



Global Initiative to
**End All Corporal Punishment
of Children**

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Secretary HRC

Enclosed briefings as
requested by P Newell.

With compliments

x 10 Israel

x 10 Estonia

x 10 Cameroon

x 10 Colombia

2 June 2010

BRIEFING FROM GLOBAL INITIATIVE
TO END ALL CORPORAL PUNISHMENT OF CHILDREN

CAMEROON (fourth report – CCPR/C/CMR/4)

Corporal punishment is lawful in the **home**. Provisions against violence and abuse in the Penal Code (1967, amended 1997) and the Constitution (1996) are not interpreted as prohibiting all corporal punishment in childrearing. In 2004 a draft Family Code was under consideration and as at November 2008, a Code on the Child had been drafted, but we have no further information on these laws.

According to a statistical review by UNICEF, 75% of children aged 2-14 experienced minor physical punishment in the home in 2005-2006. The same review reported that 56% of girls and women aged 15-49 believed that a husband or partner is justified in hitting or beating his wife under certain circumstances.¹ In a study on corporal punishment by the NGO EMEDA with UNICEF support in December 2000, 81.4% of families admitted to using corporal punishment against children as an educational measure.²

Corporal punishment is prohibited in **schools** under article 35 of the Law of Cameroon National Educational Guidelines No. 98/004 (1998).

In the **penal system**, corporal punishment is unlawful as a sentence for crime but it is not explicitly prohibited as a disciplinary measure in penal institutions. Article 615 of the Code of Criminal Investigation states that “the use of force in the process of arrest, detention or execution of a sentence is a crime except where authorized by law”. Decree No. 92/052 (1992) prohibits police from using the baton or whip as a means to extract confessions, and ill-treatment against detainees is punishable under Order No. 080 (1983). We have been unable to ascertain whether or not the draft Code on the Child would prohibit corporal punishment in penal institutions.

There is no explicit prohibition of corporal punishment in **alternative care settings**.

Following examination of the state party’s initial report in 2001, the **Committee on the Rights of the Child** expressed concern at the level of violence against children at home and in schools, and recommended measures to address these, including enforcement of the prohibition in schools (CRC/C/15/Add.164, Concluding observations on initial report, paras. 40, 41, 54 and 55).

We hope the Committee will question Cameroon in detail on its progress towards eliminating all corporal punishment of children, and – mindful of the concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and that Committee’s general comment No. 8 (2006) on “The right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment” – recommend that

¹ UNICEF (2007), *Progress for Children: A World Fit for Children – Statistical Review, Number 6, December 2007*

² Reported by UNICEF in correspondence with the Global Initiative, June 2004

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Recipients :.. N.P (enclosures)

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the State Party prohibit corporal punishment in all settings, including the home, and that they support this with appropriate public education and professional training on positive, participatory and non-violent forms of discipline.