



UNOCI Patrols

Throughout the day and night, peacekeepers of the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) patrol the length and breadth of the zone of confidence - which separates the government-controlled South of Côte d'Ivoire from the North, controlled by the Forces Nouvelles - to ensure the safety of the people living there.

In certain parts of Western Côte d'Ivoire, for example, they are a factor of calm and serenity for populations who, at one point, had fled their villages and sought refuge in the surrounding forests.

« We do not have any security problem since the Bangladeshis arrived in our village. They are very nice and they reassure us as best they can,» says Jean Louis Djè Bi Ta, a Fifth Form (Ninth Grade) student who lives in a village near the town of Zuénoula. “When they are on patrol, they always stop, come into our villages and ask about our health and concerns. Thanks to them we are no longer afraid of going into our fields or even of going far from the village.”

Similarly, the women of Minfla, another village in the same region, are able to sing, dance and clap their hands to the sound of the drum on some nights under the protective eye of the Blue Helmets. They feel free and are no longer afraid of making noise.

“Before, the villagers used to sleep early and the village used to seem deserted, » says Captain Ashiq of the Bangladeshi contingent in the area.

Members of UNOCI's battalions and military observers from 54 countries conduct on average 80 to 100 patrols each day, around the clock. This adds up to more than 2,000 per month. Each patrol comprises two to 10 soldiers aboard one or two UN vehicles. The UN police also conduct patrols in liaison with the soldiers.

UNOCI peacekeepers travel to villages and towns throughout the territory to meet the people and monitor the ceasefire. In the zone of confidence, they have an additional role. They make sure it is not violated, and they contribute to the protection of the population as well as the free circulation of people and goods.

Whatever they observe is reported only to the UNOCI headquarters and the headquarters of the United Nations in New York.

Some figures on the UNOCI force:

Participating countries :	54
Military observers :	ca. 200
Troops deployed throughout the territory :	6.600
Officers at the Central Command :	90
Civilian and military police :	700



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