



WANEP Facilitates, Community Dialogue and Mediation Training for Members of Bawku Inter Ethnic Peace committee – August 10 to 13th 2010

The persistent inter-communal violence which reoccurred in Bawku since December 31st, 2007 has been of great concern to all. The conflict between the Kusasis and Mamprusis have led to the loss of lives and properties giving rise to deep-seated mistrust between the two parties for almost three years running. The worsening security situation resulted in the deployment of military and police troops by the Government of Ghana to enforce public order thereby placing Bawku under curfew and banning the use of motorbikes in the area. These restrictions on the movement of people have badly affected commerce and economic activities further impoverishing the Municipality. An Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee was established to resolve the conflict and jointly resolve future conflicts. However, one of the identified factors militating against the performance of the Committee is lack of basic skills in dialogue, mediation, negotiation and other conflict resolution mechanisms.



Group Picture of the UNDP representative, WANEP, participants and the Upper East Regional Minister and his Deputy

Against this background, the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) in partnership with the Ministry of Interior and with support with the support of UNDP organised a three day training (August 11 to 13 2010) for members of the Inter Ethnic Peace Committee titled” **Capacity Building workshop on Sustaining Peacebuilding Efforts in Bawku Municipality through Community Dialogue”**

The Upper East Regional Minister in company of his Deputy visited the participants and when the challenges facing the group was presented to him, he stated that “There is no alternative to the Bawku Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee, we created it and MUST continue to support it to realise the objective for sustainable peace in Bawku”

At the end of the three day training, the participants renewed their commitment to sustainable peace in the area through a communiqué issued to the media and members of public (see box below)

A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE BAWKU INTER-ETHNIC PEACE COMMITTEE AT A THREE DAY CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP HELD AT BOLGATANGA FROM 10TH-13TH AUGUST 2010

We the members of the Bawku Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee (BIEPC) as part of a capacity building training workshop under the auspices of the Ghana Government through the Ministry of the Interior with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and facilitated by the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP); from 10th-13th August 2010 in Bolgatanga deliberated upon our achievements, challenges and constraints and hereby issue this communiqué on the 13th of August 2010 in Bolgatanga.

Aware that we have made appreciable progress in the search for peace since the Kumasi dialogue series, we renew our collective commitment and dedication for the search for sustainable and lasting peace in Bawku and shall continue to work tirelessly to improve upon the current peace prevailing in the area.

In this regard, we wish to draw the attention of all stakeholders particularly Government to the following challenges that are inhibiting effective work of the Committee. That:

1) i) We are in need of office accommodation and logistical support. The committee does not have any designated office in the municipality. In this regard we wish to appeal to our partners / stakeholders particularly, UNDP, WANEP, and the Government of Ghana to come to our assistance.

ii) We further wish to appeal to Government to create a special budget line to support the committee to carry out its planned activities and programmes on schedule to avoid a relapse of the past situation

2). Government and other stakeholders absorb the Transport and Travelling (T&T) and other allowances to enable the committee attend meetings and carry out its outreach activities regularly and effectively.

3. We wish to particularly urge and appeal to the Upper East Caucus of Members of Parliament to fulfill their pledge to support the committee so that the committee would be able to carry out its planned activities and programmes.

4. We further appeal to all stakeholders and well-wishers especially those interested in assisting the people of Bawku towards finding lasting peace to channel all their programmes and support through the peace committee so that all efforts will be coordinated to produce sustainable peace in the area.

5. People of Bawku have high expectations from the committee and other stakeholders, therefore, we call on all to take advantage of the prevailing conditions in the area and support the committee to work towards achieving the ultimate goal for sustainable and lasting peace.

6. While we recognize and appreciate the contributions of the media in the search for lasting peace in Bawku, we wish to appeal to them to be circumspect in their reportage on matters relating to happenings in Bawku and call on them not to put up any information which is misleading and has the potential to inflame passions.

7. In this communiqué, we reassure all Development Partners particularly the UN agencies that the prevailing security environment is safe for the implementation of development projects. In this regard, we appeal for the early implementation of the Human Security and Recovery Project in the area.

8. In conclusion, the committee wishes to extend its appreciation and gratitude to the good people of Bawku, the Government of the Republic of Ghana, the Upper East Caucus of Members of Parliament, the Regional Minister and his Deputy, the M/DCEs of the Bawku traditional area, the Bawku Municipal Assembly, the National Peace Council, the National Security Council, Northern Development Forum (NDF), UNDP, WANEP, IBIS, ActionAid, BEWDA and the Bawku Interreligious Dialogue Committee as well as the Security agencies for their support, interest and commitment towards the achievement of sustainable and lasting peace in the area.

Signed by the Co-Chair of the Inter Ethnic Peace Committee on behalf of members of the Committee:

Mr. Thomas Abilla

Alhaji Ibrahim Kobilla