



# OSAC Country Security Report

## Côte d'Ivoire

Published: April 10, 2025

*This report is intended to supplement the U.S. Department of State Côte d'Ivoire Travel Advisory and [Côte d'Ivoire Country Information Page](#).*

### Embassy & Consulate Contact Information

#### U.S. Embassy Abidjan:

Rue des Ambassades, Riviera Golf, Cocody, Abidjan.

Tel: +(225) 27 22 49 40 00; After-hour emergencies: +(225) 05 05 61 89 24.

Hours of Operation: Monday-Thursday 0730-1730, Friday 0730-1230.

### OSAC Country Chapter(s)

Abidjan has an active OSAC Country Chapter.

Contact [OSAC's Africa team](#) with any questions.

### Côte d'Ivoire Travel Advisory

The current U.S. Department of State [Travel Advisory](#) at the date of this report's publication assesses that travelers should exercise increased caution due to crime, terrorism, civil unrest, health, and piracy. Do not travel to the Northern border region due to terrorism.

### Crime

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Abidjan as being a **CRITICAL**-threat location for crime directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has included a Crime "C" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Côte d'Ivoire, indicating that there may be widespread violent crime and/or organized crime present in the country, and/or that local law enforcement may have limited ability to respond to serious crimes.

There is no single emergency line in Côte d'Ivoire. Call Abidjan's Prefecture of Police/ Police Headquarters at **+(225) 01-50-94-44-54** or **+(225) 01-03-79-91-44**. Seek out the local police contact information when you arrive elsewhere in the country.

Crime continues to be a major public security concern in Côte d'Ivoire. Violent crime, such as robberies, and home invasion do occur. Local police often lack the resources to respond effectively to serious criminal incidents.

Property crime and low-level street crime are pervasive in Abidjan after dark. Factors affecting crime in Abidjan include an under-equipped police force, a growing population of unemployed/underemployed, and easy access to weapons, especially machetes and other blade weapons.

Firearms are readily available throughout the country. Banditry exists on the roads between the cities and on the outskirts of Abidjan. Some bandits, who mainly operate at night, have used weapons similar to AK-47s. The U.S. Embassy does not permit its personnel to travel between cities at night due to crime issues (such as armed residential and street robbery). Most crimes against foreigners are non-violent incidents of opportunity (e.g., smash and grabs, muggings, pickpocketing, theft of unattended possessions). Hotel rooms are occasionally targets for theft. Western victims of crime are seldom harmed when they comply with criminal demands. Resisting an armed assailant risks escalating an economically motivated crime to a violent encounter. Reports of ATM robberies occurring in Abidjan are not uncommon. During the year-end holiday season, there is typically an increase in violent and opportunistic crime.

Criminals in Abidjan generally concentrate their activities in the very high-crime neighborhoods of Abobo, Adjame, Angre, Koumassi, Marcory, and Yopougon, as well as popular neighborhoods for nighttime entertainment, including Plateau, Treichville, and Zone 4.

## Kidnapping Threat

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Kidnapping “K” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Côte d’Ivoire.

Kidnapping in Côte d’Ivoire is rare. All recently reported kidnappings have occurred in the northern border regions of the country.

## Terrorism

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Abidjan as being a **MEDIUM**-threat location for terrorism directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has included a Terrorism “T” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Côte d’Ivoire, indicating that terrorist attacks have occurred and/or specific threats against civilians, groups, or other targets may exist.

The main terrorist threat in Côte d’Ivoire comes from al-Qa’ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and its associated groups. Hizb’allah is known to raise funds in Côte d’Ivoire. These groups remain intent on demonstrating capability and increasing influence across the region. AQIM mainly operates in the Sahel region, which includes neighboring Burkina Faso and Mali, but its threat has extended to Côte d’Ivoire with 17 small-scale attacks near the border with Burkina Faso in 2021 that claimed approximately 20 lives. These attacks have primarily targeted Ivorian security forces. Beginning in March 2020, attacks in the north of the country began to show an increased level of sophistication and coordination, to include improvised explosive

devices (IEDs) targeting police. There have been no reported terrorist attacks in Côte d'Ivoire since 2021.

## Political Violence and Civil Unrest

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Abidjan as being a **HIGH**-threat location for political violence directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has included a Civil Unrest “U” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Côte d'Ivoire, indicating that demonstrations, protests, and strikes occur frequently, and/or that local law enforcement may have limited ability for adequate response. Civil unrest can develop quickly without prior notification, often interrupting logistics and services; even demonstrations planned to remain peaceful have the potential to turn violent.

## Elections/Political Stability

In March 2021, Côte d'Ivoire held nationwide elections for the National Assembly, the more powerful of the parliament's two legislative bodies. All major political parties and some independents participated in the elections. The elections resulted in the ruling party winning 137 (54%) of the 255 seats.

In September 2023, Côte d'Ivoire held municipal and regional elections where the ruling party won a majority of seats. The main opposition party cited election irregularities which led to low-scale demonstrations. The lead up to the elections saw some protests in late February related to candidate eligibility, which led to arrests of protesters on charges of “disturbing public order.”

Election Day unfolded in a generally peaceful manner, with minor election-related irregularities, including sporadic incidents of material destruction, violence and intimidation against voting officials or voters, biometric tablet failures, voting officials refusing to admit accredited observers to polling sites, and confrontations between supporters of opposing candidates. After the voting ended, several opposition leaders suggested the possibility of fraud, but they ultimately followed the legal process for challenging contested election results. International and local observers considered the elections generally free, fair, and transparent.

The next presidential election will be held in 2025 and the next parliamentary election in 2026.

## Protests & Demonstrations

Avoid demonstrations, protests, political rallies, and large crowds, as they can escalate into violence. Clashes between protestors and security forces may occur with little warning. Police and security forces may disperse crowds using tear gas or other coercive measures, including force.

## Anti-U.S./Anti-Western Sentiment

There is no strong anti-U.S. sentiment in Côte d'Ivoire.

## Law Enforcement

There is no single emergency line in Côte d'Ivoire. Call Abidjan's Prefecture of Police/ Police Headquarters at **+(225) 01-50-94-44-54** or **+(225) 01-03-79-91-44**. Seek out the local police contact information when you arrive elsewhere in the country.

Law enforcement is somewhat effective at deterring crime but needs further capacity building; the U.S. Embassy provides training in preventative policing techniques. Security services often lack communications equipment, weapons, and vehicles, severely limiting their capacity to respond. Responses to incidents of crime are often slow and generally limited to writing a report. The judicial system is under-resourced and ill-equipped to process its current case load and to incarcerate convicted criminals in accordance with international standards.

Government corruption remains a serious problem in Côte d'Ivoire, and has an impact on judicial proceedings, contract awards, customs, and tax issues. Uniformed security forces (i.e., police, military, and gendarmes) routinely stop vehicles for traffic violations and security checks. If you find yourself at such a stop, politely present your identification. Police and security officials rarely speak English. Incidents of police or security force harassment or detention of foreigners are rare but do occur. If an officer asks you to pay a bribe, politely refuse and present a photocopy of your U.S. passport, visa, and entry stamp.

Visitors requiring police assistance should appear in person at either the police station in their area or the police headquarters in Plateau (downtown Abidjan). After doing so, U.S. nationals should contact the Embassy's consular section at **+225 27 22 49 45 94**.

Police are the least trained and funded of the three security services, and many resort to extortion to supplement their incomes. The police are largely ineffective at seeing investigations through. Gendarmes are better trained and equipped, as a paramilitary force, but also suffer from lack of funding and training.

## Police Response

Many gendarmes and police stations outside of Abidjan have one vehicle for the entire precinct and often receive distress calls from the public via cell phone because they lack a centralized dispatch system.

## Travelers with Special Considerations

For [specific traveler concerns](#) in Côte d'Ivoire, review the local laws and circumstances on the Department of State's Country Information Page.

- [Women Travelers](#)

- [LGB Travelers](#)
- [Travelers with Disabilities](#)
- [Student Travelers](#)
- [Faith-Based Travelers](#)

## Rule of Law, Arbitrary Detention, Official Harassment, Corruption, & Transparency

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Risk of Wrongful Detention “D” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Côte d’Ivoire.

The law provides criminal penalties for corruption by officials, but the government does not implement the law effectively, and officials reportedly engage frequently in corrupt practices with impunity. Human rights organizations report official corruption, particularly in the judiciary, police, and security forces. These organizations note victims of such corruption often do not report it or assist in investigations because they believe the government will not act and/or they fear retaliation. Human rights organizations report authorities award many contracts to persons or businesses without following procurement rules and often with little notice.

Civil society groups and government officials report that the High Authority for Good Government (HABG), the government’s anticorruption authority, is not empowered to act independently or to take decisive action. The HABG can investigate alleged corruption but lacks the mandate to prosecute; it must refer cases to the public prosecutor. In April 2021 the government created the Ministry for the Promotion of Good Governance and the Fight Against Corruption. The Ministry oversees the government’s general policy on anti-corruption, capacity building and promotion of good governance.

## Cybersecurity

Financial and internet-based scams are proliferating in Côte d’Ivoire. The country has developed a reputation in West Africa for cybercrime. The U.S. Embassy receives multiple inquiries per week about scams. Scams typically target Francophone internet users, but occasionally target Anglophones. Internet romance and financial scams are prevalent in Côte d’Ivoire. Scams are often initiated through Internet postings/profiles or by unsolicited emails and letters. Scammers almost always pose as U.S. citizens who have no one else to turn to for help. Common scams include romance/online dating; money transfers; lucrative sales; gold purchase; contracts with promises of large commissions; grandparent/relative targeting; free trip/luggage; lotteries; inheritance notices; work permits/job offers; and bank overpayments. The U.S. Embassy is not able to assist victims of scams. See the State Department’s [webpage](#) on International Financial Scams or report financial scams at [www.ic3.gov](http://www.ic3.gov).

## Import/Export Restrictions

There are no restrictions on imports and exports. Payment of import duties and taxes must be made within 20 days of arrival of the goods. A penalty rate is added in cases of late payment. The average time of customs clearance depends on the type of goods being imported. Officially, for the “green circuit” (most products), the clearance time varies from 10 minutes to 24-48 hours. For the “red circuit” (products that require additional inspection), the clearance ideally takes about one week, though it can take much longer. The “white circuit” provides a quicker customs clearance, but this is only granted to businesses that have established professional customs records. Anecdotally, we hear of some companies that have waited weeks for their goods to clear the port.

There are no restrictions on the use or importation of satellite phones.

A country-specific listing of items/goods prohibited from being exported to the country or that are otherwise restricted is available from the U.S. International Trade Agency [website](#).

*Additional resources and reports can be found in the [OSAC Traveler Toolkit](#).*