



## **Gender/Women Ministries and Women's Groups Enhance Capacity on Peace and Security Issues**

A capacity building training workshop on conflict analysis, mediation, negotiation and policy influencing peace and security issues for gender ministries and women's groups is underway at the Cresta Royale Hotel in Accra Ghana. Organised by the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) South Africa, in collaboration with the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) the workshop brings together 18 representatives gender ministries and women's group from countries of the Manu River Union - Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, - and Ghana.

The major aims of the workshop include assisting the participants understand the dynamics of conflicts in order to develop strategies for response; providing participants with an analytical framework to develop skills in identifying, analyzing and monitoring peace and conflict indicators; and understanding the values and benefits of collaboration as well as cooperative negotiation strategies and skills. At the end of the training participants are expected to have enhanced their capacity to apply these issues in the implementation of their mandates.

Opening the workshop, the Executive Director of WANEP, Mr. Emmanuel Bombande recalled the central and leadership role that women have been playing during times of violent conflicts and wars. *"Notwithstanding their achievements, there is still a lot more to be done"*, Mr Bombande reiterated. While appreciating the emerging relationship between CCR and WANEP, the Millennium Peace Award Winner said it is an exemplary way of African institutions taking ownership of peacebuilding in the continent.

In her opening remarks, the representative of CCR, Ms Thelma Ekiyor said capacity building for women is an integral part of CCR's programme for civil society in the specialized area of peace and security. *"There has been a lot of recognition and rhetoric about women's role in peacebuilding, but not a lot of emphasis on how women are placed in this male-dominated area. Even when women want to be involved, they lack the practical skills,"* Ms Ekiyor said. It is for this reason, she explained, that the workshop is in line with CCR's programming, especially in building the capacity of female parliamentarians, gender ministers and women's groups.

This is the second workshop of its kind organized this year, as WANEP and CCR forge a partnership. The first was a organized for gender ministries and women's groups in the Senegambia region (Guinea Bissau, The Gambia and Senegal). The two workshops fall within the framework of WANEP's Women in Peacebuilding Program (WIPNET).

Since 2004, WIPNET has been mobilizing grassroots women and building their capacity to play active and visible roles in promoting human security through an ideology known as Women's Peace Activism. With the gains and lessons learned made in the last four years, WIPNET has began a process of emnaging top-level technocrats and policy-makers in the process.

WIPNET also calls for the domestication and implementation of international protocols and instruments that mandate women's inclusion in this field. The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, constitutes an important working document in this regard and is a key working document in the workshop. Passed in 2000, *"it is the first resolution ever passed by the Security Council that specifically addresses the impact of war on women, and women's contribution to conflict resolution and sustainable peace."*

**Jacob Enoh-Eben**  
**Regional Coordinator**  
**Communication/Peace Monitoring Centre**