



WORKSHOP FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS

**WORKSHOP ON IMPLEMENTING REGIONAL PROTOCOLS FOR
SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE ECOWAS**

ORGANISED BY:

***THE FOUNDATION FOR SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA
(FOSDA)***

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the outcome of a two-day workshop for Parliamentarians within the ECOWAS, organised by the Foundation for Security and Development in Africa (FOSDA) with the support of the UNDP and the Open Society Initiative of West Africa (OSIWA).

Participants were Parliamentarians drawn from Ghana, Liberia, Senegal, and Mali and who are serving on different oversight committees in their respective national parliaments. Some of these parliamentarians were also members of the Community's parliament which facilitated a synergy between the national and the two parliaments.

The crux of this workshop as its topic indicates was to engender debate on the implementation of the various ECOWAS Protocols keeping in focus the recently adopted ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons. This was imperative because the globalization of economies and communication through improved technology and the subsequent free movement of capital and human had made the world become more sophisticated with its attendant problems. Among these are human and drug trafficking, terrorism, global diseases, identity fraud, money laundering, environmental disasters and natural resource-related conflicts. Due to the prevalence of poverty and the low patronage in the use of science and technology by institutions on the continent, Africa and for that matter

West Africa is the most hit by these global menace with the exception of maybe terrorism. Subsequent to the snare these issues cast on West Africa at the global front, their continuous presence pose an undeniable and grave challenge to domestic and regional security and as well impede the long term political stability and the economic development of the sub-region. Besides the fact that these phenomena are of multi-dimensional nature and a corollary of each other, they are not peculiar to any country but traverse national frontiers on the continent making it difficult for any single country to manage it unilaterally.

Taking cognizance of this, renowned resource persons with enormous expertise on the issues raised were assembled to make presentations on the way forward out of the above predicaments through the implementation of the various protocols. Their presentations were immediately followed by vigorous and passionate discussion among participants with much focus on the recently adopted ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons. Their gaze was intently on how this Convention could be ratified and implemented in the earliest possible time to get rid of the menace of arms proliferation which had plagued the sub-region and continue to threaten its modest development. This objective was critically looked at through the lens of thematic areas such: Science and Technology; Natural Resource and Environment and Trans-Border Crimes. Taking from different dimensions, these topics addressed how regional integration could be accelerated through the creation of wealth as well as the identification of the various elements which engender arms proliferation and those that feed on these arms.

The workshop was deliberately planned to be of a small size to make time for exhaustive discussion of topics under consideration. This was done with the notion that “it is better to discuss an issue unresolved than to resolve it undiscussed”. At the end of the programme, all present at the workshop acknowledged the effectiveness of the sessions from the presentation to the discussions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

The workshop has the following objectives:

- Take an overview of trans-border crimes in West Africa and its impact on conflicts and corruption in the sub-region.
- Identify the role and responsibilities of ECOWAS Parliament in curbing trans-border crimes and create the environment for the promotion of regional co-operation including the harmonisation of legislations.
- Promote science and technology to champion development, regional security and integration through networking, experience and intelligence sharing among countries in the sub-region.
- Examine and discuss the factors that fuel and sustain trans-border crimes in the sub-region; and also discuss gender dimension and the socio-economic impact of these crimes on people in the sub-region.
- Discuss and analyse the issues of environmental decline and natural resource management in the sub-region in order to ensure their sustainability.

Executive Director's Opening Remarks

By Ms. Afi Yakubu

Ms. Afi Yakubu expressed her greatest pleasure to welcome participants to the workshop on the topic: Implementing Regional Protocols for Security and Development in the ECOWAS. She indicated that the two-day workshop purported to elicit discussion on important topics that were relevant to the advancement of ECOWAS in the globalize world, where regional organizations play a key role. She mentioned that since 2002, FOSDA has been organizing series of workshops, conferences and awareness programme geared towards improving human security in the West African sub-region. She was of the view that even though the sub-regional body had made impressive achievement in areas of conflict management and peacekeeping, its principal objective of promoting socio-economic development through regional cooperation to improve the living standards in the sub-region is still on the drawing board. ECOWAS since its creation in 1975 has engaged actively in the adoption and signing of several protocols the latest of which has been the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and other Related Materials signed in June 2006. However it was her ardent conviction that it is only with the implementation of these protocols at both national and regional levels that citizens of the Community will feel the impact of ECOWAS. According to Ms. Yakubu, one of the fundamental problem of Africa is inertia in the implementation of agreements, protocols conventions etc. For instance, the agreement on free movement of persons, goods and capital in itself is not adequate but must be accompanied by the conscious effort to remove the numerous road blocks and border control and be replaced with modern methods of border control using hi-technology for ease of passage.

Opening Statements from Parliamentarians

Hon. Soulaymane Camara, of the Malian Parliament, opened his statement by expressing his appreciation to FOSDA for extending an invitation them to participate in the workshop together with other parliamentarians in the ECOWAS with the aim of promoting peace and security in the sub-region. He observed that, any effort made towards the promotion of peace and security in the ECOWAS sub-region requires the participation and contribution of all member states.

Hon. Moussa Cisse, of Senegal, thanked FOSDA and all those associated with organising the workshop, which he dubbed as “a struggle to achieve peace and security in the sub-region”, and indicated Senegal’s commitment to working with other governments and civil society organizations in the sub-region to achieve peace, security and stability in the sub-region. Remarkably he mentioned that Senegal had ratified all the sub-regional protocols since which he maintained was a display of its unwavering commitment towards the regional integration process and the strengthening of peace and stability in the region. He explained that the workshop was a learning platform and a rare opportunity for experience sharing among parliamentarians from the sub-region.

From the Liberian Parliament, Hon. Elijah Seah in his statement considered this workshop very timely since it was organised to deal with issues plaguing the sub-region and called for seriousness in dealing with security issues. Speaking from the experiences of the unfortunate past of Liberia, he was emphatic that potential threat to peace and stability need not wait or left at the mercy of uninformed and protracted contemplations. Hon. Seah passionately commented that conflicts have led to the collapse of states, the placement of people, shattered economies, causing poverty, unemployment, politics of marginalisation and exclusion. Therefore their early detection deserves a prompt attention to avoid recurrence of deadly conflicts.

He contended that the implementation of all protocols especially on good governance is the surest way to achieve peace and security in the sub-region and added that parliamentarians will always come from different political parties, but they should be able to build consensus on issues that create the atmosphere of peace and security than be divided on trivial issues. He observed that, true democracy should mean more than just elections or it does not end at election but must have expression in health care, food supply, and personal safety which underscore human security.

Hon. Benjamin Kunbuor, spoke on behalf his compatriots from Ghana and expressed his happiness at the invitation and the opportunity to participate in the discussion of issues bordering on security. Hon. Kunbuor added that regional protocols until recently seemed distant away from recurrent national policy considerations. He explained that much attention is not paid to them until disaster struck. He recalled how ECOWAS was shocked over the events in Sierra Leone and Liberia, which he believed occurred due to major lapses and inadequacy in the sub-regional protocols to address them pushing the conflict beyond reasonable stretch of imagination. As a result, a number of initiatives were taken to link security strongly with development efforts in the ECOWAS sub-region and commitment has to be made to achieve this harmony.

THE ROLE AND SUPPORT OF UNDP

By Dr. **Stephen Duah-Yentumi** Asst. UNDP Resident Representative

Dr. Stephen Duah-Yentumi made this presentation on behalf of the UNDP Resident Representative/UN Resident Co-ordinator. He held the opinion that the power of diplomacy and protocols in fostering peace and national security and therefore the UNDP found it delightful to be a co-sponsor of the workshop which focused on the implementation of protocols in the sub-region as a means of achieving security and development.

Dr. Duah-Yentumi noted that the 15 member states making up the ECOWAS are among the world most poorest and also one of most unstable regions in the world. Going further he indicated that of the 72 successful military coups that took place in Africa between 1960 and 1990, about 50% occurred in West Africa. Besides, the end of the last decade witnessed a period of intense violence and worsening instability both within states and across the ECOWAS sub-region. He recalled the widely escalating security crisis, which started with civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1990s and threatened the peace

and stability of most states in the sub-region. Although these statements were not symphonic to the ears, they were indisputable fact of the region's history. According to him the causes of national conflicts are varied, however, encouraging dialogue among states to define guidelines of how they will relate to each in time of conflict and instability helps alleviate regional security challenges, exemplified by the Nairobi Protocol and the ECOWAS Moratorium which has been adopted into a Convention since June 2006. Dr. Duah-Yentumi reiterated that UNDP is well placed to play the role of a facilitator and also offer technical assistance in the early stages of the formulation of protocols supporting dialoguing and consensus building. It also supports in the delivery of activities, resource mobilization, knowledge sharing and building partnerships as well as synergies with governments, civil society organizations and other development institutions and therefore finds it within its policy-frame to support FOSDA's initiative on protocol implementation in the sub-region.

Impact of Science and Technology on Regional Integration

By Col. K.A. Jackson

Col. K.A Jackson, a retired Army Officer and renowned scientist with 20 inventions and 7 patent rights made a classic presentation on the relevance of science and technology in contemporary human endeavours and by extension to regional integration efforts. According to Col. Jackson, progress of humanity and economic development are based on the application of science and technology. Almost every human endeavour is knowledge-based and technology-driven. He however disappointingly observed that science is held in a mystery and seen as a preserve of only the brightest students in this part of the world. But unknown to us, he indicated that even the arrangement and setting of fire in the three-stone-triangle (traditional stove) for cooking has many application of scientific principles. In other words we basically applied science to our daily lives unknowingly and he thus called for the demystification of science in the African society. He said the human brain is not programmed to function automatically. Instead it has been designed to acquire knowledge and skill by learning through explorations, discovery, adaptation, creation and invention. It is a process fired by our insatiable curiosity and assisted by the functions of our senses. He however was of the view that Africa and for that matter the sub-region have been left behind in many facet of human endeavours due to several bottle-neck in appropriating scientific and technological knowledge. He noted that we are saddled with the notion of too many don'ts in our socio-cultural experiences and which to a considerable extent is tied to what he describes as a "settler mentality" or complacency. These according to him precipitate the suppression of curiosity which is the bedrock of discovery and inventions and indeed the hallmark of science and technology. He mentioned that the lack of scientific knowledge and skill have left our sub-region firmly rooted in underdevelopment, poverty, diseases and deep sense of dependency. The way out of this endemic poverty and misery is to equip "our people" with knowledge in science and technology. It is only when we have advanced beyond primitive agriculture, agro-progressing and foreign controlled extractive industries to be self-sufficient and control our own affairs that a functional regional integration can be a reality. Without the skill to exploit and process to full capacity our rich natural resources,

we will be dependent upon foreign donors who will persistently dictate the development pace of our economy by deciding the prices of our raw and unprocessed materials and the price for their finished products. One of nature's law is that natural resources are raw materials that must be exploited and processed into useful products for humanity but since humans are also raw resource in nature, we must equally be processed through acquisition of knowledge and the practical application of this knowledge for self-development in order to have the capacity then to exploit the external natural resources. In a graphic picture, he stated that in the case of Ghana 200,000 out of the 300,000 pupil who enrol in school drop out at the JSS level. Out of the 100,000 who enter the SSS, only 20,000 get to the university with 10,000 going into the polytechnics. What this means is that 270,000 out of the 300,000 who start school each year drop out without any skill, indicating how under-developed and under-processed our human resource is. Even with the 30,000 that get to the tertiary, level less than half (½) come out as scientist, engineers, doctors and architects some of whom we lose through brain drain. The question therefore is how do we produce and create wealth without skilled hands? Without the generation of excess wealth and capital, most protocol will remain paper tigers and unable to achieve their objective. If foreign donors will have to fund our protocols and agreement like the NEPAD, then we should have the fore knowledge that clauses in such agreements that stand opposed to their interest will be taken out.

In the end Col Jackson admonished member states of the ECOWAS to train more people in science and technology for increased production toward the creation of excess wealth to finance projects in the sub-region independent of foreign aid and influence. In other words a profound human capital production will culminate in national prosperity which will lead to a stronger regional integration.

Mining, Natural Resources and the Environment as Security Issues in West Africa.

By: Ben Turtur Donnie, UNDP, Liberia

“Natural resources are a blessing to any country, and when used judiciously they can contribute to national development, but they often lie at the heart of wars and civil strife”. This was the opening statement of Mr. Ben Turtur Donnie which summarized the ramifying contribution these resources have made towards the socio-political development of the West African sub-region. He stated further that a mixture of huge mining and resource companies, including shadowy resource traders, smugglers, corrupt local officials, arms dealers, transport operators and mercenary companies are major players in the bloody nexus of natural resources, account for its double-faced contribution. According to him when the dark side of natural resources surfaces, there can be violent conflict and as West Africa had experienced, violent conflict can spell catastrophe for developing countries and their neighbours. Speaking from an experiential point of view as a Liberian, he indicated that the outbreak of violent civil conflicts amounts to a spectacular failure of development, which in essence causes reverse in development. Findings on a recent World Bank research on causes of conflicts and civil war shows countries most likely to be devastated by conflicts are those whose economies depend heavily on natural resources. This research is evidenced by events in the western region of West Africa which was plagued by wars fuelled by natural resource

exploitation for almost two decades now beginning with Liberia, to Sierra Leone, Guinea and Cote D'Ivoire. All these nations are endowed with one of the following: GOLD, OIL, DIAMOND and TIMBER. To forestall recurrence of such conflicts, Mr Donnie brought up the concept of "Global Commons" which he explained as a generalized notion that natural resources in any country are not the sole property of that country. They were put there by nature for the common good of the rest of the world, with the particular country as custodian and steward. Everyone therefore has the right to natural resource no matter where they are but subject to national, regional, and international laws and protocols. In the light of the foregoing, he said it is therefore important for West African leaders to have a say in the cultivation, management, exploitation and movement of natural resources of a member state backed by regional legal instrument. This is because if natural resources are not sustainably managed, there is bound to be discontent among citizens. When people are not satisfied with a situation, they may result to actions that cause chaos and insurrection, creating insecurity. On a more striking note, Mr. Donnie argued that West Africa has abundant natural resources, the sustainable use of which could bring immense wealth to the region. However due to irresponsible and unsustainable management, these resources turn out to rather be a drain on developmental efforts of the respective countries and the region. He thinks this situation persists partly because neighbours do not jointly monitor the movement of natural resources, making it difficult sometimes to determine where the resources originate as well as its final destination even though there are cross-border commonalities. In his view, such movement of resource without monitoring flourishes the shadow economy which has security implications for the region.

Environmentally, he thinks that everything that happen human has an environmental consideration and therefore a neglect of any aspect of it has a negative consequence of human life and threatens security. He recommended that every citizen of a state should be involved in planning, designing and implementation of environmental initiatives to create a sense of ownership, and since people obviously will not want to destroy what belongs to them, they will find the need to conserve the environmental regime enacted by them. He nominated poverty as one of the greatest threat to environment and security. According to him this is evident in the rural-urban migration in almost all West African countries where these migrants seek to construct home anywhere in the urban. Many governments, according to him take these squatters for granted until it is either too late to remove them or extremely expensive to relocate them. He mentioned that most of these unplanned human settlements in the urban centres eventually become slums and degenerate into a classic hideout for criminals. In conflict countries such as Liberia and Sierra Leone, war leaves abandoned buildings and these buildings quickly become displaced centres and often used as clearinghouse for drugs and other criminal activities. Therefore some buildings and even communities in post-conflict situation need to be demolished for security reasons. On this note, Mr Ben Donnie recommended the following:

1. Every West African country must develop codes of conduct and ethics on access to their natural resources and demand fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of all genetic resources;
2. ECOWAS must be involved in the implementation of all multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). I suggest that ECOWAS should be

- represented at meetings of the Conference of the Parties of MEAs, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification/Land Degradation; ECOWAS.
3. ECOWAS should begin to discuss transboundary issues, such as capacity building and empowerment of customs officials and coast guards to assist in the tracking invasive alien species, living modified organisms elicit drugs;
 4. There is need for an ECOWAS Protocol on the Management of trans-boundary resources and sharing and dissemination of information, including the adoption of legally binding instruments on the management of trans-boundary resources;
 5. Create an ECOWAS resources monitoring mechanism to employ customs officials of the neighbouring states.
 6. Each ECOWAS country should elaborate its poverty reduction strategy and eventually, an ECOWAS poverty reduction strategy.

Gender Dimension of Mining and Trans-Border Crimes in West Africa

By Mrs. Rosaline BaatuolKuu Obeng-Ofori

It has been quite obvious that poverty plays a major role in the worsening security situation in West Africa as it has been a recurring statement in almost all the presentations. Contributing to in affirmation to this fact, Mrs. Baatuolkuu-Ofori-Obeng stated that though West Africa is endowed with natural resources, it is still wallowing in the snare of poverty and being among countries in the world with the lowest standard of living. According to her this situation has contributed immensely to the increased criminal activities as an option for individuals to break out of the poverty cycle. Additionally, she also believes, that the structural defect of the patrimonial concept of most of the African states (*in which control of resources belongs to individuals in power*) also create a conducive environment in which flouting the law and using institutional prerogatives for private goals is justified. All these factors attract unscrupulous economic operators and facilitate the establishment of local and transnational criminal networks which also promote a cultural model in which money buys everything including “impunity”. In her view, the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) had caused a massive expansion of large scale mining especially in the case of Ghana, resulting in growing environmental degradation and scarcity of land. Stating as a fact, Mrs Ofori-Obeng said, competition over land in agrarian region such as ours has a correlation with the increase in crime. Land disputes and litigations according to her, lead to problems of access and control of land and affect categories of people differently. Among women, it worsens their livelihood as about 65-80% of West African women depend on the land for their livelihood and in the case of most men it pushes them into illegal or criminal activities to augment their already precarious livelihood. These activities most often begin nationally and over time, networks are built across the national frontiers. Some of these cross-border criminal activities she listed as money laundering, armed robbery, arms, drug and human trafficking. She observed further that most of the atrocious wars

within the sub-region were either sparked or fuelled by the contest for natural resource especially minerals and oil. Mrs. Ofori-Obeng cited diamonds in Sierra Leone and Liberia; oil in the Niger Delta in Nigeria and gold mining communities in Ghana as examples. These conflicts do occur due to worsening standard of living and abject poverty mostly caused by the exploitation of these resources as researches have shown that resource-dependent economies are the poorest countries in the world. The out break of these conflicts create situations of anarchy which then becomes a flourishing condition for crimes beginning most often with armed robbery, drugs and arms trade, followed by others like money laundering and human trafficking. In such situations, it is women and children who suffer the most as the balance of power and control of resources tilts towards the dominant enclave of men who are able to go all out and the full distance to survive. In respect of human trafficking, Mrs. Ofori-Obeng mentioned that on most occasions, women and children become objects of this crime against humanity with its associated abductions, sexual abuse, intimidation and health problems which further worsens their already vulnerable situation in society.

She thus calls for regional protocols to be buttressed with concerns for social dynamism and to involve a broader social participation in the integration process. Such level of participation will facilitate public understanding of the regional protocols making their implementation much easier. She mentioned that the ECOWAS parliament should endeavour to promote policies that will tilt the balance of both economic and political power to an equal level to afford women the opportunity to maximize their capabilities in contribution to both national and regional development and be rewarded equally as their male counterparts.

In conclusion, Mrs. Ofori-Obeng observed that the response to cross-border crime by West African governments has mostly been limited to the updating of national legislations and legal frameworks in order to be in line with UN conventions and protocols. This approach has however yielded mixed results as the enforcement of some of these amended laws are well beyond the control and ability of national administrations. Concrete and courageous cleaning-up efforts such as the anti-corruption campaign implemented by President Obasanjo's government in Nigeria would certainly produce dramatic results if it can be sustained long enough to ignite a virtuous cycle.

Most importantly she noted that the international community as a whole has finally come to the conclusion that security, the rule of law, justice and transparency are indispensable elements for any sound and realistic development strategy and should therefore be the goal of ECOWAS in the implementation of its regional protocols.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ECOWAS CONVENTION ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS: THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENT

Panelists: Dr. Benjamin Kumbour - (MP, Ghana); Dr. Cyriaque Pawoumotom Agnekethom – (ECOWAS Small Arms Unit); Dr. Prosper Bani, (Small Arms and Demobilisation Unit, UNDP)

This panel discussion was meant to draw out of experts the strategies that could be deployed to facilitate the ratification and subsequent implementation of the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons which is a derivative of the ECOWAS Moratorium of Small Arms.

Dr. Benjamin Kunbuor admitted that the ECOWAS Convention has a short history but an impressive pioneering initiative of the sub-region. This is because small arms and light weapons constitute a major destabilizing factor in member states and threat to peace and stability in the sub-region. However the Moratorium which was drafted to reduce the arms proliferation was limited in significance as it did not have a binding legal effect on Member States of ECOWAS. This limitation led to a number of initiatives by the ECOWAS with advocacy support from civil society organizations that converted the Moratorium into a binding Convention adopted by the Head of States in Abuja on the 14th of June 2006. Dr. Kunbuor observed however that an oversight role of Community's Parliament over the Convention will be dependent on the nature and competence of the parliament. He stated as a fact that the parliament is basically a forum for dialogue, consultation and consensus for representative of the people of West Africa with the aim of promoting integration. Thus a casual glance at both competence and obligation of the parliament suggest that no explicit role has been assigned to the parliament in the implementation of the Convention. However a closer look at the Convention reveals an implicit or implied role. The developmental objectives which fall within the competence of the parliament in the areas of education, health, telecommunication, integration and respect for human rights cannot take place in an environment of insecurity and instability occasioned by the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Therefore the parliament has an implied mandate to ensure a successful implementation of the Convention as a precondition for sustainable development. In addition he mention that the Community Parliament can take advantage of the dual position of it members as parliamentarians of both the community and their respective national parliaments to ensure effective implementation of the Convention.

Mr. Prosper Bani remarked that the dangers of the proliferation of arms are not peculiar to Africa. Many other continents around the world have had to face this menace as well, for example, Latin America, Asia, Carribean. He admitted that all violent conflicts are not devoid of small arms and light weapons but indicated that these instruments of violence are not in themselves the issue. What is at issue according to Mr. Bani is how to limit their accessibility and impact on human suffering and development. He maintained that Small Arms and Light weapons erects serious development challenges especially in the lost of human resource or manpower. He recalled several instance at donor meeting where questions were raised about the capacity of some communities in Africa to utilize the resources being sort for.

He therefore proposed these as the way forward:

1. There is the need to increase awareness among parliamentarians about the dangers associated with illicit small arms and light weapons. There is the need to understand that SALW menace is not only a security issue but environmental, health, labour and human rights.
2. Parliament should ensure that workable mechanisms are put in place to minimize production and possession of arms by civilian.
3. The Parliaments should ensure that National Commissions on SALW are well resourced to perform their mandates.
4. Parliament must consolidate and improve upon the gains made so far in the fight against illicit weapons.
5. The Convention must be implemented and made to work.

Dr. Cyriaque Pawoumotom Agnekethom of ECOWAS Small Arms Unit lauded FOSDA and the Civil Society for the good job done in working tirelessly from the draft to the signing of the Convention. He added that ECOWAS is proud that the Convention has been adopted and come to stay. Dr Agnekethom was however quick to state that it is now left with how to translate the of the adoption of the text of the Convention into a reality through its ratification and implementation. He called on parliamentarians and all concerned to strive to make the Convention work by ratifying it, adding that the Convention will only succeed if there is good working relationship among governments in the sub-region and the security agencies as well. He stated that Plans of Action by National Commissions should be very clear and endorsed by the respective governments to enable implementation be possible. He mentioned that there was an expressed displeasure by most Chief of Defence Staff in the sub-region in an ECOWAS meeting with security commissions after the adoption of Convention. They were of the view that the Convention usurps their discretion to make vital and urgent procurements relevant to national security. Though this sentiment was in a negative form, it gives an indication of the possible impact on the convention in the control of arms should it be ratified and fully implemented.

GROUP WORK AND ACTION PLANS

The final session of the workshop was a plenary session of which the participants were grouped into three:

- Group I- Anglophone Parliamentarians.
- Group II - Francophone Parliamentarians.
- Group III- Civil Society/ Agents of State and Intergovernmental Organisations.

The question posed to the various groups for a Plan of Action was: “What steps should be taken as Parliamentarians and Agent of State/Civil Society to ensure that Regional Protocols are ratified and implemented especially the Convention on SALW?”

Action Plan of the Francophone Group

At the sub-regional level, the following were proposed:

- The Executive Secretary of ECOWAS to conduct a mission to meet Parliamentarians, National Commissions and Civil Society.
- Regional workshops to be organised for Defence and Interior Committees of the respective national parliament.

At the National Level, the following were outlined:

- Workshop to be organised for all actors on SALW.
- Organise brief meetings for Parliamentarians on SALW.
- Workshop to be organised for the security agencies and related institutions.

They indicated that specific modules should be designed after the ratification of the Convention for its implementation by Parliamentarians, the National Commissions and Civil society.

Action Plan of the Anglophone Group

- Programmes to sensitise Parliamentarians on the ECOWAS Convention on SALWs to be organised.
- Find out whether a bill on the Convention has been laid in Parliament.
- If not laid in the House, the Minister responsible should be invited to lay it before the House. It will then be referred to the relevant Committee for consideration and report back to the House.
- Civil Society and other stakeholders who have inputs to make on the bill for the Convention should be encouraged to do so.

Implementation of the Protocol

- The appropriate Parliamentary Committee must exercise its oversight responsibility to ensure the implementation of the Convention when ratified.
- Provision of Budgetary support for implementation of the Convention.
- The implementation of the Convention should be adequately monitored and evaluated periodically for a possible review of the implementation process.
- Members of Parliament should create awareness of the Convention at their constituencies and District Assemblies level.

Action Plan of Civil Society/Agents of State

- ECOWAS to circulate copies of the Convention to member states.
- There should be adequate information updates on the Convention to governments, parliament, Security agencies, Civil Society Organisations, Community Based Organisations, etc.
- Workshops to be organised for sensitisation.
- Design I C E materials for public education (flyers, posters, etc).
- Public education programmes.

