

# EDUCATION PROVIDES THE BASIS FOR PEACE AND SECURITY

– *WANEP Deputy Executive Director*

The Deputy Executive Director of the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), Mrs. Levinia Addae-Mensah has said that “the tenets of social cohesion which promote peace and security, are indeed founded on education.” Mrs. Mensah made the assertion in a solidarity message at the Opening Session of the ECOWAS Human Rights Day Celebrations held on 16th January, 2018 in Monrovia, Liberia. The high profile event was witnessed by the outgoing President of Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and the President elect, Mr. George Weah.

Mrs. Addae-Mensah described the Human Rights journey in West Africa as “a very long road that has been fraught with remarkable achievements as well as daunting challenges”. She said that “WANEP as a key civil society partner to ECOWAS, has been part of the journey as we continue to support state and non-state actors with requisite capacities for effective monitoring and reporting on issues of Human Rights.”

Speaking further, the Deputy Executive Director, who is also the WANEP Program Director hailed the theme for this year’s celebration, “Promoting Right to Education Towards the Attainment of the ECOWAS Vision 2020,” which she said is a reflection of “the symbiotic relationship between Education, Peace and Security.”

WANEP is the civil society partner to ECOWAS in the operationalization of the ECOWAS Early Warning Mechanism (ECOWARN). WANEP’s relationship with ECOWAS was formalized through an MOU signed in 2002 and subsequently renewed periodically, to promote inclusive and collaborative approaches to the implementation of various Human Rights provisions in support of the effective implementation of the ECOWAS Peace and Security architecture. In accordance with the tenets of the MOU, the two organizations have been working closely in joint program planning and implementation. In 2015, the ECOWAS Commission partnered with WANEP to establish the Network of Civil Society Organizations for Human Rights Monitoring (NCSOHRM), a network that further expands the opportunities and space for an effective CSO-REC partnership that has become a reference model internationally.