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Summary of press conference of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary- General for Côte d'Ivoire

Abidjan, 4 November 2010

UNOCI CHIEF WELCOMES THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE PROVISIONAL ELECTION RESULTS

The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire, Y. J. Choi, on Thursday, in Abidjan, welcomed the announcement of the provisional electoral results as scheduled by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC).

Speaking at a press conference, the head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire "strongly urged" the IEC to work hard at reducing the waiting time for the announcement of future polls. In this regard, Mr. Choi reiterated UNOCI availability to support the IEC.

The Special Representative said it was now up to the Constitutional Council to receive any objections to the results, give its ruling on them and announce the final results of the 31 October election, in which more than 85% of Ivorians participated.

Mr. Choi said that democratic and legal means for challenging the results were in place and reiterated his conviction that no candidate will resort to undemocratic means to express their position on the election results.

Earlier, the Special Representative once again presented the international community's compliments to the Ivorian presidential candidates for their maturity and democratic spirit.

Questioned on the certification of the election, the head of UNOCI explained that according to the mandate given to him by the Security Council, the certification concerned the final electoral list and the election results. "The mandate provides that I certify all the stages that contribute to the holding of an open, free, fair and transparent election, that is to say I have to use my certification mandate to safeguard the process as well as the results of the election," he added.

Responding to a question on the possibility of any xenophobic speeches during the campaign for the second round of the election, the Special Representative welcomed the peaceful atmosphere in which the first campaign was conducted.

“Fortunately, we have not heard any speeches based on ethnic or religious differences in Côte d’Ivoire, » he said.

Paying tribute to the presidential candidates « who have not made any inflammatory statements», Mr. Choi recalled that this had been avoided thanks to the action of Ivorian religious leaders whom he had met several times. They showed a synergy in their action in an effort to avoid this kind of language which could poison the political climate and the electoral process. “I have confidence in the political actors and the Ivorian religious leaders,” he concluded.

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