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COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE 3RD INTERNATIONAL AFRICA PEACE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION CONFERENCE HELD IN ACCRA, GHANA FROM JULY 26TH TO 28TH 2011

Conference Theme: Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and Peace Studies in Africa, 15 years later: Lessons and New Directions.

The delegates at the 3rd international Africa Peace and Conflict Resolution Conference organised by the Centre for African Peace and Conflict Resolution (CAPCR) of California State University, Sacramento, USA and the Ghana Association of Certified Mediators and Arbitrators (GHACMA) give regard to the fact that conflict in its varied forms and manifestations is inevitable in our communities, business places and in our governance systems;

They acknowledge the downward conflict trend and increasing level of democratization in Africa, as positive developments that demand more robust, sustained efforts at ADR and peace studies;

They find paucity of evaluation data and best practices on peace and conflict resolution in Africa;
They are concerned by the negative effects of conflicts on the African continent, especially the ones that result in the loss of millions of precious lives;

They recognise the importance of engaging governments, the business community, religious organisations, traditional authorities, civil society and other stakeholders on peacemaking and peace building initiatives;

They are conscious of the need to educate the public about issues of peace and conflict resolution, as well as sensitization to issues of social justice that aggravate violence;

They are aware of the gap that exists in the number of dispute resolution practitioners and peace makers across the world and Africa in particular;

They appreciate the special workshop on complex/ multiparty mediation, facilitated by Mr. Daniel Yamshon;

They are committed to educating the public and highlighting issues of peace and social justice as well as training and building the capacity of peace makers and dispute resolution practitioners and institutions;

They recall the challenge faced by ADR and peace building institutions in accessing funding to promote peace initiatives and institutionalize ADR;

They acknowledge with gratitude and promise the new, enabling legislations on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in several African countries, in Ghana and Uganda in particular;

They realise the indigenous appeal of Alternative Dispute Resolution within the African context;

They are mindful of the call to institutionalise Dispute Resolution training and practice at critical levels of society and nation;

They are satisfied by the resolve of academia to introduce or expand the teaching of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) as a degree programme at the graduate or undergraduate level;
They embrace the critical appraisal of the role of technology in dispute resolution and its facility in the form of online dispute resolution (ODR);

They commend the efforts being made to mainstream ADR in the judiciary thereby improving upon the justice delivery system, without recreating the or exacerbating the problems that necessitated ADR;

They are convinced of the immense potential of ADR in increasing access to justice, decongesting the courts of backlog of cases, and providing justice in a manner that is speedy, cost effective and which satisfies the interests of disputing parties;

They are determined to empower the youth and women in peace initiatives and in dispute resolution practice and leadership;

They know that the youth are not only the most affected in any conflict but are also our most effective means of transferring knowledge and continuing a conscious culture of peace and effective dispute resolution;

Therefore
1. They commit themselves to work to prevent conflicts in Africa and where it has already occurred, to work to resolve the conflicts in a timely and effective manner.
2. They accept the challenge to institutionalise the training and practice of Alternative Dispute Resolution at critical levels, including expansion of peace and conflict studies curricular in secondary and university education.
3. They call on the rest of Africa to follow the examples of Ghana and Uganda to enact proper ADR legislations.
4. They request the Bar and the Bench to adopt proactive measures in mainstreaming ADR in Africa.
5. They wish to encourage organisations and institutions engaged in peace building and dispute resolution to empower the youth and women in their efforts aimed at making the world a more peaceful place to live in.
6. They entreat African traditional authorities to maintain the African appeal of their dispute resolution processes while embracing ADR.
7. They wish to invite religious leaders and religious organisations to empahsise peaceful co-existence to their congregants.
8. They call on ADR and peace building institutions to adopt measures aimed at attracting funding for their purposes.
9. They call on governments, the business community and donor agencies to support the course of ADR and peace building institutions.
10. They recommend the development and implementation of evaluation instruments for macro level assessment of the success of peace and conflict resolution projects and activities.
11. They further agree on the need for the creation of a sustainable peace and conflict resolution network of peace, and to hold the international peace and conflict resolution in conference every 3 years; and resolved to hold the next conference in South Africa.

Delegates expressed their immense gratitude to the Ghana Association of Certified Mediators and Arbitrators (GHACMA) as well as its staff for successfully hosting the conference and for giving them a feel of the Ghanaian hospitality and also to the Centre for African peace and Conflict Resolution (CAPCR) for instituting the conference. They also expressed their gratitude to Her Ladyship the Chief justice of the Republic of Ghana, Justice Georgina T. Wood for delivering the concluding keynote address; Hon. Martin Amidu, Attorney-General and Minister of Justice for delivering the opening keynote address; Prof. Ernest Uwazie for the conference opening address; Lt. Gen. Arnold Quainoo, Executive Director of the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CENCOR) for chairing the opening ceremony; His Lordship Mr. Justice S.A. Brobbey, Justice of the Supreme Court of Ghana for participating in the Town Hall Discussion on ADR and Peace Studies in Africa; Mr. Justice Bawa Akamba, Justice of the Appeal Court of Ghana for gracing the opening ceremony; Nana Dr. S.K.B. Asante, Chairman of the Ghana Arbitration Centre for his participation and offering important insights in the practice of Arbitration; Dr. Robin Carter, Associate Dean of the College of Health and Human Services of California State University for chairing a paper presentation panel; Mr. Austin A. Gamey, Chief Executive Officer of Gamey and Gamey Group for chairing a paper presentation session; Mrs. Chris Dadzie, Lawyer and former senior member of the Ghana Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) for chairing a paper presentation session; Dr. Sylvester Bowie, Chair of the CAPCR Board and Associate Professor of Social Work at California State University, Sacramento, USA for chairing a paper presentation panel; Mr. Martin C. Nwosu, General Secretary of Ghana Association of Certified Mediators and Arbitrators (GHACMA) for chairing a paper presentation session; Mr. Saeed Musah-Khaleepha for ably coordinating the conference
planning and arrangements, and kind remarks and gifts from the California
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Lawyers for the Arts.

The delegates also commend and appreciate the visionary leadership and
landmark ADR contributions of Prof. Ernest Uwazie, Director of Center for
African Peace and Conflict Resolution (CAPCR) of California State
University, Sacramento, USA; and Professor Kofi Quashigah, President of
Ghana Association of Certified Mediators and Arbitrators (GHACMA).

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enlightenment through their respective presentations and interactions with
the audience:
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Mr. Daniel Yamshon
Rev. Sr. Barr. Ijeoma Njoku
Mr. J.S.T. Abbossey
Mr. Saeed Musah-Khaleepha
Miss Ijeoma Ononogbu
Dr. Ephraim S. Essiesn
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Mr. Segun Arinze
Rev. Dr. Cletus Obasi
Dr. Jose Pascal da Rocha

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2. Ghana Association of Certified Mediators and Arbitrators
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3. African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes
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5. California Lawyers for the Arts
6. Nigerian Institute of Advanced legal Studies, Lagos
7. Ashaiman ADR Centre, Ghana
8. The Judicial Service of Ghana
9. Ghana Ministry of Justice and Attorney-General’s Department
10. Centre for Conflict Resolution (CENCOR), Ghana
11. Ghana Arbitration Centre
12. Afripeace & Development Foundation, USA
13. Add what may have been left out…

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