



Committee on International Justice and Peace

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • 202-541-3160

WEBSITE: WWW.USCCB.ORG/JPHD • FAX 202-541-3339

June 22, 2020

Monseigneur Ignace BESSI Dogho
Evêque de Katiola
Président de la Conférence des Evêques Catholiques de Côte d'Ivoire
B. P. 713
Cidex 3
Abidjan-Riviera

Excellence:

As Chairman of the Committee on International Justice and Peace of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops I write to express my ecclesial solidarity with the Ivorian people and your Conference as Côte d'Ivoire approaches national elections in October this year. These elections are a crucial turning point in your history as you attempt to consolidate your democracy and transition to a new elected government.

I have read your Conference statements of June 2019 and January 2020. I share your concerns that conditions in the country are not yet conducive to peaceful, free and fair elections. In fact, I took the liberty of sending your two Conference statements to Secretary of State Michael Pompeo and urged him to take your concerns into consideration and to work with you and other religious leaders to foster inter-faith dialogue, reduce rising tensions and to promote electoral institutions and laws that will ensure free and fair elections.

I am also following in the footsteps of one of my Committee Chairman predecessors Most Reverend Richard Pates who conducted a solidarity visit to your Conference in 2011. Bishop Pates was pleased to have met with Conference leaders and participate in meetings with government officials and leaders of religious and civil society institutions. Africa and Côte d'Ivoire are important international concerns of our Committee. I invite you to contact us directly to keep us informed of your concerns and to suggest ways that our Conference can continue to support your efforts to promote democratic governance, peace and prosperity.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend David J. Malloy
Bishop of Rockford
Chairman of the Committee on International Justice and Peace