



## WANEP Supports Deployment of 750 Observers for Ghana Elections

In the countdown to the Presidential and Parliamentary Elections in Ghana on December 7, 2016, the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) and its partners will deploy a total of 750 accredited observers to cover the elections. This was disclosed by the Regional Coordinator WANEP Early Warning and Response, Mr. Ifeanyi Okechukwu. He said the observers will cover mainly the prioritized hotspots across the 10 regions of the country and will send reports to the WANEP coordinated Election Situation Room (ESR) through an online Short Message Service (SMS) platform specially designed for this purpose. Additional information will be uploaded through dedicated WhatsApp platforms and phone calls from the ESR to the observers in the field. This is part of the overall program of WANEP's Election Monitoring Analysis and Mitigation (E-MAM) program launched in May 2016.

Prior to the elections, WANEP in accordance with its collaborative approach to peacebuilding teamed up with the National Peace Council (NPC), the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC), Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD), Transform Ghana, Blogging Ghana and Transform Ghana Network to set up the Election Situation Room (ESR). The ESR is supported by WANEP partners namely; USAID and the Governments of Austria, Sweden and Denmark.

Mr. Okechukwu explains that to facilitate quick collation, analysis and response, the Situation Room will be organized in three locations with the central coordinating unit located in Accra while satellite situation rooms will be located in Kumasi and Tamale. The choice of the satellite ESR is informed by the baseline survey conducted ahead of the election and the identification of strategic locations for easy monitoring and responses.

The situation room is designed to specifically monitor, analyze, report and facilitate response to violent threats to the peaceful conduct and outcome of the upcoming polls. It comprises of three units; the Data Gathering room, the Analysis Room and the Decision Room led by the National Peace Council and other eminent persons who can use their good offices to facilitate positive response to identified threats. A total of 75 personnel will be working in the three ESR. The 750 observers in the field will be in direct contact with personnel in the Data Gathering Room, which constitutes the “technical room” of the ESR.

WANEP has been monitoring and analyzing elections and electoral processes in West Africa for well over a decade. WANEP operates under the undergirding philosophy of collaborative approaches to Peacebuilding, which is aimed at creating an enabling electoral environment before, during and after the elections. Towards achieving this laudable objective, WANEP establishes platforms such as the Election Situation Room for monitoring electoral processes and results as well as for mediation of disputed discrepancies resulting from the elections. In this regard, the organization in collaboration with other key stakeholders operationalized the ESR last year in Nigeria and also in countries whose elections took place early in the year such as Benin, Cote d’Ivoire, Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Niger and currently Ghana.

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*WANEP is a leading Regional Peacebuilding organization founded in 1998 in response to civil wars that plagued West Africa in the late 1980s. We place special focus on collaborative approach, working alongside major actors, particularly governments, intergovernmental bodies and women in a bid to establish a platform for dialogue, experience sharing and learning, thereby complementing efforts at ensuring sustainable peace and development.*