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Opération des Nations Unies
en Côte d'Ivoire



UNITED NATIONS
United Nations Operation in
Côte d'Ivoire

Summary of UNOCI weekly press conference

(Abidjan, 17 February 2011)

TWO WEST AFRICAN COUNTRIES OFFER TROOPS TO UNOCI

Three countries, two of which are in West Africa, have offered to send troops to reinforce the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), the Mission's Spokesman, Hamadoun Touré, announced in Abidjan on Thursday.

Speaking at UNOCI's weekly press conference, Mr. Touré explained that negotiations with the countries concerned were well advanced. The United Nations Security Council decided earlier this month to increase the number peacekeepers by 2,000.

According to the Spokesman, UNOCI is going to acquire appropriate helicopters which will allow it to better carry out its tasks with regard to the peace process, including the protection of civilians in danger. On this basis, he said the Special Representative was carrying out consultations to explain the three elements of the Mission's mandate and reaffirm the impartiality of UNOCI's military component.

Asked about the activities of the 500 peacekeepers from the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), whose mandate was extended for three months by the Security Council on Wednesday, 16 February 2011, Mr. Touré explained that they had been deployed in UNOCI for a few weeks at the time of the presidential election. "The redeployment of these peacekeepers for a further three months will increase our capacity in terms of carrying out our tasks with regard to the peace process," said the Spokesman.

Giving an update of the human rights situation, Mr. Touré announced that UNOCI had recorded four new cases of people who were summarily killed in Ndotré, Yopougon Niangon and Adjamé Gare Ran. "To date, we have counted at least 300 deaths in connection with the post-electoral violence since mid-December 2010," he added.

Turning to the Mission's initiatives aimed at preparing the population for an end to the crisis, national reconciliation and social cohesion, Mr. Touré said that sensitisation sessions had been organised this week in the Worodougou region and Odienné.

He also announced that, in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNOCI is next week organising a meeting in Bouaké, on the contribution of the media to the reopening of schools and the functioning of the health system during the post-electoral crisis in the Vallée du Bandama region. "The meeting is part of efforts by the United Nations agencies to improve the living conditions of vulnerable people by launching an extensive community sensitisation operation through the regional media, with the support of the local authorities," he explained.

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