

WHITE & CASE

IFRC COVID-19 Emergency Decree Pro Bono Research: Côte d'Ivoire

White & Case Team: Steve SHA and Wilbert LUNA

- **Questions to be answered by close of business Friday, 27 March are listed below.**
- **Please be sure to include English translations of relevant text where possible.**

1. Is there coordination between state and non-state actors, e.g. through a national emergency response mechanism?

W&C

Yes. An analysis from the document titled *Pandemie de la Maladie à Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19). Message à la Nation de S.E.M. Le Président de la République*, from 23 March 2020, (the "**Presidential Message**")¹ reflects coordination, basically, between different institutions from the Ivorian Government, on the one hand, and the World Health Organization ("WHO"), on the other.

2. Is there mention of the role of Red Cross (RC) or humanitarian actors? In what areas/sectors? What responsibilities are ascribed to RC?

W&C

There is no mention of the RC. However, there is specific mention of the support that the WHO provides Côte d'Ivoire, in order to put in place a response plan. This was referred to both in the Presidential Message, and also in the Ministry Council Session of 04 March 2020.²

The sources referred to hereinabove do not specify responsibilities ascribed to RC, the WHO, or other humanitarian actors.

3. Are there exceptions to travel restrictions that will facilitate the movement of RC/humanitarian relief teams and/or aid across borders? What (if any) quarantine requirements or other conditions are attached?

W&C

All of the frontiers of Côte d'Ivoire have been closed, as per the Presidential Message. However, said document has established the creation of humanitarian corridors to aid individuals or communities having

¹ <http://www.gouv.ci/doc/1585001044MESSAGE-A-LA-NATION-DE-SON-EXCELLENCE-MONSIEUR-ALASSANE-OUATTARA-RELATIF-A-LA-PANDEMIE-A-CORONAVIRUS.pdf>

² <http://www.presidence.ci/communique-du-conseil-des-ministres-du-mercredi-04-mars-2020/>

an urgent need of assistance (number 5). According to official communication reports, with sources from the Ministries of State; Defense; and Safety and Civil Protection:

[...]

The traffic of goods are authorized, in terms of the sanitary controls conducted by the competent authorities.

Humanitarian corridors, as well as those of security, will be opened to satisfy specific needs to face the pandemic.³

[...]

However, there are no other specifics on (i) exceptions to travel restrictions that will facilitate the movement of RC/humanitarian relief teams, and/or aid across borders, or (ii) quarantine requirements or other conditions that may be attached thereto.

4. Are there exceptions to quarantines, curfews and other restrictions on movement that allow RC/humanitarian organizations access to vulnerable populations (including for psychosocial or non-medical aid)?

W&C

Yes, the establishment of humanitarian corridors (please, see above), but there are no specifics on this matter.

5. Have any special legal facilities or exemptions been put in place for the importation of medical aid or other relief items or personnel (International Disaster Response Law)? What (if any) quarantine requirements or other conditions are attached?

W&C

Yes, in the sense that passing of goods is authorized, in accordance to sanitary controls by competent authorities,⁴ despite the closing of the frontiers. However, no specific measures have been published in this regard.

In the context of the closure of the frontiers (answer 3, above), the Ivorian Government has created humanitarian corridors, which could make easier the importation of medical aid and other relief items, as well as the passing of personnel.

In general, to import medical products, it is necessary to obtain different documents and procedures, such as:

- a) Authorization and Declaration of Importation for merchandise of more than approximately USD 840 (FCFA 500,000);
- b) Declaration of embarking and of value;
- c) Declaration in customs, and

³ <http://www.gouv.ci/doc/1584780759BONNE-INFO-NUMERO-13-20-03-2020.jpg>

⁴ <http://www.gouv.ci/doc/1584777516FERMETURE-DES-FRONTIERES-DE-LA-COTE-D-IVOIRE-A-COMPTER-DU-DIMANCHE-22-MARS-2020-A-MINUIT.pdf>

- d) Final authorization by the Direction of pharmacy, medicine, and laboratories.⁵

It is important to mention that these procedures are generally controlled by the Health Ministry, which also presides the committee that coordinates the actions against the COVID-19 in the country.

Also, it is important to note that, on 16 March 2020, and until 22 March 2020 at midnight, the Government had prohibited the entrance of non-Ivorian travelers coming from countries with more than 100 confirmed COVID-19 cases.⁶ Although this has not been confirmed, this could be applied to goods or personnel passing through the humanitarian corridors.

6. Is the RC (or humanitarian organizations) categorized as 'essential' or 'emergency' services, for the purposes of exemptions to restrictions on business operations and opening hours?

W&C

Not specifically.

However, please bear in mind the creation of humanitarian corridors, which could ease the services provided by the RC or other humanitarian organizations. The specifics have not been announced at the moment of writing this report.

7. What other measures are provided in the emergency decrees? (for governmental actors, for communities, for health workers, etc).

W&C

The following are measures indicated by the government of Côte d'Ivoire.

Please note that it is our interpretation that those indicated in letters "e" to "n", below, and differentiated with *italics*, seem specifically applicable to governmental actors or humanitarian organizations:

- a) Closing of nightclubs, bars, movie theaters, and other show places;
- b) Curfews from 21h to 5h every day;
- c) Confinement of population per geographic area;
- d) Reinforcement of capabilities of pharma industry, labs, and other institutions to diagnose;
- e) *Regulation of all means of transports, including unauthorized movements between Abidjan and the rest of the country;*
- f) *Reinforcement of sanitary controls in airports, ports, and frontiers by land;*
- g) *Conduction of sensitization and information campaigns for the prevention of the COVID-19;*
- h) *Formation of quick intervention teams, in order to investigate cases and verify any health alerts;*

⁵ <http://uatwcm01.webbfontaine.ci:8080/web/tip/importation-medicaments-et-materiel-medical>

⁶ <http://www.gouv.ci/actualite-article.php?recordID=10960>

- i) Reinforcing the diagnostic capabilities of the Pasteur Institute of Côte d'Ivoire, a scientific public establishment;*
- j) Reserving an ambulance from the Service of Medical Urgency Aid only for coronavirus cases;*
- k) Reserving five halls of the Service of Tropical and Infectious Diseases from the Hospital Center of the University of Treichville, for isolation purposes;*
- l) Information to the personnel of hotlines on how to address potential COVID-19 cases/issues;*
- m) Weekly meeting of a committee presided by the Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene, and other health authorities of the country, and*
- n) Activation of the Center of Urgency Operations of Public Health, in order to coordinate functions.*

8. Have restrictions been adopted or put in place that ban the export of protective medical equipment?

W&C

Yes. On 24 March 2020, the Ivorian Ministry of Commerce and Industry communicated that the export of hydro-alcoholic solutions (in all of their forms) is prohibited, in order to satisfy the demand of this product in the Ivorian market.⁷

⁷ <http://www.gouv.ci/doc/1585152002Interdiction-d-exportation-de-solution-hydro-alcoolique-sous-toutes-ses-formes.pdf>