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REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON

Peace – Work – Fatherland

**CAMEROON HUMAN
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**STATEMENT BY THE CAMEROON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
TO MARK THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF REFLECTION ON THE 1994
GENOCIDE AGAINST THE *TUTSI* IN RWANDA**

7 April 2025

On the theme Remembrance, Justice and Prevention: Working Together for a Future Free of Genocide

The Cameroon Human Rights Commission (hereinafter: "the Commission" or "the CHRC"), established by Law No. 2019/014 of 19 July 2019 and rendered operational following the swearing-in of its Members before the Supreme Court sitting in joint benches,

Bearing in mind that the 1994 Tutsi genocide in Rwanda remains one of the most tragic events in contemporary history considering that in just three months, over a million people—mainly Tutsi but also moderate *Hutu*, *Twa*, and other opponents of the genocide—were systematically murdered in a climate of extreme hatred and violence, instigated by the extremist *Hutu* government. This genocide exposed the international system's failure to prevent or halt such atrocities,

Noting that this tragedy, whose impact continues to be felt both on a human and societal level in Rwanda, stands as a painful lesson not only for the country, but also for humanity as a whole—learned from the consequences of division, exclusion, and indifference to the early warning signs of widespread conflict,

Bearing in mind also that the *International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda* serves to honour the memory of the victims and

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Created by law n° 2019/014 of 19th July 2019, the CHRC is an independent institution for consultation, monitoring, evaluation, dialogue, conciliation and deliberation in the promotion and protection of human rights. It shall also serve as the Cameroon National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture, abbreviated as "NMPT".

pay tribute to the survivors through awareness raising efforts targeting policy-makers, development partners, civil society actors and the general public, emphasizing the need to keep the memory of these tragic events alive through commemorative activities.

Recalling that this Day also seeks to combat oblivion—which could pave the way for the recurrence of such atrocities— and to strengthen international solidarity in support of human rights, it rests on three essential foundations, namely:

- the preservation of **memory**, which underscores the need to honour and remember the victims of the genocide, to ensure that the atrocities they endured are never forgotten, by making sure that the history of the genocide and the narrative of its consequences give substance to remembrance and resilience, honouring those lost while raising awareness
- the demand for **justice**, which calls for the acknowledgment of responsibility and the reparation of harm suffered by survivors and their families, highlighting the need for a fair judicial process that recognizes accountability and helps victims and survivors access some form of reparation and restored dignity, even if only symbolic
- the commitment to **prevention**, which calls on all actors in society to work collectively to prevent such tragedies from occurring again anywhere, by stressing the importance of establishing prevention and early warning mechanisms,

Recalling also that the Day serves as a call for collective mobilisation, as it is crucial for governments to build a future where respect for human rights and conflict prevention are central to national and international policies. It is equally a constant reminder of the lessons of the past—an essential reminder for building resilient, informed and united societies,

Keeping in mind the main historical and structural factors that contributed to the emergence of a genocidal ideology in Rwanda, that is, a structured system of thought that justifies, prepares for, or incites the extermination of a human group due to its ethnic, religious, racial, or other affiliation, namely:

- ethnic tensions stemming from Belgian colonisation, with Belgian colonial policy favouring the *Tutsi* by positioning them as the natural elite, widening the gap between *Tutsi* and *Hutu* even before independence
- discrimination observed during the administrations of Presidents Grégoire Kaybanda and Juvénal Habyarimana. These periods *institutionalized and legitimized Hutu supremacy*, exacerbating ethnic divisions and entrenching deep-rooted inequalities
- the genocidal propaganda orchestrated by the *Radiotélévision Libre des Milles Collines (RTLM)*, which incited the extermination of the *Tutsi* by

referring to them in dehumanising terms such as *inyenzi* (a *Kinyarwanda* word meaning cockroaches)¹,

Emphasising that these factors combined to create a climate conducive to hatred and radicalisation of speech, which led to one of the most tragic genocides in modern history,

Keeping in mind that the assassination of Juvenal Habyarimana, the President of Rwanda, on 6 April 1994, in Kigali significantly heightened tensions between the two ethnic groups, marking the beginning of the systematic massacre of Tutsi by Hutu extremists from 7 April of the same year—a methodical extermination carried out over 100 days, under the watch of the world, resulting in the deaths of over one million people, primarily *Tutsi*, but also some moderate *Hutu*,

Welcoming the theme of the 2025 *International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda*—marking the 31st anniversary of this dark chapter—namely ***Remembrance, Justice and Prevention: Working Together for a Future Free of Genocide***, a theme that not only invites reflection on the past but also calls for mobilisation to protect present and future generations from genocides,

Bearing in mind the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on 23 December 2003 of Resolution A/RES/58/234, as amended by Resolution A/72/L.31 of 8 December 2017 designating 7 April each year as the *International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda*, a day to commemorate this betrayal of humanity,

Noting that each year, ceremonies take place worldwide, and in particular in Rwanda, as significant moments of remembrance, reflection, and collective education; they embody the will to honour the victims, support the survivors, and reaffirm the commitment to opposing denialism, intolerance, and hate speech,

Noting also that, according to Article 6 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, adopted on 17 July 1998, in Rome by the United Nations and entered into force on 1 July 2002,

genocide is defined as any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- killing members of the group
- causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group
- deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part

¹ See *Jeune Afrique*, Emeline Wuilbercq and Mehdi BA, "Génocide au Rwanda – Étienne Nsanzimana: 'La Radio Mille Collines, média de la haine'", <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1554151/politique/genocide-au-rwanda-etienne-nsanzimana-la-radio-mille-collines-media-de-la-haine/>, accessed on 12 March 2025.

- imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group
- forcibly transferring children of the group to another group²,

Noting that the main source of incitement to the massacres of the Tutsi in Rwanda in 1994 was *Radio Télévision Libre des Mille collines* (RTLM), the Rwandan radio station that broadcast from 8 July 1993 to 31 July 1994 without interruption, spreading hate speech and inciting genocide against the Tutsi, thus playing a central role during the descent into the horror of the genocide in Rwanda³,

Emphasising that although there is no universally accepted definition of the term "hate speech" in International Human Rights Law, institutions such as the Council of Europe define it as:

all types of expression that incite, promote, spread or justify violence, hatred or discrimination against a person or a group of persons or that denigrate them, by reason of their real or attributed personal characteristics or status⁴,

This definition is widely used to identify and combat hate speech in various legal and social contexts around the world,

Noting that *hate speech* can take various forms, whether in face-to-face interactions or through online platforms and that it mainly includes:

- *verbal attacks*, which involve aggressive or insulting comments directed at a person or group based on specific characteristics⁵
- *stereotypical or degrading visual depictions (images and cartoons)*, intended to stigmatise or smear⁶
- interactive or audio-visual content (*games and videos*), conveying discriminatory messages or inciting hatred⁷
- *the use of material elements or physical signs (objects, gestures and symbols)* to express or promote hatred towards other ethnicities, religious communities, or groups⁸,

² See International Criminal Court, Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 83 pages, spec. p. 3.

³ See Alain Bertrand Tunezerwe, "*Leçons du Passé: Du Rwanda à la RDC, l'alerte aux discours de haine*", <https://fr.igihe.net/Lecons-du-Passe-Du-Rwanda-a-la-RDC-l-alerte-aux-discours-de-haine.html>, accessed on 24 March 2025.

⁴ See *Revue des Droits et libertés fondamentaux*, Chjara Buchard, "*Les discours de haine en droit européen*", <https://revuedlf.com/droit-ue/les-discours-de-haine-en-droit-europeen/>, accessed on 13 March 2025.

⁵ See Unia, "*Qu'est-ce qu'un discours de haine*", https://www.unia.be/fr/diff%C3%A9rence-discours-de-haine-d%C3%A9lit-de-haine-discrimination/discours-de-haine?utm_source=chatgpt.com, accessed on 25 March 2025.

⁶ See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), "What is hate speech", https://www.unesco.org/fr/countering-hate-speech/need-know?utm_source=chatgpt.com, accessed on 25 March 2025.

⁷ *Ibid.*

Recognising that the forms of expression referred to above contribute to the spread of hatred and can have serious consequences for the targeted individuals and communities, it is therefore essential not to ignore the power of words and to actively combat hate speech in order to prevent its escalation into violence and to protect social cohesion,

Considering the preamble of the Constitution of 18 January 1996, in which the people of Cameroon:

[proud] of [their] linguistic and cultural diversity, an enriching feature of [their] national identity, but profoundly aware of the imperative need to further consolidate [their] unity, [while] solemnly declare that [they] constitute one and the same Nation bound by the same destiny, and [assert their] firm determination to build the Cameroonian Fatherland on the basis of the ideals of fraternity, justice and progress [and declare] that the human person, without distinction as to race, religion, sex or belief, possesses inalienable and sacred rights,

Considering Law No. 2019/020 of 29 December 2019 to amend and supplement certain provisions of Law No. 2016/007 of 12 July 2016 relating to the Penal Code, which, in Article 241-1 (new) (1) and (3), provides for and punishes contempt of tribe or ethnicity in the following terms:

Whoever, by any means, makes hate speech against people or incites them to violence due to their tribal or ethnic origin shall be punished with imprisonment of from 1 (one) to 2 (two) years and with fine of 300,000 (three hundred thousand) francs to 3,000,000 (three million) francs

Where the author of the hate speech is a Public Servant as per the provisions of Section 131 of [the Penal Code,] a leader of a political party, of the media, of a Non-Governmental Organisation or a religious institution, the punishment provided for in Subsection 1 above shall be doubled and the benefit of mitigating circumstances shall not be given,

Considering further Section 77 (1) and (2) of Law No. 2010/12 of 21 December 2010 relating to Cybersecurity and Cybercrime in Cameroon, which provide respectively that:

Whoever uses electronic communication or an information system to act in contempt of race or religion shall be punished with imprisonment for from 2(two) years to 5(five) years or a fine of from 2,000,000 (two million) to 5,000,000 (five million) CFA francs or both of such fine and imprisonment.

The penalties provided for in Sub-section 1 above shall be doubled where the offence is committed with the aim of stirring up hatred and contempt between citizens,

Keeping in mind the national, African and universal normative and institutional framework referred to in the previous *CHRC Statement to mark the 2024 International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda*⁹, which underscores

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ See CHRC Statement to mark the International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Tutsi Genocide in Rwanda, on 7 April 2024, 10pp., spec. pp.2-3., <https://cdhc.cm/admin/fichiers/Statements2024-04-0710-06-33.pdf>, accessed on 10 March 2025.

a collective commitment to combat the spread of hate speech and tribal discourse by fostering an environment of respect, equality and social cohesion, and which also provides for legal action against persons whose acts may disrupt public order or incite violence,

Taking into account the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations 2030 Agenda, adopted in 2015, which aim to eradicate poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all by 2030,

Taking into account also the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063, adopted in the same year as the SDGs, a strategic framework aimed at transforming Africa into a prosperous and integrated global power by 2063, based on seven aspirations, the first of which is "*a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development*"¹⁰, the implementation of which directly contributes to the achievement of the SDGs in Africa by aligning the continent's priorities with the broader framework of sustainable development,

Aware that the State of Cameroon, since its independence in 1960, has sought to promote peace and social cohesion among all components of its human element, values embodied in the lyrics of its national anthem, a patriotic rallying song that reflects the country's commitment to unity and harmonious coexistence, particularly in the phrase (translated word-for-word from the French version) "*may all your children from North to South, from East to West be full of love*"¹¹, which illustrates this aspiration for the consolidation of social harmony,

The Commission commends the efforts made by public authorities and their partners to combat hate speech and promote peace and harmonious coexistence, in particular through:

- the signing, on 6 March 2025, by some fifteen Cameroonian media publishers, of a public statement denouncing the spread of hate speech, thereby reaffirming their shared commitment to promote responsible journalism¹²
- the signing, by the President of the National Communication Council (NCC), of a press release on 13 January 2025, warning the media about the resurgence of hate speech and reaffirming that any media found guilty "*will henceforth be sanctioned without leniency, notably through the temporary or permanent suspension of the programmes or organs concerned*"

¹⁰ African Union, <https://au.int/fr/agenda2063>, accessed on 25 March 2025.

¹¹ See *Chant de Ralliement*, <https://www.cameroon-embassy.nl/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/National-Anthem.pdf>, accessed on 24 March 2025.

¹² See RFI, "*Cameroon: une quinzaine de patrons de presse signent une tribune contre la prolifération [des discours de haine]*", <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20250307-cameroun-une-quinzaine-de-patrons-de-presse-signent-une-tribune-contre-la-prolif%C3%A9ration-des-discours-de-haine>, accessed on 24 March 2025.

- the organisation by the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism (NCPBM) of a symposium in Yaoundé from 26 to 28 September 2024 on "*Intercommunity conflicts and the promotion of coexistence in Cameroon*", with the aim of finding lasting solutions to the issues that divide many ethnic groups in certain parts of the country,

The Commission also welcomes the initiative taken in 1963 by the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) to launch, from 2024, a prize for media professionals specifically targeting journalists and bloggers engaged in the fight against hate speech. This prize aims to encourage the production of content that promotes peace and social cohesion¹³, and **encourage** UNOCA to make this project a reality,

The Commission further commends the initiative of the civil society organisation, *Civil Watch*, which through its #ThinkB4UClick campaign launched on its #DefyHateNow information platform, is actively combating hate speech on the Internet, mainly on social networks, while promoting values such as empathy, tolerance, unity and love, all of which contribute to the culture of peace in Cameroon, and calls on everyone to play an active role in creating a digital space free of hate¹⁴,

The Commission recalls its actions aimed at promoting peace and harmonious coexistence, among which:

- the publication of six statements to raise public awareness of the dangers of hate speech, tribalism and violence, on the occasion of the:
 - o International Holocaust Remembrance Day, 27 January 2025
 - o International Human Rights Day, 10 December 2024
 - o African Human Rights Day, 21 October 2024
 - o International Day of Peace, 21 September 2024
 - o International Day of Remembrance in honour of the victims of terrorism, 21 April 2024
 - o International Day of Commemoration of the 1994 genocide against the *Tutsi* in Rwanda, 7 April 2024

¹³ See UNOCA, "Prévention et lutte contre les discours de haine : bientôt un prix pour les professionnels des médias d'Afrique centrale", <https://unoca.unmissions.org/prévention-et-lutte-contre-les-discours-de-haine%C2%A0-bientôt-un-prix-pour-les-professionnels-des-médias#:~:text=Un%20prix%20dédié%20aux%20professionnels%20des%20médias%20d'Afrique.promouvant%20les%20discours%20apaisés%20sera%20lancé%20en%202024>, accessed on 26 March 2025.

¹⁴ See DefyHateNow, "#ThinkB4UClick: Promoting Safe Digital Spaces and Combating Hate Speech in Cameroon", <https://defyhatenow.org/fr/thinkb4uclick-promoting-safe-digital-spaces-and-combating-hate-speech-in-cameroon/>, accessed on 25 March 2025.

- the active participation of its West Branch in the *International Youth Convention for the Development of Regions*, organised by the association *Afrik'art-titude*, in Foumban, from 11 to 14 April 2024, on the theme *consolidating peace and coexistence*, an activity in which more than 1,200 people participated, including 650 IDPs from the North-West and South-West Regions,

The Commission notes with regret that the low use of indigenous human resources in companies and projects located on the land of their ancestors can exacerbate the feeling of exclusion among this population, which can lead to social and ethnic tensions, particularly when indigenous communities feel marginalized in sharing the economic opportunities generated by these projects,

Aware that the sense of economic exclusion caused by youth unemployment and underemployment in such communities can lead to protest movements, sometimes tinged with ethno-tribal claims, it is therefore crucial to *promote inclusive employment policies* and ensure the integration of indigenous human resources in development projects, to strengthen social cohesion and prevent inter-community tensions,

The Commission notes with regret the recurrence of inter-community conflicts in the Adamawa, Far North, West and South Regions, a situation exacerbated by factors such as historical rivalries and/or difficulties in accessing natural resources, resulting in human and material damage as well as significant repercussions on the stability of the affected Regions, in particular:

- violent protests (including barricades on National Road No. 12, disrupting traffic and shops being looted) by youths from Meyo Centre and Mefoup village, in the Ntem Valley Division, South Region, on 20 and 21 February 2025, triggered by the murder, on the night of 15 to 16 February 2025, of Batcha Gedeon Atanga, 49 years old, from Santa, North-West Region, and that of Théodore Ondo B., 63 years old, from Mefoup, on the night of 19 to 20 February 2025. Their lifeless bodies were discovered in Meyo-Centre along the Ebolowa-Ambam road. In the face of escalating violence, the local authorities have called for calm and restraint, opening investigations to clarify these murders and identify the perpetrators, as well as to document the subsequent violence¹⁵. Investigations carried out by the CHRC South Branch in Ambam, Meyo-Centre and Mefoup revealed that the root causes of these tensions are *youth unemployment and job insecurity due to the low use of indigenous human resources in businesses and projects set up in the area*, land disputes related to

¹⁵ See *Actucameroun.com*, "*Meyo-Centre: des violences xénophobes qui interrogent la cohésion nationale*", https://actucameroun.com/2025/02/20/meyo-centre-des-violences-xenophobes-qui-interrogent-la-cohesion-nationale/?utm_source=chatgpt.com#google_vignette, accessed on 20 March 2025.

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the gradual settlement of new arrivals, the mass arrival of internally displaced persons from the North-West and South-West Regions, and xenophobic discourse amplified by social media. To avoid a resurgence of this crisis, it is crucial that the local authorities adopt a sociological approach combining security, justice and dialogue to restore lasting peace and prevent further inter-community violence,

- clashes that occurred between members of the Gbaya and Mbororo communities on 3 February 2025, in Bétaré Gongon village, Ngaoundal Sub-Division, Djerem Division, Adamawa Region; investigations conducted by the CHRC Adamawa Branch from 6 to 7 February 2025, in the Djerem Division, and after discussions with the local administrative and traditional authorities, revealed that a bushfire set by a member of the Gbaya community (a farmer)—which burned the vicinity of the Mbororo camp—was the cause of a dispute that escalated into a brawl, resulting in the death of two persons, four were injured, and huts were burned in both camps of the conflicting communities; as part of the legal proceedings initiated by the State Counsel at the Tibati Courts, eight men from the Gbaya community involved in the fight that caused the deaths of the two men have been arrested and placed in provisional detention at the Tibati Central Prison; to resolve this conflict, the CHRC, in partnership with the administrative authorities of the Djerem Division, intends to strengthen collaboration with the leaders of the Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association (MBOSCUDA), the Movement for the Integration and Mutual Assistance of the Gbaya People (MOINAM), through the organisation of awareness campaigns for the local population on *peace and harmonious coexistence*
- the violent clashes that took place on 8 August 2024 in Magba, Noun Division, West Region, between members of the Tikar community and those of the Bamoun community over the holding of the *Ngouon* festival in the Magba Sub-Division, a cultural event central to the Bamoun, but categorically rejected by the Tikar. The bloody toll of these clashes included three deaths, several injured, houses set on fire, and significant material damage.¹⁶ Traditional chiefs from both conflicting communities called for reconciliation and peace, while requesting Government's support for lasting peace
- clashes on 23 July 2024 in the Kai-Kai Sub-Division, Mayo-Danay Division, Far North Region, between residents of the villages of Doureissou (Massa) and Dama (Mousgoum) due to land disputes. The toll reports two people killed, 27

¹⁶ See *Actucameroun.com*, "Affrontement Bamoun-Tikar : le Sultan des Bamoun appelle au calme après les incidents du 8 août 2024", <https://actucameroun.com/2024/08/09/affrontement-bamoun-tikar-le-sultan-des-bamoun-appelle-au-calme-apres-les-incidents-du-8-aout-2024/>, accessed on 20 March 2025.

injured, including 14 Mousgoum, three of whom are in critical condition, and 13 Massa, along with several houses and shops destroyed and looted. "Administrative authorities visited the area after the confrontation to call for calm and reconciliation [...] as this is not the first time that Massa and Mousgoum have clashed over land disputes"¹⁷

Emphasising that inter-community violence contributes to general insecurity in the affected Regions, which are already weakened by attacks from international terrorist groups such as *Boko Haram* in the Far North and those of secessionist terrorists in the North-West and South-West, by aggravating a dire humanitarian situation already marked by thousands of displaced persons and an increased need for humanitarian assistance,

The Commission expresses deep concern regarding the biased persuasive rhetoric of certain political and opinion leaders on radio and television, a disinformation strategy that distorts facts or presents a deliberately partial version of events, potentially harming social cohesion,

The Commission notes that following the adoption of the *Report of Cameroon* after undergoing the fourth cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on 26 March 2024, the State accepted 220 recommendations. Of these 15 specifically address issues of peace and security, while seven focus on preserving peace and taking measures against perpetrators of violence. The CHRC distributed all these recommendations to the relevant government structures and civil society organisations (CSOs), each as far as it is concerned, as follows:

- the recommendation that calls for the "*ratification of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*". It is addressed to the Office of the Prime Minister (PMO), the Ministry of External Relations (MINREX), the Ministry of Justice (MINJUSTICE) and civil society organisations (CSOs). Although Cameroon ratified the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide on 6 October 1972, it is important that government institutions and CSOs work more closely together for the effective implementation of its provisions, to strengthen the prevention and punishment of such crimes on national territory
- the five recommendations that focus on specific measures to strengthen peace and security, namely:

¹⁷ See *Stopblablacam.com*, "*Extrême-Nord : un conflit foncier à l'origine d'un affrontement entre Massa et Mousgoum dans l'arrondissement de Kai-Kai*", <https://www.stopblablacam.com/societe/2507-12719-extreme-nord-un-conflit-foncier-a-l-origine-d-un-affrontement-entre-massa-et-mousgoum-dans-l-arrondissement-de-kai-kai>, accessed on 20 March 2025.

- the recommendation to "*further raise public awareness about human rights by including this topic in school curricula*" as well as into the curricula of higher education institutions, addressed to the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training (MINEFOP), the Ministry of Public Health (MINSANTÉ), the Ministry of Secondary Education (MINESEC), the Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB), the Ministry of Social Affairs (MINAS) and MINJUSTICE
- the recommendation to "*continue adopting a peaceful approach to conflict resolution, and to set up and strengthen transitional justice mechanisms in the country*" addressed to the PMO, MINJUSTICE, the Ministry of Defence (MINDEF), the Ministry of Territorial Administration (MINAT) for traditional authorities, the General Delegation for National Security (DGSN) and the Cameroon Bar Association
- the recommendation to "*continue dialogue to permanently restore peace in the North-West and South-West Regions of the country*" addressed to the PMO, MINAT, and the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism (NCPBM);
- the recommendation to "*put an end to impunity and establish accountability by prosecuting and punishing the perpetrators of human rights violations, including members of the security forces and non-state armed groups*", addressed to MINDEF, MINJUSTICE and DGSN
- the recommendation to "*take measures to find a peaceful solution to the crises and the spread of violence*", addressed to the PMO, MINAT, and DGSN
- the recommendation concerning the *rights of vulnerable persons*, calling for actions to protect this specific group of people from violence, specifically to "*adopt stronger legal protection measures for marginalised or vulnerable persons, notably by strengthening legislation to hold perpetrators of violence against members of minority ethnic groups accountable*", addressed to the Senate, the National Assembly, MINJUSTICE and MINAS,

Noting that the aforementioned recommendations aim at ensuring the effective, coherent and collaborative implementation of proposed actions, involving each actor according to its specific mandate and area of expertise,

Aware that there is no country or region within a country where the population is perfectly homogeneous, genocide therefore remains a major concern for States, including Cameroon,

The Commission therefore reiterates its recommendation made to the Government in its previous statement on the occasion of the commemoration of the *International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda*, namely to "establish an early warning system to prevent all situations that could lead to [intercommunal violence] genocide, or other international crimes such as crimes against humanity, war crimes or ethnic cleansing",

The Commission recommends to the Government:

- *to strengthen the legislative and judicial framework, to establish specialised judicial mechanisms to handle alleged cases of hate speech and related offences in immediate hearings*

to ease the resentment caused by youth unemployment and strengthen harmony between communities,

- by mainstreaming an entrepreneurial culture through the multiplication of training frameworks for self-employment and ensuring its integration across all fields of study, starting from the final years of primary education, given that international studies have shown that only 25 percent of young people in sub-Saharan Africa were expected to access salaried employment between 2014 and 2024
- by strengthening employment policies for the benefit of minorities and indigenous populations in accordance with the Constitution and international law, by encouraging companies to hire individuals from these vulnerable communities and to invest in training the youths from these communities at the locations of these companies
- by establishing platforms for dialogue between companies, local authorities and indigenous communities to ensure that the benefits of development projects are shared fairly

to mitigate inter-community conflicts:

- by ensuring that investigations mandated by the President of the Republic and conducted by the joint Gendarmerie/DGSN Commission into land disputes, as well as murders or emotional reactions that spark inter-community clashes or any other security situation stemming from social tensions, are carried out systematically, diligently, transparently and thoroughly, with a view to establishing accountability, taking corrective measures and punishing perpetrators in accordance with the law
- by promoting discussion platforms between religious and community leaders to foster mutual understanding and peacefully resolve disputes

- by putting in place transparent mechanisms for the management of water and land, to guarantee equitable access to these natural resources for all affected communities
- by systematically providing humanitarian assistance to conflict-affected populations, with particular attention to the specific needs of women, children, and all other vulnerable groups

to promote a healthy media environment and a united and peaceful Cameroonian society:

- by emphasizing education on harmonious coexistence:
 - o integrating into school curricula courses on tolerance, non-violent communication, cultural diversity, human rights, and peace
 - o stepping up the promotion of the history and cultures of the country's various communities
- by encouraging inter-community dialogue and fostering social cohesion:
 - o creating mediation bodies (commissions, local committees) where representatives of different communities can engage in dialogue
 - o regularly organising inter-community forums and public debates to discuss common issues and promote mutual understanding and tolerance among communities and political groups
 - o encouraging elites to support cultural and sporting events that celebrate diversity and strengthen social cohesion by bringing different communities together (festivals, tournaments, exhibitions, etc.)
 - o promoting the cultural expressions of minorities
 - o organising media campaigns that promote diversity, tolerance, and mutual respect
 - o continuing efforts to ensure fair representation of all communities in public institutions
 - o ensuring that all communities have equitable access to public services, employment, education, and more
 - o fighting against regional or ethnic inequalities
- by intensifying the training of local actors—including traditional authorities and youth—in peaceful conflict resolution and peace promotion, as well as raising awareness about the dangers of hate speech, and actively involving them in peace-building and tolerance initiatives

- by establishing monitoring mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of policies and initiatives to combat hate speech
- by publishing regular reports on the state of tolerance and social cohesion, identifying persistent challenges and areas where further action is needed. This recommendation is addressed to CNPBM, MINAT, the Ministry of Communication (MINCOM), CNC, universities and research institutes, as well as CSOs,

The Commission remains available to assist the Government and all other relevant stakeholders in implementing these recommendations to ensure a peaceful and harmonious environment for all Cameroonian citizens,

The Commission specifically recommends that:

the *Minister of Employment and Vocational Training* (MINEFOP)

- increase training programmes aimed at helping young people acquire skills that will enable them to become self-employed, to prevent them from resorting to violent extremism due to lack of opportunities
- *organise training sessions on Nonviolent Communication (NVC), addressing various life situations that all social categories may face*

The Commission calls on all *political and opinion leaders* to resolutely direct their actions toward promoting and strengthening harmonious coexistence and social cohesion,

The Commission also calls on the NCC to intensify its monitoring of the media and to apply appropriate sanctions to offenders, in accordance with the laws in force,

The Commission urges parents to actively contribute to the prevention of ethnic/tribal discrimination and hate speech, in particular by:

- prohibiting the use of insults and hate speech by their children from a young age, educating them about the consequences, and openly, firmly, and consistently opposing and punishing such behaviour
- promoting a culture of peace and harmonious coexistence, and developing in the family and among children a sense of responsibility, respect for themselves and others, and respect for the institutions and emblems of the State
- instilling in their offspring the concepts of diversity, inclusion, solidarity, mutual respect, love, interculturalism, sharing, equality, responsibility, forgiveness and acceptance of others

The Commission's Commitment

The Commission reiterates its commitment to continue its efforts to promote and protect human rights, in particular against all forms of violence and discrimination, through:

- awareness-raising campaigns
- advocacy
- fact-finding missions
- handling complaints and self-initiated investigations
- training workshops
- visits to places of detention,

The Commission also reiterates its commitment to work actively with national authorities, community leaders, international partners and CSOs to bring about lasting peace and to promote respect for human rights in Cameroon,

The Commission urges all those who believe they have been victims of human rights violations to break their silence by systematically reporting all human rights violations, including hate speech, discrimination and gender-based violence. They can contact the Commission by any means available, including its **toll-free number 1523** (free of charge).

Useful CHRC Addresses.-

Website: www.cdhc.cm

Facebook and X (former Twitter): **Cameroon Human Rights Commission**

WhatsApp: 691 99 56 90

Yaoundé, - 6 AVR 2025
Pour le Président
et par Ordre



Gana Raphaël
Ministre Plénipotentiaire Hors Echelle