

# ECOWAS strengthens women's leadership in peace, security

BY AGNES SARPONG

A FIVE-DAY capacity-building workshop to strengthen strategic leadership for the coordinated implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda across ECOWAS Member States has been opened in Accra.

The training, organised for the ECOWAS WPS Regional Steering Group, aims to equip participants with skills to improve coordination, stakeholder engagement, and policy alignment in advancing the WPS agenda.

It focuses on enhancing leadership, negotiation, and influencing skills for managing complex WPS processes.

Speaking at the opening, the Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Mrs Agnes Naa Momo Lartey, underlined that the workshop is timely as the region works towards full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325).

She noted that it equips national focal persons with leadership and coordination skills to drive inclusive peace and security initiatives.

Mrs Lartey highlighted Ghana's progress through two National Action Plans since 2012, the passage of the Affirmative Action Gender Equity Act, 2024, the appointment of gender focal persons in security institutions, and the election of the country's first female Vice President as milestones for gender inclusion.

She also acknowledged the deployment of women peacekeepers and mediators, supported by the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC).

Olatunde Olayemi, Programme Officer at the ECOWAS Commission, stressed that sustainable peace requires women's meaningful participation.

He highlighted the ECOWAS WPS Regional Steering Group established in 2023 and the first regional WPS report in Africa.

Dr Dirk Abmann, Country Director of GIZ Ghana, reaffirmed Germany and the EU's support, stressing that women's participation in decision-making is key for sustainable peace.

Air Commodore David Akrong, KAIPTC Commandant, encouraged participants to engage actively and called for stronger collaboration to advance the WPS agenda across West Africa.

The workshop is supported by the ECOWAS Peace, Security and Governance Project, co-funded by Germany and the European Union, and implemented by GIZ, Expertise France, FIAP, ECOWAS Commission, and KAIPTC.