



West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) Building Relationships for Peace

PRESS RELEASE

Cote d'Ivoire Presidential Election: *A Hurdle to Overcome*

The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), in its capacity as the civil society implementing partner of the ECOWAS early warning system (ECOWARN) and a member of the Peace and Security Cluster of the AU ECOSOCC General Assembly has been following keenly the electoral process in Cote d'Ivoire.

WANEP commends the political will of the Government of Cote d'Ivoire in setting the date of the much-awaited presidential election on 31st October 2010 and its commitments to a peaceful and credible process.

WANEP further appreciates the efforts of the Government and political parties in ensuring the independence of the national electoral commission and guaranteeing the political space for the participation of all Ivorians.

However in view of the growing political alliance along ethnic and regional lines; the increasing insecurity in the Dix-Huit Montagnes; the continued presence of armed mercenaries in the country; the incomplete demobilisation of ex-combatants among other human security concerns;

WANEP calls on

- ✚ **The presidential aspirants and political actors** to play by the rules of the game to ensure a free and fair process while committing themselves to accept the results of the elections.
- ✚ **Leaders of all political parties** to allow the Electoral Commission to conduct the elections and declare the results without any form of interference
- ✚ **The electoral commission** to uphold the principle of independence and impartiality in the discharge of its duties and responsibilities
- ✚ **Civil Society Organizations** to intensify their sensitization campaign on active non violence, peace, unity and the implications of ethnic-based politics
- ✚ **The Security forces** to discharge their duties professionally ensuring the safety of the electoral materials and the citizens irrespective of political or ethnic affiliations
- ✚ **The Media** to provide balanced reporting and refrain from any forms of sensationalism

- ✚ **The ECOWAS Commission and the International Community** to continue to closely monitor the process and provide, in collaboration with key actors, the necessary support for a peaceful and credible transition

WANEP Regional Secretariat, its national network in Cote d'Ivoire together with its partners notably the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) will continue to urge all stakeholders in ensuring a violence-free election

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