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PRESS RELEASE

UN ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VISITS COTE D'IVOIRE

Abidjan, 4 April 2011... The UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Ivan Simonovic, arrived in Abidjan on Sunday 3 April 2011 to assess the overall human rights situation, which has deteriorated seriously since the outbreak of the violence in Abidjan and the rest of the country.

On his arrival, Mr. Simonovic expressed deep concern over the worsening of the human rights situation, marred by massacres in the west and many abuses against civilian populations.

While in Côte d'Ivoire, Mr. Simonovic will meet the country's state authorities, political leaders and civil society. He will also have meetings with the international community, the UN system and the diplomatic corps and plans to conduct field visits.

Mr Simonovic will seize the opportunity of his visit to remind all the actors involved in the Ivorian crisis, whether they are pro-Gbagbo or pro-Ouattara, of their individual and collective responsibility to ensure that international human rights law and humanitarian law are respected, and to immediately take all necessary measures to protect civilian populations, especially women and children, and put an end to all human rights abuses.

For further information, kindly contact:

Guillaume Ngefa, Deputy Director of the Human Rights Division
Tel. : +225-06203332 ; Cell : + 225-05990412 ; Fax : +225-020235107

Email: ngefa@un.org

<http://www.onuci.org>

