



**DECLARATION ON STRENGTHENING NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND
CONTINENTAL CO-ORDINATION TOWARDS BUILDING NATIONAL
PEACE INFRASTRUCTURES FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION**

ACCRA, GHANA

10 SEPTEMBER 2013

1. From 9-10 September 2013, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the African Union Commission (AUC), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission, in partnership with the Government of the Republic of Ghana, co-organized a two-day Regional Consultation in Accra, Ghana. The objective was to explore the feasibility and modalities of building and strengthening national infrastructures for peace and establishing linkages and synergies between the national, regional, and continental efforts in conflict prevention. The Consultation constituted the first regional follow-up meeting to a similar meeting held at the continental level in Addis Ababa from 24-25 June 2013 in line with the AU Summit's Decision of May 25 2013 regarding the establishment of the Panel of the Wise (PANWISE).
2. The Conference was hosted by H.E. John Dramani Mahama, President of the Republic of Ghana, represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Mrs Hannah Tetteh. It was also attended by the Ministers of Interior and other officials of ECOWAS Member States; representatives of national peace institutions, civil society organizations; the leadership and senior officials of the ECOWAS and AU Commissions; officials of the UNDP from Headquarters and Heads of Country Offices; as well as representatives of research institutions and the Media.
3. After two days of intensive experience sharing on existing and planned initiatives in Member States on building infrastructures for conflict prevention, mediation and peacebuilding, the participants arrived at the following observations, recommendations and conclusions:

WE THE PARTICIPANTS:

4. **Recalling** that the maintenance of regional and international peace and security, in particular, the role of Member States and regional organizations, is underpinned by the UN Charter, the Constitutive Act of the AU, and the Revised ECOWAS Treaty;
5. **Taking** cognisance of the measurable progress the West African Region has made in promoting values that uphold democratic culture, peace, security and development in the last two decades;
6. **Noting** that the security environment in the Region continues to be characterised by fragility, necessitating national efforts to understand the threats to peace and security, and integrating them into development planning;
7. **Acknowledging** on-going initiatives at the local, national, regional and continental levels to build and sustain peace and security through the establishment of peace and security architectures directed towards addressing root causes and seeking to transform structural dynamics of conflict through the enhancement of national reconciliation and social cohesion, accountable and transparent natural resource governance, development of social and economic infrastructure, among other factors;
8. **Taking** cognisance of the existence of initiatives, structures and institutions for early warning and conflict prevention at various levels of maturity, harmonization and coordination in the region;
9. **Noting** that the typology of these initiatives, structures and institutions reflect the contexts and peculiarities of the respective Member States;
10. **Recognising** the need to explore the feasibility and modalities of building and strengthening national infrastructures for peace and establishing linkages and synergies between the national, regional, and continental efforts in conflict prevention in order to sustain the momentum in this direction;

DO SOLEMNLY DECLARE AS FOLLOWS:

- a. The primary responsibility for establishing, developing and sustaining national peace infrastructures belong to stakeholders in Member States, especially governments, civil society organizations, the private sector and the media;
- b. Stakeholders in Member States are enjoined to establish initiatives, structures and institutions for peace where they do not exist and strengthen existing initiatives;
- c. The following principles shall underpin the establishment and functioning of the national infrastructures for peace in Member States: national ownership and leadership, sustainability, inclusiveness, gender sensitivity, institutional and

- financial autonomy through the establishment of National Peace Funds, harmonization, complementarity, subsidiarity, coordination, and legality;
- d. Stakeholders in Member States shall reinvigorate and integrate indigenous and other alternative dispute resolution methodologies into local and national efforts;
 - e. Stakeholders in Member States shall establish national infrastructures for peace within three years, with national plans of action to be developed that seek to transform structural dynamics, based on conflict risk assessments, and taking advantage of the existing capacities and opportunities available within civil society, government, security services, the private sector, etc, annual progress reporting to be conducted and submitted to national parliaments, ECOWAS and the African Union Commissions;
 - f. Governments of ECOWAS Member States shall facilitate the development of national legal frameworks for the establishment and operationalization of national peace infrastructures;
 - g. The ECOWAS Commission shall facilitate the establishment, development and synergy building of national peace and security infrastructures in close cooperation with the African Union, the UNDP and other development partners, through the creation of space, mobilization of resources, capacity enhancement, technical cooperation and experience sharing;
 - h. All the stakeholders shall facilitate the self-empowerment of civil society, particularly women, youth, religious and community groups, and the media in the crafting and implementation of peace agreements, as well as in post-conflict peacebuilding;
 - i. Stakeholders shall encourage infrastructures for peace within the region and the continent to meet regularly for experience sharing, peer learning, and support, with technical support from relevant partners;
 - j. The national, regional and continental stakeholders shall work assiduously to ensure the establishment of linkages and synergies between the national processes and the regional and continental peace and security infrastructures. To that end, ensure the holding of a Technical meeting on or before 30 November 2013 in Nigeria, and annual meetings convened together with the African Union and the RECs to strengthen joint planning, coordination, experience sharing, lessons learnt, and reporting, to the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU.

Done at Accra, this 10th Day of September 2013

