

But more than that, I also wish to stress the need for each one of us to carry to our countries and societies the good message of the need to work together to create an atmosphere that makes conflicts unnecessary. The burden of creating this atmosphere lies on us as Governments. As Governments, we need to provide responsible leadership, through, among others, good governance and the equitable distribution of the wealth of our societies with a view to removing the underlying causes of conflicts.

Good governance and responsible leadership includes collaboration with all members of society in the pursuit of our goals. It is in this regard that we welcome the valuable contribution of civil society, the media, the youth and the international community to our effort to deal with the problem at hand. We encourage them as they contribute to our collective effort, to create a better world for the children in our sub-region and urge them to co-ordinate their efforts for an effective contribution to this noble objective.

I cannot end my remarks without extending our appreciation to all of you who have participated in this Conference. Therefore, on behalf of His Excellency the President and the Government of Ghana, and on my own behalf, I wish to extend profound gratitude to my friend and Co-Chairman, Minister Lloyd Axworthy of Canada and to my distinguished Colleague Ministers and other high officials of ECOWAS Governments, to the representatives of the donor community and international organizations represented here, to the representatives of civil society, the media and youth and all others who have tirelessly worked in the last few days to bring our deliberations to a successful end.

The support of the Government of Canada - which has proved to be a true friend of this sub-region - as well as other donor countries in our collective effort to transform our sub-region into a region of peace, prosperity and justice, devoid of wars and suffering, has been crucial to our success. In this connection I wish to say a special thank you to the Government of Canada whose vision and support for the peacemaking effort of our sub-region has galvanized our commitment to action.

We look forward to further co-operation with all representatives here and wish you all a safe journey back home.

I thank you.