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*Plenary sitting*

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**B9-0566/2021**

23.11.2021

## 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 144 of the Rules of Procedure

on the human rights situation in Cameroon  
(2021/2983(RSP))

**Michael Gahler, Christian Sagartz, Sara Skytvedal, György Hölvényi, Esther de Lange, Isabel Wiseler-Lima, David McAllister, Antonio López-Istúriz White, Miriam Lexmann, Tomáš Zdechovský, Inese Vaidere, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Peter Pollák, José Manuel Fernandes, Adam Jarubas, Tom Vandenkendelaere, Janina Ochojska, David Lega, Krzysztof Hetman, Stanislav Polčák, Loránt Vincze, Ivan Štefanec, Lefteris Christoforou, Andrey Kovatchev, Vladimír Bilčík, Seán Kelly, Michaela Šojdrová, Luděk Niedermayer**  
on behalf of the PPE Group

**European Parliament resolution on the human rights situation in Cameroon  
(2021/2983(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Cameroon, in particular the one of 18 April 2019,
  - having regard to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ‘Cameroon: Situation report’ of 5 November 2021 and the EU annual report on human rights and democracy in the world 2020 - Country report: Cameroon of 21 June 2021,
  - having regard to the statement on Cameroon by the Spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights of 27 October 2020,
  - having regard to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement (‘Cotonou Agreement’),
  - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
  - having regard to the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights of 1966,
  - having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of 1981,
  - having regard to the Constitution of the Republic of Cameroon,
  - having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas relations between the EU and Cameroon include various areas; whereas Cameroon is the first country in the region that ratified the Economic Partnership Agreement with the EU and plays a key role in the region; whereas the EU supports the strategic priorities of Cameroon;
- B. whereas the crisis in Cameroon between majority Francophone and minority Anglophone communities has evolved into an armed insurgency and calls for independence for the country’s minority Anglophone regions;
- C. whereas Felix Agbor Nkongho, a human rights lawyer and prominent defender of the rights of the Anglophone minority, is advocating for a peaceful resolution of the crisis; whereas he has received death threats from the armed separatist groups, and it is not the first time he faces attacks and harassment; whereas he was dismissed as a lecturer in the Faculty of Law and Political Science of the University of Buea, and was arbitrarily arrested and detained following his participation in a peaceful protest, but was released and charges were dropped;
- D. whereas clashes between Anglophone separatist armed groups and government security forces increase in frequency and severity; whereas humanitarian aid has also been heavily disrupted in the region due to non-State armed Groups and lockdown measures, leaving people in the concerned regions severely food insecure;
- E. whereas government forces have carried out extrajudicial killings of civilians, including women and children, torture, committed sexual violence, destructed property, including villages, homes, health facilities and hospitals, and have arrested and detained citizens arbitrarily, as a result of hostilities or while collaborating with separatist fighters;
- F. whereas President Biya, as a result of international pressure, established a commission of inquiry into the killings in Ngarbuh, following which the government admitted their security forces bear some responsibility and announced the arrest against individuals involved, but there is no further information on this;
- G. whereas armed separatist groups have raped, killed, tortured, violently assaulted,

threatened, and kidnapped hundreds of people while collaborating with the military, including women, humanitarian workers, teachers and children; whereas they have attacked schools and universities, students and teachers across the Anglophone regions and two schools out of three in the region remain closed aggravating and prolonging their violation of the right to access education;

- H. whereas various attempts in Cameroon in 2020 and 2021 to resolve the crisis have failed;
  - I. whereas after the renewal of the legal framework in December 2019 through the adoption of the General Code on Regional and Local Authority, the country organised regional and local elections; whereas the signature of the presidential decrees organising the transfer of competences and for the gradual transfer of human and financial resources to the decentralised authorities for the concrete implementation of this decentralisation process is awaiting;
  - J. whereas the government continues restricting freedom of expression and association and has become increasingly intolerant of political dissent; whereas hundreds of opposition party members and supporters were arrested following demonstrations calling for a peaceful solution to the crisis in the Anglophone regions; whereas there is persistent restriction on political opposition, protestors, journalists, and civil society;
  - K. whereas attacks by the Islamist armed group Boko Haram in the Far North Region included daily killings, kidnappings, thefts, and destruction of property, thus committing serious human rights abuses and violations of international law and international humanitarian law; whereas these attacks also involved child suicide bombers and child soldiers; whereas the presumed death of Abubakar Shekau, the leader of Boko Haram, in a confrontation in Nigeria with the splinter faction Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), helped consolidate ISWAP's power and increased insecurity in Cameroon's Far North region; whereas government forces are unable to effectively protect the affected population;
- 1. Is deeply concerned about the human rights situation in Cameroon; underlines the right of the citizens to freedom of expression, assembly and association; calls for the respect of human rights;
  - 2. Condemns the death threats against Mr. Nkongho, whose actions are of a peaceful nature;
  - 3. Urges both the Cameroonian government and the political and military leaders of separatist groups to agree on a humanitarian ceasefire and encourages the parties to the conflict to agree on confidence building measures such as the freeing of non-violent political prisoners and lifting of school boycotts; deplores the failure and unwillingness of both parties to the conflict to engage in truly meaningful peace talks to solve the conflict; is convinced that political dialogue conducted in a spirit of compromise, effective political participation and inclusion - including for all relevant stakeholders - is the only way forward to reach lasting peace; calls on both the Cameroonian government and leaders of separatist groups to make use of the existing mediation offers provided by third parties for immediate and direct negotiations;
  - 4. Condemns human rights abuses, international law and international humanitarian law violations perpetrated by the parties to the conflict and underlines the importance of the fight against impunity; calls on the Cameroonian authorities to ensure independent and impartial investigations and prosecution of the serious violations and abuses by both State and non-State actors in accordance with international law and standards, in order to end impunity in the country;
  - 5. Recalls that the death penalty has not been used in Cameroon since 1997, a milestone

- in the country's path to full abolition; reiterates the EU's opposition to the death penalty; calls on the Government of Cameroon to ensure that it will be abolished;
6. Beliefs that the decentralisation process, seen as a system of economic, social and political governance, is a key instrument to respond to the multiple development challenges, notably through enhanced accountability of local politicians but also of the local administration vis à vis engaged citizens; welcomes the EU's support of the process;
  7. Calls on the authorities of Cameroon to immediately and unconditionally release political opponents, protesters, and any other citizen who has been arbitrarily arrested and detained solely for political purposes; condemns violations of fundamental freedoms;
  8. Condemns the blockage of humanitarian aid and calls on the Cameroonian government to ensure that it reaches the region in crisis; calls on the UN and EU to continue monitoring the humanitarian situation and assessing needs to respond effectively;
  9. Condemns the terrorist actions by Boko Haram in Cameroon; acknowledges the efforts of the Cameroonian authorities in combatting this group; calls on the international community to support all efforts combatting this Islamist armed group;
  10. Instructs its President to forward this Resolution to the Commission, the Council, and the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Secretary-General of the UN, the Government and the Parliament of Cameroon, and the co-presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Assembly.