

Warning of 'human rights catastrophe' as forces reach Abidjan

Amnesty International 31 March 2011 (...) Côte d'Ivoire civilians are at immediate risk of massive human rights violations Amnesty International warned today, as forces loyal to Alassane Ouattara reach the country's commercial capital Abidjan.

"Abidjan is on the brink of a human right catastrophe and total chaos" said Salvatore Saguès, Amnesty International's researcher on West Africa.

"Côte d'Ivoire is facing a major humanitarian crisis. The parties to the conflict must immediately stop targeting the civilian population," said Salvatore Saguès. "The international community must take immediate steps to protect the civilian population." (...) (...) "The escalation of this conflict, and increased reliance on mercenaries and untrained recruits, means there is a huge and immediate risk of massive human rights violations in the coming days as the Republican Forces advance on Abidjan" said Salvatore Saguès.

On 19 March, Gbagbo's minister for youth Charles Blé Goudé, called on Gbagbo's Young Patriot movement members to volunteer as militiamen to 'liberate' the country. The Young Patriots have announced that they have recruited 20,000 soldiers.

Amnesty International has also received reports of retribution attacks against civilians committed by both sides in the western town of Duékoué. (...) See [full report](#) .