



Circle for research on the Rights and Duties of Human Person

NGO in special consultative status with the United Nations ECOSOC since 2008

International Expert Workshop on the right to Participate in Public Affairs

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RESOLUTION 30/9
OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

I- Opening Statement

Mr President,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

I speak today as the President of the NGO CRED and as the Coordinator of the National Anti-discrimination Programme of Cameroon (PNAD).

II. CONTRIBUTIONS RELATED TO REPORT A/HRC/27/29

Factors that impede equal political participation and steps to overcome those challenges

**Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights**

Cameroon has to be officially recognized as one of the most Machiavellian dictatorship humanity has ever known. Indeed, one of the factors which hinder the participation in public and political affairs is the almost eternal longevity in power of the executive and even legislative powers in Cameroon. Mr **Paul Biya**, born in 1933, is the President of Cameroon

since 6 November 1982. He was Prime Minister from 30 June 1975 to 6 November 1982. Mr **Cavayé Yéguié Djibril**, born in 1940, is the President of the National Assembly of Cameroon since 1992.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights should adopt a clear and coherent strategy against dictatorships. The cooperation of all the stakeholders guarantees a successful outcome.

III. CONTRIBUTIONS RELATED TO REPORT A/HRC/30/26
Promotion, protection and implementation of the right
to participate in public affairs in the context
of the existing human rights law: best
practices, experiences, challenges and ways to overcome them
Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights

A- BEST PRACTICES

During this workshop, our organisation drafted a report¹ **on the racial discriminations during the 2013 legislative, municipal and senatorial elections in Cameroon**. We requested the viewpoints² of political parties, including that of the ruling power who spoke through the Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation, of the body in charge of elections, of the Cameroon Law Society and of the Human Rights Defenders Network and of the Commission for Justice and Peace. Of course, we are not talking on behalf of these entities. However, I would like to underscore the independent nature of my personality (because I do not take part in any election, be it in Cameroon or in the United Nations) as well as the fact that PNAD is a participatory, inclusive and multi sector programme. We work with the utmost transparency and all what we do is published on our website and social networks.

We also forwarded our report to seven experts of the Human Rights Council to know what are the sanctions and coercive measures provided for by the law when a State obviously refuses to

¹ See:

http://pnad.ch/images/PNAD/docs/RAPPORT_DISCRIMINATIONS_RACIALES_ELECTIONS_LEGISLATIVES_CAMEROUN_2013-2.pdf

² See: http://pnad.ch/images/PNAD/consultations/Consultations_partis_politiques_cameroun.pdf

cooperate in the implementation of the international obligations he willingly abode to, as is the case of Cameroon.

B- EXPERIENCES

In Cameroon, Law No 2012/001 of 19 April 2012 on the electoral law³, amended and supplemented by Law No 2012/017 of 21 December 2012, requires in sections 151 (3), 171 (3), 218 (3), 246 (1) that each list comprises sociological and genre components respectively for the legislative, municipal, senatorial and regional elections.

The sociological component is found nowhere in Human Rights international law. However, it is a political stunt introduced by the dictatorial system to draw the attention of political actors away from obligations provided for by sections 5 (c) of the International Convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discriminations and sections 25 (a and b) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

In the report submitted, more than 62 lists⁴ were rejected because of the race or their ethnic group and the national origin of candidates. The right to be a candidate is thus denied to thousands of Cameroonians who will no more be candidates or elected in Cameroon because they are from this or that race or tribe, this or that national origin. This issue should be considered as a source of potential conflicts in Cameroon.

C- CHALLENGES

During our consultations, we realised that some political leaders confused tribe and race⁵. In Cameroon, tribalism is common and this form of discrimination based on race or ethnic origin as defined by the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination does not yet figures in the Country programmes of the United Nations or the development partners.

³ See : http://pnad.ch/images/PNAD/docs/CODE_ELECTORAL_CAMEROUN.pdf

⁴ This data is underestimated. The body in charge of elections was called upon to submit all the electoral lists rejected for this reason. The elections that preceded those of 2013 witnessed the same facts.

⁵ **Observations:** In the Cameroonian core documents of treaty bodies (HRI/CORE/1/Add.109), there are **230 tribes**. In the document updated in January 2014 (HRI/CORE/1/Add.109), there are **250 ethnic groups**. See: [http://pnad.ch/images/PNAD/consultations/consultation3/document base actualise Gouvernement.pdf](http://pnad.ch/images/PNAD/consultations/consultation3/document_base_actualise_Gouvernement.pdf)

Also see:

[http://pnad.ch/images/PNAD/consultations/consultation3/document base Gouvernement version 2000.pdf](http://pnad.ch/images/PNAD/consultations/consultation3/document_base_Gouvernement_version_2000.pdf)

See updated data of PNAD: *State of the research on the ethnic composition of Cameroon (CRED 2013)*.

<http://www.pnad.ch/index.php/publications>

Belonging to a political party is not compulsory in Cameroon and the union rep structure of political parties is currently not enough to enable an optimal application of the provisions in sections 151 (3), 171 (3), 218 (3), 246 (1) of the electoral code.

In addition, we must outline that political parties are not versed enough with the new technologies of information and communication, and some do not even have email addresses or pages on social networks to communicate with the general public.

To conclude, the website of The National Anti-Discrimination Programme (www.pnad.ch), which is hosted in Switzerland, was hacked last 28 January, and the letters requesting assistance that were sent to Geneva public authorities remained unanswered. Resources for the operational activities of the National Anti-Discrimination Programme (PNAD) had to be pulled together to build a new website operational since April 2016.

D- WAYS TO OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES

At the national level:

1) The experience of the United Nations concerning its consultative status should be generalised to the democratic institutions of every country. Parliaments, regional and municipal councils should enable civil society bodies, community organisations and women associations, minorities and natives to participate, as consultants, in the works of the constitutional bodies.

2) For Cameroon precisely:

a) The revocation of sections 151 (3), 171(3), 218(3), 246(1) of the electoral code.

b) The cooperation of all stakeholders for the application of paragraph 61 of the A/HRC/27/29 document: The Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA) draws attention to the fact that racism and racial discrimination limit opportunities for political and public participation. In this regard, it urges States and encourages the private sector and international financial and development institutions, such as the World Bank and regional development banks, to promote the participation of individuals and groups of individuals who are victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in economic, cultural and social decision-making at all stages, particularly in the development and implementation of poverty alleviation strategies, development projects, and trade and market assistance programmes. The DDPA further urges States to promote, as appropriate, the effective and equal access of all members of the community, especially those who are victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, to decision-making processes in society at all levels and, in particular, at the local level (DDPA, paras. 99, 115, 210 and 213).

c) Within **PNAD**, we scheduled a training workshop for political parties. We want the cooperation of all for this workshop to be successful.

At the international level:

- 3) The United Nations should include political parties by giving them the possibility to request the consultative status with its bodies as other associations and non governmental organisations of the civil society.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Hilaire BELL

President of **CRED**

Coordinator of **PNAD**