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UN staff undergo training at KAIPTC

By Nathaniel Y. Yankson

THE FIRST ever Rule of Law pilot training for judicial officers in the United Nations Peace Operations has started at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in Accra, with 28 participants from 15 countries, including Afghanistan.

The five-day training course is in collaboration with the Canadian and German governments and the KAIPTC.

Welcoming the course participants yesterday, the Deputy Commandant of KAIPTC, Brig. Gen. Kofi Adjei indicated that globally, it was increasingly recognized that the absence of functioning judicial and legal systems can contribute to the outbreak of armed conflict.

"Thus, the importance of the rule of law to re-establish, strengthen and reform the judicial and legal systems can play a key role in the restoration and consolidation of peace, by facilitating the maintenance of law and order," he emphasized.

The absence of such systems, Brig. Gen. Adjei said, paved the way for decades of conflicts in parts of Africa, which claimed and displaced many lives, especially that of children and women.

Such a situation, according to him, made it difficult to conduct peace support operations in areas where there were no functioning criminal justice mechanisms at all. "In such situations, peacekeepers have encountered wrongdoers in the midst of committing serious criminal acts of a direct threat to civilians and to the operations itself, and such lawlessness can seriously undermine the efforts of an entire peace operation."

The Project Officer, Gordon Klussmann, told *The Chronicle* that the five-day course is aimed at bringing basic generic rule of law into the judicial field. He said in all, there are four courses to be run for a period of two years, two in 2010 and the other two in 2011.