent la guerre." (Dialog/AllAfrica)

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Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN). 26 April 2005. "Côte d'Ivoire: Ethnic Clashes in Cocoa Town of Guiglo Kill at Least One." <http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=46821&SelectRegion=West_Africa&SelectCountry=COTE_D_IVOIRE> [Accessed 3 May 2005]

_____. 3 March 2005. "Je suis né en Côte d'Ivoire, où voulez-vous que j'aïlle." (Dialog/AllAfrica)

Le Patriote [Abidjan]. 25 March 2005. "Rapport devant le Conseil de sécurité : Kofi Annan dresse un bilan alarmant de la crise ivoirienne." (Dialog)

Le Potentiel [Kinshasa]. 24 March 2005. "Les problèmes des élections démocratiques en Afrique multipartisane." (Dialog)

Additional Sources Consulted

Publications : *Africa Confidential* , *Africa Research Bulletin* , *Jeune Afrique/L'Intelligent* , *Lettre hebdomadaire de la FIDH* , Resource Centre country file.

Internet sites, including : AllAfrica, Amnesty International, BBC Africa, European Country of Origin Information Network (ECOI), Human Rights Watch (HRW), International Crisis Group (ICG), International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), MISNA, ReliefWeb, United States Department of State.

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