



EMBASSY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE  
ABIDJAN BUREAU

OPS-2  
AFB

FBIS 2603-87  
1 December 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, FBIS  
THRU: Chief, Operations Group  
SUBJECT: Monthly Report--Abidjan Bureau--November 1987

I. GENERAL

The ambassador has announced a proposal to relocate the embassy in a vacant 14-story office building in the downtown Plateau section of Abidjan, thereby postponing or abandoning altogether plans to purchase land and construct a building in the early 1990's. FBO approval has been requested to move forward with the project but serious physical security problems with the location may force embassy planners to scrap acquisition of this particular building.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. Abidjan Bureau's host government figured prominently in several key political developments during November. Following charges by the Paris-based JEUNE AFRIQUE magazine linking Ivory Coast to the coup that toppled Burkina Faso's Thomas Sankara, the ruling PDCI-RDA party Political Bureau reacted sharply by denying the allegations and banning further distribution of the magazine in Ivory Coast. London PMU, which shares coverage of the publication, was able to provide a priority text of the controversial article and has assumed coverage of the publication for priority African material until the ban is lifted.

2. The Ivorian minister of National Education issued a statement on the detention of dissident teacher union members who allegedly wanted to "transform the Ivory Coast into a laboratory for Marxist ideas." Aside from the fact that this represented the first public challenge in some years to President Houphouet-Boigny, the local embassy was particularly interested because one of those in detention was the Ivorian spouse of an American citizen who is principal of the American school. The bureau kept the embassy closely informed on this issue.

-2-

3. The health of two regional leaders resulted in open speaker watches during the month. The first arose when Niger's Ali Saibou was named interim chairman of the Supreme Military Council, followed shortly thereafter by the public announcement that Seyni Kountche, head of state for the last 13 years, had died after a long illness. The transition appears to have gone smoothly although there is some speculation that Ali Seibou may only be an interim president. He participated in the coup that brought Kountche to power and no major policy changes have been announced.

The other open speaker watch was instituted when KUNA reported President Mobutu of Zaire was near death. The rumor appears unfounded since he has since had public meetings in Switzerland and the Central African Republic and has personally denied the rumors of a serious illness. It was reported however, that his trip to Switzerland resulted in his being out of country during the Zaire anniversary celebrations for the first time in over 20 years.

4. Other significant events during the month included two small-scale ground clashes between Libyan and Chad forces, the first in over 2 months; the rejection by the Central African Republic Supreme Court of former Emperor Bokassa's death sentence appeal; Nigeria offering military training facilities to the ANC; rioting in Lagos stemming from a traffic altercation which left several dead and in which BBC expressed a keen interest; and criticism from neighboring countries when Ivory Coast announced that passenger landing rights had been granted to flights from RSA.

#### B. Coverage

The bureau's AFP landline remained out during the month as the local PTT and Ivorian Press Agency coordinated on a line problem. This was further complicated by the relocation of the local AFP office which interrupted testing procedures. The bureau was able to continue coverage from the AFP high frequency transmission but this necessitated the Wire doing a daily backstop to fill in the gap after the RTTY version signed off. It currently appears that a solution is imminent.

### II. ADMINISTRATION

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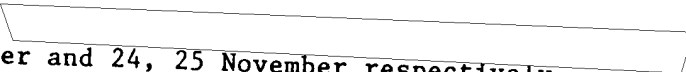
#### A. Personnel


Monitor  and teletypists   
 received PSI's during the month.

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III. VISITS

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1.  TDY'd at the bureau on 3 November and 24, 25 November respectively.

2. Newly assigned Political Assistant  visited on 27 November.

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Chief, Abidjan Bureau

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Attachments:

Monthly Production Report

cc: Chief, Swaziland Bureau  
Deputy Chief, London Bureau