

**JOINT STATEMENT OF THE FIRST LADIES
OF THE REPUBLICS OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE
AND
BURKINA FASO**

**ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COOPERATION
AGREEMENT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CROSS-BORDERING
TRAFFICKING IN CHILDREN BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF
CÔTE D'IVOIRE AND BURKINA FASO**

SIGNED IN ABIDJAN ON October 17th, 2013

We

First Lady of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire,

and

First Lady of Burkina Faso,

Recalling the historical ties of friendship and brotherhood between our two peoples;

Having regard to the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso signed on July 29th, 2008 in Ouagadougou;

Having regard to the Joint Declaration signed on October 24th, 2012 in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) for the signature and implementation of a bilateral cooperation agreement in the fight against cross-border trafficking in children;

Noting the extent of cross-border trafficking in Children for labor and exploitation purposes in West Africa;

Aware of the efforts already made by the two countries in the fight against child trafficking;

Concerned about the persistence of the phenomenon despite specific laws and the ratification of International and Sub-regional Conventions in the fight against trafficking, exploitation and the worst forms of child labor;

Speaking out firmly against trafficking, exploitation and the worst forms of child labor as intolerable violations of children's rights, jeopardizing their full development and survival;

Recognizing that the child victim of trafficking requires special protection measures for his development, well-being and development;

Convinced of the need **for upstream preventive action** against cross-border child trafficking to prevent them becoming victims of the worst forms of labor and exploitation;

Inspired by bilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements in the fight against cross-border trafficking in children;

Convinced that a cooperation agreement between Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso is a valuable tool in the fight against trafficking in children;

Expressing our solidarity and commitment to support the efforts made by the two countries for the elimination of trafficking, exploitation and the worst forms of child labor:

- **We welcome** the signing today, in Abidjan, of the Cooperation Agreement in the fight against cross-border trafficking in children by the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso;

- **Congratulate** the two Governments for this major action reflecting their common determination to eradicate this scourge;

- **Reaffirm our commitment to:**

1. encourage our respective Governments to the respect and effective implementation of the provisions of the Cooperation Agreement in the fight against cross-border trafficking of children between Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso;

2. encourage the Governments of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso to strengthen the national mechanisms to address child victims of trafficking and exploitation;

3. support all actions contributing to the eradication of cross-border phenomenon of trafficking in children;

4. strengthen advocacy in our respective countries for a national awareness of the dangers of trafficking, exploitation and the worst forms of child labor;

5. Conduct advocacy with the First Ladies of the sub West African region in order to get their involvement in action against trafficking, exploitation and the worst forms of child labor.

Done at Abidjan, on October 17th, 2013.

Dominique Ouattara
First Lady of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire

Chantal Compaoré
First Lady of Burkina Faso