

## **WANEP, CRITICAL STAKEHOLDER IN ACHIEVING ECOWAS' PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA – PAPS Commissioner**



The ECOWAS Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS), H.E. General Francis Awagbe Behanzin has described WANEP as “a critical stakeholder in achieving ECOWAS’ peace and security agenda”. The Commissioner made this assertion when the WANEP Executive Director, Dr. Chukwuemeka Eze paid him a courtesy visit on June 19, 2018 at the ECOWAS Commission, Abuja-Nigeria.

Dr. Eze, accompanied by the Coordinator of WANEP Liaison Office in ECOWAS, Mr. Francis Acquah Aikins, was in ECOWAS to pay his compliments to General Behanzin as the new Commissioner of PAPS and reaffirm WANEP’s continued support and unique relationship with the institution. According to him, “this relationship has provided the opportunity to always demonstrate CSOs capacity and capability to contribute to the promotion of peace and stability in Africa”. The WANEP-ECOWAS partnership, he said, is now a global reference and model of REC-CSO partnership.



The visit presented a unique opportunity for the Executive Director to express WANEP's gratitude to the leadership of PAPS for taking the bold decision to have WANEP embedded in the Early Warning Directorate with a Liaison Office. The WANEP Liaison office provides first hand support and inputs into analysis and policy recommendations for peace and security interventions as well as coordinate civil society inputs into peace and security decisions. Dr. Eze also pledged WANEP's commitment and continuous support to ECOWAS for a more stable and peaceful region stating that this has become imperative as current peace and security threats cannot be addressed by only one institution and therefore requires a collaborative approach.

In his response, the Commissioner reiterated his commitment to sustain the WANEP-ECOWAS partnership and collaboration from where his predecessors left. He recognized WANEP's role in Electoral conflict prevention and mediation in the region especially through its Election Situation Room and urged the Directorate for Political Affairs to enhance the collaboration on that level as well.

Also present during the visit were ECOWAS Directors including, Dr. Remi Ajibewa, Director of Political Affairs, Dr. Cyriaque Agnekethom, Director of Peacekeeping and Regional Security, Ambassador Abel Agbebleo, Executive Assistant to the Commissioner and Mrs. Esther Daramola representing the Director of Early Warning Directorate.