



**“Achieving 50-50 by 2030 is a “given” for WANEP”, Chukwuemeka Eze,
Executive Director - WANEP**

The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) associates itself with the Theme of this year’s International Women’s Day “Gender Equality towards a Planet 50-50 by 2030” and its slogan Be Bold for Change– WANEP believes that a planet with 50-50 opportunity for men and women is right, just and keen if we must ensure equity in our world.

Reflecting on the journey of WANEP over the past 18 years, I make bold to say that for us, gender equity and equality is not an option but indeed the foundation of our existence and operation. The establishment of WANEP and its undergirding principles hinge on equity and fairness. In fact, WANEP developed as an institution to address and respond to the carnages and senseless wars of the 90s in West Africa. These wars debased women and girls and made them objects and largess of the conflict. Close to three decades after the civil and armed conflicts, West Africa is still challenged by the irrational behaviours of men and boys against women and girls who ordinarily should epitomize the future.

WANEP from inception understands that the inequalities of our region and globe cannot be addressed without the population that has withstood the worst of gender disparity. I am delighted that today WANEP can boast of 52 to 48% of male and female leadership across all its strata respectively – ranging from General Assembly, Board, Management and to leadership of its National Networks. Achieving 50-50 in 2030 is therefore a “given” for WANEP. I am personally committed to ensuring that WANEP achieves this feat by the next International Women’s Day and looking forward to handing over to the first female Executive Director of WANEP in future.

On behalf of all the men in WANEP and our over 550 members, I salute the contribution of our female staff and members in building an outstanding African Institution that continues to exemplify Gender Justice and Parity.