



General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 February 2013
English
Original: English and French

Human Rights Council
Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review
Sixteenth session
Geneva, 22 April–3 May 2013

National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21*

Cameroon

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

ACHPR:	African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
ANIF:	National Financial Investigation Agency
BFDB:	Budget and Financial Disciplinary Board
CEDAW:	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIC:	International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights
CNUDHD-AC:	United Nations Sub-regional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa
CSO:	Civil Society Organisations
DGSN:	General Delegation of National Security
ELECAM:	Elections Cameroon
ENAM:	National School of Administration and Magistracy
ENAP:	National School of Penitentiary Administration
EPA:	Education Priority Areas
EPI:	Expanded Programme on Immunisation
FGM:	Female Genital Mutilation
GESP:	Growth and Employment Strategy Paper
ICC:	International Criminal Court
ICRC:	International Committee of the Red Cross
ILO:	International Labour Organisation
IMCI:	Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses
MINATD:	Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation
MINDEF:	Ministry of Defence
MINEDUB:	Ministry of Basic Education
MINEPAT:	Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Regional Development
MINESEC:	Ministry of Secondary Education
MINJUSTICE:	Ministry of Justice
MINSANTE:	Ministry of Public Health
MIRAP:	Essential Goods Supply Regulation Authority
NAC:	National Aids Control Committee
NACC:	National Anti-corruption Commission
NAPPHR:	National Action Plan for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights
NCHRF:	National Commission on Human Rights and Freedom

NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisations
OVC:	Orphaned and Vulnerable Children
PACDET:	Programme for the Improvement of Detention Conditions and Respect for Human Rights
SED:	Secretary of State for Defence
SIC:	Cameroon Real Estate Corporation
SONARA:	National Oil Refinery Company
UNAIDS:	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UNWOMEN:	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Introduction

1. This report has been prepared in accordance with the revised general guidelines for the preparation of information within the framework of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), adopted by the Human Rights Council in its Resolution 17/119 of 17 June 2011. Thus, the Report reviews the methodology of its development (I), the developments since the last review of the strategic, normative and institutional framework (II), human rights promotion and protection actions (III), the state of implementation of recommendations accepted in the previous review (IV) progress, best practices, challenges and constraints (V), national initiatives to meet these challenges (VI) and the State's expectations (VII).

I. Methodology

2. The drafting of the Report was overseen by the Interministerial Committee for monitoring the implementation of recommendations and/or decisions arising from regional and international mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights under the Prime Minister, Head of Government.

3. It is worthy of note that, based on a participatory approach, a draft Report was prepared by a team including representatives from the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of External Relations, based on contributions from various administrative units¹. It was thereafter submitted for pre-validation to national stakeholders. The resulting draft was proposed for review to civil society organisations during a consultation meeting organised by the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms (NCHRF) before its final validation during a workshop including all stakeholders. During these phases, various aspects of the draft were fine-tuned including the strategic, normative and institutional framework for human rights promotion and protection.

II. Strategic, legal and institutional framework

4. The strategic, normative and institutional framework for human rights promotion and protection has been enhanced since the last review.

A. Strategic framework: Validation of the National Action Plan for Human Rights Promotion and Protection

5. To improve Governance and strengthen the Rule of Law, Cameroon adopted the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP) in 2010 that highlights the guarantee of individual rights and civil liberties.

6. To this end, it started in November 2012, the validation process of the National Action Plan for Human Rights Promotion and Protection. The Plan, based on an inventory, identifies short and medium-term priority actions as well as strategies identified for each category of rights.

B Normative framework

7. To strengthen its normative framework, Cameroon ratified at the universal level:

- Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatments or Punishment on 19 November 2010;
 - Convention No. 144 on Tripartite Consultations to Promote the Implementation of International Labour Standards of 2 June 1976, on 14 December 2011;
 - Convention No. 155 of the ILO on Occupational Safety and Health of Workers on 14 December 2011;
 - Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts on 30 May 2012.
8. At the regional level, Cameroon acceded to the following instruments:
- The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (the Maputo Protocol), ratified on 28 May 2009;
 - The African Youth Charter, ratified on 11 January 2011;
 - The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, ratified on 9 August 2011; and
 - The Convention of the African Union on preventing and combating corruption ratified on 14 December 2011.
9. These efforts were supplemented by the ratification of some instruments under international humanitarian law including:
- The Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 on the Protection of Cultural Property in the event of Armed Conflicts on 6 May 2010;
 - The Convention of 2 April 1972 on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction on 6 May 2010;
 - The Convention of 10 December 1976 on the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques on 6 May 2010; and
 - The Additional Protocol of 8 December 2005 to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 relating to the adoption of an Additional Distinctive Emblem (Protocol III) on 6 May 2010.

C. Institutional framework

10. In addition to the reorganization of the Government to ensure sound monitoring of human rights issues in its midst², new institutions were set up and the organic framework of existing ones restructured. Regarding the setting up of new structures, the following coordination bodies were set up:
- The Interministerial Committee for Monitoring the implementation of Recommendations and/or Decisions Arising from Regional and International Mechanisms for Human Rights Promotion and Protection, by Order No. 81/CAB/PM of 15 April 2011³;
 - The Interministerial Committee on the Prevention and Fight against Trafficking in Persons, by Order No. 163/CAB/PM of 2 November 2010⁴.
11. Besides, the organisation and functioning of refugee management bodies were specified by Decree No. 2011/389 of 28 November 2011 including the Refugee Status Eligibility Commission and the Refugee Appeal Commission⁵.

12. The restructuring of the organic framework of some existing institutions concerned:
- **The NCHRF** reviewed by Law No. 2010/4 of 13 April 2010. The intention was to better guarantee the independence of this body by depriving representatives of administrations therein of the right to vote. This change earned Cameroon's NCHRF re-accreditation to status "A" by the International Coordination Committee of National Human Rights Institutions (ICC). To enhance its operational capacities and to preserve its independence, Government increased its running budget from CFAF 500 million⁶ in 2008, 2009 and 2010 to CFAF 700 million⁷ in 2011. In 2012 the NCHRF received CFAF 400 million⁸ as investment budget giving an overall total of CFAF 1.1 billion⁹. Its running budget was increased by CFAF 20 million¹⁰ thereby taking it to CFAF 720 million¹¹ in 2013, while the investment budget was maintained;
 - **Elections Cameroon (ELECAM)** whose composition and operating rules were amended by Decree No. 2011/204 of 7 July 2011 saw an increase of its members from 12 to 18. The review of the composition of this electoral Board, rejected during the previous review as recommended, was reconsidered to incorporate personalities from the civil society, the clergy and political parties¹². The objective is to guarantee this body's independence and better representation of all stakeholders of the electoral process;
 - **The National Communication Council**, reorganised by Decree No. 2012/38 of 23 January 2012, changed status from a consultative body to a regulatory body of freedom of mass communication¹³.
13. Besides the measures taken concerning the above-mentioned cases, Government equally undertook to implement specific actions that help in human rights promotion and protection.

III. Human rights promotion and protection actions

14. Cameroon is resolutely determined to implement international commitments under conventions she ratified, as well as voluntary commitments taken on the occasion of the renewal of her mandate at the Human Rights Council in 2009.

15. In this section, only unaccepted recommendations will be discussed.

A. Participation in the management of public affairs

16. Cameroon conducted a presidential election in October 2011 entirely organised by the Electoral Supervisory Body, Elections Cameroon (ELECAM) whose regional branches were finally set up in July 2010¹⁴.

17. This election recorded a turnout of 65.82%. Cameroonians residing abroad participated for the first time. Two of the 23 candidates vying for the presidency were women. A grant of CFAF 690 million¹⁵, to finance the electoral campaign was equally distributed to the candidates as required by the law¹⁶.

18. Exceptional measures such as the free establishment of national identity cards to all Cameroonians of voting age¹⁷ and positive discriminatory measures for women and persons with disabilities were adopted to promote massive voter participation.

19. To correct irregularities observed during the election and in order to improve transparency of the electoral process, a single electoral code was adopted.¹⁸ In addition, the biometric registration of voters started on 3 October 2012.

20. Apart from elections, the State equally ensured the participation of citizens in the management of public affairs through the follow-up of the decentralisation process initiated in 1996. This ongoing process was accelerated in 2010 and 2011 by the transfer of some State power and necessary resources to Local and Regional Authorities. A general decentralisation allocation is also included annually in the State budget¹⁹.

B. Right to food

21. The GESP sets out major agricultural policy guidelines to ensure food security for Cameroonians, create jobs in rural areas, reduce imports and increase exports of agricultural products. This include guaranteeing food availability, accessibility and acceptability.

22. In terms of availability, increased vegetable, animal and fishery production is encouraged. Large agricultural concerns received from 2010 to 2011, a total of CFAF 24.395 billion²⁰ with CFAF 11,150 billion²¹ for industrial crops and 13,245 billion²² for food crops. Key fisheries and breeding sectors received during the same period an overall allocation of CFAF 4,981,215,000,²³ with CFAF 3,745,715,000²⁴ for breeding and CFAF 1,235,500,000²⁵ for fishery.

23. With regard to accessibility, the legal and institutional framework was enriched with the adoption of the Framework Law on consumer protection²⁶ and the setting up in February 2011 of the Essential Goods Supply Regulatory Authority (MIRAP). At the operational level, the organisation of promotional sales campaigns, the building of periodic markets continued as well as the control of distribution channels to curb illicit speculation and other unlawful trade practices.

24. Quality is assured through the determination of standards and the organisation of quality control and compliance certification of import and export products. Wheat flour and refined vegetable oils standards were reviewed to allow for vitamin enrichment. The affixing of a stamp on some manufactured goods was adopted in view of fighting fraud and counterfeiting.

C. Right to work and access to employment

25. With regard to the right to work and access to employment, the Government of Cameroon initiated a comprehensive recruitment programme into the Public Service focused on the absorption of part-time teachers into the Public Service, the authorised recruitment of 1,000 teachers in State universities, the signing of contracts by 10,000 temporary staff and the admission through competitive examinations of about 4,500 young people for jobs in different fields.

26. Government's decision taken in February 2011 for the special recruitment of 25,000 young people into the Public Service can be added to all these measures. The selection process took into account the representation of the various components of society including 45.02% women, 1.59% persons with disabilities and 60.41% people between 25 to 34 years of age.

27. Besides Government actions, the modern economy created 160,000 jobs.

D. Public human rights awareness

28. To reinforce human rights culture, various Government bodies responsible for human rights issues in general or specific rights, the NCHRF and civil society organizations

permanently organised activities to promote human rights (seminars, workshops, awareness campaigns, celebration of international days etc.). As part of these activities, some international and regional legal instruments on human rights treaties to which Cameroon is party, were translated into some local languages²⁷ to facilitate their dissemination and understanding. These instruments are distributed in the form of leaflets or booklets.

29. A National Human Rights Education Programme for all levels of education was drawn up with the technical coordination of the NCHRF. Its implementation started in 2009 with a pilot phase in primary and secondary education. It aims at raising awareness and educating citizens on their rights and the respect for other's rights (See Annex II).

30. In addition, the media also contributes through information and public awareness campaigns in weekly radio programmes by some ministries. The main topics discussed relate to women's specific rights, children's rights, the rights of persons with disabilities, or other specific rights such as the right to education and the right to health etc.

E. Rights of persons with disabilities (Voluntary commitments)

31. To respect its development vision by the Year 2035, namely to become an emerging, democratic and united yet diversified country, Cameroon continues to promote the welfare of persons with disabilities. To this end, she has taken significant steps to improve their living conditions.

32. These steps include the:

- reinforcement of the institutional framework for the training of persons with disabilities by Decree No.2009/96 of 16 March 2009 relating to the setting up, organization and functioning of the Cardinal Paul Emile LEGER National Centre for the Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities (CNRPH)²⁸ and the continuation of construction works of the Rehabilitation Centre for Persons with Disabilities, Maroua to serve the entire Northern Regions and neighbouring countries;
- promulgation of Law No.2010/2 of 13 April 2010 on the protection and welfare of persons with disabilities. This law that internalises the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities underscores especially handicap prevention, rehabilitation, socio-economic and political integration of persons with disabilities and contains provisions favorable to them including criminal sanctions against violators of these rights;
- access to education through grants to private special education institutions, allocation of material and financial resources to support students with disabilities or born of parents with disabilities, and the adoption in January 2010 of a practical guide on accessibility of youth with disabilities to education;
- institution in 2010 of a new disability card granting tax exemptions, free education and initial vocational training, reduced transport fare, reduced costs for medical care, functional rehabilitation and equipment and reduction of sport and recreation fees;
- promulgation of Law No. 2011/18 of 15 July 2011 relating to the organization and promotion of physical and sporting activities which makes them obligatory in schools as well as in rehabilitation institutions for persons with disabilities. Four new sporting federations have been set for persons with visual disability, intellectual disability, physical disability and hearing disability;
- accessibility to public buildings by adopting a practical guide on accessibility for contractors, building owners, architectural firms and policy makers²⁹;

- supply of equipment (tricycle, rolling chairs, white stick, hearing devices) from 2008 to 2012 worth CFAF 1,000,000,000³⁰;
- facilitating access to employment by recruiting more than 500 persons with disabilities in the Public Service within the framework of the special recruitment of 25,000 youths and 110 teachers during the contracting operation of general education teachers, promoting self-employment, supporting the realisation of income-generating activities, developing a trades monograph accessible to persons with disabilities, compiling a file of skilled persons with disabilities, developing workstations adapted to the functional ability and performance capabilities of persons with disabilities;
- provision, within the framework of decentralization, of grants and assistance to the poor and the needy as well as power transferred to councils since 2010³¹;
- implementation of the project “*Accessible Election for People with Disabilities*”³²; and
- putting in place of a platform dubbed “*Inclusive Society*”, comprising civil society organizations working for the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities.

33. Government sort to implement the recommendations arising from the previous review simultaneously with the above-mentioned measures.

IV. Follow-up of recommendations from the previous review

34. During her passage before the UPR, Cameroon accepted 41 of the 61 recommendations made to her and implemented them as indicated below.

A. Legal and institutional framework

1. Participation in main international human rights instruments (Recommendations 1–6)

35. Conventions ratified by Cameroon are summarised above (§ 7). As for other conventions which she equally accepted to ratify, the procedures for the examination of related instruments are underway for their ratification.

2. Institutional reforms (Recommendations 9, 22, 28)

36. With regard to ELECAM, see § 12 above.

37. Measures have been taken to put the Constitutional Council in place in 2013³³. To this end, two laws were promulgated on 21 December 2012. They include Law No. 2012/15 of 21 December 2012 to amend Law No. 2004/4 of 21 April 2004 on the organization and functioning of the Constitutional Council and Law No.2012/16 of 21 December 2012 to amend and supplement some provisions of Law No. No. 2004/4 of 21 April 2004 to lay down the status of members of the Constitutional Council.

38. Measures were taken to improve the Judiciary in order to strengthen its independence. The judicial map was enhanced in 2012 (Annex III) with the setting up of 10 regional administrative courts by Decree No. 2012/119 of 15 March 2012. The number of courts was also increased with the opening of 8 Courts of First Instance and 2 High Courts by Decree No. 2012/120 of 15 March 2012³⁴. Similarly, the institutional strengthening of the judicial power was also reflected in the updating of the rules and regulations governing some personnel and the training of judicial staff. More so, specialisation started with the

setting up in the Magistracy and Court Registry Division of the National School of Administration and Magistracy, of three sections for the training of Judicial and Legal Officers: the Judiciary Section, the Administrative Section and the Accounting Section. In September 2012, the first batch of Pupil Judicial and Legal Officers for these sections were recruited. After their training they shall serve, based on their specialization, in judicial courts, administrative courts and audit courts³⁵. The increase of the salary scales and benefits of judicial and penitentiary staff was also identified as a priority in the justice sector strategy. Besides, from 2010 to 2012, the number of judicial and legal officers increased from 994 to 1,167 representing a rise of about 15%.

B. Promotion and protection of civil and political rights

1. Training of judicial staff in human rights (Recommendations 7, 8)

39. Curricula for the training of the Police, Gendarmerie, Prison Administration and Army staff as well as Judicial and Legal Officers contain modules on human rights.

40. Such specific courses that focus on a variety of topics and given many credit hours are aimed at familiarising these officials with human rights issues in the administration of justice and at building their capacity in this area, for a better protection of citizens' rights.

41. Besides the initial training, judicial staff undergo training in the form of seminars, workshops, educational talks etc. (the list of related activities carried out since 2010 is attached as Annex IV).

2. Fight against the impunity of law enforcement official (Recommendation 23)

42. The fight against impunity combines both prevention with repression. Prevention places emphasis on capacity building (§ 41) and repression on administrative, disciplinary and judicial measures against such personnel (Annex V). For example, 2,294 disciplinary sanctions were taken against civil servants of the police from 2009 to October 2012. This indicates an increase from 19.79% in 2011 and 10.83% in 2012 compared to 2009³⁶ (Annex VI).

3. Right to freedom of expression and freedom of the press (Recommendations 25 and 26)

43. Cameroon has continued to work for the respect and promotion of freedom of expression and communication. Therefore, she undertook to:

- provide a conducive legal framework and comply with its provisions;
- diversify and increase the means and sources of information: The media landscape has a variety of stakeholders including some twenty private televisions 4 of which were set up from 2009, some 100 private radios stations 13 of which were set up from 2009, 40 audio-visual producers, 500 cable companies in addition to the public radio station with 10 regional stations and 6 commercial FM and 23 community radio stations. Furthermore, international radio stations broadcast from Cameroon (RFI, BBC). Written and cybernetic press promoters officially declare 600 to 700 publications in addition to the public service media (*Cameroon Tribune*);
- support the development of the private press by the institution of an annual public aid to private communication, the amount of which was raised to the total sum of FCFA 235 million³⁷ from 2010 to 2011 as well as programmes for the professional and ethical capacity building of journalists and human rights defenders; and
- ensure more freedom of expression to mass communication organs.

44. The Communication Forum was organised from 5 to 7 December 2012 in view of facilitating dialogue among various stakeholders and defining the main strategic orientations in the sector, strengthening professionalism and improving communication regulation activities.

C. Economic, social and cultural rights

1. Right to health (Recommendations 31, 32, 33)

45. The strategic intervention thrusts in the health sector as defined in the GESP include improving the provision of care and services and stimulating demand in maternal, child and adolescent health care, disease control and health promotion.

46. In this regard, stabilising the budget allocated to the Ministry of Health between 2010 and 2011 at the sum of CFAF³⁸ 123 billion has allowed an increase of personnel and infrastructure. The staff has grown from 30,000 in 2010 to 38,207 in 2011, with approximately 66% in the public sub-sector and 34% in the private sub-sectors. In 2011, the Health Infrastructure Development Programme increased the number of health facilities to 4,351.

47. With regard to child health care, the implementation of the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses strategy (IMCI) continued, with the aim of reducing morbidity/mortality due to common childhood diseases including acute respiratory infections, diarrheal diseases, malaria and malnutrition. In this respect, since 2011, the treatment of uncomplicated malaria for children under 5 years is free, thereby providing patients with 218,050 doses of anti malarial drugs during that year. Immunization coverage has also improved thanks to the capacity building of the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) and free vaccines and syringes in public health facilities. From 2004 to 2011, the coverage rate of immunization increased as follow: 72.1% to 82.30% for poliomyelitis, 58.7% to 76.03% for measles, 58.2% to 75.39% for yellow fever. There is however a slight drop in the immunization coverage of BCG from 82.62% to 80.33%.

48. These actions have led to the reduction of mortality rate among children below 5 years that dropped from 144 per 1000 in 2004 to 122 per 1000 in 2011.

49. Support to orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) due to HIV/AIDS is one of the thrusts of the National Strategic Plan for the Fight against HIV/AIDS and STIs that was reviewed for the 2011-2015 period. In 2012, more than 9000 OVC receive nutritional, health, educational, legal and psycho affective support. The Plan's other five areas of intervention are: prevention, universal access to treatment and care for PLWHIV, the ownership of the fight by stakeholders, support to and protection of PLHIV, epidemiological and research promotion, strengthening coordination, management, partnership and monitoring/evaluation.

50. Actions carried out in the implementation of this plan have resulted in lower HIV/AIDS prevalence rates from 5.5% in 2004 to 4.3% in 2012.

2. Adequate housing (Recommendations 34 and 35)

51. Cameroon is witnessing accelerated urbanisation, of about 52% in 2012 resulting in an urban housing crisis marked by acute housing supply shortage, especially in the major cities of Yaounde, Douala and Bafoussam.

52. To redress this situation, Government defined and implemented a new low cost housing policy in the sector. This policy focused on the revival of public and private low cost housing production and the taking of appropriate regulatory measures³⁹. In addition,

other reforms are being examined in view of a better collaboration between institutional and financial stakeholders in the housing sector (SIC, MAETUR, CFC, MIPROMALO).

53. With particular regard to low cost housing, a priority programme for building 10,000 low cost houses and developing 50,000 plots for construction is being implemented. In 2009, the State allocated to this programme, through the Cameroon Housing Loan Fund of the sum of CFAF 24 billion⁴⁰ for its launching. The first phase of the said project will provide in a short term 1000 low cost houses in Douala and 1200 in Yaounde. The foundation stone was laid in December 2009 and February 2010 in the sites of Douala and Yaounde respectively.

54. The execution of this programme encountered some difficulties that hindered the supply in June 2011 of initially constructed houses. Corrective measures were taken to provide solutions.

55. Furthermore, housing promotion initiatives by individuals to increase the overall supply of low cost houses are rising thanks to the State's enabling policy. At the end of 2012, 50 housing promoters were given licenses. Significant actions carried out by these promoters include those of Société de promotion immobilière (SOPRIN) through the following projects: Cité des Cadres (770 houses), Cité du Sapelli (3000 houses), Cité du Baobab (1200 houses), Clos Pavillonnaire Saint-Victor (1800 houses). We could also mention the initiative of Authentic Developers Corporation (ADC) company and that of Société immobilière de Leboudi to construct 100 and 500 housing respectively.⁴¹

3. Right to education (Recommendation 36)

56. Full and universal education is one of Government's priorities as illustrated by the strengthening of measures to ensure effective free education in public primary schools decided in 2000. As part of universal access to education, incentives such as scholarships, books and school canteens were provided in Priority Education Areas (PEA).

57. Overall, Government took measures to improve on education offer (in public secondary schools from 1,525 in 2010 to 1,876 in 2011 and the authorisation of private schools from 965 to 1,003 during the same period). In higher education, the 8th public university was set up in 2010 as well as the opening of 4 university establishments in 2011. Furthermore, major strides were taken concerning the quality of supervision, the professionalisation of education with the introduction of new fields of study in technical and professional education establishments, the introduction of technical modules in the general education system; promotion of bilingualism and national languages through testing of special bilingual education programme, the issuing of a bilingual end-of-first cycle certificate as from 2013, the teaching of national languages and cultures and the strengthening of human rights education in formal education as well as the promotion of inclusive education.

4. Fight against corruption (Recommendation 27)

58. The institutions set up by the Government carried out intensive activities within the framework of the fight against corruption based on prevention, judicial and non-judicial control, detection and punishment.

59. With regard to prevention, the following activities were carried out under the auspices of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC): the drafting of the national strategy against corruption, adoption of the national coalition charter against corruption and the launching of the national honesty education programme, as well as Rapid Results Initiatives within the framework of the implementation of the abovementioned strategy.

60. The setting up in December 2011 of a Ministry in charge specifically of public contracts will strengthen the fight against fraud in public contracts.

61. Concerning non-judicial control, the Higher State Audit (MINCONSUPE) carried out several control and audit missions of State Companies and administrations after which the Budget and Financial Disciplinary Board (BFDB) imposed sanctions⁴².

62. In the same vein, the Audit Bench of the Supreme Court carried out judicial control of public accounts.

63. In addition, the National Investigation Agency (ANIF) and NACC carried out inquiries on corruption and forwarded the files to the courts.

64. Concerning judicial procedures, the operation for streamlining the management of public affairs which started in 2006 continued with the arrest, since 2009, of several dozens of high ranking officials including two former Ministers of State, one former Prime Minister and several General Managers of public companies.

65. The Special Criminal Court set up in December 2011 will allow the strengthening of judicial actions in the domain of the fight against corruption. The court is competent to try offences of misappropriation of public property and related offences where the amount involved is equal to or above CFAF 50,000,000⁴³ and judgments delivered within a maximum period of 18 months.

D. Rights of specific groups

1. Women's rights (Recommendations 13–17)

66. Actions to promote women's rights and to fight against violence and discrimination in all its forms have been strengthened in Cameroon since 2009. The Electoral Code provides for the taking into account of gender in the composition of electoral lists henceforth.⁴⁴

67. Concerning violence, the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) which is a cultural heritage of some people is in remarkable decline. Female genital mutilation, though negligible because it is practised by less than 1% of the population, remains a concern to authorities. The following measures were taken to eradicate these harmful traditional practices against women:

- greater involvement of traditional and religious authorities and excisers in the fight against FGM in view of identifying new strategies to fight this phenomenon. To this end, some forty local FGM control committees were set up in prevalence areas;
- material, financial and technical support to provide excisers with alternatives to this practice; for example, the sum of CFAF 4,000,000⁴⁵ was given to ease the functioning of local committees and help excisers to develop alternative income-generating activities;
- symbolic and solemn handing over of bistouries used by professional excisers to perform circumcision thereby indicating their willingness to abandon this practice and their adherence to the awareness of public authorities who took the commitment to ensure their conversion.

68. In October 2010, a five-year action plan for the fight against FGM was updated and approved. The said plan was edited in 2012 and put at the disposal of all FGM local control committees. The plan lays particular emphasis on the following intervention domains: studies and research, capacity building, prevention, protection and management, studies and research, partnership and coordination/monitoring and evaluation.

69. In 2011, the platform for the fight against gender-based violence involving the forces of law and order, the civil society and sector ministries was put in place and the programme for the dissemination of the strategy for the fight against gender-based violence launched. A programme for the fight against violence against women is being executed since 2011. Raising awareness among women, families, communities and opinion leaders on the disadvantages of FGM, forced marriages and other forms of domestic or public violence is carried out during commemorative days for women, the family and especially during the "16 days of advocacy against gender violence". In 2012, 50 community relay workers (traditional and religious authorities, community leaders, etc.) were trained in the Far North within the framework of the setting up of the regional platform on FGM⁴⁶ control involving MINATD, DGSN, the civil society, the purpose being to envisage the repressive phase.

70. In addition, the national launching of the UN Secretary General's campaign on the theme "Unite to End Violence against Women", took place on 8 December 2012.

71. Awareness-raising is crucial for the protection of women and the fight against discrimination. Hence, 20 community and council radio presenters were trained in gender-based violence prevention and management, reproductive health prevention and promotion including urgent situations. 200 radio programmes in local languages and in English and French, several spots, micro programmes and magazines involving administrative and traditional local authorities, and the civil society are broadcast instilling synergy of actions among the various actors, namely, law enforcement officials, health personnel and other stakeholders.

2. Children's rights (Recommendations No. 18, 19, 20, 30)

72. Within the framework of the implementation of recommendations on children's rights relating to child slavery and street children, Cameroon continued actions initiated in this domain focusing on:

- prevention: organisation of 7 regional awareness-raising campaigns on the prevention of violence, exploitation, abuse and discrimination against children in Northern Regions; organisation, in 2009 and 2010, of training sessions on the use of awareness-raising tools for the fight against trading in and the sexual exploitation of children in the 10 Regions of the country; launching, in February 2011, of the national campaign on the fight against child trafficking and sexual exploitation of children in Cameroon; organisation, in September 2011, by the NCHRF of public hearing days on the sexual abuse of children;
- management: renovation of three public facilities for child supervision; the putting in place, in December 2009, of a sponsorship system through the validation and dissemination of a guide on sponsoring vulnerable children in Cameroon; the drafting, in 2010, of 2 guides for social stakeholders, for the psycho-social support of children in a difficult situation and those in emergency; and
- reintegration: provision of support and tools to vulnerable populations within the framework of the project "*Efficient and Effective Basic Social Services*", socio-economic reconversion of free girls, training on the setting up of income-generating activities, processing and conservation of foodstuff. As such, 119 street children were reintegrated into the classical school system.

3. Rights of vulnerable groups (Recommendation 37)

73. Cameroon continued its actions in favour of vulnerable groups, especially pygmies and Mbororos. It strengthened positive discriminatory measures in view of facilitating access by these groups to education (award of scholarships and school needs, certificate-

based admission into training schools, construction of schools closer to villages and camps), access to citizenship (in 2011, in view of facilitating access to citizenship and after census carried out in 8 Regions in Cameroon, official documents were issued to Pygmies and Mbororos comprising 6,600 national identity cards and 4,253 declaratory judgments serving as birth certificates, including 1,500 for children); participation in the management of public affairs (a Mbororo is Mayor of the Ngaoui Council in the Mbere Division. There are also 4 Deputy Mbororo Mayors and several Councillors, a Mbororo is also Chargé de Mission at the Presidency of the Republic). In addition, Government promotes their access to justice (strengthening the availability of interpretation services in local languages in courts, appointment of a pygmy to the post of assessor in a customary court in the South Region), and access to land (recognition of traditionally occupied lands, setting up of traditional chiefdoms, collection of land tax from major projects in favour of development project area dwellers, payment of just and fair compensations for farm products, plants, built and un-built lands and all other property affected by the projects, facilitating procedures for obtaining land titles).

E. Cross-cutting issues: Improvement of detention conditions (Recommendations 21, 23, 24, 33)

74. Cameroon continued efforts to humanise detention conditions. As such, within the framework of the second phase of the Detention Conditions Improvement Programme (PACDET), major achievements were made. They include the provision of beddings, medical supplies and didactic materials for infirmaries and central prisons schools, improvement of access to drinking water and energy through the construction of 22 manual bareholes in prisons and the installation of a biogas system; strengthening of escort conditions and the transportation of detainees by procuring prison and utility vehicles, etc.

75. Construction, rehabilitation and renovation works in prisons also continued in view of increasing their accommodation capacity. Two new prisons of 300 places each were built in Ngoumou and Ntui. 51 out of 74 functional prisons⁴⁷ have women's quarters and 36 have quarters for minors. Most of these prisons have infirmaries equipped with appropriate technical level and prevention services for some deceases. The construction of 3 new health units in the Central Prisons in the Regional headquarters of Bamenda, Bertoua and Ebolowa has enabled the improvement of healthcare services for detainees.

76. The NCHRF, the ICRC, NGOs or associations regularly visit prisons to which are added spot visits by some international organisations.

77. Judicial delays and the number of remands in custody have been curbed by measures to build the capacity of the above-mentioned judicial actors as well as the adoption of the Criminal Procedure Code which renders detention an exception and freedom the rule through mechanisms such as release on bail and immediate release.

F. International cooperation and cooperation with the civil society (Recommendations 10–12, 14, 29 and 40)

78. Cameroon continued and intensified its cooperation with OHCHR, Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures.

79. The contribution of the United Nations Sub-Regional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa (CNUDHD-AC) was significant in the capacity building of Government Officials and civil society organisations. It was manifested by the supervision in the implementation and follow-up of UPR recommendations by organising many

seminars and workshops on topics such as trafficking in persons, migrant workers, prison conditions and indigenous populations.

80. The Centre works with Government to implement the National Study on the Identification of Indigenous Peoples in Cameroon.

81. Participation in UPR seminars organised in May 2010 in Marrakech by the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, in April 2011 in Mauritius by the Commonwealth and in November 2011 in Kigali by CNUDHD-AC, were valuable opportunities for Cameroon to share experiences on the monitoring and implementation of UPR recommendations.

82. With regard to Treaty Bodies, periodic reports were reviewed in January 2009 by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in January 2010 by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, in February 2010 by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, in April and May 2010 by the Committee against Torture, in July 2010 by the Human Rights Committee and in November 2011 by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The document representing the 4th and 5th CEDAW Periodic Reports was submitted in September 2011.

83. At the African regional level, the 2nd Periodic Report as regards the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights was examined in May 2010 while the Initial Report with respect to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child was reviewed in November 2012.

84. Cameroon also cooperated with the Treaty Bodies, including the UN Human Rights Committee and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights within the framework of individual communications and the implementation of its findings in the cases examined, as well as its concluding observations following the examination of Cameroon's last Periodic Reports.

85. The strengthening of cooperation with Special Procedures continued. Within the UN system, invitations were sent to the Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression and the Independent Expert on minority issues.

86. Several mandate holders at the universal and regional levels visited Cameroon. Mr. Olivier De SCHUTTER, Special Rapporteur on the right to food, visited Cameroon from 16 to 23 July 2012. In addition to fruitful and beneficial discussions, his preliminary recommendations were highly appreciated. They focused on areas such as food security, the development of large farms and the feeding condition of detainees. The Government is searching for better ways of implementing the recommendations made therein.

87. This was also the case with the Special Rapporteur of the ACHPR on human rights defenders in Africa who, from 7 to 11 February 2011, paid a joint visit with the Chairperson of the ACHPR. Finally, mention can be made of the joint visit, from 4 to 14 September 2012 of the Special Rapporteur of the ACHPR on the Rights of Women in Africa and the Chairperson of the Working Group on the protection of the rights of people living with HIV, people at risk, vulnerable and affected by HIV/AIDS.

88. Cameroon also sought to provide information requested by Special Procedures. Responses to questionnaires and other requests by these experts have increased slightly, although constraints regarding the timely transmission of appropriate responses remain.

89. Government maintained an inclusive and consultative approach with the civil society in particular in the recommendations implementation phase. To this end, a consultation day with the civil society was organised on 30 June 2011 supported by the CNUDHD-AC and the NCHRF. The views and recommendations of CSOs on the roadmap and timeframe for the UPR implementation actions prepared by Government were

obtained. Some of their recommendations were taken into account in Cameroon's final document.

90. The major achievements by the Government were partly due to the contributions of the various stakeholders in the sector. It is also worthy to note the best practices that were adopted as well as the constraints and difficulties that were faced.

V. Identification of progress, best practices, challenges and constraints

A. Progress and best practices

91. Human rights education and awareness initiatives should be intensified while waiting for a greater number of people to be reached. These initiatives include the production of educational specifications and guidelines on teaching human rights in schools initiated by the NCHRF, supported by the UNDP, in collaboration with the Ministries in charge of Education and the Ministry of Justice.

92. The visits of the Special Rapporteurs and international organisations in charge of human rights were intensified and demonstrate openness by public authorities who need such external overview. The maiden visit of two Amnesty International representatives to Cameroon, from 4 to 12 August 2010, provided a platform for direct, beneficial and constructive dialogue between the parties enabling the representatives of this Organisation to carry out another visit in Cameroon from 11 to 20 December 2012.

93. More so, CSOs contribute to human rights promotion and protection through initiatives some of which are worth mentioning: the setting up of denunciation squads of violence against girls in and out of school in the Far North Region, the setting up of listening centres for women who are victim of violence throughout the national territory, mediation in the reinsertion of street children, support in establishment of civil status certificates and identification documents, support for the supervision of detainees, support for the protection of domestic workers, vulnerable groups and the continuation of advocacy for the respect of human rights and their promotion in religious circles.

94. In addition, these organisations and Government are conducting a collaborative review of the human rights situation in the context of drafting and validation of Government's annual report on the issue. The meeting provides a favourable framework for the examination of the challenges facing the State of Cameroon in guaranteeing human rights.

B. Challenges and constraints

95. The fight against impunity, capacity building of state and civil society stakeholders, improving detention conditions, specificity of the legal framework for indigenous peoples and human rights education and awareness issues. These challenges are compounded by inadequate resources for the realisation of economic, social and cultural rights, but also by lack of a formal mechanism for the monitoring and evaluation of Government policies in the domain.

VI. National initiatives

96. The State, in collaboration with its partners, has initiated the National Action Plan adoption process for human rights promotion and protection, aiming at integrating the human rights approach in policies and programmes. Alongside this targeted cross-cutting action, a compendium of national, regional and international instruments for the promotion and protection of human rights has been developed to equip Judicial and Legal Officers by making available to them national, regional and international human rights promotion and protection instruments. Furthermore, the teaching of human rights, capacity building seminars, support provided by the EU within the framework of the Programme for the Improvement of Detention Conditions and Human Rights (PACDET), the implementation of the national strategy for the fight against corruption, the reorientation of the state budget with emphasis on social sectors (health, education, water and energy in particular) are initiatives to be sustained in order to ensure better human rights promotion and protection.

VII. State expectations for capacity building and requests for technical assistance, and support received

97. On 3 August 2011, Government organised, with the support of CNUDHD-AC, a briefing for technical and financial partners to seek their assistance for the implementation of some UPR recommendations. The following capacity building and technical assistance needs were expressed:

- impregnation of parliamentary and administrative staff on Conventions that Cameroon has accepted to ratify in the context of UPR;
- cooperation between the International Criminal Court (ICC) and non-party States to the Rome Statute of the ICC;
- training of civil society organisations in FGM control;
- support to programmes for street children;
- training in the Bangkok Rules and the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners;
- capacity building of judiciary and penitentiary staff, law enforcement officials and civil status registrars on human rights;
- capacity building of journalists and human rights defenders on national and international standards on press freedom and journalistic ethics;
- completion of the study on the identification of indigenous peoples in Cameroon;
- training of unit heads on corruption control in all ministries; and
- support for the preparation and validation of Cameroon's Periodic Reports to Treaty Bodies.

98. Some of these activities were organised by the Government or with the support of CNUDHD-AC, ILO, UNWOMEN and UNAIDS.

99. The Government of Cameroon is grateful to the Swiss Embassy, the French Embassy and the Delegation of the European Commission in Yaounde for expressing their willingness to assist Cameroon in the implementation of the UPR recommendations.

Notes

- ¹ Contributions were received from units listed in Annex 1.
- ² Decree No. 2011/408 of 9 December 2011 to organize the Government confers the monitoring of human rights issues on the Ministry of Justice in collaboration with the Ministry of External Relations and other authorities concerned.
- ³ Decision No. 14/SG/PM of 9 August 2011 appointed members of the Committee's Technical Secretariat that held its first meeting on 13 September 2011 and its fifth meeting on 7 December 2012.
- ⁴ Order No. 163/CAB/PM of 2 November 2010 to set up and organize an Inter-ministerial Committee for Monitoring the Prevention and Fight against Trafficking in Persons.
- ⁵ By Order No.13/DIPL/CAB and Order No. 14/DIPL/CAB of 6 August 2012, the Minister of External Relations laid down the the composition of the Refugee Status Eligibility Commission and that of the Refugee Appeal Commission. Before taking up service, members of the Commissions took oath in September 2012 in compliance with the Law. From 18 to 20 December 2012, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees in collaboration with the Ministry of External Relations, to begin the activities of these bodies, organised a training seminar for their members.
- ⁶ About 763,358.77 Euros.
- ⁷ About 1,068,702.29 Euros.
- ⁸ About 610,687.022 Euros.
- ⁹ About 1,679,389.31 Euros.
- ¹⁰ About 30,534.35 Euros.
- ¹¹ About 1,099,236.64 Euros.
- ¹² Members proposed by political parties represented at the National Assembly resigned from their parties before they were sworn in.
- ¹³ The appointment of members of the Council is pending and shall allow for its optimum deployment.
- ¹⁴ The setting up of Nation-wide services started on September 2009 and ended in July 2010. The 10 Regional Delegates were appointed in November 2009, 58 Divisional Branch Heads in March 2010 and 360 Council Antenna Heads in April 2010. As at 31 October 2011, Nation-wide services had staff strength of 2,713.
- ¹⁵ About 1,053,435.11 Euros.
- ¹⁶ Law No. 2000/15 of 19 December 2000 relating to public financing of political parties and electoral campaigns.
- ¹⁷ This measure was repeated in view of elections in 2013.
- ¹⁸ This was Law No. 2012-1 of 19 April 2012 on the Electoral Code.
- ¹⁹ This amount stood at the sum of CFAF 9, 694,000,000 (about 35,224,981 Euros) in 2010 and CFAF 7,000,000,000 (about 1,687,022.90 Euros) in 2011.
- ²⁰ About 37,244,274.809 Euros.
- ²¹ About 17,022,900.76 Euros.
- ²² About 20,221,374.04 Euros.
- ²³ About 7,604,908.30 Euros.
- ²⁴ 718,648.85 Euros.
- ²⁵ 1,886,259.54 Euros.
- ²⁶ This was Framework Law No. 2011 of 6 May 2011 on consumer protection based on the UN guiding principles on consumer protection.
- ²⁷ Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was translated into Bulu, Fulfude and Pidgin English.
- ²⁸ This is a public administrative establishment whose duty is to ensure comprehensive care for all type of disability and whose objective is to become a pole of excellence in the Sub-region.
- ²⁹ This Guide falls within the framework of the execution of the statutory and regulatory provisions as well as Circular No. 3/CAB/PM of 18 April 2008 on the respect of rules governing the award, execution and control of public procurement by which the Prime Minister, Head of Government, requires all project managers and deputy works controllers to ensure that at the technical level, projects for the construction of buildings, public edifices and roads include "the handicap approach" to take into consideration the special accessibility concerns of persons with disabilities.

- ³⁰ About 1,526,717.55 Euros.
- ³¹ To this end, MINAS put at the disposal of councils an investment budget worth FCFA 358,000,000 (about 546,564.88 Euros) to buy adapted tools and equipment for the period 2010-2012. More so, a running budget worth CFAF 212,600,000 (about 324,580.15 Euros) was equally sent as spot assistance to all categories of vulnerable persons (persons with disabilities, the elderly, OVC, EBMSMSP, VOP, etc.) during the same period.
- ³² The Project's implementation during the Presidential election of 9 October 2011 was expressed through various special measures taken during the different phases of the process. Before the election, popularization measures for registration on voters' registers were carried out by the production of bills and guides in Braille, radio and television programmes with simultaneous sign language interpretation, online articles on disability and awareness-creation among political leaders. During voting, 12 pilot polling stations equipped with access ramps, appropriate polling booths and ballot boxes on the floor were specially prepared for persons with disabilities in 9 areas of the country. (See ELECAM, General Report on the Presidential Election of 9 October 2011, pp. 23 and 46).
- ³³ The Head of State took this decision during his speech to the Nation on 31 December 2012.
- ³⁴ This increase filled the gap concerning High Courts the number of which rose from 56 to 58 thus covering the country's 58 divisions. Judicial coverage is still insufficient for Courts of First Instance although they were increased from 67 to 75 by a Decree of March 2012. 285 out of the country's 360 sub-divisions do not have Courts of First Instance. The Sub-division serves as the jurisdiction of this type of court.
- ³⁵ The number of vacancies per section for the competitive entrance examination organised in 2012 was as follows: 10 for the Administrative Section, 10 for the Accounting Section and 30 for the Judicial Section.
- ³⁶ This addition may be explained by a considerable increase in the number of Disciplinary Board sessions about 43 sessions in 2012 alone (up to October) against 14 in 2011 and 10 in 2010. Disciplinary sanctions are more severely enforced resulting in many cases of revocation of undisciplined civil servants and/or human rights offenders.
- ³⁷ About 358,778.62 Euros.
- ³⁸ About 187,786 259.54 Euros.
- ³⁹ Law No. 2009/9 of 10 July 2009 on the construction of buildings for sale and its Decree of Application No. 2009/1726 PM of 4 September 2009; Law No. 2009/10 of 10 July 2009 governing real estate lease-purchase and its Decree of Application No.2009/1727/PM of 4 September 2009; Law No.2010/22 of 21 December 2010 relating to co-ownership of buildings and its Decree of Application No. 2011/113/PM of 11 May 2011; Order No. 1/E/2/ MINDUH of 20 January 2010 to lay down rules for the presentation of general specifications for housing promotion.
- ⁴⁰ About 36,641,221,37 Euros.
- ⁴¹ Source: Ministry of Urban Affairs and Housing.
- ⁴² The BFDB held 14 sessions in 2010 and 10 sessions in 2011. Statistics on these two years show that 34 files involving some vote holders and managers were examined. 12 accused persons were sentenced to special fines of FCAF 144,674,169 (About 220,876.593 Euros), 5 were asked to pay deficits and 17 acquitted for failure to establish mismanagement. The BFDB declared itself incompetent in 1 matter and sent 1 file, concerning State petition, to the Ministry of Justice. It sent 4 files to the Audit Bench of the Supreme Court because the persons concerned were public accountants.
- ⁴³ About 76,335.87 Euros.
- ⁴⁴ For legislative, municipal, senatorial and regional elections.
- ⁴⁵ About 6,106.87 Euros.
- ⁴⁶ This is one of the Regions with a major prevalence of this phenomenon.
- ⁴⁷ 9 new prisons were set up in 2012 including Secondary Prisons, in Douala, Yaounde, Bali, Batibo and Touboro, and Main Prisons in Bandjoun, Mbankomo, Menji and Tombel.