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www.who.int1211 GENEVA 27 SWITZERLAND - TELEPHONE: (41) 22.791.21.11 - FAX: (41) 22.791.31.11 - E-MAIL: inf@who.int**Note for the press N°4
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POLIO REPORTED IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Côte d'Ivoire could be 8th polio-free country to be re-infected from Nigeria

Geneva - A case of paralytic poliomyelitis, with onset of paralysis on 17 December 2003, has been reported in Côte d'Ivoire. Investigations are currently ongoing to confirm whether the virus is linked to viruses that spread to other countries in west and central Africa in 2003 from northern Nigeria, following suspension of immunization campaigns in the state of Kano in August.

Côte d'Ivoire had not reported polio cases since July 2000. Côte d'Ivoire would become the eighth previously polio-free country in west and central Africa to become re-infected due to spreading type 1 poliovirus from northern Nigeria. Cases linked to northern Nigeria have to-date been confirmed in Benin (1 case), Burkina Faso (10 cases), Cameroon (1 case), Central African Republic (1 case), Chad (23 cases), Ghana (8 cases) and Togo (1 case).

Côte d'Ivoire is participating in the massive, synchronized polio immunization campaign launched in 10 countries across west and central Africa on 23 February. If high coverage is achieved during this campaign, it could limit the consequences and minimise the risk of further spread of the virus.

For further information please contact Melissa Corkum, Tel: +41 22 791 2765, mobile: +41 79 500 6554, email: corkumm@who.int, or Oliver Rosenbauer, Tel: +41 22 791 3832, mobile: +41 79 500 6530, email: rosenbauero@who.int.

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