

COMMISSION DES DROITS  
DE L'HOMME DU CAMEROUN

Sous-Commission chargée  
de la promotion des droits de l'homme

Secrétariat Permanent

Division de la Protection  
et de la  
Promotion des Droits de l'Homme

B.P./ P.O. Box 20317, Yaoundé  
Fax : (237) 222-22-60-82

Numéro Vert.-1523



CAMEROON HUMAN  
RIGHTS COMMISSION

SUB-COMMISSION IN CHARGE  
OF HUMAN RIGHTS PROMOTION

Permanent Secretariat

Human Rights Protection  
and Promotion Division

Tel.: (237) 222-22-61-17 / 691 12 86 70

e-mail : [chrc.cdhc2019@yahoo.com](mailto:chrc.cdhc2019@yahoo.com)

Web : [www.cdhc.cm](http://www.cdhc.cm)

Toll-Free Number. -1523

## PRESS RELEASE ON PROTECTING CHILD RIGHTS ON SCHOOL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

The Cameroon Human Rights Commission (CHRC), hereinafter referred to as "the Commission", deeply regrets to observe that some members of the educational community, especially parents, do not respect child rights concerning educational and professional guidance, as they have a strong tendency to impose choices on the children and project their own ambitions on them, thus preventing the children from giving their best and thrive in the careers for which they have a natural talent,

**Considering** Pillar 6 of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa CESA 2016 – 2025, which states that "*orientation and support*" must be provided at "*different levels and types of training*",

**Considering** Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that "*a child means every human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier*",

**Further considering** Article 12 of the same Convention, which states that "*States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child*",

Finally, **considering** the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, ratified by Cameroon on 5 September 1997, Article 11 of which states that "*Every child shall have the right to education. The education of the child shall be directed to the promotion and development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential; the preservation and strengthening of positive African morals*", and



*"Governments shall take special measures in respect of female, gifted and disadvantaged children, to ensure equal access to education for all sections of the community",*

**Taking into account** Law No. 98/004 of 14 April 1998 to lay down guidelines on education in Cameroon, which states in Articles 4 and 5 that *"The general purpose of education is to train children for their intellectual, physical, civic and moral development and their smooth integration into society bearing in mind prevailing economic, socio-cultural, political and moral factors",*

**Bearing also in mind** Article 29 of the same enactment, which states that "guidance and educational psychology activities shall be carried out during the child's schooling at all levels of education",

**Lastly, in the light of** Law No. 2003/007 of 25 July 2023 to lay down the guidelines for higher education in Cameroon, Articles 1 and 3 of which stipulate that "the State shall provide students and pupils with information and guidance on the organisation of studies, job opportunities and mobility between courses of study",

**Recalling** Decree No. 2001/041 of 10 February 2001 on the organisation of public school establishments and fixing the attributions of the heads of the school administration, Article 42 (1) and (2) of which states that "Under the authority of a School, University and Vocational Guidance Counsellor, [...] is in charge of advising, informing and guiding students according to their aptitude for counselling of class" and "he organizes the psycho technical tests and gathers all the necessary information to the Class Councils",

**Bearing in mind** the importance of educational and vocational guidance in determining the path that the child should take into adult life, avoiding the risk of taking the wrong path and providing the keys to successful study and successful integration into the world of work and society in general,

**Aware** that school guidance counselling is a progressive and participatory process in which parents play an essential role alongside professional guidance counsellors,

**The Commission endorses** Goal 4 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which aims to ensure *inclusive and equitable quality education* and promote lifelong learning opportunities,

**The Commission stresses** that there can be no equitable education without effective guidance for learners,

**The Commission also endorses** Observation No. 12 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child at its 51st session in Geneva in June 2009, which states *"that the child holds*



*rights which have an influence on her or his life, and not only rights derived from her or his vulnerability (protection) or dependency on adults [...] The Convention recognizes the child as a subject of rights, and the nearly universal ratification of this international instrument by States parties emphasizes this status of the child, which is clearly expressed in Article 12",*

**The Commission considers** that it is not necessary for the child to have complete knowledge of all aspects of the field in question to be able to form an opinion on their school or academic guidance and counselling, but they should have sufficient insight, and that they have the technical support of an expert in the guidance field,

**The Commission notes** that the mismatch between training and employment, both in terms of quality and quantity, as a result of poor or non-existent educational guidance, is one of the causes of youth unemployment,

**The Commission notes** that a very large proportion of 18-year-olds have no career plans. Many say they are confused and some take the wrong path, leading to drop-out and failure, at great cost to families and the nation,

**The Commission also notes** that the unemployment rate in Cameroon is rising steadily, reaching 6.1 per cent in 2021, up from 3.84 per cent the previous year, and that *the underemployment rate among young people will be 65 per cent in 2021*, according to the latest edition of the Sustainable Development Indicators published by the National Institute of Statistics,

**The Commission reminds** parents that the child/learner's educational guidance and counselling is the joint responsibility of the child, the parents and the school guidance and counselling professionals,

**The Commission also recalls** that school guidance and counselling, provided by professionals such as guidance counsellors, aims to provide children with all the information and tools they need to choose wisely,

**The Commission** also reminds parents that the guidance and counselling of a child/learner is a process that takes place throughout their education including higher education, and that such guidance and counselling is provided through psycho technical tests that enable the counsellor to identify the child/learner's talents and aptitudes,

**The Commission regrets** that most parents and most public and private higher education institutions do not attach importance to the role of guidance professionals in the educational guidance of children,

**The Commission** deplores the fact that some Cameroonians complete their secondary and university education in a number of standard faculties without acquiring the skills and



attitudes required for professional, environmental and democratic issues, which does not ease their socio-professional insertion,

**The Commission** congratulates the Ministry of Secondary Education for organising the 20th National Day for Guidance Counselling under the theme "*Digitalisation of Guidance and Counselling Services*": *The Counselling Helpline*" on 21 October 2022, urged guidance counsellors to use all the tools at their disposal to make Cameroonians inclusive citizens,

**The Commission is delighted to note** that the Ministry of Secondary Education set up the *E-counselling-helping* online platform on 5 September 2022, whose aim is to enable children and learners to be in contact with a guidance counsellor, even during the school holidays,

**The Commission is equally pleased to note** that the Government has instituted the *National School Guidance Days (NSGD)* by Order No. 3545/B1/1464/MINEDUC/SG/DPOS/SDOS of 27 June 2003,

**The Commission reminds the various parties** involved in the educational process that the main objective of the National Day for Guidance and Counselling is to intensively raise parents' awareness, who have the primary responsibility for children as per Article 20 (1) of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, pupils and teachers to all guidance and counselling activities and create a new dynamic between all parties involved in the guidance and counselling process,

**The Commission is pleased** to announce that, as part of its mission to promote human rights, it has launched a campaign to create Human Rights Clubs to promote the teaching of human rights in schools, universities and vocational training centres, a campaign which has already resulted in the creation of 101 Human Rights Clubs, whose aim is to familiarise children/students with the concept of human rights and thereby ensure that all human rights are respected,

**The Commission recognises** the key role played by guidance counsellors, whose duties include identifying children's potential likely to provide them with the tools they need to gain a better understanding of themselves, and help them find the best path for their development in the society,

..

**The Commission encourages** parents to engage and maintain a genuine, in-depth and constructive dialogue with their children and with guidance counsellors in schools, as such dialogue should help them to express their wishes, become aware of their child's individuality and help them develop self-confidence, given that the essential dialogue



between parents, children and counsellors has a major positive impact on the development of both children and the country as a whole,

**The Commission calls on** parents to encourage their young people to undertake work experience in organisations working in the fields that interest them, to give concrete expression to the concepts they have learnt, to discover the reality of the jobs that exist in these fields, to come face to face with the realities on the ground and to refine their career plans,

**The Commission** encourages parents and pupils/students to use the guidance services, whether online or on the ground.

**The Commission** recommends that the government establish school guidance centres throughout the country, which currently only exist in six of the country's ten regions, namely Centre, Littoral, North-West, Adamaoua, Far-North and West,

**The Commission** recommends that the government raise awareness among parents and public and private higher education institutions of the importance of the role of guidance professionals,

**The Commission** recommends that University Rectors ensure that any pre-enrolment for the academic year 2023/2024 is preceded by an orientation session conducted by a guidance and counselling professional,

**The Commission** recommends that the education community take further practical steps to significantly increase the number of places available in competitive examinations for the recruitment of student guidance counsellors,

Finally, **the Commission** calls on parents, pupils and students to listen and understand each other better and to engage in constructive dialogue to ensure that education serves the development of the child and the socio-economic development of the nation,

Yaounde, the 26 August 2023



**James MOFANGUE KOBILA**