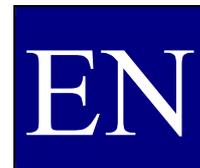




**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



C/04/292

Brussels, 9 November 2004

13297/04 (Presse 292)

Joint Statement of ECOWAS and the EU on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire

ECOWAS and the European Union, meeting in ministerial troika format in Accra, jointly condemned the recent eruption of violence in Côte d'Ivoire that caused the death of both civilians and members of the peace keeping forces. They also condemned the recent attacks against the UN and French forces in the country.

ECOWAS and the EU called on the government of Côte d'Ivoire to take immediate steps to stop violence against innocent civilians and to guarantee the security of foreign nationals residing in Côte d'Ivoire. They also called on all parties to cooperate fully with the UNOCI and French forces in their respective missions.

Both sides underlined that it is unacceptable for any party to cross the Zone of Confidence and urged Ivorian parties to cease immediately all military operations and respect the conditions of the Cease Fire Agreement. They also urged parties to cease immediately all activities that could cause further escalation of the conflict, and condemned in that regard recent inflammatory statements in the Ivorian media.

The EU underlined the important regional role of ECOWAS in the field of peace and security and urged ECOWAS to use all instruments at its disposal to assist in diffusing the current crisis. The EU stands ready to assist ECOWAS in this task through its existing mechanisms.

P R E S S

ECOWAS and the EU welcomed the initiatives taken by His Excellency President Olusegun Obasanjo, Chairman of the African Union, to diffuse the crisis and to take steps towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict. In close cooperation with the United Nations and the African Union, ECOWAS and the European Union will maintain pressure on all parties in order to prevent the conflict from spreading to neighbouring countries. They underlined that it is critical to avoid the present conflict becoming regionalised.

ECOWAS and the EU urged all parties to adhere to their responsibilities under the Linas-Marcoussis and Accra III Agreements. In that regard ECOWAS and the EU welcomed ongoing discussions in the UN Security Council to consider taking measures against those parties or individuals that are in violation of these accords. ECOWAS and the EU stand ready to work with all parties that are willing to take steps towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire.
