The Crisis in Côte d’Ivoire

I. 2010 Political & Humanitarian Crisis

a. The Electoral Process
b. Post-Election Violence: Human Rights Violations Reach RtoP Threshold

II. Responding to the Crisis

a. The UN Response
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c. Responses from the European Union and Foreign Governments
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III. Post-conflict Rebuilding and Reconciliation

The 2010 presidential election between incumbent Laurent Gbagbo and opposition member Alassane Ouattara resulted in a political stalemate and violent conflict after Gbagbo refused to honor the results that declared Ouattara the winner. As of April 2011, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon reported that over 1000 civilians had died as a result of clashes, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees stated that more than 500,000 Ivorians were forcibly displaced, and 94,000 Ivorians fled to neighboring Liberia out of fear of violence. Forces loyal to both Gbagbo and Ouattara were failing to protect civilians and were accused of gross human rights violations that could amount to crimes against humanity. In an effort to protect the people of Côte d’Ivoire from further atrocities, a military operation began on 4 April following a statement by the UN Secretary-General in which he instructed UN Operations in Côte D’Ivoire (UNOCI) to “take the necessary measures to prevent the use of heavy weapons against the civilian population.” Gbagbo’s hold on power ended on April 11, 2011 when he was arrested by Ouattara’s forces after days of fighting with involvement of UNOCI and the French military.
for presidential candidates Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara. Alassane Ouattara’s government must now foster peace and reconciliation in Côte d’Ivoire and registered refugees in neighboring states. Liberia is presently hosting the majority of the refugee population. In speaking before the UN Security Council on 10 May 2011, Under-Secretary-General for Peace and Security Council in averting and halting mass atrocities through actions such as the expansion of sanctions, enforcement of an arms embargo, and the support of UNOCI’s mandate to protect civilians. The Centre recommended that contingency plans be immediately implemented to address the situation. Furthermore, the Open Statement identified the crucial role of the AU to mobilize all international partners to react to the increased violence and bolster response to ensure the protection of civilians. The AU called for the formation of a government of national unity while an “honorable exit” was requested for both Gbagbo and Ouattara. AI called on both men to issue clear instructions to all their armed forces to refrain from violence. On 25 January, the AU sent a letter to the President of the Security Council, requesting the AU’s urgent appeal to show restraint and calling on parties to the crisis to engage in direct talks and the Panel to reconsider its position on the political crisis. The AU also called for a comprehensive peace process to address the root causes of the conflict. The Open Statement noted that at least 800 civilians were killed and tens of thousands fled the brutal attack in which most attackers were foreign mercenaries. The European Union, speaking before the Human Rights Council on 25 March, stated that pro-Gbagbo forces had used mortars and heavy machine guns and targeted unarmed civilians to risk their lives needlessly. The Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) for the International Criminal Court issued a statement on April 6, 2011 that at least 800 civilians were killed and tens of thousands fled the brutal attack in which most attackers were foreign mercenaries. The OTP also stated that attacks against the population might constitute crimes against humanity. UNOCI has been providing additional troops and personnel support to the mission. Following a letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council on the situation in Côte d’Ivoire, the UN Security Council unanimously voted on January 19, 2011 to establish governments of national unity in Côte d’Ivoire. The EU has called for an immediate cease-fire, the release of all detained persons, and the protection of all persons. The UN has called for a comprehensive peace process to address the root causes of the conflict. The AU has called for a comprehensive peace process to address the root causes of the conflict. The EU has called for an immediate cease-fire, the release of all detained persons, and the protection of all persons. The UN has called for a comprehensive peace process to address the root causes of the conflict.