West Africa Security Challenges and Resilience: Perspectives from WANEP’s National Early Warning System in 2015
### Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APC</td>
<td>All People’s Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>AQIM</td>
<td>Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb</td>
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<tr>
<td>CENI</td>
<td>Independent National Electoral Commission</td>
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<td>CMA</td>
<td>Coordination of Movement for Azawad</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
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<td>EVD</td>
<td>Ebola Viral Disease</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agricultural Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>FCBE</td>
<td>Forces Cauris Pour un Benin Emergent (Alliance Cowry Forces for an Emerging Benin)</td>
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<tr>
<td>GSPC</td>
<td>Group for Salafist Preaching and Combat</td>
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<td>IPOB</td>
<td>Indigenous People of Biafra</td>
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<td>LGA</td>
<td>Local Government Area</td>
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<td>MFD</td>
<td>Mediation Facilitation Division</td>
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<td>MUJAO</td>
<td>Movement for Unity and Jihadist Oneness</td>
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<td>NEWS</td>
<td>National Early Warning System</td>
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<td>NNPC</td>
<td>Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation</td>
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<td>NPP</td>
<td>New Patriotic Party</td>
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<td>PAIGC</td>
<td>Party of Independence for Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde</td>
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<td>PRD</td>
<td>Parti Du Renouveau Democratique (Democratic Renewal Party)</td>
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<td>PSR</td>
<td>Peace and Security Report</td>
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<td>RSP</td>
<td>Presidential Security Regiment</td>
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<td>SLPP</td>
<td>Sierra Leone Peoples Party</td>
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<td>UNSCR</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council Resolutions</td>
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<td>VE</td>
<td>Violent Extremism</td>
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<td>WANEP</td>
<td>West Africa Network for Peacebuilding</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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1. Preamble

West Africa Security Challenges and Resilience is developed by WANEP to provide analysis and insights to the socio-economic, political and humanitarian dynamics in West Africa within a twelve (12)-month timeline based on data and reports from its National Early Warning Systems (NEWS). The report is justified by the need for continuous monitoring and assessment of threats to human security in the region with implications for political stability, economic development and social enhancement of 330 million people across the 15 countries of the region. Another justification is that a historical reflection of the region in the past two decades highlights significant threats to human security caused by political instability, ethnic and communal conflicts, and violent extremism. Though these issues are context specific in relation to existing trends in each country, a broad relationship has been linked to structural and systemic factors such as poverty, bad governance, corruption and mismanagement of resources. In 2015, which is the year under review, seven key issues were analyzed in this report. These include the conducted elections in Nigeria, Togo, Guinea, Cote d’Ivoire and Burkina Faso; violent extremism in Nigeria, Mali and Niger; the Ebola crisis in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, the failed coup attempt in Burkina Faso and the constitutional crises in Guinea Bissau and Sierra Leone. A cumulative frequency from the available data highlights arrests with the highest number of incidences followed by road accidents.

The report has been categorized into six sections which include snapshot of countries in the region, significant threat levels of 2015, key stakeholders, identified hotspots, insights and implications to human security and gender dimensions, key interventions, trend analysis and possible impact to 2016 peace and security as well as strategic recommendations.
The crosscutting issues across the region were accidents, demonstrations as well as arrests and detentions. For instance, road accidents points to deep-rooted issues of structural dysfunctions, which includes poor management, corruption, flagrant abuse of policies and rule of law, poor leadership and general psychosocial mindset of citizens which have become a predominant impeding factor to development, human security and social change within most West African countries. Demonstrations often exemplify prevailing citizens discontent to existing socio-
political and economic conditions. In the context of West Africa, demonstrations are often centered on struggle for equitable distribution or equal access/opportunities to resources. In other circumstances, it is motivated by inimical State policies or actions that negatively impact on public good. Arrests and detentions highlight the commitment by the Governments of member states via its security agencies to respond to peace and security threats in the region and guarantee the protection of its citizens. This is vital in curbing crime related offences, which ensures that perpetrators are accountable for their crimes, and also serves as deterrence to potential offenders. A flip side analysis to the rise in crime can be attributed to the challenges of citizen’s access to economic opportunities in most West African countries. It validates the argument of poor management of resources and bad governance.

2. Snapshot of zones in the region:
Countries in the region are categorized into four zones in line with the ECOWAS conflict systems configurations. These are Zone I – Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Senegal and The Gambia; Zone II – Burkina Faso, Cote d’Ivoire, Mali and Niger; Zone III – Ghana, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone; and Zone IV – Benin, Nigeria and Togo.

Zone I
As reflected in the figure above, the crosscutting issues in the year were demonstrations, natural disaster, fraud/corruption, intrusion and theft. These incidences could be attributed to several issues including poor leadership, mismanagement of resources and unemployment. Other issues of concern with specific reference to the countries were:

- **Cape Verde:** the country witnessed a spill over effect of the volcanic eruption at Fogo Island of November 23, 2014, which led to humanitarian crises in three villages as a result of destruction of homes and displacements. Pockets of sexual assaults and drug related issues were also captured on the early warning system.

- **Guinea Bissau:** a significant event was the political stalemate between President Jose Mario Vaz and former Prime Minister Domingos Simones Pereira leading to the dismissal of the latter over tensions, fed by overlapping duties. However, the ECOWAS mediation in the country led by former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo facilitated restoration of constitutional order with the appointment of Carlos Correia as the new Prime Minister.

- **Senegal:** the Government came under criticisms by its citizens for sending troops to Saudi Arabia to secure the border with Yemen on grounds of ‘protecting the holy sites of Islam’\(^1\). The country reportedly has dormant extremists’ cells belonging to diverse sects who are susceptible to carry out extremist activities. Additionally, given the threats of violent extremism across the region, 3 imams and two women were arrested in November on allegations of conducting terrorist activities and linkages with Boko Haram.

- **The Gambia:** Following the December 2014 armed incursion at the presidential palace, the country experienced an uneasy calm leading to spate of arrests and detention. The arbitrary arrests instigated widespread

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demonstrations and also created levels of mutual suspicion, sense of vulnerability and insecurity amongst citizens. Consequently, relations between the country and Senegal became complicated following speculations that the country aided the plotters to uproot President Jammeh’s regime\(^2\). Furthermore, the country also came under international criticisms after the President expelled the European Union’s Charge d’Affaires in June, two years after he pulled out of the Commonwealth of Nations. On December 11, President Jammeh declared the country an Islamic Republic.

**Zone II**

As reflected in the figure above, the crosscutting issues in the year were demonstrations, physical assault, and armed attacks/violent extremism. These incidences could be attributed to structural issues including poor leadership, mismanagement of resources and unemployment. Other issues of concern with specific reference to the countries were

- **Burkina Faso**: Between January to December 2015, the main issues that

occurred are categorized into health, economic and political threats. The outbreak of avian flu in April led to the culling of birds and prohibitions in local markets, which had impact on the subsistence economy and health risks. Chieftaincy disputes in areas such as Zekounga led to the death of six persons and injuries. However, the most significant issue was the failed coup attempt of September 16 led by the Presidential Security Regiment (RSP) that claimed the lives of 14 persons and different degrees of injury to 251 persons. It also led to the disruption of the transitional government through the detention of interim President Michel Kafando. Amidst shuttle diplomacy by ECOWAS and key opinion leaders and violent demonstrations by youth groups across the country, the coup plotters were arrested and the transitional government was restored. However, the scheduled presidential and parliamentary elections were affected as they were postponed from October 11 to November 29. The election was conducted peacefully and Roch Marc Christian Kaboré was elected and sworn in as the President.

**Cote d’Ivoire:** the country faced political and security risks arising from the prosecution of Simone Gbagbo, the wife of the former President Laurent Gbagbo and 82 other allies at the special court in Abidjan in March 10, 2015 and also the conducted presidential elections of October 25. Mrs Gbagbo’s trial and conviction over her role during the post 2011 election violence increased resentments between pro Gbagbo supporters against the current government of President Alassane Ouattara, thereby deepening the political and ethnic divide between pro Gbagbo and pro Ouattara supporters. Supporters of the former president accuse the current government of selective and one-sided justice against his former rivals or opposition while ignoring abuses committed by his supporters. However, the October 25 election was conducted in a relatively peaceful manner despite some tensions associated with the electioneering process. President Ouattara was re-elected for a second term despite initial debates and contentions over his

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qualification to stand for the office based on his contested nationality and ethnicity in line with the constitution.

The issue of the former combatants and traditional authority known as the “Dozo” remained a source of concern in the country. Despite the fact that the report of the Commission of Inquiry on the 2010-11 post election violence indicted the Dozo’s as perpetrators in the conflict, most of them were not active in the disarmament and reintegration process that ended in June. The disarmament and reintegration of this group and others are imperative especially the groups that operate along the Liberian and Ivorian border. This situation is worrisome given the violent attack in January and recently in December of 2015 at Olodio Commune where an estimated 11 people died.

• **Mali**: the security situation of the country remained fragile with sporadic attacks at public places despite the peace deal between the Malian government and the main rebel group, the Coordination of Movement for Azawad (CMA) in June. This was further compounded by the withdrawal of the rebels from an international committee set up to monitor the Peace Accord in August 2015. Significant feats was achieved in October 2015, when the Ifoghas of CMA and Inghad of the “Platform” announced a peace agreement in what they called a ‘pact of honour’ at Anefis, Kidal.

Despite these peace efforts, further attacks were experienced in the country especially the November assault at Raddison Blu Hotel in Bamako, which led to the death of 20 persons. The attack on the Raddison Blu hotel was the second attack on a hotel by insurgents after a similar hostage situation killed 13 people including 5 UN workers at the central town of Sevare in August. In December, the Malian Government was compelled to extend the State of Emergency in the country to March 31, 2016 following attacks by Tuareg Separatist. The recent development constitutes a major set back to the implementation of the peace agreements, which was hoped to open prospects for Mali’s recovery and longer-term perspectives with a view to

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reversing the setbacks induced by the political and security crisis.

- **Niger:** the political landscape in the country was a bit tensed in the build-up to the February 21 2016 elections. The opposition parties rejected the timeline proposed by the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI), called for local elections to hold before presidential elections and demanded for an audit of the electoral register. The parties criticized the Constitutional Court, mandated to validate applications and results of the elections for its allegiance to the President. Additionally, Hama Amadou, the former speaker of parliament and opposition leader, who left the country in 2014 over complicity in child trafficking, was arrested in Niamey on his return in November to prepare for the presidential elections.

Given the proximity of the country to the volatile borders in Nigeria exposed to violent extremism, regions such as Diffa, Zinder and Agadez continued to face attacks by the Nigerian Boko Haram group. Consequently, a 15-day state of emergency was imposed on Diffa in October. Other issues experienced in the year include recurring food insecurity owing to insufficient rainfalls and floods in the Yobe River Valley of Diffa region. The effect of this crisis is the forced migration and exit of nationals and foreigners out of the country in search for sustainable livelihoods. The major hotspots for the year were Diffa and Niamey region, as a result of extremist groups activities and political tension.
As reflected in the figure above, the crosscutting issues in the year were fraud/corruption, homicide, intrusion/theft, demonstration and Sexual Harassment. Other issues of concern with specific reference to the countries were:

- **Ghana**: the country witnessed socio-economic and political tensions in the year. Citizens staged several protests against poor living conditions occasioned by deteriorating provision of social amenities. Negative economic interacting forces became drivers for mass retrenchments and closure of businesses. Ahead of the general elections of November 2016, the political landscapes was characterized with tensions over party’s’ election of candidates, assassination of two political actors, intra and inter party disputes as well as the proliferation of political militia groups. The upsurge of political militia groups such as the “Bolgatanga Bull Dogs, Azorka Boys and Invisible Forces etc.”, allegedly aided by top politicians and political parties constitute a veritable source of apprehension and shows declining confidence in the state security actors. The mayhem unleashed by these groups as seen in the violence recorded during the by-elections in Talensi area of Upper East Region is a pointer to potential violence in 2016 if adequate and strategic measures including political dialogue are not
employed. The country experienced a major disaster on June 3, following an inferno, which reportedly killed 154 people. The same number suffered diverse degrees of injury and several properties valued at 1,658,847.00\(^5\) cedi were destroyed. The disaster, which was reportedly caused by a combination of factors including flooding, leakage of petrol and lit cigarette threw the nation in shock with several victims still recuperating from the incident.

- **Guinea:** The country experienced socio-economic and political tensions in the year under review. The Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), which reportedly killed at least 2,536 people, infected 3,804\(^6\) others and almost crippled the economy, was officially declared over by the World Health Organization (WHO) on December 29. On the political front, the build-up to the presidential elections of October 11, 2015 was greeted with several demonstrations by the opposition parties on grounds of alleged irregularities and the postponement of the local elections till March 2016. These demonstrations led to the deaths of at least 8 people, hundreds injured and destruction of several properties\(^7\). President Alpha Condé was re-elected and sworn-in by the Constitutional Court.

- **Liberia:** In the year under review, the country recorded a decline in the number of Ebola cases and was initially declared free of the virus in May and September respectively, until its resurgence in November. The resurgence was a setback for the country that fought vehemently to eliminate the virus, which claimed an estimated 4,800 deaths, 10,600 infections and nearly crippled the economy following the withdrawal of foreign investments. Tensions arising from a proposition ‘Count 24’ by a Christian Heritage Group for Liberia to be legislated as a Christian Nation\(^8\) instigated demonstrations

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from the Muslim community of Bong County, leading to the closure of business activities.

2.13. **Sierra Leone**: Tensions ensued over the dismissal of Vice President Alhaji Samuel Sam Sumana from the ruling All People's Congress (APC) and expulsion from government for “orchestrating political violence”, trying to form a new party and alleged 'unethical practices.' However, the opposition Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) and other groups attributed the dismissal as “unconstitutional” citing the constitutional provisions, which allows for the dismissal of a vice president for misconduct or incapacity only by two-thirds vote of the majority in parliament. The country was certified free of the Ebola Virus Disease on November 7. During this period, an estimated 3,955 people died, 14,089 people (including 5,118 females and 1,992 children between 0-14 years) were infected⁹ and the economy was almost crippled following the withdrawal of foreign investment to the country since the spread of the virus in May 2014.

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As reflected in the figure above, the crosscutting issues in the year were demonstrations, armed attacks/violent extremism and natural disaster. Other issues of concern with specific reference to the countries were:

**Benin:** A significant event was the conduct of the parliamentary elections in April 26, 2015, using the new electoral code. The ruling party, Alliance Cowry Forces for an Emerging Benin (FCBE) lost the leadership of the parliament as they won 32 out of the 83 seats, down from their controlling majority of 41 seats. The leadership of the parliament has been transferred to Adrien Houngbédji of the opposition party, Democratic Renewal (PRD). This loss of leadership by FCBE had implication for the alleged plans by President Thomas Boni Yayi to push through a constitutional amendment that could allow him seek a third term in office in 2016, an allegation the president has denied. The political dynamics also raises the political threat as the country prepares its presidential elections in February 2016.

**Nigeria:** Consolidation of democracy in the country was a huge milestone. Perceived as the most crucial elections capable of disintegrating the country, former president Goodluck Ebele Jonathan's unanimous concession of defeat to President General Muhammad Buhari doused tensions across the country and prompted a peaceful consolidation of democratic governance. The 6-year insurgency by Boko Haram in Northeastern Nigeria continued with the killing of over 2,000 people in a 5-day attack at Baga, a border town between Nigeria, Niger and Chad and at the duty station of the Multinational Joint Task Forces in January. However, Boko Haram has been weakened in its strategy since the launch of the regional joint forces by Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Benin to combat the insurgent group. Agro-pastoralist conflict pitching herders against farmers with the most devastating attacks killing 95\(^{10}\) and 100 people respectively in Agatu and Logo was also a source of apprehension. Renewed agitations for independence engrossed the eastern part of the country in the last quarter of the year.

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following the arrest of Nnamdi Kanu, owner of ‘Radio Biafra’, a London based station and member of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) for insightful comments. Due to the continuous fall of oil prices on the international market, the naira was weakened against the dollar, a situation that prompted calls for the removal of fuel subsidy and devaluation of the naira by different national and international experts.

- **Togo:** The political atmosphere was tensed ahead of the presidential elections in April. Lack of consensus over the electoral calendar, candidacy of President Faure Gnassingbe, constitutional reforms etc. instigated demonstrations across the country. Under the auspices of ECOWAS, the election was postponed from April 15 to April 25th to facilitate review of the electoral list, following alleged irregularities by the opposition parties and civil society. Despite the tensions, the much-touted elections held in an atmosphere of relative peace and tranquility. President Faure Gnassingbe was re-elected and sworn in by the Constitutional Court. Increased cases of armed robberies, burglaries and killings were also common and constituted significant threats to lives and properties.

3. **Gender Dimensions To The Conflict**

While significant progress has been made across the region on the implementation of the diverse United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR), especially 1325 and including the development of National Actions Plans by 12 out of 15 member states, the impacts of conflicts on women, boys and girls are still a source of concern. The exploitation of women as weapons of violence by Boko Haram has greatly increased gender-based violence especially in Niger and Nigeria as well as central African countries like Cameroon and Chad. There are also reports of increased incidences of abductions and rape of women and girls, sexual slavery, unwanted/forced pregnancies. It has undermined education in these areas with most schools forced to close. For instance, over 2,000 schools have been closed in
these areas with approximately 1,000,000 pupils compelled to stay at home. This situation has affected the educational system and a potential threat to the increase of extremism and radicalism in these countries. According to Amnesty International, the number of men and boys, who have become victims of extra-judicial killings due to violent extremism, has significantly increased. It has also led to a huge number of widows, widowers, orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). The way and manner the spouses and parents were killed also leaves a deep psychological trauma on the surviving family members.

The outbreak of Ebola also had devastating humanitarian consequences on women and men, boys and girls. According to UNDP Africa Policy Note, 50.8% of all cases of victims of Ebola in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone are women. The prevailing effects on women spans from the fact that they are not only victims but also caregivers, which increases their vulnerability in the vicious cycle of infection and spread of Ebola in the affected countries. In addition, the death of parents and guardians has left an estimated 6,200 children orphaned with dire implications for their survival and certainty of their future.

4. Interventions

Following the adoption of National Peace Architectures and National Early Warning Mechanisms by the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS in 2014, governments of Benin, Cote d’Ivoire, Niger and Nigeria initiated strategies for the development of peace architectures. In 2015, the Governments collaborated with relevant stakeholders and civil society organizations to design modalities for the establishment of peace architectures as a cardinal pillar for conflict prevention, mitigation and resolution.


The establishment of the ECOWAS Mediation Facilitation Division (MFD) within the Political Affairs Directorate is a laudable development aimed to promote and facilitate preventive diplomacy in the region. This is evident in the engagements of MFD in political dialogue processes in Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau and Niger. The peace deal brokered in Burkina Faso by President Macky Sall of Senegal with the RSP facilitated the restoration of normalcy and eventual conduct of peaceful and credible elections in the country. A good development arising from the Authority of Heads of State and Government during their Summit in May is the commitment expressed by 13 out of 15 member states to review the ECOWAS Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance aimed at preventing tenure elongation by heads of state in the region. It is a significant move in curbing future attempts by governments of member states to elongate their tenures in office.

As part of efforts to combat violent extremism in the region, ECOWAS member states continued their military action under the auspices of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and recorded some success in this regard, especially along the Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon and Chad borders.

As part of measures to effectively manage and respond to the consequences of Ebola epidemic in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, WHO and other stakeholders established surveillance systems that facilitate early detection, diagnosis and mitigation of EVD in these countries. In this regard, each country’s EVD surveillance strategy includes the collection of blood samples or oral swabs from individuals who have clinical symptoms compatible with EVD. Humanitarian efforts were also significant in reducing the threats and spread of the disease in these countries and in the region.

5. **Possible Threats In 2016**

**Electioneering Processes:** As the region prepares for 2016, six countries (Niger, Benin, Cape Verde, Ghana, Gambia and Cote d’Ivoire) are geared to have their presidential/parliamentary elections in the coming year. Given the tensions and
threats associated with election in the region, it is imperative for stakeholders to design intervention strategies to prevent and or mitigate electoral violence across the region.

**Violent Extremism:** the issue of VE has continued to bedevil the region and likely to pose a significant risk to peace and security in the region within the coming year. Nigeria, Niger and Mali are set to face new challenges in the fight against VE in the coming year. There are also indications that countries such as Burkina Faso and Senegal will be impacted by these threats. The current situation requires vigilance and close monitoring to prevent or mitigate the spread of violent extremism in the region.

**Ebola:** Although, Sierra Leone and Guinea were declared Ebola-free in the year under review, presence of the virus in neighboring Liberia still constitutes a threat to the region. Of particular concern is the traditional funeral practice, which exposes people to the virus following close contact with infected corpses. While some residents and communities are becoming aware of the dangers involved in such practices, others are too emotional to bury their loved ones without going close to pay their last respect. Should this practice persist in the coming year, it might be difficult to eradicate the virus.

6. **Recommendations**

**Member States:**

• Endeavor to address the root causes of instability, with special attention to political-military dynamics, human rights violations, and ineffective state institutions.

• Governments should create conducive environments for the informal sector to grow and create employment opportunities for the citizenry

• Governments should promote secularism that will give rise to the promotion of a culture of tolerance, where citizens respect the rights of others, while the state is neutral in matters of religion, belief and philosophy.
• Government should intensify health and safety measures in order to prevent a resurgence of Ebola in the countries.

• Government should improve civil-military relationship to foster trust and confidence between security agents and the local communities for improved early warning alerts, information sharing and collaboration in fighting insurgency at all levels. Hence, member states should create opportunity for interface between community early warning system and intelligence gathering for effective and timely alerts that would prevent or mitigate attacks by Boko Haram and other armed groups.

• In addressing the aftermath of the violent extremism in the region, member states should develop a holistic disarmament, demobilization reintegration and rehabilitation program.

• Electoral Commission should maintain professionalism in the conduct of elections; and should be seen by candidates and electorates as credible to avoid any issue of mistrust that may constitute a threat to the outcome of elections.

• Government should set up independent funding platform to support CSOs in the promotion of peace and security. Private Sectors should also be encouraged to support such funds and the general promotion of peace and security.

• Government should explore dialogue to culminate into a negotiated settlement and provide a win-win solution for all parties. This is without prejudice to the ongoing judicial options that has already been requested by parties to this impasse.

• The Supreme and Constitutional Courts of Member States should exhibit professionalism with respect to the constitutional provisions. The court proceedings can be aired on the media to avoid suspicion by any of the parties involved and reduce negative public sentiments. Such a move will not only build public confidence in the judiciary but also impede the possibility of aggrieved parties attempting to incite members of the public to engage in any riotous behavior.
• Political Parties should refrain from any acts capable of destabilizing the country but should rather endear and embrace peaceful means of addressing the underlying issues responsible for the stalemate.
• Include budgets for gender groups to ensure effective management of gender related dimensions to conflict

**ECOWAS:**
• Deploy fact-finding mission to member states to ensure compliance with the electoral laws; as well as assess the state of preparedness of the electoral commission and relevant stakeholders
• Continuously support member states recovering from the Ebola pandemic to rebuild infrastructures
• Where need arises, ECOWAS should intervene immediately in any member state to ensure that the rule of law and constitutionalism is respected.
• Should leverage with CSOs to ensure effective lobbying for the adoption of the term limits by the Authority of Heads of State and Government
• Support member states to equip and strengthen the capacity of Multi-National Task Force to combat insurgency in the region.
• Ensure adequate mainstreaming of gender issues as a cross-cutting issue in all aspects of peace and security
• Ensure development and adoption of binding legal instruments on member states to ensure the contribution of troops and financial resources to peacekeeping missions.
• Collaborate with CSO to establish national platforms to improve citizens’ awareness and understanding of electoral laws and regional Protocols that relate to elections

**Civil Society Organizations:**
• Ensure effective coordination at national and regional levels to continuously engage with ECOWAS and member states in the promotion of peace and security.
• Collaborate with the ECOWAS Political Affairs Directorate and lead advocacy initiatives in the ongoing review of the supplementary protocol on democracy and good governance to ensure adoption by the Authority of Heads of State and Government.

• Act as watchdogs over the implementation of peace accords in the region; as well as conduct robust sensitization to ensure active participations of citizens in the forthcoming elections.

• Educate the public on the threats posed by Boko Haram and utilize the WANEP-NEWS and community policing as a counter violent extremism measure.