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UNITED NATIONS
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Summary of the UNOCI weekly press conference

(Abidjan, 16 December 2010)

UNOCI URGES IVORIAN PARTIES TO SHOW RESTRAINT AND CALM

The United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) appealed on Thursday to all parties concerned to demonstrate restraint and calm on the occasion of marches by the Rassemblement des Houphouëtistes pour la Démocratie et la Paix (RHDP) and reiterated its opposition to any recourse to violence to resolve the difficulties arising from the presidential polls.

In a statement read by UNOCI's Spokesman, Hamadou Touré, at its weekly press conference, held at its headquarters in Abidjan, UNOCI said the parties should refrain from any acts that could increase the suffering of the population and compromise the many efforts under way to make the people's will, as expressed on 28 November 2010, prevail. In this connection, he recalled the many initiatives taken by the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire, Y.J. Choi, to ensure that reason prevails and that everything is done to avoid violence, so as not to aggravate an already complex situation.

Mr. Touré specified UNOCI's role and mandate following the request, expressed by Prime Minister Guillaume Soro in a letter addressed to the UN mission, for UNOCI to supervise the RHDP's marches. "UNOCI responded that, pursuant to its mandate, it was not for it to supervise a march," Mr. Touré stressed. However, he added, security at the Golf Hotel continues to be ensured in keeping with UNOCI's mandate and the means at its disposal. Within this framework, UNOCI has increased its military strength there, so as to be better able to carry out its mission.

As the Special Representative had stated, the decision has nothing to do with the international community's support for the president elected on 28 November 2010, Alassane Ouattara, Mr. Touré stressed. "This does not call into question the support which the international community, and UNOCI, will continue to provide to President Ouattara," he said, adding: "This was strongly recalled by the UN Secretary-General's press statement, published on the eve of the marches."

The Spokesman expressed regret at the violence committed on Thursday during the march. "A score of wounded persons were transported to UNOCI," he said.

“They were received and admitted at the Mission’s clinic on the decision of the Special Representative. These wounded persons received first aid.” However, he stated that the Mission had been unable to take care of a dead man who had also been brought to it. « Mr. Choi explained to the family of the deceased the Mission’s medical limitations for dealing with this type of situation, » Mr. Touré said.

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