



UNOG Bi-weekly press Briefing: Ivory Coast UNHCR

03-11-2020 | Edited News

Shotlist

1. Exterior wide shot, Palais des Nations flag alley, nations' flags flying, a cloudy day.
2. Wide shot, podium with speakers to rear in a near-empty Room XIV in line with COVID-19 distancing measures, Palais des Nations.
3. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Boris Cheshirkov, spokesperson for UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees): “Ivorians are fleeing to neighbouring countries as they fear post-electoral violence. UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is concerned as electoral tension and unrest in Côte d’Ivoire has caused several thousand people to flee to neighbouring countries as refugees. Violent clashes erupted after the Presidential election which was held on 31 October, leaving at least a dozen dead and many more injured, according to the latest reports.”**
4. Medium shot, UN staff member typing on laptop and using listening device, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.
5. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Boris Cheshirkov, spokesperson for UNHCR: “As of 2 November, more than 3,200 Ivorian refugees had arrived in Liberia, Ghana and Togo. Most of the arrivals are women and children from Côte d’Ivoire’s west and southwest regions. The newly arrived include former Ivorian refugees who had recently repatriated and were forced to flee once again.”**
6. Close-up, hands typing on laptop, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.
7. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Boris Cheshirkov, spokesperson for UNHCR: “What we have seen is the majority of those coming across the border are women and children. In fact, more than half those that have come in to Liberia and Ghana have been children. We are still trying to assess**

the profile of the people and why they are moving as they are right now. That is why we are boosting our capacity and deploying staff. For the moment, I cannot tell you more about the profile but certainly we hope to have that in coming days.”

8. Medium shot, UN staff member using listening device, sitting on podium, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.
9. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Boris Cheshirkov, spokesperson for UNHCR: “In terms of the violence, what we have seen is already there have been reports of a dozen or more dead and many more hurt and we know that people are looking back to 2010-11, that period when there was violence which at that time led to 3,000 dead, more than 300,000 refugees fleeing in the region and around one million displaced.”**
10. Medium shot, UN staff member typing on laptop and using listening device in foreground and journalist listening to rear, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.
11. Wide shot, podium with speakers in foreground and a near-empty Room XIV in line with COVID-19 distancing measures to rear, Palais des Nations.
12. Medium shot, UN Staff member sitting and listening, Room XIV, Palais des Nations.

Story

Côte d'Ivoire: UN reports 3,000 flee abroad amid electoral violence

Several thousand people have fled from Côte d'Ivoire into neighbouring countries after a presidential election that sparked violent clashes, the UN refugee agency [UNHCR](#) said on Tuesday.

“Ivorians are fleeing to neighbouring countries as they fear post-electoral violence. UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, is concerned as electoral tension and unrest in Côte d'Ivoire has caused several thousand people to flee to neighbouring countries as refugees. Violent clashes erupted after the presidential election which was held on 31 October leaving at least a dozen dead and many more injured, according to the latest reports,” UNHCR spokesperson Boris Cheshirkov told a regular UN briefing in Geneva.

News reports said on Monday that the Ivorian electoral commission had provisionally declared 78-year-old incumbent President Alassane Ouattara the winner with 94.27 per cent of the vote. The election had been laden with tension over his decision to run for a third term, after he had gone on record as saying that he would step down after two, and the two main opposition parties had called for a boycott.

“As of 2 November, more than 3,200 Ivorian refugees had arrived in Liberia, Ghana and Togo. Most of the arrivals are women and children from Côte d'Ivoire's west and southwest regions. The newly arrived include former Ivorian refugees who had recently repatriated and were forced to flee once again,” Mr. Cheshirkov said.

He added that UNHCR was grateful to the three neighbouring countries for keeping their borders open despite the COVID-19 pandemic, and the agency was working closely with them on contingency plans in case the situation worsened further.

“What we have seen is the majority of those coming across the border are women and children. In fact more than half those that have come in to Liberia and Ghana have been children. We are still trying to assess the profile of the people and why they are moving as they are right now. That is why we are boosting our capacity and deploying staff. For the moment I can't tell you more about the profile but certainly we hope to have that in coming days,” Mr. Cheshirkov said.

On the eve of the election, UN Secretary-General António Guterres had [urged](#) all political leaders to “refrain from inciting violence, spreading misinformation and using hate speech” and to resolve any disputes through dialogue.

Mr. Cheshirkov said that many Ivorians had been sensitised to the dangers by widespread violence connected to a disputed presidential election in 2011.

“In terms of the violence, what we have seen is already there have been reports of a dozen or more dead and many more hurt and we know that people are looking back to 2010-11, that period when there was violence which at that time led to 3,000 dead, more than 300,000 refugees fleeing in the region and around 1,000,000 displaced”, he said.