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MONUSCO – UNO Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly MONUC)

Ituri : Population in Fataki Appreciative of Improved Security Situation in their Area

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In Ituri, the security situation has improved significantly on the national road number 27 in the territory of Djugu. On this road section, going from Bunia, the provincial capital, to the locality of Fataki, over 90 km, the national army troops are positioned every 5 kilometers for the protection of road users. Similarly, MONUSCO blue helmets regularly organize patrols there to reinforce the security of the population.

As a positive consequence, public transport vehicles and trucks with goods on board ride unescorted all along this road which, a few months ago, lived to the rhythm of attacks by Codeco militiamen. Motor bikers and pedestrians, including students who walk several kilometers to get to school, now move about almost safely.

Daily civilians' protection patrolling

A Nepalese blue helmets base has been deployed in Djaiba, 6 km from Fataki. Twice a day, they patrol the displaced persons camp in Lodda, located some 6 km from their base. At night, they return there. They are also present at Fataki center, at the Catholic parish or at the general hospital. These sites are usually targeted by the militiamen.

Reassured by the presence of national security forces and UN peacekeepers, some displaced persons who had fled the area several months or even years ago are now returning to their home communities.

Among them, the religious nuns of the Immaculate Heart of Marie Fataki parish. On March 17, 2021, MONUSCO accommodated them for three days at its military base in Djaiba, before escorting them from Fataki to Bunia, following a violent attack by Codeco militiamen on their convent.

It is now a month since they have returned to Fataki. One of them has explained that many idps are still hesitating because their houses were destroyed by the attackers. She pleads for the return of peace in the area to facilitate their return. In fact, many houses remain empty and surrounded by grass, for lack of occupants.

MONUSCO's intervention in May 2022 applauded

Father Jean Lojunga has been serving as priest for the Catholic parish of Fataki since March 16, 2022. On Wednesday afternoon, October 12, he was returning from a motorcycle race to Dhera, 20 km from Fataki. On the outward and return journeys, he declares that he has not noticed any security incident on the way. He says he does not remember the last time he heard a gunshot here, proof that the security situation has improved in the area.

The catholic priest praises the excellent collaboration between the FARDC and MONUSCO blue helmets which is the cause of this improvement. He says he appreciates the work done by MONUSCO blue helmets in bringing peace to this area.

"They protect us and the whole community. Last May, the assailants slaughtered 14 people in the Lodda camp. Without the intervention MONUSCO blue helmets, there would have been real carnage. A relative calm prevails here. People come from 5 or even 6 km from the city center for Farming activities and in the afternoon, they return very close to MONUSCO military camp where they feel safe", says Reverend Lojunga.

"We have full confidence in MONUSCO"

The persons who visit the Fataki center do not all live next to the MONUSCO camp. From 6 p.m., night falls on the city. It is so dark there. The small roundabout of the city which serves as a shopping center is lit by a few solar panels installed by MONUSCO as part of its program to reduce community violence. There are about fifty people coming and going; some are returning from the fields at this late hour, others are installed in front of small shops.

« There have been significantly fewer incidents for many months here. Before, we recorded several cases a day, but since the signing of the unilateral act of commitment for the cessation of hostilities by CODECO, the security situation has improved a lot. Look what time it is now here. Before, everything stopped around 4-5 p.m. It is also because here, the population has confidence in MONUSCO blue helmets ». said a man interviewed by members of a MONUSCO team on mission in Fataki".

Economic activities have resumed

This Thursday morning, MONUSCO team will meet with tradesmen and women at the Fataki market. It's not market day, but a few vendors are busy selling their vegetables and fruits. Some men claim to come from about fifteen kilometers to sell their agricultural products, without noticing a single incident along the way.

Jean Vianney Bambusombo, 57, is a merchant. According to him, the resumption of economic activities in the area is linked to the presence of blue helmets and the FARDC.

"Economic activities have resumed; I would say at 60%. In my opinion, if there were no MONUSCO presence here, the situation would be catastrophic. The problem that is happening in North and South Kivu with MONUSCO is different from Ituri where we are dealing with ethnic groups fighting among themselves. Here, if you ask the local population what they think of MONUSCO, they will tell you that MONUSCO is very necessary because without MONUSCO and the FARDC, everyone would have left to live elsewhere. Our wish is to see all these weapons that are circulating be confiscated for peace to return definitely," he says.

For her part, Mama Béatrice Madasi, Head of the Association for the Promotion of Maternal and Infant Supervision (APEMI) of Fataki, is delighted that MONUSCO regularly organizes social cohesion activities in which all the communities living in Fataki take part.

"Football matches, drama, traditional dances, female leadership training that taught us how to take care of ourselves, etc. Here in Fataki, we live in very good collaboration with MONUSCO. Today, we women can go far, several kilometers away, to cultivate our fields and come back, in complete safety," she explains.

Mrs. Madasi thus invites the people who have taken refuge in Bunia and elsewhere to return to their communities.

"Life is gradually improving. We live together, we drink together, we go to the same market, all communities combined. MONUSCO's contribution is considerable, but peace is everyone's business, we must work every day to preserve it, through our behavior," she concluded.

ecoi.net summary:



Ituri province: Security situation has improved due to measures taken by Congolese armed forces and MONUSCO troops; displaced persons have started to return to their communities

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