



## **PRESS STATEMENT**

**For Immediate Release**

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### **FOSDA COMMENDS PRESIDENT MAHAMA'S INTENTION TO PRIORITIZE BAWKU CONFLICT**

The Foundation for Security and Development in Africa (FOSDA) commends the express commitment of Ghana's President, His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, and his government to prioritize and seek peace in the ongoing Bawku Conflict. President Mahama's prompt visit on January 15, 2025, to the two Paramount Chiefs of the Bawku Traditional Area in the Upper East Region, as well as to the NaYiri king of Mamprusi, occurring one week after the President's swearing-in, is strategic and clearly demonstrates government's commitment to achieving peace in the Bawku area.

FOSDA is deeply concerned about the protracted nature of the Bawku conflict that has led to the devastating loss of innocent lives and the destruction of property over the years. In the last 3 years the conflict has been particularly destructive to the community, region, and nation in general. The once-thriving economy of Bawku has been significantly eroded, with essential service providers such as Teachers, Nurses, and Business operators fleeing the town. This exodus has crippled vital sectors, including Education, Healthcare, and Trade, leaving the community in a state of despair. The conflict further poses a serious threat to Ghana's peace and security considering the extremist threats along the border areas with Burkina Faso.

While this is a promising start, we urge the President and Government to sustain the momentum by engaging all relevant stakeholders, including civil society organizations, traditional authorities, women's groups, and youth organizations in the peacebuilding consultative process is crucial. We therefore recommend a collaborative approach across the political divide that will build trust, encourage dialogue, and promote sustainable peace in the area.

FOSDA acknowledges the complex and deeply rooted nature of the Bawku conflict, which is often exacerbated by political undertones and mistrust among the parties involved. Recent events including threats of violence, ongoing agitation, and reports of shootings highlight the urgency of addressing the Bawku issue comprehensively.

Furthermore, the proliferation of arms and ammunition among civilians and factions involved in the conflict poses a serious threat to security, both in Bawku and adjoining communities. The frequent reports of shootings and killings are a stark reminder of the volatility of the situation and the need for immediate and sustained interventions.

It is against this background that FOSDA call on his Excellency John Mahama to nominate and appoint competent security sector Ministers who align and share in the vision of finding sustainable peace in Bawku. The Ministers should be committed to making the security situation in Bawku better through the implementation of effective policies. They should also be dedicated to strengthening the security sector in the region. Furthermore, the Ministers should be committed to ensuring that all stakeholders are involved in the process of finding sustainable peace in Bawku. We also advocate non-political and inclusive stakeholder engagements and deliberate engagements of women and youth in the peacebuilding processes.

FOSDA remains committed to supporting all efforts aimed at restoring peace and stability in Bawku. We urge the government to prioritize these recommendations comprehensively and inclusively and ensure that all voices are heard in the peacebuilding process.

FOSDA believes that the road to peace may be challenging, but with sustained commitment, collaboration, and leadership, a peaceful and prosperous Bawku is achievable.

Theodora W. Anti  
Executive Director  
Contact No. 0205336268  
Email: [Theodora@fosda.org](mailto:Theodora@fosda.org)