

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

STATEMENT BY THE CAMEROON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
TO MARK THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF NON-VIOLENCE

2 October 2022

The Cameroon Human Rights Commission (hereinafter: "the Commission"), established by Law No. 2019/014 of 19 July 2019 and set up on 29 April 2021, following the swearing-in of its members before the Supreme Court sitting in Joint Chambers,

*Recalling* the UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/61/271 which, on 15 June 2007, declared 2 October the *International Day of Non-Violence*,

*Further recalling* that through this Resolution, the UN Member States reaffirm the universal relevance of the principle of non-violence and undertake to promote a culture of peace, tolerance and mutual understanding,

*Bearing in mind* that this Day offers an opportunity to spread the message of non-violence, particularly through education and awareness-raising activities<sup>1</sup>,

*Considering* that non-violence is a way of life in society in which relations between people are based on the *principles of solidarity and respect*<sup>2</sup>,

*Considering also* that non-violence can be defined as a form of peaceful action through which those who reject passivity and submission, while considering that struggle is essential, *can carry out their struggle without resorting to violence*<sup>3</sup>,

*Pointing out* that the Preamble of the Constitution of 18 January 1996 reaffirms that the Cameroonian people "*solemnly declare that we constitute one and the same Nation, bound by the same destiny and assert our firm determination to build the Cameroonian fatherland based on the ideals of fraternity, justice and progress*", and that "*every person has a right to life and physical and moral integrity, and to humane treatment in all circumstances. Under no circumstances shall any person be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or*

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.un.org/fr/observances/non-violence-day#:~:text=D%C3%A9finition%20de%20la%20non%2Dviolence&text=%C2%AB%20L'action%20non%2Dviolente,ou%20%C3%A0%20ignorer%20les%20conflits>, accessed on 6/9/2022.

<sup>2</sup> <https://bepax.org/publications/non-violence.html>, accessed on 6/9/2022.

<sup>3</sup> According to Professor Gene Sharp, a leading expert on nonviolent resistance. See this author's *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (Les politiques de l'action non-violente), *Ibidem*, accessed on 6/9/2022.



*degrading treatment or punishment", and that "no person shall be harassed on the grounds of his or her origins, opinions or beliefs in religious, philosophical or political matters, subject to respect for public policy",*

**Recalling further** that the people of Cameroon are bound by the principle of peace enshrined in the Preamble to the UN Charter, signed in 1945 at the San Francisco Conference, which binds States Parties *"to practise tolerance, to live together in peace with one another in a spirit of good neighbourliness, and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security"*,

**Noting** that in 2017, according to the UN, nearly half a million people worldwide were victims of homicide, a statistic that far exceeds the 89,000 persons killed in ongoing armed conflicts and the 19,000 victims of terrorist attacks. If homicides keep increasing at the current rate of 4 per cent, *Target 16.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals - to significantly reduce all forms of violence and related mortality rates worldwide - will not be met by 2030<sup>4</sup>,*

**Mindful** of the peacekeeping challenges facing dozens of States throughout the World, particularly Cameroon, such as terrorism, serious and recurrent human rights violations, attacks on social cohesion and peace, etc. ,

**The Commission is confident** that a prosperous, inclusive and emerging society can only be achieved by combining the values of togetherness, tolerance, peaceful cohabitation and patriotism,

**The Commission reiterates the regrettable fact** that at the national level, some Cameroonians, giving full vent to their instincts, infringe on Republican institutions and symbols, namely through attacks and all forms of violence against the defence and security forces and other agents or representatives of the State, and civilians, especially women and children,

**The Commission is satisfied to note** that there has been a reduction in the number of complaints filed with the National Human Rights Institution relating to violence, a reduction which is the result, inter alia, of the Commission's actions through the performing statements and press releases it publishes, in which the Commission condemns violations and urges the competent authorities and the public to work towards promoting and protecting human rights,

**The Commission however notes** the persistence of acts of violence which contribute to a feeling of fear and incivism among the people in certain parts of the country, even in schools, between pupils and against teachers. Such acts include:

- the kidnapping of five priests, a nun and two lay members by secessionist terrorists, followed by the burning of St Mary's Parish in Nchang, in the Diocese of Mamfe, South West Region, on 16 September 2022
- the case of a teacher who violently beat a student of the Première F3 class on 17 September 2022 at the Lycée technique d'Ambam, in the South Region, leading to the rupture of the latter's spleen

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.un.org/fr/un75/new-era-conflict-and-violence>, accessed on 6/9/2022.



- the detonation of improvised explosive devices on 2 and 12 July 2022 in the Mokolo quarter of Yaoundé, in the Centre Region, which caused one death and four seriously injured victims respectively
- the burning down by secessionist terrorists of the Molyko Public Primary School in Buea and the Queen of Rosary Catholic College in Mamfe, in the South-West Region, on 8 and 11 February 2022 respectively
- the use of social media to disseminate hate speech against communities and individuals
- the dissemination on social media of explicit messages and nudes containing acts of brutality and violence against women and children
- the upsurge in inter-community clashes in the village of Bakinjaw, Commune of Akwaya, South-West Region, between the Oliti and Messaga Ekol communities, on 29 April 2022
- attacks on indigenous communities by terrorist groups from the interior and nearby countries, causing loss of life and property, hostage-taking for ransom and theft of livestock
- the rape of several women, causing them to be infected with sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies
- the forced recruitment of children by secessionist terrorists.

***Reaffirming the positions the Commission took*** in its previous statements to mark the African and Universal Human Rights Days on support for victims of torture (26 June), on drug abuse and illicit trafficking (26 June), on respect for the rights of indigenous peoples (9 August), in tribute to the victims of terrorism (21 August) and again on the protection of education against attacks (9 September),

***The Commission strongly condemns*** these acts of extreme violence with the utmost severity and reiterates its calls on the Government to ensure that the perpetrators of such atrocities and abuses are sought out, arrested and brought to trial,

***The Commission commends*** Government measures aimed at restoring or maintaining peace and stability in the insecure regions, such as:

- the holding, on 4 August 2022 in Yaoundé, of the 4th session of the Follow-up Committee on the implementation of the resolutions of the Major National Dialogue, at whose conclusion it was noted that despite the fact that the situation is not yet totally stable, some indicators of the steady improvement of socio-economic life in the North-West and South-West Regions are noticeable. This is the case for school enrolment in the North West Region, which was 220,000 in 2017. After a drop to 45,000 in 2018 and then to 2,450 in 2019, it climbed back to 60,462 in 2022. This is a remarkable and steady progress that has also been recorded in the South West region where the number of enrolments in primary schools was 185,003 in 2018, after a drop to 123,909 in 2019, there has been a significant increase to 194,482 in 2021. The same is true of secondary school enrolment, which was 42,992 in 2018, after a decline to 54,834 in 2019, there has been a significant increase to 81,134 in 2020 and 91,797 in 2021, and 91,797 in 2022<sup>5</sup>. In addition,

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.spm.gov.cm/site/?q=fr/content/grand-dialogue-national-clap-de-fin-imminent-pour-les-consultations>, accessed on 10 September 2022.



companies such as CDC, Pamol, Ndawara Tea, and planters have resumed their activities, a sign of renewed confidence<sup>6</sup>

- organising a working session on 29 April 2022 on the eradication of violence and the fight against drug addiction and consumption in schools between the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and the Family, the Ministry of Secondary Education, the Ministry of Basic Education, the General Delegation for National Security, UNICEF, UNESCO and many other organisations and associations working to promote Child Rights<sup>7</sup>
- organising, on Monday 16 May 2022, the traditional crossroads of harmonious Cameroonian coexistence by the Ministry of Youth and Civic Education under the theme "*My contribution for a better harmonious coexistence in Cameroon*", to promote social cohesion, peace and tolerance
- the special peacekeeping missions carried out by the Defence and Security Forces in some localities where terrorists continue to spread public havoc
- the opening of 1,810 posts in various corps for the FY 2021 with 2,000 posts at the Joint Military Academy, 2,200 elite commandos at the Rapid Intervention Battalion, 3,340 posts at the National Gendarmerie, 5,330 posts for soldiers and sailors and 740 posts for non-commissioned officers of the army<sup>8</sup>, to maintain order and enhance the safety of goods and persons
- the enactment of Law No. 2014/028 of 23 December 2014 on the repression of acts of terrorism
- the enactment of Law No. 2016/007 of 12 July 2016 on the Penal Code
- the numerous press briefings by members of the Government to condemn the numerous acts of violence committed by some citizens and raise awareness of the penal sanctions incurred by those who commit these acts.

**The Commission encourages** efforts by development partners and some Civil Society Organisations working tirelessly to promote peace and protect the rights of people suffering violence, through activities such as:

- the establishment of human rights defenders' clubs in secondary schools in the Adamaoua Region by the Association of Human Rights Defenders of Cameroon (ADHAC)
- the organisation of educational talks on non-violence in schools and local communities;
- the reception of victims of violence and their orientation towards assistance services for their medical, legal and social care.

**The Commission urges** victims of violence to report such, to bring the perpetrators to book and deter those who would attempt to commit such acts,

**The Commission recommends** that the Government take concrete measures to enable victims of violence to rebuild their family, academic, professional and social lives, including

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.spm.gov.cm/site/?q=fr/content/grand-dialogue-national-clap-de-fin-imminent-pour-les-consultations>, accessed on 10 September 2022.

<sup>7</sup> <https://camerapressagency.com/cameroun-stop-a-la-violence-dans-les-ecoles-et-perspectives/>, accessed on 6/9/2022.

<sup>8</sup> *Cameroon Tribune*, No. 12332/8531 of 22 April 2021.



the appointment of professionals to take care of the victims and refer them to all existing support services necessary for their rehabilitation,

**The Commission recommends** that all those responsible for schools should ensure that the penalties provided for in the legislation in force are applied to unruly students instead of physical or psychological violence,

**The Commission urges** other actors, such as international organisations and Civil Society Organisations, to provide sustained material, medical, legal and psychological assistance to victims of violence, according to the laws and regulations in force

**The Commission calls** on all families to scrupulously comply with the principle of the physical inviolability of children as prescribed by the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (Article 16), and the rights of women prescribed by the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women (Article 4);

**The Commission urges** all the people to respect the human rights of all and everywhere, to show tolerance and a sense of brotherhood,

**The Commission calls on** the National Community to meditate on the words of KOFI ANNAN, former UN Secretary General (1997-2006): *"Let us reject the path of violence, which is the product of nihilism and despair"*<sup>9</sup>.

**The Commission, for its part, will spare no effort** to continue to promote and protect human rights through training workshops, awareness campaigns, advocacy, fact-finding missions, handling complaints, self-initiated investigations, and as part of preventing torture, through visits to all detention facilities and the use of its **toll-free number 1523**.

30 SEPT 2022  
Yaoundé,.....



James MOUANGUE KOBILA

<sup>9</sup> Kofi Annan / UN General Assembly - 24 September 2001,  
<http://evene.lefigaro.fr/citations/mot.php?mot=onu>, accessed on 7/9/2022.