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*Plenary sitting*

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**B8-0254/2019**

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))

**Jan Huitema, Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Gérard Deprez, María Teresa Giménez Barbat, Marian Harkin, Ivan Jakovčić, Petr Ježek, Louis Michel, Javier Nart, Urmas Paet, Maite Pagazaurtundúa Ruiz, Carolina Punset, Jozo Radoš, Frédérique Ries, Robert Rochefort, Marietje Schaake, Jasenko Selimovic, Johannes Cornelis van Baalen, Hilde Vautmans, Mirja Vehkaperä**  
on behalf of the ALDE Group

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

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Cameroon,
  - having regard to the statement by DROI Chair Antonio Panzeri on 7 March 2019 on the situation in Cameroon European Parliament,
  - having regard to the declaration by the HR/VP Federica Mogherini on 5 April 2019 on the deteriorating political and security situation in Cameroon,
  - having regard to the various statements by the EEAS Spokesperson on the situation in Cameroon, and in particular the latest on 31 January 2019,
  - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948,
  - having regard to the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
  - having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of June 1981, which Cameroon has ratified,
  - having regard to the Constitution of the Republic of Cameroon,
  - having regard to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement ('Cotonou Agreement'),
  - having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of procedure,
- A. Whereas, previously known as a stable country despite the fact that President Paul Biya has been in power since 1982, Cameroon faced unrest, violence and serious human rights abuses subsequently to the attacks by Boko Haram, in the Far North since 2014, abusive military operations against a secessionist insurgency in the South West and North West, the two Anglophone regions since 2016 and Government crackdown on political opposition since Presidential elections held in October 2018;
- B. whereas the law provides for freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, including for the press, but the government have restricted this right throughout the country in accordance with the provisions of the law on public demonstrations; whereas from January 17 to April 20, the government blocked access to the internet in the South west and Northwest regions; whereas Government authorities claimed the shutdown was an attempt to limit the propagation of images and misinformation about the crisis in the Anglophone regions;
- C. whereas in October 2016, peaceful demonstrations were organized by Cameroon's Anglophone minority against structural discrimination considered as mainly Francophone; whereas the government has partially responded to Anglophone socio-professional grievances, but some extremists have chosen the path of secession;

- D. whereas the governmental security forces used excessive force against them and the violence and unrest escalated in late 2016 after a series of strikes and protests contributing to the radicalization of the discourse and tactics of Anglophone activists;
- E. whereas armed separatists appeared in the field inclined to fight against the government; whereas separatists have carried out mass kidnappings including pupils and students, targeted killings of police, law enforcement officers and local authorities, extortion and have torched educational institutions, thereby depriving thousands of young people of access to education, as well as hospitals, depriving populations of access to healthcare;
- F. whereas the situation in the country has degenerated both with the insurgent terrorist group Boko Haram that has extended its actions since 2012 from Nigeria to the broader Lake Chad basin, including the far North region of Cameroon, and with the separatist crisis involving the Anglophone Northwest and Southwest regions;
- G. whereas by 2018 violence has escalated more with security forces conducting large scale operations and the separatists conducting hit-and-run attacks, and fighting had become almost daily;
- H. whereas the security forces and the armed separatists have both targeted civilians; whereas since October 2018 over 170 have been killed as a result of the fighting;
- I. whereas the situation has worsened considerably since 2017 and turned into a war of secession, when militant secessionist groups symbolically proclaimed on 1st October 2017 the independence of the “Republic of Ambazonia” from mainly francophone Cameroon; whereas 1st October is the commemorating date of the (re)unification between the Cameroon under French mandate and the British Southern Cameroons in 1961;
- J. whereas during the 2016-2017 academic year about 42 500 children did not attend school according to UN Office for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA); whereas teachers and students have been targeted by separatists for not participating to the boycott of schools, and whereas, according to Amnesty International, at least 42 schools have been attacked between February 2017 and May 2018 by separatists;
- K. whereas between January and September 2017, over 30 schools were burnt and damaged in the Anglophone regions, 139 primary schools in the Far North region because of insecurity and the constant threat of armed groups;
- L. whereas there are reports that governmental forces are responsible for extrajudicial executions, excessive use of force, burning down houses, arbitrary detentions and torture, several cases documented by Human Rights Watch; whereas according to the International Crisis Group, government forces and armed secessionists killed over 420 civilians in the two Anglophone regions since the crisis escalated in 2017;
- M. whereas all the protagonists of insecurity in the country, be it Boko Haram, Anglophone insurgents or governmental forces, have committed serious human rights abuses and breaches of international humanitarian law; whereas the Boko Haram exactions and crimes has resulted approximately 240 000 people in the far North region have fled their home since 2014 according to Amnesty International; whereas over 30 000 Anglophone Cameroonians refugees have been registered by UNHCR in Nigerian region neighbouring Cameroun and 430 000 internal displaced HRW said;

- N. whereas in December 2017, the UN Committee against Torture expressed grave concerns over the use of torture and secret detention in the country and criticized the Cameroonian authorities for not clearly indicating whether investigations were being carried out into these actions;
- O. whereas the 7 October 2018 presidential election where Paul Biya was standing for a seventh term was strained by insecurity and violence in at least these three regions; whereas the participation was very weak in the Anglophone regions and internet access in these areas has been disrupted ;
- P. whereas the election was compounded by a political divide between the ruling party and an opposition that accuses it of repeated fraud; whereas, contesting the results, the opposition called for mass street demonstrations banned by the government;
- Q. whereas at least 170 civilians have been killed since October in the Anglophone regions according to Human Rights Watch; whereas since the presidential election, and the re-election of Paul Biya, the NGO has recorded 220 incidents in the two Anglophone regions;
- R. whereas unfortunate candidate in the presidential election, opponent Maurice Kamto was arrested and could be accused of insurrection, hostility against the homeland, criminal conspiracy, public disorder, rebellion, group rebellion, and incitement to insurrection; whereas Human Rights Watch has also received reports that as many as 200 followers of Kamto, are currently detained following protests on 26 January 2019;
1. Condemns in the strongest terms the cases of torture, forced disappearances, extrajudicial killings perpetrated by governmental forces and armed separatists;
  2. denounces any use of violence against members of the security forces, calls on the security forces to carry out operations by respecting international human rights law;
  3. calls on the Cameroon's authorities to end the excessive use of force by the security services, mass arrests, arbitrary detentions, torture and other ill-treatments;
  4. urges the Cameroon's authorities to adopt all necessary measures consistent with Cameroon's human rights obligations to end the cycle of violence;
  5. deplors the measures taken aiming at restricting and preventing peaceful protests, including curfews and ban on public meetings in certain circumstances;
  6. Recalls that the Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Plan has been implemented by the Government for the North-West and South-West Regions 2018-2019, with a view of ensuring multi-faceted protection and assistance to displaced persons as a matter of priority, provision of healthcare to people affected by the crisis, etc;
  7. urges the Cameroon's authorities to immediately stop restrictions and ensure a thorough, impartial and independent investigation into all allegations of human rights violations perpetrated by security forces and take effective measures to prosecute and sanction all those responsible for such violations;

8. expresses its deep concern about political leaders detained in degrading and inhuman conditions, calls the government of the Republic of Cameroon for the free of all prisoners of conscience, whether arrested before or after the last election in order to appease the situation; calls for the resumption of political dialogue with a view to ending the crisis;
9. Urges the international community, notably the Community of the Central African States - CEAC (Communauté des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale)- and the African Union (AU), to press Cameroon to find a sustainable democratic solution to the current crisis;
10. instructs its President to forward this resolution to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Government and the Parliament of Cameroon, to the Community of the Central African States and the African Union.