



Communiqué de presse

MINUCI-29

Force Commanders of United Nations missions to Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone meet in Abidjan

Abidjan, 13 February ----The Force Commanders of United Nations peacekeeping missions to Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone are today holding a coordination meeting. Lieutenant General Daniel Ishmael Opande, Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), Brigadier General Sajad Akram, Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and Brigadier General Abdul Hafiz, Chief Military Liaison Officer of the United Nations Mission to Côte d'Ivoire (MINUCI) are attending the meeting, the third of its kind in the sub-region, but the first to be held in Abidjan.

In recent reports on Côte d'Ivoire to the Security Council, UN Secretary-General indicated that there are a number of interrelated cross-border problems underlying the conflict and instability in Côte d'Ivoire and the Mano River Union countries, including the use of child soldiers, the use and proliferation of mercenaries, flows of refugees and a pervasive culture of impunity. A further problem is the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the many fighters from several West African countries who have been involved in conflicts in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

M. Albert Tévoédjrè, the Secretary-General's Special Representative to Côte d'Ivoire declared that «the regional dimension of the peacekeeping operation in Côte d'Ivoire has been highlighted in M. Kofi Annan's last report to the Security Council and that the coordination meeting held today by the three Force Commanders is in line with the Secretary-General's concerns as well as those expressed several times by the Council »

Military coordination actions already taken by the three peacekeeping missions include the establishment of Liaison Officers within each force in order to facilitate contact and exchange of information, greater coordination, rapid intervention whenever necessary, red flagging potential trouble, including setting up observation posts along the borders to enable alerting each mission's forces.

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