



Be Bold for Change: WANEP calls for Equality

Press Release

8th March, 2017

The commemoration of the 2017 International Women's Day Celebration on March 8 is calling for a mobilization of all and sundry for a Planet 50-50 by 2030. WANEP through its National Networks across ECOWAS Member States is organizing series of activities and high level events calling on men, women, young men and young girls, activists, security sector, scholars, business women, state officials to be bold for change and stand for the gender equality agenda.

WANEP recognizes the importance of gender equality and the critical role of women and girls in the attainment of the UN Sustainable Development Goals towards the realization of African solutions to African problems. WANEP believes that no sustainable development can be achieved without the recognition of the visible and laudable achievements of women. WANEP celebrates the achievements of women throughout West Africa who have despite all odds distinguished themselves and made strong statements in the arena of politics, governance and in formal and informal peacebuilding processes. We celebrate women pioneers and emerging leaders; the women and girls who have defied the status quo, and taken advantage of every window of opportunity to achieve their dreams and contribute to the development of healthy societies

WANEP champions the education of women and girls in West Africa and reiterates that education is a fundamental human right and women and girls' education holds the key to the eradication of poverty and underdevelopment. In the realization of quality education as a critical tool for economic growth and the attainment of gender equality, WANEP through its Active non-violence and peace education program, enhances capacities for peace and the promotion of women's participation in all levels of peace processes.

WANEP however, condemns the inequality and bias that exist in the West African society at all levels on basis of gender. WANEP further condemns violence against women in all its forms and ramifications, manifesting at the interpersonal, community, structural and family levels as sexual abuse, rape, gang violence, gender-based violence among others. WANEP draws attention to the unbearable economic, psychological and emotional stress women and girls undergo due to the effects of violence and security challenges such as violent extremism which increases women's vulnerability as victims.

WANEP reiterates the call for inclusive leadership that allows for men and women to work together to make the gender equality a reality. The participation of women at all levels and the strengthening of their capacity has never been so critical in order to empower nations and build stronger economies

and wholesome societies. WANEP through the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET) program has continued to advance and strengthen the participation of women at all levels using international instruments including the UNSCR 1325 as guide and reference.

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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.

