



DECLARATION OF RECODH ON THE SITUATION IN THE SOUTH-WEST AND NORTH-WEST REGIONS OF CAMEROON

The Cameroon Network of Human Rights Organizations (RECODH) is closely following events unfolding in the North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon, shaken for more than a year by the "Anglophone crisis", which started as apparently corporate claims of Common Law Lawyers and Teachers of the Anglophone Subsystem. The wave of collective claims then turned into a dynamic of active or passive protest with political impulses and ultimately questioning the current form of the state and pleading for the advent of a federal state as unique option to better preserve the historical, cultural and linguistic specificity of the Anglophone area of Cameroon.

As from now, RECODH expresses its deep concern over the violent escalation of events, including the burning of some schools and boarding schools, both public and private, and other public buildings; symbols of the state (flag); killings of civilian populations; and members of the Forces of Law and Order. Finally, as other concerns of RECODH we have:

- 1- The non-effective resumption of schools in this part of the country constituting a serious infringement of the right to education of children;
- 2- The violence which to date, according to sources, has caused the loss of life to about 100 people including civilians and also the Defense and Security Forces; and caused the displacement of nearly 500,000 people to neighboring Nigeria;
- 3- The blockade observed at the level of the National Assembly during the last ordinary session;
- 4- The gradual rise of extremism on both sides and a climate of quasi-civil war;
- 5- the communiqués and counter-communicés attributed by the public opinion to the Administration, demanding and then refuting the massive displacement of the populations of 14 villages of the Manyu Division in the South-West region, without means of sustainability.

The RECODH, while recognizing the need for the State not to falter against any initiative undermining the territorial integrity of Cameroon, strongly recommends and maintains that:

- Dialogue remains the only option to find solutions for a sustainable peace in Cameroon. This dialogue needs to be:
 - National, inclusive and structured, with the mobilization of key players with a real grassroots influence with the populations;
 - Open and global without being limited to sectoral and corporatist concerns;
 - The Parliament as the National House of Representatives is a formal, legal and legitimate space for dialogue and should therefore play its role in the process of resolving the crisis.
- There is a need of strong collaboration between the Cameroon and Nigeria Governments, to address some issues of this crisis, like the management of refugees and boundaries control.
- There is also a need of collaboration between the Army and the populations on the field while the Government and the other goodwill actors will be looking for a peaceful solution.

The RECODH wishes to express its condolences to all the families who have lost loved ones since the beginning of this crisis, including the large family of the Defense and Security Forces.

Done in Yaoundé, 04 December 2017

The National Coordinator

Joseph Désiré ZEBAZE (SIGNED)