

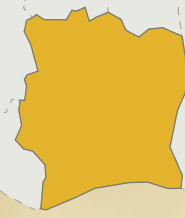


# Côte d'Ivoire

In 2010, a longstanding protracted conflict erupted into intense fighting in the wake of Côte d'Ivoire's first presidential election since Laurent Gbagbo was elected President in October 2000. While the United Nations certified the results in favour of Alassane Ouattara, Gbagbo and his supporters refused to concede power. Three months of intense fighting followed.

The **Wayamo Foundation** and **Konrad Adenauer Stiftung** retrace the key events that led the International Criminal Court Prosecutor of accusing both Gbagbo and Charles Blé Goudé for four counts of crimes against humanity, including ordering murder and rape. After the ICC acquitted both Gbagbo and Blé Goudé from all charges in 2019, the Prosecutor filed a notice of appeal against this decision which is now being considered by the ICC Appeals Chamber.

-  **Domestic accountability** timeline of events
-  **International accountability** timeline of events



23 JULY 2000

**New Constitution**  
Côte d'Ivoire adopts a new constitution that gives international treaties and agreements legal authority above domestic laws. Once ratified, an international treaty is integrated into the domestic legal system without the need for any further action for its provisions to be enforceable in domestic law.

18 APRIL 2003

**Gbagbo recognises the International Criminal Court**  
President Laurent Gbagbo recognised the ad hoc jurisdiction of the ICC, permitting a possible investigation into alleged crimes committed by his regime.

2001 – 2010

**Laurent Gbagbo's presidency**  
Laurent Gbagbo © 2012 Paterne Didi Flickr

MAY 2011

**President Alassane Ouattara inaugurated**  
President Ouattara vows to end impunity for the worst crimes.

JUNE 2011

**Establishment of a Special Investigative Unit (Cellule Spéciale d'Enquête)**  
Created in June by ministerial decree, the Special Investigative Unit consists of magistrates, police officers and registrars. The Unit is tasked with investigating the crimes and offenses committed after the proclamation of the results of the second round of the presidential election on 28 November 2010. It concentrates all the judicial inquiries opened into the crimes perpetrated during the post-electoral crisis, with the exception of cases falling within the jurisdiction of the military tribunal.

JULY 2011

**Establishment of a National Commission of Inquiry (Commission Nationale d'Enquête)**  
In July 2011, the Ivorian government created the National Commission of Inquiry. This administrative (not judicial) commission is tasked with investigating the post-election crisis.

SEPTEMBER 2011

**Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission**  
The Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CDVR) is launched with a mandate to build reconciliation and forge unity.

11 APRIL 2011

**Simone and Laurent Gbagbo Arrested**  
The presidential couple were arrested in their residences by a coalition of Ivorian Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire (FRCI) and French forces.

3 OCTOBER 2011

**ICC Prosecutor opens investigation**  
The ICC prosecutor's office opens an investigation relating to the situation in Côte d'Ivoire after obtaining authorisation from the Pre-trial Chamber of the Court. The investigation could have covered crimes committed from September 19, 2002, onward, but instead focused on alleged crimes against humanity committed during the 2010–2011 post-electoral violence.

11 NOVEMBER 2011

**Ivorian authorities surrender Gbagbo to the ICC**  
5 DECEMBER 2011  
**Gbagbo makes initial appearance before the ICC**

29 FEBRUARY 2012

**Arrest Warrant for Simone Gbagbo**  
The Pre-Trial Chamber III issued an arrest warrant for Simone Gbagbo.

15 FEB. 2013

**Rome Statute Ratification**  
Côte d'Ivoire ratifies the Rome Statute, thereby making its provisions directly applicable on its territory.  
Côte d'Ivoire ratifies the Rome Statute © 2013 ICC

DECEMBER 2013

**Special Investigation and Examination Unit (Cellule Spéciale d'Enquête et d'Instruction)**  
The Special Investigation and Examination Unit replaces the Special Investigative Unit. Earlier in the month, Ouattara announces that the Special Cell is no longer needed. Under pressure from national and international actors, the government backtracked and instead extended the Unit's mandate to create the Special Investigation and Examination Unit.

22 MARCH 2014

**Ivorian authorities surrender Charles Blé Goudé to the ICC**  
27 MARCH 2014  
**Blé Goudé makes his initial appearance before the ICC**

12 JUNE 2014

**ICC judges confirm charges against Laurent Gbagbo**  
Pre-Trial Chamber I confirms charges of crimes against humanity, including murder, rape, and other inhumane acts, against Gbagbo.

JULY 2014

**Trials in connection with the National Commission of Inquiry (CNE)**  
Twenty individuals are reportedly prosecuted in connection with the CNE's report. The investigations include crimes committed by all sides and led to the indictment of eight pro-Ouattara members of the military. The indicted supporters of Ouattara remained in government posts and, as of 2020, had not faced trial.

11 DECEMBER 2014

**ICC judges confirm charges against Charles Blé Goudé**  
Pre-Trial Chamber I confirms charges of crimes against humanity, including murder, rape, and other inhumane acts, against Blé Goudé.

11 DECEMBER 2014

**ICC rejects Côte d'Ivoire's Admissibility Challenge in the case of Simone Gbagbo**  
Judges reject Côte d'Ivoire's admissibility challenge, claiming that Simone Gbagbo could not be tried at the ICC because she was facing trial for crimes committed during the election violence in 2010–2011. The Chamber found that Côte d'Ivoire's domestic authorities were not taking tangible, concrete and progressive steps aimed at ascertaining whether Simone Gbagbo is criminally responsible for the same conduct that is alleged in the case before the Court.

26 DEC. 2014

**Trial of Simone Gbagbo and 82 co-accused**  
The trial of Simone Gbagbo and 82 co-accused opens at the Court of Assizes in Abidjan. The trial concerns both alleged militants and militiamen who supported Gbagbo, as well as members of Gbagbo's last government. It deals with crimes against the state ("atteinte à la sûreté de l'État") and not conduct amounting to international crimes. Human rights groups criticise the proceedings, contending defense attorneys did not have access to their clients' files, unreliable witnesses, lack of witness protection and incomplete investigations. (OIDH 2015)  
Simone Gbagbo © 2014 ICC

MARCH 2015

**Trials in the military justice system**  
Military prosecutors are forced to discontinue the prosecution of two pro-Gbagbo commanders for their role in the indiscriminate shelling of residential areas of Abobo in March 2011, after failing to produce sufficient evidence. The military justice system tries a handful of cases involving pro-Gbagbo officers and soldiers implicated in killing civilians during the crisis, but has been criticised by international and local human rights groups for the lack of rigor with which it is pursuing these cases.

10 MARCH 2015

**Ruling in trial of Simone Gbagbo and 82 co-accused**  
The court handed down varying verdicts. Simone Gbagbo is given 20 years in prison, twice the amount requested by the prosecutor. Civil society observers found the verdicts severe given the gaps in investigation and the weakness of the evidence presented. Charges of war crimes were added to the trial, in light of the ICC arrest warrant issued against Simone Gbagbo.

11 MARCH 2015

**Gbagbo and Blé cases are joined**  
Trial Chamber I grants the prosecution's request to combine the Gbagbo and Blé Goudé cases, reasoning that the charges in both cases were sufficiently similar, that the joinder does not pose a serious prejudice to the accused, and that it is in the interest of justice.  
Laurent Gbagbo (left) and Charles Blé Goudé (right) © 2015 ICC

MARCH 2015

**Creation of reparations commission**  
The Commission Nationale pour la Réconciliation et l'Indemnisation des Victimes (CONARIV) is created by presidential ordinance to carry out the victims' reparation process alongside the Programme National de Cohésion Sociale (PNES). CONARIV is mandated to produce a consolidated list of all victims of the Ivorian crisis and to supervise the implementation of the reparations program.

JUNE 2015

**Investigations to close?**  
Human rights organisations react to what they considered to be credible information that some of the investigations were to be closed, sending a public letter to President Ouattara appealing to him to allow domestic cases to continue.

28 JAN. 2016

**Trial of Goudé and Gbagbo begins**  
The joint trial begins before ICC Trial Chamber I in The Hague. The Prosecutor presents evidence over 231 days of hearings.  
Opening of the trial of Laurent Gbagbo and Charles Blé Goudé © 2016 ICC

20 JULY 2016

**CSEI expanded to include terrorism**  
A government communiqué announces the decision of the Council of Ministers to adopt a decree expanding the mandate of the CSEI to include terrorism.

30 OCT. 2016

**Côte d'Ivoire adopts a new Constitution**  
President of the Ivory Coast Alassane Ouattara at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C. on November 7, 2017. © Public domain

DECEMBER 2016

**Domestic cases continue**  
A UN Independent Expert Report on Capacity Building and Technical Cooperation with Côte d'Ivoire in the Field of Human Rights finds that, as of December 2016, 17 cases linked to the post-electoral crisis were still pending before the courts, while 31 out of 66 cases had already been tried. 29 had been brought before the Indictment Division, and six were before the Court of Appeal.

13 APR. 2017

**General sentenced to 18 years**  
General Bruno Dogbo Blé, a former army commander, is sentenced to 18 years in prison for illegal arrests and detentions, assassination, forced disappearances and removal of bodies.

18 JULY 2017

**Gbagbo minister sentenced to 4 years**  
Assoa Adou is sentenced to four years in prison and a CFA 200,000 fine for disruption to the peace, under article 169 of the criminal court. The court added this charge, which did not exist in the original charges.  
General Assoa Adou © 2016 Issam Zejly / Jeune Afrique

MARCH 2017 & JULY 2018

**Simone Gbagbo acquitted and acquittal subsequently overturned**  
On 18 March 2017, Simone Gbagbo is acquitted of the charges against her by the Court of Assizes in Abidjan, but that decision is overturned by the Supreme Court in July 2018. Fair trial concerns are raised; notably, her lawyers suspended their participation when the president of the court refused to call witnesses considered crucial to her defense, namely five senior public officials, one of them the president of the National Assembly.

23 JULY & 3 AUGUST 2018

**The defense files a "no case to answer motion"**  
In July and August, the defense for Gbagbo and Blé files motions for immediate acquittal.

15 JAN. 2019

**Gbagbo and Blé acquitted**  
A majority of judges acquit Gbagbo and Blé before the defence team presents their arguments.  
ICC Trial Chamber I acquits Laurent Gbagbo and Charles Blé Goudé from all charges © 2019 ICC

1 FEBRUARY 2019

**Laurent Gbagbo and Charles Blé Goudé released with conditions**  
The Appeals Chamber set conditions to be imposed on Gbagbo and Blé Goudé upon their release, which were softened in May 2019. Gbagbo and Mr Blé Goudé are not in the ICC detention centre anymore.

6 AUG. 2018

**Amnesty Declaration**  
The amnesty declaration includes the former First Lady Simone Gbagbo, former Director of Protocol of the President of the National Assembly Souleymane Kamaraté, and many other people close to former President Laurent Gbagbo including former ministers Assoa Adou and Lida Kouassi Moïse. The declaration excludes 60 persons under investigations for "crimes du sang" without specifying their identities. Many more than 60 persons were accused of these crimes, raising confusion about where the amnesty did and did not apply.  
Gbagbo unchained © 2019 Clara Sanchiz, Flickr

SEPTEMBER 2019

**ICC Prosecutor appeals acquittal**

APRIL 2020

**Rebel leaders tried in absentia**  
Former rebel leader Guillaume Soro is tried in absentia and sentenced to 20 years in prison and deprivation of civil rights for embezzling public funds and money laundering. This was the first trial and conviction of an alleged perpetrator of grave crimes from Ouattara's supporters. The charges against him were not related to the conflict.