



Article36



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The Participants of the National Consultation on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA) in Accra, Ghana, on 18th February, 2026

PREAMBLE

The National Consultation on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA) took place on **18th February, 2026** at the Palms by Eagles Hotel in Accra. The event was convened by the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons (NACSA) and the Foundation for Security and Development in Africa (FOSDA) in partnership with Article 36, Disarmament and Arms Control (DAC) and the Governments of Austria, Ireland and Norway.

The Consultation served as a high-level national dialogue among relevant Government Ministries, Security Agencies, Civil Society Organisations, Diplomatic Missions and International Experts. It forms a critical step in Ghana's preparations to co-host the **Africa Regional Workshop on EWIPA in April 2026**. Participants assessed the Political Declaration on EWIPA, examined the humanitarian consequences of using explosive weapons in populated areas, and explored Ghana's pathway towards its endorsement and her role as a continental leader.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

The participants noted that:

- The use of explosive weapons in civilian populated areas consistently results in significant civilian casualties, widespread destruction of critical infrastructure, prolonged displacement, and severe disruptions to essential services, including health care, education and water systems, causing long-term socioeconomic repercussions that persist well beyond the cessation of hostilities.
- Although Ghana is not presently affected by armed conflict, the Apeatse explosive disaster in 2022 reinforces Ghana's moral responsibility to endorse the Political Declaration on the Protection of Civilians from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA).
- The EWIPA Declaration does not introduce new legal obligations but seeks to enhance civilian protection in both conflict situations and peacetime explosive incidents.
- Ghana's endorsement of the EWIPA would further consolidate her leadership in Africa, enabling it to shape regional norms and advance policies that safeguard civilians from explosive harm.
- Identifying a Regional Champion, a high-level, credible advocate capable of encouraging broader African endorsement of the EWIPA Declaration, is of much importance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The participants agreed that:

1. Government of Ghana should:

- Advance Ghana's endorsement of the EWIPA Declaration through interministerial consultations, technical assessments and Cabinet processes.
- Develop national policies, Operational Guidelines for explosive dealers and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) including simulation trainings for security agencies to minimise civilian harm.

- Strengthen tracking systems for civilian harm for accurate and reliable data, analysis and appropriate response to incidents involving explosive weapons in both conflict and non-conflict settings.
- Enhance humanitarian access and victim assistance through improved emergency response, psychosocial support, health services, rehabilitation and long-term recovery pathways.
- Demonstrate leadership in Africa through His Excellency the President of Ghana who could serve as the continental champion for EWIPA, mobilising African leaders and promoting effective implementation of the Political Declaration.

2. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) Should:

- Support government through awareness raising, research, technical expertise and monitoring.
- Facilitate civilian national dialogue and public engagement on the humanitarian implications of EWIPA.
- Advocate for stronger protection of vulnerable populations and responsible security practices.

3. International Bodies / Partners Should:

- Provide continued technical support, training, capacity-building and policy guidance.
- Strengthen collaboration, information-sharing and assistance to help Ghana integrate EWIPA principles into national and regional frameworks.
- Support Ghana to develop a National Action Plan on EWIPA.

CONCLUSION

Participants strongly endorsed the call for **His Excellency the President of the Republic of Ghana to serve as the Continental Champion for the EWIPA Declaration**, recognising that his leadership will mobilise political commitment across Africa and solidify Ghana's role as a driving force in protecting civilians and promoting peace.

ORGANIZATIONS PRESENT

- National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons (NACSA)
- Ministry of the Interior
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration
- Ghana Armed Forces
- Ghana Police Service (CID)
- Customs Division of the GRA (Preventive)
- Ministry of Justice & Attorney-General's Department
- National Peace Council
- Ghana Red Cross Society
- Embassy of Austria
- Embassy of Norway
- Embassy of Ireland
- Ghana Red Cross
- Foundation for Security and Development in Africa (FOSDA)
- IANSA

Signed

Dr. Adam A. A. Bonaa
Executive Secretary
NACSA