

Dear Mrs. Khady Fall Tall, Dear Mrs. Udoh, Dear Mr. Pereira,

My name is Victòria Carreras Lloveras, and I am the Interim Executive Director of the GPPAC Foundation, the Global Secretariat of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), the world's largest global network of local peacebuilders. Founded in 2003, GPPAC consists of fifteen regional networks, including GPPAC West Africa. WACSOF-FOSCAO was elected by member organisations to become the new regional secretariat for GPPAC West Africa in 2021.

The purpose of my message today is to share with you our serious concerns about our partnership with WACSOF-FOSCAO.

We entered into this new relationship between our organisations in good faith, and have invested heavily in supporting WACSOF in fundraising for conflict prevention and peacebuilding work in the region.

In 2021, we made available EUR17.000 to WACSOF for the coordination of the activities of GPPAC West Africa, funded by Sida. This sum was made available to each of the regional GPPAC networks.

Furthermore, we secured a project grant from ifa-zivik, with EUR133,329.24 for WACSOF-FOSCAO as implementing partner.

Finally, we invested substantial time and effort in the development of an EU concept note and full proposal for which WACSOF-FOSCAO would have been the penholder, which was unsuccessful.

In these collaborations, we have consistently seen a lack of compliance with donor requirements from WACSOF-FOSCAO, as well as a disregard for deadlines and other agreements between our organisations in the development and implementation of these projects.

I want to share with you our serious concerns about this, to ask for your support in finding a solution, and to invite you for a phone/video call in order to discuss these matters.

Three issues, in particular, have compelled us to reach out to you today:

**1. Partnership on a 7,5-month project funded by ifa-zivik (German Ministry of Foreign Affairs) on conflict prevention in Mali through the implementation of the ECOWAS model mining and minerals development act (EMMMDA)**

In this project, GPPAC is the contracting partner of ifa-zivik while WACSOF-FOSCAO is the implementing partner, with General Secretary Komlan Messie responsible for the overall project and financial management. Throughout the project, there were constant delays in the delivery of interim reports and issues with the use of funds that were contrary to ifa-zivik's guidelines (eg: overspending).

More problematic is the delay in delivering all the required documents to finalise the report by the deadline of February 28. Despite regular reminders and clear instructions from us, the delivery of both the narrative and financial reports have not only been continuously delayed but also raised some serious concerns, especially in terms of the quality of the financial report as the authenticity of various invoices appears questionable.

We keep being told that the documents will be sent and the reports revised by a certain date, which rarely is the case: As of yet, the full report has not been submitted.

For many years we have enjoyed a very successful and trusting relationship with the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is now at risk of being seriously damaged, jeopardising potential future projects of GPPAC and its members.

**2. Failed submission of a 2021 EU proposal to set up a regional network of civil society actors specialized in peacebuilding for West Africa and the Lake Chad**

In March 2021, we worked with WACSOF-FOSCAO and other GPPAC West Africa members to develop an EU concept note, which resulted in an invitation to make a full proposal.

On July 2, it was agreed with WACSOF-FOSCAO General Secretary Komlan Messie that as penholder, WACSOF-FOSCAO would be in the lead of developing the full proposal to be submitted to the EU by September 15. GPPAC also approved the use of GPPAC regional budget to hire local external consultants to support these efforts. We agreed on a clear timeline set and several feedback moments during which GPPAC shared its concerns on the numerous gaps in the proposal and process.

WACSOF-FOSCAO frequently missed internal deadlines, but GPPAC team members worked hard to contribute to a quality proposal up until the final deadline for submission. EU proposals are competitive and rejection is always a possibility, but our main concern here is that after substantial investment of both staff capacity and funds, we have not seen evidence that this proposal was ever submitted and after several requests have still never received the final copy of the documents for our records.

**3. 2021 financial report for GPPAC West Africa (EUR17000 regional funding provided by Sida)**

In its capacity of regional secretariat for the West Africa region, WACSOF-FOSCAO should have submitted by January 31 2022 a detailed narrative and financial report against activities listed in the 2021 regional annual plan, along with a copy of the original receipts and other supporting documents. However, no copies of the receipts have been received to date.

This requirement is clear in both our contract with WACSOF-FOSCAO and in the more detailed reporting instructions sent via email in November 2021.

We also have questions about the financial report we received, as it does not reflect expenditures against the budget of the regional plan submitted by WACSOF-FOSCAO, or explain deviations, but we have yet to discuss this with the WACSOF-FOSCAO team.

Moving forward, we urgently request a call with all or any of you to find a solution to the current issues and to discuss ways in which to improve our ongoing and future collaborations with the aim of supporting peacebuilding efforts in West Africa.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best wishes,

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**Victòria Carreras Lloveras**

**Interim Executive Director**

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**GPPAC Foundation**

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