



# Africa

July-Sept 2011

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**AFJN's ANNUAL DYER LECTURE**

**November 4th, 2011 at 5:30pm**

**Busboys and Poets  
5th and K Street  
NW, DC**

**Turn to page 7 for more details!**

## The Road Ahead for Ivory Coast

*By Melaura Homan-Smith, AFJN*

While the media have moved on to leads that bleed, the people of Ivory Coast still live in the aftermath of conflict. Serious fighting wound down in April after former president Laurent Gbagbo was captured by fighters loyal to challenger Alassane Ouattara, judged by most observers to have won the November 2010 run-off elections. Gbagbo's refusal to transfer power to Ouattara sparked a six-month post election explosion of political, religious and ethnic tensions, causing about one million Ivoirians to be internally displaced with over 100,000 people fleeing the country into Liberia. The country's challenging journey back to stability revolves around three closely related priorities: security, accountability and reconciliation. These are the choices and challenges faced by the Ivoirian people.

The situation is particularly unique given that unlike some other countries—Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan—that have faced a regular and prolonged lack of security, the unrest in Ivory Coast comes after nearly 30 years of relative peace and prosperity. A report from the National Democratic Institute notes that "the societal trauma is palpable." Shootings and violence in both the economic capital Abidjan and in rural areas created an especially tense situation. Reports state that anywhere from 1,500 to 3,000 people lost their lives.

Many factors contribute to the dynamic security situation Ivory Coast now faces. A history of unresolved policy toward foreigners and immigrants, and the tendency of politicians to stir the fires of ethnic or religious differences to activate a political base have left Ivory Coast roughly divided into a largely Muslim North and a mostly Christian South. Gbagbo, a Christian from the Southwest, maintained the allegiance of the national army and much of the South. Ouattara, a Muslim from the Northeast, inspired groups to fight for him but did not necessarily control every action of these militias. Amnesty International said the prevalence of security forces and armed groups in Ivory Coast is "creating a climate of fear that is preventing hundreds of thousands of displaced people from returning to their homes." Though President Ouattara asked Ivoirians to "abstain from all acts of reprisal or violence" after Gbagbo was captured, there is still a feeling of unease. The Ivoirian people need accountability from both sides to move toward stability.

The current state's judicial system seems too weak to deal with the process of justice. While there is clear video of Gbagbo's troops opening fire on civilians and committing what could be called crimes against humanity, the plundering of the state's treasury is a less incendiary accusation in the interest of not reigniting hostilities. Charging Gbagbo with these economic crimes makes it possible to charge all those who collaborated with him. Around 80 members of Gbagbo's regime, including his son, have so far been arrested and charged.

President Ouattara has appointed new judges to the Supreme Court and Constitutional Council. In response to calls for justice, the president has invited the International Criminal Court (ICC) to investigate the claims, including charges against his supporters.

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## Understanding Drought and Famine in the Horn of Africa

By Cortney Donnalley, AFJN Intern

The U.S. Department of State has reported that over 30,000 children have died during the ongoing drought and famine in the Horn of Africa. Upon returning from her visit to the region, Dr. Jill Biden described the situation as “dire.” As many Americans continue to mobilize their communities in support of relief efforts for the victims of the famine, few understand the underlying causes of food shortages and famine. This article is an attempt to highlight and explain the basic mechanics behind food shortages, hunger, and famine.

The most common misconception about famines is that they are always associated with “drought, flooding, or other natural phenomena.” The current crisis in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya was triggered by two seasons of limited rainfall, but the drought in this case cannot account for all the widespread hunger and malnutrition of the region. For example, during an August 3rd Senate committee hearing, Nancy Lindborg of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) contrasted the drought’s effects on the people of Kenya and those of Somalia. Kenya, although plagued with government corruption, is a democratic republic and on good terms with the U.S. and other aid donors, and therefore, has been working for many years to improve the resiliency of rural communities in dealing with natural disasters, such as drought.

On the other hand, Somalia is plagued by a sense of anarchy and ongoing violence particularly under the control of the terrorist group Al-Shabab, which has left the Somali people with no infrastructure or government programs to cope with natural disasters. Although the drought has affected regions in both Kenya and Somalia, Kenya has by and large been able to deal with this crisis while Somalia is facing the “worst humanitarian disaster” in the world.

So if drought is not completely to blame for the humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa, what is? Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen famously said that no substantial famine has ever occurred in a liberal democracy. Thomas Keneally, in an op-ed for CNN published on August 29, explains:

“Famines occur in places where people are tyrannized over either by governments or, in the case of Southern Somalia, by private armies and militias. They occur in places where even in the lead-up years to famine, farmers are not always able to plant crops with security, without the likelihood that they might be confiscated, or that the village granary will be burned by armies, private and government.”

Keneally describes a situation of *food insecurity*, whereby individuals are unable to access sufficient quantities of

food on a consistent basis. So whether or not the main food crops are destroyed by a drought, a swarm of locusts, or a militant group or individuals are unable to purchase food because roads have been destroyed and transit has become impossible, economists classify these groups as *food insecure*.

Food insecurity can have a number of long-lasting and detrimental effects on a society. As in the current case of Somalia, massive numbers of Somalis are fleeing across the border, most notably into refugee camps in northern Kenya. An influx of refugees can quickly destabilize a region as they begin to compete with local populations for land and resources. Famine often tears families apart as well. Men will often leave their families at the onset of the crisis in order to look for food or work elsewhere leaving the women to care for the children alone. Fatherless families are particularly vulnerable to violence as well.

The current humanitarian crisis in Somalia provides a sober example of the importance of preemptive measures by

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governments and aid organizations to promote food security in the Horn of Africa. AFJN continues to promote food security throughout the African continent by advocating for fair trade policies that create favorable climates for African farmers to sell their goods and for African consumers to purchase foodstuffs at reasonable prices. Access to credit and savings program can also help farmers to save during good harvest times and borrow money in order to purchase critical agricultural inputs after poor harvests.

Finally, equitable land tenure systems ensure that agricultural land is distributed fairly allowing every individual the opportunity to harvest food for his/her family. The famine and malnutrition that we are witnessing today in the Horn of Africa is deeply related to historical situations and will continue to impact future events of the region. ■

For a more in-depth look at the causes of the Somali famine, read “Horn of Africa: Story of a Tragedy Predicted?” by Heve Cheuzeville (*Echos d’Afrique*) and translated by AFJN’s Bahati Ntama.

## D.R.Congo Elections Deemed Unfair Before They Happen

By Bahati Jacques, Policy Analyst

Preparations for the Democratic Republic of Congo's General Elections scheduled for November 28th, 2011 are underway. Already, members of the opposition complain of numerous irregularities throughout the electoral process. The lack of political space for the opposition has led to the killing and imprisonment of opposition leaders and supporters. This is a clear sign that the elections' outcome might be contested if these issues are not resolved.

The opposition has consistently claimed that voter lists contain not only duplicate names but also people ineligible to vote, namely minors and foreigners.

On August 19th, 2011 Radio Okapi reported that a minor found with a voter's card was arrested in Katanga province, but electoral commission officials dismissed the case saying it was irrelevant at this point because voter enrollment is over.

Similarly, on May 5th, 2011, the Haut Lomami chapter of the major opposition party, Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS), denounced massive enrollment of minors in Kamina and on June 17, 2011 Jacques Djoli, vice president of the electoral commission, acknowledged that minors were registered in several enrollment center. The report specifically mentioned center number 12010 in Manono.

To ensure transparency, the opposition has asked for unconditional access to voter lists from the National Bureau for Electoral Operations and the National Election Data Processing Center. They also ask for access to the 2006 and 2009 voter lists, a map of all 73,000 polling centers, their addresses and identification codes. These are the first steps toward ensuring free and fair elections.

The issue of enrolling foreigners to vote was brought up in 2006 and did not get resolved; it is likely to remain unresolved this time around. Civil society groups such as Association Africaine pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme/African Association of Defenders of Human Rights (Asadho) recently called for the rejection of the candidacy of anyone with dual citizenship on the grounds that it is unconstitutional. There are many Congolese officials with dual citizenship who are also candidates in the election, contrary to the constitution, and they are surely registered to vote. Chapter 2, article 10 of the Congolese constitution states that "Congolese nationality is one and exclusive. It cannot be held concurrently with any other." However, the electoral commission said that it will process the applica-

tions of those with legal proof of their citizenship.

The issue of foreign voter registration mainly targets the Congolese Rwandophone communities, specifically some in the Tutsi community who hold Rwandan citizenship earned after their successful involvement in the regime change in Rwanda in 1994. Also there are claims of new

waves of immigration from Rwanda to Congo as part of the Rwandan strategic and economic policy in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In addition, there are Rwandan citizens of Hutu ethnic background who have blended into the Congolese population since the refugee wave into DRC in 1994. To re-

solve this case, it will take a functioning government committed to the rule of law and a political will to enact comprehensive immigration and citizenship laws.

The international community waits with anticipation for the elections' results. The United States Ambassador to the DRC, Ambassador James F. Entwistle, addressed ways the Congolese can build capacity and break away from depending on the international community during a briefing organized by the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington DC on August 9, 2011. He argued that the international community should not give more money to finance DRC's elections. Rather, they should let the Congolese work with what they have and build their own capacity for future elections. He equally opposes the call by the opposition to have the international community certify the elections' results. Instead he suggests that Congolese political elite should agree on the modalities for the electoral commission to certify the results. Finally, he hopes that the loser will gracefully concede and hope to win in the next elections. This last point is important to maintain the country's stability gained so far after more than a decade of war.

One of DRC's problems has been the lack of independence of institutions. There are reports of President Joseph Kabila's attempt to influence the work of the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI). This is unfortunate, but not surprising. Such a move is a set back and a disservice to DRC's democratic process and progress in general. The ongoing focus of ensuring the elections are not rigged has taken away the opposition's platform to put forth their set of solutions for DRC's pressing problems: insecurity, sovereignty, embezzlement of public funds, injustice, unemployment, and bad governance, to name a few.

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**“The lack of political space ... has led to the killing and imprisonment of opposition leaders and supporters.”**

## In-Depth: Conflict Minerals law FAQ

By Bahati Jacques, Policy Analyst

AFJN’s advocacy to ensure full implementation of section 1502 of Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010 continues. The Multistake Holder Group made of companies, non-governmental organizations and socially responsible and faith-based investors, of which AFJN is a part, recently sent additional comments on the rules to govern Dodd-Frank 1502. While we wait for the release of the rules, we are aware of lobbyists’ work to undermine the implementation of this law on behalf of those who would rather see DRC remain unstable for their financial gain. However, we continue to believe in the promise of Commissioner Elisse B. Walter: these rules will ensure that the illicit mineral trade is addressed and allow willing investors to continue buying resources from DRC.



### The Basics:

#### What is the US Conflict mineral law?

As part of US public law 111-203, Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act promulgated on July 21, 2010, “*Section 1502 is a disclosure requirement that calls on companies to determine whether their products contain conflict minerals – by carrying out supply chain due diligence – and to report this to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).*” (Global Witness in “The Dodd Frank Act’s Section 1502 on conflict minerals”)

#### Which minerals are covered by the law?

The law is very clear: “*Columbite-tantalite (coltan), cassiterite (Tin), gold, wolframite (tungsten), or their derivatives; or any other mineral or its derivatives determined by the Secretary of State to be financing conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo or an adjoining country.*”

*“Section 1502 ... calls on companies to determine whether their products contain conflict minerals”*

However, not all minerals from DRC are conflict minerals. There are mines in conflict-free areas of DRC. If it is proven that these minerals are not connected to the network of armed groups or other conflict networks, they qualify as conflict-free and legal under the law.

#### Which criminal networks are included?

The list is long and can be found in UN reports and others. Dodd-Frank defines them as: “*perpetrators of serious human rights abuses in the annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices under sections 116(d) and 502B(b) of*

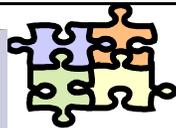
*the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n(d) and 2304(b)) relating to the Democratic Republic of the Congo or an adjoining country.*” The DRC national army is on the list because some of its members are involved in the illicit trade network.

#### Is the DRC government supportive of the law?

DRC authorities have been complaining a lot about this law, claiming loss of income because of it. It has hit pockets of many DRC politicians, army commanders, influential business people and most importantly rebel groups who count on the illicit mineral trade to finance their war. The law also disrupts networks in other countries that are connected to DRC minerals. DRC had no choice but to pay attention to Dodd-Frank 1502. The ministry of mining has done some work to comply with the law and we hope it will initiate more reform of the whole mining sector.

#### Has the US ever imposed an embargo on minerals from the Democratic Republic of the Congo?

There has never been a US embargo on minerals from DRC or adjoining countries. In fact, Dodd-Frank 1502 has mobilized international, regional and national efforts to end the plundering of DRC’s natural resources and the war financed by the illicit mineral trade. “*Despite alarmist talk of an end to eastern Congo’s minerals sector, major international companies are planning to invest in the areas covered by the law, and initiatives aimed at effective tracing and auditing to clean up the minerals trade are being developed.*” (Gavin Hayman, Director of Campaigns, Global Witness)



# Analysis:

## Why did the US pass it?

The Dodd-Frank 1502 act is the result of years of consistent advocacy. US-based organizations mobilized grassroots movement around the crisis in DRC and Senator Dick Durbin and former senator Sam Brownback championed the DRC case. Organizations like the Enough Project were very instrumental in drafting this law. A similar law is being pushed by many organizations at the European Union.

## What does the US have to gain?

Colonel Emma K. Coulson, a military fellow researcher at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, says: *“It benefits the US to partner with the DRC in settling their conflict and gain positive control of their natural resources,”* in her paper *“Impact of gender based violence on stability and security.”* She argues that: *“The US is the largest consumer of coltan, which it uses to produce electronic products and high-end electronics critical to defense weapons systems. The DRC possesses 80 percent of coltan reserves-guaranteeing a role for the DRC in the international mineral trade as consumption increases. This is considering when the US begins to strategically evaluate where its vulnerabilities lie in procuring critical minerals for tomorrow’s defense technology.”*

## What are the pros and cons of Dodd-Frank 1502?

Anyone who used to buy minerals from DRC conflict zones will have to think twice now because there could be serious consequences as a result of this law. People are taking the law seriously, as evidenced by the presence of a diverse group of representatives at the June conflict minerals conference held by Global e-Sustainability Initiative (GeSI) and Electronic Industry Citizenship Coalition (EICC). There were representatives from governments, jewelry retail, electronic, automobile and aerospace industries, and (most importantly) law firms. Unfortunately for them, profit and exports of either gold, tungsten, tin and coltan by DRC’s neighboring countries (like Rwanda and Uganda) are expected to go down as a result of this law.

## Is Dodd-Frank 1502 the answer to the complex DRC crisis?

“Dodd-Frank is not a solution to the social, historical, political, and economic problems of the DRC. No single law, particularly foreign, can solve these issues. The Dodd-Frank provision is ... a strong and firm U.S. response to the call from the Congolese people, advocacy groups, and Congolese civil society groups for an international effort to end years of illicit plundering.” (Aaron Hall and Bahati Jacques in “US Conflict Mineral Law Opens the Door to Peace in the DRC”). Dodd-Frank is the second US law regarding the DRC. US Public law 109-456, focused on democracy, human rights, good governance, humanitarian relief, development aid and regional forces destabilizing the DRC.

## The final word:

As buyers wait to find a way to comply with Dodd-Frank 1502, the loss of income has been felt by businesses which benefited from the illicit trade cash flow in the conflict zones. These are artisan miners, restaurants and many other businesses at mining sites. However, **“What good to eat and be satisfied today just to die tomorrow knowing that there is no happiness in the plight of the dead?”** asks the Bureau of Study, Observation, and Coordination of the Regional Development of Walikale (BEDEWA). Dodd-Frank 1502’s goal is to eliminate the financial power of armed groups in DRC, promote peace, a cornerstone of prosperity and progress. ■

## Congratulations to Zambians for their free and fair presidential election

A major event occurred on September 23, 2011, but it went unnoticed. The Zambian presidential election results were announced and the opposition candidate, Michael Sata, won. After the results were made public, the outgoing President, Rupiah Banda, congratulated Sata for his victory. "The people of Zambia has spoken and we must all listen," he said. "Speaking for myself and my party, we accept the results. We are a democratic party and we know no other way."

Read more on our site: [www.afjn.org](http://www.afjn.org)

Dear Friends,

By the time you read this newsletter, I will be already engaged in my new ministry as co-director of the Xaverian Youth in Mission Office in our Massachusetts community. Since early 2011 we have been searching for a new director and we are very happy to welcome Fr. Aniedi Okure to that position. He began with us in mid-August and I worked with him for two weeks to ensure a smooth transition. Aniedi comes to AFJN with strong credentials and great enthusiasm. We could not have asked for more.



Fr. Rocco Puopolo, SX with incoming Executive Director Aniedi Okure, OP

Aniedi Okure is a member of the Order of Preachers; Dominican Province of St. Joseph the Worker (Nigeria-Ghana) where he serves as Vicar Provincial for North America and the Caribbean. He comes with diverse background in teaching, administration and pastoral ministry in Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the United States. From 1995 to 2001, he served as Coordinator of Ethnic Ministries at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and was co-chair for the breakout sessions of Encuentro 2000. While at the USCCB, he brought together African priests and sisters to form the joint African Conference of Catholic Clergy and Religious in the United States - ACCCRUS (<http://accrus.org>). Since 2003, he has contributed to research projects at Catholic University's Institute for Policy Research (<http://ipr.cua.edu>). With Dean Hoge, he co-authored *International Priests in America: Challenges and Opportunities* (2006), and *African and Caribbean Catholics in the United States*

(2008). He is a frequently invited speaker on international priests and cultural diversity. He holds a doctorate degree in sociology from The Catholic University of America.

Board Chair, Rev. Christopher Promis, C.S.Sp. expressed great hope in Aniedi's leadership as AFJN looks forward to his energy and focus to create links with colleges and universities, especially of institutional members of the Network, as well as dioceses and parishes with links to Africa through twinning, and the growing African Diaspora community in the USA that stays connected to their countries of origin. Upon accepting the position, Fr. Okure said: "I accept the offer with great anticipation of working together with AFJN staff and Board of Directors to advance the mission of AFJN to a new level."

With these experiences and background Aniedi will easily contribute to the campaigns and areas of advocacy that we have been involved with recently. His sociology background will give new depth to our analysis on the impacts that conflict, displacement, food insecurity and the like have on Africa peoples and societies. His knowledge of college campuses will strengthen our outreach to AFJN College Chapters. And we look forward to new initiatives that can strengthen the network through his insights and gifts.

But as I often mentioned to you all over these past five years, AFJN is not just the Board and Staff. It is YOU. We look to each of you to help define our analysis. Your eyes and experience in Africa bring credibility to our work and makes it the corporate reality that it is. We continue to welcome your comments and insights and be attentive to issues that are only truly understood by those on the ground. There have been a number of occasions when AFJN staff were the first to alert colleagues in Washington to serious issues on the ground due because members took the time to communicate. And we look to you to help support our service financially in any creative ways you can. AFJN is the only remaining pan-African faith based advocacy and education office in Washington. Our place is not only unique, but of vital importance for those we represent on the continent.

Blessings,

- Fr. Rocco Puopolo, SX

*“Ivory Coast” continued from page 1*

The police have been reactivated in Abidjan and the rebels separated into barracks; the president also plans to demobilize 10,000 troops next year. Action is also being taken against the security forces who extort money at road blocks.

Aware that even a robust justice system can't always reconcile past acts and assist in rebuilding communities, the president has also set up the Truth, Dialogue and Reconciliation Commission (TDR) to identify human rights violations and make recommendations on how to harmonize relations across ethnic, religious and regional lines. In a speech given on September 23, 2011, in Washington DC, President Ouattara announced that he has established a “no corruption, no nepotism” pledge for members of his administration. Those who break the pledge will not only be dismissed, but will forfeit their right to government jobs regardless of who they are. This strong institutional outlook could help launch Ivory Coast to good governance and further legitimize President Ouattara’s administration.

The shift in power will surely be uncomfortable for Gbagbo's supporters, but the work of local organizations and churches should help individual communities weather the changes. In addition, ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States, has agreed to post-conflict reconstruction support as well as to help with repatriation of citizens. The United States and France are poised to help reinvigorate one of West Africa's formerly robust economies. As UN General Secretary Ban Ki-moon says "We [the international community] have to help them to restore stability, rule of law and address all humanitarian and security issues." True, but we must also be confident in the Ivorian people's ability to build their own effective, dynamic democracy. ■

# Is Democracy Relevant IN TODAY'S AFRICA?

**AFJN 3RD ANNUAL  
DYER LECTURE**

**Friday November  
4th, 2011. 5:30pm  
Busboys and Poets  
5th and K Street  
NW, DC**

**Keynote Speaker: Nii Akuetteh**  
*Activist and Policy Analyst*

Millions of Africans and well-wishers may argue that the continent's top-most priorities are to ensure peace and stability first, and to alleviate crushing poverty second. There is fear in Africa that the 2011 wars in Cote d'Ivoire and Libya are the start of a reactionary Western re-conquest, re-colonization and resource exploitation of Africa. Whether the priorities are right or wrong, and whether the fear is justified or not, recent events do beg this huge question:

**Given the present dangers, is democracy relevant in today's Africa?**

Event is free and open to the public, but space is limited, please RSVP to [melaura@afjn.org](mailto:melaura@afjn.org) or 202-884-9780  
Light refreshments will be served.

*“DRC Elections” continued from page 3*

Sadly, elections do not mean change to the Congolese people. They see government officials as lucky and corrupt, people who use their offices to prosper and feed their families off the backs of the governed. AFJN's recent interviews with Congolese Diaspora reveal a deep sense of resentment and mistrust toward any person working in government. At a meeting in Washington DC in 2007, a Congolese woman widowed by the war, elicited cheers when she described Congolese leaders as “a bunch of bandits and thieves.” While this may seem a generalization, the Congolese audience pointed out that the crimes of leaders are not limited to corruption, but include killing, rape, money laundering and much more. Even worse, the victims know who they are, but have nowhere to turn for justice. This situation has become a culture because it is present in schools, hospitals, and legal offices, to name a few.

No matter who wins the elections, if the winner is not willing to make the needed changes to bring the DRC to order, it is all a waste of time and money. Thus, the Congolese people should reflect and act on these words from the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen from the Constitution of 1793: “When the government violates the rights of the people, insurrection is for the people and for each portion of the people the most sacred of rights and the most indispensable of duties.” The choice is either to wait for another time or follow in the footsteps of the most recent and successful examples of people's power in Tunisia and Egypt. ■

## AROUND AFRICA HAS GONE DIGITAL!

**Africa Faith and Justice Network,**  
inspired by the Gospel and informed  
by Catholic Social Teaching, edu-  
cates and advocates for just rela-  
tions with Africa.

Staff:

Aniedi Okure, OP

Bahati Jacques

Melaura Homan-Smith

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