

# INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

## WEST AFRICA: CIVIL UNREST IN COTE D'IVOIRE

12 November 2004

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

### In Brief

This Information Bulletin (no. 1/2004) is being issued for information only. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

### The Situation

Côte d'Ivoire, once one of the most stable and wealthy countries of West Africa, has suffered from civil unrest in the past two years. After an eighteen month ceasefire, renewed clashes occurred, resulting in several casualties of foreign nationals. With the security situation deteriorating, the unrest extended into anti-western violence with looting and destruction of residences, vehicles and other property. French and other foreign nationals were confined to their homes over the week-end. With the worsening situation since Monday, evacuation to their home countries started on Tuesday afternoon.



There is limited information about the humanitarian situation in the country. Electricity and water supplies in the north have been cut for one week; outbreaks of epidemics, especially cholera, are likely. There is concern that the situation in the Côte d'Ivoire will affect neighbouring countries, including potential population movements across the border: the UN indicates that 5,000 Ivoirians have already fled to Liberia, a country which itself is struggling to recover from its own civil war. Ghana has reportedly received hundreds of people.

The Federation Mano River Sub-Regional Office in Abidjan was closed for two days. The Federation's Head of Office and other expatriate delegates are being temporarily relocated for security purposes. The Federation's local staff resumed work on Thursday 11 November.

## **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

The National Red Cross Societies of Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Guinea, Mali and Burkina Faso<sup>1</sup> - where an influx of refugees has started or is expected – are each monitoring the situation and are in close contact with Federation offices in Dakar (Senegal), Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), Monrovia (Liberia) and Freetown (Sierra Leone). Volunteers and local Branches in border areas are carrying out assessment missions on population movement and making initial preparations to assist the refugees. The national societies are linking their assessments with other organizations, focusing on the aspects related to the mandate of the Movement.

The ICRC, as lead agency for the Movement in the Côte d'Ivoire, has been assisting the injured in Abidjan and the northern part of the country. Red Cross volunteers have transferred patients from overcrowded medical posts to better equipped hospitals, and have supplied medicines and bandages. However, it is important to note that, due to the scale of violence, their movement and interventions are restricted.

In Paris airports, the French Red Cross is assisting families arriving from Côte d'Ivoire with warm clothes, accommodation and other basic needs.

## **Coordination**

The Federation is represented in the region by the Regional Delegation for West and Central Africa in Dakar, sub-regional offices in Dakar, Abidjan, Lagos and Yaoundé, and countries offices in Liberia and Sierra Leone. It is in close contact with ICRC, OCHA and other organizations to monitor and assess the situation and participate in developing a regional contingency plan. The Regional Delegation has already participated in *ad hoc* inter-agency meetings. The OCHA office in Dakar is organizing a conference on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire and the possible impact on neighbouring countries; it will be held Friday 12 Nov., and the Regional Delegation will participate.

Further updates on this situation, and on Red Cross action, will be provided in the coming days.

*[Click here to return to the title page or contact information](#)*

*For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeals:*

- Côte d'Ivoire, Appeal 01.22/2004 - [http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?annual04/012204.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual04/012204.pdf)
- Mano River sub-region, Appeal 01.27/2004 - [http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?annual04/012704.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual04/012704.pdf)

*Please also watch for the 2005 Annual Appeals, due to be launched in Geneva on 23 November 2004.*

*The map below reflects countries bordering with Côte d'Ivoire. (Source: <http://www.reliefweb.org>).*

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<sup>1</sup> Red Cross Society of Côte d'Ivoire - <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=182>  
Liberian Red Cross Society - <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=103>  
Red Cross Society of Guinea - <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=77>  
Mali Red Cross - <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=112>  
Burkinabe Red Cross Society - <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=181>