

## African Journalists Gain Skills

Cape Town: Congress 2008 of the World Association of Christian Communicators (WACC) will go in the history of some African journalists as a source of knowledge which they had not previously known.

The journalists drawn from Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Tanzania, Kenya, South Africa and Malawi report that they have benefitted a lot from a 'Peace Reporting Workshop' run by veteran journalists Stephen Brown and Peter Kenny from the Geneva-based Ecumenical News International (ENI).

The

journalists attending the week-long workshop at the WACC Congress in Cape Town participated in courses and discussions which they last had during their journalism training. "The workshop is very informative. I think journalists need training like this to enable them to champion for peace through their reporting, and not exacerbate conflicts like they mostly do," said the Uganda-based Redemptor Atieno, who was born in Kenya. The journalists have gone through topics such as how to avoid inflammatory reporting in conflicts zones. In a continent where there have been conflicts in Kenya, Zimbabwe, Sudan, South Africa, Burundi, Somalia and Rwanda, the importance of a peace reporting workshop cannot be over-emphasised for the African journalists. "It has been a wonderful training getting experiences of people in the field in the region, involved in promoting peace," said Frank Jomo, a journalist from Malawi. Frank Nzwili, the East Africa correspondent for the ENI said the practical exercises of the workshop taught him how stories are edited. "We have managed to get some experiences which we had not gotten in our media houses," he said. Munyaradzi Makoni, a freelance journalist from Zimbabwe who operates in South Africa, said: "It was an eye opener because the workshop incorporated aspects that are usually looked for in international news in terms of reporting peace." The journalists were reminded of the '10 rules of for writing news.' The rules include: "Avoid judgments and inferences," and 'Write simply, succinctly, honestly and quickly.' Columbus S. Mavhunga, Journalist, Zimbabwe