

# Ivory Coast

## Houphouet Urges Unity, Diligence in Speech

AB062051 Abidjan Domestic Service in French

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[Address to the nation by President Felix Houphouet-Boigny on the occasion of 27th Independence Day on 6 December; place not given—live or recorded]

[Text] My dear countrymen: Commemorating again our national independence gives me yet another opportunity to look back on the events that have marked the last 12 months, and to draw from them the teachings that will enable us to best orient our behavior in the coming year. However, for reasons that I will very soon cite, I am postponing to 31 December the examination of the problems that confront us. The times are hard. The crisis that does not spare any nation is striking hard with its unfortunate accompaniments of inflation and unemployment.

There is no cause to despair. Discouragement is not an Ivorian attribute. Let us therefore work with determination in unity and discipline to assure our country of continued growth. Let us preserve what is essential: the most precious acquisition, peace. Peace of hearts and minds, peace in justice and stability. Despite the disastrous fall in the prices of our agricultural primary products, we have been able to maintain for our courageous peasants the prices of their produce. So has it been with the pay of our equally courageous public servants. The employers of the private sector: We congratulate them for their great understanding during this difficult period. They have also been able to maintain their workers' salaries despite the unavoidable retrenchment of workers that is being experienced by the all countries and all institutions and which we deplore.

Let us pray that, confident in one another, and with an unalterable faith in the happy destiny of our dear fatherland, we will be able, with God's help, to overcome the difficulties that are plaguing us, in order to totally fulfill its expectation. Ivory Coast is, and must remain, the land of hope.

Long live Ivory Coast!