

Remarks

of

**Honorable Morris M. Dukuly, Sr.
Minister of Internal Affairs**

at

**The African Peacebuilding Coordination Network Trainings Organized
The African Center for the Constructive Resolutions of Disputes
(ACCORD)
RLJ Hotel, Kendeja
Monrovia, Liberia
Friday, June 28**

Let me begin by extending my deepest felicitations and best wishes to ACCORD for organizing this first in a series of the **African Peacebuilding Coordination Network Trainings** in Liberia. It is my understanding that the second and third trainings will be held in Burundi and DR Congo before the end of this year. I want to applaud this effort.

I also, in a very special way, want to acknowledge the presence of our brothers and sisters from Burundi, DR Congo and South Sudan, including our colleagues from Liberia. Special thanks to you for coming to Liberia and I hope you have the chance to enjoy a little of our Liberian hospitality. Like Liberia, we all share a common history of conflict and fragility but we are assured that peace will not elude us.

I was made to understand that over the past four days you have had intense sessions in various topics that will help enhance your capacity to plan and implement peacebuilding tools, enhance your engagement in policy formulation and that will help foster your roles as catalyst for coordinated peacebuilding efforts through local ownership and participation in your respective countries. For us in Liberia local ownership and participation is critical and therefore the need for capacity development and enhancement cannot be overstated.

That is why, in the Government of Liberia's Poverty Reduction Strategy developed in 2008, the Government noted that

“strengthening peace will require both conflict-sensitive implementation of the PRS and a range of complementary, strategic interventions to address conflict factors and enable development.” The Government noted that over the PRS period, the Government will focus on building the capacity of leaders and institutions to develop and implement conflict-sensitive policies and programs.” The Government also noted that with an understanding of conflict issues and methods for addressing them, the Government could then set a strong foundation for lasting peace and stability in Liberia. Since then Ministry of Internal Affairs through its Peacebuilding Office has conducted series of trainings with support of several partners, including ACCORD. A few of the trainings include:

- A four day training session on conflict resolution and mediation skills organized by the American Bar Association (ABA) on May 2-5, 2009 for 18 staff members of the Ministry of Internal Affairs;
- A five day training organized by ACCORD on July 5-10, 2009 for 35 participants from Burundi, Liberia, Sierra Leone and South Africa on peacebuilding and state building, mediation, conflict analysis, governance and the rule of law, and economic revitalization and peacebuilding;
- Three peacebuilding trainings in November 2009 by the UNMIL Civil Affairs for representatives from 10 County

Peace Committees. The trainings were held in Grand Bassa, Gbarpolu and Bong counties on conflict analysis, conflict management/resolution, conflict prevention and reconciliation. Out of 103 participants, 45 were females from all walks of society;

- Three workshops organized by the CDA Collaborative Learning Project on Conflict Sensitivity and “Do No Harm” for the PBO staff, as well as two Assistant Ministers from the MIA, 35 GoL representatives from different ministries, and CSOs. 125 persons from all walks of life also participated in similar workshops in Bomi, Bong and Margibi Counties;
- Mano River Basin Regional Peacebuilding Seminar on 26-29 October 2010, organized by ACCORD, involving peace practitioners from Sierra Leone, Guinea, Ivory Coast and Liberia.

You will note that ACCORD has been a key partner in these trainings and it is no surprise that this first round of the **African Peacebuilding Coordination Network Trainings** is being held in Liberia. The various trainings mentioned above have resulted in tangible results, like improvements in policy and project formulation, as well as monitoring and evaluation.

The MIA through the PBO has periodically organized, facilitated and

conducted rounds of training for local officials and CSOs in all fifteen counties in Liberia. The trainings are conducted in the areas of conflict management, conflict analysis and conflict resolution, including skills in mediation, dialogues and negotiation processes. Trainings for CSOs have included topics such as project proposal development, project management, and monitoring and evaluation. Additionally, policies formulation in Liberia has been guided by analysis of the root causes of conflict and potential areas of conflict in Liberia. Conflict analyses help programmers, policy makers as well as institutions to take necessary and appropriate action that will help resolve, or mitigate conflicts. Analyses also help shape programme design in such a way that implementation will not inadvertently reignite conflict. As you wrap up your trainings today I want to reemphasise some of what you may have discussed over the last few days:

1. Our analysis or understanding of conflict and violence shapes our response to it.
2. Simple analysis leads to simple solutions – example if we think the cause of conflict is evil people, the simplistic solution is to kill the evil people.
3. Deeper analysis leads to better solutions – several conflict analysis tools may be employed.
4. A Diversity of Tools Gives Greatest Insight - Conflict, violence and issues of justice are complex. We need to use many different tools to understand the different elements.

5. Our Perspectives and Experiences Shape Our Analysis - Our own worldviews have been shaped by our backgrounds: ethnicity, religion, class, education, family, sex, language, region, etc. It is important to listen carefully to the ways other people analyze a situation to learn from and enrich our own understanding. We need to understand the whole problem in order to address all aspects of the problem.
6. Analysis is Dynamic: It Requires an Ongoing Process - While outside experts and research can help, we can use our own experiences and knowledge to engage in the process of analysis.
7. Analysis Shapes Action (Program and Policy) - Our analysis of a situation shapes the way we choose to respond to it. Analysis is the first step in the design of peacebuilding programs. If we want to change public policies, we need to change the way people analyze conflict.

It is my expectation that following this training you would have acquired the skills and proficiency to make you good programmers. It is also my hope that you will help with peace consolidation in your respective countries that will then foster national unity and sustainability development. The tasks are enormous but surmountable. Thank you very much!