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IVORY COAST ON THE BRINK

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PARTICIPANTS:

Introduction and Moderator:

EZRA SURUMA
Distinguished Visiting Fellow
The Brookings Institution

Panelists:

CHALOKA BEYANI
United Nations Special Rapporteur on
The Human Rights of IDPs

MARGARET MCKELVEY
Director, Office of Assistance for Africa
Under Secretary for Democracy and Global Affairs
U.S. State Department

SARAH MARGON
Associate Director for Sustainable Security
Center for American Progress

ANN HOLLINGSWORTH
Senior Analyst
International Crisis Group

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. SURUMA: Good afternoon to you all. My name is Ezra Suruma. I'm with the African Growth Institute here at Brookings Institution and I'm also from Uganda, a visiting fellow.

I am happy to welcome you to this event, Ivory Coast on the Brink. It's highly regrettable that we meet in a situation of such severe crisis in that country and we have a distinguished set of -- group of speakers who are going to discuss the situation currently in the Ivory Coast.

We have Chaloka Beyani who is a United Nations special rapporteur on human rights of IDPs. And we have Sarah Margon who is associate director for sustainable security in the Center for American Progress. We have also Margaret McKelvey, director, Office of Assistance for Africa. Is that the right -- I hope I have the right -- she's in the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, and was formerly director of the Office of African Refugees Assistance from 1986 to 1993. Okay. And we have Ann Hollingsworth who's a senior analyst, International Crisis Group.

Mr. Beyani will be addressing issues concerned with the AU convention, mainly, and Margaret McKelvey will be touching on the humanitarian response. Ann Hollingsworth will talk about ECOWAS and AU response and the history of the conflict. And Sarah Margon will be talking mainly about the regional implications of this crisis.

By way of introduction, the crisis is worsening by the hour. Reports say that the number of displaced persons has now reached between

500,000 and 700,000. This is up from yesterday when we were getting figures of 450,000. Ninety thousand of these have fled to Liberia, and the President of Liberia, Johnson Sirleaf, has been quoted as saying that the situation is a threat to the entire region, into neighboring countries, is going to destabilize particularly Liberia which has been in civil war for 14 years and is barely recovering, but also the other neighbors as well.

Four hundred deaths have been reported since December. Yesterday it was reported that 30 people were killed in the Abidjan suburbs. Fighting is continuing, and I think it was reported that Ouattara's forces took another town yesterday, the fifth town. Recruitment is continuing of young people into the military of Gbagbo, and the humanitarian situation is so severe that humanitarian staff are leaving. The International Organization for Migration is reported to have withdrawn some of their staff, their essential staff and others.

The funding for the crisis is currently minimal. The UN funding -- UN called for $32 million U.S. but only $7 million has materialized so far for Cote d'Ivoire and for Liberia, $25 out of 55 million expected has been realized.

When will the situation end? I wish there was some basis for hope, but it would appear that every effort at mediation for the last 10 years seems to have failed and it is of course paradoxical that a country which was considered one of the most stable and most prosperous from 1960 when they got independence up to about 2000 -- 1993 when Houphouët-Boigny, the first president who ruled for 33 years, died. It seems that stability and peace went with him.

It makes me worried because my country, though sometimes said to be doing very well, when they say a country is doing very well I think we are going to start getting worried about what is coming next.

So, in economics we talk about business cycles, but it seems that maybe I'm not assuming for all politics but you seem to have problem of political cycles as well when stability is followed by this type of instability, but perhaps more severe in that it involves loss of life and so much suffering as is happening now in Cote d'Ivoire.

So, with that introduction, let me call on the experts starting with Chaloka Beyani from the United Nations, to speak about this humanitarian crisis. Mr. Beyani?

MR. BEYANI: Thank you very much, Chair, panelists, and people who have turned up to listen to this discussion as well as to Brookings for inviting me to be here this afternoon.

Let me just make one slight clarification, that I -- although I'm a special rapporteur, I serve as an independent expert, so I actually do not speak for the United Nations, as such, although there are obviously synergies between my role and that of the United Nations.

There has been a slight background given by the Chair already to the situation in Côte d'Ivoire, but my mandate essentially addresses IDPs, that is persons displaced within states. And in that regard the figures seem to indicate that there would be about 400,000 persons displaced as a result of the fighting in Côte d'Ivoire. Beyond that, there are more than at least 500,000 people

displaced outside of Côte d'Ivoire, so the magnitude of the problem and the humanitarian crisis is obviously evident from the figures.

The pattern of displacement obviously follows the fighting between the forces of Gbagbo and forces of Ouattara and I think most of us have followed that, but I'll come back to that in a minute.

It also seems that the pattern of displacement follows very much an urban character and most of the IDPs are being hosted by friends and families which fortifies one of the major priorities of my mandate which is to look at persons who are displaced outside camps and settlements and the needs of their protection in that regard.

The second aspect in terms of the pattern itself is that the recent attempt by both forces to control the populations that are displaced I suspect for military reasons, IDPs report that they are being prevented from fleeing and flight, obviously, is a mode of protection in itself, and therefore the prevention of flight is a strategy that most armed groups and others involved in armed conflict attempts to use in relation to IDPs. But the focal point of my discussion is to attempt to situate this in relation to the African Union Convention for the protection of internally displaced persons which was adopted by the African Union in 2009 and its relevance as part of a nominative framework for the protection of internally displaced persons.

It sits side-by-side by the guiding principles on internally displaced persons. The relevance of the guiding principles, I think, is more importantly illustrated by the fact that there's a polarized situation between effectively a de

facto regime and a lawfully recognized government, which the UN and the AU have recognized.

Irrespective of that polarization, the guiding principles starting from principle two, require that the principles related to the protection of IDPs and their assistance shall be observed by all authorities, groups, and persons, irrespective of their legal status. So, from the point of view of my mandate and the issues of protection and assistance, the question of status and recognition may not be so relevant. It is the humanitarian aspect of it.

Nonetheless, beyond the guiding principles, it seems that the African Union Convention has something to say, both in relation to that particular situation and also to the framework of protection. When the African Union adopted the Convention it was quite clear from the preamble that one of their major concerns was to put an end to the phenomenon of internal displacement by eradicating the root causes and amongst those pointed out are recurrent conflicts as well as addressing other forms of displacement.

Now, it's clear that this is a recurrent conflict from about 2000 when it first broke out in huge proportions. The UN got involved, mediated a peace agreement in 2005, and beyond that, elections were actually postponed in order to give peace a chance. The elections take place and the manifestation of the problem is that of an electoral dispute, but we know that beyond the electoral dispute, in attempting to address the root causes that the African Union Convention alludes to, there are issues of control and power, issues of identity between the north and the south, and issues of who actually governs the country,

and the issue of who governs the country also goes hand-in-hand with the control of resources and their distribution within the state.

So, beyond the preamble, the African Union Convention goes on to examine those kinds of issues by obliging member states in particular to put to an end conditions that relate to displacement as well as to eliminate the root causes of internal displacement, and in particular, regard could be had to Article 3 too, General Obligations Relating to States Parties, whereby states "an obligation to refrain from, prohibit and prevent arbitrary displacement of populations. More importantly, prevent political, social, cultural, and economic exclusion and marginalization that are likely to cause displacement of populations by virtue of their social identity, religion, or political opinion."

Now, that is the core of the problem within Côte d'Ivoire and sits comfortably within the framework of the AU Convention.

Beyond those provisions, there are also aspects of the Convention that require the states parties to prevent and avoid conditions that actually leads to arbitrary displacement. The question of states parties of course presupposes that these are member states of the African Union. It presupposes that there is an effective government in control, but where there is not an effective government in control, then the provisions of Article 7 kick in which is about the responsibilities of armed groups in relation to populations that are displaced within states.

In the circumstances it might be legitimate to say that the officially recognized candidate leads the government and the former president might, at

this point in time, be a member of an armed group that may be captured neatly by the provisions of Article 7 of that particular Convention. So, this shows that when African states were meeting to address issues of displacement, they clearly had a proper vision in terms of what the causes are, what the framework for addressing these causes would be, and how to move forward in that context.

I did say at the outset that the UN was involved from the very beginning and still are involved in that situation, but there are also obligations of the African Union specifically within the framework of the African Union Convention on IDPs. Those obligations descend from the Constitutive Act of the African Union Act itself and in particular Article 4H which requires the union, in grave circumstances, namely war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, to obviously intervene in the situation. I think the situation is reaching those proportions. But this is an aspect where the relationship between the UN and the AU perhaps becomes important. I think it beggars belief that in the circumstances you have a UN presence in a country where negotiations have taken place, elections have taken place under the auspices of the UN, they are disputed, and the losing candidate refuses to cede power completely and somehow nothing seems to be done about that state of affairs.

A comparable situation existed in Kenya in 2007 and '08 and there clearly leadership from the AU, effective mediation by Kofi Annan, in similar circumstances led to a resolution of the problem within Kenya and I think that in terms of patterns and solutions for that situation, that particular example is a telling point.

The convention also does provide a framework for durable solutions in terms of what do we actually do, and as we examine that situation we should be looking at what are the possible solutions to the actual issue of displacement, either in terms of eventual return or integration or settlement elsewhere, but more importantly it does require that the framework of the Convention should be included in the peace agreements so that IDPs do participate in that framework in relation to how they see their circumstances, in relation to the peace agreement as a whole, because of the fact that they are essentially civilian populations who are caught up in issues of politics and identity and the clamor for power.

So, I and the UN will obviously be looking at the situation very closely to see how it unfolds and I think that most of us know that at this point the Human Rights Council is seized of the matter officially and they propose to send an international fact-finding commission to Côte d'Ivoire, have requested the Office of the High Commissioner to assist in that regard in terms of reporting on the factual situation, and that resolution, of course, is still being debated and has to be voted upon among some of the crop of measures that are being undertaken at the international level.

I propose to end there and probably seed ground for questions later on. Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MR. SURUMA: Thank you very much, Mr. Beyani.

MS. MCKELVEY: Good evening. Does this work? Can you hear

me? All right, thank you.

Again, I'm Margaret McKelvey from the State Department, the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration. I'm the director of our Africa Assistance Office.

If I say Libya instead of Liberia from time to time tonight it's because that has taken a lot of our energy. We treat Africa as the entire continent and there are quite a few similarities, obviously, between the two situations. The most dissimilar thing, probably, is the degree of attention that Libya is getting as compared to Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.

Our moderator, I was fearful he was going to start giving my whole life history when he started, but one thing that I would mention was that I started out working on Africa as a Peace Corps volunteer in Côte d'Ivoire, so have some special fondness for the area and would like to think some special knowledge of it, but that may be a bit shallow.

I do think that most Ivoirians and most Liberians, up until, you know, some years back, really didn't have an easy time thinking of themselves as refugees. I think most of us living in the states have a very difficult time imagining that we could ever be refugees, although quite a few other folks across the continent do, I think, always have that in the back of their mind.

So, it was quite a shock, I think, when sort of Christmas Eve of 1989, Charles Taylor invaded Liberia and started that round of warfare. And then 10 years later, to the day pretty much, Christmas Eve 1999, General Guéï overthrew the civilian government of Côte d'Ivoire and I remember shortly

thereafter being at an event across the street at SAIS, I think Professor Zartman was maybe moderating that, was this a good coups or not, and quite a few people in the audience thought that it was a good coups. It was an excellent way of getting rid of civilian leadership that people have grown quite tired of, leadership that was certainly playing the regional card, playing the tribal card, dividing people, and so on, and my feeling at the time was that Ivoirians had not, for quite some years, lived under a military government and might not know what they were in for. I think it took them about a year before they decided that was really not the best thing.

I also wondered why a president like Compaoré in Burkina would have been involved in facilitating all of these things when you consider that there are millions of Burkina Bai living in Côte d'Ivoire who could be at risk from these various conflicts. I don't imagine that actually entered into his calculation particularly, but those of us in the refugee business have been dealing also with that phenomenon.

I think probably most folks here know all of the definitions, but sometimes the press confuses it a bit, so we love to put a label on folks in the State Department, so just to say that refugees, those outside their country, the IDPs, obviously, inside, and then we have two other groups that we've been talking about in terms of this particular crisis, returning nationals, who would be, say, the Burkina Bai, the Malians, the Ghanaians, people who have fled Côte d'Ivoire and the trouble there, are not refugees, but they are returning to their home countries, but they may not have spent any particular time in that place, or

maybe I should say returning to the place of their nationality. And then what we abbreviate as TCNs, third country nationals, who are all kinds of other folks that have been living and working in Côte d'Ivoire and are finding themselves in need of evacuation and almost in a refugee-like status in the neighboring countries.

So, it's kind of inconvenient in a way to have all of these labels, but it does come into play in terms of the legal disposition, the programs that at least the U.S. government offers for them.

Just a quick note, and as someone has mentioned, the numbers are changing so dramatically, this could be changed by the time we finish tonight, but the number of Ivoirian refugees that are so far registered in Liberia is just over 90,000. That means those that have actually put their names -- had their names put down and been recognized. Clearly, we think there are probably more. And every once in a while someone will say, well, how do you know they're really Ivoirians? Maybe they're Liberians that had been refugees in Côte d'Ivoire and are returning, or maybe they're something else. They're always -- you know, there's nothing non-political about humanitarian work on that

Beyond that, if you look at some of the other neighboring countries, and again, these numbers will -- are subject to revision -- at this point about 455 registered people in Ghana, so a relatively small number, but the UN is preparing to start a refugee camp for those folks. Guinea, just under 1000 at this point, and those of you who follow this know that there were Ivoirian refugees already in Guinea as a result of the various phases of warfare. Mali, just under 200, Burkina, just 22 so far, Nigeria 63, and Togo 372. So, small numbers going

to the other countries, Liberia's taking the brunt of this.

So far the U.S. government has been able to put in the equivalent of $28.7 million worth of assistance. The bulk of that is on the Liberia side to deal the Ivoirian refugees. Our host mentioned that there would be new appeals coming out this week, both for Liberia and for all of the other neighboring countries where facilities are going to be needed, taking a somewhat pessimistic view of where things are going.

Those of you who are Washingtonians inside the Beltway clearly know that we're in a dismal fiscal situation at the moment. The U.S. government is on a continuing resolution through the 8th of April, which is a couple more weeks now, so we're going to be hard pressed, I think, to respond to these new appeals. So, it's a particularly unfortunate time.

Just three or four quick things that we're following and seed the floor as well for questions later or concerns, I should say, one is the lack of humanitarian space and access inside Côte d'Ivoire and I think Ann is going to talk maybe more about that; the adequacy of the donor response -- as our moderator mentioned, it's quite low at this point. We did, for example, a message to quite a number of governments around the world saying Libya-Liberia, Libya-Liberia, please give to both. We got a lot of responses back that were more focused on Libya, shall we say, than were focused on Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. The absorptive capacity of Liberia at this point, obviously Liberia is still very much recovering from its long years of warfare. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees had to start a brand new camp in the midst of fairly

virgin bush, so that was quite costly, and of course the camp capacity has been far outstripped already at this point.

The growing violence in Côte d'Ivoire and the very, very difficult challenge that we all recognize of how do you protect civilians in this kind of setting, particularly the urban warfare setting. It's, again, an issue we're also dealing with in Libya at this point, and you've seen the grand debates about that with people of good will on all sides of the equation. And lastly, just to underscore the possibility that all of this leads to regional instability. I mentioned earlier in opening the relationship between Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, there have been plenty of reports of people that were sort of formerly employed combatants now being reemployed. I think for years we've had a kind of circulating group of ex-combatants who have found, shall we say, job opportunities in Guinea, in Liberia, in Côte d'Ivoire, so we certainly hope that this will not be the beginning of a regional downward spiral, but one has to pay very close attention to that.

Thanks so much.

(Applause)

MR. SURUMA: Ms. Ann Hollingsworth? Your response.

MS. HOLLINGSWORTH: Thank you so much, and thanks to Brookings for hosting this important and timely panel today. My name is Ann Hollingsworth. I'm the senior analyst for U.S. Advocacy and Research based here in Washington, DC. I cover the Africa portfolio for our Washington office.

We put copies of this outside for you but today Crisis Group's president, Louise Arbour, sent an open letter to heads of state and government

of the Economic Community of West African States or ECOWAS, on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. The letter states that, "Côte d'Ivoire is no longer on the brink of civil war, it has already begun." There are worrying indicators of a deepening crisis and the potential for ethnic cleansing and other forms of mass killing. The only question now is whether the international community can prevent a wide scale war.

I'll be discussing current context including the AU high level panel background and the March outcome of that, and key recommendations to the AU and ECOWAS for the way forward.

First of all, there's no doubt that Gbagbo lost the election and I don't think we can say that enough. Ouattara had a winning margin of over 350,000 votes and the UN certified that the vote was free and fair.

In an attempt to reverse the outcome, the Constitutional Council, firmly in the hands of Gbagbo supporters, largely fabricated fraud in the center in the north where Ouattara enjoys huge support, pushing the incumbent's share of the vote, over 50 percent, and declaring him the winner.

Security forces loyal to Gbagbo were primarily responsible for political violence since early December 2010. Gbagbo sought to prevent his opponents from using the insurgency strategy that allowed him to take power in October of 2000.

According to Human Rights Watch, security forces have committed extra-judicial killings, torture, rape, and conducted enforced disappearances. The UN has confirmed 440 dead although the death toll far

exceeds this number. Gbagbo's willingness to use military and paramilitary forces to stay in power is clear. His obstinate refusal to accept the electoral outcome has produced a collapse of the banking system and of the formal and informal economy, the lack of essential public services, and a brutal impoverishment of the majority of the population including in Abidjan.

Ivoirian officials, unlike many of their counterparts in West Africa, have never experienced long periods of non-payment of their salaries and are unprepared for this. The salaries of civil servants are not only essential for them, but for their extended families. The U.S. has provided strong statements on the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire and implemented targeted financial sanctions along with money for humanitarian assistance, as Margaret mentioned. The U.S. and international community are faced now with a fundamental decision at a very crucial time.

So, on the AU, the African Union summit in Addis decided in late January to convene a high-level panel comprising of five heads of state across the continent. The panel included heads of state of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, South Africa and Tanzania, along with the AU Commission chair and the ECOWAS Commission president. After initial division, in March the African Union finally adopted a strong and unified position that reaffirmed its earlier stance. The continental body endorsed the decision of a high-level panel.

Following the recommendations of this panel, the AU Peace and Security Council reaffirmed the victory of Ouattara in the election of November 28, 2010 and insisted that Gbagbo must leave in the superior interest of the

Ivoirian people and to safeguard peace. The panel also recommended the formation of a government of national unity involving all political parties and civil society, while an honorable exit was proposed for incumbent present Gbagbo.

The AU panel results were a major blow for Gbagbo. He lost South Africa's support and now only has one big African supporter, Angola. The AU decision doesn't solve the crisis, but gives a strong advantage to Ouattara at this crucial time. The AU's decision is a step in the right direction. It makes clear that there is only one elected president in Côte d'Ivoire and that Gbagbo, the sole architect of the current crisis, should now depart. But without enforcement measures to secure Gbagbo's exit and secure the Ouattara presidency, the AU's recommendation has no chance of solving the crisis.

Now, moving to ECOWAS. ECOWAS, with the support of the African Union, should offer Gbagbo a final chance for a peaceful departure while actively preparing to oust his regime by all necessary means before it is too late. The massive investment of the intentional community has made in peace and security in West Africa for nearly two decades is under threat right now. So, we have four recommendations for the way forward.

First, ask the high representative to be appointed by the president of the Commission of the African Union to provide a last chance for the outgoing president to leave in a dignified manner with guarantees of security and to require an immediate response from him.

Second, decide on the establishment of a military mission whose objective would be to allow the regional community to protect along with the UN

operations and Côte d'Ivoire forces, all people residing in Côte d'Ivoire in the very likely case of the eruption of massive violence, to support military action and decisions which could be taken by ECOWAS in accordance with developments in the months to come, and help President Ouattara and his government to ensure authority over all defense and security forces and to control the entire territory.

Three, ask the United Nations Security Council to consider emergency measures that could take the form of preventative military actions by the UN Operations in Côte d'Ivoire, to more effectively protect civilian populations such as disabling the mobility of armed elements undertaking indiscriminate attacks with heavy weaponry in Abidjan.

And finally, ask the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and the UN Security Council to adopt individual sanctions against those who reject the decision of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union dated March 10th, are responsible for deliberate attacks on civilians, openly call for violence, or are responsible for broadcast and print media messages inciting violence and hatred.

Thank you and I look forward to your questions.

(Applause)

MS. MARGON: Thanks to Brookings, the chair, my co-panelists, I'm batting cleanup here so I'm going to try not to be too repetitive and I think everybody probably wants to get to questions.

I'm going to focus on predominantly the Obama Administration but I also want to look at some of the regional dynamics, the meaning these elections

can have on the continent more broadly, and then have a brief conversation about the regional organization and some concerns that I have there. And I'm sorry, in advance, if I sound somewhat pessimistic, but as we watch the numbers of displaced go up and watch the conflict get worse, the fighting get worse, I don't see an immediate resolution. I don't think anybody does. But I also don't think calls for Gbagbo to depart are necessarily the answer to the problem.

Côte d'Ivoire, historically, has been a very important economic hub in the region but I think we need to be realistic about where the Obama Administration can have leverage here. We don't have any direct, vital U.S. interests in Côte d'Ivoire, but we do have a number of indirect and important interests in the broader region that should not be unnoticed and they will be very negatively impacted if Côte d'Ivoire descends completely into conflict.

So, let's start with Liberia. As we all know, we have a strong U.S.-Liberian relationship. We've played a primary role in helping to rebuild that country since its war ended in 2005. We've spent over $350 million annually since that time in helping to rebuild Liberia. I think it's now somewhere around over $1 billion that we've spent in helping to rebuild Liberia, so conflict in Côte d'Ivoire spills over into Liberia that obviously impacts our efforts to see stability throughout the region.

Liberia, as you all probably know, has an upcoming presidential election, which is always a rather difficult time in a recovering country. The presence of now some 90,000 displaced people along the border is likely to make the situation even more unstable and the staggering numbers of displaced

people within Côte d'Ivoire is certainly likely to make the problem -- to make the election even more difficult even if they never even cross the border.

Some organizations, as Ann mentioned, have documented the recruitment of Liberian mercenaries, a practice that inevitably spreads insecurity and the potential for civilians to be caught up in the crisis on either side of the border.

Yesterday the Liberian president made it really clear that if the stalemate in Côte d'Ivoire is not addressed, it will threaten critical gains in security, and I was really pleased to hear her make the statement loud and clear because I think the voices from the surrounding countries are just as critical as the messages from the United States and the AU and ECOWAS.

In early February, the UN peacekeeping mission in Liberia increased its security presence along the border with Côte d'Ivoire, but it does make me wonder where the Liberian military is. We certainly did spend a lot of money helping to rebuild that military, and I'll get to that a little bit later, but there's also Mali and Burkina Faso, poverty-stricken countries that simply do not have the resources or the infrastructure to address numbers of refugees coming in, if the numbers increase. I think we have seen also the instability in Guinea, 1000+ refugees there. All of this, I note, coming at a time when certain members of Congress are looking to defund our engagement in the United Nations as fast as they can and cut back on our Foreign Affairs account which certainly makes it difficult in a tight environment to try to help what clearly seems to be a devolving situation.

Let me move quickly to the viability of elections or the meaningfulness of these elections. The Côte d'Ivoire elections were rescheduled some six times and had the potential to end the political stalemate that that country has seen for so long, but I think we all probably know that if Gbagbo didn't win, he wasn't going to go too quickly. And so what we're seeing now is a stalemate post election which, as we look at the upcoming elections throughout the rest of the continent, neighboring Liberia, we have Nigeria, these are critical elections and I am quite concern that this casts a pall on the legitimacy of elections and our engagement in trying to push those forward as part of important political transitions.

I think the stock that we place in these elections is an important starting point particularly for these conflict racked states, but if we don't see them moving in the right direction, I think we're going to start to see either leaders figure, oh, sure, we'll participate in election, and then we'll just stick it out until we get a unity government, or you'll see increasing numbers of citizens wondering why they should even bother to participate, and I think this is something that we need to look at from a much larger and more long-term level because if elections aren't getting us to the point that we need, how can we help move them in that direction?

Finally, as I just mentioned, in the fiscally tough period, I also worry that members of Congress are going to take a swipe at democracy accounts because why should they be funded, they're not doing anything? So, these are two things that I'm particularly concerned with and hope that Côte

d'Ivoire doesn't end up moving along, but let me move to some of the regional organizations.

My colleagues have detailed quite thoroughly how the regional organizations have played a very important role and I think they've stepped up to the plate in terms of supporting the proper election outcome, calling on Gbagbo repeatedly to step down, and seeking to mediate even -- and in the case of ECOWAS, talking about a military intervention force even if that force, for the most part, seems latent at this point. Ann, I certainly hope that your call is heard in that sense. And I think some of my co-panelists have also talked about the obligations that nations have at the nation state level to deal with both the humanitarian and the political crisis, but I think we have to recognize that Gbagbo is not going to step down anytime soon and so I worry that the AU panel and the threats from ECOWAS may be the last stop diplomatically and I don't expect to see the UN Security Council in the near-term authorizing a resolution like they just did for Libya.

So, the question then becomes, where do we go from here? As I mentioned, I'm not overly hopeful, but I do think there's a certain -- there are certain steps we can take to try to move the situation forward. We have to recognize that even if Gbagbo leaves, there are -- the situation will certainly get a little bit easier, but we have to also question what happens to the military. The military has pledge loyalty to Gbagbo, so where will the military go? Will it follow him and disband? Will they defect? Will they turn on a dime and support the actual president who has been elected? Will they try to stage a coup?

These are all things, I think, that need to be considered and we need to try to figure out how we can work or how the Obama Administration can work to engage certain members of the military. We, obviously, do not have those connections, but there may be others who do and they should be tapped into.

Sanctions are certainly helping. They are continuing to choke slowly Gbagbo and make it hard for him to pay his forces. They're going to bite, but they're also going to bite the Ivoirian people and that, in and of itself, poses a problem. It's a slow process and I worry that as they bite the Ivoirian people we may see an increase in Cocoa smuggling which I think we've already heard a lot -- bit of increase -- excuse me, we've heard some increases already.

So, at a minimum, we need to ensure that Côte d'Ivoire stays on the radar, and I know there's many individuals and organizations in this room who have been trying to do that for a long time. The statements from our Administration have been good. There's a resolution in the House that has been good and I'm certainly hopeful that we'll see one in the Senate as another tool to push the Administration to continue to engage on this.

I think working closely with the EU, the Obama Administration has to ensure that the French, for example, are not completely distracted by Libya and that they continue to play an important role.

Angola, not so long ago the U.S.-Angolan relationship was supposedly strengthened. There's a bilateral commission that does exist and I think now would be a very good time for us to tap into those bilateral relations

and try to encourage the Angolans to play a more constructive role right now.

We need to ensure that the EU maintains their ban on cocoa and consider encouraging the private sector to press for an end to the stalemate. It's not necessarily traditional, but given the very active and high level of cocoa that comes from Côte d'Ivoire, the private sector would be well served to have that ban lifted over time.

We should consider encouraging President Sirleaf to deploy her military to the border to stop recruitment of mercenaries and stop the crisis from spreading into Liberia. As I mentioned earlier, we've spent a long time investing in that military and while it may be something that the region is reluctant to see, I do think that there's an important border patrol role for them alongside the United Nations mission that is up there.

We should encourage the Obama Administration to work at the Security Council to reauthorize a stronger mandate, which Ann mentioned earlier. For the peacekeeping mission in Côte d'Ivoire, they need to undertake more proactive civilian protection measures and also encourage the UN mission in Liberia to take a proactive civilian protection role along the border.

And finally, I think, we need to continue our humanitarian contributions which have been modest but important and signal that at the very least we recognize how serious this can be, but we have to make sure that it's not the sole thing we're doing and that it's not only a stop gap measure, but part of a more comprehensive effort to engage the region.

So, I think I'm going to stop there. There's been a lot of

information that we've shared and I'm sure there's a lot of questions. I do think that there's an important role for the Obama Administration in helping to stop this from becoming full out civil war. It may not always be direct, it may be indirect, but sometimes we can lead from behind and do it very successfully.

Thank you.

MR. SURUMA: Thank you very much. We have some suggestions for short-term humanitarian interventions. Those are clearly important and necessary. But also there has to be solutions to the real problem, political problem, in the medium- to long-term.

As the speakers have indicated, for the last 10 years or so, there have been attempts for the various parties to agree and they don't seem to work. They seem to agree, then after the agreement they break what they agreed -- in South Africa, in so many places, they have sat, said we have now agreed, and then things have broken down.

But a solution has to be found. Perhaps, if I may, say the first question to the distinguished panel, democracy in Africa -- Sir Arthur Lewis wrote a book, "Politics in West Africa", in 1963 and he said that he didn't think that the western type of democracy, winner take all elections could work in Africa. And he suggested that where the divisions -- ethnic divisions -- are so severe, he called it cleavage -- then the only model that could work is one where all the parties, somehow come together, and form some sort of coalition in order to form a government, because the winner take all arrangements where one of the groups comes in and the other one is out is totally unacceptable.

So, the question is, is the democratic arrangement which is being attempted in the Côte d'Ivoire legitimate? And if the sides are so divided, is it a legitimate attempt that will be accepted by the parties? Clearly they are not accepting. Is it possible that maybe we have the wrong design of democracy for African countries?

MS. HOLLINGSWORTH: I'll start with that. For all of you that are familiar with International Crisis Group's reporting, the democracy and rule of law issues are very strong. We do a lot of elections reporting and this is a very hard issue and I don't want to go too far out on one side or the other, but in the case of Côte d'Ivoire, you know, to me this is the perfect example of there was a clear winner and a clear loser, and the people did speak and they did vote, and, you know, the regional side of this that Sarah touched on and the implications for the upcoming elections over the next 12 months -- Congo, for us, is huge right now -- of looking ahead to what's going to happen in November, all of this is very troubling for the implications for those elections when maybe it's not as clear cut as this case was, which was a clear winner and clear loser.

So, we're very concerned about, you know, the message that this does send, as Sarah was talking about, but, you know, in this instance, you know, we really need to push for the people's vote to be respected.

I'll leave it there.

MR. SURUMA: Chaloka?

MR. BEYANI: Thank you very much. It's a very vital and important question, I think, to address at this point in time, but in addressing it,

perhaps we should also have a slight historical perspective, that most African states fought for independence in the name of self-determination, that is the will of the people. They gained independence on that basis.

We then saw between the 50s, if you take Ghana, Nigeria later in the 60s, a whole range of arrangements in relation to government that cemented the exclusion of others from the political system.

The way to remove that was a litany of military coups through Africa. By the 1990s after the changes in Eastern and Central Europe, African states and people again took to the streets and governments began to change. Most governments then adopted the formula of two terms in terms of presidential tenure in office, which was broadly accepted. Others, of course, shortly after that, began to renege on that principle and change those systems, which means that the political elite bought time and concessions from the early 1990s but after that, they went back to their old ways.

Why do I say this? There are a number of countries that have remained on the democratic path. There are others who used the conversion to democracy more as an arrangement to buy power over a period of time. So, what has happened in Ivory Coast, from my point of view, is that it goes against the grain. I think what Africa is actually looking for is a pacific sentiment for the change of power between regimes, period. This is what is at stake.

Now, two problems here come to mind. First, electoral commissions have come undersold in most places, and the battle for democracy is hinging around who controls the electoral commissions. We saw in Ivory

Coast how, as the official was reading out the results, someone simply grabbed the piece of paper and tore it to pieces as if to say, look, what you have done here is actually useless. We are going to continue in power whatever the outcome.

We saw in Kenya the chair of the electoral commission himself saying he was not in control of his body and he actually didn't know who won the election. And so Zambia has elections, I come from Zambia. Zambia has elections in October, and we have seen, again, the chair of the electoral commission who is a distinguished judge, has been forced out. Those are indicators. One you see changes in the composition of the electoral commission shortly before the election, then you should know that there's actually trouble ahead.

So, I think electoral commissions should be strengthened in that regard. I do not think that power-sharing arrangements are actually appropriate where someone has clearly won and the people have spoken. That's a swindle in relation to those who voted, and voted and spoken so clearly, and I think that these arrangements should be out of the window.

Kenya was exceptional because, A, the balance was quite close, the intervention was timely by the UN and the AU, and quite effectively so, and the coalition was in place only in order to allow a number of important reforms, and those reforms have taken place. And that was the purpose of the coalition arrangement. Beyond that, full electoral systems will come back. So, to conclude this aspect, Africa needs to get rid of the first post -- they first pass the

post system because of precisely the problems that you mentioned, and try to move towards proportion representation in terms of electoral system. That's number one.

Number two, systems of representation of people, the delineation of constituencies in terms of the outcome of results clearly has to change. It was drawn by colonial governments in terms of their control of the population and administrative units, and most of those have not changed. Kenya has made important strides in that regard recognizing that this is where the problem actually lays in terms of the outcomes.

And finally, there has to be an acceptance of the fact that once you enter into an electoral process, then the winner out of that process should be recognized as the legitimate authority, otherwise it's pointless to enter into an election if you know that the incumbent, at the end of the day, will say, forget all of this anyway, I'm here to stay.

MR. SURUMA: Thank you.

MS. MARGON: Just to add to those excellent points. I think we're looking in many cases at nascent states either in terms of being post-conflict or post-strong man, and so what we have are some very, very weak institutions where the election is a critical part of a longer process and what's so key is not only the election which has to occur and the results have to be elected, but the education and the work that goes on between those elections, and I think that's where we have been missing, and so what ends up happening is an election where nobody has to necessarily be held accountable because the end

game is that you can work out a power sharing government.

The model we have of elections in the United States clearly is not the model that should be replicated anywhere in Africa or around the world in terms of a cut -- a specific mold, but there are elements of it that continue to change, that continue to adjust, that are important and should be considered, but basically I think as we've seen in all these uprisings around the world that these are basic, fundamental freedoms that people want. They want the right to vote. They want the right to choose their leaders. So, no, our model of democracy or elections may not work specifically for Côte d'Ivoire, but there is a model that will work and we have to help them, support them to get there. It can't happen overnight, as we well see, but it can happen.

MR. SURUMA: Thank you very much. Do you have --?

MS. MCKELVEY: Well, I'm not a political scientist as much as a humanitarian, maybe just a couple of observations. I've heard from a number of Ivoirians that they weren't so keen on either candidate and maybe we should just start over kind of thing. Now, that's not in the cards. No one is suggesting that, but there's a certain amount of, can we please move beyond this, and so I think let's just have another election. And I think as Sarah said, it represents people's desire to choose and if they're going to be denied the choice that they made here, in other words, clear winner, clear loser, but like so many places in the world it was not a landslide, as an honest election, it was, you know, people on both sides of this, so I think people really do want to continue to have some sort of electoral process that allows them to choose.

I think just a reflection from an earlier time in Côte d'Ivoire, obviously Houphouet-Boigny was president for life, whether he intended to die in office or not but did, but he made quite an important fetish of making sure that people thought of themselves as Ivoirians first and foremost and a national identity and a place that perhaps didn't by other measures have a national identity, and it was very interesting to see how quickly his successor was able to break down any sense of unity by highlighting the differences among people, and those of us that work on things like refugees and so on, see that it's this kind of using electoral politics or religion or whatever to schooling, to highlight the differences between people and to demonize some and to give the impression that it's okay to kill those people because they're different, kind of thing. That's not a very helpful way forward, I would say, in the future, so I would sort of take issue with the idea that elections and democracy are not necessarily the answer for Africa.

I think the continent has, you know, in this convention on IDPs, the African continent has been far out in front of the rest of the world on elucidating these principles. Now, whether they observe all of them, not necessarily, but there's not another region of the world that has a similar convention, so I think there are a lot of good thinkers and in this global world, I don't know that there should not be democracy in Africa as much as we're pushing for it other places.

MR. SURUMA: Thank you very much. We turn over to you, the audience, for questions. Try to keep your questions brief and please say who you are, and then we'll take a few questions at a time and then the panel can

respond.

MR. WAGENSEL: Thank you. My name is Steve Wagenseil. I also was a Peace Corps volunteer in Côte d'Ivoire a long time ago and most recently I spent 14 months in Abidjan working with the UNDP on the elections project. I left there in December of 2009 because it was pretty obvious the elections really weren't going anywhere having been postponed twice while I was there.

A couple of points about possible solutions. You mentioned the Joint Commission with Angola, and I'm concerned about the possibility of using Angola as -- leverage on Angola to help lever Gbagbo out of office because there's no doubt that Angola has been supporting him financially and perhaps even with mercenaries. I don't know whether that's practical or not. Sanctions are an imprecise weapon.

On the question of elections themselves I will echo entirely what you said, the people in Côte d'Ivoire wanted elections, they were tired of having the elections postponed, they were tired of the way the president had simply remained in office for an additional five years, totally constitutionally legal and so forth, but they were getting a little tired of Gbagbo, and there's no question that the election results as announced by the chairman of the election commission were accurate, that Gbagbo lost. He won votes in the north; Ouattara won votes in the south. It was not a total division.

My question really for all of you, taking into account the political side, the humanitarian side, how does this town in this environment, as you

mentioned, how can we do something? I was very handicapped when I was working there because the U.S. government could not assist the UNDP in the elections project because of the sanctions that are imposed on Blaguday and others. Can we break out of that mold? Can we get a new paradigm? I don't know. It's very frustrating. I've been watching it closely with tears in my eyes for months.

MR. SURUMA: Thank you very much. Yes.

MR. LONDONI: Bernard Londoni. I'm with iJET Intelligence Risk Systems. My question again will go to Sarah with regard to the role of the military.

You mentioned that the military now is paying allegiance to Gbagbo and which I believe if Ouattara becomes president you worry maybe they could be -- they might not pay allegiance to him. My point with the military, I think, has to do with how we could look for it, because now if you look at the sanctions, the military also is fighting for its own survival. Most of the EU sanctions have targeted even those top military commanders, so they believe if Gbagbo goes, then they should go also. So, maybe you should look at it in terms of your policies if you could recommend. It's an issue. It's an issue in the sense that even if Laurent Gbagbo goes today, the military will still worry and try to find a way if they could also stay in power, so that they could protect themselves because they will not pay allegiance to Ouattara when they know that Ouattara is going to prosecute them.

MR. SURUMA: The gentleman behind.

MR. ZARTMAN: William Zartman from SAIS. I've led two reconciliation workshops in the mid -- around 2005 in Ivory Coast among all the political parties and obviously I failed.

I have three questions. Why do we not station a ship off shore to jam Gbagbo's radio and television programs? Have we learned nothing from the experience with Ali Amil Kaleen in Rwanda? Why do we not follow the suggestions of the International Crisis Group on pre-military actions to take? Have we learned nothing from Liberia? And why do we not label blood coffee, cocoa, and timber the same way we label blood diamonds? Have we learned nothing from Angola and Sierra Leone?

MR. SURUMA: Thank you very much. Finally, young lady?

SPEAKER: Hi, my name is Atin Adwuir and I'm a student at SAIS. I know we want very much for Gbagbo to step aside, but I don't see, given how Ivory Coast is very divided, I don't see how Ouattara can rule effectively, and I know this may not be something that makes sense to a lot of people here, but I'm wondering what if we speak with Ouattara to have him recognize Gbagbo as the president just for the sake of peace and stability?

MR. SURUMA: Finally, over here.

MR. OSEI: Thanks, my name is Kafour Osei. In addition to the question he asked about the military, especially when some members of the military perceive Ouattara to be behind the rebellion, how would you address the fact that they might not pledge loyalty to him if he were to become president? That's my question.

MR. SURUMA: Will you say who you are? Your name?

MR. OSEI: Kafour Osei.

MR. SURUMA: So, I think we take those for the time being. Who would like to start? Question about the military. Maybe Sarah, you want to --

MS. HOLLINGSWORTH: I can start more generally, and, yeah, I think -- and something we haven't touched on is Ouattara's support inside of Ivory Coast and I think -- I think the underlying conversation here -- and we need to talk about the communication that's happened since the November 28th timeframe because Gbagbo basically has the television to himself, Ouattara is in the hotel, he does have access to radio, but the impression often is that the West is sort of telling him what to say and he's not communicating well to the people of the Ivory Coast.

However, he is the elected president of the Ivory Coast and it must be recognized as such. There's a lot of heated rhetoric going on by Gbagbo's supporters and his inner circle right now. There's a lot of misinformation that's getting out to the public, and so the communication strategy here is something that needs to be addressed as well because it's very real on the ground.

I think the Ivoirian people are getting some misinformation on what's going on by Gbagbo's supporters on sort of this solidarity of who's with them, of who's against them, from a regional standpoint. So, all of this needs to be discussed and I think that we really need to get a better picture inside of Ivory Coast because just kind of blanketly saying that Ouattara doesn't have the

support of the Ivoirian people I don't think is necessarily true.

So, I just wanted to make that point.

MS. MARGON: And just to that point, and then I'll answer the question on the military or at least try to answer them, I think we'd be kidding ourselves if we said, sure, Mr. Gbagbo, go ahead, take your presidency back for the sake of peace and security and then, you now, walked away and said, great, that one was solved. I think there's far too many other individuals and groups in that country to go along with that and I think there may be a massive eruption, just like we're seeing a massive eruption now if we went in that direction.

So, aside from the fact that the Ivoirian people spoke at 54 percent and said, we want Ouattara to be the president, I think -- which you can't go back on -- I also think there are too many groups, militaries, paramilitaries, other individuals, who have a longstanding interest in seeing him leave, so I don't really think that's an option and not one that I would recommend as well. But it's a bold suggestion at the very least.

In terms of the military, these are really good and important questions because I think -- and frankly ones that I don't think have been delved into enough. I think if -- Gbagbo is clearly surrounded by a number of hard liners, his wife, as well as others, and they're clearly egging him on to stay and dig in his heels, and I think the questions are, if they were convinced or he were convinced to step down, then how would we handle not only the military but also the paramilitary forces that have been created, and I think Ouattara will have an incredible job of working to ensure stability, both in the immediate aftermath of

his departure should he actually go, but then also in the long-term, and I think clearly security sector reform -- the UN happens to be pretty good at some DDR and other types of processes, but bringing in some of the regional international organizations to look at some of the low level commanders, figuring out how many people are actually in the military would be a really good start probably, but then looking at some of the top level individuals to see who actually does need to be prosecuted, and that probably should not happen solely by Ouattara's government, but by independent actors, the UN and others, who can come in and make those recommendations. Where they're prosecuted going forward, you know, the ICC is always out there, but I think if they could be prosecuted at the national or the regional level, there's a nice court that's virtually empty in nearby Sierra Leone that could potentially be a venue. But putting it -- having it happen somewhere in the region would send a really important message, I think, and help with some of the communication issues.

So, you're both absolutely correct. I mean, it's a tremendous issue and obviously going forward the security sector reform is going to be equally as critical as scaling up the civilian institutions and helping the displaced people get back -- get back home, but we're not there yet unfortunately. It's important to do the contingency planning and look at everything, but we're so far from there at that point that we need to deal with what's in front of us immediately at the same time that we consider those options.

MR. SURUMA: Margaret, you want to talk about how Washington can help?

MS. MCKELVEY: I was just thinking of the woman that made the proposal. I think that is, in a way, reflective of what some people are saying. Is there not just a way to take this conflict away from us so that we don't have to go through some sort of more open warfare on that and juxtaposed with the -- what does the Côte d'Ivoire situation say say to the rest of the continent, to the rest of the world? I mean, we, in the State Department, will often say, well, what is the message about Qaddafi going back to the Libya situation, and what does that telegraph to someone like Gbagbo? Did the Kenyan arrangement really work out as a government of national unity? The Zimbabwean one has not worked out particularly well. I mean, each situation has its unique characteristics but also in this globalized environment, people are watching to see how it is done elsewhere, and I think that's why a lot of us are a little pessimistic about not going through more open armed conflict.

To go to Professor Zartman's question about things like jamming and so on, as I understand it, not being a technician on that, that's a little more complicated, apparently than -- you're saying not -- in terms of the U.S. government doing something like that. I do think that it's just very important for folks like you all who are here to keep these issues, keep the advocacy going so that people do not let this particular situation fall off.

When we talk about strengthening the UN, you know, it's fine to change the words in the resolution that establishes a peacekeeping operation, it's got to be backed up by trained troops that can actually do it, and equipment. So, you have to keep up the pressure on that sort of thing.

MR. SURUMA: To you.

MR. BEYANI: Well, very little to say because not many questions were addressed to me, but I would say that it will be important for the U.S. to add its voice in relation to that situation and also to see that the events, I think, in Libya, but more importantly, the leadership must come from the African Union. And to give support to the African Union, to push it to act and act more decisively. The African Union should also act in cooperation with ECOWAS and ECOMOG in Africa is the most effective regional military organization, but one suspects that because of the events and the impending elections in Nigeria, ECOWAS actually can't act at the moment, but perhaps after the elections in Nigeria the situation might become clearer in terms of, you know, what decisive measures ECOWAS and ECOMOG might take.

But the issue of Ouattara recognizing Gbagbo -- first of all, elections actually matter. And I think that if people accept the terms of the discourse, they should also accept the outcome, clearly, and we should also ask the question, why do losing presidents actually want to remain in power? I think that's critical. There's a system of patronage, politically, control over populations, but more importantly, when we speak of blood diamonds and blood cocoa, it's control over resources to the exclusion of others. And leaving power also means leaving that system. Handing power over to Ouattara means that Ouattara now is in control of those resources from the point of view of those who are in power and who don't want to do so.

So, the whole issue goes back to what I said earlier, it is to look at

the post-colonial state in Africa. It's in need of reform, effectively and urgently. We might say, yes, the coalition has not worked in Kenya, but actually if you leave aside the day-to-day wrangling and you look at the nature of the reforms that have been undertaken, and I speak as former member of the expats that was involved in making up the Kenyan constitution, the lady seated in the front row here was also involved, what we looked at is what actually went wrong in terms of institutions, in terms of the political framework, in terms of resources, their management, the finances of the country, the treatment of the people in terms of the abuse of rights. And if you look at that constitution it's probably the first one that reforms the post-colonial state and that tends to draw processes within it that are linked to institutions, and that attempt to empower institutions, limit the power and patronage of the presidency, such that there is nowhere where the president actually has a single power of appointment by himself or herself. Those powers come from some other bodies.

Some of you who followed the events of the wrangle over the past few weeks, because that was an attempt to return to the old system, which the new constitution blocks altogether and which immediately created a crisis. Electoral reform, the question of the military, that we have discussed, the constitution requires the reform of the military. The problem with the military here is that it has loyalty to one side. But that loyalty is not just a matter of political loyalty, it's ethnic loyalty too, it's ethnic about resources. If Gbagbo tomorrow said that I'm stepping down, those around him would be the first one to threaten him. Why? Because there's a sense of loss on their part when he steps down.

It's not just him; it's a whole system around him. And I think that's the gist of the problem. And in Kenya, the echelons of the military must clearly be balanced, both in regional and ethnic terms, so there's a process of reform in relation to the police, in relation to the executive, the cabinet. Throughout the system, it recognizes the peculiar character of African states in relation to their populations and that tends to have a constitutional framework that responds both for the character and configurations of those populations.

MR. SURUMA: Thank you very much. I think we have time for a couple more questions. At the back.

SPEAKER: Hello, my name is Nakala Bouchet (phonetic) I was given the opportunity by one of my friends and many other to talk about Ivoirian crisis. I'm not going to open a debate. There are a few things I would like to add and also that the panelists can talk about.

There is an embargo, an economic sanction against Gbagbo and the international community thinks that that's the way to solve the issue. Of course, I don't have any proof of that, but what is going on in Ivory Coast and we don't see in the media is the following: Ivoirian cannot have access to their savings because the banks control by France have closed in Ivory Coast under the influence of the international community, so you wake up one day, you go to the Bank of America and you're told that you cannot have access to your savings. That's something nobody talks about.

Second, the ships cannot come to Ivory Coast, of course, because of the economic sanction and we are lacking the basic medicine in Ivory Coast

because of the same economic sanctions, and then people who are dying in the Ivory Coast are not those who are killed by Gbagbo's forces or by Alassane Ouattara's forces only. People who are dying are mothers in the hospitals who cannot deliver. People who are dying are children and many of those people are dying in the Ivory Coast.

So, wouldn't you want to have like a clear perspective of the situation in Ivory Coast and looking for solutions, I would like you to think about all those aspect the international media don't talk about and the policymakers failed to address. Thank you very much.

MR. SURUMA: Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MR. SURUMA: The lady in back in the right.

MS. MITCHELL: Hello, Wanda Mitchell. Attorney and consultant on international development law issues. I just wanted to make two comments and the panel may react if you'd like, but I have a couple of concerns about ignoring an election that have to do with trade and investment and economic growth.

If you don't honor your word, then no one can do business with you. And that's a major problem on the continent. There has to be some level of consistency and I think my second point on whether a different structure is needed, and I think any structure that any country in Africa or any other part of the world would like to have, they should have, but my one concern would be to make certain that it's clear who is in charge on various issues at various times.

We live in a different world. It is a world that is really controlled by computers at incredible speed, and it simply requires someone on the ready with respect to various issues. So, while I would agree also with proportional representation, I would encourage the need to have real leadership in real time.

MR. SURUMA: Thank you very much. The lady in front of you.

SPEAKER: Hi, Chandsee Pondev, Devex, (phonetic) I'm wondering about the ability of the humanitarian community to serve the conflict-affected populations both within Côte d'Ivoire and in Liberia and the extent to which the humanitarian response is being politicized. I know Dr. Beyani had sort of mentioned this a bit in his opening remarks.

MR. SURUMA: The last question in the back?

MR. KENNEDY: Hi, Josh Kennedy. Save Darfur Coalition. I was wondering, and this maybe relates to Ann's communications question, when the election results came out I looked at the independent media we could get coming out of Ivory Coast and there were several, what appeared to be Catholic church run stations that seemed to be running very uplifting spiritual messages and then I flipped over to RTI which was very pointedly running a documentary on Patrice Lumumba. So, is there an opportunity to tap into the UN's independent radio, have them broadcast messages of peace, and as well as to tap into the Catholic church's not only their stature within Gbagbo support community but also their stature across the country and try and counter some of these more inflammatory messages?

MR. SURUMA: Anybody want a go at this?

MS. MARGON: Can I just -- Dr. Zartman, your points are all very well taken. I think there are many who would say that the reason Charles Taylor elected to step down from Liberia was because there were U.S. votes not too far away, but I think all of your points go directly back to the question -- I think it was Steven, if I'm not mistaken -- who asked how we can make things move in Washington and I think before we can offer these as options, we need to figure out how we can help move things in Washington. That said, I would agree that this has to be not solely a unilateralist intervention of any kind whether it be diplomatic or military, but I do think we need to see more engagement from the Administration in pushing forward with these alternative ideas that can help bring, for lack of a better term, a creative consensus about how to dislodge Gbagbo and address all of the next level in order to see stability progress in Côte d'Ivoire. It sounds like you certainly have a number of excellent suggestions that should be brought into that thinking.

And I know there are folks at the State Department, at the political level in the Africa bureau working on this and in fact have had some relative freedom to move as much as they can on this, but again because this is indirect U.S. interest, not direct U.S. interest, you end up unfortunately running up against a bunch of hurtles.

I'm happy to talk offline about some thoughts on how to try to move the Administration having just come off four years on the Hill if that's helpful.

MS. HOLLINGSWORTH: Well, thank you for those questions. I'd

like to first start off with, there's -- to me there's really not enough of a sense of urgency on what's going on right now. We're hearing the words conflict, we're hearing, you know, things like that. Crisis Group has come out and called this a civil war, it's begun, and so I really want to hit home that the humanitarian situation that the gentleman talked about, for the people on the ground right now, no access to resources, to banks, they're not getting paid, these are huge issues and they need to be solved yesterday. This -- you know, we have some pretty strong recommendations here and we want it to be ECOWAS and AU led because it seems like, you know, everyone is getting on the same page right now and so we need to use that momentum to use these recommendations to get a resolution to this, because the people on the ground are suffering and so, you know, I'm a little wary of any sort of prolonged recommendations just because of the fact of the urgency of the situation as it stands today.

On the -- I understand your frustration on the economic sanctions and the way that that affects people on the ground. I know that that has been part of the dialogue here in Washington on sanctions and how that affects people, whether -- what targeted financial sanctions does, and the sanctions have been working, as Sarah mentioned. And it is kind of closing in on Gbagbo's resource capabilities. However, this has been going on for a while here. We're knocking on the end of March, so the people of Ivory Coast are suffering and I just wanted to kind of reiterate that point and agree with some of your points, sir.

You know, on the leadership and who to pick up the phone to call, you know, that is important to the U.S. You know, they want someone that they

can, you know, pick up the phone -- there needs to be a leader to this country and Ouattara was the elected leader and so that is where we're coming from on this. So, you know, supporting him and supporting his presidency is a big part of our talking points right now.

The extent on how the humanitarian response is being politicized, I can't specifically speak to that question. I'll leave that to Margaret, but, you know, the humanitarian community, this is an escalating situation. You can see from news reports from yesterday and today alone, Abidjan has been on the radar, you know, for all of us that have worked Côte d'Ivoire for quite some time, but it's extremely troubling what's going on in Abidjan right now and the numbers are raising higher and higher the number of people that are leaving, these mass exodus. You know, all of this -- you know, we're past kind of the warning signs of this is bad. It is bad. And so the international community really needs to step up and support ECOWAS and AU and all of the, you know, humanitarian and NGOs that are going to be needed in the coming months.

I'll leave that there.

MS. MCKELVEY: Just on the question of sanctions. A, I can assure the person that answered that at least within the State Department, every time there's a suggestion of putting them on, the counter question is asked, what impact will that have on the average Ivoirian or average whomever, and how do you balance that -- the impact? Will it be successful in dislodging the leadership? It's a blunt tool. I think the sanctions that have been put on Gbagbo and his associates have really taken a bite, but have also had quite an impact on the

local people.

The issue of the banks closing was, I don't think, so much a conspiracy by France and so on, but the bank's response to the sanctions that were put in place by the United States and by some of the European countries as well to comply with not doing business or risk seeing their assets seized.

So, it's -- one is perhaps a little surprised that none of these steps, however blunt they may be, has not dislodged Gbagbo as yet. One could ask, perhaps, as the young woman said, well, maybe Ouattara could recognize Gbagbo. Maybe Gbagbo's supporters could encourage him to step down for the sake of peace and security in Côte d'Ivoire. So, the -- it's a kind of unfortunate damage to the people as well. I don't think anyone at this point is prepared to say, well, let's just lift the sanctions because people are being hurt, but that will inevitably become more of a subtext in the dialogue.

As to the question about humanitarian assistance and is it able to get through and is it being politicized, there's no problem on the outside of the country in terms of meeting the needs of refugees, no obstacles except resource obstacles, human resources and financial resources, logistical -- I mentioned that eastern Liberia is very remote, shall we say, so it takes time.

Within Côte d'Ivoire, yes, humanitarian access to neighborhoods of Abidjan to the western part where we have internal displacement as well, that is an issue driven by security as opposed to politics or anything else. I don't think we have seen any politicization of humanitarian assistance in this particular situation and I would say "yet". I mean, it is entirely possible that one could end

up seeing that. I mean, the principle of humanitarianism obviously is that you go in neutral and partial, universal, that can be constrained by access so that one group of people ends up being able to be assisted, another group ends up not being able to be assisted, but there should be, I think, no political motive attributed to any of that.

I certainly recognize that people may well attribute a political motive to that, particularly those among the groups that have not yet received assistance.

MR. SURUMA: Thank you very much. We have run out of time. Thank you very much, everyone. We appreciate your coming.

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CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

/s/Carleton J. Anderson, III

Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia

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