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UNITED NATIONS
United Nations Operation in
Côte d'Ivoire

Summary of UNOCI weekly press conference

(Abidjan, 5 May 2011)

UNOCI'S FUTURE ROLE UNDER PREPARATION

A UN Technical Assessment Team (TAM) is currently in Côte d'Ivoire to prepare the future role of the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI). UNOCI spokesperson Hamadoun Toure announced Thursday. The Spokesperson pointed out that the team, led by the Director of the Africa Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Raisedon Zenenga, has been meeting Ivorian partners to find out their needs and expectations in this connection.

On the military aspect, Mr. Toure gave a rundown of the activities of peacekeeping troops in the field. In this regard, he announced that in the past week, the UN Force had conducted 1024 land and air patrols, and mixed patrols with units of the Republican Forces of Côte d'Ivoire (FRCI).

He indicated that the mine clearance team is continuing its mission throughout the national territory to diffuse explosive devices. "Eleven sites have been cleared and 28 more have been envisaged in the days ahead," Mr. Toure said, adding that Ivorian authorities had made an uninhabited site available for the destruction of the explosives.

"Besides, our troops are providing security in internally displaced persons' camps throughout the country, especially in the Catholic Mission in Duekoue, the Union of Evangelical Churches camp, the Nazareth and St. Joseph camp," he went on. The Blue Helmets provide regular medical assistance to the displaced population, help prevent epidemic outbreak by providing potable water and installing sanitary facilities.

In the same vein, the spokesperson said the UN Force provided free medical treatment to 716 Ivorian patients and distributed 106,000 litres of drinking water to the population.

At UNOCI's medical service in Abidjan, the mission continued to receive the wounded and victims of armed combat in the several districts of Abidjan. Between 28 April and 3 May, the medical service admitted 63 patients (57 men, 5 women and one child) who were either wounded by bullets, grenades, machetes, knives or were burnt alive. Four of the victims died from their.

With regard to human rights, Mr. Toure noted that UNOCI was closely following cases of violation in Yopougon during the fighting in the past several days,

paying special attention to reports of a mass grave which is the subject of an investigation by UNOCI's Human Rights Division.

On the humanitarian front, the spokesperson announced the visit on 6 May by representatives of the press corps in Abidjan to the Western towns of Toulepleu, Bolequin and Duekoue to make a firsthand appraisal of the humanitarian situation which deteriorated grievously since the post-electoral crisis. The press corps is being led by the UN Humanitarian Coordinator, Ndolamb Ngokwey.

Mr. Toure also recalled sensitization campaigns carried out by UNOCI in Korhogo, Koun Fao, Tanda and other villages along th Bondoukou-Koun Fao route as well as the Vallee du Bandama. These activities, he explained, fall within the framework of promoting peace, dialogue and tolerance.

On a different note, Mr. Toure said on the dawn of the World Press Freedom Day on 3 May, UNOCI has taken note of the declaration by professional organizations, regulatory and self-regulatory bodies. UNOCI, he concluded, encourages the government and all actors concerned to continue to work toward the rapid return of diverse and responsible opinion in the Ivorian media.

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