



# **West Africa Network for Peacebuilding**

## **BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS FOR PEACE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **WANEP APPEALS FOR SUSTAINED DIALOGUE AND NOT VIOLENCE IN BIMBILLA**

*Tamale, 14<sup>th</sup> February 2017* - The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, Ghana (WANEP-Ghana) and its member organizations notes with great concern the recent conflict in Bimbilla between the Nakpaa and Andani families which has resulted in the death of a child and nine other persons mostly women. Several people have also been injured while houses were destroyed leading to internal displacements from both sides.

Though social conflicts often increase the risk of negative expressions between disputing parties, WANEP-Ghana condemns the perpetuation of violence in the Bimbilla crisis. Such actions reinforce a vicious cycle of violence, which destroys existing cohesion and opportunity to promote mechanisms for dispute resolution. The recent spate of violence fosters further division, mistrust, fear, social and economic impoverishment of the area.

WANEP-Ghana appreciates the enforcement of order by the police and imposed curfew, which will restore calm and stability in Bimbilla. However, it is important that the police maintain strict vigilance. There are already reports of people breaking the curfew, and over 20 people have been arrested since the violence recurred.

Since November 21<sup>st</sup> 2016, WANEP-Ghana and its consortium members including the Creating Awareness and Relief Everywhere Int. Ghana (CARE-Ghana), Action Aid Ghana, Social Enterprise Ghana (SEND-Ghana) in partnership with the Northern Region Peace Council have been engaged in dialogue design and series of dialogue with key parties, supported by United States Agency for International Development. Unfortunately, this recent violence constitutes a drawback to the ongoing dialogue process and smooth implementation.

In view of the current situation WANEP-Ghana further calls for:

- Government to continue to enforce law and order to create space for ongoing efforts in preventive diplomacy;
- Disputing factions to exercise restraint and their leaders should call on their followers to remain calm and not to engage in any further violence so as to not derail the existing curfew;
- Politicians and political leaders to be mindful of their direct or indirect participation in the conflict, as both factions tend to draw some leverage from politicians to escalate the conflict. In this light WANEP applauds the Interior Minister, President and other government officials who have firmly indicated their stance not to interfere in chieftaincy affairs;
- The media to be circumspect and conflict-sensitive in their reportage and refrain from being channels of violent communication by disputing parties capable of reinforcing tensions and insecurity;

- Disputing factions to remain committed to the ongoing dialogue process initiated by WANEP-Ghana and its consortium in partnership with the Northern Peace Council;

In conclusion WANEP-Ghana and all its partners through its early warning mechanism will continue to support informed responses to find permanent solution to the crisis. It will continue to collaborate with relevant institutions in peacebuilding to enable the environment for peaceful co-existence and sustainable development in Bimbilla.

Moving forward, it is the hope of many peace and security analysts that an early outcome from the highest court of the land will contribute to stabilize Bimbilla. However, before and after such an outcome (even long after that), there should be “appropriate” security presence in Nanung to forestall any negative reaction while peacebuilding efforts will ensure transformation of the conflict.

Thank you.

*For further inquiries regarding this press release please, contact Albert Yelyang, National Network Coordinator, WANEP-Ghana +233 244156898 or email: [ayelyang@gmail.com](mailto:ayelyang@gmail.com)*

*Thank you.*



Building Relationships for Peace  
WANEP - GHANA