

Launch of the Africa Regional Desk
21 August 2008
Accra - Ghana

On the 21st of August 2008, the first anniversary of the Africa Regional Desk was celebrated during its official launch at the Alisa Hotel in Accra, Ghana. The event was co-organized with WANEP (West Africa Network for Peacebuilding), Affiliate of IFOR and host of the Africa Regional WPP desk.

The event was chaired by Kalie Sillah from WANEP, and included speeches and solidarity messages from Africa Desk Coordinator Euphemia Akos Dzathor, Africa Regional Advisory Board Chair Joy Mbaabu, IFOR/WPP Regional Development Officer Dorothy Attema, and IFOR/WPP Program Manager Isabelle Geuskens. Due to plane problems, Guest of Honour Betty Murungi, Executive Director from Urgent Action Fund Africa, was prevented from attending. The program was officially launched by Hajia Alima Mahama, Ghana's Minister of Women and Children's Affairs.

The audience consisted of representatives of eleven IFOR African member organizations, who had attended a three-day gender training in Accra prior to the launch.

Representatives from Ghana's civil society and the international donor community were also amongst the audience.

Euphemia Akos Dzathor, coordinator of the Desk, emphasized that during the next three years (2009-2011), the program will educate and train women activists in Africa in gender sensitive active non-violence activities. This will enable them to serve as peace trainers on the continent.

During her keynote address, Mrs Hajia Alima Mahama pointed out that gender equality is an integral part of achieving a peaceful society, and commended WPP for complimenting the government's efforts at ensuring peace and security in Africa.

The launch was covered in several newspapers, including The Daily Graphic (national newspaper of Ghana), with an article on the African Women Peacemakers Program and a more detailed analysis on the role of women as peacebuilders in Africa.