



MINUSTAH

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PRESS RELEASE

MINUSTAH clarifies key issues concerning the operation in Cite Soleil

Port-au-Prince, 15 December 2004 – The Principal Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations in Haiti, Mr. Hocine Medili, underscored, during a press conference held on 15 December, key issues concerning the joint operation conducted by MINUSTAH, on 14 December, in the neighborhood of Cite Soleil.

According to Mr. Medili, “this operation serves as MINUSTAH’s direct contribution to the residents of Cite Soleil; and the objective of this operation is to provide them with a safe and normal environment.” Mr. Medili also added that meetings among United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), concerning the return of humanitarian activities in Cite Soleil, which were interrupted a few months ago for security reasons, are currently back in progress.

“It is important to emphasize that this joint operation was not targeted against any specific group or political movement. Instead, this intervention’s purpose is to gradually re-establish security and create a political space which will allow the residents of Cite Soleil to offer their support during the process of national inclusion and reconciliation,” explained Mr. Hocine Medili.

The Principal Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations in Haiti clarified that “the fact that we are engaged in an operation of this nature should not be misunderstood by any armed groups as an opportunity to occupy public or private spaces or to include themselves in any action concerning the maintenance of order which is not legitimately theirs.”

MINUSTAH’s Force Commander, General Augusto Heleno Pereira, who also attended the press conference, highlighted that the “operation in Cite Soleil is not a demonstration of force.” Instead, he described the operation as a support to the Haitian National Police (HNP) and affirmed that, on 16 December, the HNP will obtain its place inside the neighborhood.

MINUSTAH’s Force Commander commemorated the fact that operation had been a success since no one was killed and only four people were injured; of which two were minor wounds. General Heleno accentuated that this operation will not, in any case, use force in vain; and will instead concentrate on actions that are appropriate and just for the re-establishment of order.

The initial phase of the operation is now over. During the press conference, Jean-Francois Vezina, the Information Officer of the International Civilian Police, stated that one of the goals for the upcoming days, once the military troops re-establish a safe level of security in that neighborhood, will be to conduct regular MINUSTAH civil police patrols inside Cite Soleil.

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More information concerning this operation will be released once they are available. For further information please contact the MINUSTAH Public Information and Communication Office at (509) 510-2563 ext. : 6343 or 510- 3183/84/85 ext. : 6037- 6034-6035 or a missions’ Web Site Site at <http://www.minustah.org>