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*Plenary sitting*

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**B8-0249/2019**

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 Cameroon  
(2019/2691(RSP))

**Elena Valenciano, Victor Boștinăru, Soraya Post, Maria Arena**  
on behalf of the S&D Group

**European Parliament resolution on Cameroon  
(2019/2691(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the statement by High Representative Mogherini on the deteriorating political and security situation in Cameroon of 5 March 2019 and the statement by the Spokesperson of the High Representative on the situation in Cameroon of 31 January 2019,
  - having regard to the statement by the UN experts on the crackdown on protests of 11 December 2018,
  - having regard to the statement of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights on the human rights status in Cameroon of 6 March 2019,
  - having regard to the anti-terrorism law of Cameroon of 2014,
  - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
  - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966,
  - having regard to the Cotonou Agreement, in particular Article 96 thereof,
  - having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of 1981,
  - having regard to the Constitution of Cameroon,
  - having regard to Rule 135(5) and 123(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the constitution of Cameroon was amended in 2008 to remove term limits; whereas presidential elections took place in Cameroon on 7 October 2018; whereas the incumbent President Paul Biya, who has been in power since 1982, was declared the winner of the election; whereas this is his seventh term in office; whereas the election was marred by irregularities and manipulation of results as noted in particular by the US State Department Report of 13 March 2018;
- B. whereas supporters and allies of the opposition party Cameroon Renaissance Movement (MRC) led by Maurice Kamto held protests in Douala, Yaoundé, Dshang, Bafoussam and Bafany; whereas state security forces suppressed the protests with disproportionate force including teargas and rubber bullets;

- C. whereas around 200 people including Maurice Kamto and other opposition leaders were arbitrarily arrested in January and detained without immediate access to a lawyer; whereas these opposition supporters including the leader have been charged with crimes including insurrection, hostilities against the fatherland, rebellion, deterioration of public or classified assets, contempt of the President of the Republic, and gatherings of a political nature;
- D. Whereas those members and supporters of the opposition face trial in military courts and are facing the death penalty; whereas the European Union opposes the death penalty, in all cases and without exception;
- E. whereas the Anglophone community faces structural and worsening discrimination in the Northwest and Southwest regions; whereas Cameroonian security forces violently suppressed demonstrations and separatist protests by the Anglophone community in 2017;
- F. whereas the situation has rapidly deteriorated and has resulted in violence plaguing both regions including abductions, looting, indiscriminate force, destruction of villages, and killings by armed groups and extrajudicial killings by state forces including Cameroonian soldiers, gendarmes and members of the Rapid Intervention Battalion; whereas this has resulted in hundreds of thousands of internally displaced people;
- G. whereas the ongoing conflict, including the kidnapping of children, is preventing access to basic services in the Northwest and Southwest including healthcare and education;
- H. whereas the Government of Cameroon has failed to grant the UN Human Rights Office access to the affected regions;
- I. whereas the United States has suspended military assistance with Cameroon in response to the ongoing violations of human and civil rights;
- J. whereas Cameroon is facing serious human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law by Boko Haram in the Far North region;
- K. whereas Cameroon is facing a humanitarian crisis responding to over 600 000 internally displaced people, around 350 000 refugees as a result of neighbouring conflicts in Nigeria and the Central African Republic, and 1.9 million people at risk of food insecurity in the country;
- 1. Deplores the violence and discrimination facing the Anglophone community; expresses particular concern over allegations that Government forces are responsible for killings, excessive use of force, and torture; calls on the Government to immediately take all steps to bring an end to the violence and impunity in the country;

2. Notes with concern the deteriorating situation for internally displaced people; calls in particular for immediate measures by the Government of Cameroon and the international community to protect the security, safety and unhindered access to healthcare and education for children;
3. Deeply regrets the repressive climate in Cameroon facing opposition parties and supporters, civil society and citizen movements; condemns the arrest and detention of Maurice Kamto and other peaceful protesters; recalls that civilians should not be tried in military courts; calls on the Cameroonian authorities to release Maurice Kamto and the protesters immediately and drop all politically-motivated charges; further calls on the Government of Cameroon to cease all harassment and intimidation of political activists, including the ban on peaceful political gatherings, demonstrations and protests, and to take action to clamp down on instances of hate speech;
4. Recalls that the death penalty has not been used in Cameroon since 1997; notes that this is a milestone in the country's path to full abolition; reiterates the European Union's absolute opposition to the death penalty and calls on the Government of Cameroon to confirm it will not seek the death penalty for political activists and protesters;
5. Expresses concern that the 2014 anti-terrorism law is being misused to restrict peaceful assembly; calls on the Government to urgently take steps to ensure these rights are protected for all people in Cameroon including lifting the ban on MRC demonstrations and launching a review of the provisions of the anti-terrorism law;
6. Reiterates that a vibrant and independent civil society is essential to uphold human rights and the rule of law; expresses concern that the activities of the Cameroon Anglophone Civil Society Consortium have been banned; urges the government to lift the ban and ensure an open space in which civil society can operate; further condemns, in this regard, the criminalisation of homosexuality in Cameroon and urges the Government to ensure space for LGBTI civil society organisations to operate safely;
7. Urges the Government of Cameroon to build a genuine, representative and vibrant democracy; calls therefore for the government to convene all political stakeholders for a consensual review of the electoral system, with the aim of ensuring a free, transparent and credible electoral process; urges this process to take place before any further elections, in order to promote peace and avoid post-electoral crises;
8. Expresses alarm that the UN has been denied access to the Northwest and Southwest regions and calls on the Government of Cameroon to ensure immediate and unrestricted access;
9. Supports calls from the international community for the Government to launch independent investigations into reports of human rights abuses by state forces; urges the Government to cooperate closely with the UN in this regard; further urges the

Government of Cameroon to urgently organise an inclusive dialogue for a peaceful and lasting solution to the crisis in the Anglophone regions;

10. Notes the decision of the United States to scale back its military assistance to Cameroon due to credible allegations of gross violations of human rights by security forces; calls on the European Commission to undertake an assessment of EU support to security services in this regard and report back to the European Parliament;
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the European Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, the ACP-EU Council, the institutions of the African Union and the Government and Parliament of Cameroon.