

## ACCRA DECLARATION

### Advancing Human Rights for Women and Girls

#### A Key to Peace and Progress

9 DECEMBER 2015

The Carter Center, in collaboration with the Office of the National Chief Imam of Ghana and regional civil society organizations, convened the West Africa Human Rights Defenders Forum entitled, "Mobilizing Action for Women and Girls," from 7-9 December 2015.

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter has asserted that universal love and equal dignity for all are at the heart of all major religions, and he has urged people of faith in every part of the world to reassert this essential truth through their words and with their deeds. In response, over sixty scholars,

sexual violence in her lifetime,<sup>2</sup> her voice and involvement are crucial in making and enforcing laws necessary to end impunity for this fundamental violation of human rights. Empowering women to contribute on social, political, and economic matters, helps families and communities do better. Our communities and families must create environments for women to participate actively in all realms of life, including the political, religious, business, and cultural.

### Gender, Faith, and Conflict

As global counterterrorism operations escalate, security policies focus on short-term, militaristic approaches. While military and police action is necessary at times to protect communities from violence and aggression, effective and sustainable solutions require long-term, community-based approaches built on dialogue, inclusivity and respect for humanity. The signatories of this declaration agree that decision-making that is inclusive of women results in more effective security policies. Women are uniquely capable of engaging disputing parties in collaboration with key stakeholders, media and religious leaders to confront issues that typically go unaddressed in peace talks such as the rebuilding of schools, psychological rehabilitation, and food security. Women