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**ONUCI**

## **Ivorian reggae star becomes ONUCI's first messenger of peace**



**Abidjan, 22 September** - Ivorian reggae star Koné Seydou, better known as Alpha Blondy, on Wednesday became the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire's first ever messenger of peace, at a ceremony marking the Fourth International Day of Peace.

Accepting the certificate confirming his nomination from the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in Côte d'Ivoire, Pierre Schori, a visibly moved Alpha Blondy said he was happy and proud to receive the honour.

Koné, described by Schori as "a brother to his neighbour and a remedy for man," has always advocated the ideals of peace, fraternity and social cohesion. "It is in the name of all [these ideals] that I will go personally to meet the leaders of the political parties," he told the Ivorian personalities, diplomats, UN officials and other invitees who attended the ceremony. "I am not a politician," he added. "I will have my own way of working."

He acknowledged that his job would be a difficult, long-term one, but said he would rely on God and count on all Ivorians to work together to resolve the Ivorian conflict and all the others that tear the African continent apart. "We know the illness," he said. "It's called war. Together, we have to find a vaccine against the war, our war."

In his first declaration as a messenger of peace, Alpha Blondy launched a call to action: "War is not the solution," he said. "The boat is taking in water and we must mobilize ourselves to save it."

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