Editorial

Joint Message on World Press Freedom Day for 3 May 2011 from

World Press Freedom Day was born twenty years ago in the vision of a group of journalists gathered in Windhoek, Namibia. The Windhoek Declaration was a call to arms to protect the fundamental principles of the freedom of expression as enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration Human Rights. It was also a bell ringing in change across the world.

Twenty years on, the media landscape has changed beyond recognition, but our objective remains the same: to promote freedom of expression as the foundation for human dignity and the cornerstone of democracy.

Our times feature a great paradox. We enjoy unprecedented opportunities for expression thanks to new technologies and media. More and more people are able to share information and exchange views, within and across national borders. This is a blessing for creativity, for healthy societies, for including everyone in new forms of dialogue.

At the same time, new threats are arising. In a context of rapid change, these combine with older forms of restriction to pose formidable challenges to freedom of expression. New measures to block, filter and censor information emerge every day. Challenges take different features, but they share the same face as violations of a fundamental human right.

The United Nations is dedicated to ensuring that the Internet becomes a truly global public resource, to which all have access and where all voices are heard. This underlines the importance of quality content. This calls for action to defend the integrity and safety of online reporters. All principles of freedom of expression must be brought to the on-line world.

And they must be protected. Over the last decade, more than 500 journalists lost their lives in the pursuit of their profession. Sixty killings were reported worldwide in 2010 alone. Every week brings more reports of journalists and bloggers suffering from intimidation and violence.

Violations of fundamental human rights cannot go unanswered. State authorities must do everything to counter impunity and to protect the safety of journalists. We will never forget the courage of journalists who paid with their lives for our right to know.

The media revolution is triggering new debates about freedom of expression, about the nature of regulation, about the balance between expression and responsibility. We must not shy away from exploring all angles of these questions. We must all rise to the occasion and accept the responsibility of change.

Twenty years after Windhoek, events every day show that promoting freedom of expression remains as important as ever. On this 2011 World Press Freedom Day, we call on all governments to join forces with the United Nations to guarantee and promote freedom of expression in print, on the airwaves and online.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon
Navi Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director-General
The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Cote d'Ivoire, Y. J. Choi met with Ivorian President Alassane Ouattara on Tuesday 3 May. Mr. Choi reaffirmed the availability of UNOCI to cooperate with all the resources at its disposal to the restoration of public order and stability in Cote d'Ivoire. Two days earlier the UNOCI Chief met with representatives of the Group of Elders: former Irish Republic President and former High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and former head of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Archbishop Desmond Tutu. It should be noted that this independent group of world leaders were in Cote d'Ivoire to contribute to the launching of the reconciliation process in Côte d'Ivoire. Mr. Choi responded to their request to give a rundown on the post-electoral situation. The <Elders> were transported by UNOCI to Korhogo where they met with ex-president Laurent Gbagbo. Before his departure from Abidjan, Kofi Annan said he was encouraged by the various discussions he had with Ivorian authorities and advised that Côte d’Ivoire take its time and avoid any rush with regard to the dialogue, truth and reconciliation commission.

End of working visit of General Babacar Gaye

The Military adviser to UN secretary-General, General Babacar Gaye, paid a working visit to Cote d’Ivoire from 28 April to 3 May 2011. Apart from discussions with the Special Representative of UN Secretary-general for Cote d’Ivoire, Y.J. Choi on the overall situation in Cote d’Ivoire. General Gaye was received in audience by Head of State Alassane Ouattara. "The President granted me the honour of receiving me like he did during my previous visit in December," the General said after their meeting. General Gaye also held meetings with Ivorian military authorities as well as the commanding officers of the different battalions of the UN Force to encourage them to pursue their mission of protecting the population so as to ensure the restoration of peace.
The United Nations Police (UNPOL) have deployed multiple patrols along with Formed Police Units to establish a reassuring presence in Ivorian security services such as Compagnie Republicaine de Sécurité (CRS II), the National Police College, the Police Prefecture, the Directorate-General of the National Police and the Ministry of Interior. This presence does not only contribute to the strengthening of security and surveillance but also facilitates relation between the newly formed Republican Forces of Cote d’Ivoire (FRCI) on one hand and the Police and ex-Defence and Security Forces (FDS) in order to encourage the resumption of work. Besides the UN Police are participating in the Operations Centre of the Ministry of Interior charged with centralizing information and manages the interventions of the National Gendarmerie and Police. It is based in the Ministry of Interior and contributes to security operations including joint patrols involving UNPOL/FPU-Licorne-FRCI-Police-Gendarmerie. The objective is to avoid any security loopholes that could affect the return to normal life and to assist Ivorian forces substitute military presence with Police presence which is more reassuring to the population and the business community.

UN Technical Assessment Mision (TAM) in Cote d’Ivoire

The UN is geared towards reconstruction, national reconciliation and social cohesion. In this light, a Technical assessment mission was dispatched from New York on 31 April to carry out a 15-day evaluation exercise. Experts of various sectors, led by Raisedon Zenenga, the Director of the Africa Division of the Department of Peace Keeping Operations were scheduled to meet with President Allassane Ouattara as well as other political and civil society actors. Their trip will also take them into the interior of the country.

UNPOL assist Ivoirian security forces resume duties

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UNOCI faces the press:

The traditional UNOCI press conference attended by national and international media persons took place on 5 May 2011 at the mission’s HQ. We revisit some highlights of the conference given by UNOCI spokesman Hamadoun Toure:

- Blue helmets conducted 1024 land and air patrols in the week just ended.
- UN bomb clearance team is working throughout the national territory. Eleven sights were cleared last week and 28 have been earmarked in the days ahead.
- UNOCI medical service admitted 63 patients (57 men, 5 women and one child) in the week just ended. Patients were wounded either by bullets, grenades, machete, and knives or simply burnt alive. Four patients died from their injuries.
- The humanitarian situation has grievously deteriorated in several towns thus affecting education, health, public hygiene, food security and protection.
- Of the $160 million requested for humanitarian aid, only $32 million has been made available.
- UNOCI encourages the government and all the parties concerned to continue efforts towards the rapid return of diversity of expression in the Ivorian media.
3 Sensitisation:

- Seguela

UNOCI and two of its civil society partners on Tuesday 3 May organised a sensitisation campaign dubbed ONUCI TOUR in Seguela to create awareness about national reconciliation. The campaign involving the Worodougouka Soutra and Esperance NGOs gave out messages to a gathering of some 300 sons and daughters of Worogodoougou which calling for forgiveness, national reconciliation and dialogue. The Secretary-General of the Prefecture, Mr. Blaise Kiouassi attended the campaign which lasted an hour during which participants confirmed their commitment to genuine national peace.

- Korhogo

UNOCI increases contact with all components of the society

The UN Operation in Cote d’Ivoire (UNOCI) held discussions with youths of political parties, media men and women in Korhogo on what contributions they can make to national cohesion and social cohesion. For party youths representing the Ivorian Popular front (FPI), Movement of Future Forces (MFA), Rally of Republicans (RDR), Democratic Party of Cote d’Ivoire (PDCI), the Ivorian Labour Party (PIT) and the union of Community youths, it was a question of sensitising the grassroot population on the democratic culture, while the media practitioners expressed the need for capacity-building in order to carry out their mission with greater professionalism and contribute to the effective healing of the society. UNOCI, after the post-electoral crisis, intends to pursue its objective of supporting every component of society to reinforce the social fabric, security, dialogue and peace.

4 Messages of peace from Korhogo

RDR Youth president, Coulibay Ibrahim:

“It is important that we the youth should forgive one another and that all our efforts should be geared towards reconciliation so that Cote d’Ivoire continues to live on.”

FPI Youth president, Yeo Kolo

It is for the youth to show the example of a successful reconciliation so the elders and the others can follow. We hope that those of Korhogo to begin with and the Savanne region would serve as a locomotive to all Ivorian and African youths in the quest for forgiveness and mutual acceptance.
The last traumatic events in Côte d’Ivoire have the potential to affect children. Parents and adults have an important role to play and support them through recovery process. Some children may have immediate as well as delayed responses that are shown through emotional and behavioral changes.

The children react to the stress reaction in different way: sometime with important behavioral changes, sometimes with no signal of disease. In any case, their silence does not mean that the event did not affect the child. We can observe the child’s play to detect elements of a stressful event.

Normal reaction to a traumatic event may be:

- Anxious attachment
- Highly fearful
- Separation anxiety
- Regressive behavior
- Loss of new skills
- Nightmares
- Night terrors
- Self blame
- Distorts young children’s moral and social concepts
- Decline of school performance
- Psychosomatic complaints (such as dizziness, headaches, stomach pains)
- Dramatic behavioral changes

Those reactions are normal and it should be monitored by parents.

Certain enfants deviennent plus exigeants émotionnellement : ils demandent plus de leur parents, deviennent excessivement anxieux et craintifs de leur environnement, ont un besoin constant d’être rassurés. En ce sens, les personnes en charge d’enfants et de leur bien-être (caredgevier) peuvent aider à améliorer leur capacité de faire face à une situation stressante.

What Parents and Caregivers can do?

1. It is important to spend time “listening” to children. Reassure children that they are safe and that trustworthy people are in control.
2. First and foremost the parents (or any other adult who care the child) must understand and emotionally support the younger, to answer their questions honestly, to attend to the concerns and fears, to encourage them to seek solutions.
3. Furthermore, ongoing routine and daily activities following stressful events give children a sense of stability and security.
4. Help children express their feelings.

Immediately after a traumatic event, help your child calm down by showing that you can calm yourself. Suggest your child to draw a picture of his or her feelings or use a doll or stuffed animal to talk to, with you, about the event. Listen to the child’s description of events and talk to him or her in a calm, loving way. Personal problems and to help them cope with or overcome difficult situations.

Last but not least it is important to help them with the comprehension of last events. Children cannot forget painful experiences without first understanding what happened to them. Try to maintain a “secure shell” around your children without avoiding the problem. Give them an opportunity to deal with stress through play.

Finally consider that exist child specialist who can help children with severe behavioral problems are usually psychologists, pediatricians, social workers, school counselors or community health workers. The ONUCI Staff Counselling Unit can also provide professional support to your children.

Remember: it’s only through Comprehension that is possible obtain the Acceptance that lead the child to Recovery.

Drawing by a 8-year old child (www.hrea.org)

A mong the multiple sections and divisions of UNOCI, one should cite the Transport section, an essential and indispensable link in the smooth functioning of the UN mission. The transport section based in Daloa and which covers the towns of Daloa, Divo, Seguela, Duekoué, Man, Dannane and Odienne, is made up of dynamic, professional men who are dedicated to peace in Côte d’Ivoire. Dougrou Charles, Kone Karim, and Yeo Kahabie, all of the married and family heads and «soldiers of peace» occupying the post of mechanic of Ivorian nationality based in Daloa, who under difficulties and work-related constraints, make their highly appreciated contributions to the restoration of peace in the country. Yeo, Karim and Charles belong to a team of twelve and have tried their hands in various occupations before joining UNOCI. Yeo and Karim were in the private transport sector. STIF and STBO companies for Karim and a private garage in Daloa for Yeo. Charles has an unusual experience, having worked as non accredited clerk in notary’s office in Grand Lahou and dabbled in other jobs before becoming an apprentice mechanic. Recruited between 2004 and 2006, our mechanic ‘geniuses’ work in perfect harmony with people from diverse parts of the world including Barbados, Jamaica, Haiti and Sudan. For the three of them, working for UNOCI is a daily source of inspiration and hope for them as they look forward to better days for themselves and their compatriots with the help and support of UNOCI.

Portrait : Charles, Karim et Yéo,

Aces at the service of peace
ONUCI FM the Radio for Peace proposes its regular newscasts at 7h00, 8h00, 12h00 and 16h00 as well as news briefs. We also have special reports and magazine programmes on health, culture, sport, entertainment and music.

We invite you to listen to our special reports on Sunday 9 May at 7h40 in which we trace the ordeal of the displaced persons of Sakassou. On Tuesday, free medical treatment at Yamousoukro hospital.

On Thursday we take you on a trip to Odienne to visit abandoned children at the “Arc en Ciel” Centre. WE feature reggae singer Naftaly on Wednesday and the choreographer, Joseph Aka on Friday.

REGGAE TIME commemorates 30 years after the death of Bob Marley on Sunday at 20h00.

DITES MOI DOCTEUR (Saturday 14h00, Monday 17h40) will focus on asthma and on how to treat it.

LIRE POUR LA PAIX, Wednesday21h00 and Thursday 16h00: journalist Michel Kipre takes us to the Mimosif- com academy which trains world players such as Yaya Toure, Aruna Dindane, Kouassi Gervais <Gervino>, Bakary Kone <Baky> or Salomon Kalou <Kalunho> etc.