

By Jennifer Ambolley

**B**erenice Owen-Jones, the Australian High Commissioner to Ghana has emphasized the critical role of global organizations in sustaining dialogues on women's participation in conflict resolution and peace-building efforts.

Delivering a speech at a forum on the participation of Women in Peace and Security in West Africa, Berenice Owen-Jones emphasized the need for stakeholders to continue to share knowledge and expertise on advancing the involvement towards global efforts in combating conflicts.

Berenice Owen-Jones reasoned that women are the most affected during wars and conflict and therefore it is imperative that they become active participants in steps towards the resolve of such issues.

"In times of conflicts and crisis, the imperative to implement the women peace and security agenda heightens and we know that conversations and resources, accountability and persistence are needed to ensure the equal and full participa-

## 'Dialogues on women's participation in conflict resolution must be sustained'

tion of women in peace and security initiatives. We should continue to build upon our shared experiences, knowledge and networks to further that goal," she said.

She further outlined the policy interventions by the Australian government to upscale the participation of women in peacebuilding efforts.

She noted that the country has historically supported the United Nations and other organizations in pursuing and executing actions that will create the platform for women to take active stage in the conflict resolution efforts.

"We work with civil society organizations and the UN to ensure that international actions and commitments to peace and security and the progressive principle resolution 1325 reflects the principles, needs and roles

of women and girls in fragile conflict and post-conflict situations.

"Through our foreign policy and aid program, Australia has given priority integrating a gender perspective into global peace and security. Australia's actions to implementing these commitments across governments are guided by our second national action plan on

women peace and security for 2021. It's an ambitious long-term strategy in support of meaningful concrete outcomes that improve the lives of women and girls globally.

"Australia is a staunch supporter of global efforts such as the women peace and humanitarian funds and the UN women's global facility on women peace and security that undertake a range of important activities," she added.

Levinia Addae-Mensah, the Programme Director and Deputy Executive Director of West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) highlighted the efforts by her outfit to improve the welfare of women and girls in the sub-region.

She outlined some of the actions and strategies implemented by WANEP which has provided the platform for the

participation of women in matters of peacebuilding and security in the sub-region.

"Women and girls issues are of huge importance to WANEP and since its establishment in 1999, WANEP has over the last quarter of a century remained resolutely committed to women peace and security agenda through the our women and peacebuilding networking program and since 2015 our program referred to as the women, peace and security networking program dedicated exclusively to young girls.

"WANEP has invested significant resources in capacity building, facilitating dialogue platforms. The discussion provides a platform for policy makers, academics and civil society and other stakeholders to come together, share insight and formulate recommendations to support the meaningful participation of women and girls in peacebuilding and conflict prevention initiatives," she said.



*Berenice Owen-Jones, Australian High Commissioner*