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**Human Rights Council**  
**Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review**  
**Forty-fourth session**  
6–17 November 2023

## **Summary of stakeholders' submissions on Cameroon\***

### **Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

#### **I. Background**

1. The present report was prepared pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21, taking into consideration the periodicity of the universal periodic review and the outcome of the previous review.<sup>1</sup> It is a summary of 32 stakeholders' submissions<sup>2</sup> for the universal periodic review, presented in a summarized manner owing to word-limit constraints. A separate section is provided for the contribution by the national human rights institution that is accredited in full compliance with the Paris Principles.

#### **II. Information provided by the national human rights institution accredited in full compliance with the Paris Principles**

2. The Cameroon Human Rights Commission recommended the ratification of the main human rights instruments and better implementation of the national, regional and universal legal instruments in force in Cameroon.<sup>3</sup>

3. The Commission suggested that the new National Action Plan for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights should be aligned with the new National Development Strategy 2020–2030 and that the sectoral national public policies currently being implemented should take into account the human rights that are endangered in the current security context.<sup>4</sup>

4. The new Plan should be supported by a more human rights-sensitive budgeting process, which implies financial allocations that are substantial, sustainable throughout the implementation period and transparent, in other words, discernible in the medium-term expenditure frameworks of the authorities tasked with carrying out activities under the Plan, following a well-defined timetable. The design of indicators should be improved and underpinned by the human rights indicators proposed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.<sup>5</sup>

5. The Commission encouraged the harmonization of criminal and civil legislation on the minimum age for marriage with international standards. It recommended that Cameroon should increase human and material resources in places of deprivation of liberty so as to

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



improve conditions of detention; sign the decree implementing articles 18-1, 26 and 26-1 of the Penal Code on alternative sentences; prohibit incommunicado detention, which is conducive to torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment; and adopt reparation mechanisms that provide for restitution, compensation, rehabilitation and guarantees of non-repetition.<sup>6</sup>

### **III. Information provided by other stakeholders**

#### **A. Scope of international obligations<sup>7</sup> and cooperation with human rights mechanisms**

6. Le Réseau des Défenseurs des Droits Humains (REDHAC), the Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa (CHRDA), and Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights (RFKHR), (Joint Submission 13 – JS 13) recommended to Cameroon to ratify the Optional Protocol on the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.<sup>8</sup>

7. Franciscans International (FI) and Denis Hurley Peace Institute (Joint Submission 7 – JS7) recommended to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances.<sup>9</sup>

8. Ensemble contre la peine de mort, Droits et Paix, the Réseau des avocats camerounais contre la peine de mort and the World Coalition against the Death Penalty (Joint Submission 6 – JS6) recommended that Cameroon ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.<sup>10</sup>

9. Marist Foundation for International Solidarity recommended to consider ratifying and be a state party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education as well as the Convention on Technical and Vocational Education.<sup>11</sup>

10. The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) urged Cameroon to sign and ratify the TPNW, as a matter of international urgency.<sup>12</sup>

#### **B. National human rights framework**

##### **1. Constitutional and legislative framework**

11. Joint Submission 6 – JS6 also recommended that Cameroon should: abolish the death penalty for all crimes, including acts of terrorism, and commute death sentences to terms of imprisonment; deposit the instruments of ratification of the OP-CAT with the Secretary-General of the United Nations; and amend the Penal Code of 2016, the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2014 and the Code of Military Justice of 2017 to remove any mention of the death penalty. It further recommended that the law be changed so as to limit the jurisdiction of the military courts to cases concerning purely military offences, offences committed by serving military personnel and offences committed by military personnel in time of war.<sup>13</sup>

##### **2. Institutional infrastructure and policy measures**

12. The Unity Platform and Humanity First Cameroon called upon the Government to ensure that the Cameroon Human Rights Commission cooperates without discrimination or prejudice with civil society organizations representing the interests of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons and develops a platform for assisting human rights defenders who are harassed in the course of their work.<sup>14</sup>

13. International Communities Organisation recommended that *de jure* powers be granted to the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism (created in 2017).<sup>15</sup>

14. International Service for Human Rights, Cameroon Network of Human Rights and Pathways for Women's Empowerment (Joint Submission 11 – JS 11) stressed that the Cameroon Human Rights Commission should be provided with adequate funds to safeguard its independence and effectiveness, and that commissioners should be appointed through public, merit-based processes that respect the gender parity principles set out in CHRC Act section 14(2).<sup>16</sup>

15. The American Bar Association Center for Human Rights, the Committee to Protect Journalists, and Freedom House (Joint Submission 12 – JS 12) recommended to abolish the National Communication Council media regulator and establish a new independent broadcast regulator with narrowly defined powers.<sup>17</sup>

16. JS 12 encouraged to allow the media to establish independent self-regulatory bodies without interference from government and ensure that independent and self-regulatory associations, such as the Consortium of Journalism Associations, are able to operate freely and without interference.<sup>18</sup>

## C. Promotion and protection of human rights

### 1. Implementation of international human rights obligations, taking into account applicable international humanitarian law

17. Franciscans International (FI) and Denis Hurley Peace Institute (Joint Submission 7 – JS7) urged Cameroon to take all necessary measures to ensure the security, right to life, prevention from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of all anglophone Cameroonians against State forces and non-State actors' acts violating international human rights and humanitarian law.<sup>19</sup>

#### *Equality and non-discrimination*

18. The Cameroon section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF Cameroon) called for the removal from the Civil Code, by 2024, of all discriminatory provisions against women, including those related to marriage and family relations, and for the adoption and publication of the new family code and a comprehensive anti-discrimination law that lists all prohibited grounds of discrimination under article 2 (2) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.<sup>20</sup>

19. Just Atonement Inc recommended that Cameroon take steps to ensure that marginalized communities, including women and LGBTQ+ individuals, enjoy equal rights.<sup>21</sup>

#### *Right to life, liberty and security of person, and freedom from torture*

20. Release Them Campaign (Joint Submission 1 – JS1), a collective of individual human rights defenders and representatives of human rights organizations across Africa, Europe and the United States, recommended to look at the cases of enforced disappearances, mass killings, mass rape and dumping, extortion through arbitrary arrests by security forces, among others.<sup>22</sup>

21. The UPR Project at BCU, Centre for Human Rights, School of Law, Birmingham City University recommended to Cameroon to formalise its *de facto* moratorium on death penalty, with a view to abolition, within the next three years, and affirm its commitment to SDG 16 on access to justice through its support at the next biennial vote on the UNGA Resolution on the moratorium on the use of the death penalty.<sup>23</sup>

22. It also advised to annually publish data on the use of the death penalty, including the number of death sentences and executions, the nature of the offences and the reasoning behind convictions, identity of executed prisoners, and the number of death sentences commuted and pardoned and provide its National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms with a mandate on legislative abolition of the death penalty.<sup>24</sup>

23. Réseau des Défenseurs des Droits Humains (REDHAC), the Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa (CHRDA), and Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights (RFKHR), (Joint Submission 13 – JS 13) urged to end all enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings

and hold all perpetrators accountable and guarantee the right to a fair trial and access to justice and end all fair trial violations, including the use of military courts for civilians.<sup>25</sup>

*Human rights and counter-terrorism*

24. Un Monde Avenir (Joint Submission 2 – JS2) called upon the Government to review section 2 of the Anti-Terrorism Act, which exposed peaceful demonstrators to life imprisonment.<sup>26</sup>

*Administration of justice, including impunity, and the rule of law*

25. FIACAT and ACAT (Joint Submission 8 – JS8) called upon Cameroon to combat impunity by conducting independent, effective and impartial investigations into allegations of human rights violations, extrajudicial executions, torture and excessive use of force, prosecuting and sentencing perpetrators to penalties commensurate with the seriousness of these acts, and guaranteeing full protection and reparation to victims; and to grant independent monitoring mechanisms free access to places of deprivation of liberty in order to investigate human rights violations.<sup>27</sup>

26. They also called for Cameroon to ensure the strict observance of time limits associated with pretrial detention, including by raising awareness of the provisions of the new Code of Criminal Procedure, and to ensure that pretrial detention remains an exceptional measure by giving priority to alternatives.<sup>28</sup>

27. Release Them Campaign (JS1), requested an independent fact-finding mission to Cameroon to specifically investigate human rights issues of prisoners in all the detention facilities across the country and publish the findings, especially on the rights of prisoners in Cameroon.<sup>29</sup>

28. Release Them Campaign (JS1) recommended to look at the cases of enforced disappearances, mass killings, mass rape and dumping, extortion through arbitrary arrests by security forces, among others.

29. Un Monde Avenir (JS2) requested that Cameroon put an end to the prosecution of civilians in military courts and end all ongoing trials involving civilians in military courts.<sup>30</sup>

30. Un Monde Avenir (JS2) reiterated the urgent need for the Government to establish a framework for the rapid review of unconvicted prisoners' files, in order to relieve congestion in places of detention, and the need to open independent investigations into cases of arbitrary detention and excessive use of force by the police and the defence and security forces and to compensate all victims.<sup>31</sup>

31. The American Bar Association Center for Human Rights, the Committee to Protect Journalists, and Freedom House (Joint Submission 12 – JS 12) stressed to end incommunicado holding and lengthy pre-trial detention of journalists and the abolishment of detention without trial and ensure that arrests and detentions comply with international human rights law.<sup>32</sup>

32. JS 12 advised to conduct an investigation of the circumstances surrounding the incommunicado holding and lengthy pre-trial detention of journalists and take appropriate measures against those responsible for the violation of rights.<sup>33</sup>

*Fundamental freedoms and the right to participate in public and political life*

33. Un Monde Avenir (JS2) called upon Cameroon to release all persons deprived of their liberty for demonstrating peacefully and to adopt a law on access to information and public documents.<sup>34</sup>

34. Human Rights Foundation requested the urgent release of all individuals who have been arbitrarily detained for exercising their fundamental right to freedom of expression or association without substantial evidence, or without due process of the law.<sup>35</sup>

35. It also advised to repeal or amend laws to ensure that vaguely worded and ambiguous clauses relating to terrorism and spreading false news are clearly defined or removed, so they

cannot be applied in an arbitrary manner to stifle legitimate and peaceful dissent, freedom of the press, and freedom of expression.<sup>36</sup>

36. FIACAT and ACAT (JS 8) called upon Cameroon to guarantee in practice the freedoms of assembly and demonstration by respecting the prior declaration regime set forth in Act No. 90/55, by refraining from undue use of the argument of disturbance of public order or of the Anti-Terrorism Act (No. 2014/028) in order to ban peaceful demonstrations, and by immediately releasing all persons deprived of their liberty for demonstrating peacefully. They also called for thorough investigations into all cases of excessive use of force against demonstrators and participants in peaceful public gatherings.<sup>37</sup>

37. International Service for Human Rights, Cameroon Network of Human Rights and Pathways for Women's Empowerment (Joint Submission 11 – JS 11) promoted strong, high-level political support for Human Rights Defenders through public statements by State officials, which raise awareness about, recognise, and support their vital and legitimate work. They also recommended that Cameroon enact laws and policies that give full force and effect to the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, safeguard the right to safe and unhindered access to international human rights mechanisms, and prohibit acts of intimidation and reprisals against Human Rights Defenders who engage with the UN and regional human rights systems. In particular, Cameroon should prioritise and support the enactment of a specific national law on HRDs which accords with the Declaration and with the Model National Law on the Recognition and Protection of Human Rights Defenders.<sup>38</sup>

38. Front Line Defenders called for urgent measures to put an end to the arrest and detention as well as judicial harassment against Human Rights Defenders and requested guarantees that in all circumstances all Human Rights Defenders in Cameroon are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions and ensure full respect for the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.<sup>39</sup>

39. It also asked for a review and amendment to the 2014 anti-terrorism law to ensure that its provisions are not used to restrict freedom of expression or association and ensure its compliance with international human rights standards.<sup>40</sup>

40. Finally, it urged Cameroon to effectively address threats, attacks, harassment and intimidations against Human Rights Defenders, by thoroughly, promptly and independently investigating human rights violations and abuses against them and bringing the suspected perpetrators to justice in fair trials without recourse to the death penalty and providing effective remedies and adequate reparations to the victims.<sup>41</sup>

41. International Communities Organisation recommended to establish an enquiry into the reported discriminatory practices facing civil society organisations and to create an independent cross-community committee, with representation of minorities within Anglophone and Francophone communities, to oversee CSOs registration, decision-making process affecting CSOs, and protection of freedoms in line with international law. This would remove decision making processes on CSOs from the political sphere and induce separation of powers between the bodies responsible for the granting of licences to CSOs and state institutions.<sup>42</sup>

42. Lawyers for Lawyers recommended to take immediate measures to ensure sufficient safeguards are in place, both in law and in practice, to guarantee the full independence and safety of lawyers and their effective protection against any form of retaliation in connection with their professional activity.<sup>43</sup>

43. It also requested measures to ensure that crimes, harassment, and other violations against lawyers are effectively investigated and publicly condemned at all levels and that the perpetrators of such acts are prosecuted.<sup>44</sup>

44. It advised to refrain from any actions that may constitute harassment, persecution, or undue interference in the work of lawyers, including their criminal prosecution on improper grounds such as the expression of critical views or the nature of the cases that the lawyer is involved in.<sup>45</sup>

45. Lawyers for Lawyers also urged immediate measures to guarantee the effective protection of the right of freedom of expression of lawyers as set out in article 23 of the Basic

Principles on the Role of Lawyers, in particular their right to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action.<sup>46</sup>

*Right to privacy*

46. The Unity Platform and Humanity First Cameroon recommended pardoning and releasing all persons detained under article 347-1 of the Penal Code and article 83-1 of the Cybersecurity and Cybercrime Act of 2010.<sup>47</sup>

*Right to an adequate standard of living*

47. Franciscans International (FI) and Denis Hurley Peace Institute (Joint Submission 7 – JS7) recommended to investigate all cases of destruction of homes of anglophone Cameroonians and prosecute those responsible, establish fair and effective dispute resolution mechanisms to address claims for restitution and compensation of civilians having lost their home, in accordance with the principles of Housing and Property Restitution for Refugees and Displaced Persons (Pinheiro Principles), take all necessary measures to ensure that internally displaced persons are able to return to their home regions safely or make sure to offer them appropriate and sustainable alternatives and prevent homes destructions and forced displacement of civilians.<sup>48</sup>

*Right to health*

48. L'Association Sourires de Femmes (ASDF) recommended to strengthen critical support for women experiencing mental health concerns, both to prevent and address violence. This includes access to long-term counseling, affordable housing, childcare supports, better legal assistance, and employment opportunities.<sup>49</sup>

49. L'Association Sourires de Femmes (ASDF) recommended also to take measures to improve education concerning sexual and reproductive health and improve access to contraceptive care and family planning services, particularly in rural communities.<sup>50</sup>

50. It also recommended that Cameroon continue to improve maternal and child health outcomes, including by increased investment in the training and provision of medical professionals, with special attention to those in rural and remote areas and for those in low-resource settings. In accordance with Cameroon's commitments in the Geneva Consensus Declaration, this does not require the inclusion of abortion.<sup>51</sup>

51. Franciscans International (FI) and Denis Hurley Peace Institute (Joint Submission 7 – JS7) recommended to take all urgent measures to ensure that everyone in the Northwest and Southwest Regions of Cameroon have a safe and secure access to the public health care system and prevent and address acts of violence, attacks and threats against medical personnel and patients in the Northwest and Southwest Regions in accordance with the Security Council Resolution 2286 on the protection of civilians in armed conflict and medical personnel.<sup>52</sup>

52. JS7 also requested to improve the availability and the quality of the primary health-care system to ensure that hospitals are adequately staffed with medical personnel and equipment as well as regular supply of medicines.<sup>53</sup>

*Right to education*

53. JS7 recommended to take all necessary urgent measures to ensure the security of all students and education personnel in the Northwest and Southwest Regions throughout the academic year and the reintegration of English-speaking children, especially in rural areas as well as investigation and prosecution of all cases of violence directed at teachers, students and parents and educational infrastructures.<sup>54</sup>

54. Marist Foundation for International Solidarity requested to make the preschool mandatory and free for all, and to ensure that preschools are evenly distributed in the rural and urban areas of the country. The Foundation also asked to prioritize the training and recruitment of preschool teachers.<sup>55</sup>

55. The Cameroon section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF Cameroon) called for an increase in public funding for education, the abolition of all indirect fees in primary education, and the punishment of education staff who demand the payment of informal fees in schools, in order to make free primary education a reality.<sup>56</sup>

56. It also called for the reconstruction, as soon as possible, of schools that had been destroyed or damaged as a result of the ongoing crises in the Far North, North-West and South-West Regions, for subsidized schooling for internally displaced children, and for all measures to be taken to provide functional educational facilities at all levels and in safe, accessible locations, especially for girls.

*Development, the environment, and business and human rights*

57. The Centre pour l'Environnement et le Développement, the Coalition Foncière du Cameroun, the Réseau Recherche Actions Concertées "Pygmées" and the Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association (Joint Submission 5 – JS5) recommended that the measures set out in the Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries Act of January 1994 should be implemented so as to enable compensation for loss of use rights. This will help to prevent the continued loss of income and livelihoods for communities as a result of growth in investment.<sup>57</sup>

58. They urged Cameroon to undertake a mission to all gold mining sites with the aim of identifying human rights violations and setting companies a short deadline to remedy them.<sup>58</sup>

59. Just Atonement Inc recommended that Cameroon invest in early warning for extreme weather events that may become more frequent and/or intense due to climate change. Meteorological services and communication infrastructure will help prepare citizens for disastrous events and mitigate possible damage.<sup>59</sup>

## **2. Rights of specific persons or groups**

### *Women*

60. The European Centre for Law and Justice recommended to effectively combat Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Cameroon and to enforce laws as well as provide support services for victims. It noted that because FGM is ingrained in the culture, education and awareness campaigns must be carried out to stop this harmful and destructive practice.<sup>60</sup>

61. Further, Cameroon must enforce its laws, which prohibit the marriage of individuals under the age of 18. Once again, because this practice is deeply ingrained in cultural traditions, awareness and educational campaigns must be conducted to show the damage this practice causes, as well as educate the population on the current law regarding marriage.<sup>61</sup>

62. The Cameroon section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom called upon Cameroon to involve traditional and religious leaders in the fight against discrimination and violence against women and girls by eliminating harmful cultural and religious practices, including those based on custom.<sup>62</sup>

63. Marist Foundation for International Solidarity stated that the government should take measures to improve the application of the Right to Education Act, and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act and ensure that both primary and secondary schools are girl-child friendly, alongside UNICEF, Bilateral cooperation with friends countries, Plan International and other NGOs, boost girl-child's school attendance by offering free textbooks, meals and scholarships to girls, and supporting grassroots women's advocacy groups especially in areas with lowest girl enrollment.<sup>63</sup>

64. It also encouraged Cameroon to carry out girl-child education campaign to raise awareness and sensitize the regions of the country where traditional beliefs continue to hamper schooling for girls and the negative impact of child marriage practices for the development of girls and women as well as for the society.<sup>64</sup>

65. AFFADA, ALDEPA, ALVF-EN, AMEF, CIDA, COSDHEN, Hope Advocates Africa, Mother of Hope Cameroon, PawED, RADAC, Reach Out Cameroon, Right Livelihood, Saare Tabitha, WEEN (Joint Submission 15 – JS 15) recommended to adopt a

specific law to effectively combat all forms of sexual and gender-based violence, including marital rape and reconsider the adoption of an inclusive family code and scale up efforts to bridge the gap between legislation and implementation on all types of legislation and policies affecting women and girls.<sup>65</sup>

66. They also promoted more shelters and response centres for survivors of gender-based violence throughout the country, with a focus on crises areas and guarantee, among others, that they have the necessary financial and human resources to run efficiently, to ensure that response centres and shelters for survivors of gender-based violence are effectively holistic and inclusive, including for women living with disabilities and refugees.<sup>66</sup>

#### *Children*

67. L'Association Sourires de Femmes (ASDF) recommended to repeal any laws allowing early/child and forced marriage, enact laws criminalizing early/child and forced marriage and ensure implementation and enforcement to effectively protect women and girls.<sup>67</sup>

68. Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children stated that in Cameroon, corporal punishment of children was lawful, despite recommendations to prohibit it by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, other human rights treaty bodies, and of the 3rd cycle UPR of Cameroon in 2018.<sup>68</sup>

69. There is no explicit prohibition of corporal punishment in alternative care settings, where it is lawful as for parents.<sup>69</sup>

70. International Rehabilitation Council for Torture victims, Trauma Center Cameroon, and Women in Alternative Actions (Joint Submission 10 – JS 10) recommended strengthening juvenile justice systems by promoting offender accountability through restorative justice, community service, and educative talks on the negative effects of juvenile delinquency and social cohesion. They also recommended that civil society organizations have full access to places of detention and prisons to provide urgent direct assistance, medical, psychosocial, and legal support to detained youths.<sup>70</sup>

71. SOS Village d'Enfants, the Réseau Camerounais des Organisations des Droits de l'Homme, the Centre International pour la Promotion de la Création and Action Locale pour un Développement Participatif et Autogéré (Joint Submission 14 – JS14) called for the swiftest possible adoption of the draft child protection code and the draft personal and family code.<sup>71</sup>

72. They also called for the adoption of a decree establishing a national child protection commission under the supervision of the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family.<sup>72</sup>

73. JS 14 encouraged Cameroon to convene a national conference on child protection under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Affairs, with the participation of non-State, private, community and international actors who play an important role in the protection system, in order to develop national priorities and strategic directions, determine the necessary resources and strengthen mechanisms for the coordination, monitoring and evaluation at all levels (central, regional and local) of private charities and other institutions that take in children.<sup>73</sup>

74. JS 14 also called for the removal from the body of laws and regulations of provisions that conflict with those set forth in duly ratified Conventions. For example, the minimum legal age for marriage is set at 18 years for boys and girls alike. However, the Civil Code sets the marriage age at 15 years for girls with parental authorization, and 18 years for boys, even though a new law entered into force in July 2016 prohibiting the marriage of boys and girls under the age of 18 years. The former provision should therefore be repealed.<sup>74</sup>

#### *Indigenous peoples and minorities*

75. Broken Chalk recommended that Cameroon continue to focus on implementing inclusive education in schools and fight against discrimination against indigenous children in their access to education and that the infrastructure of schools be better equipped for



students with physical disabilities and indigenous people who have to travel from their villages.<sup>75</sup>

76. Broken Chalk also recommends that school curriculums include information about the history of the indigenous population of Cameroon. Their record should be accurately taught in the classroom, and their culture should be discussed with the class. Doing so will make it possible for other children to learn about their own history and, ideally, reduce the perception that indigenous children are below them.<sup>76</sup>

*Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons*

77. The Advocates for Human Rights and Alternatives Cameroon (Joint Submission 4 – JS4) recommended to decriminalize consensual same-sex sexual activity between adults by repealing Article 347-1 of the Penal Code and immediately release, commute the sentences of anyone convicted of consensual same-sex sexual activity between adults, and expunge their criminal records related to consensual same-sex sexual activity between adults.<sup>77</sup>

78. It requested the Ministry of Health to sanction health care workers who do not respect patients' rights to confidentially, regardless of their real or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and/or sex characteristics, and who refuse to provide care to members of the LGBTIQ+ community or those perceived to be members of the LGBTIQ+ community.<sup>78</sup>

79. JS4 also urged to ensure the protection and security of human rights defenders and lawyers representing LGBTIQ+ persons or those accused of engaging in consensual same-sex sexual activity between adults.<sup>79</sup>

80. The Unity Platform and Humanity First Cameroon called upon the Government to take action to raise awareness of stigmatization and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons in public service and to encourage the Ministry of Justice to cooperate specifically and systematically with civil society organizations representing the interests of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons and to take those organizations' recommendations into account in the State's various reports.<sup>80</sup>

### **3. Specific regions or territories**

81. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights was concerned about the situation of insecurity in the North-West and South-West regions and the protracted armed conflicts and civil strife in Cameroon, involving the Government, English-speaking combatants and Boko Haram, resulting in political, economic and social instability.<sup>81</sup>

82. Release Them Campaign (JS1) recommended that the UN Security Council takes appropriate measures to bringing the conflict in the North and Southwest Regions of Cameroon to an end and lasting peace and justice restored.<sup>82</sup>

83. Un Monde Avenir pointed out that, during the third cycle of the universal periodic review, Cameroon had received a recommendation (A/HRC/39/15/Add.1, para. 121.60) requesting it to "investigate all cases of disappearance of political opposition representatives, including members of the English-speaking minority, and take all adequate measures to find them and enable them to return safely to their homes".<sup>83</sup>

84. The crisis in the North-West and South-West regions nevertheless continues to claim victims of enforced disappearance. Very few of these disappearances have been investigated by the authorities and the individuals concerned remain missing to this day. Cases included the abduction of several people by non-State armed groups and by the defence and security forces. In particular, at least 81 people, including 79 students, were abducted from Nkwen Presbyterian Secondary School in Bamenda (North-West Region) on Monday, 5 November 2018, while the President of the House of Chiefs of the North-West Region and traditional chief of Bambalang, Fon Yakum Kevin Teuvih, was abducted by non-State armed groups on 7 December 2021.<sup>84</sup>

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> A/HRC/39/15, A/HRC/39/15/Add.1, and A/HRC/39/2.

<sup>2</sup> The stakeholders listed below have contributed information for this summary; the full texts of all original submissions are available at: [www.ohchr.org](http://www.ohchr.org) (one asterisk denotes a national human rights institution with A status).

*Civil society**Individual submissions:*

ASDF	Association sourires de Femmes, Yaoundé (Cameroon);
Broken Chalk	The Stichting Broken Chalk, Amsterdam (Netherlands);
CFam	Center for Family and Human Rights, New York, NY 10017 (United States of America);
ECLJ	European Centre for Law and Justice, The, Strasbourg (France);
End Violence	Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, New York (United States of America);
FLD	Front Line Defenders – The International Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Blackrock, county Dublin (Ireland);
FMSI	Marist International Solidarity Foundation, Rome (Italy);
H.R.F	Human Rights Foundation, New York (United States of America);
ICAN	International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, Geneva (Switzerland);
ICO	International Communities Organisation, London (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
JAI	Just Atonement Inc., 2nd Floor (United States of America);
L4L	Lawyers for Lawyers, 1007 JC Amsterdam (Netherlands);
UPR BCU	The UPR Project at BCU, Birmingham (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
WILPF	Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, Geneva (Switzerland).

*Joint submissions:*

JS1	<b>Joint submission 1 submitted by:</b> #ReleaseThem Campaign, Aschheim (Germany); #ReleaseThem Campaign (#RT), Pathways for Women’s Empowerment and Development (Pawed), Southern Cameroon European Women (Scew), E.V. – Victoria Relief Foundation (VRF);
JS2	<b>Joint submission 2 submitted by:</b> Un Monde Avenir, Douala (Cameroon); Code De Procédure Pénal (CPP), Déclaration Universelle De Droit De L’homme (DUDH), Pacte International De Droit Civil Et Politique (PIDCP), Organisation Non Gouvernementale (ONG), Organisation De La Société Civil (OSC), Droit Civil Et Politique (DCP), Droit Economique Social Et Culturel (DESC), Tribunal Militaire (TM), Examen Périodique Universel (EPU), Mouvement Pour La Renaissance Du Cameroun (MRC), Social Democratic Front (SDF), Stratégie National De Développement (SND30), Procès-Verbal (PV), Election Cameroun (ELECAM), Code Electorale (CE), Nord-Ouest Et Sud -Ouest (NOSO), Women International League For Peace And Freedom (WILPF), Un Monde Avenir (1MA), Association Femme Et Enfant (AFE), Human Rights Defense (HRDC), Cameroon Radio Television (CRTV), Commission National De Droit De L’homme Et Liberté (CNDHL), Charte Africaine Des Droits de L’homme et des Peuples (CADHP), Organisation Des Nations Unies (ONU), Force de Défense et Sécurité (FDS), Réseau Des Défenseurs Des Droits Humains En Afrique Centrale (REDHAC), Conseil Economique Et Social Des Nations Unies (ECOSOC), Cercle Des Educateurs Solidaires Des Quartiers Réunis (CESOQUAR), Directeur de Publication (DP), Charte Africaine de la Jeunesse (CAJ), Charte Africaine de la Démocratie des Election et de la Gouvernance

- (CADEG), Convention sur l'Élimination de toutes formes de Discrimination à l'Égard des Femmes (CEDEF);
- JS3 **Joint submission 3 submitted by:** Joint Submission by The African Association of Jehovah's Witnesses and The European Association of Jehovah's Witnesses, 65618 Selters (Germany); African Association of Jehovah's Witnesses and The European Association of Jehovah's Witnesses;
- JS4 **Joint submission 4 submitted by:** Advocates for Human Rights, Minneapolis (United States of America); The Advocates for Human Rights, Alternatives-Cameroun;
- JS5 **Joint submission 5 submitted by:** Center for Environment and Development, Yaoundé (Cameroon); Le Centre pour l'Environnement et le Développement (CED), La Coalition Foncière du Cameroun (CFC), Le Réseau-Recherche Actions Concertées « Pygmées » (RACOPY), Le champ de l'Association de développement social et culturel de La Mbororo (MBOSCUA);
- JS6 **Joint submission 6 submitted by:** Ensemble contre la peine de mort, Paris (France); Ensemble contre la peine de mort (ECPM), Droits et Paix, Réseau des avocats camerounais contre la peine de mort (RACOPEM), Coalition mondiale contre la peine de mort (WCADP);
- JS7 **Joint submission 7 submitted by:** Franciscans International, Geneva (Switzerland); Franciscans International (FI), Denis Hurley Peace Institute (DHPI);
- JS8 **Joint submission 8 submitted by:** Fédération Internationale de l'Action des Chrétiens pour l'Abolition de la Torture, Paris (France); ACAT Cameroun;
- JS9 **Joint submission 9 submitted by:** Humanity First Cameroon, Yaoundé (Cameroon); Plateforme Unity Humanity First Cameroon;
- JS10 **Joint submission 10 submitted by:** International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims, Copenhagen (Denmark); International Rehabilitation Council for Torture victims, Trauma Center Cameroon, Women in Alternative Action;
- JS11 **Joint submission 11 submitted by:** International Service for Human Rights, Geneva (Switzerland); Pathways for Women Empowerment and Development; Cameroon Network of Human Rights Organisations;
- JS12 **Joint submission 12 submitted by:** Joint Submission by the American Bar Association, Center for Human Rights, the Committee to Protect Journalists, and Freedom House for UPR – Cameroon, New York, NY (United States of America); American Bar Association Center for Human Rights, the Committee to Protect Journalists, and Freedom House;
- JS13 **Joint submission 13 submitted by:** Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights, Washington (United States of America); Réseau des Défenseurs des Droits Humains (REDHAC), Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa (CHRDA), Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights (RFKHR);
- JS14 **Joint submission 14 submitted by:** Coalition des OSC pour l'EPU 2023 Cameroun, YAOUNDE (Cameroon); SOS Villages d'Enfants, Réseau Camerounais des Organisations de défenses des droits de l'Homme, Association Locale de Développement Participatif et Autogéré, Cercle Internationale de Promotion de la Création ;
- JS15 **Joint submission 15 submitted by:** UPR Coalition on Women and Girls' Rights in Crises Areas, Geneve (Switzerland); AFFADA, Association de Lutte contre les Violences faites aux Femmes et aux Filles Extrême Nord Cameroun, Action Locale pour un Développement Participatif et Autogéré, Authentique Memorial Empowerment

Foundation, Community Initiative for Developmental Action, Collectif des Organisations de la Société Civile des Droits de l'Homme dans la Région de l'Extrême Nord, Hope Advocates Africa, Mother of Hope Cameroon, Reach Out Cameroon, Réseau d'Action pour le Développement et l'Autonomisation des communautés, Right Livelihood, Pathways for Women's Empowerment and Development, Saare Tabitha, WEEN Cameroon;

*National human rights institution:*

CDHC

Commission des Droits de l'homme du Cameroun, Yaoundé (Cameroon);

*Regional intergovernmental organization:*

AU-ACHPR

African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Western Region P.O. Box 673 Banjul (Gambia);

<sup>3</sup> Soumission de La Commission des Droits de l'homme du Cameroun, pp. 7–8.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>5</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>6</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>7</sup> *The following abbreviations are used in UPR documents:*

ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
OP-ICESCR	Optional Protocol to ICESCR
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICCPR-OP 1	Optional Protocol to ICCPR
ICCPR-OP 2	Second Optional Protocol to ICCPR, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
OP-CEDAW	Optional Protocol to CEDAW
CAT	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
OP-CAT	Optional Protocol to CAT
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
OP-CRC-AC	Optional Protocol to CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict
OP-CRC-SC	Optional Protocol to CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
OP-CRC-IC	Optional Protocol to CRC on a communications procedure
ICRMW	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
OP-CRPD	Optional Protocol to CRPD
ICPPED	International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

<sup>8</sup> Soumission de Réseau des Défenseurs des Droits Humains (REDHAC), the Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa (CHRDA), and Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights (RFKHR), (Joint Submission 13 – JS13), p. 11.

<sup>9</sup> Submission from Franciscans International (FI) and Denis Hurley Peace Institute (Joint Submission 7 – JS7), para. 53.

<sup>10</sup> Ensemble contre la peine de mort (ECPM), Droits et Paix, Réseau des avocats camerounais contre la peine de mort (RACOPEM), Coalition mondiale contre la peine de mort (WCADP), (Joint Submission 6 – JS6), para. 60.

<sup>11</sup> Submission from the Marist Foundation for International Solidarity, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> Report of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>14</sup> Rapport alternatif sur les violations de droits humains sur la base de l'orientation sexuelle réelle ou supposée et des identités de genre et leurs expressions au Cameroun (Joint Submission 9 – JS9), para. 64.

<sup>15</sup> Submission of the International Communities Organisation, para. 24.

<sup>16</sup> Submission from International Service for Human Rights, Cameroon Network of Human Rights and Pathways for Women's Empowerment (Joint Submission 11 – JS11).

- 17 Joint Submission by the American Bar Association Center for Human Rights, the Committee to Protect Journalists, and Freedom House (Joint Submission 12 – JS12), paras. 98–100.
- 18 *Idem*.
- 19 Submission from Franciscans International (FI) and Denis Hurley Peace Institute (Joint Submission 7 – JS7), para. 53.
- 20 Soumission La Ligue Internationale des Femmes pour la Paix et la Liberté – section du Cameroun, en abrégé WILPF Cameroon, p. 7.
- 21 Submission from Just Atonement Inc, para. 22.
- 22 Report from RELEASE THEM CAMPAIGN (Joint Submission 1 – JS1) – para. 5.
- 23 Submission from the UPR Project at BCU, Centre for Human Rights, School of Law Birmingham City University, para. D.
- 24 *Idem*.
- 25 Submission Réseau des Défenseurs des Droits Humains (REDHAC), the Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa (CHRDA), and Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights (RFKHR), (Joint Submission 134 – JS13), p. 11.
- 26 Rapport Un Monde Avenir (Joint Submission 2 – JS2) – para. 32.
- 27 Le Rapport de la FIACAT et de l’ACAT, para. 19.
- 28 *Idem*, para. 38.
- 29 Report from RELEASE THEM CAMPAIGN (Joint Submission 1 – JS 1) – para. 5.
- 30 Rapport Un Monde Avenir (Joint Submission 2 – JS2) – para. 3.
- 31 Rapport Un Monde Avenir (Joint Submission 2 – JS2) – paras. 17–25.
- 32 Joint Submission by the American Bar Association Center for Human Rights, the Committee to Protect Journalists, and Freedom House (Joint Submission 12 – JS12), paras. 74–78.
- 33 *Idem*.
- 34 Rapport Un Monde Avenir (Joint Submission 2 – JS2) – paras. 31–33.
- 35 Submission from Human Rights Foundation, para. 27.
- 36 *Idem*.
- 37 Le Rapport de la FIACAT et de l’ACAT, para. 60.
- 38 Submission from International Service for Human Rights, Cameroon Network of Human Rights and Pathways for Women’s Empowerment (Joint Submission 11 – JS11).
- 39 Submission by Front Line Defenders – the International Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, para. 23.
- 40 *Idem*.
- 41 *Idem*.
- 42 Joint Submission for International Rehabilitation Council for Torture victims, Trauma Center Cameroon, and Women in Alternative Actions, (Joint Submission 10 – JS10), paras. 49–50.
- 43 Submission by Lawyers for Lawyers (L4L), para. G.
- 44 *Idem*.
- 45 *Idem*.
- 46 *Idem*.
- 47 Rapport alternatif sur les violations de droits humains sur la base de l’orientation sexuelle réelle ou supposée et des identités de genre et leurs expressions au Cameroun (Joint Submission 9 – JS9), para. 55.
- 48 Submission from Franciscans International (FI) and Denis Hurley Peace Institute (Joint Submission 7 – JS7), para. 16.
- 49 Submission by The Advocates for Human Rights – Association Sourire des Femmes, para. 49.
- 50 *Idem*.
- 51 The Center for Family and Human Rights (C-Fam), para. 18.
- 52 Submission from Franciscans International (FI) and Denis Hurley Peace Institute (Joint Submission 7 – JS7), para. 31.
- 53 *Idem*.
- 54 *Idem*, para. 41.
- 55 Submission from Marist Foundation for International Solidarity, p. 2.
- 56 Soumission de la Ligue Internationale des Femmes pour la Paix et la Liberté – section du Cameroun, en abrégé WILPF Cameroon, pp. 16–17.
- 57 Le Centre pour l’Environnement et le Développement, la Coalition Foncière du Cameroun, le Réseau-Recherche Actions Concertées « Pygmées » et la Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association (Joint Submission 5 – JS5), para. 39.
- 58 Le Centre pour l’Environnement et le Développement, la Coalition Foncière du Cameroun, le Réseau-Recherche Actions Concertées « Pygmées » et la Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association (Joint Submission 5 – JS5), para. 25.
- 59 Submission from Just Atonement Inc, para. 24.
- 60 Submission from The European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ), paras. 36–37.

- <sup>61</sup> Submission from The European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ), paras. 36–37.
- <sup>62</sup> Soumission La Ligue Internationale des Femmes pour la Paix et la Liberté – section du Cameroun, en abrégé WILPF Cameroon, p. 7.
- <sup>63</sup> Marist Foundation for International Solidarity, p. 4.
- <sup>64</sup> Idem.
- <sup>65</sup> Submission AFFADA, ALDEPA, ALVF-EN, AMEF, CIDA, COSDHEN, Hope Advocates Africa, Mother of Hope Cameroon, PawED, RADAC, Reach Out Cameroon, Right Livelihood, Saare Tabitha, WEEN.
- <sup>66</sup> Idem.
- <sup>67</sup> Submission by The Advocates for Human Rights – Association Sourire des Femmes, para. 49.
- <sup>68</sup> Submission from Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, p. 1.
- <sup>69</sup> Idem.
- <sup>70</sup> Joint Submission for International Rehabilitation Council for Torture victims, Trauma Center Cameroon, and Women in Alternative Actions, (Joint Submission 10 – JS10), paras. 49–50.
- <sup>71</sup> Soumission de SOS Village d’Enfants, le Réseau Camerounais des Organisations des Droits de l’Homme, le Centre International pour la Promotion de la Création, et Action Locale pour un Développement Participatif et Autogéré, (Joint Submission 14 – JS14).
- <sup>72</sup> Idem.
- <sup>73</sup> Idem.
- <sup>74</sup> Idem.
- <sup>75</sup> Submission from Broken Chalk, paras. 22–23.
- <sup>76</sup> Submission from Broken Chalk, para. 26.
- <sup>77</sup> The Advocates for Human Rights and Alternatives Cameroon (Joint Submission 4 – JS4), para. 59.
- <sup>78</sup> Idem.
- <sup>79</sup> Idem.
- <sup>80</sup> Rapport alternatif sur les violations de droits humains sur la base de l’orientation sexuelle réelle ou supposée et des identités de genre et leurs expressions au Cameroun (Joint Submission 9 – JS9), para. 63.
- <sup>81</sup> Fiche technique sur le Cameroun de la Commission Africaine des Droits de l’Homme et des Peuples, p. 6.
- <sup>82</sup> Report from RELEASE THEM CAMPAIGN (Joint Submission 1 – JS1) – para. 5.
- <sup>83</sup> Rapport Un Monde Avenir (Joint Submission 2 – JS2).
- <sup>84</sup> Idem.
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