



**STATEMENT ON THE CERTIFICATION OF THE FINAL RESULT  
OF THE FIRST ROUND OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION  
HELD ON 31 OCTOBER 2010**

**By YJ Choi, SRSG, UNOCI**  
(Abidjan, 12 November 2010)

1. The Security Council mandated me by its resolution 1765 (2007) to certify that all stages of the electoral process provide all the necessary guarantees for the holding of open, free, fair and transparent presidential and legislative elections in Côte d'Ivoire in accordance with international standards.
2. In this regard, I developed, in consultation with the stakeholders, the "five-criteria framework for certification", which was subsequently referred to in paragraph 32 of the sixteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2008/250). The framework defines broad benchmarks that enable me to assess whether: (a) a secure environment exists during the period leading to elections and allows for the full participation of the population and the candidates in the process; (b) the electoral process is inclusive; (c) all candidates have equitable access to State-controlled media and whether the latter remains neutral; (d) the voters lists are credible and accepted by all parties; and (e) the results of the elections are determined through a transparent process and are accepted by all or are challenged peacefully through the appropriate channels.
3. With regard to the final voters list, I duly certified it on 24 September during a press conference held at UNOCI Headquarters.
4. As regards the certification of the results of the elections, I have carefully monitored and assessed the conduct of the various stages leading to the elections, including the registration of candidates for the presidential elections, equitable access to State media for all candidates, the distribution of voter and identity cards, electoral campaigning from 15 to 29 October, voting on 31 October, ballot counting and tallying, the announcement of the provisional results by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) during the night of 3-4 November, and the proclamation of the final results by the Constitutional Council on 6 November.
5. I would like to first highlight the fact that, despite isolated acts of intimidation and obstruction of freedom of movement in some areas, the first round of the presidential election took place in a generally peaceful and secure environment, ensured by the Ivorian security forces and the Integrated Command Centre with its mixed brigades, supported by the impartial forces, UNOCI and Licorne.

6. The registration of candidates for the presidential elections was conducted from 26 August to 16 October 2009. The process was inclusive, as any person who met the conditions defined either by the electoral law or by political agreements was able to register as a candidate during this period. The final list of candidates was published by the Constitutional Council, by its Decision n° CI-2009-EP/028/19-11/CC/SG of 19 November 2009. Fourteen out of the twenty candidates registered by the IEC were confirmed; six did not meet the legal requirements.
7. Unlike the period preceding the official electoral campaign when the coverage by *Radiodiffusion Télévision Ivoirienne* (RTI) of the various candidates' political activities was unbalanced, during the electoral campaign, State media, under the supervision of regulatory bodies, generally guaranteed equal access to the presidential candidates. Also, in conformity with the recommendations of the *Conseil national de la communication audiovisuelle* (CNCA), television stations and radios in the north broadcast in synchronization the programming of the RTI throughout the electoral campaign period. With regard to the print media, *Fraternité Matin* under the supervision of Conseil National de la Presse (CNP) provided equal access to all the candidates during the campaign period. It is also to be noted that most of the major political parties have their own affiliated newspapers, which enjoyed complete freedom of press before, during and after the election.
8. The distribution of identity and voter cards commenced on 6 October 2010 in some regions. By 17 October, through the means of UNOCI and UN Country Team air, ground, maritime assets and human resources, over 11.5 million identity and voter cards had reached the entirety of over 10,000 polling sites for distribution to individuals. The Government extended the distribution period and proclaimed Friday, 29 October, an official holiday in order to facilitate the collection of these cards by the population. By the time of the opening of the polls on 31 October, most of the voters had collected their cards. The Commission also made arrangements so that the remaining cards could be collected at the polling stations on the day of the elections. The distribution of these cards has taken place in a peaceful environment with no major incidents reported.
9. The two-week electoral campaign, from 15 to 29 October, aroused passion and emotions, but these were kept in check thanks to the restraint and mutual respect that Ivoirians have demonstrated. Overall, the campaign proceeded remarkably peacefully and democratically, despite some minor isolated incidents.
10. The historic day of 31 October was marked as much by the enthusiasm of the population as by the respect for human rights and democratic principles. Only isolated incidents were recorded but none that would impact significantly on the outcome of the vote. The first round of the presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire has proven to be a historic turning point in the peace process in the country as voter participation reached over 83% in an open and free environment. The Ivoirian people rose to the occasion, demonstrating their commitment to the peace process and their determination to restore lasting peace and stability in Côte d'Ivoire.
11. The counting of the ballots in 19,854 polling stations in general proceeded in a remarkably peaceful and orderly manner. The tallying process in local electoral commissions at the level of 326 sub-prefectures/communes, 70 departments, and 19

regions as well as in the central IEC in Abidjan also proceeded in a peaceful and orderly manner. Some isolated troubles and minor incidents were effectively reported, which, however, could in no way affect the overall results of the election.

12. The announcement of the provisional results by the Independent Electoral Commission was made during the night of 3-4 November. While awaiting the announcement of the provisional results by the Independent Electoral Commission, the candidates and the Ivorian political class demonstrated the necessary patience and respect for democratic principles worthy of the historic action of the people of Côte d'Ivoire on 31 October 2010. Contrary to speculation, the candidates and political parties abstained from announcing the results themselves, thus remaining faithful to their commitment. The Ivorian people and their leaders exceeded all expectations with regard to the conduct of the first round of the presidential elections.
13. The restraint on the part of the population and candidates were all the more noteworthy as the partial results of the first round of the elections were made available only from the evening of 2 November 2010. As an official announcement began two days after the election, some tensions and speculations spread through the country. This subsided when the IEC announced the provisional results during the night of 3-4 November 2010.
14. In this regard, during the press conference I held on 4 November, I urged the IEC to work on reducing the waiting time for the results in future polls, with a view to avoiding speculation and tension aroused by the absence of a timely dissemination of the results by the IEC. UNOCI has reiterated its availability to provide all its support to the IEC in this regard.
15. On 6 November, the Constitutional Council proclaimed the final results of the first round of the presidential elections held on 31 October 2010, validating the provisional results as announced by the Independent Electoral Commission referred to in paragraph 13 above.
16. In the wake of the proclamations of the results of the election, some allegations of irregularities were made based on three types of discrepancies: the first discrepancy concerns the actual total number of polling stations announced by the IEC. This number was 20,073 before the election and became 19,854 after the election; the second discrepancy concerns the number of registered voters on the electoral list announced by the IEC. The number was 5,725,720 before the election but became 5,784,490 after the election; the third discrepancy is about the difference between the number of people recorded as registered voters and the actual number of voters, the latter being superior to the former by a small margin in many of the 19,854 tally sheets.
17. Upon my inquiry regarding these three discrepancies, the IEC gave explanations and clarifications: the first discrepancy regarding the number of polling stations is due to the merging of polling stations in some public buildings and the invalidation of results or cancellation of polling stations in some foreign countries; the second discrepancy regarding the number of voters is due to the fact that a number of civil servants, security and polling agents were authorized to vote in the location of their duty stations, i.e., not the polling stations in which they were initially registered. The

number of 58,770 concerned voters should have been subtracted from the registered voters list; the third discrepancy in the tally sheet is a corollary of the second discrepancy as observed in many polling stations.

18. After careful analysis and examination, I have reached the conclusion that the explanations provided by the IEC are valid and that such discrepancies are inadvertent errors that have no bearing on the actual ballot counting and tallying, not to mention the overall results. I would like to point out that such errors should not in any way diminish the excellent and exemplary job done by the electoral commissioners and representatives of candidates. It is worth mentioning that many of them worked in difficult conditions, including counting ballots and preparing tally sheets under lamp light provided for by the international community and often without having been properly catered for.
19. In summary, after a thorough analysis and evaluation of the final results of the first round of the presidential elections, which took place on 31 October, I have arrived at the conclusion that the process leading to the proclamation of the final results was as a whole peaceful and democratic, and that the results of the elections were determined through a fair and transparent process, and that those anomalies, irregularities, and errors cited above are of such minor nature as to affect in no significant way the overall results of the election. Therefore, based on the five criteria framework for certification, and further to the mandate vested upon me by the Security Council, I hereby certify the final results of the first round of the presidential elections held on 31 October 2010.
20. It is to be noted that, pursuant to the decision by the Constitutional Council of 6 November 2010, the candidates Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara, who had garnered the most votes in the first round of the elections, have been qualified to run in the second round of the presidential elections, scheduled to take place on 28 November 2010, with one week official campaigning beginning 20 November 2010.
21. Based on the process thus far, I am confident that Cote d'Ivoire with the support of the international community can meet the challenges lying ahead. The Ivorian people, who have suffered and waited for so long, and who rose magnificently to the occasion on 31 October 2010, will do so again. I call upon all stakeholders to remain committed to the holding of an open, free, fair and transparent second round of the presidential elections, with a view to bringing the Ivorian crisis closer to a conclusion.

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