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*Plenary sitting*

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**B8-0245/2019**

16.4.2019

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 135 of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Cameroon  
(2019/2692(RSP))

**Charles Tannock, Monica Macovei, Ruža Tomašić, Karol Karski, Arne Gericke, Jana Žitňanská, Jan Zahradil, Anna Elżbieta Fotyga, Branislav Škripek**  
on behalf of the ECR Group

**B8-0245/2019**

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Cameroon  
(2019/2692(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to statements by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the Commission on the situation in Cameroon, including that of 5 March 2019;

- having regard to statements by the EEAS on the situation in Cameroon, including that of 31 January 2019;

- having regard to the Statement by the European Parliament DROI Committee Chair of 7th March 2019 on the situation in Cameroon;

- having regard to statements by OHCHR on the situation in Cameroon, including that of 21 February 2019;

- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948;

- having regard to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

- having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of June 1981, which Cameroon has ratified;

- having regard to the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy;

- having regard to the Cotonou Agreement;

- having regard to the interim Economic Partnership Agreement between the EU and Cameroon, effective since 4 August 2016;

- having regard to the constitution of Cameroon;

- having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure;

A. whereas Cameroon faces a number of simultaneous political and security challenges, including threats from Boko Haram in its Far North Province, cross-border threats along its eastern border with the Central African Republic, as well as an internal armed separatist rebellion in its Anglophone North and Southwest Provinces;

B. Whereas Presidential elections took place on 7 October 2018 with incumbent President Biya being re-elected; whereas President Biya has been in office since 1982 and is one of Africa's longest serving leaders:

- C. Whereas the elections were marred by claims of fraud, voter intimidation, and associated violence;
- D. Whereas Parliamentary and local elections were scheduled to take place in 2018 but have been since delayed;
- E. Whereas the President of Cameroon holds significant powers, including the right to appoint and dismiss the Prime Minister, members of Cabinet, Judges, Provincial Governors, and senior appointments in the armed forces;
- F. Whereas the ruling Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) dominates political life, holding 148 out of 180 seats in the National Assembly and 81 of the 100 seats in the Senate;
- G. Whereas opposition parties activities and electoral chances are severely hampered by repression and the suppression of free speech and assembly; whereas the leader, Maurice Kamto, and up to 200 members of the Cameroon Renaissance Movement (MRC) were arrested in January 2019 and continue to be detained;
- H. Whereas corruption remains a major obstacle to Cameroon's development, ranked 152 out of 180 according to Transparency International's 2018 Corruption Perception Index;
- I. Whereas gender based violence and the persecution of minorities remains a problem;
- J. Whereas Boko Haram has been active in Cameroon's Far North Province since 2013, with many of the terrorist group's fighters coming from Cameroon's own population; Whereas the situation has improved in recent years yet security threats remain and legal issues surrounding the fate of former fighters persist;
- K. Whereas many former Boko Haram fighters have been the subject to extrajudicial killings by security forces or community vigilante groups according to reports; whereas Cameroon is a member of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) to counter Boko Haram;
- L. Whereas Cameroon's Far North Province hosts around 250,000 internally displaced persons and up to 140,000 Nigerian refugees;
- M. Whereas deeply rooted historical tensions persist between Cameroon's majority Francophone and its minority Anglophone communities; whereas Cameroon's Northwest and Southwest Provinces remain predominantly English speaking and boast distinct educational and legal systems;
- N. Whereas in 2016 the appointment of French speaking lawyers to the Anglophone provinces sparked protests; whereas the government response was disproportionately heavy-handed with hundreds, including many peaceful protestors, being arrested and charged;
- O. Whereas in October 2017 some armed groups declared independence for the two provinces and have subsequently engaged in an armed struggle against Government forces;
- P. Whereas the conflict has been marked by widespread abuse against the civilian population

according to reports; whereas government forces have been accused of extrajudicial killings; torture, and indiscriminate arrests whilst there are reports of the separatist armed groups carrying out assassinations, kidnappings, and attacks on school personnel;

Q. Whereas the Cameroonian Government has pointed to the work of the institution of the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism, and the creation of the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Committee in response to the situation in the Northwest and Southwest Provinces; whereas these efforts appear to be an inadequate response to the crisis;

R. Whereas human rights groups continue to highlight the role of the Government's Rapid Intervention Brigade (BIR) in the conflict, particularly regarding attacks against civilians, including the recent case in the village of Meluf;

S. Whereas up to 500,000 Cameroonians have been internally displaced due to the conflict and a further 30,000 have sought refuge in neighboring Nigeria;

T. Whereas the situation in neighboring Central African Republic (CAR) continues to pose cross-border threats to Cameroon; Whereas the country hosts around 275,000 CAR refugees;

1. Notes that Cameroon is an important partner for the EU in the region, including in the fight against terrorism;

2. Condemns the politically motivated arrest of opposition figures and activists and calls for the release of all those currently detained;

3. Express its concern regarding the situation in Cameroon's Northwest and Southwest Provinces;

4. Strongly condemns all attacks against civilians and calls on the Cameroonian Authorities to investigate those allegations made against its security forces, particularly with regards to the activities of the Rapid Intervention Brigade (BIR);

5. Notes that the work of the institution of the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism, and the creation of the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Committee in response to the situation in the Northwest and Southwest Provinces however considers this an inadequate response;

6. Calls on the Government to fully investigate all allegations of voter fraud and intimidation during the 2018 Presidential election; Reminds the Cameroonian Authorities of its commitments to democracy and upholding the rule of law as part of the Cotonou Agreement;

7. Calls on the Government to commit to holding parliamentary and local elections this year in line with its constitution;

8. Remains concerned about pervasiveness of corruption and recommends that the Cameroonian Authorities consider adopting a wider separation of powers between the executive and the judiciary in this regard;

9. Supports any initiative that will promote an inclusive political dialogue within the context of preserving fundamental freedoms and the rule of law;

10. Notes the large number of refugees that Cameroon plays host to and the economic strain that this places on the country;

11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the EEAS, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, the parliaments and governments of the Member States, the Government and Parliament of Cameroon.