

# A Report of a Steering Group Meeting for East and Central Africa Held at Grand Imperial Hotel in Kampala Uganda between 16<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2014.



*Meeting participants*



**NPI - Africa**

A Peace Resource Organisation



**Center for Conflict Resolution**

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## Introduction

Each year representatives from 16 countries which are members of GPPAC come together to share their experiences on conflict prevention and peace building initiatives and programmes through the Regional Steering Group (RSG), This sharing helps in deepening the understanding of issues at regional level as well as strengthening National mechanisms from a regional perspective. The 2014 RSG meeting presented a unique opportunity entailing four distinct yet related activities: 1. The RSG meeting; 2. Interaction with Uganda CSOs on Conflict Early Warning and Early Response mechanism as well as on the ICGLR mechanism for Regional Peace, Security and Development; 3. Interaction on Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework; and 4. Celebrations of the International Day of Peace.

The meeting brought together representatives of GPPAC national Focal Points from 16 countries of East and Central Africa, representatives from GPPAC global secretariat, over 20 Ugandan CSOs, and key government institutions. Also present were representatives of the Great Lakes Project that is partnering with GPPAC on a project aimed at consolidating peace in the Great Lakes region. The opening ceremony was graced also by Ambassadors/High Commissioners in Uganda - invited from the countries represented by GPPAC members.

## Opening Remarks

### Introduction Remarks - Moffat Kamau, NPI-Africa Programme Manager

In his introduction remarks, Moffat welcomed participants and read out the objectives of the meeting. He observed that we live in a region with a lot of conflicts and therefore the need to proactively and jointly seek for concerted efforts. He added that this context provides basis for such meetings. He mentioned a number of activities that were to be accomplished during the meeting, i.e CSO consultations on CEWER, PSCF, ICGLR, and peace day celebrations- all geared towards sustainable peace in the region.

### Welcome Remarks – Ms. Rose Othieno, Executive Director CECORE

In her welcome remarks, Rose on behalf of the host organization (CECORE) welcomed all dignitaries and participants present. She commended everyone for all the efforts and commitment towards ensuring a peaceful society. She noted that the meeting was at a very appropriate moment - especially during the peace week in which the participants were to actively participate. She gave a brief about CECORE - a peace building organization engaged in the area of capacity building, dialogue and mediation, research, advocacy and networking, consultancy, among others. She noted that it is through networking and partnership that CECORE is the GPPAC focal point in Uganda. She described Uganda as a very friendly country and wished all a pleasant stay in the country.

## Introduction Brief on GPPAC and NPI-Africa

The GPPAC global secretariat is based in the Hague- Netherland while the regional secretariat is hosted by NPI-Africa. During the meeting, Charlotte Crocket and Walter Odhiambo gave highlights of the two organisations.

GPPAC is a global network of CSOs committed to acting to prevent the escalation of conflict into violence. It aims to build a multi-stakeholder partnership including civil society, governments, regional organisations and the United Nations. GPPAC calls for a fundamental change in dealing with violent conflict: a shift from reaction to prevention, as an approach that will save lives, and prove more effective and less destructive. The membership of the GPPAC network is comprised of recognised CSOs, organised primarily through regional networks and global structures. At the regional level, it is governed by RSGs and at the global level by an International Steering Group (ISG), majorly composed of representatives from GPPAC regional networks. Each GPPAC Region is coordinated by a Regional Secretariat. NPI-Africa is the Regional Secretariat for the Eastern and Central Africa region.

NPI-Africa is a continental resource based organization, engaged in a broad range of peace building and conflict transformation initiatives in Africa. It has initiatives that promote dialogue, mediation, healing and reconciliation; training and capacity building; action-oriented research and policy influencing, Human Security and Climate change. Being the regional Secretariat for GPPAC Eastern and Central Africa, NPI-Africa coordinates, supports and strengthens CSOs in 16 countries that form the regional network. Walter emphasised the need for research, and analysis in order to respond to conflicts with informed and right interventions. He also noted that this is a take-off time for Africa but conflicts can deter us from achieving that mission. He therefore called for engagement with government and structures, active involvement in ensuring peaceful elections and inclusiveness – including the private sector.

## Key Note address - The Resident Coordinator United Nations/Resident representative UNDP Uganda, Mrs. Ahunna Eziakonwa-Onochie

The UN coordinator informed the meeting that she chose to come to the RSG, out of 3 meetings she had been invited to officiate at because of the key issues that were being discussed. She shared her experience in regard to the impact of conflicts and how rebuilding a post conflict area is much more expensive than prevention of conflict.

In her address, she noted the need to reflect on the root causes of the problems to enable a full analysis and understanding of conflict situations. She emphasized that protection of human rights should be at the centre of all interventions noting *that “you cannot continue to abuse the rights of the people and expect the world to be peaceful”*. Whose words are these??? If hers, there is no need of quotes! She called upon actors especially the civil society to shape a world where there are no human rights abuses and impunity. To promote a peaceful society, Mrs. Ahunna advised actors to address the conditions that breed and fuel violent conflicts e.g Internal Displaced Persons (IDP) situations.

She noted that the choice of selecting Uganda to host the meeting was very relevant as there are many lessons to learn from the country – especially from its turbulent conflicts and how it has successfully addressed them. Uganda has suffered from a number of violent cases which include political transitions, armed conflicts, terrorism, and insurgencies in different forms, but it has successfully come out of it with programmes of reintegration, disarmament, amnesty, recovery and rehabilitation programmes in Northern Uganda, among others. She also raised concern on the need to address existing and potential challenges like maintaining peace and stability, the overwhelming youth bulge, management of natural resources like oil and environment, and the development gap between the poor and the rich.

In her conclusion, she emphasized the application of the Rights Based Approach to development to ensure equality and inclusiveness, the need for Africa to benefit from its resource hub, elimination of conditions for violence, and localization of the post 2015 development agenda. She applauded the meeting for promoting the implementation of the PSC framework and the ideals of the International Day of Peace, but challenged peace actors to transform the “International Day of Peace into an International Decade of Peace”.



- Mrs. Ahunna Eziakonwa-Onochie

## Official Opening – Guest of Honor

The meeting was officially opened by Kepher Kuchana Kateu (Director, Ministry of Internal Affairs – Directorate of Government Analytical Laboratory) on behalf of the Minister for Internal Affairs, Hon. Minister Gen. Aronda Nyakairima. In his written speech, the Minister noted that Uganda is committed to upholding the peace ushered in the country, and that the country has made tremendous strides towards achieving total peace nationally and in the region. The minister acknowledged that peace is a prerequisite to development and called upon not only the government but also other stakeholders for a collective effort in ensuring sustainable peace. He cautioned against negative statements that have potential to inciting communities, tribes and nations against each other. The minister added that good governance, democracy, rule of law and effective institutions in the country are important aspects for sustainable peace and therefore must be promoted at all times.

In his official remarks, the he elaborated the Conflict Early Warning and Response mechanism under CEWARN/IGAD as one of government’s mechanisms in handling conflicts. The mechanism has been focusing on pastoral conflicts as a thematic area in the Karamoja cluster but also, it is being expanded both thematically and geographically to cover the entire country. He noted that the government of Uganda has a number of efforts geared towards addressing the proliferation and misuse of small arms (like disarmament and arms marking).

The minister applauded GPPAC, NPI-Africa and CECORE for their efforts in promoting peace in Uganda, Great Lake Region and globally - upon which he declared the meeting officially opened and wished participants fruitful discussions.



- Mr. Kepher Kuchana Kateu

## Conflict Situation Analysis and Peace building Initiatives: Focus on Uganda and Countries in the Region - Dr. Ashad Sentongo

All countries in the GLR have experienced wars in the last 50 Years. These wars are mainly caused by structural and relational dynamics. Today, even countries that are perceived to be peaceful (without overt violence) have serious conflict threats and are affected by spillover effects like refugees influxes and proliferation of guns.

The presentation elaborated the general context of conflicts in Uganda, the Great Lakes Region and Africa, conflict analysis and resolution, and recommendations for CSOs.

Analysis: Conflict analysis is key in the conflict resolution process as it provides the basis for intervention and response. Reflecting on the 3 Pillar model (by *Dennis Sandole*), it is important to analyze 1: Conflict sources; parties, issues, objectives, means, conflict handling orientations and conflict environment, 2: conflict causes and preconditions; at individual, communal, societal, international and ecological level, and 3: apply Conflict Resolution; prevention, transformation, management, resolution (prevention), and 3<sup>rd</sup> party approaches.

The logical analysis of conflicts and how conflicts have stemmed mainly from the lack of and or insecurity about basic needs in Uganda and the great lakes region was highly emphasized. It was observed that the lack of basic needs leads to perceived structural violence. Perceived structural violence resultantly leads to perceived marginalization/deprivation. The perceived deprivation creates ethno-political groups that later form the basis for mobilization for violence. Notable among the example with such scenarios are Kenya, South Sudan, and Sudan where ethnic mobilization has perpetuated conflicts. Also observed was that human security is critical in ensuring sustainable peace and stability and once it is threatened, causes preconditions for violence.

Emerging conflicts in the region were also discussed and observed as posing a big threat to peace and stability. Key among these are; conflicts over natural resources, issue of refugees, cross-border and land disputes and increasing Gender Based violence.

Recommendations: To address the conflict challenges, CSOs in the region need to among others, localize the needs based approach, strengthen coordination, actively participate in decision making, focus on long term interventions, and ensure safety of the people. To address the structural and relational dynamics, there is need for a paradigm shift to transform existing structures, build peaceful relationships, and build on the “pieces of peace” that exist in communities. Also stressed was the existence of a generation of over 75 percent of the population (youth) who have witnessed and internalized the thinking that “when you face conditions which are unfavorable, you fight and that when you fight you gain” – a scenario that needs a mindset change.

## Conflict Early Warning and Response – Case Studies of Kenya and Uganda

Conflict early warning and response are critical mechanisms for conflict prevention – from occurring, escalating or re-emerging. Discussions indicated that it is much cheaper to prevent than solve a conflict after it has occurred. The cost of war can be mitigated if efforts are geared towards effective early warning and response. The Government of Uganda and Kenya have established the Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Units (CEWERU) in accordance with the CEWARN Protocol. The CEWARN was established by IGAD to coordinate efforts to prevent conflict and to formulate response strategies through information collection, analysis and dissemination. The mandate of CEWARN is to “receive and share information concerning potentially violent conflicts, as well as their outbreak and escalation in the IGAD region.

Joseph Muhumuza (the national coordinator – CEWARN Uganda) and Peter Mwamachi (from NSC-Kenya) shared the experiences from Uganda and Kenya respectively. These included; methodologies of data collection, analysis and reporting, structural frameworks, successes, best practices, challenges, among others.

The key issues that arose from the discussions include:

**Successes of CEWARN:** There was appreciation that the conflict early warning mechanisms have tremendously contributed to peace in Uganda, Kenya, and the region. For example the successful elections during the referendum and general elections in Kenya were partly attributed to the conflict early warning and response mechanisms – especially by minimizing hate speech. The reduction in cattle rustling in Uganda and in the entire Karamoja cluster is also greatly attributed to early warning and response efforts.

**Challenges:** The early warning and response mechanisms are still challenged by limited financial resources, shift in donor priorities, unpredictable regional socio-political developments, and limited response.

**Weak response:** While there has been tremendous efforts towards early warning, early response is usually poor, late or absent. This frustrates the early warning efforts

**Dealing with “postmortem”:** There was a concern of continued magnitude of high levels of violence despite early warning mechanisms in place. This raised the question of “how early is early, criticizing that the existing mechanisms concentrate on incident reporting (postmortem) as opposed to early warning. Another related analytical observation was that “incident reporting is a failure of early warning”.

**Need to replicate best practices:** Best practices like the “*nyumba Kumi*” initiative in Kenya, Peace committees in Kenya and Uganda, were pointed out as important models of community peace building that ought to be adopted.

**Coordination:** Proper coordination and involvement of all actors was pointed out as critical for the success of early warning and response efforts. Coordination needs to be enhanced and linked at community, national and regional level.

**Need to enhance ownership:** There was a general realization that awareness about conflict early warning and response is low among the general population. Furthermore the ownership among actors like the community and government institutions is still low.

**Focus on one conflict:** There was a concern over the focus on only one thematic type of conflict in Uganda i.e. pastoral conflicts. However under the new strategic plan, Uganda is expanding both geographically and thematically – i.e. covering the entire country and all conflicts. What other types of conflicts need to be addressed??? Mention them.

**The influence of invisible actors:** Participants decried the role of invisible actors in escalating conflicts in the region. One of the issues pointed out was the proliferation of small arms and light weapons where the arms manufacturers (as invisible actors) have played a big role in its increased danger.

**Need to strengthen early warning systems even in countries that are not experiencing overt conflicts:** There was a general recognition of the need to establish and strengthen early warning systems even in areas that seem not to be experiencing open violence like Tanzania, Gabon, and Cameroon. These countries are also threatened by a number of conflict issues internally and externally like land tensions, GBV, and spill-over effect like refugee influx, terrorism and rebel attacks.

### **Presentation on the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework – Ms. Rose Otieno**

In February 2013, the governments of the Great Lakes Region and the international community collectively committed to ending the conflict in the DRC. Brokered by the UN, the African Union, the ICGLR and SADC, the PSC Framework (popularly known as the Framework of Hope) for the DRC and the region Brought 13 nations into a comprehensive pact to stop the cycles of violence in eastern DRC by resolving their root causes, approaching solutions regionally and fostering trust between the DRC and its neighbours.

The presentation provided general information about the PSCF, Regional Action Plan and National Indicators, the process towards the establishment of regional CSO coalition and an overview of key issues in the regional perspective. The presentation provided information on what the Framework entails the roles the CSOs can play, and updates on the ongoing CSO consultations.

The key issues from the discussion on the PSCF included:

**The Need to implement the Framework???:** There was a general concern that while the framework provides hope for the realization of peace in DRC and the region, it has largely remained on paper and its implementation and intended outcomes are not felt.

**Presence of active rebel forces in Eastern DRC:** This was observed as a big challenge to the realization of the objectives of the framework. Much as DRC is conditioned by the responsibility not to harbor rebel forces in its territory, the rebel forces are still at large in Eastern DRC mainly because of lack of state presence. Notable among the rebel forces in the areas was the (please provide this in full (FDLR) rebels who have continued to escalate mayhem like rape caused on innocent civilians. Also, a related concern was the insensitive interventions in addressing the FDLR issue. Instead of transferring the rebels to another area within DRC, it was suggested that it is better to disarm them and return them to Rwanda where they came from as refugees.

**The Need to address the root causes of conflict in DRC and the region:** Much as the governments are keen at responding to violent conflicts in the region, it was noted that a number of factors that give rise to violence need to be addressed to avoid escalation and prevent re-occurrence. These include youth unemployment, bad governance, resource-based conflicts, misuse and proliferation of small arms, and GBV.

**I see the need to provide a list of acronyms after the table of contents or providing the full meaning of abbreviations the first time they are used in the report.**

**Low awareness on the PSC Framework:** Generally the awareness about the PSCF itself is still low even among the populace – let alone the actors who are expected to take lead in creating its awareness like CSOs. Therefore it was suggested that members need to collaborate with the office of the UNSE/GLR to create awareness and promote the ideals of the framework.

**Update on regional consultations:** There have been national consultations at national level in 4 countries (Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and DRC) regarding the implementation and monitoring of the framework - facilitated by the office of the UN Special Envoy for the GLR. These consultations will culminate into a sub-regional conference that will bring together representatives from the four countries. During the national consultations, 5 CSO representatives were selected in each country for a regional consultation meeting (that was yet to convene). The move is geared towards creating awareness on the PSC Framework as well as coalescing CSO's towards the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the framework.

### **ICGLR as a Regional Mechanism for Peace, Security and Development – Nathan Byamukama – Director, ICGLR Training Facility**

On 15 December 2006, 11 ICGLR member States, meeting in Nairobi, signed the Pact for Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, committing them to work

collectively, to deal with the root causes of conflict and insecurity. This followed years of protracted conflict, war and insecurity in the region. The ICGLR therefore is a regional response to the challenges of the region to transform it into a space for sustainable peace and security, political and social stability, shared growth and development, cooperation and convergence. It was formed on the premise that the people and challenges of the GLR are interlinked; hence instability in one country easily affects neighbours;

The presentation highlighted the background of ICGLR, its legal status and structure, the Peace, Security and Development challenges, achievements so far, and next steps.

The key issues that arose from the presentation include:

**Persistent conflict challenges:** The meeting pointed out concerns over persistent challenges that hinder the progress of the ICGLR objectives. These include negative forces, Small arms and light weapons proliferation, refugees and IDPs, Illegal exploitation of natural resources, impunity, sexual violence, human rights violations, and bad governance, among others.

**Challenge in application of principles between non-interference and responsibility to protect:** There was concern over the application of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of states and responsibility to protect. A case in point was the case of South Sudan where the application of the responsibility to protect is challenged by the principle of non-interference.

**Genocide practices in Sudan:** Crimes against humanity and genocide practices were brought up noting that actors like ICGLR are silent on the issue and it is not being addressed. However, ICGLR in response is convincing Sudan to form a committee on genocide prevention - to communicate and verify the issue.

**Persistent havoc by forces like FDLR:** FDLR has continued to cause havoc in DRC. Information was however given that a meeting had been held and the FDLR forces were given up to December 2014 to voluntarily surrender.

**How CSOs can utilize existing ICGLR platforms:** It was agreed that CSOs need to utilize existing forums and spaces within ICGLR to lobby and advocate for peace in the region. Noted among them is a CSO Forum. Members were also advised to learn from the youth Forum that has been active in engaging Heads of State in advocating for youth issues. Another point of advice was to take advantage of the CSO forum chaired by Mzee Butiku who was also a participant in the meeting.

### **The Regional Civil Society Forum and the Linkage with Uganda CSOs– Mzee Joseph Butiku**

Mzee Butiku is the chairperson of the ICGLR Civil Society Forum. He shared the plans for the establishment of the Regional Civil Society Forum - noting that this is an initiative of finding solutions to local problems. The forum is a space for open and constructive dialogue

permitting to identify common interests and search for solutions through consultation and cooperation.

The Forum seeks to address the challenges that formed basis for its establishment. Notable examples include lack of coordination for social action, lack of respect for international conventions, lack of mechanisms to monitor the commitment of states, lack of framework for consultations between actors and CSOs, lack of transparency, lack of pro-poor policies, weak democratic processes, low level of awareness, loss of confidence among the population, vulnerability of civil society, absence of common regional vision, lack of deep-rooted principles of democracy, overlapping initiatives, among others. Mzee Butiku unveiled the roadmap towards the Forum which will involve development of CSO inventory, creation of national CSO Forum that bring together CSOs (between September 2014 to April 15, 2015), election of coordination committee of 5 members (from the 12 ICGLR countries), and establishment of a national bureau. At the regional level, the same process will be conducted. Mzee Butiku reiterated that each country has tens of thousands of CSOs (over 20,000 in the region) and there is critical need for coordination horizontally and vertically.

The reactions from the presentation were:

**Need for coordination:** Participants observed the need to coordinate with already existing national forums for ICGLR, and similar forums under frameworks like PSC Framework and EAC. Another level of coordination pointed out was at community, national and regional level.

**Need for effective communication:** It was remarked that activism is necessary but the language of activism matters. There is therefore need for independent, diplomatic and non abusive language by CSOs in communicating the views and feelings of the population. Use of the media and other forums to communicate to the people were also explored.

**Negative perception between government and CSOs:** This was raised as an issue that continues to derail the working relationship between government and CSOs instead of being complimentary actors. CSOs are sometimes tainted as partisan and breeding grounds for political resistance. It was agreed that CSOs need to strongly pronounce that they are not political parties or representatives to be used for political purposes. The need for the CSOs to word with the government in implementation of its activities

**Ensuring equal representation in the coordination committees:** This suggestion was meant to ensure quality representation. It was based on the concern that some organizations may have wrong intentions, interests, and reputation -something that needs to be avoided. Also related was that the selection should be inclusive and consider diversity, demography and geography.

## National Peace Policy Development Process in Uganda - Canon Joyce Nima

Since 2002, NGOs in Uganda have been pursuing the enactment of the national peace policy aimed at establishing an institutional framework that promotes partnership in peace building and conflict management. With continuous lobbying, CSOs are now working with the Government line ministry (Office of the Prime Minister) to precipitate the process of developing the policy. At the moment, a draft issues paper is in place and government is in the process of identifying a consultant to draft the policy. NGOs like UJCC and CECORE have worked with government and summarized the issues paper for enhanced awareness, made inputs (including engendering the issues paper), had meeting with members of parliament, and also made peace policy proposals.

The presentation highlighted the basis for the need for the peace policy, progress so far made, and the policy suggestions. The key issues that emanated from the discussions were:

- The need to ensure active involvement of CSOs, government institutions and the general population in the process of developing the peace policy to enhance ownership
- the responsibility of implementing the peace policy be accorded to another ministry but not the Ministry of Internal Affairs as suggested in the policy because it is the ministry in charge of for security in the country and therefore it may be biased This proposal is however at the proposal level and subject to discussion and dialogue.
- Lack of direct funding for peace activities by government. This was however challenged because there is no peace policy in place and therefore CSOs find it difficult to advocate for funding towards peace activities since there is no allocation for it under the national budget.

## Addressing challenges and Recommendation for Enhancing Women Participation in Peace Building – Robinah Rubimbwa

Women's participation is critical in sustainable peace and development. This is premised on the fact that Conflicts affect women differently, and that women's role and importance need to be recognized in peace building and conflict transformation. It is also further justified by the increased violations of women during conflict and post conflict situations, lack of (or need for) accountability for implementation of existing frameworks, lack of adequate resources for addressing women's issues etc. A case study of Uganda's progress towards the implementation and monitoring of the UNSCR 1325 was used to assess women participation in peace building.

The discussions raised the following issues:

- There was concern over the increasing GBV, use of women as weapons of war, gender insensitive interventions, and impunity.
- Need to focus on human security to guarantee the security/safety of women
- Recognition that women play a vital role as first teachers about life, providers at home, social connectors for peace – roles that are often ignored.
- Women can utilize the opportunity of a Ugandan chairing the UNSCR to lobby for women issues
- There is need to encourage women to openly contest for political positions and participate in decision making processes

### Country Updates – GPPAC National Focal Points

Each of the 16 GPPAC focal points represented at the meeting gave an update on the peace and conflict situation in their respective countries. The key issues/challenges brought out were:

- Increasing ethnic conflicts and tensions in countries like South Sudan, DRC, and Kenya
- High prevalence of GBV and use of women as weapons of war in countries like DRC, Somalia and CAR
- Election tensions and processes ahead of the upcoming elections in countries like Uganda, Gabon, DRC, Congo Brazzaville and Burundi
- Harsh operating environment for CSOs in almost all countries represented. This is manifested by stringent laws and policies, crackdown on human rights defenders, negative perceptions towards CSOs as anti-government, etc
- Presence and emerging rebel forces that pose a big hindrance to peace in the region like SELEKA in CAR, LRA in CAR, FDLR in DRC, M23 in DRC, etc. This is further worsened by threats of terrorist groups like Alshabab in Somalia and the rest of the region.
- Emerging issues like terrorist practices of Boko Haram and its effect on Cameroon, refugee influx, eruption of revenge and counter revenge attacks between ethnic groups. Also stressed was that the emerging conflicts are also being felt in relatively peaceful countries (without wars) like Tanzania, Cameroon and Gabon.

**Peace building efforts by GPPAC Members;** The members were highly applauded for the tireless efforts towards peace building in their respective countries. These included the strengthened CSO fraternity in Somalia, engagements in strengthening conflict early warning and in process of developing the peace policy in Uganda, engagement in budget process in Congo Brazzaville, community peace initiatives in Kenya, Peace education and arms control in Cameroon, advocacy against rebel atrocities in CAR, Conflict prevention efforts in Gabon, advocacy against human atrocities and genocidal tendencies in Sudan, condemnation against natural resource conflicts and rebel forces in DRC, CSO/government dialogues in Burundi, etc.

### **Updates from the thematic Cluster leaders**

Updates and activities from the thematic clusters of Gender, Human security, and Peace education were given. There was no update on the fourth thematic area of Dialogue and Mediation as the coordinator (Rose Othieno from Uganda) was at the time on a radio talk show talking about the work of GPPAC and preparations for the International Day of peace celebrations.

**Gender** – Poety of Congo Brazzaville: Reported carrying out Gender advocacy on UNSCR 1325, promoting the visibility of women in conflict prevention. Also reported was awareness on the GPPAC / UN Gender policy among stakeholders. She is working on a Gender document that she plans to present in next RSG meeting.

**Human security** (MacOmalla of TZ): Reported working with RECSA - a regional governmental body enhancing control of small arms and light weapons in the region. He has held consultative meetings to introduce GPPAC and its activities. Furthermore, advocacy and capacity building, civic education, and research activities have been carried out.

**Peace education** – (Justine of Cameroon): Reported that she represented GPPAC during the African Alliance summit in Kigali where she made a key note address on peace education as well as on peace education curriculum. During the summit, she was co-opted as member of Africa Alliance peace committee. She has been instrumental in promoting peace education in Cameroon.

After the updates, the thematic cluster leaders were advised to work closely with the national focal points in collection of data and feedback from the entire region.

It was also agreed that all the thematic cluster leaders be retained in their respective capacities.

### **Updates from the GPPAC Global Secretariat – Charlotte Crocket**

Charlotte highlighted a number of activities being carried out at the global level and global secretariat.

Currently, the secretariat is engaged in developing the new strategic plan (2016-2020), review of the post 2015 development agenda, drafting of new funding proposal to the Dutch government. Information was that a new liaison officer for Middle East and North Africa has just been recruited. She encouraged members to engage in the promotion of the post 2015 development agenda.

Charlotte also gave an overview of the various GPPAC activities at the global level. Examples included; dialogue meetings involving young political leaders in Armenia and Azerbaijan, a series of seminars on election violence in Bangladesh, solidarity missions on peace processes for inclusive development in South Asia, establishment of platforms for peace building dialogues in North East Asia (North Korea), and development of recommendations for peace enhancement to regional bodies in Venezuela.

She reminded members about the GPPAC peace portal and encouraged those who have not registered to do so by August 2014. She also encouraged members to utilize GPPAC social media platforms like face book, twitter and website. She further asked members to feel free to report or put to her attention any conflict and peace events whenever need be.

### **Review of Annual work plans – 2014-15**

Moffat Kamau went through the annual work plan to give a performance evaluation on the progress made. A number of planned activities had been accomplished and were highlighted while a few had not. Moffat was to have bilateral engagement with specific focal points to forge ways of accomplishing those that have not been carried out. In response, members noted the presentation needed to clearly indicate which activities have been carried out and those that have not – for better clarity. They also applauded the secretariat on the issue of ensuring that all the communication documents have both English and French version – but also noted that the French versions usually have editorial errors.

### **Presentation on the Great Lakes Project – by Pascal Richards**

The Great Lakes project is a four year collaborative programme between ACCORD, NPI-Africa and GPPAC aimed at consolidating peace building in the Great Lakes Region. It targets Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda and DRC as well as the ICGLR. The project targets interventions at 3 levels; capacity building of CSOs, national strategies to support political buy-in and capacity of multiple stakeholders to work together, and collaboration with the regional intergovernmental mechanisms. Among the activities the project has conducted

include; Interactions at national and regional level, follow-up meetings with CECORE/CEWERU, and SEGLR, Interactions with ICGLR, Consultation meeting in Bujumbura, facilitation of youth forum in Nairobi, ahead of ICGLR summit. It was reported that the project had also planned side sessions during ICGLR heads of state meetings in Angola, but was challenged by political and visa issues. During the discussions, there were pleas that; the project brings GPPAC Focal points on board and extends to other countries within the region. The project is however, currently limited by geographical jurisdiction and implementation modalities.

### Group work and plenary: Challenges and recommendations in implementing plan of action.

The group discussions and plenary focused on identifying the challenges and way forward in implementing the GPPAC plan of action. The groups were divided into Anglophone and Francophone. Below were the outcomes.

Anglophone	Francophone
<p><b>Challenges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak fundraising; our projects are bigger than the budget</li> <li>• Lack of effective communication among members – weak links between organization and work of GPPAC, information sharing – would be interesting to know what each member is doing/country specific</li> <li>• Diversity of issues; elections, wars, etc - making it difficult for joint action</li> <li>• Weak reporting /communication</li> <li>• Limited follow-up on what is done – no continuous monitoring</li> <li>• Increasing dynamic nature of conflicts – different forms and types</li> <li>• Language barrier - especially working with Franco phone countries</li> <li>• Limited scope in reporting by focal points – on what organization is doing rather than what is happening nationwide</li> <li>• Lack of adequate time for regional coordination at global secretariat</li> <li>• Vast region</li> </ul>	<p><b>Challenges</b></p> <p>Limited Financial resources necessary to work on the national level with the focal points</p> <p><b>Weak coordination</b></p> <p>Low level of ownership of the work plan by the national focal points</p> <p>New members (and their countries) are not reflected in the work plan</p> <p>Unclear division of tasks and responsibilities</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of gender specific indicators for gender mainstreaming</li> </ul>	
<p><u>Recommendations:</u></p> <p><u>Global Secretariat</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop reporting format, including monitoring of results from past activities</li> <li>- Diversify donors (EU, Japan, UN Peace building)</li> <li>- Develop template for project proposals for fundraising</li> <li>- Identify cross-regional connections in GPPAC</li> <li>- More time for regional coordination</li> <li>- Set aside an emergency reserve for <b>prevention of</b> crisis situations</li> <li>- Always look for ways to collaborate and advocate that don't require funding</li> </ul> <p><u>Regional Secretariat</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RLO to put together a regional newsletter, to be sent out every month</li> <li>- Create a regional Face book group/page</li> <li>- Coordinate regional communication on the peace portal</li> <li>- Coordinate bi-annual webinar/online conference, with agenda points to be submitted by the national focal points</li> <li>- Create a regional directory of all members with e-mail, phone, Skype etc.</li> <li>- Always include budget lines for national coordination and translations in funding proposals</li> <li>- Identify cross-regional connections in GPPAC</li> </ul>	<p><u>Recommendations:</u></p> <p>Recommendations to the Global Secretariat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilization of financial resources to support the national and regional levels in a continued sustainable manner at institutional and activity level of GPPAC in the region and individual member states (e.g. support for national focal points to have an active national network)</li> <li>• Share information on opportunities for financial support at country and regional level</li> <li>• Create links and mobilize donors at national and regional level</li> <li>• Accompany &amp; support national and regional activities on elections and advocacy/lobby</li> </ul> <p><u>Recommendations to the Regional Secretariat</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilization of financial resources to support the national and regional levels in a continued sustainable manner at institutional and activity level of GPPAC in the region and individual member states (e.g. support for national focal points to have an active national network)</li> <li>• Share information on opportunities for financial support at country and regional level</li> <li>• Accompany and instigate proactive exchanges between the members and the countries in the region on elections</li> <li>• Accompany and instigate advocacy/lobby</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Frequently review plans and adapt to changing context if necessary</li> <li>- Subscribe to AU situation room and other early warning mechanisms</li> <li>- Set aside an emergency reserve for prevention of crisis situations</li> <li>- Always look for ways to collaborate and advocate that don't require funding</li> <li>- New RLO must be bilingual (English and French) and make use of the language knowledge among the focal points for work in specific countries</li> <li>- Include gender mainstreaming in all activities and develop and distribute gender indicators to members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- of the national and regional level</li> <li>• Quarterly Synthesis (newsletter) on the situation of the countries in the region (reporting format has to be developed so as to give a clear framework for the members to fill in with the relevant information)</li> <li>- Analysis of the regional and national situation and proactive suggestion of activities/interventions by the regional secretariat</li> <li>- Bilingual Communication by utilizing all communication channels at the disposal of the regional secretariat (regular telephone, email)</li> <li>- Develop «outcome areas» and common indicators to measure common results of the network</li> <li>- Greater attention for learning and capacity building, lessons learnt, challenges and failures through the work of the network and its members</li> <li>- Regional secretariat should push / remind national focal points on the agreed activities (e.g. through quarterly action plans)</li> <li>- Greater attention needs to be given to all the regions and countries</li> </ul>
<p><u>National Focal Points</u></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Focal points participate in fundraising, also by monitoring and sharing opportunities</li> <li>- Send a country update every three months to the regional secretariat including early warnings</li> <li>- Report to the GS on major upcoming events for GPPAC Update</li> <li>- Communicate with one another on funding opportunities and how to make best use of them together</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Take joint position on developments in the region, using GPPAC statement mechanism</li> <li>- Show solidarity: If there is a problem in one country, support the member there in any way possible (joint advocacy to regional bodies, approaching that country's embassy with</li> </ul>	<p><u>Recommendations to member organisations &amp; in particular the national focal points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mobilization of financial resources to support the national and regional levels in a continued sustainable manner at institutional and activity level of GPPAC in the region and individual member states (e.g. support for national focal points to have an active national</li> </ul>

<p>recommendations, seeking media attention etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Share contact details of national GPPAC members</li> <li>- Work together in smaller country groups around shared issues (e.g. cross-border conflicts, violent extremism, elections in the same year, violent armed conflict)</li> <li>- Subscribe to AU situation room (and other early warning mechanisms)</li> <li>- Develop (concise) action plan for national network strengthening</li> <li>- National focal points support regional secretariat in translating relevant materials into languages other than English and French</li> </ul>	<p>network)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Share information on opportunities for financial support at country and regional level</li> <li>- Awareness raising and capacity building campaigns linked to elections (focusing on peace and security)</li> <li>- Strengthening of lobby/advocacy capacities</li> <li>- Strengthening of capacities for proper documentation</li> <li>- Build up active networks at national level</li> <li>- Broaden the support base for lobby and advocacy</li> <li>- Undertake proactive exchanges within the regional, global network on elections for the countries concerned (i.e CAR, Burundi, DRC, Congo Brazzaville, Gabon etc.) with support from regional and global level</li> <li>- Increase ownership of the regional GPPAC work plan by the national focal points (e.g. by having national focal points including the mentioned activities in their own annual operational plans)</li> </ul>
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**Selection of a regional secretariat host**

HUREPI and NPI-Africa expressed interest in hosting the GPPAC regional secretariat for East and Central Africa. However HUREPI later withdrew her bid to contest in favour of NPI-Africa. NPI therefore will host the regional secretariat for the next 2 years, 2015-2017.

In his acceptance remarks, Walter Odhiambo remarked that consensus is the best way of moving forward. He thanked Peter Mac’Omalla of HUREPI for the bold decision. He also thanked members for accepting to give NPI-Africa an extra mandate to host the regional

secretariat. He called for creation of a unified family of peace builders where all members feel recognized and equal treatment.

### **International Day of Peace Celebrations**

Each year the International Day of Peace is observed around the world on 21 September - as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples. The RSG meeting was integrated as one of the activities of the peace week in Uganda. The participants joined the rest of the country during the climax of the national Day of Peace celebrations that were in Adjumani district, West Nile part of Uganda under the theme” The Right of Peoples to Peace”.



- Delegates in Adjumani

### **Closing Remarks – Walter Odhiambo, Executive Director – NPI-Africa**

Walter remarked that throughout the discussions, fundraising was a common challenge and therefore a critical need for capacity building of GPPAC members in the area. He said that GPPAC members need to package themselves well in order to be able to take advantage of the existing opportunities. He re-emphasized the need for preventive actions before violence erupts. He added that this can be strengthened through research, strengthening advocacy, and capacity building. He finally wished all participants safe travels to their respective destinations.

*Report compiled by Patrick Bwire – Uganda*