

Ban ignored, thugs move diamonds

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast (AP) - Smugglers in war-divided Ivory Coast are violating a United Nations-imposed ban on diamond sales, illegally exporting the gems to neighboring countries for overseas sales, according to a draft U.N. report obtained Tuesday by The Associated Press.

The illegal trade in "conflict diamonds" has long fueled African wars and the U.N. Security Council imposed the diamond embargo on Ivory Coast in a bid to keep rebels in the turbulent country from profiting from the gems.

The draft report, which has not yet been published, says \$9 million to \$24 million worth of diamonds mined in the rebel-held north of the West African country are being sold on the international market each year via brokers in Ghana and Mali.

Ivory Coast has been split in two since fighting erupted in 2002, and rebels control the arid northern half. About 10,000 U.N. and French peacekeepers have been deployed to maintain a fragile peace. Rebel officials could not immediately be reached to comment on the report's findings.

Earlier this year, U.N. experts compiling the report visited five diamond mining sites controlled by the New Forces rebel movement.

The report identified four major diamond dealers — a Ivorian, a Malian, a Belgian and another whose nationality was not known — in the northern rebel town of Seguela. It also cited two Belgian buyers who relocated to Ghana following the outbreak of Ivory Coast's war.

A 60 percent rise in diamond exports from Ghana



Diamond miners work hard to unearth precious minerals that will eventually be sold.

since 2000 could be explained by U.N. embargoes on Ivorian and Liberian diamonds, the report said.

Ivorian rebels impose taxes on trucks carrying goods through their territory to finance their activities and

admit to smuggling cocoa to neighboring countries.

Porous borders and poor controls are to blame for the illicit diamond trade, according to the U.N. report, which urged Ghana and Mali to take steps to prevent Ivorian diamonds from being smuggled through their territory.

The diamond ban made Ivory Coast part of the "Kimberley Process," established in 2002 to help control conflict diamonds — sometimes called "blood diamonds" — that have fueled and funded wars that killed millions in Angola, Congo, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

The process is designed to track diamonds from mines to jewelry display cases, certifying the origin of each stone.

Jolie critical of West's apathy

GENEVA (AP) - Angelina Jolie says it is shocking that refugees are being turned into hate figures in rich countries in an attempt to win elections or sell newspapers.

Even worse, the Academy Award-winning actress and United Nations goodwill ambassador said, was that people in the West did not seem to care.

"It's a scandal, really, in such a rich world, that we are not even finding a way to help feed refugee families properly," Jolie wrote in an op-ed piece released this week in *Refugees*, a quarterly magazine published by the U.N. refugee agency.

She said Europeans, who only six decades ago were confronted by 40 million refugees in the aftermath of World War II, have turned their backs on victims of tyrannical regimes. Jolie also criticized Americans and Australians for failing to improve the situation of the many migrants who have died trying to emigrate to their countries.

"We will put Band-Aids over the most gaping wounds because they look a bit ugly," even as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees battles to meet funding requirements for its annual programs helping 20 million people, Jolie said.

"Agencies like UNHCR should not really have to struggle to scrape a few tens of millions of dollars together to help rebuild shat-

tered nations — like Angola, Sierra Leone, Liberia and south Sudan," Jolie said. "But we won't pay for a full cure."

Jolie, who has made over 30 missions for the agency since becoming goodwill ambassador in 2001, described her shock over a

photo printed in an edition of *Refugees* earlier this year capturing a couple bathing on a beach while disregarding a Black man washed ashore.

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The next testing cycle will be held in December 2006. Application Forms for entry Police Officer and entry Corrections Officer will be available beginning 8am Monday, October 16 2006. Filing closes 5pm, November 9, 2006 or when 400 qualified application forms have been received for EACH position, whichever occurs first.

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