

COALITION IVOIRIENNE POUR LA COUR PENALE INTERNATIONALE

CI CPI

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Côte d'Ivoire cabinet adopts bill to revise Constitution to allow ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court *A notable advance in the fight against impunity*

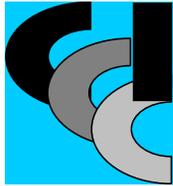
On 26 September 2012, the cabinet of Côte d'Ivoire adopted two bills relating to the International Criminal Court (ICC):

- The first bill revises the constitution to allow ratification by Côte d'Ivoire of the Rome Statute of the ICC.
- The second bill authorizes the Head of State to ratify the Rome Statute of the ICC.

Ivorian civil society, led by the Ivorian Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CI-CPI), recognizes the major challenge posed by the adoption of the Rome Statute. Since 2003 the CI-CPI held conferences, facilitated discussions, organized conferences, undertook much advocacy, and is even conducted a comparative analysis of the Rome Statute and the Côte d'Ivoire constitution in the light of decision number 002/CC/SG of 17 December 2003 of the Constitutional Council, which found contradictions between the Constitution and the Rome. At the end of this analysis, the Coalition made suggestions to amend the Constitution to allow for the ratification of the Statute.

Reacting to the adoption of these bills, **Ali Ouattara, president of the Côte d'Ivoire Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CI ICC) stated:** "The adoption of these bills goes a long way in the fight against impunity and the strengthening of the rule of law in Côte d'Ivoire. Ratification of the Statute by Côte d'Ivoire will be the culmination of a long process which will facilitate relations between the Court and the government, as well as give Ivorian courts the opportunity to prosecute international crimes and avoid the surrender of Ivorian citizens to The Hague to answer for their crimes."

Mr Francis Dako, Africa coordinator for the global Coalition for the International Criminal Court stated from Cotonou: "Côte d'Ivoire has just taken an important step in the process of ratifying the Rome Statute. In my name and those of my colleagues in New York and The Hague, we encourage the Ivorian government to continue its initiatives against impunity and to contribute to the emergence of a universal, fair and independent international criminal justice. We are greatly



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encouraged that Côte d'Ivoire will become a state party to the Rome Statute between now and 2013."

This milestone is the culmination of the efforts and support of all stakeholders towards the ratification of the Rome Statute by the Ivorian government.

Côte d'Ivoire participated actively in the Rome Diplomatic Conference in 1998, and voted for the adoption of the Statute and was one of the first African signatories of the Statute in November 1998.

On 18 April 2003, Côte d'Ivoire, although not a party to the Rome Statute, accepted the Court's jurisdiction. The President recently confirmed this acceptance on 14 December 2010 and 3 May 2011.

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- Upon ratification, Côte d'Ivoire will be able to finally sit among the democratic nations fighting for effective, fair and impartial international criminal justice and participate at the Assembly of States Parties, the Court's governing body.
- Côte d'Ivoire officials will also be able to be appointed to decision-making and operational positions in the Court's organs.

Cote d'Ivoire has signed the Rome Statute. However, we remain concerned by the agreement signed between Côte d'Ivoire and the United States of America relating to the non-extradition of U.S. citizens to the Court. '