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en Côte d'Ivoire



UNITED NATIONS
United Nations Operation in
Côte d'Ivoire

Summary of UNOCI weekly press conference *(Abidjan, 21 April 2011)*

UNOCI DEPLORES FIGHTING IN YOPOUGON AND ABOBO

The spokesperson of the UN Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI), Hamadoun Toure Thursday deplored the persistent fighting in Yopougon as well as clashes in Abobo between units of the <Invisible Commando> and Republican Forces of Cote d'Ivoire (FRCI) pointing out that they were threatening efforts deployed four months ago to restore peace.

During UNOCI's weekly press conference, the Spokesperson disclosed that discussions were going on with the different parties to bring them back to reason and thus help the Ivorian people to finally go beyond the post-electoral crisis stage.

On this subject, Hamadoun Toure indicated that UNOCI was attentively following up the triple challenge of security, humanitarian assistance and the preservation of human rights. He reiterated the UN mission's willingness to spare no effort to help the government live up to the three challenges that could serve as a basis for social cohesion and national reconciliation.

On the military front, Mr. Toure announced the launching yesterday of joint UNOCI-FRCI patrols aimed at speeding up the return of law and order in Abidjan. "Our troops also have the responsibility of ensuring security at the Port and around the Golf Hotel," he specified. The UN, he added, ensures the protection of the national branch of the Central Bank of West African States at Plateau as well as its local branches in the interior of the country.

The Spokesperson gave a rundown of the activities of the peace keeping troops especially with regard to patrols. "During the past week, UNOCI conducted 976 land, mixed and aerial patrols." In view of the troubling situation in Yopougon, UNOCI has decided to double the presence of peacekeepers in the area. About a hundred UN troops, he said, would set up a round the clock patrol. "We are contributing to ensure security while at the same time preserving our military impartiality," he said.

The disarmament operation taking place besides those in army camps launched in the wake of the fall of former president Laurent Gbagbo is still going on and that some 50 light weapons and 3000 ammunitions have been recovered besides communication equipment.

He disclosed that a UNOCI mine clearance team has begun demining in Cocody, the scene of deadly combat during the last several weeks.

Mr. Toure also announced the arrival of 250 Malawian soldiers within the context of reinforcing UNOCI's security capacity. The Malawi contingent forms part of the additional 2000 troops authorized by the Security Council.

Earlier, Mr. Toure indicated that the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Cote d'Ivoire, Y.J. Choi was holding consultations at the New York HQ of the organization on the latest developments of the situation in the country and has made a contribution to troop contributing member states. Mr. Choi also discussed the future role of UNOCI after the resolution of the post-electoral crisis.

On a different note, Mr. Toure expressed satisfaction with the return to the newsstand of certain Ivorian newspapers and called on the competent authorities to take adequate measures with a view to permitting the expression of diverse opinion on the national media landscape. "This goes with the respect of press freedom and the right to information of the citizens, he concluded.

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