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Cote d'Ivoire – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 28 February 2011

What is the government's attitude to members or supporters of the Liberation for Presidential Majority (LMP)?

A report from the *Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights*, in a section titled "Background" (paragraph 7), states:

"On 28 November, there was a successful presidential election in Côte d'Ivoire with over 81 per cent participation except for the last minute confusion about its result. Repeated attempts to prevent members of the dioula and baoulé ethnic communities from voting in several areas, including Lakota, Issia, San Pedro led to violent clashes between supporters of La Majorité Présidentielle (LMP), Laurent Gbagbo's party, and the RHDP of Alassane Dramane Ouattara. LMP supporters portrayed Alassane Dramane Ouattara as the 'father of the rebellion,' and displayed defamatory posters and screened a film denigrating him and inciting violence against members of the dioula ethnic group to which he belongs. Some of the messages were blatantly xenophobic and propagated religious and ethnic division between the North and the South. They appealed to people not to vote for Alassane Ouattara, calling him 'the assassin,' to block his supporters from campaigning on his behalf, and to rise up against his supporters should he win the 28 November election. Laurent Gbagbo's campaign adopted a slogan that called on his supporters to 'vote 100 per cent' for the 'original'. On 18 November, the Minister of Interior read a press release on state television in which he condemned these acts and asked the perpetrators to cease their activities." (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) (15 February 2011) *Report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Cote d'Ivoire*, p.6)

In a section titled "The human rights situation during and after the elections" (paragraph 10) this report states:

"The enforcement of the curfew which was declared on 27 November 2010 as well as repeated clashes between LMP and RHDP supporters and the violent suppression of an attempted public demonstration by RHDP supporters on 16 December 2010 led to systematic human rights abuses ranging from extra-judicial killings, torture, illegal arrest and detention, abductions and enforced disappearances, including that of journalists, and willful destruction of property." (ibid, p.7)

A document issued by the *US Embassy in Abidjan* refers to allegations published by the pro-Gbagbo newspaper *Fraternite Matin* as follows:

"The paper goes on to say that just after the closing of the polling stations on Sunday, the ruling LMP [La Majorite Presidentiel: the name of the ruling FPI party and other parties and associations that are supporting the incumbent during the elections] is protesting against what it saw as 'violence and illegal confinement of its

representatives; most of whom were chased out from the polling stations in the zones under the control of the New Forces.” (Information Section of the Public Affairs Office of the American Embassy in Abidjan (1 December 2010) *Côte d'Ivoire: American Embassy's National Daily Press Review*)

A report broadcast by the state-controlled *Television Ivoirienne* states:

“At Abobo avocatier, there were clashes between RHDP and LMP elements yesterday morning. At the Abobo State Transport Company depot, there were pitched scuffles between LMP and RHDP militants. Weapons and batons were seized here. At Abobo-Baoule, RHDP militants attacked the villagers, wounding many and destroying a lot of property. The Abidjan-Adjame village was also attacked. At the Abobo roundabout close to the mayor's offices, RHDP militants attacked LMP supporters. At Williamsville, at the Djeni Kobina crossroads, an RHDP activist on motorcycle fell down and died. At Treichville, an RHDP activist fell down from a vehicle which ran over him killing him. At Adjame Boribana, scuffles erupted between RHDP activists and LMP activists who were returning from a campaign rally. At Koumassi, at the Solibra crossroads and at the large crossroads, there were clashes between youths armed with sticks and machetes. At Yopougon, near the Saint-Pierre church, there were scuffles between the two groups. At Yopougon SIDECI, there were clashes between the two groups. It must be noted that here gunfire was even used. At Yopougon Yaosseï, there were clashes between the two groups. At Yopougon Doukoure, there were attacks on all passers-by, on people who were wearing LMP t-shirts. And one person died here. In the interior of the country, at Bayota, one LMP activist was killed, At Oume, one LMP activist was killed. In the Facobly area, there were attacks on the village of Dorbou, and the LMP official in Djoubou was also attacked. In this area, 20 persons were wounded, 10 of them seriously.” (Television Ivoirienne (29 November 2010) *Cote d'Ivoire: Chief of army staff gives reasons for curfew*)

See also *Television Ivoirienne* report which states:

“At the end of the voting operations, we observed groups of activists of the Rally of Houphouëtists for Democracy and Peace, [RHDP] armed with bludgeons or machetes, who attempted to kidnap election agents, stations supervisors and their assistants, or to seize and destroy ballot boxes in order to deprive LMP candidate of his votes in those polling stations. In connection with these aggressive intentions and this tendency for violence, we deplored for the sole day of 28 November, six losses in human lives, namely in Daloa, Issia, Saïoua, Zikisso, and dozens of people seriously injured in several towns of the interior and in Abidjan. In the CNO zones, under control of the New Forces, the conditions for a free, fair, and transparent election were not gathered. Indeed, in total violation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and the electoral code, the Armed Forces of the New Forces (FAFN), who were supposed to have been disarmed and put in barracks, sowed terror and sorrow among the civilians. Thus, the election officers and representatives of LMP were expelled from the polling stations and impeached from executing their duties. Supporters of LMP were severely beaten, humiliated, and illegally confined.” (Television Ivoirienne (30 November 2010) *Cote d'Ivoire: Gbagbo spokesman wants votes annulled in the north*)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information among English-language sources currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive

as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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