

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

November 2021

Consolidated table of OHCHR recommendations and responses received from Cameroon following an OHCHR technical mission to the country in September 2019

From 5 to 26 September 2019, OHCHR deployed a human rights assessment team to Cameroon with two objectives: to assess the human rights situation in the North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon and propose recommendations for follow-up actions and further cooperation with the Government of Cameroon. The deployment of the team followed the visit to Cameroon of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, in May 2019.

The assessment team received full cooperation from Cameroonian authorities during its mission in the country. The OHCHR report on the findings of the mission and recommendations was shared in December 2019 with the Government which subsequently provided its comments. Since then, OHCHR and the Government engaged in consultations on the way forward towards the implementation of the report's recommendations. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and other developments delayed these consultations. On 26 May 2021, the Government provided information on follow-up actions taken, including in relation to the human rights situation in the North-West and South-West regions. This offered the opportunity for the issuing of this document.

OHCHR remains committed to working with the Government of Cameroon, the National Human Rights Commission and other national partners to advance human rights in the country. The consolidated table is a tool to map progress and identify areas that need further work or remain unaddressed, including based on OHCHR's continuing assessment of the human rights situation in the Cameroon

Annexed to this table is a summary of the report of the OHCHR assessment team deployed to Cameroon in September 2019.

Consolidated table of OHCHR recommendations and responses received from the Government of Cameroon

Ministry of Justice		
<i>Recommendations by OHCHR</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Other possible actors/support</i>
1.1 Ensure prompt, thorough, effective, impartial and independent investigations into all alleged human rights violations and abuses committed in the North-West and South-West, holding perpetrators accountable, and providing victims with effective redress	Medium to long term	
1.2 Undertake confidence-building measures to increase public trust in institutions in the North-West and South-West	Medium to long term	UN
1.3 Ensure access to justice by guaranteeing the functioning of courts in the two regions, including by deploying personnel fluent in English and educated in Common Law	Medium to long term	
1.4 Provide free legal aid for victims of human rights violations and abuses	Short term	NGOs, National Bar Association
1.5 Facilitate unannounced and regular visits to places of detention to the Cameroon National Commission for Human Rights and Freedoms and OHCHR, and ensure follow-up to their recommendations	Short term	NCHRF, OHCHR
1.6 Improve the living conditions and treatment of prisoners, take steps to address prison overcrowding and ensure that families are allowed to visit their relatives and legal representatives their clients in prison	Short, medium and long term	
<i>Responses received from the Government of Cameroon</i>		
Action	Status	
a. Prosecution of officers involved in violence against lawyers	Completed	
b. Lawyers' robes and wigs that were seized by the police were effectively handed back.	Completed	
c. Discontinuance of proceedings against 333+ persons arrested	Completed	
d. Presidential offer of amnesty to combatants in the North West and South West willing to drop their arms and join the peace process.	Ongoing	
e. Integration of the first crop of English-speaking Magistrates with a strong specialisation in Common Law following deliberations of the Higher Judicial Council by Decree N° 2020/430.	Completed	
f. English version of the Treaty and other OHADA texts published in the Official Gazette of OHADA	Completed	
g. Promulgation of Law No. 2017/014 modifying the organization and functioning of the Supreme Court, with the introduction of a Common Law Section	Completed	

h. Census of English-speaking Magistrates, with a view to increasing their number and the redeployment of magistrates, following the linguistic criterion. A Decree appointing English-speaking Magistrates to the posts of State Counsel in the Court of First Instance and High Courts of the two regions.	Completed
i. The process of amendments to the law on the organization of the legal profession should continue.	Ongoing
j. Harmonisation of the Criminal Procedure Code.	Completed
k. Reorganization of ENAM to include a Common Law section.	Completed
l. The creation of a law school for the training of lawyers and notaries.	Ongoing
m. The recruitment of interpreters specialized in courts, pending the results of the special recruitment of English-speaking magistrates and registrars.	Ongoing
n. The continuation, on a transitional basis, of the exercise of duties of lawyers and notaries, cumulatively in the North West and South West Regions.	Ongoing
o. The preparation of the National Forum on Justice, during which all the problems raised by lawyers, and many others will be taken into account.	Ongoing

Ministry of Territorial Administration and the Ministry of Decentralization and Local Administration

<i>Recommendations by OHCHR</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Other possible actors/support</i>
2.1 Introduce simplified procedures for IDPs to obtain national ID cards, including in terms of lower fees	Short term	Bureau National de l'Etat Civil (BUNEC)
2.2 Waive the need for IDP children to present a birth certificate when registering in school and /or introduce simplified procedures for it to be obtained	Short term	Ministry of Basic Education
2.3 Ensure that the population in the North-West and South-West has access to public services every workday	Short term	The whole government is concerned (school, social services...)
2.4 Enhance coordination of humanitarian aid distribution by the Humanitarian Coordination Centres, including by simplifying procedures for implementing humanitarian agencies/NGOs (e.g. focal point nomination/waivers)	Short term	UN agencies, local and international NGOs
2.5 Decentralise distribution of humanitarian aid in the North-West and South-West with a view to reaching those in need, by duly integrating gender dimension	Short term	Implementing partners accepted by the communities
2.6 Develop programmes of assistance for IDPs outside the North-West and South-West regions (West, Littoral, Center etc.), including their access to adequate housing, health care, education and social protection	Short to medium term	UN, Implementing partners accepted by the communities

2.7 Create conditions for a safe return of IDPs	Medium term	
Responses received from the Government of Cameroon		
Actions taken	Status	
a. Promulgation of Law 2019/024 on the General Code of Decentralized Local Authorities.	Completed	
b. Election and setting up of Regional Assemblies and Special Status to the SW and NW.	Ongoing	
c. Setting up of the Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Plan for the North West and South West (EHAP-NW/SW).	Ongoing	
d. Order for the Special Recruitment of 500 Translators and Translator-Interpreters into the Public Service.	Completed	
e. Creation of the National School of Local Administration and appointment of officials.	Completed	
f. Creation of the Ministry of Decentralisation and Local Development	Completed	
g. Creation and implementation of a Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction and Development of the North West and South West Regions.	Ongoing	
h. Consultation with the Ministry of Territorial Administration for the return of traditional rulers to their constituencies	Completed	
Ministries of Basic Education, Secondary Education and Higher Education		
Recommendations by OHCHR	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Other possible actors/support</i>
3.1 Ensure free primary education for all, including by eliminating any informal fees, reopening schools in the North-West and South-West and guaranteeing the safety of children and school personnel	Short to medium term	UNICEF
3.2 Prior to reopening of schools, support community-based education initiatives	Short term	UNICEF, international NGOs
3.3 Remove any obstacles to IDP children accessing education outside the North-West and South-West regions, including by sanctioning those who are demanding payment of informal fees, eliminating obstacles to school registration, and deploying sufficient personnel to respond to the increase in the number of students	Short term	Ministry of Territorial Administration
3.4 Organise catch-up/extra classes and make arrangements for exam taking in order to minimise the impact of school closures on children	Short term	UNICEF, UNESCO
3.5 Introduce provisional measures aimed at ensuring livelihoods for private school teachers	Short term	Private school providers
3.6 Ensure that the English curriculum is available in the schools in the North-West and South-West and lessons given by English speaking personnel	Medium term	

3.7 Ensure investment in and refurbish education facilities that have been damaged or destroyed in the North-West and South-West	Medium term	UN, bilateral donors
<i>Responses received from the Government of Cameroon</i>		
Actions taken	Status	
a. Recruitment of 1,000 young bilingual teachers specialised in science and technology. The Minister of Public Service and Administrative Reform launched a special recruitment of 1,000 young bilingual graduates. - Recruitment of lecturers in all the 8 State Universities.	Completed	
b. Department of French Modern Letters to be created in the Higher Teachers' Training College (ENS) of the University of Bamenda	Completed	
c. Introduction of new examination instruments in addition to Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ), for entrance examinations into professional schools. Creation of another Higher Technical Teachers' Training College (HTTTC) for the French speaking subsystem of education. Creation of a Higher Institute of Engineering and Technology for the English speaking subsystem (Polytechnic at University of Bamenda).	Completed	
d. Reinforcement of the Admission of HND/HPD certificate holders in particular specialities, into third year of HTTTCs of the Universities of Bamenda and Buea, to make up for the acute shortage of technical teachers in English speaking schools.	Completed	
e. The Minister of Higher Education has ordered for the Harmonization of programmes in the Universities of Buea and Bamenda. The draft texts to align the technical education certification system of the English speaking subsystem of education with the guiding principles of the said system are being finalized.	Ongoing	
f. Increase in the number of candidates to be admitted into the HTTCs and HTTTCs. Admission of candidates into specialization in HTTC and HITTC of the Universities of Buea and Bamenda on the basis of their highest certificates.	Completed	
g. Effective implementation of harmonised BMD programmes in all universities. Awarding of end-of-course diplomas that specify the status of trainees in professional schools. More autonomy for universities in the organization of competitive entrance exams into professional schools.	Completed	
h. A special subsidy of CFAF 2 billion, to be granted to lay private and denominational schools for the current fiscal year, up to a total of CFAF 4.3 billion.	Completed	
i. The Minister of Secondary Education instructed the dispatch of teachers, the bulk of whom were sent to the North-West and South-West Regions. French speaking lecturers and administrative staff who were not fluent in English were removed from the Universities of Bamenda and Buea.	Completed	

j. The policy on textbooks and teaching materials reviewed at the National Forum on Education. “One text book” policy implemented.	Completed	
k. Students going back to school during the opening of the school year in 2020, despite the Covid-19 pandemic.	Ongoing	
l. Setting up of a Special Fund of CFAF 2 billion to private secular and denominational schools in the North-West and South-West Regions.	Completed	
m. Creation of a Faculty of Law and Political Sciences at the University of Buea, the creation of Departments of English Law in the Universities of Douala, Dschang, Ngaoundere, and Maroua, the teaching of Public Law in the Universities of Buea and Bamenda.	Completed	
Ministry of Social Affairs		
<i>Recommendations by OHCHR</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Other possible actors/support</i>
4.0 Conduct a mapping of unaccompanied children, street children and children heading households due to the crisis in the North-West and South-West regions and mobilise/strengthen the existing service providers in order to provide them with holistic assistance	Short term	Local and international NGOs, UNICEF, Ministry of Territorial Administration
4.1 Ensure that in the crisis in the North-West and South-West, special attention is given to persons with disabilities and older persons, including in terms of provision of humanitarian assistance	Short term	Ministry of Territorial Administration
Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and the Family		
<i>Recommendations by OHCHR</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Other possible actors/support</i>
5.1 Enhance capacities of current service providers for SGBV survivors, including by providing them with training and assistance, with a view to ensuring holistic support (medical, psycho-social, legal, economic) for SGBV survivors	Short term	Local and international NGOs, UNFPA
5.2 Establishment of and awareness raising about referral pathways for SGBV survivors	Short term	UNFPA, local and international NGOs
5.3 Establishment of a free-of-charge phone line/WhatsApp number where survivors can receive the assistance needed, including in terms of information on referral pathways, and which is widely advertised (radio, billboards)	Short term	UNFPA, local and international NGOs
Ministry of Defence		
<i>Recommendations by OHCHR</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Other actors/support</i>
6.1 Ensure that joint defence and security forces operating in the North-West and South-West regions are given clear instructions on compliance with applicable international law, including with regard to the prohibition of killings, arbitrary detention as well as torture and ill-treatment	Short term	

6.2 Ensure prompt, thorough, effective, impartial and independent investigations into all alleged human rights violations committed by defence and security forces in the North-West and South-West, holding perpetrators accountable and providing victims with effective redress	Short term	
6.3 Keep the public informed about the investigations into human rights violations by the defence and security forces	Short term	Ministry of Communication
6.4 Consider organising a pre-deployment training for defence and security forces on international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and more specifically on the use of force, with a comprehensive gender dimension	Short term	OHCHR (HQ, CARO)
6.5 Enable unannounced and regular visits to places of detention to the National Human Rights Institution and OHCHR, and ensure follow-up to their recommendations	Short term	CHRC, OHCHR CARO, NGOs
6.6 Appoint gender focal points for every joint security force in the North-West and South-West, tasked with awareness raising on the prohibition of rape and other sexual violence and reporting of incidents.	Short term	
6.7 Consider limiting in practice the application of Act No. 2014/028 of 23 December 2014 on the penalization of acts of terrorism and ensure that all persons sentenced under this act are given a fair trial, particularly in cases where civilians are tried by Military Justice Tribunals (which should be limited in number)	Short term	
6.8 Revise the provisions of Act No. 2014/028 of 23 December 2014 that are incompatible with International Human Rights Law	Medium to long term	OHCHR (HQ, CARO)
6.9 Review military/police/gendarmerie code of conduct/manuals with a view of ensuring their compliance with relevant applicable international law	Long term	OHCHR (CARO)
<i>Responses received from the Government of Cameroon</i>		
Actions taken	Status	
a. With reference to recommendation 6.1, the preparation of the Defence Forces for operations is permanent. The High Command has in this sense committed in 2018, a manual for training called "The Instructor's Guide" (a copy of which was given to the High Commissioner during her working visit to Cameroon in May 2019). The content of this manual takes into account international legal instruments that protect human rights, and is applied by soldiers in the North-West and South-West regions, within the framework of reinforced policing. The document was strongly inspired by international humanitarian and human rights law instruments. For example, it deals with the rules for the use of weapons, policing, ethics in policing situations, appropriation of the principles of humanity, proportionality, necessity and precaution.	Completed	
b. With reference to recommendation 6.2, all violations perpetrated by the Defence and Security Forces are denounced and investigated. When such violations are proven, prosecutions are systematically initiated. To date, some military personnel are being		

<p>prosecuted by the Military Courts in the North-West and South-West regions, in relation to abuses observed in the operations. This is the case of those prosecuted in the framework of the so-called 'Ngarbuh 3' case, which occurred in February 2020.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>c. With reference to recommendation 6.3, all military court hearings are public. Naturally, only cases investigated in the course of judicial information are covered by the secrecy of the investigation.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>d. With reference to recommendation 6.4, and as mentioned in section a, pre-deployment training is permanent within the Defence and Security Forces and at all levels of military training: Technical Aptitude Certificate 1 (TAC1), Technical Aptitude Certificate 2 (TAC2), Technical Aptitude Certificate 3 (TAC3), Armoury Certificate 1 (AC2), Armoury Certificate 2 (AC2), Speciality Certificate 1 (SC1), Speciality Certificate 2 (SC2), Unit Commander Course (SCU), Staff Certificate (CEM), Staff Diploma (DEM), and War College.</p> <p>To reinforce this training, a training centre has been established in Motchebom to prepare troops for internal and external operations (including participation in UN peacekeeping operations, such as the one in the Central African Republic). This was a step forward in popularising international humanitarian law and human rights law, while taking gender into account.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>e. With reference to recommendation 6.5, the competent authorities are regularly asked to visit places of detention. These requests have always received the necessary support. The Minister of Defence, through the Director of Military Justice, has instructed all heads of military prosecutor's offices, in a memorandum, to visit the above-mentioned places often enough, in order to reduce the number of abuses described.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>f. With reference to recommendation 6.7, it should be noted that several seminars have been held on the judicial fight against terrorism. The said seminars were organised in order to mitigate the rigour of the application of Law N°2014/028 of 23 December 2014 on the repression of acts of terrorism. For example, six (06) seminars bringing together military and civilian magistrates officiating before the Military Courts, were organised during the period 2020-2021, in collaboration with the American NGO Global Center.</p> <p>In addition, the military courts in charge of the fight against terrorism strictly observe the rules of fair trial, reinforced by those of the Code of Criminal Procedure (rights of the defence, exercise of remedies, etc.).</p> <p>Moreover, prosecutions before the military courts are not only based on the quality of the person, but also on the offence committed.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>g. With reference to recommendation 6.8, work on the review of Law No. 2014/028 of 23 December 2014 on the repression of acts of terrorism, to make it compatible with international instruments of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, has been completed.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

h. With reference to recommendation 6.9, as mentioned in section a, the "Instructor's Guide" already exists.	Completed	
Ministry of Communications		
<i>Recommendations by OHCHR</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Other possible actors/support</i>
7.1 Refrain from any illegal or disproportionate interference in the press and media activities and on internet access related to the reporting on the situation in the North-West and South-West	Short term	
7.2 Capacity-building of journalists on international norms related to freedom of expression/media and redress mechanisms	Medium term	UNESCO, CARO
Ministry of Public Health		
<i>Recommendations by OHCHR</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Other possible actors/support</i>
8.1 Empower community health workers by providing them with trainings and necessary equipment to conduct their activities	Short term	International and national NGOs, WHO
8.2 Build capacity of community health workers in terms of prevention of epidemics	Short term	WHO, Health cluster
8.3 Conduct a needs-assessment and deploy additional English-speaking personnel to the medical facilities in the North-West and South-West regions and in the neighbouring regions/cities with high influx of IDPs, including medical doctors and psychologists	Short term	
8.4 Ensure security of the medical personnel and patients in the North-West and South-West	Short term	
8.5 Consider establishing a fund aimed at covering the cost of medical bills for those most vulnerable affected by the crisis	Short term	International NGOs, UN
8.6 Ensure investment in and refurbish health facilities in the North-West and South-West that have been damaged or destroyed	Medium term	UN, bilateral donors
8.7 Conduct a mapping of needs in terms of psychological assistance and invest in educating a sufficient number of psychologists to deal with the trauma related to the crisis in the North-West and South-West	Long term	Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family
Ministry of External Relations		
<i>Recommendations by OHCHR</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Other possible actors/support</i>
9.1 Ensure effective coordination of human rights focal points in different Ministries, including by organising (at least) monthly meetings and regular information-sharing (e.g. group e-mail address/WhatsApp group)	Short term	OHCHR (CARO), relevant Ministries
9.2 Establish a mechanism for regular tracking of the implementation of actions identified based on the roadmap to be agreed upon (based on these proposed actions)	Short term	

National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism		
<i>Recommendations by OHCHR</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Other possible actors/support</i>
10.1 Proactively and regularly make use of the mediation role of the National Commission for the promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism in relation to the crisis in the North-West and South-West	Short term	
10.2 Establish functioning representations of the Commission in every region and as a matter of priority in the NW and SW regions	Medium term	
10.3 Strengthen the capacity of Commissioners on human rights, including on linguistic rights	Medium term	OHCHR (CARO)
Responses received from the State		
Action	Status	
a. Enactment of Bilingualism Law	Completed	
b. Training on fight against Hate Speech and Xenophobia	Completed	
Cameroon Human Rights Commission (CHRC)		
<i>Recommendations by OHCHR</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Other possible actors/support</i>
11.1 Strengthen the capacity of Commissioners on human rights monitoring and reporting in crisis situations, with a view to producing periodic public reports	Short term	OHCHR (CARO)
11.2 Enhance the protection work of the Commission's regional representations in the NW and SW regions in terms of receiving complaints and ensuring follow-up	Short term	Relevant authorities
11.3 Conduct regular unannounced prison visits in line with the Commission's role as national preventive mechanism under OPCAT	Short term	Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Defence
11.4 Undertake measures related to rendering the Commission fully Paris Principles compliant, strengthen its independence and guarantee its financial autonomy	Medium term	Relevant authorities
OTHER INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM THE STATE		
Economic measures		
Action	Status	
a. Decree N 0 2019/3179/PM to grant the status of economic disaster areas to the Far-North, North-West and South-West Regions.	Completed	
b. 90 days tax breaks accorded to businesses to assuage the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on small and medium size enterprises.	Completed	
c. Adoption of a refreshed National Development Strategy SDN30.	Completed	

Reintegration of ex-combatants	
Action	Status
a. Creation of National Centre for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of ex-combatants.	Completed
b. Creation of an Inter-ministerial Committee for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism.	Completed
c. Reintegration of ex-combatants	Ongoing