

Global Action to Prevent War outcome document of February 2010 workshops on Civilian Protection, UN Peacekeeping and Human Security: Perspectives From the Central African Region March 2010 Global Action to Prevent War (GAPW), in partnership with the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Foundation (LUKMEF) in Limbe, Cameroon and the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP) in New York, sponsored two workshops for military, government and civil society leaders in Cameroon and neighboring countries on prospects for improving civilian protection and human security within the Central African region. These workshops were funded by the Ira Wallach Fund for the Eradication of Genocide, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the ICRtoP with supplemental support from Michael and Nan Frydland and Richard Fuller.

The Cameroon workshops represent the latest in a series of programs designed to bring into regional settings the strategies, tools and norms debated within the international community to prevent and address atrocity crimes and other major threats to human security and good governance. With workshops in Pretoria, Manila, Jakarta and Brazilia already completed, GAPW came to Cameroon to help ensure that the security needs and aspirations of the region's diverse communities and constituencies are fully vetted and subsequently made available to help influence global policy. The Yaounde workshop was led by Christian Tanyi of LUKMEF, and included diverse regional leaders in civilian protection, including Voke Ighorodje (a consultant to the ICR2P from Nigeria), Anne Nkwain Nsang (director of the regional UN Information Centre), and Andre Kabi (Handicap Afrique in the DRC). Participants in Yaounde looked at a range of issues impacting civilian-military relations, the role of women in peace processes, efforts to promote good governance, and prospects for more robust preventive and diplomatic efforts to address in their earliest stages atrocity crimes and other grave threats to human security. Attention was also given to new peacekeeping tools and capacities being developed for community, regional and international use, including GAPW's proposal for a United Nations Emergency Peace Service (UNEPS).

The second workshop, also focused on civilian protection priorities, was co-organized by Ben Oru at the University of Buea and was the first of what will be several university briefings held this year throughout Cameroon, and perhaps the region, on tools and norms for promoting civilian protection and human security, including the important norm of the responsibility to protect. Central Africa proved to be a challenging environment in which to organize, but it is also a region of hopeful new civil society influences, abundant human and natural resources, and government and military officials who are becoming weary of armed conflict and are more interested in connecting skills across professional contexts to enhance community and national security. It is also a region where security issues are engaged holistically, where development priorities require progress on arms transfers and where dialogue across issues and professional sectors is desired and engaged with increasing seriousness. GAPW hopes to sustain a long-term relationship with LUKMEF and the other institutional representatives who participated in our workshops, including UN, government and military officials. (...)

See full report

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