

**Assistant Secretary-General and  
Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator  
Catherine Bragg  
Statement to the Press on Côte d'Ivoire  
New York, 24 January 2012**

**Checked against delivery**

I am very pleased to be here today to brief you on the humanitarian situation in Côte d'Ivoire and my mission.

I would also like to mention that we have the honour of the presence of the Côte d'Ivoire Minister of State, Minister of Employment, Social Services and Solidarity, His Excellency Gilbert Kone Kafana, who is responsible for humanitarian affairs. Coincidentally, the Minister is in New York for business and has agreed to attend this noon briefing.

I travelled to Côte d'Ivoire last week because the country continues to face considerable humanitarian challenges. Nine months after the eruption of post-electoral violence, the humanitarian community requires USD 173 million to respond to the needs of more than two million people who remain in a situation of high vulnerability; either because they are still displaced, have no houses to live in, cannot cultivate their fields, or have no access to basic necessities like food or drinking water.

It is crucial that we do not lose sight of these humanitarian needs, because addressing them will be a key condition for the country's successful transition to reconstruction and development. This is a historic opportunity for Côte d'Ivoire, and it is one that we cannot afford to miss.

The Consolidated Appeal for 2012, which I launched on 16 January in Abidjan, has a particular focus on the vulnerable regions of the West and South-West. The Appeal clearly articulates the key humanitarian priorities for the country over the next year, which include enabling voluntary, safe and durable returns and the reintegration of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees; protecting civilians; rebuilding 17,000 houses, rehabilitating more than 170 schools and more than 100 health centres; providing basic services to vulnerable populations; and restoring livelihoods.

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To support and kick-start this vital humanitarian response for 2012, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) has already allocated USD 8 million for life-saving projects in Côte d'Ivoire.

The progress that has been made in terms of returns of close to a half million IDPs and refugees, while laudable, is not enough. Now is not the time for the international community or the Government to turn their attention away from the needs of a still sizeable population, who individually - each one of them - has endured hardship and insecurity for too long.

This was the humanitarian situation I saw during my mission when I visited displacement areas in the West. In the Nahibly IDP camp, where more than 4,500 displaced people are still living, potable water needs to be trucked in and there is no electricity for illumination to enhance security. Yet people told me they were ready to go home and start rebuilding their lives, but that the conditions were not yet in place for that.

As a humanitarian community, if we continue to focus our efforts, work together more effectively, commit to more strategic priorities and receive the financial support we urgently need, we can address these challenges. We can support the most vulnerable across the country, including in Abidjan, and help them to reintegrate. We can help create the conditions for the 186,000 IDPs in Côte d'Ivoire, as well as the 161,000 Ivorian refugees in neighbouring countries, to return voluntarily and durably.

Everyone has a role to play in supporting this process, from the United Nations system to NGOs, donors and the international community at large, but also the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, which has a major responsibility in ensuring that all of its citizens, without discrimination, have access to basic services and can live in a safe and secure environment. Communities across Côte d'Ivoire must also work together so that all Ivorians can live side by side in peace and harmony.

So, I call upon all our partners to help make 2012 the year that we bring the humanitarian situation in Côte d'Ivoire to a successful conclusion, and in so doing, open the way for the country to become, once again, a pillar of stability in western Africa and beyond.

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