

## Delegation of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire

### *Position Paper for the Security Council*

The topics before the United Nations (UN) Security Council (SC) are: Strengthening Peacebuilding to Prevent and Mitigate Conflict; and the Impact of Climate-Related Disasters on International Peace and Security. The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire is deeply committed to intensify its work in peacebuilding in all stages of conflict, as it is one of the primary objectives of the UN and especially the SC to ensure international security. As climate change is increasingly impacting the international system, we are hoping to increase cooperation with other Member States in order to better combat this threat and the severe consequences it has on international peace.

#### **I. Strengthening Peacebuilding to Mitigate Conflict**

Achieving and sustaining durable peace has been one of the key global challenges for decades. The number of violent conflicts affecting the globe today is higher than it has been in the last three decades. In the deeply affected region of West Africa, state-based conflicts alone resulted in over 7,500 deaths in 2017. Poverty, unemployment and political instability have largely contributed to the emergence and outbreak of violent religious and ethnic conflicts and strengthened political extremism and terrorist groups such as the Islamic State (IS) in our neighboring Member State of Mali and other regional neighbors such as Niger and Nigeria. With youth being disproportionately affected by violent conflict, we believe that it is of the utmost importance to create perspectives for young people and include them in the process of peacebuilding in order to achieve durable peace.

The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire highlights the importance of peacebuilding in all stages of conflict, including the prevention and mitigation of conflict and therefore welcomed the General Assembly's (GA) resolution 70/262 (2016) reviewing the architecture of UN peacebuilding. As we believe that sustaining durable peace on a global scale requires international cooperation, especially on a regional level, the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire has remained actively engaged with other Member States of the African Union (AU), strongly supporting its peacebuilding efforts through institutions such as the *African Peace and Security Architecture* (APSA) and the *AU Peace and Security Council* (PSC). Being one of the founding members of the *Economic Community of West African States* (ECOWAS), the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire is convinced that economic stability and regional economic development play a significant role in the prevention of violent conflict and therefore recently signed the *ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement and Trans-Border Security in West Africa*. Welcoming the work of the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire is looking back on the successful termination of the SC's *UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire* (UNOCI) that ended in 2017. We are expressing our appreciation for the large contribution the mission has made to stabilizing the political situation and strengthening regional security after the post-election crisis in the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire in 2011. As over 60% of the population of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire is under the age of 25 years, we are endorsing the SC resolution 2250 (2015) which established the SC's belief that youth perspectives and integration in peace building processes are critical to creating durable peace and preventing conflict. Therefore, the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire also supports the SC resolution 2419 (2019), emphasizing the important role youth can play in combatting the rise of extremism as a contributing factor to the emergence of violent conflicts.

Young people, despite being the future of our world and the key persons to consider when striving to sustain peace in the long term, are often neglected in discussing measures of peacebuilding. Therefore, the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire would like to lay focus on the role of youth in the prevention of conflict, as well as in post-conflict rehabilitation. In order to support young people's visions of peace, we need to create space for youth to engage in political processes. Existing initiatives such as UNICEF youth centers or the *United Network of Young Peacebuilders* (UNOY), which connects youth organizations across 40 countries to strengthen youth-led peacebuilding, provide a useful foundation to build on. To further extend the capacities of such platforms, the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire encourages an increased cooperation of the SC with other UN-bodies such as UNICEF, but most importantly with civil society organizations (CSOs), in order to increase civic participation in local governance and facilitate inter-community dialogue. Furthermore, we would like to highlight that access to education is fundamental for facilitating young people's positive engagement in peace. In order to improve accessibility of basic education, as well as introducing peace education in educational facilities around the world, the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire is advocating for a close cooperation with the PBC in order to enhance peacekeeping operation mandates with special regards to educational programs. In addition, as poverty,

unemployment and a lack of economic opportunity among youth are root causes of the emergence of conflict, we would like to highlight the need to strengthen national development and peacebuilding plans with reference to regional economic development. We believe that empowering youth will allow us to create a better world for everyone, which is why the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire invites all members of the SC to join our efforts in order to strengthen the role of youth in peacebuilding.

## **II. The Impact of Climate-Related Disasters on International Peace and Security**

Over the last few decades, there has been a significant and continuous increase in the number of climate-related disasters around the world. The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and its neighboring West-African States are among the most severely affected Member States. Droughts, desertification and water scarcity due to increasing global temperatures have had severe consequences for agriculture and food production in the region. The growing food insecurity has led to the forced displacement of millions of people and intensified conflicts over scarce resources. The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire is alarmed about the disruptive effect climate-related disasters have on fragile peacebuilding processes in the West-African region, and therefore urges all Member States to recognize the impact, climate change has on international peace and security.

The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire stands behind the General Assembly's resolution 62/281 (2009), recognizing the possible security implications of climate change and noting the respective responsibilities of the principal organs of the UN, including the SC. We actively support the SC resolution 2349 (2017), establishing that climate change affects regional stability and impacts factors such as food insecurity and water scarcity. As these factors are directly linked to the intensification of violent conflicts, we are highly encouraging Member States of the SC to officially recognize climate change as a direct threat to international peace and security. As the agricultural sector makes up over 50% of the Ivorian economy, our economic development has increasingly been hindered by climate-related disasters. The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire has therefore adopted a national sustainable development strategy, whose main components are defined in parallel to a national plan to combat poverty. We stand behind Secretary General Antonio Guterres' report to the SC, highlighting how scarcity of natural resources is one of the root causes of violent conflict. Recognizing that climate change is a global issue, we highly appreciate the *Department for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs'* (DPPA) pilot initiative named *Climate Security Mechanism* which encourages the cooperation with and input from other UN-bodies such as the *United Nations Development Program* (UNDP) or *UN Environment*. Further strengthening regional cooperation to combat climate change, the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire endorses the efforts of the ECOWAS' *Climate Change Project Steering Committee*, which have strengthened regional capacities to adapt to climate change and its associated challenges for the West-African population. As a member of ECOWAS, we warmly welcome the collaborative efforts between the SC and ECOWAS and encourage both parties to further strengthen their partnership. The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire stands behind the SC's call for more risk assessments on water and water management in response to the situation in the Lake Chad Basin in 2017, as similar challenges occur all throughout Western Africa and other world regions.

Convinced that international and regional cooperation is crucial in order to successfully combat the challenges arising with global climate change, the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire is strongly promoting an increased collaboration of the SC with other UN agencies, such as the UNDP, the DPPA and the *UN office for Disaster Risk Reduction* (UNDRR) in order collectively accumulate and share data on climate-related issues and disaster relief. The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire is recognizing and welcoming the increasing exchange of UN-bodies on this issue, but stresses the need to increase our efforts beyond mere discussion. We invite Member States to also join forces with regional alliances such as the EU, AU or ECOWAS, as they often better equipped to assess the severity of regional issues, such as water scarcity or food insecurity. We are hoping that an increased exchange of information on the effects of climate change on international peace and security will greatly improve the effectiveness of the SC's peacebuilding missions around the world. Creating a better response to climate-related disasters, especially in conflict-prone areas, will significantly facilitate the SC's efforts to ensure international peace and security. The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire is therefore looking forward to working together with other Member States of the SC in order to find durable solutions to these issues.