



## ONUCI – 976

### PRESS RELEASE

#### **UNOCI CONDEMNS VIOLENCE AGAINST PEACEKEEPERS IN ABIDJAN**

**Abidjan, 27 February 2011...** The United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) strongly condemns the acts of violence perpetrated on 25 and 26 February 2011 against its peacekeepers, during which three Blue Helmets were wounded and four vehicles were damaged.

The three Blue Helmets were wounded in an ambush carried out against the UNOCI military in the Abobo neighbourhood by the armed forces of President Gbagbo's camp. The peacekeepers were on patrol within the framework of the protection of civilians, a main element of UNOCI's mandate, when they were shot at in the PK-18 area. The patrol was forced to return fire.

Meanwhile, on Friday and Saturday, 'Young Patriots' damaged four UNOCI vehicles in Abidjan.

The United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire notes that this new escalation of violence and attacks against the mission and its personnel has been fuelled by the propaganda, based on unreal facts, undertaken against it by President Gbagbo's camp.

UNOCI wishes to recall that under international conventions, any attack against UN peacekeepers constitutes a war crime.

UNOCI also wishes to recall that the Blue Helmets' rules of engagement allow them to use force to protect UN personnel and material as well as freedom of movement. These rules shall be applied strictly.

UNOCI reiterates its call for calm and invites all parties concerned to avoid any recourse to violence.

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***Pour toute information supplémentaire, prière de contacter:***

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