

Seminars on Ivory Coast

Ifri's sub-Saharan Africa program seminars

These Seminars are organised
in Partnership with



Issue

The announcement that elections are to take place on 29th November, 2009 seems to finally signal an end to the long-lasting crisis in Ivory Coast which started in 1999 and intensified in 2002. Over the past ten years, Ivory Coast has made tremendous changes at political and economic levels but also in its relationships with neighboring countries and its former colonial power, France. The aim of these meetings is to highlight the main developments within the Ivorian society preceding this new electoral challenge.

September 25, 2009 - Seminar 1: Ivory Coast's Electoral Process

This first seminar focuses on the electoral process which has been one of the main topics of conversation for Ivorians and international observers for many years. The electoral fiasco in 2000 marked an important point in the escalation of events which led to the 2002 coup and then to the division of the country. After many postponements, Ivorian authorities claim they will respect the last announced date of 29th November. However, some observers are already reporting delays in the electoral organization and huge costs to the government's budget. This meeting aims to focus on the importance of the electoral process within the dynamic leading to the end of the crisis in Ivory Coast., to make a statement on technical aspects but also to discuss the political stakes of the poll, notably the balance of power between the different candidates, but also the importance of ending the crisis in Ivory Coast for the entire region.

Postponed - Seminar 2: What Future Perspectives for Ivory Coast's Economy?

Ivory Coast's consensus began disintegrated at the end of the 1970s following a downturn in the Ivorian economic model based on cocoa and coffee production. While a large part of sub-Saharan countries enjoyed a period of consequent economic growth since the beginning of the new millennium, Ivory Coast's economy has been hit by the consequences of the political crisis: Has the decade-long crisis renewed Ivory Coast's economic fundamentals? Has political crisis redistributed economic positions? What infrastructures are still available for the country's growth? Is the business environment enough good to reassure potential investors? What are the leading economic sectors today?

Postponed - Seminar 3: Reconstruction of Ivorian Society

The third seminar will focus on social reconstruction in Ivory Coast. The country is currently a social laboratory due to the diversity of its society and the important political and economic crises which have been ongoing for almost a decade. At the root of the conflict, social tensions, linked to land issues in rural and urban areas, urbanization, migration but also to the economic crisis which hit the country since the end of the 1970s, have been manipulated by the different political players. We observe the emergence of new forms of socialization, consumer habits and also new forms of protests. All these transformations lead us to ask some questions about the future of the country, notably: Is Ivorian society ready to face its reunification, its the main coming challenge? Is Ivory Coast ready to take up its position as regional leader? Has the crisis allowed the emergence of a new society accepting its diversity? Or does Ivory Coast need to construct build up a new social contract?

Seminar 1: Ivory Coast's Electoral Process

September 25, 2009

Provisional Programme

14:30 – 14:45

Introduction to the seminar series

- **His Excellency Pierre Aimé Kipré**, Ambassador of Ivory Coast to France.
- **Alain Antil**, Head of sub-Saharan Africa Research Programme, Ifri

14:45 – 16:45

Speakers:

- ♦ **Christian Bouquet**, Professor, Michel de Montaigne University (Bordeaux 3)
- ♦ **Massaër Diallo**, Head of Unit, Governance, Conflict Dynamics, Peace & Security, Sahel and West Africa Club, OECD
- ♦ **Thomas Hofnung**, Journalist, *Libération*