

**REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN**  
**PAIX-TRAVAIL-PATRIE**

**REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON**  
**PEACE-WORK-FATHERLAND**



# **REPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN CAMEROON IN 2023**

Yaounde, November 2024



# **REPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN CAMEROON IN 2023**

# MINJUSTICE

Report of the Ministry of Justice on  
Human Rights in Cameroon in 2023

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## Foreword

“You should not. Most of all, do not give up. Rather, utilize your intelligence, your wisdom, your resolve, your skills and talents to rise to the current and future challenges”.

Excerpts of the Head of State’s Message to the  
Youth on the occasion of the 57<sup>th</sup> Edition of the  
Youth Day (11 February 2023).

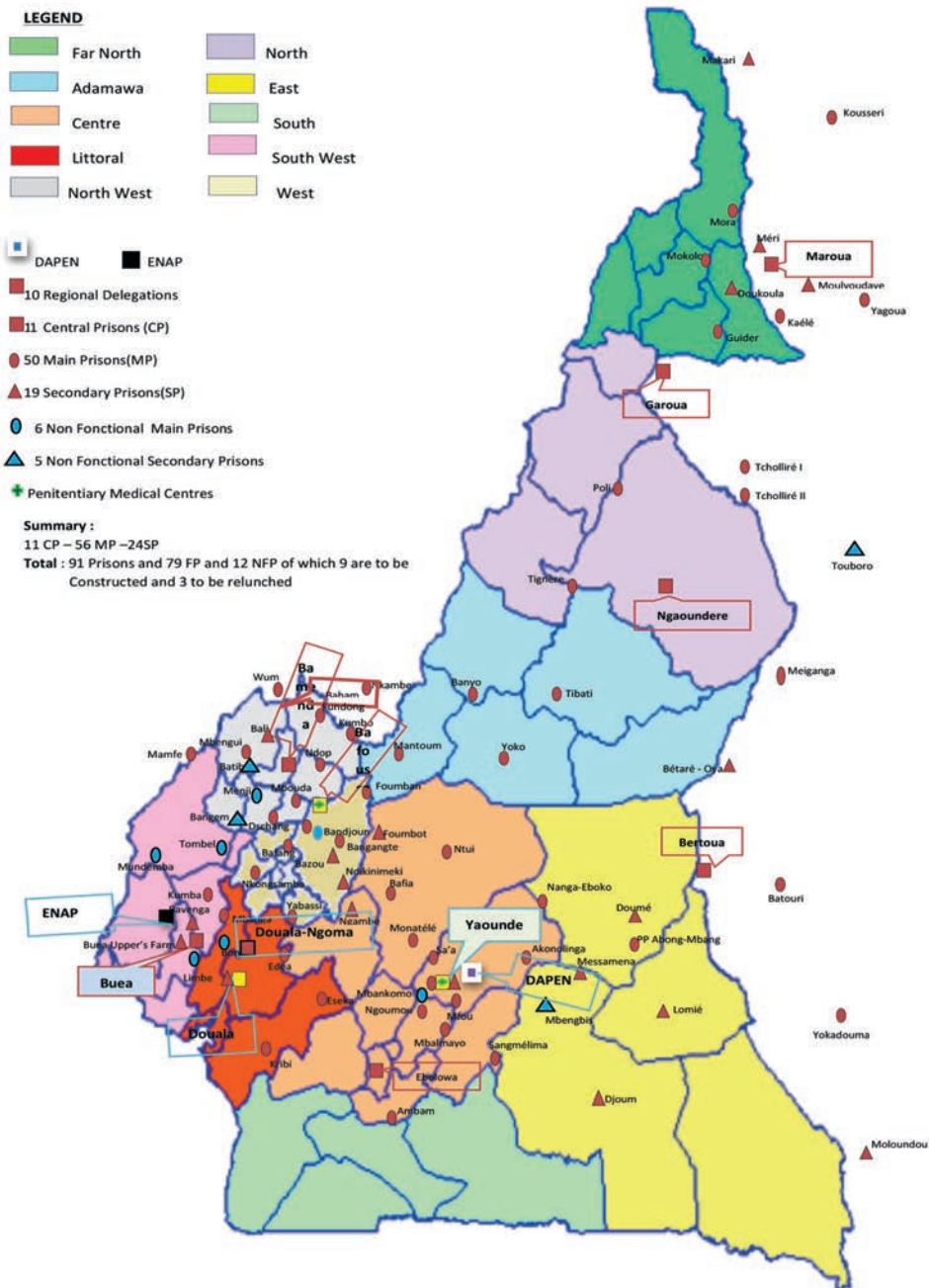


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## PENITENTIARY ADMINISTRATION MAP OF CAMEROON



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## List Of Acronyms And Abbreviations

<b>AfCFTA</b>	: African women entrepreneurs and the challenges of industrialisation in the African Continental Free Trade Area
<b>ACHPR</b>	: African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights
<b>AfDB</b>	: African Development Bank
<b>Agropoles Programme</b>	: The Regional Economic Development Programme to promote medium- and large-scale enterprises in rural areas in Cameroon
<b>ANIF</b>	: National Agency for Financial Investigation
<b>ANOR</b>	: Standards and Quality Agency
<b>ANTIC</b>	: National Agency for Information and Communication Technologies
<b>APECCAM</b>	: Professional Association of Credit Institutions of Cameroon.
<b>APME</b>	: Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Promotion Agency.
<b>ART</b>	: Antiretroviral Treatment
<b>ART</b>	: Telecommunications Regulatory Agency
<b>AWEP</b>	: African Women Entrepreneurship Programme
<b>BUNEC</b>	: National Civil Status Registration Office
<b>C2D/AFD</b>	: Debt Reduction and Development and French Development Agency
<b>CA</b>	: Court of Appeal
<b>CAMTEL</b>	: Cameroon Telecommunications
<b>CAPIET</b>	: Teachers Certificate of Technical Education
<b>CCCP</b>	: Cameroon Clubfoot Care Project (CCCP)
<b>CCIMA</b>	: Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Handicrafts
<b>CDENO</b>	: North West Livestock Development Fund
<b>CDT</b>	: Tuberculosis Diagnostic and Treatment Centers
<b>CFC</b>	: Cameroon Housing Loan Fund

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<b>CFFDP</b>	: National Trainer Training and Programmes Development Centre
<b>CFI</b>	: Court of First Instance
<b>CHRCERH</b>	: Gynaecological Endoscopic Surgery and Human Reproductive Teaching Hospital.
<b>CHRC</b>	: Cameroon Human Rights Commission
<b>CISSA</b>	: Committee of Intelligence and Security Services in Africa
<b>CONAC</b>	: National Anti-Corruption Commission
<b>CONSUPE</b>	: Supreme State Audit Office
<b>CPC</b>	: Criminal Procedure Code
<b>CRPD</b>	: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
<b>CSESU</b>	: Company in charge of the Security of Schools and Universities
<b>CSO</b>	: Civil Society Organisations
<b>CUD</b>	: Douala City Council
<b>CURY</b>	: Yaounde Emergency Centre
<b>DDHCI</b>	: Department of Human Rights and International Cooperation-MINJUSTICE.
<b>DDR</b>	: Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
<b>DGSN</b>	: General Delegation for National Security
<b>DSFs</b>	: Defence and Security Forces
<b>ECCAS</b>	: Economic Community of Central African States
<b>EIFORCES</b>	: International School of Security Forces (EIFORCES)
<b>EITI</b>	: Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
<b>ELECAM</b>	: Elections Cameroon
<b>ENAM</b>	: National School of Administration and Magistracy
<b>ENEO</b>	: Energy of Cameroon
<b>ESCR</b>	: Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
<b>ESMPs</b>	: Environmental and Social Management Plans
<b>ESSTIC</b>	: Advanced School of Mass Communication
<b>FEICOM</b>	: Special Council Support Fund
<b>FENASSCO</b>	: National School Games Federation
<b>FENASU</b>	: National University Sports Federation
<b>FLSC</b>	: First School Leaving Certificate
<b>FONIJ</b>	: National Fund for Youth Integration
<b>FSLC</b>	: First School Leaving Certificate

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<b>GBV</b>	: Gender Based Violence
<b>GECAM</b>	: Union of Cameroonian Enterprises
<b>GIZ</b>	: German Technical Cooperation
<b>GTTC</b>	: Government Teacher Training College
<b>HALCOM III</b>	: Operation Stop Illicit Trade
<b>HC</b>	: High Court
<b>HPPs</b>	: Human powered pumps (HPPs)
<b>ICCPR</b>	: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
<b>ICTs</b>	: Information and communication technologies
<b>IDPs</b>	: Internally Displaced Persons
<b>IED</b>	: Improvised Explosive Devices
<b>IMS</b>	: Incident Management System
<b>IPES</b>	: Private Institutes of Higher Education
<b>IRIC</b>	: International Relations Institute of Cameroon
<b>KOICA</b>	: Korean International Cooperation Agency
<b>MAETUR</b>	: Urban and Rural Land Development and Equipment Mission
<b>MBOSCUDA</b>	: Mbororo Cultural and Development Association
<b>MINADER</b>	: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
<b>MINAS</b>	: Ministry of Social Affairs
<b>MINCOMMERCE</b>	: Ministry of Trade
<b>MINDCAF</b>	: Ministry of State Property, Surveys and Land Tenure.
<b>MINDDEVEL</b>	: Ministry of Decentralisation and Local Development
<b>MINDEF</b>	: Ministry of Defence
<b>MINEDUB</b>	: Ministry of Basic Education
<b>MINEFOP</b>	: Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training
<b>MINEPAT</b>	: Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development MINEPAT
<b>MINEPDED</b>	: Ministry of the Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development
<b>MINESEC</b>	: Ministry of Secondary Education
<b>MINFI</b>	: Ministry of Finance
<b>MINFOF</b>	: Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife
<b>MINFOPRA</b>	: Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform
<b>MINPIA</b>	: Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries
<b>MINJEC</b>	: Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education
<b>MINJUSTICE</b>	: Ministry of Justice

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<b>MINMAP</b>	: Ministry of Public Contracts
<b>MINPMEESA</b>	: Ministry of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, Social Economy and Handicrafts
<b>MINPOSTEL</b>	: Ministry of Post and Telecommunications
<b>MINPROFF</b>	: Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family
<b>MINREX</b>	: Ministry of External Relations
<b>MINSANTE</b>	: Ministry of Public Health
<b>MINT</b>	: Ministry of Transport
<b>MINTOUL</b>	: Ministry of Tourism and Leisure
<b>MIPROMALO</b>	: Mission for the Promotion of Local Materials
<b>MIRAP</b>	: Consumer Products Supplies Regulatory Authority
<b>NACC</b>	: National Anti-Corruption Commission
<b>NASLA</b>	: National School of Local Administration
<b>NCC</b>	: National Communication Council
<b>NCDDR</b>	: National Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Committee
<b>NCPBM</b>	: National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism
<b>NSIF</b>	: National Social Insurance Fund
<b>OEWG</b>	: Open-Ended Working Group
<b>OPCAT</b>	: Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention against Torture
<b>PAEA-MRU</b>	: Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project (PAEA-MRU)
<b>PARPAC</b>	: Programme to Support Consolidation of Agricultural Production in Cameroon
<b>PARZIK</b>	: Loan Agreement to finance the Project for the construction of roads to Kribi Industrial and Port Zone
<b>PATNUC</b>	: Acceleration of Digital Transformation Cameroon Project
<b>PEMVEP</b>	: Mobilisation and Development Studies Project through Hill Dams
<b>PIC</b>	: Public Independent Conciliators
<b>PLANUT</b>	: Three-year Emergency Plan
<b>PROLAC</b>	: Lake Chad Region Recovery and Development Project
<b>PSNSC</b>	: National Strategic Plan for Community Health

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<b>PT</b>	: Physiotherapy
<b>REPALEAC</b>	: The Network of Indigenous and Local Communities for the Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa
<b>RLAs</b>	: Regional and Local Authorities
<b>SALW</b>	: Small Arms and Light Weapons
<b>SC</b>	: Supreme Court
<b>SCAAP</b>	: Copyright Society for Photography and Audiovisual Arts
<b>SCC</b>	: Special Criminal Court
<b>SIGIPES</b>	: Computerised system for the Integrated Management of State Personnel and the Payroll
<b>SMEs</b>	: Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
<b>SNP</b>	: Safety Net Project
<b>SNP-AEI</b>	: Adaptive Safety Net and Economic Inclusion Project
<b>SODECOTON</b>	: Cameroon Cotton Development Company
<b>SONACAM</b>	: Cameroon National Musical Art Corporation
<b>SONAMINE</b>	: National Mining Cooperation
<b>SONARA</b>	: National Refining Company
<b>SRH</b>	: Sexual and Reproductive Health Services
<b>UCAC</b>	: Catholic University of Central Africa
<b>UDHR</b>	: Universal Declaration of Human Rights
<b>UHC</b>	: Universal Health Coverage
<b>UNCHRD-CA</b>	: UN Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa
<b>UNDP</b>	: United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNFPA</b>	: United Nations Fund for Population Activities
<b>UNHCR</b>	: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNPRD</b>	: United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
<b>UPR</b>	: Universal Periodic Review
<b>Youth FESTAC</b>	: Youth Festival of Arts and Culture



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## PREFACE

Every year since 2005, the Ministry of Justice has published a Report on Human Rights in Cameroon with the support of institutional and non-institutional stakeholders. This Report expounds on measures taken to guarantee Human Rights, challenges encountered and solutions envisaged. The Report for the year 2023, follows the same pattern. The year was characterised by Cameroon's remarkable participation in the 4<sup>th</sup> cycle of the Universal Periodic Review.

Measures taken include increasing the salaries of employees of the public service and the minimum wage, seeking and obtaining funding for major development projects as well as raising awareness and strengthening capacities in the area of Human Rights while laying emphasis on vulnerable groups. Corrective measures, both administrative and judicial, were also taken in response to Human Rights violations. Senatorial elections were organised and phase I of the Universal Health Coverage was launched, both successfully. The legislative, strategic and institutional frameworks in diverse fields were strengthened, including the adoption of the Charter on Child Online Protection, creation of a Peacekeeping Operations Training School and the adoption of the Strategic Plan to eliminate onchocerciasis.

Regarding challenges, the Report highlights insufficient financial resources which limited the State's ability to act, terrorist attacks from *Boko Haram* and separatist fighters, recurring road accidents, increase in gender-based violence, several incidents involving municipal police and hate speech particularly on social media, all of which affected the right to peace and the right to security. The quality of life was to a certain extent, impacted by challenges relating to waste disposal and supply of water and electricity.

Concerning solutions envisaged, the Report proposes better management of the municipal police and waste disposal, strengthening production, transmission and distribution of water and electricity, continuous research, diversification and mobilisation of financial resources for overarching projects. It also proposes strengthening normative, administrative and judicial response to road accidents, hate speech, gender-based violence and terrorist acts.

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These developments are contained in this Report which I invite you to read, keeping in mind that each and everyone's contribution is valuable for Nation building.

I wish you a pleasant reading.

**Laurent ESSO**

Minister of State, Minister of Justice,  
Keeper of the Seals

**GENERAL**

# INTRODUCTION



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**1-** In 2023, Cameroon's 4<sup>th</sup> periodic report under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) was examined. The UPR is a major activity of the Human Rights Council which reviews the activities carried out in different countries to promote and protect Human Rights. The participation of 110 countries in this exercise revealed the interest that the community of nations has in Cameroon. The exercise was an opportunity to highlight the Human Rights situation in Cameroon in the last four years, and analyse internal and external dynamics influencing the situation in Cameroon.

**2-** Highlights of the year 2023 mainly concerned the election of Senators, increase in fuel prices and response measures such as increase in monthly remuneration for civil and military personnel<sup>1</sup>, as well as the minimum wage, persistent power cuts, suspicious death of the journalist **Martinez ZOGO** and proceedings against the alleged perpetrators, the operationalisation of the Deposits and Consignment Fund<sup>2</sup>, the creation of the Union of Cameroonian Enterprises (GECAM), a new employers' organisation, registration of the "Ngouon" on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, persistent security crises in some regions, increase in killings of women and reaffirming the stance of Bishops' on homosexuality and the solemnisation of marriage for gay couples<sup>3</sup>.

**3-** Thus, despite security and economic challenges, Human Rights action was guided by the need to consolidate the enjoyment of rights and liberties.

**4-** To achieve this, Cameroon continued to adhere to its international commitments, make strategic and policy choices, adopt legislative measures, enact regulatory instruments and undertake actions to improve the living standards of its people on the basis of the 2020-2030 National Development Strategy.

**5-** As regard international, bilateral and multilateral commitments, the following decrees were ratified; Decree No.2023/29 of 17 January 2023 to ratify the General Cooperation Agreement between the Republic of Cameroon and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, signed in Yaounde on 10 November 2021; Decree No. 2023/314 of 1 August 2023 to ratify the

<sup>1</sup> Decree No. 2023/158 of 6 March 2023 to increase the monthly basic remuneration of civilian and military personnel by 5.2% on average.

<sup>2</sup> The authorities in charge of the institution were appointed by Decrees of 20 January 2023, that is Decree No. 2023/35 to appoint the Chairperson of the Board of Directors, Decree No. 2023/36 to appoint the Director General and Decree No. 2023/37 to appoint the Assistant Director General.

<sup>3</sup> Declaration made on 21 December 2021.

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Bilateral Cooperation Agreement between Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea for the exploitation of cross-border oil and gas fields signed in Yaounde on 17 March 2023; Decree No. 2023/315 of 1 August 2023 to ratify the Framework Cooperation Agreement between the Republic of Cameroon and the Republic of Uruguay, signed in Montevideo on 17 June 2022.

**6-** Moreover, Cameroon submitted instruments to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 28 September 2023 and those of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa on 8 September 2023.

**7-** Regarding regulatory action, particularly by the President of the Republic during the year 2023, apart from instruments of appointment and definition of the organic frameworks of some institutions, most instruments focused on the search for funding for various development projects in diverse areas of national life.

**8-** Regarding the right to fair trial, the primordial consideration was to improve access to justice. Thus, the rules and regulations governing Bailiffs was modernised after over 45 years<sup>4</sup>, and replaced by Decree No. 2023/42 of 25 January 2023 to lay down the rules and regulations and organization of the profession of Bailiff and Enforcement Agent. At the end of the year, the hope for new impetus within the Corps of Lawyers was rekindled with Order No. 627/DPJ/SG/MJ of 18 December 2023 to lay down the modalities for the organisation, the date and the centre of the entrance examination for pupilage, 2023 session. Some months before, Joint Order No. 423/MINJUSTICE and No. 2/MINAS of 19 September 2023 was signed by the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Social Affairs to appoint Assessors in matters of juvenile delinquency for the 2023 and 2024 judicial years.

**9-** In terms of security, to enable Cameroon carry out its activities efficiently, cooperation agreements signed in the area of defence and security with some countries such as Algeria<sup>5</sup> and Egypt<sup>6</sup>, were ratified. To consolidate peace in the crisis regions, funding was sought notably for the Presiden-

<sup>4</sup> The previous Decree dates back to 1979.

<sup>5</sup> Decree No. 2023/313 of 1 August 2023 to ratify the Defence Cooperation Agreement between Cameroon and Algeria, signed on 31 July 2022 in Algiers.

<sup>6</sup> Decree No. 2023/312 of 1 August 2023 to ratify the Defence Cooperation Agreement between Cameroon and Egypt, signed on 11 October 2022 in Yaounde.

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tial Plan for the Reconstruction and Development of the North West and South West Regions<sup>7</sup>. Moreover, a Peacekeeping Operations Training School was set up by Decree No.2023/399 of 4 September 2023. In addition, a Coordination Committee on national policies against money laundering, terrorism financing and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction was laid down by Decree No. 2023/464 of 30 October 2023. The setting up of coordination bodies in the fight against trafficking in and smuggling of persons<sup>8</sup> should also be mentioned.

**10-** As concerns free movement, Cameroon chose visa exemption for holders of diplomatic and service passports from Russia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and facilitated procedures for the Cameroon online visa following Decree No. 2023/147 of 2 March 2023 to lay down the conditions of implementation of Law No. 97/12 of 10 January 1997 to lay down conditions of entry, stay and exit for aliens in Cameroon. Moreover, in a bid to improve infrastructure and the means of facilitating the exercise of this right, Law No. 2023/10 of 25 July 2023 governing the railway sector in Cameroon was adopted. A financing agreement was concluded in the same sector<sup>9</sup>. Furthermore, other cooperation or financing agreements were either authorised or concluded in the road<sup>10</sup> and air<sup>11</sup> sectors.

<sup>7</sup> Decree No. 2023/76 of 6 February 2023 to authorise a loan agreement to finance the presidential Plan for the Reconstruction and Development of the North West and South West (PPRD) and Decree No. 2023/330 of 4 August 2023 to ratify the Loan Agreement for implementation of the Presidential Plan for Reconstruction and Development of the North West and South West Regions.

<sup>8</sup> Order No. 10/CAB/PM of 10 February 2023 to set up Regional Coordination Committees to intervene in sectors to ensure prevention and fight against trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling; Order No. 9/CAB/PM of 10 February 2023 to create an Exchange Platform between the Government of Cameroon and Civil Society relating to the fight against trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling.

<sup>9</sup> Decree No. 2023/338 of 9 August 2023 to authorise to sign a loan agreement for the additional financing of the Belabo-Ngaoundere Railway line Renovation Project (PRBN).

<sup>10</sup> This is Decree No. 2023/329 of 4 August 2023 to authorise a Loan Agreement to finance the Ebolowa-Akom II-Kribi Road Construction Project, Decree No. 2023/078 of 6 February 2023 to ratify a Loan Agreement to finance the Olama-Kribi Road Construction project, Bingambo - Grand-Zambi Section or Decree No. 2023/100 of 8 February 2023 on a loan agreement to finance the project to Develop Access Roads to the Industrial and Port Area of Kribi (PARZIK).

<sup>11</sup> Decree No. 2023/316 of 1 August 2023 to ratify the Air Transport Services Agreement between Cameroon and Algeria, signed in Yaounde on 24 February 2021.

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**11-** Acceleration of digital transformation was one of the main concerns as relates to freedom of expression and communication.

**12-** Regarding the right to participate in the management of public affairs, senatorial elections took place, and the President of the Republic completed the composition of the Senate with the appointment of 30 Senators. In addition, crises within political parties sometimes required the intervention of administrative authorities. Decentralisation continued with the definition of conditions for exercising powers devolved notably in the areas of health<sup>12</sup> and secondary education<sup>13</sup>, as well as defining the duties of Secretaries General of Regional and Local Authorities (RLAs)<sup>14</sup> including the roles and advantages of accountants assigned to these RLAs<sup>15</sup>

**13-** As regards the right to an adequate standard of living and in a bid to lift financial constraints, alternative means to the budget were sought with authorisation to resort to issuing public securities<sup>16</sup>, to external bank loans<sup>17</sup> and to fund development projects provided for in the Finance law. To develop hydro agricultural areas with the aim to improve productivity in diverse localities, loans<sup>18</sup>, commercial credits<sup>19</sup> were sought and financing

<sup>12</sup> Decree No. 2023/132 of 10 February 2023 to lay down conditions governing the exercise of some powers devolved by the State upon regions in the area of health.

<sup>13</sup> Decree No. 2023/223 of 27 April 2023 to lay down conditions governing the exercise of some powers devolved by the State upon regions in the area of secondary education.

<sup>14</sup> Decree No. 2023/422 of 19 September 2023 to define the duties of secretaries-general of regional and local authorities.

<sup>15</sup> Decree No. 2023/475 of 7 November 2023 to define some duties and lay down the benefits of public accounting officers assigned to Regional and Local Authorities.

<sup>16</sup> Decree No. 2023/77 of 6 February 2023 to authorise the issuance of Government securities for the financing of development projects included on the 2023 Finance law of the Republic of Cameroon for the 2023 Financial Year.

<sup>17</sup> Decree No. 2023/317 of 1 August 2023 to authorise the Minister of Finance to take out external bank loans to finance development projects and settle outstanding payments (...).

<sup>18</sup> For rice, Decree No. 2023/335 of 4 August 2023 to authorise a loan agreement to finance the Rice Value Chain Development Project in Cameroon and Decree No. 2023/334 of 4 August 2023 to authorise an Instalment Sale Financing Agreement for the partial financing of the Rice Value Chain Development Project in Cameroon. For the other crops, Decree No. 2023/332 of 4 August 2023 to authorise a loan for the development of 15,280 hectares of irrigated areas in the localities of Mbere, Vina and Faro-et-Deo, in the Adamawa Region of Cameroon. Also, Decree No. 2023/123 of 10 February 2023 to ratify a loan agreement to partially finance the Yaounde Complementary Stormwater Sanitation Project (PCADY).

<sup>19</sup> Decree No. 2023/333 of 4 August 2023 to authorise a commercial credit agreement for the development of 15,280 hectares of irrigated areas in the localities of Mbere, Vina and Faro-et-Deo in the Adamawa Region of Cameroon.

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agreements signed. Funding was also sought for rainwater management in the city of Yaounde or for the electrification of some localities in rural areas<sup>20</sup>.

**14-** In addition, Phase I of the Universal Health Coverage was launched in April 2023. It gives those enrolled the right to free access to preventive care and essential health services in approved health facilities.

**15-** In the area of Education, Law No. 2023/7 of 25 July 2023 on Higher Education policy in Cameroon was adopted as well as Law No. 2023/337 of 8 August 2023 to lay down special rules and regulations governing research personnel, while actions were taken to guarantee the quantity and quality of education supply. Regarding teacher training, Decree No. 2023/434 of 4 October 2023 was adopted to lay down the organisation and functioning of Government Teacher Training Colleges.

**16-** Concerning the right to a healthy environment, the normative framework that governs access to genetic resources was consolidated with Decree No. 2023/7526/PM of 6 October 2023 to lay down the conditions of implementation of Law No.2021/14 of 9 July 2021 governing access to genetic resources, their derivatives, associated traditional knowledge and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their use, Order No. 111/PM of 6 October 2023 to lay down the organisation and functioning of the National Access and Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits arising from the Utilisation of Genetic Resources Committee, Order No. 17/MINEPDED of 18 October 2023 to specify the tasks of the National Clearing house on Access and Fair and Equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources, and Order No. 16/MINEPDED of 18 October 2023 to specify the tasks of the National Focal Point on Access and Fair and Equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources.

**17-** With regards to the rights of specific groups, the Charter on Child Online Protection was adopted pursuant to Law No. 2023/9 of 25 July 2023 as well as the national Strategy document on Community-based Rehabilitation for Inclusive Development in Cameroon (2024-2029).

<sup>20</sup> Decree No. 2023/344 of 10 August 2023 to ratify the loan contract for the partial funding of Phase III of the project for rural electrification through photovoltaic solar system in 200 localities.

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**18-** All of this information is analysed in the Report which has maintained its traditional structure. It opens with a general introduction and closes with a general conclusion. It also includes a preliminary chapter on Cameroon's cooperation with Human Rights mechanisms as well as three parts on civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights and the right to a healthy environment and finally on cross-cutting issues and specific rights.

# PRELIMINARY CHAPTER

## COOPERATION BETWEEN CAMEROON AND INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS



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**19-** In 2023, a year which marked the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Cameroon continued cooperating with Human Rights mechanisms. The country expressed its viewpoints on various relevant issues, including the conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza, the upsurge of terrorism in the Sahel, tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the civil war in Sudan, the resurgence of coups in Africa, and acts of terrorism in the North West, South West, and Far North Regions of Cameroon. These issues were extensively deliberated upon, more within the framework of non-contentious cooperation than contentious cooperation.

## SECTION 1: NON-CONTENTIOUS COOPERATION

**20-** This played out both at the universal and regional levels. Apart from its traditional interaction with Human Rights mechanisms, Cameroon solemnly reaffirmed its commitment to upholding Human Rights on the occasion of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UDHR and the Global Refugee Forum. Furthermore, several Cameroonians were appointed to high positions in international bodies.

### §1: Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the UDHR

**21-** Partaking in the event, the Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Cameroon to the United Nations Office in Geneva outlined the country's 3 commitments.

#### A: Scope of the Celebration

**22-** The celebration featured debates which made it possible to have an overview of the Human Rights situation and to formulate recommendations in the form of a call to action.

#### 1) Overview of the Human Rights Situation

**23-** The anniversary was celebrated on 11 and 12 December 2023 in Geneva under the theme "Human Rights 75". Numerous prominent figures, including dignitaries from various countries, international organisations, NGOs, academics, and Human Rights advocates participated in the event.

**24-** The event provided an opportunity to emphasize the need to continue working towards a world where every individual can fully enjoy their fundamental rights. Four high-level roundtables allowed for deliberations

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on various themes, including gender equality, the fight against racism, the protection of children and refugees, freedom of expression and security.

**25-** It was agreed that the universality and indivisibility of Human Rights remain the pillars upon which the Human Rights system and the ideals to which humanity aspirations are founded.

**26-** The crisis of multilateralism was highlighted as a source of international instability and the constraints thereto mentioned. These include lack of resources, the persistence of inequalities, and ongoing conflicts. Under such circumstances, the current system of Human Rights protection cannot effectively guarantee the right to life, prevent suffering due to armed conflicts, and protect individuals, especially vulnerable groups such as women, children, and the underprivileged.

## 2) Call to Action: Act Now

**27-** At the end of the deliberations, it became evident to all that guaranteeing Human Rights requires more action than talking. The various stakeholders were called upon to structure their actions around the following 5 thrusts:

- joint efforts to draft appropriate legal and policy frameworks for the protection and guarantee of Human Rights;
- equal consideration of economic, social, and cultural rights, as there can be no equality in poverty;
- strengthening cooperation with a view to building a peaceful international society, with emphasis on prioritising peaceful dispute resolution mechanisms and the fight against violent extremism;
- a better consideration of environmental issues, with particular emphasis on speeding up transition to a green economy;
- responsible involvement of companies in the protection of individual and collective rights.

## B: Cameroon's Three Commitments

**28-** Cameroon made 3 commitments which reaffirm its adherence to the international Human Rights system, namely: continuing the process of ratifying all Human Rights treaties, strengthening and improving national Human Rights legislation; building the capacities of relevant national

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administrations to instil in them best practices in preventing torture; strengthening cooperation with UN and regional Human Rights protection mechanisms.

## §2: Participation in the Global Refugee Forum

**29-** From 13 to 15 December 2023, a Cameroonian delegation led by the Minister of External Relations took part in the Global Refugee Forum, organized by the Swiss Government and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Geneva. On this occasion, Cameroon made 5 commitments, namely: aiming for a refugee enrolment rate at the primary and secondary levels equivalent to that of nationals, and 15% enrolment for higher education by; ensuring the inclusion of refugees in the implementation of universal health coverage; continuing to issue identity cards, civil status documents and travel documents in order to facilitate their socio-economic inclusion by 2025; strengthening environmental protection mechanisms, especially by promoting reforestation and alternative energy sources in sites and localities hosting large numbers of refugees; and taking into account the needs of refugees in the planning tools of RLA in order to better support the ongoing decentralisation policy.

## §3: Traditional Cooperation with Human Rights Mechanisms

**30-** This cooperation was characterised by participation in sessions of these mechanisms, but more especially by the country's participation in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

### A: Participation in Sessions

**31-** At the regional level, Cameroon attended the 75<sup>th</sup> and 77<sup>th</sup> sessions of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) in Banjul and Arusha<sup>21</sup>. During these sessions, the country's efforts to promote and protect Human Rights were highlighted. It also attended the 52<sup>nd</sup>, 53<sup>rd</sup> and 54<sup>th</sup> sessions of the Human Rights Council. Concurrently, the country held high-level meetings with key figures such as: the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the President of the Human Rights Council and the Head of the Human Rights Council and Treaty Mechanisms Division at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

<sup>21</sup> The 75<sup>th</sup> Session was held from 3 to 23 May 2023, and the 77<sup>th</sup> from 20 October to 9 November 2023.

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## B: Cameroon's 4<sup>th</sup> Periodic Review

**32-** Following the submission of its 4<sup>th</sup> Report under the UPR, Cameroon presented the said Report during an interactive dialogue before the Human Rights Council's Working Group on 14 November 2023. This dialogue was facilitated by a troika made up of Côte d'Ivoire, Finland and the Czech Republic. It started with the presentation of the delegation and a keynote address by the Minister of External Relations, head of the delegation. In his discourse, he highlighted key progress made in the areas of civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR), specific rights and cross-cutting issues since the last Report. Secondly, 110 delegations made 291 recommendations compared with 196 from the previous review, representing 87 new recommendations.

### 1) Recommendations Accepted

**33-** Subject to a few adjustments, the 220 recommendations accepted are similar to those accepted during the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle. They primarily focus on promoting and protecting Human Rights, enhancing employment opportunities, ratifying some international conventions, domesticating ratified international conventions, upholding fair trial principles and public liberties, improving governance, enhancing detention conditions and the overall living standards of the population, guaranteeing specific protection for vulnerable individuals such as children, girls, women, and indigenous populations, combating discrimination, providing access to essential social services like education, healthcare, water, and electricity, addressing impunity, and fostering a consensus-based approach to crisis situations.

### 2) Recommendations Noted

**34-** Some 71 recommendations were noted, either because the State took a principled stance against them or because they necessitate further consideration due to their complex nature or multiple aspects which cannot be universally rejected or accepted. In the first case, the recommendations concern contentious issues such as the decriminalisation of homosexuality, ratification of the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, enactment of a law protecting Human Rights defenders, abolition of the death penalty, and extending circumstances under which abortion may be authorised and organising a new Major National Dialogue. The second case concerned the amendment of

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Law No. 2014/28 of 23 December 2014 on the suppression of acts of terrorism and the adoption of a law on access to information.

## §4: Appointment of Cameroonians to Prominent Positions

**35- Nelly BANAKEN**, First Adviser at the Permanent Mission of Cameroon to the United Nations in New York, was elected Vice-Chair of the UN's Third Committee on Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Issues for the 78<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the United Nations held from 19 to 26 September 2023. The aforementioned committee focuses on social matters pertaining to humanitarian affairs and Human Rights.

**36-** In addition, **Clémentine NKWETA-SALAMI** was appointed Deputy Special Representative in the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, as well as the United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator in Sudan. She brings with her three decades of experience within the United Nations system, with her most recent position being Director of the Regional Bureau for East Africa, the Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (from 2020 to 2023).

## SECTION 2: CONTENTIOUS COOPERATION

**37-** Several communications were filed against Cameroon before United Nations and African Human Rights Bodies. After the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (AfCHPR) declined to consider KACK Law Firm's Communication No. 698/18 on behalf of **Innocent ONDOUA NKOU**, about 20 communications were pending before this body as at 31 December 2023. At the same time, two communications were pending before the Committee against Torture, one before the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and two before the Human Rights Committee, which ruled on the merits in 2 cases involving **AMBASSA ZANG** and **ZOGO ANDELA**.

### §1: Communication No. 3214/2015, Dieudonné Téléphone AMBASSA ZANG against the State of Cameroon

**38-** It is worth reviewing the facts, the complaints raised, and the decision rendered.

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## A: The Facts

**39- Dieudonné AMBASSA ZANG**, who served as a Cameroonian Minister from 2002 to 2004 and as a Parliamentarian from 2007 to 2009, faced legal action for misappropriation of public funds during his tenure in the Government after his parliamentary immunity was waived on 7 August 2009. He sought refuge in France, where he obtained refugee status. Consequently, he was tried in absentia. The author of the Communication claims to have contacted both the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians and the Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union regarding the lifting of his parliamentary immunity. On 11 June 2013, a preliminary inquiry was open against him, and it was closed on 9 June 2014, with a partial no-case ruling. On 16 June 2015, the Special Criminal Court (SCC) sentenced him in absentia to life imprisonment for embezzlement of public funds and ordered him to pay damages of CFAF 126,180,438<sup>22</sup> and CFAF 694,405,000<sup>23</sup> jointly and severally with another co-defendant. Additionally, he was permanently stripped of his civic rights. He filed an appeal to the Supreme Court against this judgment.

**40-** The author of the Communication also mentioned receiving an email informing him about the rape of his customary wife, who is also the mother of his children.

## B: Complaints

**41-** The author complains that the State violated his right to an effective remedy and his right to fair trial. He specifically criticises the establishment of a special court to adjudicate cases involving misappropriation of public funds, the impartiality of the judges, the refusal to consider his arguments sent through a Bailiff, the excessive length of the proceedings, and the denial of justice manifested by the absence of a judgment on his appeal to the Supreme Court within the 6-month period stipulated by Section 13 of the Law of 14 December 2011 to set up the Special Criminal Court. The author asserts that no legal action has been taken against the perpetrator of the aforementioned rape.

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<sup>22</sup> About 192,641.89 Euros.

<sup>23</sup> About 1,060,160.31 Euros.

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## C: The Committee's Decision

**42-** Following a decision rendered in absentia against the State of Cameroon, the Committee noted that it is not prohibited to establish special courts as long as the guarantees of a fair trial are ensured. The Committee acknowledged and endorsed the author's allegation regarding the lack of independence of the court members. It observed that the judgment had been rendered solely based on the arguments presented by the State's representative, and thus declared a violation of Article 14 (1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The Committee also noted excessive delay and the absence of a judgment by the Supreme Court regarding the appeal filed, and thus declared a violation of Article 14(3). Furthermore, the Committee observed the disparity in rights under the law concerning access to appeal before the Supreme Court on points of law for the accused, and on both facts and law for the Legal Department, thus establishing a violation of Article 14 (5).

**43-** Consequently, the Committee recommended that the State provide adequate compensation to the author of the communication for the violation of his right to fair trial. It further urged the State to review the author's conviction and sentence in accordance with the provisions of the Covenant.

### §2: Communication No. 3838/2020, ZOGO ANDELA against the State of Cameroon

**44-** Following an initial communication presented to the Human Rights Committee, **ZOGO ANDELA**<sup>24</sup> filed the current communication addressing the same facts and the State's response to the Committee's decision in the previous case, along with the subsequent progress in their judicial proceedings before the SCC and the Supreme Court. The decision of the committee of 14 July 2023, the complaint leading up to same and the observation of the state shall be examined.

## A: Complaint

**45-** The author of the communication claimed that his right to fair trial was violated by the State during judicial proceedings related to his alleged embezzlement of public funds. He also criticised the State for disregarding the Committee's decision in Communication No. 2764/2016, as the

<sup>24</sup> Communication No. 2764/2016, Zogo Andela v. Cameroon, findings of 8 November 2017.

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court had denied his application for release despite the decision rendered in the earlier communication. He maintained that his right to defence was violated. As a result of numerous procedural irregularities, his counsel had to withdraw from the case, and he also rejected the court-appointed counsel.

**46-** Moreover, the court denied his requests for adjournment, refused to accept his complaint with a civil claim. His request to challenge Section 591 et seq. CPC the Special Criminal Court (SCC) members was rejected and the decision notified on him 1 hour 30 minutes before the hearing, resulting in the Legal Department witnesses being heard in his absence despite his deteriorating health condition as documented by a physician. His lawyer refused to represent him on 29 October 2018 and he was sentenced to 42 years imprisonment on 28 November 2018. He appealed to the Supreme Court. At the time the Committee was seized, the Supreme Court had not yet ruled on the case, despite the legal time limit of 6 months. He claims to have filed several criminal and ethical complaints against the actions of the Judges of the SCC with the Supreme Court, but they were unsuccessful.

## **B: The Committee's Decision**

**47-** The Committee found a violation of Articles 3 (b, c, e), 5 and 14 (1) of the ICCPR. It recommended that the State grant adequate compensation to the author of the communication for the harm suffered, allow a higher court to review the entire proceedings against the author, taking into account procedural guarantees, and ensure the author's release pending the judgment of the higher court.

## **C: The State's Observations**

**48-** It is important to specify that the decision against the State was rendered in absentia, and the latter communicated its reaction to this decision to the Human Rights Committee. It highlighted a distortion of the facts and an erroneous assessment of the law. The author of the Communication's particularly disrespectful and belligerent behaviour towards not only the court but also his opponents was thus highlighted. He created numerous incidents in an attempt to avoid being judged. The allegations made by the author of the communication are unfounded or based on a misinterpretation of the law. As a result, his case was handled in accordance with

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the law. His strategic defence choices, such as making unsworn statements and dismissing his counsel also had an impact on the proceedings.

**49-** In summary, the State's cooperation with various mechanisms was substantial. It allowed the State to engage in contemporary debates and reflections on Human Rights while benefiting from the observation of other stakeholders for the purpose of improving the Human Rights situation in the country.



# PART ONE

## CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS



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## INTRODUCTION TO PART ONE

**50-** Protecting civil and political rights requires the State to preserve physical and moral integrity and liberty. Access to free and impartial justice, secured access to information as well as information and communication technologies (ICTs), and participation in economic and social growth was guaranteed.

**51-** Protection of physical and moral integrity as well as liberty took the form of qualitative and quantitative increase of personnel in charge of applying the law, actions of the national torture-prevention mechanism and raising awareness on compliance with the highway Code and town planning standards. Furthermore, violations of physical and moral integrity and liberty were sanctioned.

**52-** Respect of the right to fair trial was consolidated through affirmation of an independent Judiciary, continuous improvement of judicial infrastructure, increasing staff numbers and respect of deontology, just to name these.

**53-** Punishment for offences committed using the Internet and sanctions against media stakeholders and telecommunications operators helped to ensure the protection of consumers of electronic communication services.

**54-** The election and appointment of Senators, coupled with continuation of the devolution of powers to RLA demonstrated the right for all to participate in the management of public affairs.

**55-** All these measures make up this part which is structured as follows:

- Right to Physical and Moral Integrity and Right to Liberty;
- Right to Fair Trial;
- Freedom of Expression and Communication ;
- Right to participate in the Management of Public Affairs.



# CHAPTER

# 1

## RIGHT TO PHYSICAL AND MORAL INTEGRITY AND RIGHT TO LIBERTY



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**56-** The obligation of the State to ensure the full enjoyment of the right to physical and moral integrity and the right to liberty was a permanent concern in spite of the obstacles posed by the persistent security crisis in some regions. Indeed, despite Government's preventive action to protect and promote such right and the continued sanctioning of non-compliant staff in charge of law enforcement, there was still the violation of rights.

## **SECTION 1: PREVENTIVE ACTIONS TO PROMOTE AND PROTECT THE RIGHT TO PHYSICAL AND MORAL INTEGRITY AND THE RIGHT TO LIBERTY**

**57-** Such activities included the preservation of the right to physical integrity, the right to liberty and training of target staff.

### **§1: Actions to Preserve the Right to Physical Integrity**

**58-** In this context, maintenance of safety in the transport sector, activities of the national mechanism for the prevention of torture and stepping up the staff strength of security forces were the trends observed.

#### **A: Promoting Transport Safety**

**59-** Road safety campaigns were organised and transport infrastructure improvement continued.

##### **1) Continued Improvement of Transport Infrastructure**

**60-** In 2023, some 2,400 km of roads were asphalted thereby bringing the total road network to about 121,873 km including 10,225.58 km of asphalted roads including 109 km of motorways, 5,798.69 km of national roads, 1,606.08 km of regional roads and 2,711.81 km of council roads.

**61-** In addition, financing agreements were signed to improve transport infrastructure, in particular rail and road infrastructure, with a view to facilitating the free movement of goods and persons. The agreements include the credit agreement with the *Agence Française de Développement* for the complementary financing to renew the Belabo-Ngaoundere railway line project (PRBN)<sup>25</sup>; the Loan Agreement with Standard Chartered Bank Lon-

<sup>25</sup> Decree No. 2023/338 of 9 August 2023 to authorize to the Minister of Economy, Planning and Regional Development to sign with the French Development Agency an amount of 126,000,000 Euros of approximately CFAF82, 530,000,000 for the additional financing of the BelaboNgaoundere Railway Line Renovation Project.

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don to finance the Ebolowa-Akom2-Kribi<sup>26</sup> Road Construction Project; the ratification of the Loan Agreement to finance the Olama-Kribi Road Construction Project, the Bingambo - Grand-Zambi<sup>27</sup> stretch, as well as the ratification of the Loan Agreement to finance the Project for the construction of roads to Kribi Industrial and Port Zone (PARZIK)<sup>28</sup>.

## 2) Road Safety Campaigns

**62-** The Ministry of Transport (MINT) conducted 800 field trips and launched 8 road safety campaigns resulting in a reduction of 82% drink-driving, 20.4% of high speed, 15.6% of driver fatigue. However, there was a 71% increase in compliance with the use of seat belts. Driving schools registered 100,000 learner drivers.

## B : Prevention against Torture

**63-** During celebrations to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Protocol to the United Nations Convention against Torture (OPCAT), an inter-regional conference was organised by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and supported by the Association for the Prevention of Torture from 10 to 12 October 2023, in Yaounde, under the theme *“Advancing the prevention of torture in Central and East Africa”*. The meeting, which brought together more than 60 representatives from 18 countries, was an opportunity for States to share their experiences and challenges, and to raise awareness among States reluctant to accede to the OPCAT.

## C: Stepping up the Staff Strength of Security Forces

**64-** At the Combined Services Military Academy, 200 cadet officers were recruited in 2023. The National Gendarmerie also recruited 3,340 non-

<sup>26</sup> DECREE No. 2 0 2 3 / 3 2 9 of 4 August 2023 to authorize the Minister of Economy, Planning and Regional Development to sign with Standard Chartered Bank London, a loan agreement for an amount of EUR 198 820 547, or approximately CFAF 130 417 729 548, guaranteed by UK EXPORT FINANCE, to finance the Ebolowa-Akom 11-Kribi Road Construction Project.

<sup>27</sup> Decree No. 2023/78 of 6 February 2023 to ratify the Loan Agreement for an amount of Emirati Dirham 55 095 000, equivalent to USD 15 000 000, or approximately CFAF 8.792 billion, signed on 18 December 2019 between the Republic of Cameroon and the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD) to finance the Olama-Kribi Road Construction Project, Bingambo-Grand Zambi Section.

<sup>28</sup> Decree No. 2023/100 of 8 February 2023 to ratify Loan Agreement No. 2000200005057 for an amount of EUR 114.3 million, or approximately CFAF 75 billion, signed on 20 September 2022 between the Republic of Cameroon and the African Development Bank (AfDB), to finance the Project to Develop Access Roads to the Industrial and Port Area of Kribi (PARZIK)

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commissioned officers as part of its professionalisation policy: 300 general service cadet non-commissioned officers, 40 health non-commissioned officers and 3,000 general service gendarmes. For the military, 700 general service non-commissioned officers, 40 health service soldiers and 5,330 soldiers were recruited, giving a total of 9,610 military staff. The General Delegation for National Security (DGSN) also recruited through a special competitive entrance examination: 50 pupil superintendents of police, 50 pupil assistant superintendents of police and 100 pupil inspectors of police. Besides, 5 pupil superintendents of police general medical officers, 2 pupil superintendents of police electrical engineers, 97 pupil assistant superintendents of police, 400 pupil police inspectors and 1,750 pupil police constables were recruited through direct competitive entrance examinations.

## §2: Measures to Safeguard the Right to Liberty

**65-** In addition to prison controls (see chapter on detention conditions §902), other places of detention were controlled by judicial authorities<sup>29</sup> who addressed relevant issues.

**66-** On the whole, the courts released 360 persons and Examining Magistrates 771, following applications for their release. In addition, the courts on their own motion released 1,397 persons.

## §3: Capacity Development of Stakeholders in the Judicial Chain

**67-** Administrative staff<sup>30</sup> were drilled on the respect for and protection of Human Rights during both initial and in-service training.

### A: Initial Training

**68-** A 30-hour module on “*Human Rights and Civil Liberties*” was delivered to Pupil Magistrates, to students of the Administrative Section, land affairs section, Labour Section and Social Affairs Section of the National School of Administration and Magistracy (ENAM). Pupil Magistrates apart from those of the audit bench, also received a 30-hour course on “*Human Rights litigation*”.

<sup>29</sup> The State Counsel, the Procureur General and the Inspectorate General of Judicial Services.

<sup>30</sup> Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Defence, Secretariat of State in charge of the National Gendarmerie, the General Delegation for National Security and the National School of Administration and Magistracy.

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## B: In-service Training

**69-** ENAM in collaboration with the University of Sant'Anna in Pisa, Italy, organised, in Yaounde from 20 to 22 March 2023, a training session for some 20 Judicial and Legal Officers on the *Treatment of crimes under international law* with focus on the protection of victims and the rights of persons targeted by international judicial cooperation in criminal matters. A capacity development session was organised for 17 Judicial and Legal Officers and 7 Lawyers from the Adamawa, North and Far North Regions on "*Protection of victims and witnesses in criminal proceedings*", from 16 to 17 October 2023 in Garoua. On 8 December 2023, International School of Security Forces EIFORCES rounded off a 2-week training of 10 Gendarmerie and 10 Police Officers from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) training class. Besides, 90 Police Officers were trained in the Far North and South West Regions on techniques and methods of investigation, management and support in matters of violence against women and children.

**70-** In addition, 250 National Gendarmerie staff from the Adamawa, Far North, Littoral, North, North West and South West Regions attended 7 training sessions organised as part of the dialogue with the International Committee of the Red Cross. Besides, 1,100 other staff members attended internal training sessions on Human Rights organised by the Secretariat of State in charge of the National Gendarmerie.

## SECTION 2: VIOLATION OF ENSHRINED RIGHTS

**71-** Violations of the right to physical integrity and the right to liberty seriously undermined the consolidation of such rights.

### §1: Managing Risks of Violation of the Right to Physical Integrity managing the risk of physical harm

**72-** The collapse of buildings and landslides, road traffic accidents and fires, as well as other violations of the right to physical integrity were registered.

## A: Collapse of Buildings and Landslides

**73-** In 2023, there were several landslides and buildings that collapsed.

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## 1) Collapse of Buildings

**74-** Douala registered 2 successive disasters. On 23 July 2023, a 4-storey building collapsed at the place named *Mobil Guinness* where 33 persons died and several others were wounded. However, another building collapsed at PK9 on 30 July 2023 causing only material damage. On 27 July 2023, a building collapsed in Ngaoundere in Baladji quarters, causing the death of 4 people.

**75-** During the interministerial meeting held on 5 August 2023 following these incidents, the Prime Minister, Head of Government relayed the instructions of the Head of State, on the strict enforcement of the instruments governing the construction of buildings in urban centres, identification of buildings and high-risk constructions for their eventual demolition<sup>31</sup>, stepping up control of building sites and awareness-raising of the population.

## 2) Landslides

**76-** On 16 April 2023, some 2 persons were buried following a landslide in Douala, Nyalla quarters. On 26 September 2023, in Nkolbong quarters in Douala, a landslide caused the death of 2 people, and on 8 October 2023, another landslide killed 28 people and injured 17 in Mbankolo quarters in Yaounde.

**77-** In response to these tragedies, the Prime Minister, Head of Government ordered the coordination of relief actions, assistance with psychological care for victims, eviction from risky areas<sup>32</sup> and the suspension of the granting of land titles in such areas. The order was issued at the end of the interministerial meeting on 11 October 2023. Thus, in a statement of 17 October 2023, the Minister of State Property, Surveys and Land Tenure announced the withdrawal, in the wake of the disaster, of 2 land titles fraudulently obtained on sites unfit for construction.

## B: Road Traffic Accidents

**78-** The National Gendarmerie registered 1,841 road traffic accidents on interurban roads, causing 731 deaths and 2,051 injuries. On urban roads,

<sup>31</sup> As at 31 July 2023, some 3 buildings were destroyed in Douala.

<sup>32</sup> In a press release dated 11 October 2023, the Senior Divisional Officer of the Mfoundi Division, following serious cracks identified at a place known as Ebama, in Ngousso, asked local residents to evacuate the area.

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the DGSN registered 6,866 road traffic accidents with 509 dead and 664 seriously injured.

## C: Fire Outbreaks

**79-** The National Fire Brigade carried out 1,528 firefighting operations, representing 30.51% of their 5,008 interventions. Although lives and property were saved as a result of the operations<sup>33</sup>, the loss of life in some cases was heavy such as the fire outbreaks of 21 May 2023 in New-Bell quarters, Douala with 4 deaths including a new-born and that of 31 May 2023 in Garoua, in the *Camp Carreaux* quarters where a woman and her child lost their lives.

## D: Statistics on Violations of the Right to Physical Integrity

**80-** The courts handled proceedings related to the violation of the right to life, in particular 206 cases of capital murder of which 138 were pending trial, 243 cases of murder with 164 before trial courts, and 898 for unintentional killing. Some 68 matters were brought before the courts for assault occasioning grievous harm, 33 of which were pending trial, 1,047 for simple harm of which 535 were pending trial and 1,348 for slight harm.

## §2: Violations of the Right to Liberty

**81-** In 2023, criminal courts saw an increase in proceedings relating to the violation of the right to liberty, most of which were brought before military tribunals. The Garoua Military Tribunal heard 49 cases of kidnapping and 138 cases of false arrest<sup>34</sup>. In addition, 8 proceedings for similar facts were pending before the Examining Magistrate of the Maroua Military Tribunal.

**82-** Besides, kidnappings with demands for ransom of 40 traders and students of Cameroon and Chadian nationality near Touboro were registered on 22 October 2023.

**83-** Several violations of the right to liberty were reported in the North West and South West Regions including kidnappings by non-State armed enti-

<sup>33</sup> The fire outbreak of 22 March 2023, at Acero Metal company resulting in 19 wounded and that of the Chinese Commercial Centre of Akwa, Douala, on 17 September 2023.

<sup>34</sup> See 2022 Report, p 28, §70 and 71. There were 85 proceedings on false arrest and detention before the Garoua Military Tribunal.

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ties, and abductions, particularly that of some 30 women in Kedjom-Keku village on 21 May 2023. They were released a week later by the Rapid Intervention Battalion (BIR). The Defence and Security Forces (DSFs) also released on 1 June 2023, Fon **Yakum Kevin Teuvih**, Vice-Chair of the Regional Council and Chair of the House of Chiefs of the North West Region, who was kidnapped in December 2021. On 4 October 2023, some 2 civilians in Guzang village were kidnapped and summarily executed by an armed gang.

**84-** There were also ghost town operations in the North West and South West Regions, commonly known as lockdowns, maintained by separatist groups to restrict the free movement of persons and goods, sometimes for several days.

**85-** Attacks against road users were observed on some roads including the one connecting Douala to Yaounde between 11 and 20 March 2023. An extensive DSF operation reduced the number of attacks.

## SECTION 3: CONTINUED SANCTIONS AGAINST VIOLATIONS

**86-** Sanctions were imposed on persons found guilty of violating Human Rights, in particular against the staff of the administration in charge of law enforcement.

### §1: Sanctions against Vertical Violation

**87-** Such sanctions included administrative and judicial sanctions against staff in charge of law enforcement. Victims of illegal detention, depending on the case, applied to the judge for *habeas corpus* or the compensation commission for victims of illegal detention.

#### A: Administrative Sanctions

**88-** The following sanctions against police officers were imposed: 5 grade reductions, 8 echelon reductions, 4 delays in promotion for a period of 1 year, 3 removals from the promotion list, 4 reprimand and 2 suspensions.

#### B: Judicial Sanctions

**89-** The courts, pursuant to their judgments, sanctioned staff in charge of law enforcement, perpetrators of violation of Human Rights, and awarded compensation where necessary, for the damages suffered.

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**90-** In fact, by Judgment No. 5/CRIM/23 of 9 January 2023, the Maroua Military Tribunal found **M.G.**, a soldier, guilty of arbitrary arrest and detention and violation of instructions (indecent behaviour likely to tarnish the image of Defence Forces). He was convicted and sentenced to 3 years imprisonment.

**91-** The same court in Judgment No. 106/CRIM/23 of 15 March 2023, found police officers **L.M.** and **Y.N.** guilty of false arrest and violation of instructions (indecent behaviour likely to tarnish the image of Defence Forces). They were convicted and sentenced to 2 years imprisonment suspended for 3 years and ordered to pay severally to the victim the sum of CFAF4,500,000<sup>35</sup>.

**92-** The Garoua Military Tribunal, in Judgment No. 85/23 of 7 September 2023, found the Gendarme **O.F.A.** and **N.N.D.L.** guilty of theft, false arrest, and violation of instructions. The Court convicted and sentenced them to one year imprisonment suspended for 3 years and a fine of CFAF25,000<sup>36</sup> each.

**93-** In addition, proceedings against **D.P.** for torture were ongoing before the High Court (HC) of Benoue preliminary inquiry ongoing at the Maroua Military Tribunal; against Lieutenant-colonel **V.E.** for violation of instructions, false arrest, and fraudulent retention of the property of another; against Chief Warrant Officer **S.A.**, the *Maréchaux de Logis* **M.A.**, **B.Z.G.** and others for accessory to false arrest, and fraudulent retention of the property of another; as well as against Chief Warrant Officers **B.P.C.** and **E.C.B.** for violation of instructions (non-compliance with the rules on conducting judicial police investigations), abuse of office, false arrest.

## C: Habeas Corpus Litigation

**94-** To ensure sanctions of illegal detention, 66 applications for immediate release through *habeas corpus* proceedings were granted.

**95-** Thus, the President of the HC of Diamare in Ruling No. 6/HC/2023 of 9 February 2023 upheld the illegality of the prolonged detention in the following terms: “... Considering that **H.S.** has served his entire sentence and his release date is well past, That his current detention is illegal...”

<sup>35</sup> About 6,870.23Euros.

<sup>36</sup> About 338.17Euros.

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**96-** Furthermore, he clearly stated in Ruling No. 37/HC of 21 December 2023, the obligation of trial courts to forward their decisions to the local prison and the prohibition of execution of imprisonment in default of payment for persons over 60 years old.

The President of the HC of Diamare, in Ruling No. 3/HC of 14 July 2023, considered the continued detention of an accused person whose detention warrant has expired constitutes illegal detention.

**97-** The *habeas corpus* judge of the HC of Wouri, in a decision, found it illegal to keep in custody an accused minor on bail<sup>37</sup>; the continued detention of a convicted person whose sentence has expired<sup>38</sup>, or that of a convicted person who has appealed and whose judgment has not become final<sup>39</sup>.

## **D: Actions of the Commission for the Compensation of Victims of Illegal Detention**

**98-** Although the number of applications registered remained relatively stable, 18 in 2022 and 19 in 2023, the Commission delivered 13 decisions compared to 18 in 2022 during 2 hearings against 3 in 2022.

**99-** For the first time, in a decision on the merits, a compensation of CFAF5,067,410<sup>40</sup> was awarded to the applicant **KAMGANG TCHOMTE Yves André** for illegal detention.

## **§2: Sanctions against Horizontal Violations**

**100-** The courts punished violations of the right to physical integrity and the right to liberty committed by persons other than staff in charge of law enforcement. The MINT, in its road safety strategy, also imposed sanctions.

## **A: Judicial Repression**

**101-** Judgments delivered by the courts made it possible to guarantee the right to physical integrity and the right to freedom. In this regard, by Judgment No. 47/CRIM of 7 November 2023, the Court of Appeal of the North

<sup>37</sup> Ruling No. 51/HC of 28 November 2023.

<sup>38</sup> Ruling No. 20/HC of 26 April 2023.

<sup>39</sup> Ruling No. 18/HC/TGI/W/23 of 26 April 2023.

<sup>40</sup> No. 01/CI of 29 March 2023, Nkamgang Tchomte Yves André vs the State of Cameroon.

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Region quashed Judgment No. 57/CRIM of 18 May 2022 delivered by the HC of Benoue that discharged and acquitted **A.** for kidnapping and child trafficking; Ruling anew, it found him guilty of the said charges, convicted and sentenced him to 10 years imprisonment.

**102-** By Judgment No. 213/CRIM of 28 December 2023, the HC of Diamare found **D.A.** and **E.J.** guilty of kidnapping a minor and complicity in the kidnapping of a minor. They were convicted and sentenced to 20 months and 6 years imprisonment respectively. Besides, by Judgment No. 736/COR and Judgment No. 724/COR of 13 June 2023, the Court of First instance (CFI) of Garoua convicted and sentenced **A.M.** and **M.O.** alias **A.N.** to 2 years imprisonment respectively.

**103-** By Judgment No. 106/CRIM of 15 March 2023, the Maroua Military Tribunal found **A.O.** guilty of complicity in illegal arrest and detention, convicted and sentenced him to 5 years imprisonment and to pay compensation to the civil party in the sum of CFAF6,912,200<sup>41</sup>. There were also proceedings before the same court against **S.A.**, **H.I.**, **S.A.**, **A.S.** and **A.Y.** for aggravated kidnapping of a minor, false arrest, illegal carriage and possession of weapons and munitions of war.

## B: Repressive Measures of the Ministry of Transport

**104-** By Decision No. 52/D/MINT/SG/DTR/BCPRJ/CJ of 11 May 2023, the Ministry of Transport suspended the interurban passenger transport company *Touristique Express SA* for serious breach of regulations concerning a traffic accident on 9 May 2023 that killed 15 people. It also suspended the licence of the driver of that company for a period of two years. Although the suspension was lifted 4 days later, the same company was again suspended on 16 August 2023 for 15 days following a road traffic accident that killed 9 people and injured 42. It also ordered the immobilisation of all buses of the said company that are not equipped with the centralised management and monitoring system for interurban transport until such a system is installed.

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<sup>41</sup> About 10,552.98 Euros.

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**105-** On the whole, the State continued to take multifaceted measures to guarantee the right to physical or moral integrity and liberty. Indeed, the repression of violations of this right were combined with preventive actions.

**106-** In the future, particular attention should be paid to the scourge of building collapses and to the fight against abductions and road accidents.



## CHAPTER

# 2

## RIGHT TO FAIR TRIAL



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**107-** The promotion, protection and implementation of the right to fair trial remained major concerns of the State of Cameroon. actions focused, at both the procedural and institutional levels, on guaranteeing equal access to the courts and the administration of quality justice.

## SECTION 1: GUARANTEEING THE RIGHT TO EQUAL ACCESS TO THE COURTS

**108-** The content of legislation was disseminated, legal aid granted and the development of judicial infrastructure continued.

### §1: Dissemination of Legislation Content

**109-** The Official Gazette of Cameroun, the daily newspaper *Cameroon Tribune*, Cameroon Radio Television and the website [www.prc.cm](http://www.prc.cm) were the main publication media of laws and regulatory instruments in English and French. Court judgments were published in legal journals and magazines, including *Justitia*, which published extracts of judgments of the Special Criminal Court. The Ministry of Justice (MINJUSTICE) published 3 editions (021, 022 and 023) of its magazine *Justitia*, in 4,500 copies containing different legal topics.

**110-** In a bid to guarantee availability of legal instruments and other documents in English and French, translation services in Administrations were available such as the Translation Unit of MINJUSTICE with 6 Translators comprising 1 man and 5 women. As part of celebrations to mark the International Translation Day on 30 September 2023, training in terminology for staff of that Unit was organised from 2 to 5 October 2023 in the conference room of MINJUSTICE. On the whole, the Unit translated 1,339 pages of documents in 2023.

**111-** With regard to doctrine, many legal books<sup>42</sup> and journals were published by academics and professionals. Such journals include *Juridis Périodique*, with 3 issues (133, 134 and 135) published.

<sup>42</sup> These include: *Introduction générale au droit camerounais du sport*, *Le droit et les cries au Cameroun* (tomes 1 et 2), *Le droit des réseaux et services de communications électroniques au Cameroun*, *Droit pénal du travail au Cameroun*, *Introduction au droit minier applicable au Cameroun*, *Droit des successions à l'épreuve de la dualité juridique au Cameroun*, *l'effectivité des libertés publiques dans un contexte de lutte contre le terrorisme au Cameroun*, *La politique juridique sportive du Cameroun de 1960 à nos jours*.

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## §2: Legal Aid

**112-** Persons with insufficient financial resources were able to obtain legal aid upon request. The Legal Aid Commissions granted 147 of the 222 applications registered, as shown in the table below, with a rate of 66.21% as against 54.94% in 2021 and 44.75% in 2022.

**Table 1: Legal Aid Grant in 2023**

Court	Number of legal aid applications registered	Number of legal aid applications rejected	Number of legal aid grants		Number of beneficiaries		
			Full grant	Partial grant	Number Men	Number Women	Other (Detainees, refugees, internally displaced persons, indigenous peoples (Pygmies, Mbororos) + persons living with a disability)
CFI	35	13	16	3	14	4	00
HC	161	48	95	22	54	4	19
CA	26	5	5	6	6	1	00

**Source: MINJUSTICE**

**Key:** CFI (Court of First Instance); HC (High Court); CA (Court of Appeal).

**113-** By Judgment No. 82/CAJ/TGI/W/DLA of 5 December 2023, the Legal Aid Commission of the High Court (HC) of Wouri granted 50% of the application of **Y.N. F.** By Judgment No. 2/AJ/TGI/023 of 23 November 2023, the HC of Sanaga-Maritime granted the application of **T.L.J.** By Judgment of 21 December 2023, the Court of First Instance (CFI) of Douala-Bonanjo granted the application of **A.P.C.** company.

## §3: Development of Judicial Infrastructure

**114-** In a bid to align the judicial and penitentiary maps to the administrative map, the Division for Research and Planning (DEP) of MINJUSTICE conducted studies to identify sites likely to host future judicial infrastructure. On 12 December 2023, a DEP team went to Dzeng in the Centre Region where 2 plots of 5,000 m<sup>2</sup> and 5 hectares respectively were selected for construction of a court premises and a prison. The formalities to secure the plots and hand them to MINJUSTICE were underway.

**115-** Construction and rehabilitation of judicial infrastructure continued. Such infrastructure includes judicial complexes of Yaounde and Douala, the completion rates of which at the end of 2023, stood respectively at 61.56% and 51.70%, as compared to 47.88% and 51.10% in 2022. The

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complexes have incorporated accessibility for people with reduced mobility through the installation of lifts and the construction of a 6% ramp access to the ground floor. Construction work on the Edea and Ngambe court premises also continued.

## SECTION 2: GUARANTEEING QUALITY JUSTICE

**116-** In addition to the requirements fair hearing and judgments rendered, measures taken to ensure a quality justice system focused on guaranteeing hearing by an appropriate court.

### §1: Guaranteeing Proceedings by an Appropriate Court

**117-** The objective was to guarantee the proper composition of the court, its jurisdiction, impartiality and independence.

#### A: Proper Composition of the Court

**118-** Violation of the proper composition of the court was sanctioned. Thus, by Judgment No. 12/DL of 26 October 2023 in the matter between **A.M.C.** and **K.M.D.**, the Court of Appeal (CA) of East Region quashed Judgment No. 5088/TPD/BRI of 4 February 2022 delivered by a court the composition of which included assessors who did not represent the customs of the parties. By Judgment No. 05/SOC of 3 July 2023 in the matter between **N.T.** company and **D.N.**, and Judgment No. 04/SOC of 8 August 2023 in the matter between **N.T.** company and **E.Z.A.E.M.**, the CA of North Region quashed a judgment delivered by a court that had ruled on a labour matter with only one assessor out of the 2 required.

**119-** In order to guarantee the normal composition of the juvenile court, the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Social Affairs appointed by Order No. 423/MINJUSTICE and Order No. 2/MINAS of 19 September 2023, assessors in juvenile matters for the 2023 and 2024 judicial years.

#### B: Jurisdiction of the Court

**120-** The court on its own motion, at the request of the parties or the Legal Department, the deviations from the requirement of respect for jurisdiction *ratione loci* and *materiae* of the court were corrected either by the courts seised who declared they lacked jurisdiction or by higher courts that quashed the judgments of the courts that wrongly declared that they lacked jurisdiction.

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**121-** By Judgment No. 551/COR of 23 June 2023 in the matter between The People and **C.L.L.N. vs. B.B.S.**, the CA of Centre Region quashed a judgment delivered by a court that declared its lack of jurisdiction *ratione loci* to rule on alleged defamation by press on the ground that the press organ involved (a radio) was not established in its jurisdiction. The CA ruled that all courts of the broadcasting venues of the radio, including the said court, had jurisdiction to entertain the matter. The court, ruling *de novo*, declared that the said court had jurisdiction and ordered that the matter be returned to it for proper determination.

## C: Impartiality of the Court

**122-** Although no cases filed against a judicial authority by litigants was recorded, requests for recusal provided an opportunity to assess the relevance or otherwise of some allegations of bias.

**123-** On the whole, 55 applications for recusal were registered at the level of the courts of appeal compared to 33 in 2018; 37 in 2019; 20 in 2020; 44 in 2021 and 7 in 2022. The Presidents of the said courts granted one application and rejected 29. At the end of 2023, some 25 applications were pending.

## D: Independence of the Court

**124-** The independence of the court was guaranteed through the monitoring of professional obligations of judicial staff, consolidation of financial resources allocated to the justice sector, monitoring the number of judicial staff and development of their technical capacity.

### 1) Monitoring the Professional Obligations of Judicial Staff

**125-** The General Inspectorate of Judicial Services (IGJS) continued its checks on documents by examining periodic reports provided by the courts, with special focus on the performance of Judicial Officers and the monitoring of pre-trial detention. It also conducted 8 on-the-spot checks in the courts<sup>43</sup>. The table below provides details of the monitoring involved.

<sup>43</sup> CFI Bafoussam, 20 -24 February 2023; CFI Mbanga, 13 - 17 March 2023; HC Edea, 3-7 April 2023; Registry of HC of Wouri and CA of Littoral Region, 29 May - 2 June 2023; CFI of Garoua, HC of Benue and Registry of CA of North Region, 23 - 27 October 2023; CFI of Ngaoundere, HC of Vina and Registry CA of Adamawa, 24 - 28 October 2023; CFI of Maroua, HC of Diamare and Registry of CA of Far North Region, 25 November - 2 December 2023; and Registry HC of Wouri, 4 - 8 December 2023.

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**Table 2: Comparative status of the Monitoring of Professional Obligations of judicial staff since 2021.**

	2021	2022	2023
Applications received and examined	212	218	259
Time-barred applications	46	129	73
Observation letters	35	27	32
Queries	28	51	13
Requests for observations issued	69	132	82
Files forwarded to the disciplinary body	7	16	20
Dismissed Judicial and Legal Officers	7	0	0
Dismissed Registrars	43	12	7

**Source: IGSJ and DAG/MINJUSTICE**

**126-** The Anti-Corruption Unit in MINJUSTICE held two sessions on 17 May and 21 September 2023. At the initiative of the Unit, 110 giant posters to sensitise against corruption in the Judiciary were designed, disseminated and posted in the courts.

## **2: Consolidation of Financial Resources allocated to the Justice Sector**

**127-** Be it MINJUSTICE, the Supreme Court or the Constitutional Council, budget resources were amended upwards as shown in the table below.

**Table 3: Financial allocation to the justice sector (in millions CFAF<sup>44</sup>)**

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Constitutional Council</b>	///	2,774	3,244	3,744	3,744	<b>3,944</b>
<b>Supreme Court</b>	3,336	4,504	5,503	4,130	From 4,566 to 4,208.25	<b>5,985</b>
<b>Ministry of Justice</b>	63,454	66,316	65,825	60,549	From 64,974 to 64,484.346	<b>65,915</b>

**Source: Finance Laws from 2018 to 2023**

**128-** With regard to MINJUSTICE, 50.54% of the budget was earmarked for enhancement of judicial activity, 25% for improving prison policy and 24.46% for governance and institutional support of the justice subsector.

<sup>44</sup> CFAF 1,000,000 about 1,526.72 Euros.

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## 3) Monitoring Judicial Staff Strength and Development of Technical Capacities

**129-** As at 31 December 2023, MINJUSTICE had 1,783 Judicial and Legal Officers, including 33.30% women. In the non-judicial and legal category, it had 3,567 civil servants including 53% women and 1,614 civil servants governed by the Labour Code, including 61% women.

**130-** Some 319 judicial staff were trained in Cameroon and abroad<sup>45</sup> on the rights of the defence, the judicial processing of cross-border crimes, the

<sup>45</sup> Training organised by Académie de Droit International, (7-27 January 2023, The Hague); Training workshop on the right of the defence, for civilian Judicial and Legal Officers working at military courts (23-24 January 2023, Yaounde); Round table on combating terrorism in Lake Chad Basin countries (7-9 February 2023, Niamey); Judicial training for African countries on the theme: "Investigate and prosecute cross-border crimes" (19-23 February 2023, Cairo); Seminar on the drafting of court judgments (20 - 24 February 2023, Yaounde); Training on interministerial management of a terrorist crisis (27 February-3 March 2023, Abidjan); Training of trainers of the Magistracy and Court Registry Division of ENAM on the administration of justice in the context of terrorism (5 -11 March 2023, Douala); Drafting of a guide on the collection and prevention of survey data and objects on the scene of terrorist crimes, for 3<sup>rd</sup> category forces (12 - 17 March 2023, Douala); Training on maritime disputes and the Law of the Sea (18 March - 24 December 2023, New-York); Training session on "Judicial processing of international crimes" (20 - 23 March 2023, Yaounde); Seminar on disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (20 - 23 March, Vienna); Training on the theme: "Ethics and the Rule of Law" (3 - 17 April 2023, Paris); Capacity development seminar on combating wildlife crime (11-15 April 2023, Douala); Training on judicial handling of terrorism (15 May 2023, Abidjan); Training workshop of Judicial and Legal Officers on court management (10 -11 May 2023, Yaounde); Training on "disputes on intellectual property rights: practical guidelines" (13-27 May 2023, Paris); Regional workshop on management of remand in custody (16 -18 May 2023, Nairobi); Training session on "Application and enforcement of challenging cross-border sentences" (29 -31 May 2023, Yaounde); Workshop on the use in court, of evidence collected from the battle field within the framework of combating terrorism (14-15 June 2023, Dakar); Training on the "Training of trainers" (15-30 June 2023, Paris); Training organised by the International Counter-Terrorism Academy on restrictions to terrorist networks (26-30 June 2023, Abidjan); Seminar to raise the awareness of heads of court on the financial risks arising from the procedure of advancement of salaries post mortem of public officials (20-22 July 2023, Ebolowa); Awareness raising Programme for Judicial and Legal Officers and Judicial Police Officers on cybercrime (2-4 August 2023, Limbe); Training workshop on wildlife scene management (22-25 August 2023, Garoua); Training workshop on combating illegal mining practices (11-15 September 2023, Gaborone); Training organised by the International Counter-Terrorism Academy on the implementation of an anti-terrorism intelligence and targeting cell (25-29 September 2023, Abidjan); Third edition of the regional seminar on enforcement of intellectual property rights (26-28 September 2023, N'Djamena); Subregional seminar on the management of intellectual property law disputes for Judges from OAPI countries (10-13 October 2023, Abidjan); Seminar on "Intellectual property rights litigation" (30 October-1 Novembre 2023, Yaounde); Training on cybercrime (13-15 November 2023, Yaounde); Training workshop on a new form of crime according to the Q. NET model (13-15 November 2023, Abidjan); Capacity development workshop for stakeholders in the fight against environmental crime (14-16 November 2023, Abidjan); Workshop on the dissemination of the national strategy to combat poaching and wildlife crime (22-24 November 2023, Douala); Regional workshop on legislation against the manufacture and trafficking of fake medical products (28-30 November 2023, Abidjan); Training on the negotiation and implementation of bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral trade agreements (4-15 December 2023, Yaounde); Training session on OHADA Uniform Acts (6 - 8 December 2023, Garoua); Training course on "judicial management" (6 - 28 December 2023, Paris); Training on international conventions on criminal justice and its impact on national criminal laws (10-14 December 2023, Egypt).

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drafting of court judgments, the administration of justice on terrorism, disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, ethics and the Rule of Law, combating wildlife crime, court management, the management of remand in custody, and combating illegal mining practices.

**131-** With regard to Human Rights, during 19 workshops organised with its own funds or with the support of partners<sup>46</sup>, MINJUSTICE trained 211 Judicial and Legal Officers (compared to 161 in 2022 and 125 in 2021), 32 Registrars and 20 Bailiffs on the following topics: domestic violence, criminal justice, child protection in the criminal justice system, protection of child victims and witnesses, protection of children in contact with the law in times of crisis, Human Rights in relation to HIV and tuberculosis, and protection of victims and witnesses.

**132-** For its part, the National School of Administration and Magistracy (ENAM) hosted<sup>47</sup> 5 training sessions for Judicial and Legal Officers on: drafting techniques of court judgments in the OHADA zone (for some 20 Judicial and Legal Officers and some 100 student Judicial and Legal Officers), dealing with crimes under international law, the application and execution of sentences, intellectual property rights and litigation, and cybercrime (for some 80 Judicial and Legal Officers).

## §2: Fair Hearing and Judgments

**133-** In addition to providing reasons, the principle of adversarial hearing and equality of arms, and the exercise of the right to appeal, the requirements of fair hearing and judgments were fulfilled through assistance to the parties, the publicity of hearings and the delivery of judgments within a reasonable time.

### A: Assistance to Parties

**134-** The parties were assisted by lawyers and other stakeholders.

#### 1) Assistance of the Parties by Lawyers

**135-** On the overall situation, one of the highlights was the announcement of projected increase in the number of lawyers. The Minister of Justice signed

<sup>46</sup> UNICEF, GIZ, Care International, United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa.

<sup>47</sup> As part of cooperation with: l'Université Saint'Anna de Pise, l'Ecole nationale de magistrature de France and the Regional Higher School of Magistracy.

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Order No. 627/DPJ/SG/MJ of 18 December 2023 to lay down the terms of organisation for the 2024 examination session. In addition to declaring that the exam will hold in Yaounde, the Order further lays down the eligibility criteria and forms an examination committee comprising a jury and a secretariat.

**136-** As at 31 December 2023, the Cameroon Bar Association had 3,740 lawyers, including 1,081 women, compared to 3,725 in 2022. The increase was due mainly to the admission of lawyers from other countries. Furthermore, the Cameroon Bar Association continued to enhance its corps. Thus, in addition to a complaint for illegal practice and usurpation of office, the Cameroon Bar Association sealed in June 2023 in Douala, the chambers of **S.N.S.B.** who reportedly usurped the title of Lawyer. Besides, MINJUSTICE organised training sessions including those initiated by the Cameroon Bar Association, on Human Rights themes (see §131) trained 206 lawyers in 2023 as against 29 in 2022.

**137-** The specific exercise of the right to assistance by a lawyer is reflected in the table below.

**Table 4: Exercise of the Right to Counsel in 2023**

Court	Number of suspects (SUS) / Accused (AC) / Plaintiffs (PLT) / Applicants (APP) / Respondents (RES) assisted										Number of lawyers appointed automatically	Number of lawyers remunerated by the suspect/accused
	Civil		Labour		Customary law		Simple offence		Criminal			
	APP	RES	APP	RES	APP	RES	PLT	SUS	PLT	AC		
CFI	528 2	459 1	969	809	625 1	260 3	121 87	150 43	42	194	709	3708
HC	191 2	183 1	480	488	20	10	140	98	133 9	245 1	350	329
CA	348 2	226 9	717	242	175	58	112 7	840	309	77	20	492

**Source:** MINJUSTICE

**138-** With regard to ethics, the Department of Judicial Professions (DPJ) of MINJUSTICE registered 164 complaints of aggravated breach of trust and non-attendance of hearings against lawyers.

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## 2) Assistance to Parties by other Stakeholders

**139-** Parties received counsel not only from lawyers but also from ministerial and public officers and Translators/Interpreters.

### a) Assistance of the Parties by other Counsel

**140-** Academics, tax advisers and other professionals assisted parties before administrative courts. Thus, in the matters that resulted in Ruling No. 196/OSE/TA/EBWA/2023 delivered by the Administrative Court of Ebolowa (between **L.L.N.C.** and State of Cameroon) and Judgment No. 151/ADD/2023/TA-YDE of 11 July 2023 delivered by the Administrative Court of Yaounde (between **E.N.F.** and State of Cameroon), Counsel for applicants were university lecturers.

### b) Assistance of the Parties by Ministerial and Public Officers

**141-** As at 31 December 2023, Cameroon registered 493 offices of Notaries Public including 107 women Notaries Public and 104 offices of Sheriff/Bailiffs, 56 of which were headed by women. The DPJ of MINJUSTICE registered 177 complaints against Sheriff/Bailiffs and 77 against Notaries Public on allegations of breach of trust

**142-** On 25 January 2023, the President of the Republic signed Decree No. 2023/042 to lay down the rules and regulations and organisation of the profession of Bailiff and Enforcement Agent, which repealed Decree No. 79/448 of 5 November 1979. Among other innovations, the Decree of 25 January 2023 provides that Bailiffs shall be law officers (the decree of 5 November 1979 provided that they were **Ministerial and Public Officers**), reduces the age of admission into the profession from 25 to 23 years, raises the retirement age from 60 to 65, includes duly established disability as a cause of termination of service, allows the formation of professional civil societies of Bailiffs, and provides that chambers of Bailiffs shall be inviolate and cannot be attached. In addition, clerical staff strength was stepped up by Order No. 399/DPJ/SG/MINJUSTICE of 17 August 2023 to publish the results of 25 candidates for the professional examination of first clerical officer for the 2022 session.

### c) Assistance of Parties by Translators and Interpreters

**143-** 41 Translators and Interpreters provided assistance in the administration of justice, both in the courts and in the central services of MINJUSTICE.

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The courts that did not have such services made use of *ad hoc* Interpreters, in particular for interpretation into their mother tongues. Thus, as part of the proceedings resulting in Judgment No. 74/PD of 20 June 2023 (between **E.M.T.** and **S.M.**), Judgment No. 82/PD of 18 July 2023 (between **Y.P.T.** and **D.M.**), Judgment No. 85/PD of 1 August 2023 (between **A.E.A.M.** and **Z.N.J.B.**) and Judgment No. 98/PD of 3 October 2023 (between **M.Z.P.** and **A.V.S.**) delivered by CFI of Ambam, the parties were assisted by an Interpreter into their mother tongue.

## B: Public Hearings

**144-** Since public hearings are the rule, courts exceptionally ordered hearings in camera to take into account privacy, public policy or the security of the State requirements. In any case, judgments were delivered in open court. The following table provides information on public hearings in 2022 and 2023.

**Table 5: Publicity of hearings in 2022 and 2023**

Court	Number of hearings in open court	Number of hearings in camera		
		On the Cout’s own motion		At the request of the parties
		Minors		
		Offenders	Victims	
CFI	115,017	233	82	49
CC	198,512	12	26	56
HC	11,382	30	29	12
CA	6,660	01	02	15

**Source:** MINJUSTICE

**145-** At the request of the parties, the courts heard 547 matters in camera.

## C: Trial without Undue Delay

**146-** In the courts as well as in the central services of MINJUSTICE, measures were taken either to ensure the hearing of matters without undue delay or to correct deficiencies related thereto. With regard to the central services, in addition to the integration of the requirement for a judgment to be delivered within a reasonable time as part of in-service training modules, particularly on Human Rights, the IGSJ focused during on-the-spot or document checks, on the diligent hearing of matters. In the courts, this requirement was highlighted during checks conducted by heads of court.

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**147-** In his keynote address of November 2023, the Prime Minister, Head of Government indicated that to date, 66.88% of civil matters entered on the cause list were heard and determined.

## D: The Obligation to Render Seasoned Judgments, Adversarial Hearing and Equality of Arms

**148-** The Court of Appeal or Supreme Court quashed unreasoned judgments brought before them. Thus, following Judgment No. 05/DL of 22 June 2023 in the matter between **M.D.** and **M.A.**, the CA of East Region quashed an unreasoned judgment. By Judgment No. 89/CIV of 6 March 2023 in the matter between **D.M.M.** and **N.P.**, the CA of Littoral Region quashed a judgment for inconsistencies between the grounds and the verdict.

**149-** Breaches of the adversarial principle and equality of arms were remedied. By Judgment No. 122/COR of 5 September 2023 in the matter the People and **N.Y.Y.S.**, and the rightful claimants of **M.D.** vs. **I.A.** and **A.A.C.**, the CA of East Region quashed a judgment that declared an opposition inadmissible whereas the challenged judgment was wrongly qualified as adversarial, given that the opponents had neither appeared nor were represented before the said court.

## E: Appeals

**150-** The table below provides information on appeals.

**Table 6: Right to Appeal in 2023**

Appeals	Number of appeals received					Appellants			Number of appeals not forwarded for failure to pay reproduction fees					Outcome of appeals									
														Number of appeals declared inadmissible <sup>48</sup>					Number of appeals amended or stroke off <sup>49</sup>				
	TP D	CFI	H C	C A	S C	L D	Pa rties	oth ers	C C	CF I	H C	C A	SC	C C	C FI	H C	C A	S C	C C	C FI	H C	C A	S C
Third-party opposition	141	26	63	05	00	01	200 + 32	116	000	000	000	000	000	110	002	003	000	79	05	01	02	...	
Opposition	163	1288	193	236	00	01	941	85	07	26	06	00	00	09	26	08	08	00	41	68	02	30	...

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Appeals	Number of appeals received					Appellants			Number of appeals not forwarded for failure to pay reproduction fees					Outcome of appeals									
	TP D	CFI	H C	C A	S C	L D	Pa rti es	oth ers	C C	CF I	H C	C A	SC	C C	C FI	H C	C A	S C	C C	C FI	H C	C A	S C
Appeal	445	5833	120422	100	00	1411	14207	397	39	160	41	104	00	00	00	02	505	00	26	41	03	1308	...
Appeal before the SC	00	02	196	850	00	123	631	58	00	00	00	174	00	00	00	00	97	00	00	00	00	00	...
Review	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	...

**Source:** MINJUSTICE

**Key:** TPD (Tribunal de Premier Degree); CFI (Court of First Instance); HC (High Court; CA (Court of Appeal); SC (Supreme Court)

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**151-** In conclusion, the provision of legal aid, the development of judicial infrastructure, the development of the technical capacities of judicial staff, the signing of the decree to organise the Bar examination, the updating of the rules and regulations governing Bailiffs and measures taken to ensure the right to fair trial are initiatives taken in 2023 to guarantee everyone the right to fair trial. Among the challenges, there is the insufficient use of legal aid by potential beneficiaries.

<sup>48</sup> Form to be filled in by all the courts with regard to opposition, and only the Court of Appeal or the Supreme Court with regard to the other appeals.

<sup>49</sup> See footnote above.

## CHAPTER

# 3

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND COMMUNICATION



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**152-** In a bid to guarantee freedom of expression and communication to all, the State continued to ensure access to information, combat cybercrime, regulate the media sector and sanction anyone who violated the right thereto.

## SECTION 1: DIVERSIFICATION OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION

**153-** The variety of information sources and public support to private communication was maintained, while the digital divide continued to be reduced.

### §1: Variety of Sources of Information and Maintenance of Public Support to the Private Press

**154-** The growth of freedom of the press was illustrated by the increasing number of media houses: 644 print media outlets, 58 community radio stations, 250 audio broadcast houses, of which 166 were licensed, 54 television channels, 500 cable distribution enterprises and 52 online media outlets.

**155-** State subvention to print and online media, amounting to CFAF66,000,000<sup>50</sup> in 2022, increased to CFAF119,000,000<sup>51</sup> in 2023, shared among 53 print media outlets and 5 online media outlets.

### §2: Enhancement of access to the Internet

**156-** On 23 August 2023, Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (MINPOSTEL) launched the Acceleration of Digital Transformation Cameroon Project (PATNUC). The project aims to extend the coverage of high-speed networks and reduce the digital divide between urban and rural areas, as well as amend the digital regulatory framework. The following progress was observed after financing<sup>52</sup> was provided: completion of an institutional study on the amendment of the legal and institutional framework of the telecommunications and ICTs sector, the study on support to the implementation of long-term monitoring and control mechanisms for the execution of the terms of reference of mobile telephone operators and the study on the consolidation of priority sectors with high growth potential through the integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

<sup>50</sup> About 100,763.36 Euros.

<sup>51</sup> About 181,679.39Euros.

<sup>52</sup> Signature of a loan agreement of US\$100,000,000 (about CFAF623,229,135,99.23).

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**157-** Furthermore, on 30 October 2023, the State and Cameroon Telecommunications (CAMTEL) signed an agreement for the retrocession of 812 km of optical fibre to CAMTEL. The 812 km are in addition to the 12,000 km already held by CAMTEL and which concern the overhead cables laid by The Energy of Cameroon (ENEO) on the south interconnected network, especially on the Yaounde-Boumnyebel-Edea-Kribi-Douala-Limbe-Nkongsamba-Bafoussam segment. The contribution will also make it possible to expand the broadband network and facilitate Internet access in remote areas.

## SECTION 2: COMBATING CYBERCRIME

**158-** Securing access of users of electronic communications focused on combating cybercrime by ensuring security audits and security monitoring. Actions to develop the capacities of stakeholders and raise awareness of users of telecommunications services were also carried out.

### §1: Security Audits

**159-** Security audits were conducted by the National Agency for Information and Communication Technologies (ANTIC) in 11 ministries, 8 public companies and institutions, 5 banking institutions, 2 microfinance institutions, 3 mobile phone operators and an internet provider. The 29 audits resulted in the detection of 3,462 vulnerabilities which were addressed.

### §2: Security Monitoring and Software Security

**160-** It consisted in security monitoring measures and software security operations.

#### A: Security Monitoring

**161-** With regard to security monitoring, ANTIC identified 1,053 fake accounts in social media, 793 of which were deleted. It recorded 31,463 complaints on cybercrime which led to the discovery of 12,868 vulnerabilities on the sites of public and private administrations, as well as 5 cyber-attacks on the websites of public administrations. This led to the certification of 5 official government websites and the issuance of 153 alerts and 24 safety bulletins.

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**162-** Furthermore, a record of cybercrimes reveals more than 15,000 cases of scamming and phishing, 200 cases of intrusion detected in the information systems of public and private structures causing harm worth some CFAF7,000,000,000<sup>53</sup>.

**163-** Besides, ANTIC received 15,539 requisitions and 232 applications for authentication of digital evidence from judicial authorities and different national security<sup>54</sup> structures in the search for digital evidence, the identification of cybercriminals and prosecuting them before the competent courts.

## B: Securing Software

**164-** ANTIC secured 5 software using the PKI<sup>55</sup> system and acquired relevant equipment for the progressive renewal of the National Public Key Infrastructure servers. It also approved 6 security audit firms.

## §3: Capacity Development

**165-** MINPOSTEL organised the first edition of the national cyber security information week in Cameroon from 28 to 30 November 2023 in Garoua North Region.

**166-** ANTIC organised the following seminars: a capacity development seminar on cybercrime for the staff of 30 public institutions from 19 to 23 June 2023 in Kribi; a capacity development seminar on digital investigation techniques, cyber warfare strategies, and cyber intelligence for the staff of 20 DSF units from 10 to 14 July 2023 in Kribi; an awareness-raising seminar on cybersecurity and the fight against cybercrime for Judicial and Legal Officers and Judicial Police Officers (JPO) from the South West Court of Appeal from 2 to 4 August 2023 in Limbe; and a seminar on document security in the age of digital transformation from 27 to 29 September 2023 in Ebolowa.

## §4: Outreach to Users of Telecommunications Services

**167-** On 13 and 14 March 2023, ahead of the 40<sup>th</sup> World Consumer Rights Day celebrated on 15 March each year, the Telecommunications Regulatory Agency (ART) raised the awareness of students of the National

<sup>53</sup> About: 10,687.023 Euros.

<sup>54</sup> MINDEF, SED, DGSN, DGRE, etc.

<sup>55</sup> It is used to measure cybersecurity operations.

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Advanced School of Engineering Yaounde and the Catholic University of Central Africa on how to bring a matter before the Agency by consumers in case of infringement of their right to electronic communication.

**168-** MINPOSTEL<sup>56</sup>, ANTIC and ART also raised awareness on the dangers of cybercrime through media coverage, distribution of flyers and poster campaigns.

## SECTION 3: SUPERVISING THE ENJOYMENT OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND COMMUNICATION

**169-** The control of enjoyment of freedom of expression and communication was done through regulation by the National Communication Council (NCC) and the ART.

### §1: Regulation by the National Communication Council

**170-** The NCC ensured in-service training of media professionals as well as compliance with professional ethics.

#### A: In-service Training of Media Professionals

**171-** The NCC organised a national seminar on hate speech under the theme *Mechanism to eradicate hate speech in the media in Cameroon* on 26 June 2023 in Yaounde; an International Forum on the theme *Social media regulation: collaboration modalities between African media regulators and digital platforms* on 8 and 9 November 2023 in Yaounde.

**172-** The NCC also published general education Communiqués, including the Communiqué of 12 June 2023 on the promotion of homosexuality in the media and the Press release of 20 September 2023 on the responsibility of moderators of debates and interactive programmes on statements made by their panellists.

#### B: Implementation of Ethics and Deontology

**173-** The NCC issued 20 decisions against the media, including 16 temporary suspensions of less than 6 months, a warning, a ban and 2 dismissals. These sanctions were taken following allegations of non-compliance with ethical rules and deontology in social communication.

<sup>56</sup> MINPOSTEL field trip of 15 December 2023 to the Bilingual School Complex Biyem-Assi where the awareness of more than 1000 students was raised on the dangers of social networks.

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**174-** Following its outreach activity, the NCC ordered on 22 September 2023, the suspension of broadcasting of the television channel *Canal+Elles* on the package of the cable operator Canal Plus International, for the persistent broadcast of pornographic and homosexual programmes.

## **§2: Actions of the Telecommunications Regulations Board**

**175-** Measures were taken to improve the quality of services provided to consumers and to protect same.

### **A: Measures to enhance service quality**

**176-** The deteriorating relationship between mobile telephone operators and consumers was illustrated by a wave of indignation on *Facebook* and *Twitter* social networks that led to the implementation of the operation “*air-plane mode*”. Indeed, in the week of 24 April 2023, some users of the said operators put their mobile phones on airplane mode, thus interrupting electronic communications traffic.

**177-** In a bid to address the crisis, a meeting was held between MINPOSTEL and the operators on 27 April 2023 at the end of which the following recommendations were made to the operators: a refund of the airtime and data not consumed during the unavailability of the network; consumers be informed of the rising and descending consumption rate according to the chosen package; and the provision of a comparative tool of the prices of the offers and the network coverage of each operator.

**178-** Fines were imposed by the regulator on operators guilty of recurrent violation observed in complying with the coverage obligations and the quality of electronic communication services contained in their terms of reference. Thus, *Camtel*, *MTN Cameroon*, *Orange Cameroon* and *Viettel Cameroon* were ordered to pay to the public treasury the cumulative sum of CFAF6,000,000,000<sup>57</sup> following the continuous degradation of the quality of their services offered.

### **B: Consumer Protection**

**179-** As part of its prerogatives to protect users, the Telecommunications Regulations Board (ART) (Directorate General and Regional Delegations of Douala, Yaounde and Garoua) received 1 13 written complaints and

<sup>57</sup>About 9,160,305.34Euros

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54 verbal denunciations from subscribers against *Orange Cameroon*, *MTN Cameroon*, *Viettel Cameroon* and *Camtel*. ART sent 21 formal notices to these operators and two others (*Radio Balafon* and *Success Radio*) for non-compliance with the frequencies and tariffs announced or published.

**180-** Among the conciliation attempts, 5 initiated by consumers against mobile operators were under review.

## SECTION 4: JUDICIAL GUARANTEE OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND COMMUNICATION

**181-** Investigations were opened following attacks related to freedom of expression or communication.

**182-** Some of the investigations involved journalists or people acting as such. This was the case of **Arsène Salomon Mbani Zogo** popularly known as **Martinez Zogo**, Director of *Amplitude FM* radio station, kidnapped on 17 January 2023. He was found dead and mutilated on 22 January 2023 in Ebogo II, on the outskirts of Yaounde. Following an investigation opened, suspects were arrested. As part of the preliminary inquiry conducted by the Examining Magistrate of the Yaounde Military Tribunal, they were charged (with violation of orders, co-action in false arrest, co-action in torture, accessory in torture, false arrest, usurpation of title, usurpation of office, and accessory in murder) and placed under detention. The matter was pending.

**183-** Besides, on 2 February 2023, the radio presenter **Jean-Jacques Ola Bela** was found dead in Yaounde. On 7 May 2023, **Anye Nde Nsoh**, a journalist with *The Advocate News Paper* was shot dead by an armed gang in Bamenda. Investigations into these two cases were ongoing.

**184-** Furthermore, court judgments protected the interests of third-parties. On 10 April 2023, for example, by Judgment No. 526/COR, the CFI Douala/Bonanjo found **N.B.Y.** guilty of theft by electronic means, convicted and sentenced him to 2 months imprisonment and ordered him to pay to *Société Générale Cameroun S.A.*, the civil claimant, the sum of CFA1,300,000<sup>58</sup> as compensation for damages suffered. Similarly, by Judgment No.1319/COR of 29 September 2023, the CFI Garoua, found **F.F.** and **A.P.L.P.** guilty of fraud, blackmail and invasion of the privacy of

<sup>58</sup> About 1, 984.73Euros.

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others by electronic means. Consequently, they were convicted and sentenced to 3 years imprisonment, and a fine of CFAF1,000,000<sup>59</sup> and to pay the victim **M.H.B.** the sum of CFAF3,600,000<sup>60</sup>. By Judgment No. 1492/COR of 31 October 2023, the same court found **O.I.** guilty of electronic fraud to the detriment of *MTN Cameroon* and convicted and sentenced him to 3 years imprisonment and ordered him to pay the victim the sum of CFAF1,700,000<sup>61</sup>.

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**185-**On the whole, the State continued to guarantee everyone the right to freedom of expression and access to information. This resulted in the diversity of information sources and the enhancement of Internet coverage, protection of cyberspace users, training of media stakeholders and sanctioning their abuses. However, efforts are still to be made to step up the quality of telecommunications services and the protection of journalists.

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<sup>59</sup> About 1, 526.72Euros.

<sup>60</sup> About 5,496.18 Euros.

<sup>61</sup> About 2,595.42 Euros.



# CHAPTER 4

## RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS



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**186-** The State of Cameroon continued to guarantee the participation in the management of public affairs as a means of boosting the promotion of Human Rights, reducing inequalities, and social conflicts and taking more informed, lasting, effective and transparent decisions. This participation occurred at local level, in political life and in the Public Service.

## SECTION 1: POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

**187-** Political participation was consolidated through parliamentary and electoral activities.

### §1: Parliamentary Activity

**188-** To enable the Senate and National Assembly properly execute their missions of strengthening the legislative framework and controlling Government action, their resources were increased.

#### A: Strengthening the Legislative Framework and Controlling Government Action

**189-** The National Assembly and the Senate held 3 ordinary sessions during which about fifteen bills were adopted in diverse fields including mines, finance, child protection online, public-private partnership or Higher Education guidelines as well as bilateral, regional and international cooperation .

**190-** Control of Government action was mainly carried out by way of oral questions by Senators and Members of Parliament to members of Government. These questions focused on issues including the production and distribution of electrical energy, the state of the road network, the economic situation and health.

#### B: Strengthening Parliamentary Resources

**191-** The resources allocated to the Senate (CFAF 16,162,000,000<sup>62</sup>) and the National Assembly (CFAF 29,622,000,000<sup>63</sup>). In 2022 the respective amounts were CFAF 15,162,000,000<sup>64</sup> and CFAF 28,182,000,000<sup>65</sup>.

<sup>62</sup> About 24,694,809.16 Euros.

<sup>63</sup> About 45,224,427.48 Euros.

<sup>64</sup> About 23,148,091.60 Euros.

<sup>65</sup> About 43,025,954.19 Euros.

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**192-** Parliamentary diplomacy also provided an opportunity for Cameroonian and foreign Members of Parliament to share their experience. For example, in December 2023, the National Assembly received a delegation from the France-Cameroon Friendship Group. Discussions focused particularly on strengthening human and material resources of Parliament, economic cooperation and consular relations between France and Cameroon.

## **§2: Senatorial Elections and Appointment of some Senators**

**193-** Senatorial elections were organised and some Senators were appointed. The electoral system was strengthened and activities of political parties were marked by dynamism.

### **A: Senatorial Elections and Appointment of some Senators**

**194-** Through Decree No. 23/23 of 13 January 2023, the President of the Republic convened the electoral college to elect Senators, that is 70 Senators, while the President himself appointed 30 other Senators. After receiving the candidatures submitted by 13 political parties, Elections Cameroon<sup>66</sup> (ELECAM) published the accepted lists (that is, the lists of 10 political parties<sup>67</sup>) and the rejected lists (the lists of 3 political parties) on 7 February 2023. During its hearing on 15 February 2023, the Constitutional Council dismissed the 13 petitions filed before it on grounds that they were unfounded. The elections which took place on 12 March 2023, concerned 11,134 voters in 198 polling stations. At the end of the vote and the litigation which followed, the Constitutional Council published the results during its hearing on 23 March 2023. The outcome was the election of 70 Senators from the list of the CPDM.

**195-** Pursuant to Decree No. 2023/188 of 31 March 2023, the President of the Republic appointed 30 Senators, that is 24 from the CPDM and 6 from political parties of the opposition (ANDP, FSNC, UPC, SDF, UNDP and MDR).

**196-** Regarding the public funding of political parties, the sum of CFAF 1,500,000,000<sup>68</sup> was disbursed.

<sup>66</sup> Independent body in charge of the organisation, management and supervision of the entire electoral and referendum process.

<sup>67</sup> CPDM, UNDP, SDF, USM, FDC, PCRN, ANDP, MDR, FSNC and UDC.

<sup>68</sup> About 2,290,076.34.

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## B: Continuous Strengthening of the Electoral System

**197-** The electoral system was strengthened through an update of electoral registers, electoral diplomacy and dialogue with stakeholders of the electoral system.

### 1) Annual Update of Electoral Registers

**198-** On 31 August 2023, at the end of the annual registration on electoral registers, there were 368,119 new registered voters compared to 338,376 in 2022, that is 35.55% women, 69.47% youths (20 to 35 years) and 32,197 persons living with disabilities. Overall, the electoral register had 4,039,500 men and 3,483,684 women. The table below presents the progress in registration on electoral registers since 2020:

**Table 1: Progress in the Number of Voters Registered on Electoral Registers**

Regions	Year 2020	Year 2021	Year 2022	Year 2023
Adamawa	449,151	455,149	464,504	479,030
Centre	1,213,621	1,223,398	1,267,020	1,303,376
East	332,131	335,728	344,581	355,116
Far North	1,147,102	1,157,064	1,176,987	1,193,542
Littoral	998,300	1,016,176	1,065,064	1,122,338
North	696,111	709,997	727,962	749,906
North West	599,772	599,097	602,039	610,778
West	775,046	790,061	816,938	839,687
South	272,344	277,228	288,520	299,076
South West	373,233	376,525	382,243	390,089
Cameroonians abroad	18,946	19,425	19,207	18,937
Grand total	6,875,757	6 959 848	7,155,065	7,361,875

**Source: ELECAM**

### 2) Dialogue between Stakeholders of the Electoral System

**199-** Dialogue between stakeholders of the electoral system continued with the aim of guaranteeing an inclusive electoral process. Thus, on 24 February 2023, a discussion took place in Yaounde between ELECAM and other stakeholders of the electoral process under the theme *for a credible, secure, inclusive and peaceful election*. On 24 May 2023, ELECAM organised a meeting in Yaounde with heads of associations of persons living with disabilities with the aim to reorganise the partnership with the network of these

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associations. On 8 August 2023, still in Yaounde, ELECAM officially launched the national platform for permanent consultation with other stakeholders of the electoral process, with the goal of supporting and strengthening general transparency and sincerity around activities relating to the electoral process.

### 3) Electoral Diplomacy

**200-** As part of sharing experiences and best practices in electoral matters, ELECAM held consultations with diplomats. On 13 June 2023, ELECAM received a Commonwealth delegation which was interested in measures taken to ensure the holding of inclusive, peaceful, transparent and credible elections. On 14 September 2023, this body welcomed a visit from the High Commissioner of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in Cameroon, which marked the latter's interest in the progress made towards inclusion in the electoral process. Moreover, from 5 to 7 September 2023, in Addis Ababa, the President of the Electoral Board of ELECAM took part in a workshop on the validation of guidelines and principles relating to the use of social media in elections in Africa.

### §3: Dynamism of Political Parties

**201-** In November 2023, pursuant to the legalisation of 40 new political parties (among which 4 are led by women), the number of political parties stood at 367 in 2023. Some political parties such as CRM and SDF renewed their organs. For CRM, the party chair was re-elected on 10 December 2023 and for the SDF, a new party chairman was elected on 29 October 2023 following the death of the former<sup>69</sup>.

**202-** Political parties suffered internal crises and tensions which led to disciplinary measures taken by them as well as responses from the administration and courts. In terms of discipline, several measures were taken including the dismissal of some militants notably of CRM and SDF. At the level of the courts, by way of illustration, the administrative court, dismissed an application to stay execution of an administrative act forbidding a congress planned by a political party to hold from 15 to 17 December 2023 in Kribi based on the risk of disturbing public order on grounds that it was unfounded (Ruling No. 196/OSE/TA/EBWA/2023 of 14 December by the President of the Ebolowa Administrative Court).

<sup>69</sup> Ni John FRU NDI died on 12 June 2023.

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## SECTION 2: PARTICIPATION IN THE LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

**203-** This participation was characterised by continuous consolidation of decentralisation and the liveliness of traditional chiefdoms.

### §1: The Vivacity of Traditional Chiefdoms

**204-** Changes were made in the leadership of traditional chiefdoms and disputes regarding the designation of traditional rulers persisted.

#### A: Changes in the Leadership of some Traditional Chiefdoms

**205-** Based on vacancies observed at the helm of some traditional chiefdoms, mainly due to death, administrative authorities held usual consultations and the reports resulting from same were forwarded to the competent authorities for the designation of new traditional chiefs. For example, pursuant to Order No.5/PM of 23 January 2023, the Prime Minister homologated the designation of Mr **DIN DIKA Louis** as First-class chief of Akwa. Similarly, on 31 March 2023, the Mayo-Kani Senior Divisional Officer signed an Order to homologate the designation of Mr **KOMENI Amadou** as Third-class chief of Mbitou in Mayo-Kani.

#### B: Persisting Disputes relating to the Designation of Traditional Chiefs

**206-** Disputes relating to the designation of traditional chiefs continued or emerged, and posed a threat to social cohesion and the legitimacy of traditional chieftaincies. Some include disputes relating to the designation of the chiefs of Bagam and Bangou Villages. Responses to the said disputes were sometimes administrative and sometimes judicial.

**207-** For administrative responses, the Minister of Territorial Administration in a Circular Letter of 24 January 2023, instructed administrative authorities to draw up a list of traditional chiefs highlighting in particular the mode of transfer of traditional power in each chiefdom and "as much as possible" a registry of potential successors. This instruction is a response to grievances attributed to some administrative authorities including the failure to take into account or the inadequate consideration of the customs and traditions of the communities concerned, violation or misuse of the regulatory procedure for designating traditional chiefs. At local level, the administrative response was in several forms; reform of instruments of des-

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ignation, administrative police custody, prohibition on public demonstrations, call to order, etc.

**208-** Regarding judicial response, new matters were registered and others disposed of. Thus, by Judgement No. **12/CIV/TGI** of 16 March 2023, the Bamboutos HC rejected a request to annul a document presented as the will of a traditional chief who died on 23 May 2020 on grounds that it was unfounded.

## §2: Continuous Consolidation of Decentralisation

**209-** This consolidation was done through the allocation of resources, monitoring of the actions of Regional and Local Authorities and the dynamism of Public Independent Conciliators (PIC).

### A: Increasing Resources Allocated for Decentralisation

**210-** Human and financial resources as well as the normative framework were strengthened.

#### 1) Strengthening Financial Resources

**211-** Decree No. 2023/34 of 20 January 2023 to lay down the distribution of the Common Decentralization Fund for the 2023 financial year, set the sum at CFAF 252,568,936,000<sup>70</sup> as against CFAF 240,231,858,000<sup>71</sup> in 2022 and CFAF 232 176 624 000<sup>72</sup> in 2021, that is CFAF 137,240,638,000<sup>73</sup> for the operating component and CFAF 115,328,300,000<sup>74</sup> for the investment component. The Allocation is distributed as resources transferred for operations (CFAF 102,240,636,000<sup>75</sup>), allocations for the regions (CFAF 30,000,000,000<sup>76</sup>, that is, CFAF 3,000,000,000<sup>77</sup> for each of the 10 regions) and other purposes (CFAF 5,000,000 000<sup>78</sup>).

<sup>70</sup> About 384, 560, 146, 57 Euros.

<sup>71</sup> About 366,766,195.42 Euros.

<sup>72</sup> About 354,468,128.25 Euros.

<sup>73</sup> About 209,527,691.60 Euros.

<sup>74</sup> About 176,073,740.46 Euros.

<sup>75</sup> About 156,092,574.06 Euros.

<sup>76</sup> About 45,801,526.72 Euros.

<sup>77</sup> About 4,580,152.67 Euros.

<sup>78</sup> About 7,633,587.79 Euros.

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**212-** In a bid to strengthen the administrative and financial independence of the RLAs, as well as their contribution to economic growth and local development, a budget of CFAF 46,960,695,000<sup>79</sup> was allocated to the Ministry of Decentralisation and Local Development (MINDDEVEL), that is CFAF 36,000,000,000<sup>80</sup> to support the implementation of projects for the 360 subdivisions and CFAF 4,000,000,000<sup>81</sup> for the 14 City Councils.

**213-** As part of the transfer of powers, some administrations transferred financial resources to RLAs. This is the case of the Douala City Council (CUD) which received CFAF 275,714,000<sup>82</sup> from the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education (MINJEC) and an allocation of CFAF 100,000,000<sup>83</sup> from MINDDEVEL. Thanks to these financial resources, the CUD carried out various projects<sup>84</sup> relating to roads, public lighting, sanitation, urban mobility, the fight against high cost of living, waste management, the management of green spaces and socio-economic activities.

**214-** On its part, the Special Council Support Fund (FEICOM) funded 267 Councils' projects to the tune of CFAF 41,233,526,451<sup>85</sup> (as against CFAF 36,777,892,537<sup>86</sup> in 2022). These projects included electrification, construction of city halls and water supply.

## 2) Upgrading Human Capital

**215-** 641 students obtained their certificates in diverse fields (steering, resource management, public policies relating to land use, planning and development, animation and services to the population, technical interventions, etc.) from the National School of Local Administration (NASLA) in

<sup>79</sup> About 71,695,717.56 Euros.

<sup>80</sup> About 54,961,832.06 Euros.

<sup>81</sup> About 6,106,870.23 Euros.

<sup>82</sup> About 420,937.40 Euros.

<sup>83</sup> About 152,671.76 Euros.

<sup>84</sup> With the commissioning of the autonomous management of roads and constructions in the city, the launch of the operation Douala Clean City, it's possible, the achievement of 100% of registered lighting projects, the construction of 500 linear meters of drains, the cleaning of 9,750 linear meters of gutters and other drainage networks, the undertaking of preliminary studies for the rehabilitation of the various loading points for taxis and minibuses, the intensification of the pre-collection of refuse at home (19,560 tonnes), etc.

<sup>85</sup> About 62,951,948.78 Euros.

<sup>86</sup> About 56,149,454.25 Euros.

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2023. From 21 to 23 June 2023 in Buea, the school also organised its 1<sup>st</sup> symposium on the theme *Crisis management in Cameroon in a context of decentralization: challenges and perspectives* which was attended by over 250 locally elected officials.

**216-** In terms of capacity building of RLA Stakeholders, 525 councillors out of 639 that were expected were trained in the North West, West, Littoral and Centre Regions. The trainings organized by MINDDEVEL focused on the following themes: legal framework applicable to RLAs; powers transferred; management of basic social services; legal situation of RLAs; financial regime, finance and asset management by RLAs; organisation and functioning of the municipality; human resources management within RLAs; local planning and implementation of RLA projects; decentralised cooperation, inter-municipal cooperation and partnership: stakes and challenges.

**Table 2: Status of Capacity-building for Locally Elected Officials in 2023 by MINDDEVEL**

	Date	Expected	Present	Men	Women
<b>North West</b>	21-23 June 2023	137	115	92	23
<b>West</b>	13-15 June 2023	126	119	89	30
<b>Littoral</b>	4-6 July 2023	137	114	88	26
<b>Centre 1</b>	18-20 July 2023	115	75	61	14
<b>Centre 2</b>	25-27 July 2023	124	102	69	33

**Source:** MINDDEVEL

### 3) Strengthening the Normative Framework

**217-** Strengthening of the normative framework was characterised by the validation of the compendium of accounting standards specific to RLAs on 25 January 2023 in Yaounde, during a session of the Public Accounts Standardisation Committee. In connection with the transfer of powers, financial aspects and management of local human resources, the following texts were adopted: Decree No. 2023/132 of 10 February 2023 to lay down conditions governing the exercise of some powers devolved by the State upon regions in the area of health; Decree No. 2023/223 of 24 April 2023 to lay down conditions governing the exercise of some powers devolved by the State upon regions in the area of secondary education; Joint-

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Instruction No. 7/IC/MINFI/MINDDEVEL of 31 January 2023 on the preparation, drafting, implementation and control of RLAs Budget; Decree No. 2023/4186/PM of 24 July 2023 to lay down modalities for the recovery, centralisation, distribution and payment of proceeds of the special excise duty to fund the collection and treatment of trash for RLAs; Joint Instruction No. 929/IC/MINFI/MINDDEVEL of 14 September 2023 on General Bookkeeping of RLAs; Decree No. 2023/422 of 19 September 2023 to define the duties of Secretaries-General of regional and local authorities ; Decree No. 2023/421 of 19 September 2023 to lay down the system of remuneration and benefits granted to secretaries-general and officials of RLAs; Decree No. 2023/475 of 7 November 2023 to define some duties and lay down the benefits of public accounting officers assigned to regional and local authorities ; Order No. 147/A/MINDDEVEL of 19 July 2023 to lay down the modalities for the establishment, organisation and functioning of neighbourhood and village committees as part of civic participation in council activities.

## B: Monitoring the Activities of RLAs

**218-** In addition to initiatives by the Supreme State Audit Office (CONSUPE §828 et seq), National Anti-Corruption Commission (CONAC 825 et seq) and the Audit Bench of the Supreme Court of Cameroon, (§830 et seq) etc. Ministry of Decentralisation and Local Development (MIND-DEVEL) carried out legality checks on compliance with laws and regulations as well as administrative management. As such, 14 control missions (Dibang, Batchenga, Penja, Ngomedzap, Banyo, Demdeng, Nanga-Eboko, Makenene, Nyanon, Buea, Dibamba, Messok and Foubot) and 5 missions to evaluate the functioning of services (union of Lekie councils, union of Mbam-et-Inoubou Councils, Ebolowa City Council and its 2 district councils) were carried out. In total, 9 reports were sent to the Budget and Finance Disciplinary Board and the Audit Bench against 21 local council officials for damage caused to the tune of CFAF 437,194,369<sup>87</sup>.

**219-** Several incidents involving municipal police officers or persons presenting themselves as such were recorded, recalling the necessity to accelerate the implementation of Decree No. 2022/354 of 9 August 2022 to lay down conditions for carrying out municipal policing. Among such

<sup>87</sup> About 667,472.32 Euros.

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incidents<sup>88</sup> were the deadly incidents on 17 and 19 July 2023 in the Douala 4 and 5 Councils. In response, by circular letter of 13 September 2023, the Minister of Decentralisation and Local Development instructed Senior Divisional Officers to take measures to stop such incidents as well as the intrusion into the missions of the Ministry of Transport, by signing mission letters for council agents who have to go to the field, by requesting the supervision of the national police during field controls, and by informing and raising awareness regarding possible sanctions in the event of non-compliance.

## C: The Dynamism of Public Independent Conciliators

**220-** In addition to continuing awareness-raising and information campaigns on their role as mediators, and on the promotion of the need for civil status registration, the Public Independent Conciliators established in the North West and South West Regions organised workshops for local language broadcasters in Buea and Bamenda. Moreover, they registered about 40 complaints, more than 50% of which involved the municipal police, those in charge of drawing up civil status documents or those in charge of debt collection. An annual report was made of all their activities and submitted to the highest authorities

## SECTION 3: PARTICIPATION IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

**221-** Civil servants were recruited, trained and monitored, the update of the State payroll continued and human resources management improved.

### §1: Recruitment, Training and Monitoring of Public Officials

**222-** Recruitment into the public service was guided by the drive for inclusiveness. To guarantee the quality of civil servants, they were trained and their professional obligations were monitored.

## A: Recruitment into Public Service

**223-** Overall, 20 competitive examinations were organised for scholarships and trainings, 63 direct competitive entrance examinations and 4 selection tests were organised for 2,230 positions compared to 1,198 po-

<sup>88</sup> Mention can also be made of the confiscation and destruction of property, corruption, acts of physical and moral violence.

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sitions in 2022, mainly under the supervision of the Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform (MINFOPRA). The gender distribution of successful candidates was 51% women and 49% men.

**224-** There were 630 positions available through examinations for scholarships and trainings disaggregated as follows: National School of Administration and Magistracy; classical law sections (275) and Common Law sections (60), National Institute of Youth and Sport (80), National Youth and Sports Centres (120), Sub-Regional Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics (80), Institute for Demographic Training and Research (20), Public Finance Management Academy, Central African Regional centre (20). The 1,310 positions in direct competitive entrance examinations were in the following fields and per number of positions : agriculture (60), rural engineering (50), mining and geology (30), industrial technology (50), water and forestry (80), civil engineering (130), livestock and sea fisheries (60), animal industries (30), public health (540), telecommunications technology (50), financial management (100), information technology and teleinformatics (30) and translators and interpreters (100). Regarding the 90 positions in fields for which recruitment was through selection tests, these were: environmentalists (10), executive secretaries (30), midwives (100), and teachers in technical and vocational education (150).

**225-** Those recruited included civil servants in categories A1 (405), A2 (565), B1 (299), B2 (316), C (360) and D (20), and State employees governed by the Labour Code in categories 11 (10), 9, (130) and 8 (150). Among those newly recruited were a visually impaired veterinary doctor (category A2) and a dental surgeon with a motor disability (category A2).

**226-** In addition to these recruitments conducted by MINFOPRA, there were others conducted by other administrations<sup>89</sup>.

## B: Initial and In-service Training of Employees of the Public Service

**227-** Overall, those newly recruited were trained on administrative ethics and deontology. Those recruited through examinations for scholarships and trainings were monitored or began initial training. This is the case with students admitted into ENAM in 2023, that is, 125 students in the Magistracy and Registry Division compared to 150 students in 2022, 120 in the Administrative Division as compared to 110 in 2022 and 90 in the

<sup>89</sup> Such as MINEDUB, MINESEC, DGSN and MINDEF.

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Financial Regulatory Division compared to 120 in 2022. In ENAM courses on Human Rights and public liberties and on Human Rights litigation were taught (see §68).

**228-** Regarding in-service training in Cameroon or abroad, MINFOPRA processed 3, 820 files as against 4,051 in 2022, that is 1,682 applications for in-service trainings of which 1,411 were granted and **271** were being processed; **1,930** files relating to end of in-service training of which **1,682** were finalised and 248 were being processed; **208** extensions of in-service training including 161 finalised and 47 of which were being processed.

**229-** Furthermore, from 31 October to 2 November 2023, ENAM organised a seminar on matrimonial and family counselling for 50 staff of the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family (MINPROFF); 32 staff of the Ministry of Public Works (MINTP) jointly funded road projects unit on techniques and practices of administrative writing from 7 to 9 November 2023; and 32 staff of the Economic and Social Council on administrative writing and file review from 14 to 31 November 2023.

## C: Monitoring the Professional Obligations of Employees of the Public Service

**230-** Regarding the processing of files of the physical head count operation of State employees, after the sorting and pre-screening phase, 8,766 files were identified as falling under the jurisdiction of MINFOPRA. The processing of these files led to the signing of 1,788 dismissal orders of dismissals (1566 civil servants governed by the labour code and 222 governed by the statutes of the Public Service) compared to 1,408 in 2022, i.e of some delinquent public service employees. Regarding sessions of the Permanent Disciplinary Board of the Public Service, of the 703 proceedings initiated against delinquent employees of the public service, 68 matters were examined by this body (compared to 141 in 2022) and 90 disciplinary sanctions passed.

**231-** Moreover, Administrative Courts were seized for the cancellation of some dismissal orders and rendered some judgements. For example, the Yaounde Administrative Court through the Judgment of 21 November 2023 in the case **N.P.** against the State of Cameroon dismissed the case of the defendant. Also, the Administrative Bench of the Supreme Court sitting as

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a full bench, dismissed the case of **K.N.E.** in the matter against the State of Cameroon on 27 December 2023.

## §2: Further Update of the State Payroll

**232-** Launched in 2008 under the aegis of MINFOPRA, the Operation to update the Payroll and list of employees of the State continued. A new organisational framework was set up and new teams constituted as part of the process to monitor and support sector committees in different administrations. Selected teams visited administrations particularly to update staff files and make entries on the "CARTO" application. The outcome was as follows: of the 38 administrations, 279 736 employees of the public service were registered out of a total work force of 301 048, representing an achievement rate of 92.32%; Data for 244 266 employees of the public service was validated representing a rate of 87.30%; 21 312 were pending registration and data for 35 470 was pending validation.

**233-** Mixed MINFOPRA/MINFI teams were deployed on the field to collect data on the update of personnel files of different administrations, the administrative and financial situation of public officials and the state of entry on the "CARTO" application. The said teams also participated in sessions of sector committee in charge of monitoring the afore-mentioned operation in the 16 administrations. The use of files of staff whose information have been updated resulted in the production of statistical bulletins of 8 administrations, with emphasis being laid on variables relating to the status, professions, gender, age, seniority and region of origin.

## §3: Continuous Improvement of Human Resources Management

**234-** As part of a complete overhaul of State human resources management applications, technical procedures relating to the establishment of the new computerised system for integrated management of State personnel and the payroll (SIGIPES 2)<sup>90</sup> continued. This is a solution which comprises 14 completely integrated modules. Within the same application, it combines aspects of career and salary, completely adjustable, bilingual and unique to the State of Cameroon.

<sup>90</sup> SIGIPES 2 seeks to guarantee: the integrity, confidentiality and relevance of data processed or being processed, the traceability of connections to the application and operations carried out on data, secured management of users' accounts, user profile management, effective processing of all data and centralisation of updates.

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**235-** In a nutshell, the State of Cameroon sought to guarantee the right to participate in public life notably by continuing recruitments into the public service, consolidating decentralisation and strengthening the electoral system. Disputes relating to the designation of traditional chiefs, improper behaviour of some municipal police employees and discord within political parties were amongst issues of concern.

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## CONCLUSION OF PART ONE

**236-** Overall, Government made progress with the promotion and protection of civil and political rights.

**237-** Regarding the right to physical and moral integrity and the right to liberty, preventive and repressive actions were carried out to consolidate results. Some of these include protection of road users and riparian population in risk zones, awareness-raising and sanction of members of the forces of law and order and activities of the national torture prevention mechanism.

**238-** Respect for procedural and institutional norms resulted in a guarantee of the right to fair trial.

**239-** The rights of users of electronic communication services continued to be protected from non-respect of specifications by operators and through guidelines which seek to improve the quality of these services. Furthermore, access to reliable and secure information was guaranteed by continuous diversification of sources of information and protection of journalists.



## PART TWO

# ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS AND RIGHT TO A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT



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## INTRODUCTION TO PART TWO

**240-** Determined to progressively improve socio-economic conditions necessary to offer its citizens a life worth living, based on available financial resources, the State of Cameroon took several measures relating to economic, social and cultural rights. Some of these measures include: strengthening the provision of education and housing, developing factors of food production, expanding and consolidating employment and social security, preserving biodiversity, combating climate change, promoting health and revamping cultural life.

**241-** This part thus reports on the measures deployed which are presented in 6 chapters as follows:

- Right to Education;
- Right to Health;
- Right to an adequate Standard of Living;
- Right to Work and Social Security;
- Right to Culture and Leisure;
- Right to a Healthy Environment;



# CHAPTER

# 1

# RIGHT TO EDUCATION



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**242-** In 2023, the right to education was ensured by Government in the sub-sectors of Basic Education, Secondary Education, Higher Education and Research, in a context marked by a number of challenges, including the abandonment of posts by some teachers and the fight against corruption in basic and secondary education.

## SECTION 1: RIGHT TO EDUCATION AT NURSERY AND PRIMARY LEVELS

**243-** Access to education at the nursery and primary levels was effective in an environment marked by the promotion of moral values in schools, the stepping up of inclusive education and combating corruption. The academic year was crowned, in the primary cycle, by the publication of results of official examinations, and the transition from primary to secondary school.

### §1: Access to Education at the Nursery Level

**244-** In nursery education, demand for education was guaranteed by a relatively large supply.

#### A: Provision of Nursery Education

**245-** Provision of school infrastructure and textbooks was guaranteed, and human resources consolidated.

##### 1) Provision of Infrastructure

**246-** Provision of infrastructure was effective through actions such as the construction of 30 nursery classrooms, 9 latrine blocks and 6 security fences, and the rehabilitation of 13 nursery classrooms.

**247-** The existing nursery schools stood at 13,317, comprising 4,325 public schools, 8,039 private schools and 953 Community Schools. This nursery schools had 26,219 classrooms, including among other things, 737,358 seats, 37,225 tables, 4,013 playgrounds, 10,473 medicine cabinets, 183 canteens and 9,200 toilets.

##### 2) Supply of Textbooks

**248-** Textbooks were provided to preschool kids, comprising 465,909 colouring workbooks, including 52,836 to pre-nursery kids, 213,378 to Nursery I, and 199,695 to Nursery II; 456,952 graphic workbooks, including 50,970 to pre-nursery kids, 207,945 to Nursery I and 198,037

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to Nursery II; and 462,900 Mathematics workbooks, including 50,628 to pre-nursery kids, 210,781 to Nursery I and 201,491 to Nursery II.

## 3) Human Resource Development

**249-** A total of 3,329 nursery and primary school teachers were recruited in 2023, of which 3,000 teachers on contract basis pursuant to Joint Order No. 61/A1/1464 of 18 August 2023, which is part of the 4<sup>th</sup> group of the 3<sup>rd</sup> contracting programme for teachers of the Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB), 300 teachers from the recruitment waiting list of 2021, and 29 persons in dire need. After signing their employment contracts in December 2023<sup>91</sup>, the teachers were posted as follows: 272 to Ngaoundere, 397 to Mfou, 321 to Bertoua, 628 to Maroua, 139 to Douala, 578 to Garoua, 229 to Bamenda, 380 to Bafoussam, 202 to Ebolowa and 183 to Buea.

## B: Demand for Nursery Education

**250-** There were 627,798 nursery kids in 2023 compared to 596,197 in 2022, (an increase of 5.3%), including 314,661 girls and 313,137 boys. The Centre Region had the highest enrolment with 193,957 kids and the Adamawa Region the lowest enrolment with 19,300 kids. The gross enrolment rate (GER) stood at 40.8%.

## §2: Access to Primary Education

**251-** The provision of primary education met the demand.

## A: Provision of Primary Education

**252-** Infrastructure and human resources were made available to guarantee the right to education. Textbooks were distributed free of charge and scholarships for excellence awarded.

### 1) Provision of Infrastructure and Human Resources

**253-** The number of primary schools was 22,834, including 13,287 Government schools, 8,887 private schools and 660 Community Schools.

**254-** Some of the actions taken to achieve universal primary education included further development of inclusive education in 70 pilot schools; con-

<sup>91</sup> These contracts were signed between 11 and 12 December 2023, following Communiqué No. A/171/C/MINEDUB/SG/DRH dated 7 December 2023, inviting those concerned to sign.

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struction of 1,000 classrooms, 50 blocks of latrines and 10 fences; provision of 9,000 benches; and rehabilitation of 15 Government primary schools. The total number of classrooms was 120,018 for 4,634,501 seats.

**255-** The number of teachers stood at 120,262, including 71,922 women and 48,340 men.

## **2) Free Distribution of Textbooks and Award of Scholarships for Academic Excellence**

**256-** Scholarships for academic excellence worth CFAF85,000,000 were awarded to 2,684 pupils who were the best at the *Certificat d'Etudes Primaires (CEP)* and the First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) examinations in the 10 regions. In addition, 6,750,000 essential textbooks in subjects such as English, French and Mathematics were distributed free of charge.

## **B: Demand for Primary education**

**257-** The number of pupils in Government primary schools across the country was 5,155,547, including 2,446,722 girls and 2,708,825 boys. The Far North Region had the highest enrolment with 1,091,167 pupils and the South Region the lowest with 185,835 pupils. The primary GER was 122.2%.

**258-** Functional literacy centres had 28,666 learners, of whom 16,678 female and 11,988 male. In the literacy and non-formal basic education centres, there were 6,845 learners, with 3,499 female and 3,346 male.

## **§3: Consolidating Inclusive Education**

**259-** On 27 November 2023, the Minister of Basic Education signed Circular No. 12/B1/1464/L-C/MINEDUB/CAB to lay down measures to protect girls from gender-based violence in schools.

**260-** The Circular to Regional and Divisional Delegates, and Subdivisional Inspectors of basic education, as well as Head teachers of School intended to limit or even eradicate the use of violence in school provides as follows: systematically search the school bags of pupils and seize any dangerous objects found therein; report to the central services of MINEDUB, administrative authorities and law enforcement officers, sales points of drugs and narcotics, as well as any acts of violence committed against pupils, especially girls; develop the civic skills of pupils as part of post-school and extracurricular activities; raise the awareness of pupils on the need to combat

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violence through children's government, children's parliament, clubs and associations; take special measures to protect pupils; establish and implement permanent dialogue with Parents/Teachers Associations to effectively apply the sanctions provided for by the internal rules and regulations of schools.

**261-** Furthermore, instructions were given to prohibit teachers found guilty of sexual abuse on girls from entering the classroom, and forward the evidence thereof to the competent authorities for appropriate sanctions.

## **§4: Promotion of Moral Values in Schools**

**262-** By Correspondence No. 1426/42/MINEDUBSO/SG/OS-CAPPS/SDAMS.CSS of 28 November 2023, the Minister of Basic Education denounced the resurgence of broadcast of obscene music in schools during celebrations (Christmas tree party and cultural activities), highlighting that the songs convey messages contrary to the values promoted by education in Cameroon and contribute to tarnishing the image of the Cameroon school and even the image of the country. In the correspondence, he reminded Regional Delegates of the provisions of Circular No. 3/B1/1464/MINEDUB/SG/DSSAPPS of 4 May 2016 formally prohibiting the broadcast of obscene music in nursery and primary schools and literacy centres and non-formal basic education.

## **§5: Combating Corruption**

**263-** The "*Corruption-Free 2023 School Reopening*" campaign that held from 21 to 25 August 2023 in the 10 regions, targeted stakeholders in the education community, particularly those in the basic and secondary education subsectors. During the campaign, teams from the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) posted in public places and schools, some 3,000 bills on offences to be avoided and the penalties thereof; distributed copies of the CONAC *Newsletter* and the handbook *A Decade of Combating Corruption in Cameroon*; polo shirts and CONAC bags; visited 339 education structures and discussed with 223 school administration officials. Other actions by means of rapid intervention (AIR) were carried out through field visits to verify reports of acts and practices of corruption. Counselling units to collect reports were available at the following toll-free number 1517 and WhatsApp 658 26 26 82 or email address [info@conac.cm](mailto:info@conac.cm).

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## §6: Results of Official Examinations and Transition from Primary to Secondary School

**264-** The national coverage rate of programmes evaluated at 97.9% made it possible to obtain results in official examinations.

### A: Results of Official Examinations

#### *Certificat d'Etudes Primaires*

**265-** Registered: 323,138; Sat: 315,944; Passed: 279,592 (Girls: 132,148; Boys: 147,444).

#### *First School Leaving Certificate*

**266-** Registered: 135,294; Sat: 134,178; Passed: 128,476 (Girls: 65,190; Boys: 63,286).

### B: Results of Competitive Examinations and Transition from Primary to Secondary School

#### *Common Entrance Examination*

**267-** Registered: 114,994; Sat: 113,817; Passed: 102,887 (Girls: 53,428; Boys: 49,459).

**268-** The general transition rate from primary to secondary school stood at 60.69% (61.02% of girls and 60.4% of boys). From primary to secondary technical education, the transition rate was 15.99% (12.29% girls and 19.99% boys) and from primary to secondary general education, 44.7% (48.73% girls and 41.11% boys).

## SECTION 2: RIGHT TO SECONDARY EDUCATION

**269-** The Ministry of Secondary Education took action to guarantee access to education in order to obtain results in official examinations as relevant measures were taken in the settlement of claims by teachers. In addition to the reorganisation of teacher training schools and promotion of academic excellence, some powers in the area of secondary education were transferred to the regions and gender-based violence prohibited. Besides, Government guaranteed the establishment of safe schools, closed down illegal schools and reduced the rate of abandonment of posts by teachers.

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## §1: Measures taken in the Settlement of Claims by Teachers

**270-** Following strikes by teachers in 2022, Government took measures to meet their demands. Progress was made with respect to teacher absorption, salary management and social dialogue.

### A: Progress in Absorption

**271-** A special office dedicated to the processing of files for primary and secondary school teachers was opened at the Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform (MINFOPRA), with branches in the 10 Regional Delegations of the Ministry.

**272-** The time taken to absorb teachers, which sometimes took several years was reduced to 90 days through a system of simplified and digitised procedures. Out of the 3,812 absorption files received by MINFOPRA from March 2022 to September 2023, some 3,712 were processed. As at 28 September 2023, some 3,702 graduates from Higher Teacher Training Colleges each received a service number. Only 100 files were pending since they were incomplete and awaiting authentication of certificates.

**273-** Besides, 11,515 Absorption Orders for Contract Teachers were signed between March 2022 and September 2023.

### B: Progress on Salary Management and Continued Dialogue between Government and Teachers

**274-** The 2/3 system was entirely banned<sup>92</sup> and the salaries and housing allowance of teachers were paid in full since March 2022. From September 2023, a cash plan was adopted to continue payment of salary and advancement arrears of teachers generated by absorption. Thus, from May 2022 to April 2023, some 21,707 non-housing and salary supplement files were processed resulting in a financial impact of CFAF39,329,522,424<sup>93</sup>. -During the same period, 31,331 files on advancement, reclassification and absorption of contract workers were also processed.

<sup>92</sup> Orders on advance salary the payment of 2/3 of the salary are no longer signed. Henceforth, absorption of teachers into the Public Service is by way of an absorption decree that entitles them to full salary and not 2/3 of their salary as was the case before.

<sup>93</sup> About 60 045 072, 40 Euros.

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**275-** Furthermore, dialogue and negotiations between Government and teachers continued, notably during the working session of 28 September 2023 with the inter-Trade Union comprising a dozen trade unions.

## **§2: Access to Secondary Education**

**276-** The supply of education made it possible to satisfy the ever-increasing demand.

### **A: Supply in Education**

**277-** Supply in education was achieved by the opening of 144 schools, including 61 Government schools and 83 private schools. In addition, 132 classrooms, 7 specialised workshops and classrooms were built and 3,071 benches provided to Government schools. Besides, 3,669 new teachers were recruited by the State.

**278-** The State subsidised 888 private secondary schools, including 178 Catholic schools, 66 Protestant schools, 34 Islamic schools and 610 secular private schools.

**279-** The subsidies amounted to CFAF2,107,406,203<sup>94</sup>, of which CFAF456,423,695<sup>95</sup> was earmarked for Catholic schools and CFAF150,640,232<sup>96</sup> for Protestant schools; CFAF77,455,247<sup>97</sup> for Islamic private education schools and CFAF1,422,887,029<sup>98</sup> for secular private schools.

### **B: Demand for Education**

**280-** There were 2,009,141 students in secondary schools, of whom 1,394,547 were in Government and 614,594 in private schools. The number of boys in school was 1,059,449 while there were 949,692 girls. The GER stood at 47.5%, (44.92% girls and 50.09% boys). The net enrolment rate was 38.08%, of which 36.52% of girls and 39.63% of boys.

<sup>94</sup> About 3 217 414,05Euros.

<sup>95</sup> About 696 830,07Euros.

<sup>96</sup> About 229 985,09Euros.

<sup>97</sup> About 118 252,29Euros.

<sup>98</sup> About 172 346,61Euros.

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## §3: Reorganisation of Teacher Training Colleges and Promotion of Academic Excellence

**281-** Decree No. 2023/434 of 4 October 2023 to lay down the organisation and functioning of Government Teacher Training Colleges (GTTC) was signed.

**282-** Some of the innovations contained in the Decree include: restricting recruitment to holders of the *Baccalauréat*<sup>99</sup>, training in both official languages and specialised training for early childhood and inclusive education.

**283-** Promotion of excellence was guaranteed, notably during the Bon'E-belle academic excellence ceremony organised in Douala on 21 October 2023 by the Association **Ngon'A Bon'Ebelle**, where 52 holders of *Baccalauréat* and GCE Advanced Level each received an amount ranging from CFAF100,000<sup>100</sup> to CFAF200,000<sup>101</sup>.

**284-** Under the patronage of MINESEC, the **KADJI DEFOSSO Foundation** organised in October 2023, the ceremony of academic excellence dubbed "**Quality back to school**" during which winners received awards<sup>102</sup>.

## §4: Transfer of Some Powers to the Regions in Secondary Education

**285-** Decree No. 2023/223 of 27 April 2023 to lay down conditions governing the exercise of some powers devolved by the State upon regions in the area of secondary education was signed. The devolved powers include: participation in the preparation and implementation of the national school map in the region; construction, extension, equipment, maintenance and upkeep of secondary and high schools in the region; recruitment and payment of support staff of the said schools depending on available budget resources; purchase of school equipment and supplies; distribution and award of scholarships and grants to secondary and high schools in the region; representation on the management and dialogue bod-

<sup>99</sup> The competitive entrance examination into the GTTC formerly opened to holders of Probatoire, CAP, and BEPC is henceforth opened to holders of *Baccalauréat*.

<sup>100</sup> About 152,67Euros.

<sup>101</sup> About 305,34Euros.

<sup>102</sup> 4 GCE Advanced Level Sciences, 4 *Baccalauréats* (C, D and E) laureates each received a laptop and CFAF500,000 CFA (763,36 Euros). Besides, 7 teachers working in the Far North (3), North West (2) and South West Regions were awarded a computer and CFAF100,000 each.

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ies of Government Secondary and High Schools; support for council action in primary and nursery education.

## §5: Curbing the Rate of Abandonment of Posts by Teachers

**286-** In a Press Release No. 70/23/MINESEC/SG/DRH/SDP/SFCP of 30 May 2023, the Minister of Secondary Education invited anyone who knows about teachers absent from their work stations to report them anonymously at [www.minesecdr.cm](http://www.minesecdr.cm). This resulted in the recording of 1,571 teachers leaving their jobs to go abroad. In a Press Release No. 104/23/MINESEC/SG/DRH of 23 October 2023, the Minister invited the persons concerned to report to door 507 bis of the Ministry of Secondary Education within a period of 2 weeks with the workstation Map Sheet<sup>103</sup> signed by their respective Principals and any supporting documents of their current administrative position, subject to which disciplinary action will be taken against them.

## §6: Prohibition of Gender-Based Violence

**287-** By Circular No. 13/23/C/MINESEC/SG/DPPC/DAJ/DOVAS of 10 November 2023 to consolidate the fight against GBV in schools, the Minister of Secondary Education instructed heads of school to ensure that a favourable environment obtains in schools<sup>104</sup>; and to adopt functional and adapted mechanisms to prevent GBV in schools<sup>105</sup>. The said Circu-

<sup>103</sup> The workstation mapping is an online census platform established by MINFOPRA. It lists all the workstations of the Cameroon public service, brings out the actual occupancy rates, identifies the occupations of these workstations and defines the needs of the forecast management. Through this platform, the State seeks to control the number of State employees for a reliable payroll. It is also an instrument for analysis and strategic management of the number of State employees.

<sup>104</sup> Through the establishment of a local coordination team responsible for combating violence through functional mechanisms for prevention, response, support and referral of students/adolescent (s); capacity development of teachers, guidance counsellors, youth and animation counsellors and other school staff on GBV in schools; the implementation of safe mechanisms for collecting information, including mini-investigations on cases of violence and measures taken, as well as collaboration with administrative, security and municipal authorities; legal and institutional support through the development of a code of conduct containing the expected principles, values and attitudes, the prohibited behaviour and likely disciplinary and/or judicial sanctions thereof.

<sup>105</sup> These mechanisms must be safe, easily accessible, confidential and take into account the particular barriers that may be encountered by students with special needs. They include: regular reminder of teachers and other educational staff of their obligation to refrain from any form of harassment/intimidation, sexual exploitation or sexual abuse; promotion of approaches to prevent GBV in schools and gender equality in the delivery of school curricula such as life-skills education, civic education and targeted approaches to violence management; prohibition of publication or dissemination of private papers or recordings, drawings, photographs, films or any other media reproducing the sexual image of the learner with or without their consent or that of their parents or guardians; etc.

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lar recalls the sanctions<sup>106</sup> incurred in case of violation of the requirements referred to above.

## §7: Security in Schools and Universities, and Closing Down Illegal Schools

**288-** By Decision No. 268/23/MINESEC/SG/DAJ/DESG/DESTP/DEN/BNCEP of 30 June 2023, some 104 schools were closed for failing to comply with the legal formalities for their establishment.

**289-** The fight against delinquency in school was conducted, especially in Yaounde where 207 schools received security assistance from the Company in charge the Security of Schools and Universities (CSESU). As part of its operations, the CSESU seized 11 large bags and 70 strands of cannabis, 41 tobacco leaves, 62 hookahs, 80 mobile phones, 30 condoms, 10 machetes, 9 razor blades, 10 daggers, 12 pairs of scissors, 4 sachet whisky and 5 packs of cigarettes. In addition, 1,000 students were arrested and 146 brought before the territorially competent police units, and 214 students were referred to the *Centre de vie de Yaoundé*.

## §8: Overview of Official Examination Results

**290-** The results of the following examinations were published: *BEPC*<sup>107</sup>, *CAP*<sup>108</sup>, *Brevet de Technicien*, *Brevet Professionnel*, *Probatoire de Brevet de Technicien*, *Probatoire de l'Enseignement Général*, *Probatoire de l'Enseignement Technique*, *Baccalauréat De l'Enseignement Général*, *Baccalauréat de l'Enseignement Technique*, *CAPIEMP*<sup>109</sup>, *CAPIET*<sup>110</sup>, *GCE Advanced Level*, *GCE Ordinary Level*, *Technical and Vocational Education Examination*.

<sup>106</sup> According to the Circular, any act of violence, in particular GBV, is a serious offence and punishable under the current legal and criminal provisions. Furthermore, the penalties provided for by law do not prevent the initiation of disciplinary procedures and sanctions against any person who commits GBV in schools. In addition, the head of the school shall initiate disciplinary proceedings against the accused in accordance with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure, the Code of Conduct, the General Rules and Regulations governing the Public Service or the Labour Code.

<sup>107</sup> Brevet d'Etudes du Premier Cycle.

<sup>108</sup> Certificats d'aptitude professionnelle.

<sup>109</sup> Certificat d'aptitude pédagogique d'instituteurs de l'enseignement maternel et primaire.

<sup>110</sup> Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle d'instituteurs de l'enseignement technique.

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## A: Results of *BEPC*

**291-** Registered: 207,396; Sat: 204,808; Passed: 142,657 (Girls: 72,732; Boys: 69,925)

### ***BEPC Bilingue***

**292-** Registered: 3,320; Sat: 3,304; Passed: 2,868 (Girls: 1,775; Boys: 1,093)

## B: Results of *Certificats d'Aptitude Professionnelle*

### ***CAP (sciences et technologies du tertiaire)***

**293-** Registered: 8,558; Sat: 8,444; Passed: 4,988 (Girls: 3,459; Boys: 1,529)

### ***CAP Industriel***

**294-** Registered: 37,602; Sat: 37,163; Passed: 30,873 (Girls: 6,565; Boys: 24,308)

## C: Results of *Brevet de Technicien*

### ***Brevet de Technicien (Commercial)***

**295-** Registered: 4,520; Sat: 4,503; Passed: 3,826 (Girls: 3,613; Boys: 213)

### ***Brevet de Technicien (Industriel)***

**296-** Registered: 10,681; Sat: 10,628; Passed: 7,995 (Girls: 2,019; Boys: 5,976)

## D: Results of *Brevet Professionnel*

### ***Brevet Professionnel (Commercial)***

**297-** Registered: 27; Passed: 20 (Girls: 17; Boys: 3)

### ***Brevet Professionnel (Industriel)***

**298-** Registered: 214; Sat: 212; Passed: 165 (Girls: 128; Boys: 37)

## E: Results of *Probatoire de Brevet de Technicien*

### ***Probatoire de Brevet de Technicien (Commercial)***

**299-** Registered: 5,484; Sat: 5,433; Passed: 3,744 (Girls: 3,448; Boys: 296).

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## ***Probatoire de Brevet de Technicien (Industriel)***

**300-** Registered: 15,089; Sat: 14,921; Passed: 10,741 (Girls: 3,372; Boys: 7,369).

## **F: Results of *Probatoires de l'Enseignement Général***

### ***Probatoire (Scientifique)***

**301-** Registered: 85,471; Sat: 84,876; Passed: 51,793 (Girls: 25,259; Boys: 26,534).

### ***Probatoire (Littéraire)***

**302-** Registered: 118,346; Sat: 117,341; Passed: 59,572 (Girls: 33,764; Boys: 25,808).

## **G: Results of *Probatoire de l'Enseignement Technique***

### ***Probatoire de l'Enseignement Technique (Industriel Scientifique)***

**303-** Registered: 33,120; Sat: 32,680; Passed: 10,415 ( Girls: 2,361; Boys: 8,054).

### ***Probatoire de l'Enseignement Technique (Commercial Littéraire)***

**304-** Registered: 10,937; Sat: 10,820; Passed: 6,794 (Girls: 4,452; Boys: 2,342).

## **H: Results of *Baccalauréat de l'Enseignement Général***

### ***Baccalauréats (Littéraires)***

**305-** Registered: 64,129; Sat: 63,693; Passed: 48,969 (Girls: 28,173; Boys: 20,796).

### ***Baccalauréats (Scientifiques)***

**306-** Registered: 61,846; Sat: 61,334; Passed: 45,715 (Girls: 22,109; Boys: 23,606).

## **I: Results of *Baccalauréats de l'Enseignement Technique***

### ***Baccalauréat Technique (Commercial)***

**307-** Registered: 9,082; Sat: 9,020; Passed: 5 218 (Girls: 3,614; Boys: 1,604).

### ***Baccalauréat Technique (Industriel)***

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**308-** Registered: 11,410; Sat: 11,354; Passed: 8,322 (Girls: 2,393; Boys: 5,929).

## **J: Results of CAPIEMP and CAPIET**

### **CAPIEMP**

**309-** Registered: 7,227; Sat: 7,135; Passed: 6,948 (Girls: 5,258; Boys: 1,690).

### **CAPIET**

**310-** Registered: 1,983; Sat: 1,970; Passed: 1,875 (Girls: 1,149; Boys: 726)

## **K: Results of GCE Advanced Level**

### **GCE Advanced Level**

**311-** Registered: 64,008; Sat: 63,112; Passed: 43,423 (Girls: 26,447; Boys: 16,976).

### **GCE Advanced Level (Arts)**

**312-** Registered: 40,206; Sat: 39,609; Passed: 27,267 (Girls: 17,555; Boys: 9,712).

### **GCE Advanced Level (Science)**

**313-** Registered: 23,802; Sat: 23,503; Passed: 16,156 (Girls: 8,892; Boys: 7,264).

## **L: Results of GCE Ordinary Level**

### **GCE Ordinary Level (Arts)**

**314-** Registered: 47 467; Sat: 46,830; Passed: 28,490 (Girls: 18,148; Boys: 10,342).

### **GCE Ordinary Level (Science)**

**315-** Registered: 36,838; Sat: 36,604; Passed: 27 825 (Girls: 15,442; Boys: 12,383).

## **M: Results of Technical and Vocational Education Examination**

### **Technical and Vocational Education Examination (Advanced Level)**

**316-** Registered: 9,409; Sat: 9,381; Passed: 6,927 (Girls: 3,383; Boys: 3,544).

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## Technical and Vocational Education Examination, Intermediate Level

**317-** Registered: 14,264; Sat: 14,117; Passed: 8,416 (Girls: 3,571; Boys: 4,845).

## SECTION 3: RIGHT TO HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

**318-** The right to education in the higher education and research subsector was reflected in access to higher education, evaluation of training provided abroad, promotion of university cooperation, consolidation of the legal framework in education, training and promotion of academic excellence, and sanctions for improper functioning of private higher education institutions.

### §1: Access to Higher Education

**319-** In higher education, the supply of university education was guaranteed with a view to meeting the demand for university training.

### A: Supply of Higher Education

**320-** In a bid to develop academic research and innovation, 150 lecturers, holders of a *Doctorat*/PhD were recruited in the 3 new State Universities<sup>111</sup>, and 40 other lecturers in the Advanced School of Public Works.

**321-** On 30 May 2023, the library of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Ebolowa received a donation<sup>112</sup> of 1,919 books comprising 892 medical books in all specialties, 192 dictionaries and encyclopaedias, 804 books and journals, and 38 social science books.

**322-** At the University of Ngaoundere, 432 computers were distributed and a combined administrative and pedagogy office was built at the School of Geology and Mining.

**323-** At the University of Bamenda, a building with 6 classrooms went operational.

**324-** At the International Relations Institute of Cameroon (IRIC), the supply of education was achieved by the distribution of 500 computers to the best students.

<sup>111</sup> University of Bertoua, University of Ebolowa and University of Garoua.

<sup>112</sup> Donated by Dr Jean Michel EBA AFENE, anaesthetist-resuscitator at the Centre Hospitalier Interrégional Edith Cavell.

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**325-** In all, 70,000 students received the excellence award

## **B: Demand for Higher Education**

**326-** The University of Buea admitted 30,000 students in 8 faculties<sup>113</sup> and 3 Professional Schools/Colleges<sup>114</sup>.

**327-** In addition, some 4,618 students were admitted in the University of Bertoua, 10,127 in the University of Bamenda, 24,444 in the University of Douala, 20,810 in the University of Yaounde I.

**328-** IRIC had 1,576 students, of whom 879 were newly admitted. The number of newly enrolled students was 3,521 at the University of Garoua, 6,711 at the University of Ngaoundere and 12,259 at the University of Maroua.

## **§2: Evaluation of Training provided Abroad**

**329-** At the 110<sup>th</sup> and 111<sup>th</sup> ordinary sessions of the National Commission for the Evaluation of Training Offered Abroad, held on 13 November 2023 in Yaounde, 2,395 equivalences were granted out of 2,427 applications for diploma equivalence from 50 countries. Some 18 files were rejected for non-approved online training, unauthorised or unlicensed off-site training, institution not authorised to issue the diploma, religious certificate or certificate not approved in Cameroon.

## **§3: Promotion of University Cooperation**

**330-** On 16 November 2023, framework cooperation agreements were signed between the University of Ebolowa and two academic institutions in the Russian Federation, including the North-East Federal University of Yakutsk and the National Institute of Arctic Arts and Culture. The agreements focused, among other things, on the travel of teachers and students, co-graduation and bilateral organisation of research programmes.

<sup>113</sup> Faculties: Arts; Veterinary Medicine and Agriculture; Education; Engineering and Technology; Health Sciences; Science; Social and Management Sciences; Laws.

<sup>114</sup> Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters; College of Technology; Higher Technical Teacher Training College Kumba.

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## §4: Consolidation of the Legal Framework for Higher Education and Scientific Research

**331-** Law No. 2023/7 of 25 July 2023 on higher education policy in Cameroon was enacted. It introduces 3 major innovations: the advent of the entrepreneurial university, the institution of a national accreditation and quality assurance commission that will contribute to the certification of courses provided and the classification of private higher education institutions to make them more competitive and efficient.

**332-** Furthermore, Decree No. 2023/337 of 8 August 2023 to lay down special rules and regulations governing research personnel was signed. The decree redefines the conditions of recruitment and work of research personnel in public research institutions, upgrades their salary and revises their retirement conditions.

## §5: Training and Promotion of Academic Excellence and Scientific Research

**333-** Since the objective is to share its expertise, the *Centre Pasteur du Cameroun* trained 24 PhD students<sup>115</sup> on the general approach in biology, isothermal amplification techniques and their principles, and the application of molecular techniques to diagnosis. The training ran from 26 to 30 September 2023.

**334-** The 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the Scientific Research and Innovation Week held in Yaounde from 17 to 19 November 2023, under the theme: **“Scientific research and innovation: an important lever for Made in Cameroon and import-substitution policy”**. Professor **Eddy Léonard Ngonkeu** was awarded the *Lion d’or*, a special prize of the President of the Republic for scientific and technological excellence, in recognition of his research on the development of wheat production and processing in Cameroon. Besides, 25 young researchers from different institutes under the supervisory authority of the Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation received scholarships to study in France.

<sup>115</sup> These students were selected following a call for applications in August 2023.

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**335-** During activities to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Advanced School of Mass Communication (ESSTIC), 1,225 graduating students of the last 5 years from 5 disciplines<sup>116</sup> received their certificates. The ceremony held on 20 October 2023 in Yaounde.

## **§7: Sanctions for Mismanagement of Private Higher Education Institutions**

**336-** During the 29<sup>th</sup> session of the National Commission for Private Higher Education held in Yaounde on 11 August 2023, sanctions were imposed on 6 Private Institutes of Higher Education (IPES) for mismanagement. The *Institut de l'émergence, de la santé et des sciences biomédicales de Ngaoundéré* was reprimanded for unauthorised candidates for the *Brevet de Technicien Supérieur* and the Higher National Diploma examinations and ordered to compensate the said candidates. The *Institut supérieur professionnel des sciences et technologies de Ngong* in the North Region was reprimanded and ordered to compensate students who it abandoned in training.

**337-** Furthermore, *Institut supérieur des arts et métiers de Bafoussam* was reprimanded and prohibited from applying for an extension of courses for 2 years, for misleading advertising and launching unauthorised courses. For having launched unauthorised courses, the Standard Bilingual Academy of Health Sciences in Yaounde was reprimanded and banned from applying for an extension of courses for 2 years. The *Institut supérieur de pétrochimie et d'ingénierie mathématique de Yaoundé* was warned for improper suspension of the director of the institution. The *Institut supérieur des sciences technologiques et d'agriculture de Bertoua* was warned for fraudulently opening a campus in Douala and was ordered to close the said campus.

<sup>116</sup> Journalism (329), Edition (191), Advertising (197), Corporate Communication (270), Archiving and Records Management (165) and Library Science and Documentation (130).

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**338-** Despite the difficult context illustrated, among other things, by the abandonment of posts by some teachers, the State continued to guarantee the right to education through the fight against corruption, the transfer of some powers to the regions in secondary education and the reorganisation of the functioning of the Government Teacher Training Colleges among other things.

# CHAPTER 2

## THE RIGHT TO HEALTH



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**339-** Developing a high-performance healthcare system that promotes the health of the population in a spirit of equity, has always been a major concern of the Government of Cameroon. Hence, the operationalisation of the universal healthcare coverage (UHC) in 2023 was a milestone. Actions were taken for health promotion as well as for the prevention and management of diseases in an atmosphere where there was little concern for covid-19. The health of the mother, adolescents and the child continued to be of concern as well as research to improve human health and measures to strengthen the health system.

## SECTION 1: HEALTH PROMOTION

**340-** Actions were carried out on community health promotion as well as on water, sanitation and hygiene to improve the living environment. The fight against malnutrition and illicit or harmful substances was also part of the initiatives to promote health.

### §1: Community Action for Health Promotion

**341-** In continuation of one of the specific objectives of Strategic Axes No 5 of the National Strategic Plan for Community Health (PSNSC) 2021-2025 (which is to improve health coverage of vulnerable populations through health promotion, disease prevention and treatment services as per community guidelines, under the Integrated Community Management of Childhood Illness approach), from January to June 2023, 14,567 children below the age of five were treated free of charge for simple cases of malaria, acute respiratory infections, diarrhoea and severe acute malnutrition by 16 multi-purpose community health workers in the Far Nord Region.

**342-** The Mokolo Council included in its 2023 budget, CFAF2,000,000<sup>117</sup> to pay multi-purpose Community Health Workers which was in line with another objective of the PSNSC which requires that Local and Regional Authorities should be fully involved in financing and managing community health within their area of jurisdiction. The said sum was shared among 40 of such workers on 2 November 2023 in Mokolo.

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<sup>117</sup> About 3,053,44 Euros.

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## §2: Improving the Living Environment of the Population

**343-** Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) interventions were carried out. Among other activities, the Ministry of Public Health (MINSANTE) controlled the quality of water used for the production of drinks.

**344-** Partners of the State were also involved in WASH activities. Hence, the Norwegian Refugee Council trained 104 persons, including hygiene promoters, community leaders, teachers, students and religious leaders, who went door-to-door sensitising people on good hygiene practices, reaching a total of 49,277 persons. In 2023, UNICEF and its partners provided nutrition, protection, education, WASH and health support to 714,539 persons, 75% of whom were children.

**345-** Access to water (See § 499-509), and improvement on waste management (see § 565, 717-719) also part of initiatives to improve the living environment.

## §3: Combating Illicit or Harmful Substance

**346-** An evaluation was carried out on centres for addiction treatment, support and prevention (CSAPA). These centres, which are working bodies of the National Drug Control Committee received 1,720 patients, including 745 old and 975 new ones<sup>118</sup>. In 2023, there were 19 of these centres.

**347-** Sensitisation was carried out against drug consumption reaching 12 000 students and 200 000 persons of the general public.

**348-** *Operation Halte au Commerce Illicite* (Operation Halt Illegal Trade) continued to seize illegal medicines. One of its seizures was on 23 August 2023 in Garoua, regarding 21,200 tablets of Viagra, 2260 sachets and bottles of diverse pharmaceutical products and 2,226,840 diverse tablets.

<sup>118</sup> 41 patients were aged under 23.

- 254 patients aged between 15 and 19, 224 of whom were male and 30 female.
- 585 patients aged between 20 and 24, including 535 males and 50 females.
- 354 patients in the 25-29 age group, 315 of whom were male and 39 female.
- 204 patients in the 30-34 age group, of whom 188 were male and 16 female.
- 115 patients in the 35-39 age group, including 93 men and 22 women.
- 166 patients aged 40 and over, 147 of whom were male and 19 female.

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## SECTION 2: PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF DISEASES

**349-** Measures continued to be taken to eliminate or reduce exposure to risks that might increase the chances of the occurrence of disease, and when persons were sick, care was provided.

### §1: Disease Prevention

**350-** Disease prevention initiatives included both communicable and non-communicable diseases. Vaccination was part of initiatives to prevent diseases.

#### A: Communicable Diseases

**351-** Initiatives continued to be taken towards preventing priority communicable diseases, neglected tropical diseases and epidemic prone diseases.

##### 1) Priority Communicable Diseases

**352-** Concerning **malaria**, on 21 November 2023, Cameroon received 331,200 doses of the RTS,S, the first antimalarial vaccine recommended by the World Health Organization. The vaccine was set to be administered in 42 health districts, mostly for children aged 0–24 months. Some 4,657,179 tests were carried out for malaria and 2,977,754 were confirmed, of which 65.6% were simple malaria and 34.4% severe malaria.

**353-** As far as **HIV/AIDS** is concerned, the 2024-2030 National Strategic Plan for the fight against HIV and STDs (NSP) was adopted. The Strategy aims that, with differentiated approaches, Cameroon contributes to the elimination of HIV, tuberculosis, viral hepatitis and STDs by 2030, and ensures quality coverage for all target populations and vulnerable groups. It has 6 major objectives, namely reducing new infections among adults, adolescents and children, eliminating mother-to-child transmission of HIV, reducing HIV-related mortality, improving the quality of life of persons infected and affected by HIV, combating all forms of discrimination and improving governance through an effective response.

**354-** The new Strategy was adopted following the evaluation of the 2021-2023 NSP with the following findings among others: Concerning the general population; low availability of male and female condoms for awareness-raising campaigns and activities among populations most at risk; as

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regards children exposed to HIV, the estimated rate of mother-to-child HIV transmission at 12 months, including through breastfeeding, remained high (15%), low identification of children exposed to HIV (72.4% in 2021 and 76.2% in 2022) and low HIV screening of infants at 9 and 18 months of age. As concerns young persons and adolescents; low identification of HIV cases among adolescents, low rate of in-depth knowledge of AIDS among girls and boys, particularly in the 15-24 age group.

**355-** In the run-up to World AIDS Day, a national awareness campaign lasting 30 days was carried out, the aim of which was to increase people's knowledge of HIV/AIDS. The campaign reached 5,790,238 persons.

**356-** Furthermore, 1 005 380 female condoms (2 846 635 in 2022) and 28 180 438 male condoms (29 122 272) were distributed while 2 638 708 persons (2 948 355 in 2022) were screened for HIV, 54 916 of whom tested positive compared with 70 206 in 2022.

A total of 2,638,708 persons were tested for HIV in health facilities, of whom 54,916 (2.1%) were positive, representing a 0.3% decrease as compared to 2022.

**357-** HIV prevalence rate stood at 2,1% compared with 2,4% in 2022.

**358-** The National Strategic Plan to Combat Tuberculosis 2020-2024 was extended to 2026 with the objective of reducing deaths due to tuberculosis by 30% in 2026 as well as reducing the incidence of tuberculosis by 30% by 2026. Hence, the reference to the National Strategic Plan to Combat Tuberculosis 2024-2026.

**359-** Furthermore, 4 spots to raise awareness among the general public on knowledge and prevention of tuberculosis as well as early detection and treatment of tuberculosis as well as tuberculosis and HIV-AIDS co-infection were broadcast in local languages, French and English 28 times per quarter over the radio in various regions. As concerns screening, some 194,610 were screened for tuberculosis and 19,020 were positive.

## 2) Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs)

**360-** The Strategic Plan for the Elimination of Onchocerciasis (PSEO) 2021-2030 was adopted on 30 January 2023. The strategic axes of the Plan

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include: strengthening field interventions in endemic areas; improving results-based planning, resource mobilisation, financial sustainability and partnership; and strengthening monitoring and evaluation, surveillance and operational research to accelerate the elimination of Onchocerciasis.

**361-** The Lymphatic Filariasis Morbidity Management and Incapacity Prevention Plan (PCMPI) 2022-2026 was also adopted on 30 January 2023. The Plan has as pillars, training patients in lymphoedema management and training on hydrocele surgery.

### 3) Epidemic Prone Diseases

**362-** Parts of the country still witnessed a cholera epidemic. In response, vaccination campaigns were carried out in the Centre, Littoral, North, West and South West, among other things. A cholera vaccination campaign targeting 1,825,070 people in 11 health districts in the Centre Region took place from 16 to 20 August, 2023. Out of the number targeted, 1,773,090 (97%) persons were reached including 525,836 children aged 1-5 years.

**363-** There was a conjunctivitis epidemic in Cameroon and on 30 October 2023, the Minister of Public Health sent out a Communiqué in which he outlined measures to prevent the spread of the disease, amongst other things.

### B: Non-Communicable Diseases

**364-** Actions were taken to prevent non-communicable diseases such as on cancer and mental health issues.

#### 1) Cancer

**365-** In 2023, in order to prevent cancer, a total of 277,248 children aged 9 to 12 were vaccinated against the papillomavirus (HPV). Furthermore, the National Cancer Control Committee, on 23 January 2023 partnered with the Cameroon Baptist Convention to launch a campaign for the screening of cancer of the uterus at the CBC health centre in Ekoumdoum, Yaounde.

#### 2) Mental Illnesses

**366-** In August 2023, the MINSANTE trained 200 young volunteers from the Family Club Association in Yaounde on the harmful effects of drug use.

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The training aimed to equip them to conduct awareness campaigns in secondary and High schools in Yaounde.

**367-** To celebrate World Mental Health day on 10 October 2023 under the theme: "mental health is a universal Human Right", from 1 to 30 October 2023, a vast awareness-raising campaign on mental health called *Octobre d'Amour* (October of Love) was organised in the mainstream media, on social media and in certain schools in the city of Yaounde.

## C: Vaccination

**368-** Vaccination was done with the aim of reducing premature mortality due to vaccine preventable diseases. This included the Penta 1, Penta 3 and RR1 vaccines whose rates between 2020 and 2023 are shown in the table below.

**Table 1: Statistics on the Penta 1, Penta 3 and RRI vaccines between 2020 and 2023**

Vaccine	2023	2022	2021	2020
Penta 1	90.1	84.6	85.1	86.6
Penta 3	83.2	79.7	79.7	80.2
RR1	81.5	76.8	73.2	73.6

**Source:** MINSANTE 2023

## §2: Management of Diseases

**369-** Treatment continued to be provided for various types of communicable and non-communicable diseases.

### A: Communicable Diseases

**370-** Management of communicable diseases included priority Communicable Diseases, neglected tropical diseases and epidemic prone diseases.

#### 1) Priority Communicable Diseases

**371-** Concerning **malaria**, of the 1,953,401 of simple malaria cases, 91.8% were treated with artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT) in health facilities. Of the 1,024,353 cases of severe malaria, 55.4% were treated with Artesunate, 27.2% with Arthemether and 17.4% with Quinine.

**372-** Out of a total of 2,137,774 hospitalisations, 1,024,353 were for malaria (49%). Of total hospitalisations, 23,979 died and out of the to-

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tal number of hospitalised malaria cases, 1,756 died given a mortality rate of 7.3%.

**373-** Some 490 484 persons were estimated to be infected with HIV among whom 27 960 (5,7%) children less than 15 and 317 108 (66,8%) women. Some 98.1% knew their status while a total of 481 147 were Antiretroviral therapy (ART) (93.3%) and 85.9 % had viral load suppression.

**374-** Death from HIV stood at 8 561 against 14 995 in 2019.

**375-** In 2023, 25,705 cases of all forms of tuberculosis were reported and put under treatment in the 345 Tuberculosis Diagnostic and Treatment Centers (CDT) in our country, whereas in 2022, there were 25,286 cases. One of the challenges in providing treatment was the inadequate availability of tracer drugs.

**376-** Out of 9,409 cases of snake bites, 130 persons died. Of the 114 suspected cases of monkey pox, 27 were confirmed with no deaths. As concerns the treatment of Schistosomiasis and Helminthiasis (see § 419). There were 14 suspected cases of malburg but non was confirmed. Also, no case of dengue fever was reported.

## 2) Epidemic Prone Diseases

**377-** In May 2023, about half of the health districts were experiencing a measles epidemic, with 4,677 cases and 18 deaths.

**378-** Moreover, a total of 1,124 suspected cases of **meningitis** and 46 deaths were recorded, for a case-fatality rate of 4.1% in 2023. Also, there were some 114 suspected cases of **monkeypox**, 27 of which were confirmed. The main difficulty in the management of cases was that there was no harmonised treatment protocol and treatment was not free of charge.

**379-** As concerns **cholera**, Incident Management System (IMS) at national and regional level was functional and the number of laboratories capable of confirming cholera cases was increased.

**380-** The infection and death rate from **covid-19** reduced tremendously in 2023: There were 840 cases bringing the number since the start of the disease in 2020 to 125 074. There were 9 deaths, taking the total number up to 1 974.

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## B: Non-Communicable Diseases

**381-** As regards **mental health**, in June 2023, following 5 visits to the 7 districts of Yaounde by teams of volunteer nurses, psychologists and psychiatrists, nearly 400 wandering mentally ill *patients* were cared for at the *Village de l'Amour* (VDA) at the Jamot Hospital in Yaounde.

**382-** Also, emergency psychological care was provided by MINSANTE for victims of the Mbankolo landslide in Yaounde in October 2023 and psychological monitoring was carried out every 3 days at *maison du parti Nkomkana* resettlement sites and the targeted health facilities (Yaounde Central Hospital and Yaounde Emergency Centre (CURY)).

**383-** Furthermore, *Action pour le respect des droits de l'homme et la dignité humaine* and *Association d'appui au progrès et le développement* on 10 October 2023 in the context of the celebration of World Mental Health Day celebrated under the theme: 'Mental health is a universal human right', organised a sports walk and sensitised 300 persons at the Regional Hospital Maroua on how to take care of mental health.

**384-** As concerns **kidney diseases**, after the first kidney transplant in 2021, transplant surgeries continued in 2023, for example 3 cases were handled between 31 January and 2 February 2023 at the Yaounde General Hospital.

**385-** In 2023, about 20,000 **cancer** cases were diagnosed. Some of the patients received treatment in public hospitals and others elsewhere. Chemotherapy was offered in 8 health facilities across the country. Surgery and radiotherapy were also available in public and private health facilities. For example, at the Douala General Hospital, patients paid CFAF 50,000<sup>119</sup> per month for radiotherapy treatment.

**386-** There were a total of 3601 (955 new cases) persons living with **sickle cell anaemia** out of which 59 died. There were 4367 (1084 new cases) cumulative cases of epilepsy with 47 deaths.

**387-** Out of the 42678 persons living with **hypertension**, 200 died. A total of 9352 cases of hypertension were diagnosed in 2023 alone.

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<sup>119</sup> About 76,34 Euros.

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**388-** Of the 31 450 cases of **diabetes** (9 281 new) 306 persons died and of the 2 491 cases of alcoholism (1 153 new cases), 45 persons died.

**389-** As for **yellow fever**, more than 1,751 cases were investigated, with 55 cases confirmed, 6 of whom died.

**390-** Also, 51 persons died of **substance abuse** out of a cumulative number of 2 909.

## SECTION 3: REPRODUCTIVE, MATERNAL, ADOLESCENT AND CHILD HEALTH.

**391-** Reproductive health activities including family planning and other activities to support reproductive health. The health of mothers, adolescents and children was also taken care of.

### §1: Reproductive Health

**392-** The Minister of Public Health on 29 June 2023, launched the Family Planning 2030 (FP2030)<sup>120</sup> initiative in Cameroon. Cameroon had on 8 June 2022, made 10 commitments towards participating fully in this initiative. These commitments include, increasing modern contraceptive prevalence from 15.4% to 35% by 2030 and to reduce unmet need for FP from 23% to 10% by the same time.

**393-** Also, as part of activities to celebrate World Contraception Day on 18 September 2023, MINSANTE with the Support of the German Development Bank, organised a series of activities from 23 to 29 September 2023 in the Adamawa, East, North and Far North Regions. Various contraceptive services were offered in Garoua-Boulai, Meiganga, Garoua, Maroua and Minawao; educational talks; an information and awareness campaign involving traditional media and social networks as well as youth platforms.

**394-** UNFPA reached 522,823 persons from January to October 2023. This included 275,286 persons reached with integrated Gender Based Violence (GBV)/ Sexual and Reproductive Health Services (SRH), 230,987 persons reached with GBV/protection messages and 5,226 per-

<sup>120</sup> FP2030 is a global partnership focused on family planning. It is a core convening partner on the High Impact Practices for Family Planning. Its vision is a future where women and girls everywhere have the freedom and ability to live healthy lives, make their own informed decisions about using contraception and having children, and participate as equals in society.

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sons to whom dignity kits were distributed. UNFPA initiated 225 mobile outreach activities to support SRH and GBV services, distributed 237 post rape kits and reproductive health commodities, supported 11,086 safe deliveries, and deployed 16 new midwives in humanitarian settings.

**395-** Between 2016 and December 2023, 400 babies had been born through Invitro fertilization at the Gynecological Endoscopic Surgery and Human Reproductive Teaching Hospital, (CHRACERH).

**396-** Furthermore, within the project “The Fight against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence among Conflict-Affected Population in 3 targeted Regions of Cameroon, implemented by Cameroon Young Jurists Legal Resource Center, 36 health workers were trained in reproductive health services and care of sexual and GBV survivors and 4,892 women and girls accessed reproductive care and services in 16 public health facilities in the Centre, Littoral and South West Regions

## §2: Maternal Health

**397-** As regards malaria in pregnant women, there were 202,496 confirmed cases (89,734 simple cases and 112,762 severe cases). Of the 89,734 simple cases, 66% were treated with ACT (artesunate-mefloquine, artesunate-sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine (SP), artesunate-amodiaquine, and artemether-lumefantrine. Out of the 112,762 severe cases, 46.9% were treated with Artesunate) and 99.4% with injectable.

**398-** Out of a total of 264,745 pregnant women hospitalised in 2023, 112,762 were for malaria. Out of 997 199 pregnant women targeted, 807 236 were tested for HIV (81%) and of 23 210 targeted, 13 899 were put on Antiretroviral therapy (ART).

**399-** A total of 1,049,683 pregnant women were expected for prenatal consultation or in the delivery room, out of which 826,115 were received representing 78.7%. Of those received, 807,236 (97.7%) were tested, of which 1,5378 were HIV-positive, and 13,899 (90.4%) were put on ART.

## §3: Adolescent Health

**400-** As part of the celebration of the 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the International Day of the Girl Child on 11 October 2023 in Gado Badzere and Garoua Boulai in the East Region, an awareness campaign and educational talks were organised by UNFPA and other partners, under the theme: *investing in girls’*

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*rights: our leadership, our well-being.* More than 270 girls, aged 10 to 22, were among those reached by messages on the consequences of early sexuality and its risks.

**401-** In the context of the Inequality Project of the CBC Health Services, also called Expanding and Scaling up HIV and SRH services to Adolescent Girls and Young Women project on 11 and 12 April 2024, Teachers from in the North West Region. They were taught the skills necessary to rebuild communities and improve the sexual and reproductive rights of adolescents and their general mental health, particularly those living with HIV.

**402-** The 21<sup>st</sup> edition of the AIDS Free holidays jointly organised by *Synergies Africaines* and the National AIDS Control Committee took place from 2 to 31 August 2023 nationwide. Peer educators carried out sensitisation and education, on HIV/AIDS sexually transmitted diseases and risks associated with drug consumption. The campaign reached 3,706,410 adolescents and young people aged 15 to 24.

**403-** Of the estimated 490,484 cases of HIV, 18, 039 were adolescents aged 15-19 years and 30,453 were young persons aged 20 to 24 years. Some 46.5% of HIV infected adolescents aged 10 to 19 and 83.0% of young persons aged between 20 and 24 were on ART.

**404-** Activities carried out relating to menstrual hygiene included the distribution by the Norwegian Refugee Council of menstrual hygiene kits 180 female students in the Far North Region and 477 in the Littoral Region. Also, the *Welisane Foundation* organised the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of “*vacances sans grossesse*”(Pregnancy free holidays) campaign from July to September 2023. Activities included workshops on sexual and reproductive health, educative talks and messages on contraception as well as proper menstrual hygiene management through social media and onsite, including in schools and churches. The messages on menstrual hygiene were in line with the theme of the 2023 World Menstrual Hygiene Day on 28 May “making menstruation a normal fact of life by 2030”. The campaign carried out by 50 peer educators reached over 12,000 youths.

## §4: Child Health

**405-** In addition to acquiring equipment including over 400 incubators to take care of premature babies, other actions were taken to prevent and treat diseases in children.

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## A: Prevention of Diseases in Children

**406-** Between 1 January and 30 September 2023, 136,659 children between 6 and 23 months were given micronutrient powders to enhance the nutritional value of their food. This was funded by UNICEF.

**407-** Infants received Intermittent preventive treatment for malaria as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> dose, 248,969; 2<sup>nd</sup> dose, 184,722; 3<sup>rd</sup> dose, 138,782; 4<sup>th</sup> dose 110,157; 5<sup>th</sup> dose and above, 43,511.

**408-** In order to prevent mother to child transmission of HIV (PMTCT), out of 23 210 exposed children tested, 12 538 received ART prophylaxis (54,%). 80.3% of health facilities offered PMTCT services.

**409-** Activities for the 31<sup>st</sup> World Breastfeeding Week took place from 1 to 7 August 2023 under the theme "Enabling breastfeeding: making a difference for working parents" were launched in Cameroon on 27 July 2023. During the launch, hundreds of women were sensitised on the importance of breastfeeding new-borns for up to 6 months.

## B : Treatment of Diseases in Children

**410-** Of the 334,844 cases of severe malaria of children less than 5 years, 232,873 were treated with artesunate, 73,678 with arthemether while 26,964 were treated with quinine.

**411-** Of the 697,001 cases of confirmed simple malaria in children less than 5 years old, 93.9% were treated with ACT. Of these 697,001 cases, 486 579 were treated free of charge (69.8%) and of 334 844 severe cases, 154 291 were treated free of charge (46.1). Thus out of a total of 1 031 845 children below 5 years who had malaria, 640 870 were treated free of charge (62.1%).

**412-** Out of 587,501 hospitalisations of children less than 5 years old, 334,844 (57%) were for malaria. Of the total number of hospitalisations, 5,590 died including 1201 (18.2%) from malaria.

**413-** 40,9% of HIV infected children aged less than 15 were on ARV while 78,4% of children who tested positive for HIV in 2023 started taking ARV.

**414-** Of the 8,561 deaths from HIVARV 2 160 were children aged below 15.

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**415-** A total of 202, 625 (96 %) of the 211, 012 children aged 0-59 months who suffered from pneumonia, received antibiotic treatment while 86, 469 (72 %) of the 120, 644 aged 0-59 months affected by diarrhoea received ORS + ZINC (oral rehydration salts and Zinc). Some 34 cases of neonatal tetanus were investigated in 8 regions (in 27 health districts out of 200, representing 13%) with 16 deaths recorded.

**416-** Concerning clubfoot, on 3 and 4 July 2024 in Yaounde, 91 teachers of nursing and midwifery schools in Cameroon participated at a workshop organised by Cameroon Clubfoot Care Project (CCCP) in collaboration with the MINSANTE under the theme, "Early identification and referral of children born with clubfoot to treatment." Participants acquired skills on diagnosis and treatment of Clubfoot. From 26 to 27 October 2023 in Limbe, CCCP organised another workshop on the Management of Delayed Presentation of Clubfoot in walking-age children. The workshop was attended by 30 Physiotherapy staff from 22 clubfoot clinics in 6 Regions of Cameroon. Its objective was to introduce the protocol for managing clubfoot in walking-age children and improve the management of clubfoot by Physiotherapist using the Ponseti method.

**417-** Since the start of the CCCP) in 2014, training and refresher courses to build the capacity of Physiotherapy (PT) staff have contributed to the successful treatment of over 2500 children with clubfoot in Cameroon.

**418-** As regards children's mental health, 127,441 children(47.52 % girls) affected by the North-West/South-West crisis received psychosocial support from teachers trained in psychosocial support as well as conflict and disaster risk mapping, funded by UNICEF.

**419-** Within the framework of the deworming campaign run by the National Schistosomiasis and Helminthiasis Control Program, a deworming campaign was launched on 20 November 2023 at Magba in the Noun Division, to distribute Mebendazole and Praziquantel tablets from December 2023, to some 7.500 000 school-age children against intestinal worms and 4.500 000 against schistosomiasis. The campaign was expected to last until February 2024.

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## SECTION 4: STRENGTHENING THE HEALTH SYSTEM

**420-** Measures continued to be taken to enhance health facilities, human resources and equipment. Initiatives to improve access to health included the operationalisation of the universal health coverage among others.

### §1: Availability of Healthcare Facilities and Human Resources

**421-** Health facilities were enhanced and human resources were taken care of.

#### A: Availability of Healthcare Facilities.

**422-** Out of over 6900 public, private and mission health facilities in the country, 2801 were of the public sector. The 2801 health facilities were distributed per region as follows: Adamawa (169), Centre (488), East (201), Far North (420), Littoral (132), North (268), North West (252), West (423), South (211) and South West (237).

**423-** On 28 November 2023, the Minister of the Economy, Planning and Regional Development, and the Minister of Public Health on the one hand and the Resident Representative of the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) on the other hand, signed an agreement related to the "Project for the Strengthening of the Emergency Medical System in Cameroon". The Project that shall be co-funded by Cameroon and KOICA provides for the extension of the Yaounde Emergency Centre (CURY), the supply of medical equipment to CURY and the construction of a training Centre for emergency medical services amongst others.

#### B: Human Resources

**424-** On 22 May 2023, a strike action started at the Yaounde Emergency Centre (CURY) and the Jamot hospital, organised by the National Syndicate of Health Workers to protest against poor working conditions, especially the non-absorption into the public service of about 27,000 who have been working for 10 years.

**425-** Following this, was signed, Order No 080 PM of 20 June 2023 setting up, organisation and Functioning of the *ad hoc* inter-ministerial committee responsible for examining the demands made by health workers and making proposals for concrete measures to be taken to address them. Was

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also signed, Decision no. 021SG/PM of 7 July 2023 establishing the composition of the *ad hoc* secretariat responsible for examining the demands made by health workers and making proposals for concrete measures to be taken to address them.

## §2: Accessibility to Healthcare

**426-** The universal health coverage went operational amid other measures to make healthcare more accessible.

### A: Universal Health Coverage

**427-** The national technical unit was set up in February 2023 to oversee and guide the implementation of phase 1 of the UHC at national level, following which the said phase was launched in Bertoua on 12 April 2023. The UHC shall enable the State to provide a continuum of essential health services at low cost in order to reduce the financial burden on families. Phase 1 of the UHC aims to increase the use of health services by improving access and quality of health care for the population covered.

**428-** Order No.4081/2023/A/MINSANTE/CAB of 19 June 2023 specifying the conditions for the implementation of phase 1 of the UHC was signed.

**429-** To benefit from UHC, anyone resident in Cameroon is eligible for the UHC without discrimination (article 3(2) but must first of all register at dedicated MINSANTE sites.

**430-** Pregnant women, children aged 0 to 5, newborns up to 42 days, persons living with HIV and persons on dialysis are the priority target for phase 1 of the UHC (article 4(1)). However, certain segments of the population can benefit from UHC relating to health promotion.

**431-** As per article 5 of this Order, the following are covered by UHC: for children 0 to 5 years, consultation, treatment of malaria; for pregnant women, antenatal consultations, deliveries, care for newborns up to 42 days; for persons living with HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis or onchocerciasis, care for the pathology; for persons on dialysis, dialysis sessions for one year.

**432-** Concerning the cost of services, persons living with HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis or onchocerciasis and children from 0 to 5 years treatment

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received is free, while prenatal consultations, deliveries and care for newborns is subject to a fee of CFAF6000<sup>121</sup> and for sessions of hemodialysis, the annual fee is CFAF15000<sup>122</sup>.

**433-** As per article 10 of the Order, the implementation of UHC shall be carried out in first-category hospitals, Regional Hospital centre and regional hospitals, while other types of care can be obtained at all public health facilities.

## **B: Other Measures to improve on Accessibility to Health Care**

**434-** From 18 October 2023, a packet of the protocol for the treatment of hepatitis C made up of a combination of Sofosbuvir/Daclatasvir 400/60mg of 28 tablets which used to cost CFAF100.000<sup>123</sup> became free.

**435-** In January 2023, the Directory of healthcare facilities in Cameroon was published. It presents a summary of services offered by each health facility on the national territory. Thus, tables are presented for each district showing the surface area, population, ratio of health facilities per 1,000 inhabitants, and the number of sites available for the creation of new health facilities. The Directory is an operational document that meets the need to communicate with all stakeholders in the healthcare sector, as well as with all potential beneficiaries, in order to improve access to and use of existing services.

## **SECTION 5: IMPROVING ON HEALTH THROUGH RESEARCH**

**436-** The Institute of Medical Research and Medicinal Plant Studies carried out a number of research projects relating to children's health, malaria, neglected tropical diseases and HIV.

**437-** Research was carried out into **children's health**, including: assessing the effectiveness of early childhood feeding and nutrition programme in Cameroon; the impact of chemotherapy on poli parasitism in relation to anaemia and malnutrition in children; child and weaning practices of Cameroonian women and their impact on the health and nutritional status of the mother-child.

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<sup>121</sup> About 9,16 Euros.

<sup>122</sup> About 22,9 Euros.

<sup>123</sup> About 152,67 Euros.

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**438-** With regard to malaria, clinical trials were carried out with a view to bringing three antimalarial phytomedicines to market; a study of the humoral and oxidative impact of placental malaria in pregnant women in Cameroon: the case of Yaoundé and the surrounding area; research into the production of essential oil-based insecticides and mosquito repellents.

**439-** As far as neglected tropical diseases are concerned, research focused on mechanisms regulating host immunity to helminth infections and the associated morbidity: defining the molecular and microbial bases for auxiliary therapies and the development of better anti-helminth vaccination strategies; the burden of schistosomiasis,

**440-** In terms of HIV-related research, the following studies were carried out: assessment of the nutritional status of people living with HIV in relation to the effectiveness of antiretroviral treatment (ART) and the study of HIV and hepatitis B co-infection; and the immunological profile of people living with HIV and parasitic infections.

**441-** Other research projects included the study of human parasitic infections linked to water quality and activities carried out in flood-prone areas of Cameroon; the ethno-medical evaluation of traditional medicines; and the study of the health quality of food sold in markets: experimentation with the health-market concept.

## SECTION 6: IMPROVING ON GOVERNANCE IN THE HEALTH SECTOR

**442-** In line with decentralisation efforts, was issued, Decree No. 1023/132 of 10 February 2023 to lay down conditions governing the exercise of some powers devolved by the State upon regions in the area of health.

**443-** As per Article 2 of the Decree, the powers devolved by the State upon regions shall concern the following: construction of categories 3 and 4 hospitals, namely regional and district hospitals, in accordance with the health map prepared by the State; equipping, management and maintenance of such hospitals; support to health facilities falling under the region's sphere of competence; participation in the preparation of the regional component of the health map; participation in the organisation and management of the supply of essential drugs, reagents and medical devices, in accordance with the national health policy.

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**444-** Article 10 provides that the devolution of powers upon regions by the State in the area of health shall be accompanied by the concurrent transfer of the requisite resources for the exercise of such powers, in accordance with the regulations in force. In addition to the financial resources transferred by the State, regions may receive support from various partners for the exercise of the powers devolved in the area of health, in accordance with the regulations in force (Article 12).

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**445-** A giant step forward was the operationalisation of the first phase of the UHC which enabled free or low cost treatment for a certain category of persons including children, pregnant women and for certain diseases. Diseases continued to be cared for including the continuation of kidney transplant surgeries. Also, strategic plans relating to HIV/AIDS and STDs as well as neglected tropical diseases, namely, onchocerciasis and lymphatic filariasis were adopted. In spite of these successes, the working conditions of health staff remained a challenge.

# CHAPTER 3

## RIGHT TO AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING



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**446-** In its efforts to make efficient use of the resources at its disposal, the State of Cameroon endeavoured to implement the right to adequate standard of living in order to guarantee the well-being of the people living in its territory. Actions taken concerned food, water and energy supply and decent housing.

## SECTION 1: RIGHT TO FOOD

**447-** Comprehensive measures to implement the right to food, and other special measures were taken relating to the availability, accessibility and acceptability of food.

### §1: Measures to Guarantee the Right to Food

**448-** The measures focused on stepping up the normative and strategic framework, rooting import substitution and reducing abject poverty.

#### A: Stepping up the Normative and Strategic Framework

**449-** In the cross-cutting research sector, of which one of the stakeholders is the Institute for Agricultural Research and Development (IRAD), Decree No. 2023/337 of 8 August 2023 to lay down special rules and regulations governing research personnel was enacted. In addition to the definition of the researcher and the establishment of advisory bodies, the Decree lays down the duties of researchers, the terms and conditions of their recruitment and their terms remuneration.

#### B: Rooting Import-Substitution

**450-** To boost local production especially in the food sector, the 2023 finance law allocated a budget of CFAF130,000,000,000<sup>124</sup> to support local producers in the import-substitution process and provided for fiscal and customs measures to step up local production (see § 791-792).

**451-** A number of activities to promote import-substitution were organised. In this regard, the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Excellence Week in Scientific Research and Innovation in Cameroon* was organised by the Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation (MINRESI) from 17 to 19 October 2023 in Yaounde on the theme *Scientific research and innovation: an important lever of the Made in Cameroon and import-substitution policy*. On 25 October 2023, the Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Crafts of

<sup>124</sup> About 198,473,282.44 Euros.

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Cameroon organized the 4<sup>th</sup> international investors forum in Douala on the theme: ***“Import-substitution in Cameroon: challenges, opportunities and financing mechanisms.*** In the same vein, under the auspices of the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development (MINEPAT), the Growth Sectors Network Centre Project organised a workshop from 22 to 23 June 2023 in Yaounde on the theme: *The Growth Chains Network Centre, an operational instrument for the embodiment of import substitution policy, development and self-financing of growth chains.*

**452-** In the same vein, the Ministry of Trade (MINCOMMERCE) hosted a meeting on 26 December 2023, attended by bakery promoters and the promoter of PAFIC SARL company that submitted a cassava flour production project to reduce dependence on wheat imports. The project that was initially planned for 3,500 hectares and aiming at a monthly production of 600 tonnes of cassava, covered 2,000 hectares.

**453-** With regard to political vision, the President of the Republic in his address to the nation on 31 December 2023, ordered the establishment of an integrated import-substitution plan.

### C: Object Poverty Reduction

**454-** Through the Safety Net Project (SNP) and the Lake Chad Region Recovery and Development Project (PROLAC), MINEPAT continued to finance income-generating activities for the most vulnerable households. On 11 December 2023, it launched and supervised the Adaptive Safety Net and Economic Inclusion Project (SNP-AEI) for 2023-2028. The project received support from the World Bank to the tune of USD 160,000,000<sup>125</sup> for 217,500 households, and the annual contribution of the State of Cameroon of CFAF18,000,000,000<sup>126</sup> for 138,500 beneficiaries. The SNP achievements in 2023 were as follows: ordinary cash transfers of CFAF363,004,830<sup>127</sup> from the World Bank for 107,000 households and CFAF1,800,720,000<sup>128</sup> from the State of Cameroon and C2D/AFD<sup>129</sup>

<sup>125</sup> About CFAF98,580,848,000.

<sup>126</sup> About 27,480,916.03 Euros.

<sup>127</sup> About 554,205.85 Euros.

<sup>128</sup> About 2,749,190.84 Euros.

<sup>129</sup> Debt Reduction and Development and Agence Française de Développement (French Development Agency).

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for 49,000 households; emergency cash transfers of CFAF375,000,000<sup>130</sup> from the World Bank for 47,000 households and CFAF780,000,000<sup>131</sup> from the State of Cameroon and C2D/AFD for 106,500 beneficiaries.

## §2: Food Availability Measures

**455-** The development of factors of production by research and other institutions constituted one of the measures to guarantee food availability. The measures had a positive impact on production.

### A: Development of Factors of Production by Research Institutions

**456-** Such development included the allocation of budget resources to production, distribution of seeds and plants and conducting research on plant, forest and fish production.

#### 1) Research on Plant, Forest and Fish Production

**457-** With regard to plant and forest production, IRAD developed appropriate farm techniques in Barombi Kang on a half hectare area, that made it possible for 500 kg of seeds to be harvested, threshed and stored; activities to enhance the continuous production of instant ginger powder and seasonal fruit drinks; palm oil, pineapple and plantain value chains as part of the PD-CVA<sup>132</sup>; conservation techniques and processes for meat and fish products. The institute also produced basic seeds of improved varieties of sorghum, plantain vitro plants for the North West and South West Regions, composite flour from wheat substitution trials for tubers, and basic seeds of improved varieties of yam, cassava, potato and beans for same Regions.

**458-** The institute further improved the productivity of legumes in different agro-ecological zones of Cameroon, and large ruminants nationwide; the production system of small traditional ruminants through the acquisition and maintenance of genetic resources and hay production; as well as health, production, welfare and the microbiological and organoleptic quality of poultry and chicken eggs by using a natural product available locally, without commercial value and with therapeutic properties. It also stepped up the production of pre-sprouted oil palm seeds for 25 ha, selected rice va-

<sup>130</sup> About 572,519.08 Euros.

<sup>131</sup> About 1,190,839.69 Euros.

<sup>132</sup> Agricultural Value Chains Development Project.

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rieties suitable for high altitude areas, multi-area adaptation trials for wheat in the Adamawa Region, and day-old chicks through parental acquisition, feed formulation, incubation and sex-determination of eggs.

**459-** In addition, IRAD organised campaigns to distribute improved seeds to the population and other stakeholders in the agricultural sector: 2 tonnes of seeds to multipliers in Wassande, 35 tons of various rice varieties (Nerica, Nerica L56, Nerica L8 and 4, Nerica L36), 3 tonnes of Groundnut (40 ha seeded), 500kg of bean (20 ha seeded), 55,000 Cashew Nut plants (550 ha seeded), 1.5 tonnes of Soybean (50 ha seeded), 13 tonnes of Corn (450 ha seeded), and 7 tons of rainfed and off-season sorghum (350 ha seeding).

**460-** With regard to fish production, IRAD carried out on fisheries and aquaculture activities mainly in the Noun, Mfoundi and Fako Divisions with the following results: reduction of health risk due to the presence of some heavy metals in fish species along the Limbe coastal zone; the implementation of a diet based on maggots and snail flour locally composed; and fish processing and conservation technologies used in fishing communities in Limbe and its surroundings.

## **2) Allocation of Budget Resources to the Production and Distribution of Seeds and Plants Agricultural Production in Cameroon** Agricultural Production Support Programme in Cameroon

**461-** Budget resources (provided by the African Development Bank (AfDB) through the Programme to Support Consolidation of Agricultural Production in Cameroon (PARPAC) were allocated for the production and distribution of cashew nut plants in the Far North, North, Adamawa and Centre Regions to the tune of CFAF662,450,000<sup>133</sup> as well as seeds as follows: CFAF538,775,000<sup>134</sup> for basic seeds of acacia gum nursery in these regions; CFAF108,900,000<sup>135</sup> for basic seeds of composite corn, CFAF67,400,000<sup>136</sup> for basic seeds of cassava improved varieties, CFAF37,425,000<sup>137</sup> for improved potato seeds, CFAF34,500,000<sup>138</sup> for

<sup>133</sup> About 1,011,374.05 Euros.

<sup>134</sup> About 822,557.25 Euros.

<sup>135</sup> About 166,256.54 Euros.

<sup>136</sup> About 102,900.76 euros.

<sup>137</sup> About 57,137.40 Euros.

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improved bean seeds in the North West and South West Regions; CFAF50,000,000<sup>139</sup> for basic seeds of improved varieties of sorghum; CFAF35,000,000<sup>140</sup> for basic seeds of improved varieties of rice.

## **B: Development of Factors of Production by other Institutions**

**462-** MINEPAT, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER), the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries (MINEPIA) and structures under their supervision led to the development of factors of production in the animal, fisheries and agricultural sectors.

### **1) Development of Factors of Production in the Animal and Fish Sectors**

**463-** The financial resources, technical and material capacities of the stakeholders were enhanced.

#### **a) Strengthening of Financial Resources**

**464-** The budget resources allocated to MINEPIA stood at CFAF51, 278,000,000<sup>141</sup> in 2023, an increase of 12.62% compared to 2022. This administration transferred CFAF3,600,000,000<sup>142</sup> to Councils for the implementation of the following pastoral and fish farming activities of council interest: CFAF1,436,812,000<sup>143</sup> for the construction of pastoral production facilities, CFAF1,199,000,000<sup>144</sup> for animal health infrastructure, CFAF221,000,000<sup>145</sup> for the construction and equipment of slaughterhouses, and CFAF742,819,000<sup>146</sup> for the promotion of fishing and fish farming.

#### **b) Technical Capacity Development of Stakeholders**

**465-** The national zootechnical and veterinary training centres trained 928 students, of whom 400 women and 528 men, as follows: 89 agricultur-

<sup>138</sup> About 52,671.76 Euros.

<sup>139</sup> About 76,335.88 Euros.

<sup>140</sup> About 53,435.11 Euros.

<sup>141</sup> About 78,287.022.90 Euros.

<sup>142</sup> About 5,496,183.21 Euros.

<sup>143</sup> About 2,193,606.11 Euros.

<sup>144</sup> About 1,830,534.35 Euros.

<sup>145</sup> About 337,404.58 Euros.

<sup>146</sup> About 1,134,074.81 Euros.

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al advisers, 64 agricultural entrepreneurs, 250 livestock technicians, 157 veterinary nurses, 16 fishing technicians, 68 aquaculture technicians, 157 assistant livestock technicians, 96 assistant veterinary nurses and 31 assistant aquaculture technicians. There were 1,067 students still in training in all these sectors. The Limbe Nautical Arts and Fisheries Institute trained 2 fishing technology specialists, 14 marine mechanics, 4 fish farmers, and 2 sea navigators. In addition, 60 poultry farmers from the North West Region were trained in modern techniques for breeding day-old chicks at training sessions in Ngaoundere, Garoua and Maroua.

**466-** Furthermore, the North Region Livestock Development Fund (CDEN) conducted 16 training sessions on various themes in the Adamawa, North and Far North Regions for 418 people including 288 men and 130 women. In Ebolowa, 150 Council, FEICOM and MINEPIA Senior Officials were drilled on good slaughter and biosecurity practices in poultry slaughter facilities from 30 to 31 August 2023.

**467-** In addition, 3 training sessions aimed at the establishment of the interprofessional pig organisation in the Adamawa, North and Far North Regions were organised in Ngaoundere, Garoua and Maroua, for 100 representatives of producer organisations. With regard to family poultry farming, 300 women from the Far North Region were trained in Maroua and received support comprising 2,500-day-old Goliath broiler chicks, 6 solar-powered incubators with a capacity of 1,000 eggs each and 45 traditional poultry houses.

## c) Enhancement of Material Resources of Stakeholders

**468-** Some of the actions taken include the development of 150 hectares of feed swamps in Fory, Lahore-Vina, Wakwa, Bockle and Dogba by CDEN; the restoration of 37 hectares of pasture by the Livestock Development and Exploitation Corporation; the production and sale of 252 tonnes of animal feed to farmers in the North West Region by the Livestock Development Fund for the North West Region (CDENO); the issuance of 57 permits to establish units for the manufacture, storage and marketing of livestock feed and 20 technical permits for the import of livestock feed and inputs; and the installation by CDEN of a cryogenerator with a capacity of 40 litres/day of liquid nitrogen for inseminators for the conservation of animal seeds in Garoua.

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**469-** Besides, the following achievements are worthy of note: acquisition of artificial insemination and animal reproduction equipment by the Livestock and Fisheries Development Project which was transferred to CDENO; distribution of 1,004 breeders of improved breed to 74 cooperatives and producer associations as part of activities of the Kounden breeding station; the signing of 60 pig farm start-up permits; production of 160,141 day-old chicks for poultry farmers in the North West Region by CDENO; installation in Maroua of a hatchery with a capacity of 57,600 eggs for young poultry farmers in the Adamawa, North and Far North Regions; the signing of an agreement between CDEN and *Société d'expansion et de modernisation de la riziculture* for the upgrading of rice straw and another between CDEN and the cotton development company for the upgrading of cottonseed cakes.

**470-** Further actions recorded were the: construction by CDEN of 8 solar boreholes for livestock watering and professional use in Libong, Mbakana, Souangor, Chabal, Koza, Mindjil, Dalhou and Maroua; ongoing construction of 5 livestock farms, a cattle feed store, 4 cattle drinking water points and 30 automatic veterinary syringes with spare parts (needles, rubber seal of the piston, needle adapter) by CDENO in the North West Region; production and distribution by CDEN of 1,100 booklets consisting of 7 thematic curricula as follows: 200 booklets on dairy production, 150 booklets on bovine fillet feeding, 150 booklets on cattle rearing; 100 booklets on small ruminants breeding; 100 booklets on pig breeding, 300 booklets on poultry breeding and 100 booklets on small ruminants feeding.

**471-** In the fish sectors, the following actions were taken: continued construction of houses for fishers in Bamusso as part of the Bakassi Peninsula Development Programme; completion of the construction of the Youpwe landing stage and fish market to the tune of CFAF7,000,000,000<sup>147</sup> as part of cooperation with Japan; drawing up and adoption of a management plan for the upstream Nachtigal Dam fishery; biological rest in the Lagdo, Mbakaou, Mapé and Maga water bodies in collaboration with the councils of the areas concerned; continued activities to combat illegal fishing through monitoring patrols, checks and surveillance at sea with the support of MINDEF; continued support to operators wishing to invest in intensive aquaculture in Cameroon<sup>148</sup>, grating occupancy permits to 5 pro-

<sup>147</sup> About 10,687,022.97 Euros.

<sup>148</sup> In a call for expression of interest launched in 2020, some 139 medium- and high-scale operating developers were shortlisted.

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motors in intensive aquaculture and VAT exemptions and customs duties to 6 promoters on the import of aquaculture materials and equipment for project execution.

**472-** The Regional Economic Development Programme to promote medium- and large-scale enterprises in rural areas in Cameroon (Agropoles Programme) received funding for the installation of fishing equipment at the Agropole Artisanal Maritime Fisheries in the Kribi-Campo coastal strip, to the tune of CFAF95,000,000<sup>149</sup>.

## 2) Development of Factors of Production in the Agro-Pastoral Sector

**473-** In terms of financial support, the State allocated subsidies to the agricultural sector as follow: CFAF1,520,000,000<sup>150</sup> for 200 tonnes of wheat, CFAF775,000,000<sup>151</sup> for 158,319 tonnes of certified sorghum/mil seeds, CFAF15, 357, 920, 000<sup>152</sup> for 2,500 tonnes of maize, CFAF13,767,701,000<sup>153</sup> for 1 720 tonnes of certified rice seed, CFAF1,380,299,000<sup>154</sup> for 2 400 tonnes of certified potato seed and 288 000 kg of fertilizer, CFAF12,005,000,000<sup>155</sup> for fertilizers to produce 45,000 tonnes of palm oil and 334,000 tonnes of certified palm oil seeds.

**474-** With regard to material and technical factors and within the framework of the Programme to improve productivity and production in agricultural sectors, MINADER invested in the development of agricultural sectors (cocoa, coffee, rubber, banana, cotton, palm oil, plantain, maize, rice, soya, sorghum, cassava and Irish potatoes) with high added value, foreign exchange earnings and food security. The activities included the acquisition and distribution of quality plant material, agricultural fertilizers and pesticides, and support for youth entrepreneurship. These were supported by the AfDB in the context of the Support Programme to consolidate PARPAC, through input subsidies and capacity development of producers.

<sup>149</sup> About 145 038,17 Euros.

<sup>150</sup> About 2,320,610.69 Euros.

<sup>151</sup> About 1,183,206.11 Euros.

<sup>152</sup> About 23,447,206.11 Euros.

<sup>153</sup> About 21,019,390.84 Euros.

<sup>154</sup> About 2,107,326.72 Euros.

<sup>155</sup> About 18,328,244.27 Euros.

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As part of PARPAC, group fertilizer purchases were made for all crops. As a result, 4,913 tonnes of mineral fertilizers and 239,512 litres of organic fertilizers were purchased and distributed.

**475-** As part of the transfer of power to Councils, 283 mini-agricultural, rural, socio-economic and community facilities were built or rehabilitated, including markets, storage warehouses, community huts, education and community action centres, boreholes and improved wells,, culverts and agricultural access roads (551.406 km of built or rehabilitated roads) and threshing areas. Concerning sustainable management of agricultural production systems and food security, 834 tonnes of maize, 3,245 bags of cereals, 60 tonnes of urea, 60 tonnes of NPK fertilizer and 166 tonnes of sorghum were purchased and stored.

**476-** In addition, as part of the Lake Chad Region Recovery and Development Project<sup>156</sup>, monitored by MINEPAT and implemented in 10 councils of the Logone and Chari Division affected atrocities of *Boko Haram*, 50 farmers were trained in the techniques of producing off-soil forage and 250 farmers representing producer organisations received varied financial support. As part of the construction of market production infrastructure, 3 boreholes equipped with human-powered pumps were built in Fadje, Mlo and Douguia, 6 multi-purpose boreholes and solar-powered pastoralist boreholes built in Tanne, Amdjagara, Dougousilio, Fotokol, Woulky, Nigue, Ibou, and 1 storage warehouse in Madaïk, 1 livestock park in Fotokol and 1 cold store in Zimado were built.

**477-** With regard to developing agricultural land use, the implementation of the agricultural component of the three-year emergency plan for accelerating economic growth, also monitored by MINEPAT, continued with 56% of hydro-agricultural perimeters and 30% of water reservoirs developed. As part of completion of procedures for the development of 10,000 ha of hydro-agricultural perimeters in Karam, the Ministry of Public Contracts notified MINEPAT of its exceptional authorisation to contract the Karam project by private agreement. Regarding the development project of 1,580 ha of forage areas in Vina, Mbere and Faro-and-Deo Divisions, a

<sup>156</sup> Designed to respond to the common challenges and shared opportunities of countries of the Lake Chad Basin, the project aims to improve the living conditions and resilience of the people living in the beneficiary councils, by providing them with access to basic infrastructure, and by carrying out their economic activities, especially agriculture.

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favourable opinion from the national public debt council was obtained on an exceptional basis in February 2023.

**478-** As part of the implementation of the Project for the Development and Valorization of Investments in the Benue Valley<sup>157</sup>, the panel of independent experts for the review of the dam's safety and the monitoring of the hydrological and hydraulic study was appointed; the contract for the development of 2,944 ha and construction of 18.1 km of dike along river benue on the left bank was signed on 26 June 2023; the contract for the rehabilitation of 1,122 ha and the development of 3,065 ha, as well as the construction of 15.7 km of dike along the right bank of the river benue was signed on 28 July 2023; the contract for monitoring and controlling the rehabilitation and development works on the right-bank by gravity and on the left-bank in pressurized irrigation, including dikes, was signed in June 2023.

**479-** Regarding the Project for the Development and Valorization of Investments in the Logone Valley, financed through an IDA loan<sup>158</sup> of CFAF1 13,000,400,000<sup>159</sup>, the partnership agreement between *Société d'expansion et de modernisation de la riziculture de Yagoua* (SEMRY) and the Lake Chad Bassin Commission on collection, processing and management of hydrometeorological data in the Logone sub-basin, was renewed;; the remediation work of the upstream slope of section 3 of the maga dam dike on 750 linear meters (ml), following the bumping of waves during the flood period, were completed; and a technical assistance contract to support SEMRY in the implementation of the restructuring process was signed on 12 June 2023 with the survey office MAZARS SA .

**480-** Through financing from the Agropoles Programme, the road serving the Douala cocoa processing plant (300 m of cobblestones laid in Bonaberi at a cost of CFAF1 19,906,340<sup>160</sup>) was built; the pineapple processing plant in Nlohe was connected to the high-voltage grid at the cost of

<sup>157</sup> On 12 October 2021, Government through MINEPAT signed a loan agreement of CFAF1 16 917 500 000 (About 177,928,416.03 Euros) with the World Bank for the execution of of this Project, which aims to develop and enhance irrigation in Benue Valley to step up agricultural production in irrigated areas, thereby reversing the trend of rice imports; a factor that contributes significantly to Cameroon's trade balance.

<sup>158</sup> The Project is the subject of an IDA Loan Agreement of 113,000,400,000 FCFA (About 171,967,260.53 Euros) signed on 26 October 2022.

<sup>159</sup> About 172,519,694.66 euros.

<sup>160</sup> About 183,063.11 euros.

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CFAF25,000,000<sup>161</sup> Penja pepper Agropole received support of CFAF100,000,000<sup>162</sup> for the purchase of equipment and inputs. the fish production Agropoles of Mbalmayo, Zoétélé and Haut Nyong received CFAF35,000,000<sup>163</sup> for the construction of their ponds.

## C: The Impact of Improving Factors of Production

**481-** The development of factors of production had an impact on agricultural, animal and fish production.

**482-** Thus, under the Agropoles projects, maize production increased from 11,036 to 13,000 tonnes. The Sirdjam maize Agropole contributed significantly to this result with a production of 3,000 tonnes. The Agropole programme's contribution to palm oil production has been 12,000 tonnes through Edea palm oil production, processing and marketing Agropoles. The West Region Potato Agropole achieved the 64,000-tonne target. Pineapple production slightly increased, with the production of 19,550 tonnes<sup>164</sup> in 2023 from 12,600 tonnes in 2022.

**483-** The table below shows the production status in tonnes for animal and fish sector in 2023.

**Table 1: Production in tonnes of animal and fish sector in 2023**

Animal Production		Production of derived products		Fish Production	
	Production		Production		Production
Cattle	130,169	Milk	176,618	Aquaculture	19,157
Goat	38,564	Eggs	123,103	Small-scale marine fishing	184,400
Sheep	25,649	Honey	7,971	Mainland Fishing	25,775
Pig	49,435			Industrial fishing	12,229
Poultry	65,312				
Gross Total	309,129				241,561

**Source: MINEPIA**

**484-** Animal production from January to August 2023 stood at 80,791 tonnes of beef, 24,936 tonnes of goat meat, 17,829 tonnes of sheep meat, 31,755 tonnes of pork, 42,369 tonnes of poultry meat, 83,038 tonnes

<sup>161</sup> About 38,167.94 Euros

<sup>162</sup> About 152,671.76 Euros.

<sup>163</sup> About 53,435.11 Euros.

<sup>164</sup> Especially through Awae pineapple production Agropole.

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of table eggs, 1 10,374 tonnes of milk and 6,934 tonnes of honey. Over the same period, 150,186 tonnes of fish were produced.

**485-** In connection with agropoles, 310,000 tonnes<sup>165</sup> of broiler meat and 310,000,000 table eggs (as at October 2023) were produced.

## **§3: Food Accessibility and Acceptability**

**486-** General and specific measures were taken to guarantee food security.

### **A: General Measures to Promote Food Accessibility and Acceptability**

**487-** The measures included the regulation of supplies, price control and combating fraud or smuggling, as well as continued development of distribution channels, standardisation and certification.

#### **1) Regulation of Supplies, Price Control and Combating Fraud or Smuggling**

**488-** In order to regulate the supply of foodstuffs (vegetable, animal and fish), MINCOMMERCE organised consultations with the main stakeholders which led to a reduction in the price of the 200g of bread from CFAF150 to CFAF135<sup>166</sup>, the litre of refined oil from CFAF1,535 to CFAF1,500<sup>167</sup> and palm oil from CFAF1,128 to CFAF975<sup>168</sup>. Conversely, the price of a kg of sugar increased from CFAF807 to CFAF838 and a bag of 50 kg from CFAF19,572 to CFAF23,572<sup>169</sup>.

**489-** Besides, MINCOMMERCE staff conducted 5,910 checks compared to 21,916 in 2022, summoned 791 businesses and sealed 27 against 47 in 2022.

**490-** The National Fraud Control and Repression Brigade, and its decentralised services sanctioned 19,263 businesses (compared to 6,388 in 2022), or 87.37% of sanctions related to price control, trade and competition, 10.95% related to metrological control and 7, 68% related to quality control of products put on the market and after-sales services.

<sup>165</sup> Especially through Bandjoun Agropole.

<sup>166</sup> About 0.23 to 0.21 Euros.

<sup>167</sup> About 2.34 to 2.29 Euros.

<sup>168</sup> About 1.72 to 1.49 Euros.

<sup>169</sup> About 29.89 to 35.99 Euros.

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**491-** In addition, Operation Stop Illicit Trade (HALCOMI) III to collect compromised rights and impose fines of CFAF1,949,733,724<sup>170</sup>.

## 2) Continued Development of Distribution Channels

**492-** The Consumer Products Supplies Regulatory Authority (MIRAP) identified a site for the construction of the storage warehouse at the Douala sea port, supplied the Cameroon market through 5 test /pilot stores, organised 91 periodic test markets and mobilised partnerships with 191 rural producer organisations. It also “valued” local products to the tune of CFAF4,842,900,000 for local producers and improved, by an average of 15%, the purchasing power of consumers buying from its outlets .

## 3) Continued Standardisation and Certification

**493-** The Standards and Quality Agency (ANOR) initiated 160 draft standards (compared to 2,737 in 2022), including 6 for food technology and projects, and approved 6 others. With regard to local products, it issued 418 conformity certificates and 23,337 certificates for imported products (as against 21,057 in 2022).

**Table 2: Status of Quality Control Missions**

Actions	Number of structures checked	Field checks	Goods seized	Offences detected	Investigations with findings	Alerts
<b>2022</b>	693	30	1,505	184	6	1
<b>2023</b>	1,575	43	2,054	494	9	11

**Source:** ANOR

**494-** Quality control missions were extended to the North, Far North and Adamawa Regions on the one hand, and carried out in Yaounde at night to check the quality of bread in bakeries. These missions led to the sealing of non-compliant bakeries. To facilitate controls in the port areas, access badges to the the Port Authority of Douala and Port Authority of Kribi were issued to ANOR teams.

## B: Food Security

**495-** Under the leadership of MINEPIA, more food security facilities were consolidated, such as the functioning of the Animal Health Emergency Op-

<sup>170</sup> About 2,976,692.71 Euros.

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erations Coordination Centre and the construction and equipment of a slaughterhouse with a capacity of 150 cows slaughtered per day and an equipped meat cannery in Maroua, a national animal seed production centre in Ngaoundere and 3 relay centres in Jakiri, Lougguere and Maroua, 3 pig breeding farms in Bali, Kaele and Kounden; the supply of 2 shrimp fishing boats, the redevelopment and equipment of the facilities of Youpwe in Douala, the construction of housing for fishers in the South West Region (in support of the Bakassi Peninsula Development Programme with equipment to support small-scale fishers) and the construction of two animal feed storage warehouses in Maroua and Tignere.

**496-** With regard to control and certification of the quality of animal and fish products, a session of the Committee for Authorisation to Market Drugs and Veterinary Products held from 24 to 26 August 2023, resulted in the approval of 41 veterinary specialties.. CDENO purchased a variety of veterinary medicines and equipment worth 6,500,000 CFA francs and distributed them prices at subsidised prices to livestock farmers in the North West Region. In slaughterhouses and markets, 189,175 cattle, 47,436 small ruminants, 40,401 pigs, 1,099,120 birds, 367 donkeys and 77 horses were inspected. In addition, 100.1 tonnes of meat and offal were seized to protect consumers.

**497-** Similarly, veterinary inspection procedures for game and bush meat were validated at a workshop organised from 7 to 8 September 2023 in Ebolowa. The Rabies Control and Elimination Project to immunize some 100,000 pets against rabies kick started. The national veterinary laboratory produced 7,000,000 doses of vaccines. The 4<sup>th</sup> batch of 24 basic level field epidemiologists was trained. Pastures were rehabilitated with the installation of 350 screens, 70 control traps and 19 fences around dairy farms in the Adamawa and Far North Regions. Besides, 21 private client licenses were granted to veterinarians and 5 secondary practising licenses were issued.

## SECTION 2: RIGHT TO WATER AND ENERGY

**498-** The State continued to guarantee water and energy supply with the available resources.

### §1: Access to Water

**499-** Access to drinking water was achieved in both urban and suburban and rural areas.

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## A: Access to Drinking Water in Urban and Suburban Areas

**500-** Phase 1 of the Three-year Emergency Plan (PLANUT 1) for the construction of 900 boreholes equipped with human powered pumps (HPPs) and 19 drinking water systems was at 99.17% complete in 2023, that is, 895 boreholes and 19 drinking water systems were built. PLANUT 2 which was implemented in two phases, saw the construction of 537 boreholes equipped with HPP out of the expected 588 boreholes, representing 91.25% completion for phase 1. Phase 2 allowed the construction of 326 boreholes equipped with HPP out of the 469, a completion rate of 69.62%.

**501-** In December 2023, the completion rate of the Yaounde and surrounding areas drinking water supply project from River Sanaga (PAEPYS) for a daily production of 300,000 m<sup>3</sup>/d to 400,000 m<sup>3</sup>/d stood at 98% compared to 91.8% in the same period in 2022.

**502-** In addition, Phase I of the 9-city Water Supply Project was completed for the towns of Bafoussam, Bamenda, Kribi and Sangmélima. Phase II of same project in Garoua Boulai and Maroua was launched on 28 August and 20 September 2023 respectively.

**503-** With regard to the rehabilitation project of 350 SCANWATER stations, with the innovative incorporation of a solar energy source for their operation, studies were carried out on 239 stations.

**504-** The Drinking Water Project of Douala and its surroundings from River Wouri, with a daily production of 400,000 m<sup>3</sup>/d of drinking water, completed its preliminary studies, while geotechnical studies were underway.

**505-** The preliminary project studies for the Stormwater Mobilisation and Development Studies Project through Hill Dams (PEMVEP) in the North Region<sup>171</sup> were completed, including environmental and social impact assessments.

## B: Access to Drinking Water in Rural Areas

**506-** Contracting of contractors and NGO outreach for the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project (PAEA-MRU) to build 60 drinking water points and 2,200 institutional latrines was underway. Similarly, data collection

<sup>171</sup> Barkehi and Ndjambadi in Benue Division, Poli in Faro Division, Mousgoy and Bassira in Mayo-Louti Division.

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missions and feasibility studies for drinking water construction were completed.

**507-** In October 2023, the progress rate of Studies and Preparation of a Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Programme (MRU Studies) stood at 81.5% compared to 50% at the same period in 2022.

**508-** The Drinking Water Supply (SPA) Rehabilitation, Consolidation and Extension Project in 52 centres was completed in 2023, with the final 38 communities completed.

**509-** Government efforts satisfied an estimated 650,000 Camwater subscribers.

## §2: Right to Energy

**510-** Government efforts focused on electric energy, solar energy and petroleum products and gas.

### A: Electric Energy

**511-** In 2023, Government guaranteed the production and transportation of electric energy.

#### 1) Production of Electric Energy

**512-** In a bid to increase energy production from 1,652 megawatts in 2023 to 5000 megawatts by 2030, a Recovery Plan for the Electricity Sector of Cameroon (2023-2030) was adopted in February. The plan includes a priority recovery plan for the electricity sector for the period 2023-2026, with the main objective of maximising the consumption of energy by industries and households produced by the Nachtigal dam. The priority plan will cost some CFAF420,000,000,000.

**513-** The overall progress rate of the Lom Pangar headworks and spillway station stood at 94%. For each of the 4 generators, civil engineering work was completed. Groups 1 and 2 were commissioned in May and August 2023 respectively. Group 3 was completed and became functional in open trial.

**514-** The completion rate of the works for the hydroelectric dams of Memve'ele, Mekin and the Kribi gas plant stood at 100% in December 2023 and the infrastructure ready to be put into service. As at 1 December 2023, the completion rate for the hydroelectric works at Nachtigal dam

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was 92%. The first 60 MW production unit was completed and production tests were underway.

**515-** Besides, on 20 April 2023, MINEE relaunched the Bini a Warack Hydroelectric Development Project (75 MW) by signing with the British company Savannah Energy RMC Limited, a memorandum of understanding that allows for the resumption of public-private partnership.

## 2) Transport of Electric Energy

**516-** From January to October 2023, the electricity consumption of the South and North Interconnected Networks increased by about 5.45%. There was also an improvement in the quality of electrical energy delivered to large account customers by Energy of Cameroon (ENEO) and to the distribution network following the increase in the transformation capacities of the interconnecting stations of Oyomabang and Bekoko, of 210 MVA to 285 MVA and 105 MVA to 180 MVA respectively.

**517-** The National Electricity Transportation Company (SONATREL) continued to build and strengthen electricity transmission infrastructure through certain projects, by revitalizing the performance of the public transport network and ensuring the maintenance of facilities.

### a) Construction and Consolidation of Transportation Infrastructure

**518-** Most of the population affected by the project of upgrading the electricity transmission networks and sector reform (PRRTERS) received compensation and the settlement of the complaints continued. The objective of this project is to improve the capacity, efficiency and reliability of the public transportation system and to streamline it.

**519-** Similarly, 1,185 persons affected by the project of interconnection between the north and south interconnected network of Cameroon (RIS-RIN) were identified. The project consists in building a 225 kV power line, some 530 km long, between the Nachtigal upstream plant and the Wouro Soua station (near Ngaoundere) and the construction of 4 new substations (Ntui, Yoko, Tibati and Wouro Soua).

**520-** Works on the Transmission Network Access Contract (CART) Project with Nachtigal Hydro Power Company (NHPC), which will have a capacity of 420 MW, was in the completion phase.

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## b) Balance between Demand and Supply

**521-** From January to October 2023, demand was close to 6,325 GWh, an increase of 5.45% compared to the same period in 2022. The increase was due to the improvement of service quality in the West and North West Regions through the 225 kV Bekoko-Tchouwong line, the 225/90 kV 180 MVA transformers from Bekoko and Oyomabang, the interconnection of the East Region to RIS via the 225 kV Ahala-Abong Mbang line.

## c) The Gwh Transport Capacity by the Existing Distribution Network

**522-** The public transportation system transited 6,579,979.98 megawatt hours (MWh) of energy in 2023, representing 13% more than in 2022 (5,826,392.42 MWh). In addition, 4,970,752 MWh were supplied to the distribution network and 410,759 MWh were supplied to large account customers connected to the transport network.

## d) Availability of Public Transport

**523-** The overall availability rate of the transmission network was 97.94% as at 31 October 2023. This rate could not reach the expected 100% because of the unavailability of 225 kV (Kilovolt) lines Kribi-Mangombe No. 1 and No. 2 due to vandalism on poles, failure of the transformer 90/30 kV 20 MVA (Mega volt ampere) the old Limbé-Sonara and 90 kV Mangombe-Logbaba line, as well as the malfunction of the load regulator of the 110/90 kV 60 MVA transformer in Garoua.

## 3) Major Maintenance Actions

**524-** On the lines, preventive and corrective maintenance operations carried out on all transport networks (RIS and RIN) enabled the following: replacement of broken insulators on the poles of the 90 kV Garoua-Guider lines, 90 kV Guider-Maroua, 110 kV Deido-Dangote Cement Cameroon S.A. (Bonaberi); repair of the conductors and guard cables damaged by crimping; resumption of the 225 kV Kribi-Mangombe No. 1 on ERS tower following the collapse of the pole No. 224; the logging of trees off-corridor on all lines affected by the transport network.

**525-** In the substations, the following maintenance operations were carried out: replacement of the BPN transformer from Guider following an explosion by cable masses; the rehabilitation of condenser bench No. 2 in

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Bekoko after a long absence from this structure following its operation in September 2019. The rehabilitation was possible due to the transfer of condenser bench No. 2 from Oyomabang to Bekoko and the acquisition of 45 condenser elements in the SONATREL CAPEX; the replacement of the 105 MVA transformer and the commissioning of a new 180 MVA transformer at the Bekoko substation TR1; and the elimination of vibrations on the Nsimalen substation JDB 90 kV phase 0.

**526-** With regard to the management of the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA-COUNTING-IT) infrastructure, the following actions were taken: rehabilitation of the vandalised All-Dielectric Self-Supporting Optical Fibre Cable (ADSS) Oyomabang-Nomayos and the recovery in SCADA of all posts of the Regional Delegation Centre-South-East impacted; troubleshooting of the ADSS optic fibre cable cut between Deido and Dangote Cement Cameroon S.A. (Bonaberi) and the stabilisation of SCADA communications with impacted stations in the West Corridor; the resolution of repetitive crashes of the communication servers of the SCADA system affecting the tele conduction of the stations; and the replacement of the optic fibre cable (Optical ground wire) defective between Limbe Mile 2 and SONARA, troubleshooting of active telecom equipment and recovery of the 2 substations in the SCADA system .

**527-** All the preventive and curative maintenance operations aimed solely at consolidating transport infrastructure in order to guarantee availability of electric energy on the Public Transport Network (PTN), which ultimately had a major impact on the quality and accessibility of electrical energy received from the distributor by the population.

**528-** The number of Energy of Cameroon (ENEO) subscribers was estimated at 1,995,000 in 2023.

**529-** In spite of these actions, SONATREL faced financial challenges inherent in the recovery of its debts, which delayed several projects and/or the lifting of some reserves for a good energy evacuation on the PTN.

## B: Solar Energy

**530-** Concerning alternatives to electricity, on 19 September 2023, the country's two largest photovoltaic plants with a cumulative capacity of 30

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MW were operational. As of October 2023, the two power plants located in Maroua and Guider had already injected approximately 45,000 MWh of energy into the North Interconnected Network (RIN), which is equivalent to a savings of CFAF18,000,000,000<sup>172</sup>.

**531-** On 17 November 2023, Government launched in the South Region, Phase III of the Rural Electrification Project by solar photovoltaic power plants which targets 87 communities on the national territory with 10,000 connections.

**532-** This phase consists of the construction of mini solar photovoltaic plants with lithium storage batteries of 24 hours autonomy, the construction of the associated distribution networks and the supply of the metering system (pre-paid meters). It is financed by a loan of CFAF3,476,000,000<sup>173</sup> from the African export-import bank (Afreximbank).

**533-** Phases I and II made it possible to build 350 solar power plants, including networks associated with 27,400 electrified households in rural areas. Phase III will make it possible to provide 37,400 households with electricity since the project began.

## C: Petroleum Products and Gas Sector

**534-** In order to avoid disruption in the supply of finished products, MI-NEE took several actions, in particular, continued selection of traders responsible for supplying the country with petroleum products through the current import mechanism which continues to lower the level of premiums, thereby generating budgetary savings for the State and making National Refining Company (SONARA)'s facilities and storage capacity available to receive and store large volumes of petroleum products for the domestic market. This solution also helped to lower premiums and reduce demurrage, thus avoiding the prolonged boarding of ships in Douala.

**535-** In addition to a volume of 63,000TM for the remainder of the year 2022, an overall volume of 130,000 TM was planned as an import to cover the needs of the domestic market in 2023. The total volume was 193,000MT for 2023. For imports, approximately 116,248 MT of commercial butane gas was delivered to the domestic market.

<sup>172</sup> About 27,480,916.03 Euros.

<sup>173</sup> About 536,870.23 Euros.

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**536-** As part of the construction of new storage tanks and oil product pipelines to improve logistics and increase capacity, some progress was made in the construction of 2 storage tanks of 6,500 m<sup>3</sup> each. The completion rate was about 25% after delivery of some materials.

**537-** The completion rate for the construction of a 1,000 TM of GPL sphere at the Bonabéri repository was estimated at 45%.

**538-** Moreover, the construction of the second pipeline to receive petroleum products in Douala was completed and testing was underway for its imminent commissioning.

**539-** In addition, the floating natural gas liquefaction plant operated by the SNH/PERENCO/GOLAR consortium exported 2,181,021 m<sup>3</sup> of liquefied natural gas as at 30 September 2023. Its commercial butane gas production unit placed a volume of 24,318 MT of the product on the national market.

**540-** The fight against fraud of petroleum products was intensified throughout the country, and more specifically along the roads. It resulted in the seizure of 1,238,885 litres of combined products as at 30 September 2023. The Chemical Marking Programme for petroleum products allowed a drop in pollution from 36% in 2011 to 0.5% by 30 September 2023.

## SECTION 3: RIGHT TO HOUSING

**541-** In 2023, the State took a number of actions to improve housing supply, occupancy works and step up legal security of land.

### §1: Housing Supply

**542-** Actions were carried out focused on the financing of housing, construction and management of houses, acquisition and restructuring of building plots.

#### A: Real Estate Financing

**543-** On 19 December 2023 in Yaounde during the ceremony to lay the foundation stone for the construction of 60 pilot units out of the 3,060 expected, the Minister of Housing and Urban Development stressed that the housing deficit amounts to about 2 million units. To address the situation, Government increased the number of partners. Thus, following discussions

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with the Minister of Economy, Planning and Regional Development on 2 April 2023, a delegation of Austrian businessmen pledged the disbursement of CFAF13,000,000,000<sup>174</sup> for the construction of 350 medium-sized apartment units in Yaounde and Douala

**544-** In addition, on 24 November 2023, the Professional Association of Credit Institutions of Cameroon (APECCAM) organised the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the finance week on real estate financing. The main objective of the forum was to increase the attractiveness of real estate financing in Cameroon, especially by identifying financing structures.

**545-** The Cameroon Housing Loan Fund (CFC) also granted 187 loans to applicants for the purchase of low-cost houses in Douala/Mbanga Bakoko and 63 loans for houses in Olembe/Yaounde in 2023.

**546-** Furthermore, with a view to facilitating the financing of low-cost houses, the Special Council Support Fund (FEICOM) organised an awareness-raising seminar on 22 November 2023 in Yaounde for Mayors on the procedures for implementing and managing the construction of 1,500 council houses.

**547-** In addition, as part of the agreement between FEICOM and the CFC for the financing of Councils, the second financing line of CFAF20,000,000,000<sup>175</sup> signed in 2020 for the construction of 1,200 houses, benefited as at 31 December 2023, some 42 Councils to the tune of CFAF17,000,000,000<sup>176</sup>.

**548-** Besides, during the reference year, the CFC disbursed CFAF2,500,000,000<sup>177</sup> for the Council Houses Building Programme.

## **B: Construction Programmes and Projects and Management of Low-cost Houses**

**549-** The Government Pilot Phase of the construction of 10,000 low-cost houses and development of 50,000 plots had mixed results in terms of the number of units completed. Indeed, of the 1,675 expected houses, 660

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<sup>174</sup> About 19,847,328.24 Euros.

<sup>175</sup> About 30,534,351.15 Euros.

<sup>176</sup> About 25,954,198.47 Euros.

<sup>177</sup> About 3,816,793.89 Euros.

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houses (1 60 in Yaounde, 500 in Douala) were completed and received, with 120 occupied in Olembe and 300 in Mbanga Bakoko.

**550-** Besides, for the execution of the Pilot Phase II of the construction programme of 10,000 low-cost houses and 50,000 building plots, the Minister of Housing and Urban Development laid the foundation stone for the construction of 3,060 new pilot houses in Olembe, Yaounde on 19 December 2023.

**551-** Furthermore, with a view to guaranteeing easy access to houses for all, Cameroon Real Estate Corporation (SIC) continued a series of works such as the construction of the Mfoundi Residence which includes the construction of 150 houses, 3000 m<sup>2</sup> of offices and shops and parking (43.69%); emergency rehabilitation of Djoungolo building (82.46%).

## C: Acquisition and Restructuring of Building Plots

**552-** Actions carried out concerned on the development of heritage through the achievement of real estate expertise for public administrations and structures, and the geolocation of administrative properties and administrative leases in Yaounde and Douala.

**553-** In addition to direct registration, Urban and Rural Land Development and Equipment Mission (MAETUR) benefited from Minister of State Property, Surveys and Land Tenure (MINDCAF) public utility and allocation declarations in large areas as part of the land reserves programme.

**554-** The public utility declarations covered 1,000 ha in Mbankomo, 1,790 ha in Diwon in the Littoral Region; 2,500 ha in Lobo Botmakak in the Centre Region; 2,220 ha in Massoumbo and 4,000 ha in Dibamba-missole in the Littoral Region; and 2,500 ha in Bangseng in the South West Region.

**555-** MINDCAF allocations covered 15 ha in Olembe, 50 ha in Bonis, Bertoua, 100 ha in Djarengol-Kodeck, Maroua and 237 ha in Yansoki-Bakoko, Douala.

**556-** Besides, MAETUR initiated works to secure land in Bikok in Mefou-and-Akono Division (urban centre: 900 ha, Yola: 84 ha, Nkondougou: 10 ha), Bertoua (Birpondo: 43 ha, Kpokolota: 100 ha, Mokolo: 4.30 ha, Ngaikada: 30 ha) where a framework convention, 2 specific land agreements and a development agreement were signed between MAETUR and the population.

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**557-** Furthermore, MINDCAF issued 218 land titles to MAETUR customers.

**558-** With regard to facilitating access to the land bases necessary for the implementation of projects, MINDCAF signed 130 public utility declarations in 2023.

**559-** The restructuring programmes of Bobongo *cité des Berges* and Bonaloka (77 ha) had a 100% execution rate for the land survey, 50% for social engineering; and 50% for the urbanisation plan.

**560-** In addition, the Yaounde-Douala Highway Programme had an execution rate of 90% for all works in its emergency phase.

## §2: Habitable Conditions

**561-** Visits were made to ensure the effective mobilisation of contractors for works already carried out, assess difficulties encountered and provide guidance with a view to improving the performance rate. On 8 November 2023, the Minister of Housing and Urban Development made a field trip to the sites where drainage and rehabilitation works were underway in Douala as part of the Inclusive and Resilient Cities Development Project (PDVIR) financed by the World Bank and the Government of Cameroon. The works had a completion rate of 48.5%.

**562-** In addition, to making housing accessible, the Mission for the Promotion of Local Materials (MIPROMALO) conducted scientific and technical research activities related to bio-architecture and comfort control as part of the promotion of the right to housing, and studies on low-cost construction methods adapted to the Far North, North and South Regions.

**563-** Government continued programmes and projects already started. The C2D programme, for example, the objective of which is to build infrastructure, commercial facilities and urban services in order to improve the living environment of the population, continued in Bafoussam. This involves the rehabilitation of 20 km of concrete road, 5.65 km of bypass roads for the shopping centre, 14.4 km of routes to bridge the gap in neighbourhoods with dense habitat and 5.40 km of priority routes for the organisation of the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) which, at the end of November 2023, showed an execution rate of 98.6% for a cost of CFAF

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238,000,000,000<sup>178</sup>. The partial rehabilitation of market A and the modernisation of the *Casablanca market*, financed to the tune of CFAF209,000,000,000<sup>179</sup>, marked an overall execution rate of 85.5% in November 2023. Also, 204 stores were leased to merchants in November 2023.

**564-** Furthermore, on 4 March 2023, the Minister of Housing and Urban Development launched several projects. This included building of 16 km of road in Maroua, and Maroua green city as part of the C2D urban regional capitals project. Other road projects financed by the Public Investment Budget were evaluated by MINHDU such as the construction of some roads and drainage in Maroua, the paving of the boulevard of the Lamidat of Maroua; the completion in Maroua of the Governor's Office junction-presidential residence- Central Prison junction road section ; construction of the main drains in Maroua with Phase I of construction completed with an advance rate of 78.12%.

**565-** In January 2023, *THYCHLOF Sarl*, the Yaounde Urban Community's new household waste collection service provider, presented 7 new refuse collection trucks destined to step up the refuse collection system in the city of Yaounde.

**566-** As part of the Complementary Project for Sustainable Stormwater Drainage in Yaounde (PCADY), the loan agreement of CFAF23,000,000,000<sup>180</sup> signed on 20 September 2022 with the African Development Bank came into force on 23 February 2023 to improve stormwater management.

**567-** In order to combat flooding, the cleaning of the drain running from Ndogpassi 3 quarter in Douala up to the mouth of River Wouri, precisely at *Bois des singes* took place with the credits transferred from MINDHU to the Douala III Council to the tune of CFAF40,000,000<sup>181</sup>.

**568-** MAETUR executed 95% of the works for drinking water supply in the Ngoulmekong Subdivision and 100% in Gbego, Bertoua. The earthworks from Nkolguet to Bikok were executed at 20%.

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<sup>178</sup> About 363,358,778.63 Euros.

<sup>179</sup> About 319,083,969.47 Euros.

<sup>180</sup> About 36,030,534.35 Euros

<sup>181</sup> About 61,068.70 Euros

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## §3: Securing Land

**569-** Measures to protect land were taken by the administration, and by the courts.

### A: Land Protection by Administrative Authorities

**570-** MINDCAF issued 14,251 land titles, including 3,047 to local authorities and 11,204 to private individuals. In addition, 300 applications for provisional concessions and 110 applications for definitive concessions were processed.

**571-** In a bid to combat the unlawful use of land, MINDCAF, by Order No. 1809/Y7/MINDCAF/SG/D6/S200/EAFN/BMG of 10 July 2023 cancelled 127 irregularly established land titles in the area affected by the iron mine project of Lobe in Kribi I and Campo Subdivisions in the Ocean Division, South Region. Similarly, Order No. 012102/L/Y7/MINDCAF/SG/D6/S200/5210 of 22 March 2023 to withdraw 90 land titles in the Nkam Division was signed.

### B: Land Protection by the Courts

**572-** MINDCAF received 5,349 pre-litigation petitions and processed 4,561. A total of 788 pre-litigation were pending.

**573-** With regard to the litigation of matters, 3,052 files were received at MINDCAF. Some 1,126 of them were processed, 1,926 were pending, while the execution of court judgments resulted in 382 files received, as 238 were processed and were 144 pending.

**574-** Also, land claims were filed before the Administrative Courts during the reference year. The Bafoussam Administrative Court, for example, received 101 applications for the cancellation and rectification of land titles, 37 for the cancellation of orders of the Governor in land matters and 36 for stay of execution of irregular land titles.

**575-** In order to prevent land abuse, the Court while ordering payment of damages, sanctioned violations of property rights. By Judgment No. 115/COR of 11 May 2023, for example, the CFI of Yabassi declared **D.C.** guilty of land fraud, sentenced him to 3 months imprisonment and fine of CFAF100,000<sup>182</sup>.

<sup>182</sup> About 152.67 Euros.

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**576-** In spite of international and internal security crises that led to a widespread increase in the prices of consumer products and consequently the cost of living in Cameroon in 2023, Government consolidated the import substitution policy and continued to develop factors of production in order to guarantee the right to an adequate standard of living, while carrying out some projects including the commissioning of the two largest photovoltaic plants in the country, issued several land titles and availed some buyers of low-cost houses.



# CHAPTER 4

## RIGHT TO WORK AND SOCIAL SECURITY



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**577-** The persistent war between Russia and Ukraine in 2023 continued to the impact global economy and have repercussions in Africa, especially in Cameroon where inflation increased despite Government's efforts to build resilience. In this difficult atmosphere, wages were revalued and actions taken to ensure promotion of entrepreneurship, corporate dialogue and protection of workers' rights, and social security.

## SECTION 1: SALARY INCREASE

**578-** The salary increase of 5.2% was contained in Decree No. 2023/158 of 06 March 2023 to increase the monthly basic remuneration of civilian and military personnel.

**579-** By Decree No. 2023/338/PM of 21 March 2023 to fix the Guaranteed Minimum Wage (GMW), GMW which stood at CFAF36,270<sup>183</sup> since 2014 rose to CFAF41,875<sup>184</sup> for State agents governed by the Labour Code, CFAF45,000<sup>185</sup> for workers in the agricultural and related sectors and CFAF60,000<sup>186</sup> for other sectors of activity.

## SECTION 2: ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROMOTION STRATEGIES

**580-** Since the registration and subscription process for the health-accident insurance and the management of claims by agro-entrepreneurs were digitalised through the launch of a dedicated platform on 6 August 2023, known as "Campost Yunus Assur"<sup>187</sup>, other actions such as vocational training and increase in the job offer, grouping work units and awards to innovative SMEs were carried out.

### §1: Vocational Training and increase in Job Offer

**581-** Actions in this area focused on improving access to vocational training, establishment of small and medium-sized enterprises-(SMEs), migration of small production units from the informal sector to the formal sector,

<sup>183</sup> About 55.37 Euros.

<sup>184</sup> About 63.93 Euros.

<sup>185</sup> About 68.70 Euros.

<sup>186</sup> About 91.60 Euros.

<sup>187</sup> This is a set of financial services integrated into a unique platform. Registration follows payment of charges ranging from CFAF5,750 (About 8.78 Euros) to CFAF25,000 (About 38.17 Euros) depending on the capacities of each agro-entrepreneur.

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registration of craftsmen and craftwomen and craft enterprises, compliance and financial support of incubation structures, special support of young entrepreneurs, and organisational development and signature of partnership agreements.

## A: Improving Access to Vocational Training

**582-** In a bid to improve access to vocational training, the following actions were carried out: completion of construction works on the Trade Training Centres (CFM) in Bandjoun, Nanga-Eboko and Maroua; completion of studies for the upgrade of SAR/SMs (Rural Crafts Section/Home Economics Section) of Mvomeka, Fontem and Ngomedzap to CFM; securing the construction sites of the 20 CFM as part of the project *Planet One*<sup>188</sup>.

## B: Establishment of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

**583-** The number of SMEs established in 2023 stood at 12,260 of which 74.13% by men, 25.87% by women and about 65% by young persons between 25 and 40 years old. In terms of the legal form, the SMEs were made up of establishments (52.97%) and limited liability companies (46.77%). These new SMEs generated nearly 22,000 direct jobs.

## C: Changeover of Small Production Units from the Informal Sector to the Formal sector

**584-** The 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the awareness-raising caravans for SME membership in the Approved Management Centres (AMC) organised by the Ministry of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, Social Economy and Handicrafts (MINPMEESA) was held in Bamenda from 4 to 5 July 2023, under the theme: *Accession of SMEs from economically affected areas to AMCs: a factor of competitiveness and growth*. The caravans enabled 3,250 businesses to changeover from the informal sector to the formal sector and benefit from tax reductions and other incentives.

## D: Registration of Craftsmen and Craftwomen and Craft Enterprises

**585-** Under the initiative of MINPMEESA, the registration of craftsmen in some council registers started in 2014 was completed in 2023 with the

<sup>188</sup> *Planet One* project officially launched on 16 February 2023 in Yaounde is a training platform for youths which aims, among others, to equip them with tools to enable them to be more performant on the field.

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establishment of 360 council offices for registration of craftsmen and craft-women in all councils of the country. The operation resulted in the registration of 3,875 craftsmen. In addition, 260 local social economy networks were established.

## E: Compliance and Financial Support for Incubation Structures

**586-** During the session of the committee responsible for validating training modules and support systems on 9 November 2023, some 37 incubation structures were brought into compliance, including 4 public structures and 33 duly approved private structures.

**587-** MINPMEESA granted subvention of about CFAF400,000,000<sup>189</sup> to public incubation structures. The University of Maroua and University of Bamenda, and the pilot incubation centre of the Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Handicrafts (CCIMA) also received a grant of CFAF100,000,000<sup>190</sup> each.

**588-** A CFAF100,000,000 MINPMEESA funding agreement was signed with University of Maroua on 10 July 2023 to develop entrepreneurship in particular, incubation activities at the National Advanced Polytechnic, University of Maroua.

## F: Special Support to Young Entrepreneurs

**589-** As part of the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the World Entrepreneurship Week in Cameroon under the theme: *Networking as a tool for developing youth entrepreneurship* held from 14 to 17 November 2023 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises held on 27 June 2023 in Yaounde, MINPMEESA raised the awareness of some 3,000,000 youths in entrepreneurial culture.

**590-** At the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the Israel-Cameroon seminar on Hi-Tech, innovation and entrepreneurship, held from 3 to 6 July 2023, some 100 selected Cameroon entrepreneurs, including start-ups and SMEs promoters from the 10 Regions, were trained in digital technology and drilled on the design of ideas and coding.

<sup>189</sup> About 610,687.02 Euros.

<sup>190</sup> About 152,671.76 Euros.

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**591-** In order to address the challenges of very small, small and medium-sized enterprises<sup>191</sup> in easily producing financial statements that can enable them to obtain credit from banks and other financial institutions, 2 applications namely, *BeManagement*<sup>192</sup> and *Creancia*<sup>193</sup> were set up by *Blupass* company, in partnership with *Société camerounaise d'équipement*, and officially presented in Yaounde on 18 December 2023.

## **G: Substantive Innovations and Adjustments, and the Signing of Partnership Agreements**

**592-** By Decree No. 2023/368 of 28 August 2023, the National Employment Fund (NEF) was reorganised. Some of the innovations include: the financial supervisory authority of NEF is henceforth the Ministry of Finance (MINFI) and the technical supervisory authority, the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training (MINEFOP) instead of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. The financial year of NEF which previously ran from 1 July to 30 June of the following year pursuant to Decree No. 90/805 of 27 April 1990, now runs from 1 January to 31 December of same year.

**593-** Decree No. 2023/237 of 4 May 2023 lay down the establishment and organization of the National Trainer Training and Programmes Development Centre (CFFDP) was published. Under the supervision of MINEFOP, the CFFDP organises, among other things, in-service training of trainers in all trades, training and pedagogical and andragogical development of trainers and staff of public and private structures.

**594-** The Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Promotion Agency (APME) was reorganised by Decree No. 2023/336 of 8 August 2023. The decree that repealed some provisions of Decree No. 2018/629 of 25 October 2018, extended the tasks of the APME and addressed the problem of budgetary instability faced by the said agency. including a direct financing

<sup>191</sup> Law No. 2010/1 of 13 April 2010 on the promotion small and medium-sized enterprises in Cameroon defines 3 types of enterprises: Very Small Enterprises, Small Enterprises, and Medium Enterprises.

<sup>192</sup> It is a platform that enables the restructuring of SMEs by helping them improve on their management. The software makes it possible for SMEs to have access to their financial statements through an online accounting service.

<sup>193</sup> It is a factoring platform (that enables the financing and recovery of credits to help an enterprise obtain anticipated payments from a credit establishment, and to subcontract management of the credit by the said establishment).

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window which targets young entrepreneurs, constituted as individual projects, by granting them subsidies, repayable loans at a subsidised rate, in accordance with the manual of zero-interest procedures.

**595-** In addition, Decision No. 6-2023 of 21 February 2023 to transform, reorganise and lay down the functioning of the National Youth Integration Fund (FONIJ)<sup>194</sup> into a Young Entrepreneurs Guarantee Fund (FOGAJEUNE). FOGAJEUNE aims to provide technical and financial services to Cameroon entrepreneurs (local and diaspora) between 18 and 35 years old, through 2 counters, including a direct financing counter that targets young entrepreneurs with individual projects, by giving them grants, refundable loans at a subsidised rate following the manual on zero-interest rate procedures. The other counter is a guarantee counter that targets young entrepreneurs from local communities or the diaspora and their associates, in particular those who benefit from State funding and other government programmes for the socio-economic integration of youths, requesting additional financing for the expansion of their businesses, individually or in groups, under an agreed guarantee mechanism. The contribution of FOGAJEUNE stands at 50%.

**596-** Decree No.2023/232 of 4 May 2023 to lay conditions for implementing Law No. 2019/008 of 25 April 2019 to institute the Petroleum Code was published. Article 129 of the decree obliges the holder of a petroleum contract to designate a local manager of petroleum operations whose identity is communicated to the Minister in charge of hydrocarbons. The decree also requires oil contract holders to create jobs and wealth for Cameroon nationals.

**597-** On 19 October 2023, some 4 partnership agreements were signed between the Ministry of Youth and Civic Education and financial institutions, including NFC Bank, People finance S.A., *Caisse camerounaise d'épargne et de crédit*, and *Crédit du Sahel*.

## §2: Job Creation, Guidance for Job Seekers

**598-** With regard to job creation, 1 57,382 jobs were created in 2023, distributed as follows: Adamawa Region (2,322), Centre Region (21,364),

<sup>194</sup> The aim of FONIJ established by Decision No. 10/2016/D/MINJEC/CAB of 23 February 2016 was to promote integration of youths in the production channel through the financing of their innovative production projects and the subvention of organisations that groom and support them towards self-employment and entrepreneurship.

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Est Region (2,625), Far North Region (1,026), Littoral Region (80,664), North Region (322), North West Region (2,538), West Region (34,539), South Region (14,929), and South West Region (1,571).

**599-** In terms of job seeker orientation, NEF registered and directed 45,186 new job seekers and placed more than 21,503 in paid jobs.

**600-** Furthermore, as part of labour regulations, 23,548 national employment contracts were targeted, as well as 1,495 foreign workers' contracts<sup>195</sup>.

## §3: Grouping of Work Units

**601-** In the social economy and handicraft sectors, work units were grouped together. Besides, small and medium-sized enterprises, social economy organizations and craftsmen and craftswomen received financial support.

### A: Social Economy Activities

**602-** In order to increase the visibility of stakeholders and products of social economy units, MINPMEESA organised the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the social economy information week on the theme: *Globalisation of networks in the Regions and development of partnerships* from 24 to 26 October 2023 in Yaounde. During these days, 500 social economy units exhibited their know-how and showcased the *made in Cameroon* brand. In order to promote and consolidate the networking of small work units, MINPMESSA organised the cooperative market of the South Region in Ebolowa, during which 2,350 social economy units were mobilised in 29 local social economy networks (RELES), supported by 4 divisional social economy networks under the regional network. The main sectors identified were agriculture, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, basketry, clothing, decoration and catering. MINPMESSA installed 246 RELES, especially in Adamawa, Centre, East, Littoral, West and South Regions.

### B: Handicraft Sector

**603-** The map of informal sector stakeholders showed 3,500,000 work units in the handicraft sector. In order to improve the quality of local products,

<sup>195</sup> Section 27 (2) of the Labour Code provides: "A contract of employment concerning a worker of foreign nationality must be endorsed by the Minister in charge of Labour previously to commencement thereof."

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MINPMEESA organised a workshop on capacity development for craftsmen and women and their professional organisations on packaging, from 25 to 26 April 2023 at the regional handicraft village in Ebolowa, during which 50 craftsmen and craftwomen were trained in the fields of cosmetics and agri-food.

**604-** In the same vein, a workshop to raise the awareness of craftsmen and craftwomen on the concept of bar codes, its purpose, use and the terms for its acquisition, held from 26 to 27 April 2023 at the Ebolowa regional handicraft village where the awareness of 50 craftsmen and craftwomen from Dja-and-Lobo, Mvila, Ocean and Ntem Valley Divisions was raised.

## **C: Financial support to SMEs, Social Economy Organisations and Craftsmen and Women**

**605-** The Cameroon Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Bank (BC-PME) financed 236 SMEs for a total amount of CFAF6,400,000,000<sup>196</sup> and also opened an agricultural counter with a budget of CFAF1,000,000,000<sup>197</sup> for agro-pastoral SMEs in its first year. APME, through partnership agreements with local commercial banks<sup>198</sup>, supported 200 SMEs in the development of their projects and the preparation of business plans. The SMEs received funding of up to CFAF800,000,000<sup>199</sup>. To allow SMEs easy access to bank financing, the State set up a guarantee line of CFAF200,000,000,000<sup>200</sup>, of which 70% is for SMEs. MINPMEESA also granted some CFAF5,000,000,000<sup>201</sup> to councils for the financing of employment- and income-generating micro-projects.

## **§4: Rewards for Innovative SMEs**

**606-** SMEs attended the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the “CBT<sup>202</sup> *Champions of made in Cameroon*”<sup>203</sup> competition held on 7 December 2023 in Yaounde. Dur-

<sup>196</sup> About 9,770,992.37 Euros.

<sup>197</sup> About 1,526,717.56 Euros.

<sup>198</sup> *Crédit Communautaire d’Afrique, Commercial Bank of Cameroon, Société Générale Cameroun, Pro-PME.*

<sup>199</sup> About 1,221,374.05 Euros.

<sup>200</sup> About 305,343,511.45 Euros.

<sup>201</sup> About 7,633,587.79 Euros.

<sup>202</sup> *Cameroon Tribune and Cameroon Business Today.*

<sup>203</sup> Annual event to reward SMEs.

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ing the competition, 5 SMEs received awards<sup>204</sup> in the following order: CBT gold champion award (CFAF5,000,000<sup>205</sup>) was won by *Kebe Home*<sup>206</sup>, specialised in interior design; the silver champion award (CFAF 3,500,000<sup>207</sup>) was granted to *Lamana* for the Blesolac brand (cereals and baby purees made from local products); the bronze champion award (CFAF 2,000,000<sup>208</sup>) was given to *Sweet Choco*, a manufacturer of different co-coa products; the jury's special prize (CFAF 1 000 000<sup>209</sup>) went back to *Mendim Mezong*, wild eggplant tea; the best hope award (CFAF 1 000 000) was won by *Step by step Group Ltd*, fertilizer producers.

## SECTION 3: PROMOTION OF CORPORATE DIALOGUE AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS

**607-** Protection of the rights of workers, promotion of trade unionism and continued corporate dialogue were at the centre of State activities.

### §1: Protection of the Rights of Workers

**608-** The rights of workers were protected both administratively and judicially.

#### A: Administrative Protection of the Rights of Workers

**609-** Labour inspectors conducted 4,759 company inspections to assess working conditions and prevent conflicts and occupational hazards. At the end of the visits, violation of labour law and regulations were found and 607 formal notices served.

**610-** In the course of examining and resolving individual and collective labour disputes, 6,514 conciliation reports were drawn up between employers and workers.

<sup>204</sup> On the basis of originality, innovation, production and processing phases, employability, turnover, share capital, enhancement of raw materials with special focus on *made in Cameroon* brand.

<sup>205</sup> About 7,633.59 Euros.

<sup>206</sup> Designing firm specialised in internal design.

<sup>207</sup> About 5,343.51 Euros.

<sup>208</sup> About 3,053.44 Euros.

<sup>209</sup> About 1,526.72 Euros.

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## B: Judicial Protection of the Rights of Workers

**611-** Courts registered some 3,840 suits relating to corporate disputes, including wrongful termination of employment contracts, 666 of which were filed by employers and 3,047 filed by workers. Of the 2,367 cases adjudicated, 1,654 were in favour of workers and 713 in favour of employers.

**612-** Concerning wrongful dismissal, by Judgment No. 139/SOC of 7 June 2023, the HC of Wouri ordered Gras Savoye Cameroon, now Willis Towers Watson Cameroon, to pay Ms. **A.M.T.** the sum of CFAF195,323,203<sup>210</sup> broken down as follows: CFAF24,154,978<sup>211</sup> for notice allowance; CFAF46,616,110<sup>212</sup> representing severance pay; CFAF3,774,215<sup>213</sup> for leave allowances; CFAF96,619,920<sup>214</sup> for damages for wrongful dismissal; and CFAF24,154,980<sup>215</sup> for waiting allowance for return transport costs. The Court also ordered the provisional execution of the said judgment up to a maximum of CFAF600,000<sup>216</sup>.

**613-** For wrongful dismissal, by Judgment No. 194/SOC of 2 August 2023, the HC of Wouri ordered *Société Atlantique Assurances Cameroun IARDT* to pay Mr. **J.E.E.J.** the sum of CFAF39,389,103<sup>217</sup> broken down as follows: CFAF3,745,748<sup>218</sup> for August 2022 salary; CFAF6,742,364<sup>219</sup> for paid leave allowances; CFAF11,237,244<sup>220</sup> for notice compensation allowance; CFAF4,994,344<sup>221</sup> for redundancy allowance; and CFAF12,669,403<sup>222</sup> for damages for wrongful dismissal.

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<sup>210</sup> About 298,203.36 Euros.

<sup>211</sup> About 36,877.83 Euros.

<sup>212</sup> About 71,169.63 Euros.

<sup>213</sup> About 5,762.16 Euros.

<sup>214</sup> About 147,511.33 Euros.

<sup>215</sup> About 36,877.83 Euros.

<sup>216</sup> About 916.03 Euros.

<sup>217</sup> About 60,136.04 Euros.

<sup>218</sup> About 5,718.70 Euros.

<sup>219</sup> About 10,293.69 Euros.

<sup>220</sup> About 17,156.10 Euros.

<sup>221</sup> About 7,624.95 Euros.

<sup>222</sup> About 19,342.60 Euros.

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## §2: Promotion and Protection Trade Union Rights and continued Corporate Dialogue

**614-** In all, 15 new trade unions were entered in the trade union register, thereby bringing the total to 1,024.

**615-** Negotiations of national collective agreements continued with the aim of improving working conditions. In all, 27 sessions of national collective bargaining were held and resulted in the signing of 5 collective agreements, including the National Insurance Collective Agreement, the National Agriculture Collective Agreement and related activities, the national collective agreement for processing industries, the national collective agreement for companies involved in the exploitation, production and refining of hydrocarbons, and the collective agreement for Orange-Cameroon company.

## SECTION 4: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF SOCIAL SECURITY

**616-** Debt recovery was guaranteed by decree and social security coverage ensured. Emphasis was laid on the social protection of migrant workers and the situation of domestic workers. In addition, companies complied with their social security obligations and social security litigation was effective.

### §1: Guarantees for Debt Recovery

**617-** Law No. 2023/11 of 25 July 2023 governing guarantees and recovery of debts by public entities enjoying the treasury's preferential-rights was enacted. Sections 3 and 6 grant public entities, including NSIF, a right to legal mortgage that offers better guarantees for the forced recovery of its social security debts.

**618-** In this respect, NSIF recovered CFAF222,870,929,545<sup>223</sup> in 2023.

### §2: Social Security Coverage

**619-** The digitisation of services offered by NSIF continued, with remote registration that enabled 53,404 new social security contributors to be registered, including 18,372 voluntary insured persons and 35,032 compulsory insured persons. NSIF improved its quality of services through the new ap-

<sup>223</sup> About 340,260,961.14 Euros.

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plication “my NSIF for me, intended to enable social security contributors file their claims.

**620-** Payments made by NSIF for social security benefits amounted to CFAF134,677,000,225<sup>224</sup> to 236,608 beneficiaries (social security contributors) who generated 365,462 beneficiaries, that is, an increase of CFAF9,673,641,294<sup>225</sup> compared to 2022, where the amount stood at CFAF125,003,358,931<sup>226</sup> FCFA. The old age, disability and pensions and death benefits (PVID) represented 88.77% of payments and those for family benefits (FB) and occupational hazards (OH) were 9,14% and 2.08% respectively. The rate of the PVID branch was 48.87%, those of the FB branch were 48.84% and the OH branch 2.27%.

**621-** The family benefits branch had the largest number of beneficiaries (239,990), followed by the PVID branch (119,815 beneficiaries) and then the OH branch (5,657 beneficiaries).

**622-** In the FB branch, the number of allottees was 115,566 for 239 beneficiaries (children) to whom a total amount of CFAF12,312,921,782<sup>227</sup> was paid. The PVID branch, which focused on payments made by NSIF in social benefits generated 115,650 allottees and paid 119,815 beneficiaries for a total amount of CFAF119,556,273,267<sup>228</sup>. The 5,392 allottees (principal social security contributors) and 5,657 beneficiaries of the OH branch were managed to the tune of CFAF2,807,805<sup>229</sup>.

### §3: Compliance of Companies with their Social Security Obligations

**623-** In terms of compliance with social security obligations, 35,299 active employers out of the expected 43,070 made e-filing, that is, a performance rate of 81.96%. In addition, nearly 13,133 employers were up to date with the payment of social security contributions of their employees.

<sup>224</sup> About 205,613.740.80 Euros.

<sup>225</sup> About 14,768,918 Euros.

<sup>226</sup> About 190,844,822.80 Euros.

<sup>227</sup> About 18,798,353.87 Euros.

<sup>228</sup> About 182,528,661.48 Euros.

<sup>229</sup> About 4,286.73 Euros.

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**624-** As sanctions for non-compliance with social security obligations, 71,380 employers were identified as not being up to date with the payment of social security contributions on behalf of their employees, for a total of 8,183 debt instruments, that is, a recovery balance of CFAF235 863 560 008<sup>230</sup>. Actions for forced recovery were brought against the said employers, in addition to the increases<sup>231</sup> and penalties for late payment automatically generated in case of non-compliance with the obligations to declare and pay. The amount of social security contributions claimed from the most recalcitrant employers brought before the courts stood at CFAF6,000,000,000<sup>231</sup>.

## §4: Domestic Workers

**625-** The special operation to raise awareness, screen, register and monitor employers of domestic workers, which began in 2022 continued. especially in public administrations. The SMIG of this category of workers was revalued at CFAF60,000<sup>232</sup> and the social contributions of the said workers represent 17.15% (CFAF10,290<sup>233</sup>) of the said SMIG, or 12.95% (CFAF7,770<sup>234</sup>) paid by the employer and 4.2% (CFAF2,520<sup>235</sup>) paid by the employee.

**626-** NSIF registered 107,416 new social security contributors, of which 56,906 were compulsory and 50,510 voluntary.

## §5: Social Security Protection of Migrant Workers

**627-** A workshop on the theme: *Governance of labour migration*, organised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security in partnership with the African Union held from 8 to 9 August 2023 in Yaounde. Participants at the workshop were equipped with legal instruments to address migration issues on the field, including foreign labour.

<sup>230</sup> About 360,097,038.18Euros.

<sup>231</sup> About 9,160,305.34 Euros.

<sup>232</sup> Bout 91.60 Euros.

<sup>233</sup> About 15.71 Euros.

<sup>234</sup> About 11.86 Euros.

<sup>235</sup> About 3.85Euros.

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## §6: Social Insurance Disputes

**628-** Social security litigation concerned the recovery of social security contributions and social security benefits.

### A: Social Security Contributions Debt Recovery Disputes

**629-** In the pre-litigation phase, 25 applications for were submitted to the Pre-Litigation Committee of the NSIF Board of Directors by employers who challenged recovery initiated by NSIF.

**630-** Of the 132 cases brought by employers before administrative courts to challenge the collection of social security contributions by NSIF, 4 judgments were entered for NSIF at the first and last instances, 1 withdrawal was registered and 127 matters were still pending before the courts at the end of December 2023.

**631-** The Administrative Bench of the Supreme Court, ruling on disputes on the recovery of social security contributions debts, entered 4 judgments for NSIF.

### B: Social Security Benefits Litigation

**632-** The Pre-Litigation Committee of the Board of Directors of NSIF received 293 petitions from social security contributors. Of the 318 petitions examined, 24 were reconsidered<sup>236</sup>

**633-** Social security contributors brought legal actions before Regional Committees for Social Security Litigation, which sit at the HC. Thus, of the 169 cases registered, 52 decisions were issued, 40 in favour of NSIF and 9 in favour of social security contributors.

**634-** Of the 23 cases pending before the courts of appeal, 12 judgments were delivered, 5 in favour of social security contributors and 7 in favour of NSIF. There were 15 cases pending before appellate courts, 11 old and 4 new. In addition, 4 litigants appealed before the Supreme Court.

<sup>236</sup> These are cases that no longer went before the disputes Commission. These cases were referred back to the social welfare centres so that they could review their initial rejection position.

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**635-** Despite many economic and climatic constraints, Government continued its actions to promote and protect the right to work and guarantee social security, as shown by, among others, an increase in salaries, rewards for innovative SMEs and financial support for small and medium-sized enterprises, social economy organisations and craftsmen and craftswomen.

**636-** Challenges remain, including rising incomes of workers due to new spending generated by inflation, the availability of oil resources and electricity.

# CHAPTER 5

## RIGHT TO CULTURE AND LEISURE



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**637-** In 2023, actions continued to be taken to make cultural property available, with one major action being the initiation of the procedure to retrieve illegally exported cultural property. The organisation and participation in cultural and artistic activities, as well as the protection of the moral and material interests of artists was ensured while the promotion of official and mother languages continued to be promoted. One of the highlights of 2023 as regards culture was the inscription of the Ngouon festival of the Bamoun people on UNESCO's representative list of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

**638-** Tourism and leisure was strengthened and measures taken to clean the sector. Also, the decentralisation process in the sector recorded some progress.

## SECTION 1: AVAILABILITY OF CULTURAL PROPERTY

**639-** Archives were preserved, activities were carried out to exhibit cultural heritage, cultural infrastructure was strengthened and efforts made to retrieve illegally exported cultural property.

### §1: Preservation of Archives

**640-** On 14 December 2023, the National Archives officially received the architectural and town-planning archives between 1961 and 1993 produced by the architect **Armand SALOMON**. They comprised 103 bundles of archival documents corresponding to 16 linear meters (LM) and 17 wooden cases containing 94 plans and maps with a volume of 7 LM.

**641-** Furthermore, as part of activities to mark the International Archives Week, and the implementation of the legal framework on archives within public administrations and Local and Regional Authorities, workers in the archival chain took the oath of office on 21 December 2023, before the High Court Mfoundi.

### §2: Exhibition of Cultural Heritage

**642-** Apart from permanent exhibitions at the National Museum in Yaounde, temporal exhibitions were also organised.

**643-** With regard to permanent exhibitions, the National Museum readjusted its exhibition spaces, in order to highlight the country's multiculturalism as

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a vector of peace and national unity. Hence, new exhibition spaces were created. The Unity space is an illustration of the deep bonds that exist between Cameroonians. The Cultural Diversity Space highlights the geographical, ethnic, linguistic, culinary and clothing diversity of Cameroonian communities while the Great Figures of Cameroon History Space celebrates the memory of national heroes for their ultimate sacrifices and self-sacrifice in nation-building.

**644-** As regards, temporal exhibitions, one dedicated to **Adolf NGOSSO DIN**, (a figure of nationalism in Cameroon who lived from 1884 to 1914)<sup>237</sup> was organised on 31 August 2023, jointly by the National Museum and the Adolf **NGOSSO DIN** Association. His biography and life under the German protectorate of Cameroon was presented and his photograph was officially handed over to the Museum.

## §3: Enhancement of Cultural Infrastructure

**645-** To better promote the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the Sawa people, the *Maison de la culture Sawa*, (House of sawa Culture in English and “Mukanda mua Ngondo” in the Duala language) was officially inaugurated on 14 December 2023 in Douala. The building covers 1,760 m<sup>2</sup> of the site’s overall surface area of 5,000 m<sup>2</sup>, and cost around CFAF 6,000,000,000<sup>238</sup>. Of this sum, the State of Cameroon contributed 75% through the Douala Council, while the Ngondo (the traditional assembly of the Sawa people), contributed 25%.

**646-** The house is both a landmark and a reference platform for those wishing to enrich their knowledge and trace their Sawa origins.

## §4: Retrieving Illegally Exported Cultural Property

**647-** From 15 to 26 October 2023, a delegation led by the Ministry of Arts and Culture (MINAC) visited Germany. The delegation was responding to an invitation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the context of the German Act on the Protection of Cultural Property of 2016, which requires that cultural objects can only be imported into Germany if they have been lawfully removed from their country of origin, otherwise they may be seized

<sup>237</sup> He was secretary to Douala chief Rudolf DUALA MANGA BELL. Both men were accused of high treason by the German authorities and hanged on 8 August 1914.

<sup>238</sup> About 9,160,305.34 Euros.

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and returned to their country of origin. The aim of the meeting was to set up a process for identifying illegally imported cultural goods from Cameroon to Germany.<sup>239</sup>

## SECTION 2: PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES

**648-** The National Ensemble displayed cultural heritage through music and dances among others. Sporting activities were organised as well as other cultural events.

### §1: Performances by the National Ensemble

**649-** The National Ensemble which has as mission, promoting Cameroonian culture through music, dance and other cultural expressions had performances in 2023.

**650-** On 8 April, 2023, the National Orchestra performed during the ceremony at which traditional musical instruments were handed over to the Museum by *Association pour la sauvegarde et la promotion de la Culture Guider*. Furthermore, the National Orchestra performed at the celebration of the 41<sup>st</sup> edition of the World Music Day on 21 June 2023. Also, the National Ballet and National Orchestra performed during the exhibition dedicated to **Adolf NGOSSO DIN** in August 2023.

### §2: Participation in Sporting Activities

**651-** In order to encourage people to take part in sporting activities, the Garoua Vita course (*Parcours vita de Garoua*) was inaugurated on 12 July 2023 and made available to the public. School games and other sporting activities were organized and Cameroonian teams obtained good performances in competitions.

### A: Participation in School and University Games

**652-** The 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the finals of the National School Games Federation (FENASSCO) League B games for primary schools took place in Douala from 10 to 15 June 2023. The overall trophy went to the Far North Region which also won the girls' football final, while the North won the boys' football final.

<sup>239</sup> This is in line with the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, 1970.

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**653-** The 23<sup>rd</sup> edition of FENASSCO League A Games for secondary and high schools took place in Garoua and Gaschiga from 28 July to 4 August 2023 at the end of which the Centre Region came first with 58 medals (37 gold, 15 silver and 8 bronze), followed by the North Region with 78 medals (26 gold, 18 silver and 35 bronze) and the West Region with 39 medals (15 gold, 8 silver and 16 bronze). The national finals of the 2023 edition of the National University Sports Federation (FENASU) Games, were held in Ngaoundere from 28 April to 8 May 2023, with the participation of more than 22 universities and higher private institutions with more than 3.480 athletes in around 10 sporting disciplines. At the end of the competition, the University of Yaounde I came first with 37 medals.

## **B: Participation in other Sports Competitions**

**654-** The National Women's Volleyball team emerged third at the 21<sup>st</sup> African Women's Volleyball Championship that took place from 16 to 24 August 2023 in Yaounde, while the National Men's Volleyball team was fourth at the 24<sup>th</sup> edition of the African Men's Volleyball Championship played in Egypt from 30 August to 9 September 2023.

**655-** Moreover, the Cameroon Football Cup (2022-2023 season) was won by *Fovu de Baham* after beating PWD of Bamenda on 24 September 2023 while *Lekié FF* defeated *AS Fortuna* during the finals of the Cameroon Women's Football Cup.

**656-** The Cameroon cycling tour which was organised from 3 to 11 June 2023 saw cyclists riding from Figuil through Garoua, Pouma, Kribi, Douala, Loum, Dschang, Bangante, Bafia to Yaounde.

**657-** During the Yaounde African Open 2023 (Judo) in Yaounde on 18 and 19 November 2023, wherein 16 countries participated, Cameroon came 2<sup>nd</sup> with 3 medals.

## **§3: Other Cultural and Artistic Events**

**658-** An Artistic and cultural holiday workshop was organised by the Ministry of Arts and Culture (MINAC) from 1 July to 11 August 2023 for children aged 3 to 16, to give them a chance to express their creative talents and learn about art and culture. Activities carried out included music, theatre, dance performances and art object exhibitions.

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**659-** From 12 to 16 June 2023 in Bamenda, Youth Outreach Programme organised the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of the Youth Festival of Arts and Culture (Youth FESTAC). The objectives of the festival were among others, to encourage the participation of youths in cultural expression and preservation and promote cultures, cultural dialogue, diversity, learning and social cohesion. Some 10 groups participated in the dance competition, 70 children attended the workshops<sup>240</sup> and on the last day of the festival, the African Day of the Child, 500 persons attended the festival.

**660-** Also, Cameroonian designers showcased textile from the 4 cultural areas<sup>241</sup> of Cameroon at the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Salon International du Textile Africain* (International African Textile Fair) held from 6 to 11 November 2023 in Guinea.

## SECTION 3: PROTECTION OF THE MORAL AND MATERIAL INTERESTS OF ARTISTS

**661-** The fight against piracy of works of art, the collection and distribution of royalties to artists and support to them was ensured.

### §1: Fighting against Piracy

**662-** Throughout 2023, the Cameroon National Musical Art Corporation (SONACAM) deployed in the country's 10 regions, committees made up mainly of artists who carried out awareness raising campaigns on the ills of pirating works of art. Moreover, they identified more than 3,000 persons as being part of the chain of piracy of works of art and dismantled networks producing pirated products.

**663-** Additionally, on 5 December 2023, the Copyright Society for Photography and Audiovisual Arts (SCAAP) organised an awareness-raising seminar in Yaounde on the repression of Copyrights and neighbouring rights piracy attended by representatives of several public administrations and by forces of law and order. Participants were drilled on offences related to piracy and penalties provided, the advantages of repressing piracy in the interest of Collective Management Bodies (CMBs), as well as effective methods of support to CMBs by the public authorities.

<sup>240</sup> Workshops on weaving, embroidery, beadwork, drumming, painting.

<sup>241</sup> Soudano-sahelian, Sawa, Fang-Beti-Bulu and Grassfields.

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## §2: Collection and Distribution of Royalties to Cultural Actors

**664-** Three distributions of royalties took place for the various collective management bodies. For example, in June 2023 musicians received their royalties. SONACAM, one of the collective management bodies had published a list of 2005 musicians to receive CFAF 80 000 000<sup>242</sup>.

**665-** In December 2023, another distribution was announced as some collective management bodies had already validated the reparation of royalties.

## §3: Support to Artists

**666-** Government as in the previous years, continued to support to artists financially. For the year 2023, were allocated: CFAF18,150,000<sup>243</sup> for music; CFAF55,600,000<sup>244</sup> for Cinema; CFAF11,750,000<sup>245</sup> for festivals and CFAF 750,000 for literary arts.

## SECTION 4: PROMOTION OF OFFICIAL AND MOTHER LANGUAGES

**667-** Measures continued to be taken as regards the promotion of official languages as well as mother languages.

### A: Promotion of Official Languages

**668-** In September and October 2023, the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism (NCPBM) embarked on a mission between September and October 2023 to assess the practice of bilingualism in some public hospitals<sup>246</sup>, state universities and defence and security training centres<sup>247</sup>.

**669-** Besides, on 30 January 2023, MINESEC launched in Mbandjock in the Centre Region, the 18<sup>th</sup> edition of the National Week of Bilingualism celebrated under the theme *"Bilingualism: a window to cultures and*

<sup>242</sup> About 122,137.40 Euros.

<sup>243</sup> About 27,709.92 Euros.

<sup>244</sup> About 84,885.50 Euros.

<sup>245</sup> About 1,145.04 Euros.

<sup>246</sup> Regional Hospital Garoua, Regional Hospital Limbe and Regional Hospital Annex Buea.

<sup>247</sup> Gendarmerie Training Centres, Combined Services Military Academy, National Advanced Police School, Police training College.

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*technologies, a human capital development tool for the emergence of Cameroon". At the event, students carried out sociocultural activities including bilingual news presentations, and sketches to showcase the important role bilingualism plays in the sociocultural and economic growth of the country.*

## **B: Promotion of Mother Languages**

**670-** Activities were organised by various stakeholders around the country to mark the International Mother Language Day which is celebrated every 21 February. Hence, MINESEC on 12 May 2023, organised an activity at the National Museum in Yaounde to jointly celebrate the said Day and the National Day of Arts and Culture at School. Activities included a round table and promotion of cultural diversity by students through poetry presentations among other things. During the round table, discussions included the place of art and mother languages in education in Cameroon, their transformational and didactic power, and the contribution of culture in promoting languages.

**671-** Moreover, "Mayege", an application for learning African languages designed by young Cameroonians, was presented to the public in Yaounde on 30 August 2023. Its aim is to preserve mother languages and to promote and teach history, language systems and cultural values.

## **SECTION 5: PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM AND LEISURE**

**672-** The normative framework of the tourism and leisure sector were enhanced, the showcasing of Cameroon's tourism potential continued including through the participation at events, infrastructure was enhanced and cleaning up of the sector continued.

### **§1: Enhancement of the Normative Framework**

**673-** Order n°02 /MINTOUL of 30 June 2023 laying down the conditions for opening a branch of a tourism agency was signed as well as Order n°03/MINTOUL of 30 June 2023 laying down the characteristics and visual requirements of approved Tourist Guide and Leisure Facilitator professional cards. The said cards issued by the Minister of Tourism are valid for 10 years.

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## §2: Strengthening Visibility

**674-** The Ministry of Tourism and Leisure (MINTOUL) participated at several events where it showcased Cameroon's tourism potential by putting up stands to display material, on Cameroon's tourism among others and distributed same. It thus participated at: the African Ancestry Network concept from 21 to 23 March 2023 in Yaounde ; the celebration of World Responsible and Respectful Tourism Day on 2 June 2023; celebration of Sustainable Gastronomy Day on June 18 2023; the CEMAC Cross-Border Fair at Kye-Ossi in July 2023; 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the Cameroon Government Action Fair "SAGO" in July 2023; the Diaspora Kitchen Festival on 9 and 10 March 2023 in Mouanko; in the International Tourism Fair, 3 November 2023 in Limbe; and the celebration of World Tourism Day on 27 September 2023.

**675-** Furthermore, MINTOUL and *Chaîne des Restaurateurs pour la promotion du patrimoine de la cuisine camerounaise* (CRESPAC) jointly organised the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Festival of Cameroon and World Flavours under the theme: "Codification and standardisation of Cameroonian cuisine" from 20 to 25 November 2023 at the National Museum in Yaounde with the featured country as Italy and the featured national dish as *taro sauce jaune* or *Achu*. It aimed at showcasing Cameroonian cuisine through culinary recipes for the 14 Cameroonian dishes validated by the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO).

### B: Promoting a Culture of Healthy and Educational Leisure Activities

**676-** MINTOUL organised a holiday camp in Ebolowa from 11 to 18 August 2024. Participants were about 40 children aged from 7 to 16 selected from the 10 regions of the country. Activities carried out included an excursion to the Nkolandom tourist complex to introduce the children to the local tourist attractions. Outdoor classrooms were also organised for students in Ngaoundere in October 2023.

## §3: Increased Offer in the Tourism and Leisure Sector

**677-** Tourism and leisure infrastructure was enhanced including hotels, restaurants, tourist agencies, leisure establishment and touristic sites.

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Several touristic sites were created through the signing of 150 texts including the following sites including: Order No. 4950/A/MINTOUL/SG/DST/SDRI of 21 August granting the status of tourist site for the natural landscape called "Lac de Guere"; Mayo Danay Division, Far North Region; Order No. 4948/A/MINTOUL/SG/DST/SDRI of 21 August granting the status of tourist site for the natural landscape called "Mont des Elephants" Ocean Division, South Region; Order No. 4947/A/MINTOUL/SG/DST/SDRI of 21 August granting the status of tourist site for the natural landscape called "Mundemba Waterfall" Ndian Division, South West Region; Order No. 4936/A/MINTOUL/SG/DST/SDRI of 21 August granting the status of tourist site for the natural landscape called "Mont Kilum", Bui department, North-West Region.

**678-** The National Technical Commission for Tourism and Leisure Establishments granted authorisations for the construction or operation of tourism and leisure establishments, approved tourist guides and granted licences to operate tourist agencies.

**679-** As a result, 109 hotels were granted authorisation to build; 118 hotels were granted licences to function; 23 restaurants as well as 24 leisure establishments were authorised to function; 14 tourist agencies and 19 tourist guides were licenced.

**680-** The total number of approved hotels in Cameroon in 2023 was 2,350 consisting of 37,885 rooms.

**681-** Furthermore, signposting equipment for tourism establishments was acquired and the Lagdo and Maga Nautical resorts were inaugurated on 3 and 4 March 2023. *Stations Nautiques de Lagdo et Maga* Also, the Ebolowa Recreation Park went operational on 1 April 2023.

## §4: Cleaning up the Tourism and Leisure Sector

**682-** MINTOUL paid particular attention to cleaning up the tourism and leisure sector. In implementation of Order No.102 /PM of 9 December 2020 setting out the procedures for carrying out inspections in tourism and leisure establishments. To this end, 385 tourism and leisure establishments were inspected as follows: 32 in the Adamawa Region, 44 in the Centre Region, 45 in the East Region, 28 in the Far North Region, 50 in the Littoral Re-

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gion, 55 in the North Region, 78 in the West Region, 4 in the North West Region, 4 in the South West Region and 45 in the South Region.

**683-** MINTOUL carried out unannounced inspections of tourism and leisure establishments in order to bring in line with the regulations in force. Consequently, 868 tourism and leisure establishments and facilities were inspected in the Adamawa, Centre, East, Far North and South Regions as thus: 158 restaurants, 73 snack bars, 586 hotels, 28 leisure establishments, 15 tourist agencies and 8 party halls. Following these inspections, 124 establishments were sanctioned. The sanctions were administrative involving the closure of establishments and financial sanctions involving the payment of fines.

## **§5: Promoting Good Governance in the Tourism and Leisure Sector**

**684-** In 2023, MINTOUL transferred resources to some Local and Regional Authorities in the context of decentralisation. Hence, the amount of CFAF 1 200 000 000<sup>248</sup> was transferred to more than 25 Local and Regional Authorities for the development of tourist sites.

**685-** Some of the councils concerned were: Tignère Council (construction and equipping of a restaurant and a mini-water supply at the Damougare tourist site); Baré-Bakem Council (rehabilitation of the access stairs to the Mbang-Ebongo tourist site); Touboro Council (supply of equipment to the Mbang-Rey tourist site); Bamusso Council (construction of an eco-tourism site); Ngaoui Council (construction of a Boukarou on the Mount Ngaoui tourist site); and Mouanko Council (extension of the Mouanko municipal inn).

**686-** Also, from 11 to 12 July 2023, MINTOUL organised a seminar in Yaounde to raise awareness on the basic texts on the transfer of powers in the tourism and leisure sector. It was attended by mayors of local councils of the Centre, East and South Regions and the regional executives.

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**687-** Great strides were made towards making cultural property available including retrieving illegally exported cultural property from Cameroon. The promotion of official languages was in motion with the NCPBM

<sup>248</sup> About 1,832,071.07 Euros.

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assessing the practice of bilingualism in some major institutions of the country.

**688-** In the tourism and leisure sector, the number of tourism and leisure establishments increased while decentralisation was in gear with the transfer of resources to some local authorities. Notwithstanding measures taken, wiping out clandestine establishments in the tourism and leisure sector was still a challenge.



## CHAPTER

# 6

## RIGHT TO A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT



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**689-** In 2023, as part of its efforts to preserve the environment, the State focused its actions, inter alia, on biodiversity conservation, the fight against pollution, nuisances and harmful and/or dangerous chemical substances, forest and wildlife protection, while strengthening its regulatory framework.

## SECTION 1: STRENGTHENING THE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

**690-** The regulatory framework was primarily strengthened with the enactment of Law No. 2023/14 of 19 December 2023 relating to the Mining Code. This Law governs, among other aspects, the recognition, possession, transportation, transformation and matching of mineral substances. It is a text which encompasses all domains, including the protection of the environment which is discussed in Chapter 5.

**691-** For instance, Section 135(1) mandates compliance with existing legislation and regulations pertaining to environmental protection and management of all mining and quarrying activities.

**692-** Furthermore, Section 137 outlines the obligations of mining and quarry licence holders, including: the prevention of geo-risks and geo-catastrophes, the prevention or minimisation of any discharge into the environment, the protection of fauna and flora, and the promotion or maintenance of the general health of the population.

**693-** At the end of mining and quarry activities structures built and used shall be secured in accordance with conditions set out in the Environmental and Social Management Plan and the sites rehabilitation programme.

**694-** Furthermore, the following legal instruments were enacted: Decree No. 2023/7526/PM of 6 October 2023 outlining the implementing provisions of Law No. 2021/014 of 9 July 2021 to govern access to genetic resources, their derivatives, traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their utilisation; Order No. 111/PM of 06 October 2023 to Lay Down the Organisation and Functioning of the National Access and Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from the Utilization of Genetic Resources; Order No. 17/MINEPDED of 18 October 2023 to specify the tasks of the National Clearing-house on Access and Fair and Equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilisation of genetics resources; and Order No. 16/MINEPDED of 18 October 2023 to specify the tasks of the Na-

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tional Focal Point on Access and Fair and Equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilisation of genetics resources.

## SECTION 2: BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

**695-** Biodiversity conservation efforts concerned 2 main areas: promoting and restoring nature and ensuring the sustainable management of biodiversity.

### §1: Promoting and Restoring Nature

**696-** Activities related to promoting and restoring nature revolved around biodiversity conservation and direct nature restoration initiatives.

#### A: Promoting Biodiversity Conservation

**697-** Efforts to promote biodiversity conservation involved strengthening knowledge and controlling Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) mechanisms and enhancing the information system on biodiversity and ecosystem services.

##### 1) Strengthening Knowledge and Control of ABS Mechanisms

**698-** In 2023, efforts to enhance knowledge and control of ABS mechanisms included the following key initiatives: development of an online system for processing ABS access requests and training 10 members of Ministry of the Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED's) ABS team on how to use the system; creation of a pilot catalogue of high economic potential genetic resources in Cameroon, along with a methodological guide for inventorying genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge in the country; signing of four (4) ABS law implementing texts by the Prime Minister, Head of Government, and the Minister of the Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (see §694), Regulatory Framework); issuance of Prior Informed Consent, six (6) of which received a declaratory decision.

##### 2) Strengthening the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Information System

**699-** In terms of establishing an Environmental Information System (EIS), ten thematic databases were made available within the EIS, and a baseline study made it possible to draft best practices for sustainability.

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## B: Nature Restoration

**700-** The Government's efforts in nature restoration were fundamentally focused on combating desertification and addressing climate change.

### 1) The Fight against Desertification

**701-** Efforts towards the restoration of degraded lands and landscapes were primarily conducted through the Operation Green Sahel. In 2023, through this project, several sites were reforested, including the Djamboura locality in the Mindif Council in the Mayo Kani Division, where 150 hectares were reforested with 30,000 seedlings planted, and the Ngafakat site in the Mokolo Council in the Mayo Tsanaga Division, which saw 250 hectares reforested with 35,000 seedlings planted.

**702-** Similarly, initiatives towards the reforestation of degraded landscapes were undertaken with funding from the National Fund for the Environment and Sustainable Development in the Far North Region. The reforested sites included the Ouazan site in the Meri Council, where 180 hectares were reforested with 25,000 seedlings; the Beguele site in the Maroua 1 Council, both in the Diamare Division, where 170 hectares were reforested with 25,000 seedlings; and the Doulo 3 site in the Mora Council in Mayo Sava, where 250 hectares were reforested with 30,000 seedlings. Additionally, at the Doubane site in the Guidiguis Council in the Mayo Kani Division, 70 hectares were reforested with 20,000 seedlings. Moreover, at the Hamalade site in the Bibémi Council in the Benue Division in the North Region, ( ) 150 hectares were reforested with 17,000 seedlings.

**703-** Furthermore, on 7 July 2023, the Far North Region launched a reforestation operation, planting 6,107 forest and fruit trees. This initiative, called "Green Diocese," was spearheaded by the Catholic Clergy of Maroua and comprised 6 pastoral<sup>249</sup> zones within the Maroua-Mokolo diocese. It was supported by the National Forestry Development Support Agency.

**704-** Moreover, local associations and internally displaced women planted 2,000 trees at the internally displaced persons site in Bogo, in the Far North Region.

<sup>249</sup> These are Maroua, Mayo Sava, Koza, Centre, Mokolo and Tsanaga-South.

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## 2) The Fight against Climate Change

**705-** On 13 December 2023, the Interdisciplinary Research Laboratory in Environmental Law, Natural Resources and Sustainable Development, set up on 25 April 2023 by Order No. 2023/291 of the Rector of the University of Yaounde II, was officially inaugurated at the said university.

**706-** As part of efforts to strengthen the resilience of the population and production systems to adapt to climate change, the preparation process for the revision of the National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change was almost complete. Negotiations with the United Nations Environment Programme, the Green Climate Fund, and the Autonomous Sinking Fund resulted in the formulation of an implementation institutional framework, aimed at building capacity for the appropriation and sustainability of this vital process, with financing agreements currently being finalised.

## SECTION 3: INTEGRATING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MECHANISMS

**707-** This section discusses environmental assessments, environmental and social monitoring, of development projects, intensification of environmental awareness and education, as well as establishment of an environmental information system.

### §1: Environmental Assessments, Environmental and Social Monitoring and Follow-up of Development Projects

**708-** Sustainable development was ensured by the Government through, environmental assessments and environmental and social monitoring and follow-up of development projects, among other things.

#### A: Environmental Assessments

**709-** They were marked by the organisation of 19 public hearings as part of environmental assessments; the receipt and processing of 200 Terms of Reference for environmental assessments; the preparation and holding of 10 meetings of the Interministerial Committee for the Environment, during which 128 environmental assessment reports were examined. At the end of these meetings, 143 environmental compliance certificates were issued, as well as 27 approvals for environmental assessments.

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## **B: Environmental and Social Monitoring and Follow-up of Development Projects**

**710-** As part of these activities, 166 semi-annual reports on the implementation of Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) were processed; monitoring missions for the implementation of 7 ESMPs were organised and 5 environmental investigation missions related to requests submitted by third parties were conducted; 33 applications for Attestations of Compliance with Environmental Obligations (AROE) were processed and 24 AROEs were issued; 774 monitoring missions for the status of ESMP implementation at the national level were conducted.

**711-** Furthermore, the National Radiation Protection Agency conducted certain environmental activities, in particular in-situ measurements of radon/thoron and their decay products and the collection of environmental samples in Bétaré Oya and its vicinities, in the Lom-et-Djerem Division, and in Batouri and its environs, in the Kadey Division.

## **§2: Environmental Awareness and Education and the Establishment of an Environmental Information System**

**712-** Environmental awareness and education, coupled with the creation of an environmental information system, enabled the Government to enhance the sustainable management of biodiversity.

### **A: Environmental Awareness and Education**

**713-** On the occasion of World Environment Day on 5 June 2023, the Government conducted numerous awareness-raising activities, including a walk in Yaounde to raise awareness on non-compliant plastics, as well as media activities on environmental management in general, and the use of non-compliant plastics in particular. Continuing this momentum, on 2 June 2023, the MINEPDED organised a roundtable discussion on the theme "Solutions to Plastic Pollution."

### **B: Creation of an Environmental Information System**

**714-** This involved deploying evaluation missions to assess the documentation and furniture of the regional offices of the Environmental Information and Documentation Centre (CIDE) in the West, South, Adamawa, North, Far North, East, North West, South West, and Littoral Regions.

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**715-** It is also worth noting that 10 thematic databases were made available within the environmental information system and a benchmark study resulted in the development of good sustainability practices.

## **SECTION 4: THE FIGHT AGAINST POLLUTION, NUISANCE AND HARMFUL AND/OR DANGEROUS CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES**

**716-** Waste management was ensured, as well as the fight against pollution.

### **§1: Waste Management**

**717-** On 22 September 2023, during a meeting with Mayors of Sub-divisions and waste collection stakeholders, the Mayor of the Yaounde City Council presented his new waste collection model. With the establishment of a special excise tax intended to finance waste removal and treatment, marking the State's disengagement from waste collection, the Yaounde City Council planned to fully finance this activity starting as from 2024. Previously, Councils covered 15% of waste collection costs, while the State covered 85%.

**718-** Furthermore, strengthening environmental policing enabled the continued collection of data on inspections across the country, as well as the continuation of operations to check the conformity of plastic packaging, which led to the confiscation of 16,729.4 kg of non-compliant plastics.

**719-** In the context of promoting integrated waste management, 11 sessions of the Environmental Permit Review Committee (PE) were held, resulting in the issuance of 237 environmental permits. MINEPDED issued 15,900 waste manifest tracking sheet, accompanying all waste transport operations and made them available to MINEPDED's Regional and Divisional Delegates.

### **§2: Fight against Pollution**

**720-** The ecologically sound management of chemical, toxic, and/or hazardous products enabled the monitoring of export and disposal operations for 80 tons of Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) from Perenco Rio Del Rey, as well as the drainage, transport, centralisation and disposal operations for 211 tonnes of PCBs from other holders, totalling 291 tonnes of PCBs

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exported and disposed of; and the sealing of 5 PCB-contaminated sites at various company facilities in the Littoral, Centre, and North regions.

**721-** Furthermore, 3,544 facilities and 808 ships were inspected. Additionally, the diagnostic study of air quality in the cities of Douala and Yaounde continued, with the installation of 2 sensors in Yaounde to continuously measure ambient fine particulate matter levels.

**722-** The project to degas and secure Lake Nyos and Lake Monoun<sup>250</sup> continued to be implemented by the Institute of Geological and Mining Research. This Institute also conducted environmental monitoring of mining areas and areas with high mining potential, with the objective of improving information on environmental radioactivity and heavy metals in air, water, soil and food around urban centres and mining sites or areas with mining potential.

## SECTION 5: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF FORESTS AND WILDLIFE SPECIES

**723-** The development, securing, and exploitation of forest and wildlife resources were ensured, and breaches were sanctioned.

### §1: Developing, Securing and Exploiting Forest and Wildlife Resources

**724-** This section covers the development and restoration of forest resources, the securing and exploitation of wildlife resources and protected areas as well as the exploitation of timber and non-timber forest resources.

#### A: Development and Restoration of Forest Resources

**725-** By the end of 2023, 164,627 hectares of permanent forest domain were sustainably managed and exploited through inventories and the review of management and reforestation plans, which was above the envisaged 100,000 hectares.

**726-** In actual terms, only 136.7 hectares (6.83%) were reforested out of the 2,000 hectares targeted .

<sup>250</sup> Which aims to maintain the CO2 concentration below the saturation threshold and the infiltration rate of water into the natural dam below 3 litres/second, in order to ensure the return of displaced persons to their ancestral lands.

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**727-** As at 31 December 2023, 3,182,734.42 cubic meters of legal timber were placed on the market, surpassing the legal production of 2,500,000 cubic meters of timber to supply the market.

**728-** Furthermore, in its mission to assist Councils and local communities in managing forestry operations, the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MIN-FOF) had, by the end of 2023, increased the production forest area managed by these Councils and local communities by 61,042.95 hectares, exceeding the planned 67,000 hectares.

## **B: Securing and Exploiting Wildlife Resources and Protected Areas**

**729-** Of a target of 40,000 daytime patrols to reduce poaching and wildlife crime, 64,356 daytime patrols were conducted by the end of 2023.

**730-** On 15 February 2023, *Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau* (KfW) granted 10,000,000 Euros<sup>251</sup> in funding for the implementation of the 5<sup>th</sup> phase of the Sustainable Natural Resource Management Programme in the South West<sup>252</sup>. This phase, that shall last 3 years, aims to improve the management of forests and protected areas which are under pressure from poachers and illegal operators.

**731-** The development and promotion of ecotourism in and around protected areas resulted in 47,145 visitors in 2023, achieving 39.29% of the targeted 102,000 visitors.

**732-** In addition, of the CFAF 950,000,000<sup>253</sup> that the Government envisaged to raise by promoting wildlife in 2023, only CFAF 715,950,781<sup>254</sup> was collected by the end of the year, representing an implementation rate of 75.36%.

**733-** In 2023, 40 professionals and specialists in fauna and flora were trained out of the 74 targeted, achieving a 61.54% execution rate. Missions to identify artisan carpenters for training were conducted in 4 cities namely Nanga-Eboko, Bangangte, Garoua, and Maroua. A total of 150 artisan carpenters were registered, including 35 in Nanga-Eboko, 40 in Bangangte, 35 in Garoua, and 40 in Maroua.

<sup>251</sup> About FCFA 6,550,000,000.

<sup>252</sup> These include Limbe, Buea, Tiko and Mutengene.

<sup>253</sup> About 1,450,381.68 Euros.

<sup>254</sup> About 1,093,054.63 Euros.

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## C: Developing Timber and Non-timber Forest Resources

**734-** At the International Business and Trade Fair (FIAC) held in Douala from 2 to 12 November 2023, MINFOF presented the first works crafted from “*lotofa* and *cordia*,” which are new and relatively unknown species, with the aim of making them known to the public.

**735-** With regard to the quantity of dendroenergy and non-timber forest products placed on the market, the goal was to increase the legal supply of dendroenergy by placing a volume of 55,000 tonnes on the market. By 31 December 2023, 48,168.511 tonnes of dendroenergy had been placed on the market, representing an achievement rate of 87.58%.

### §2: Sanctions

At administrative level, sanctions were taken, including 5 temporary suspension decisions against defaulting forestry and wildlife stakeholders, including Decision No. 0770/D/MINFOF/CAB of 14 November 2023 temporarily suspending the *GRAND CAPITAINE Zone d’Intérêt Cynégétique* No. 9.

**737-** Decisions rendered by the courts in these matters are summarized in the table below:

**Table 1: Summary of some Court Decisions relating to Forestry in 2023**

No.	Case name	Title of case	Court	Nature of offence	Judgment	Region
1	The People and MINFOF vs MBARGA Joseph		CFI Meiganga	Tree felling	JGT No.118/Cor of 27/6/2023 DI: CFAF 89 096 951	East Region
2	The People and MINFOF vs EDIMA Martine and 3 others	01PVNo.0680/PVCI /MINFOF/CAB/BN C/C3 of 5/6/20	CFI Akonolinga	Felling of protected species	JGT No.526/Cor of 4/10/2023; the Court declined jurisdiction	Centre Region
3	The People and MINFOF vs OUMAROU SANDA and 2 others		CFI Tibati	Illegal possession of a hunting weapon, slaughter of a bongo and a baboon and unauthorised movement in a PA (protected area)	JGT No.279/Cor of 23/10/2023 damages: CFAF 4 249 000	Adamawa Region

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No.	Case name	Title of case	Court	Nature of offence	Judgment	Region
4	The People and MINFOF vs ALONA Augustin Hans	003/PVCI/RES/DLD /DFOF/SFAP of 17/4/2023	CFI Bertoua	illegal killing, possession, and trade of fully protected class A animal species (10 bags of pangolin scales)	JGT No.1417/Cor of 30/6/2023: CFAF 1 833 000	East Region

**Source :** MINFOF

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**738-** Despite challenges in waste management due to its proliferation in some cities in Cameroon, the Government took steps to guarantee the right to a healthy environment in 2023. These included among other things, the adoption of a new Mining Code containing environmental protection provisions, coupled with reforestation campaigns covering thousands of hectares of degraded land and initiatives to combat climate change and pollution.

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## CONCLUSION OF PART TWO

**739-** In conclusion, to guarantee economic, social and cultural rights, the State notably extended availability of cultural property, expanded the school map, introduced the vaccine against malaria, improved water and electricity supply, increased the salary of civil servants as well as the minimum wage. Moreover, the State further facilitated debt recovery from social contributions and continued consolidation of import-substitution, execution of sanitation projects and construction of houses as well as rolling out universal health coverage.

**740-** In addition to limited financial resources, challenges recorded in this area included security constraints in some localities.



## PART THREE

# CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND SPECIFIC RIGHTS



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## INTRODUCTION TO PART THREE

**741-** In 2023, the Government continued initiatives towards promoting peace and living together. It also improved the quality of governance, notably through strengthening dialogue between the public and private sectors, investment incentives and transparency on the one hand and combating corruption and misappropriation of public property on the other hand. Moreover, despite the insufficiency of financial resources, efforts continued to be made to protect the rights of specific categories of persons and address cross-cutting issues. These include improving detention conditions, strengthening the legal framework regarding children, elderly persons, and persons with disabilities as well as access by indigenous populations to land, health care, education and documentation. Some other priorities included consideration for women in several areas of public life, their well-being and security in private life, care for refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons.

**742-** Developments in these areas are presented in part three of this Report in the following chapters:

- Right to Peace, Security and Respect for Human Rights;
- Good Governance and Combating Corruption;
- Detention Conditions;
- Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Socially Vulnerable Persons;
- Promotion and Protection of Women's Rights; and
- Protection of the Rights of Forcibly Displaced Persons.



# CHAPTER

# 1

## RIGHT TO PEACE AND SECURITY AND RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



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**743-** Although the security of the nation was characterised by persistent crises, Government took measures to prevent and maintain peace and security.

## **SECTION 1: Persistence of crisis in some Areas**

**744-** On the whole, the security situation was characterised by incursions by non-State armed groups in the Far North Region, North West Region and South West Region. The neighbouring Littoral Region and West Region also suffered the consequences of such crises.

### **§1: Far North, Centre and East Regions**

**745-** Terrorist attacks were recorded, as well as a resurgence of inter-community and urban violence.

#### **A: Continuous attacks by Boko Haram.**

**746-** After a lull of a few months, Boko Haram relaunched armed attacks against Defence and Security Forces (DSF), resulting in collateral civilian victims in neighbouring villages<sup>255</sup>. There were 11 explosions from improvised explosive devices (IED), 27 ambushes and 262 incursions by Boko Haram and Islamic State's West Africa Province (ISWAP) groups.

**747-** The security assessment meeting of the Region held on 3 May 2023 in Maroua was an opportunity for the Cameroon Army high Command to review its strategy and adapt it to the threat including the recurring use of IEDs. The military high command was advised to consolidate the presence of the army at the borders with Chad and Nigeria by patrols and maintain collaboration with the population, major sources of intelligence.

#### **B: Resurgence of Intercommunity and Urban Violence**

**748-** Following a land dispute over the devastation of a field by a herd of cattle, the Kotoko and Arab Chua communities clashed on 5 October 2023, resulting in 3 deads, many wounded and material damage.

<sup>255</sup> They include the attack at Djibrili on 18 March 2023 leaving 2 civilians dead and 4 soldiers wounded; on 16 April 2023 at Krawa-Mafa and Zeleved, 1 soldier was killed and 3 wounded; at the joint check point of Mora on 18 May 2023 1 customs officer and 1 civilian were killed; at Blangoua and Djakana on 3 August 2023, 9 persons were killed; on 3 November 2023 at Lamini leaving 16 civilians dead; on 9 November 2023 at Tchakamari, 1 soldier was killed; at Salee on 23 December 2023, 4 persons were killed. A mine also exploded along the Bavongola-Tchebe highway killing 6 soldiers.

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**749-** On 19 December 2023, Tokombere was the scene of ethnic-political clashes. The report of the incidents indicated one dead and 17 wounded including 10 members of the DSFs.

**750-** Intercommunity violence was also observed in the Centre Region and East<sup>256</sup> Regions.

## §2: North West and South West Regions

**751-** Armed gang intrusions, armed confrontations with DSFs, assassinations and kidnappings with demand for ransom persisted. About 500 attacks were recorded, while more than 245 people were abducted.

**752-** The attacks<sup>257</sup> included the attack in Egbekaw, South West Region on 5 November 2023, where heavily armed assailants set fire on houses and shot people trying to escape the flames at close range. This criminal act of extreme cruelty, claimed by a separatist group called Manyu Unity Warriors, resulted in 25 dead including 19 men, 5 women and a child.

**753-** In July 2023 in the North West Region, at Nacho junction in Bamenda, 10 people were executed by armed individuals.

## §3: West and Littoral Regions

**754-** Insecurity in the South West and North West Regions had an impact on the neighbouring Littoral and West Regions.

**755-** In the Littoral Region, a patrol at Matuke Joint Check Point was ambushed on 1 May 2023. The toll of this attack reported 3 dead among DSFs. On 10 May 2023, some 14 people suspected of taking part in or facilitating the operation were arrested and brought before the competent authorities by staff of the Gendarmerie Brigade, Mbanga.

**756-** In Bamenyam, West Region, gunmen from neighbouring North West Region, aboard some 30 motorcycles, killed 9 people after encircling the market square on 21 November 2023.

<sup>256</sup> At Batouri on 18 May 2023 between Kako, Tupuri and Massa communities leaving 22 persons wounded and at Sangmelima on 24 May 2023 between the Bamouns from the West Region and Bulus from the South Region following the death of a Bulu native.

<sup>257</sup> The attack on a CDC transport vehicle in Tiko on 11 February 2023 leaving 5 employees dead and 44 others wounded, and the attack in Muea on 8 September 2023 during which 3 persons were burnt to death in a vehicle.

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## SECTION 2: MEASURES TO PREVENT INSECURITY

**757-** Combating the proliferation of weapons and hate speech as well as refresher courses for security staff continued.

### §4: Combating the proliferation of weapons

**758-** It consisted in consolidating coordination, holding meetings of different coordination platforms and the effectiveness of control operations.

#### A: Consolidating Coordination

**759-** Decree No. 2023/464 of 30 October 2023 to establish, and lay down the organisation and functioning of the Coordination Committee for National Anti-Money Laundering Policies, Financing of Terrorism and Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction was signed. Under the authority of the Minister of Finance, the duty of the Committee is to develop and co-ordinate policies and activities aimed at combating this scourges..

#### B: Coordination Platforms

**760-** At its meeting of 20 April 2023, the Interministerial Committee on the Implementation of the Kinshasa Convention prepared the National Report on the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (PoA). There were further discussions on the establishment of a national body to control small arms and light weapons (SALW). In the same vein, an evaluation meeting of the SALIENT<sup>258</sup> Project was held in Mbankomo from 5 to 6 May 2023.

**761-** The Interministerial Committee for the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540<sup>259</sup> held its sessions on 25 January and 18 April 2023. It also organised a National Workshop from 9 to 11 May 2023 in Yaounde and a Subregional Workshop from 24 to 26 May 2023 in Douala. The workshops aimed to raise awareness on the dangers of chemical terrorism and access of non-State stakeholders to Nuclear, Bacteriological, Biological, chemical and Explosive (NRBCE) technologies. The issue resulted in a workshop to raise the awareness and educate partici-

<sup>258</sup> Save life entity.

<sup>259</sup> On the prohibition to provide support to non-State stakeholders on the development, supply, transfer or use of nuclear, chemical or biological arms or their distribution especially for terrorist purposes.

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pants on the fight against the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons in Cameroon. It was organised from 12 to 14 September 2023 in Yaounde, in partnership with the French and American Governments. In the same vein, the Ministry of Finance (MINFI) organised seminars from 20 to 29 September 2023 for customs officers in Douala, Garoua and Yaounde on the identification and recognition of chemical precursors.

## C: Arms Control

**762-** As part of his prerogatives to control the movement of weapons, the Minister of Territorial Administration signed 8 orders to open stores for sale of weapons and ammunition, 34 orders to import weapons and ammunition, 102 orders on local purchase, 208 acquisition authorisations and 116 firearms licences.

**763-** The Customs Administration also contributed to this control by seizing 9,350 shotgun cartridges, 286 fireworks and other pyrotechnic objects, 400.4 g of black powder, 3 war munitions and 30 bags of aluminium.

## §2: Stepping up Cross-border Security

**764-** Collaboration with neighbouring States to halt cross-border insecurity was marked by the working session of 3 October 2023 between the Cameroon and Chadian Ministers of Defence. The two authorities agreed to set up a joint working group to address issues of terrorism, interstate transhumance, illicit trafficking, movement of armed gangs and weapons of all calibres.

## §3: Capacity Development of Staff of Defence and Security Forces

**765-** Activities in this context focused on combating terrorism in general and the rise of the use of IEDs in particular. In this regard, the African Peace Support Trainers Association organised a workshop for staff of the Ministry of Defence (MINDEF), on terrorist financing in Africa, from 1 to 2 June 2023 in Yaounde. The fight against terrorism was also at the centre of the meeting of the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services in Africa (CISSA), held in Yaounde on 2 November 2023. The aim was to identify the sources of terrorist financing and to step up cooperation between services, and address the causes of radicalisation.

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**766-** In response to the threat from IEDs<sup>260</sup>, 260 demining experts were trained for 4 weeks on coordination, transport, conveyance and destruction of explosives, as well as on security measures. At the end of the training, they were awarded certificates on 21 June 2023. In addition, the International School of Security Forces (EIFORCES) ended the third 2 week training of 10 National Gendarmerie and 10 National Police staff on Explosives Disposal Ordinances on 8 December 2023.

## SECTION 3: CONSOLIDATION OF ACTIONS TO RESTORE PEACE

**767-** Actions against perpetrators of violence in the English-speaking Regions for the consolidation of peace, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants and ex-associates, and the search for national cohesion continued.

### §1: Proceedings against Instigators of the Anglophone Crisis

**768-** The repeated calls by the Head of State and the advocacy of CSOs to States harbouring citizens of Cameroon origin involved in the violence in the South West and the North West Regions had legal consequences. On 21 March 2023, for example, the District Court of Maryland convicted and sentenced **E.F.N.** and two of his accomplices to 5 years imprisonment, suspended for 2 years and a fine of US\$25,000<sup>261</sup>. They were found guilty of smuggling firearms from the United States of America to the Federal Republic of Nigeria, destined for Cameroon.

**769-** By two separate decisions of 18 and 20 April 2023, **T.E.B** and **M.N.** were convicted and sentenced to 4 years imprisonment by an American court for attempted transfer of firearms to Cameroon through Nigeria.

### §2: Measures to Consolidate Peace

**770-** Civilian and military actions, and the reconstruction of crisis regions also continued.

### A: Continued Civilian and Military Actions

**771-** On 3 March 2023, a food distribution campaign was organised in Kwakwa, Nake, Bole, Mbonge and Ekondo-Titi. A health campaign was

<sup>260</sup> There were 265 IED attacks in the North West Region and 32 in the South West Region.

<sup>261</sup> About CFAF155,557,28.4 or 23,661.58 Euros.

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also organised on 30 September 2023 in Ekengue. On 20 December 2023, the Joint Multinational Force handed rehabilitated classrooms of Government Primary schools Mada and Homeka to the State. At the end of January 2023, some 1,600 people took part in the free screening and vision campaign organised by the Rapid Intervention Battalion (BIR) in the Far North Region.

## **B: Continued Actions and the Search for Financing for the Reconstruction of the Regions in crisis**

**772-** The reconstruction plan and programme continued to be implemented.

### **1) Reconstruction and Development Plan for the North West and South West Regions**

**773-** The search for financing of the said plan resulted in the signing of the financing agreement of the support project for the said reconstruction on 10 May 2023 in Jeddah. The project<sup>262</sup> supported by the Islamic Development Bank to the tune of CFAF21,115,000,000<sup>263</sup> was launched on 18 December 2023 in Yaounde.

**774-** The execution of projects in the South West Region in particular, was strengthened by a financing commitment of CFAF1,300,000,000<sup>264</sup> from Japan, thus bringing the contribution of this friendly country to CFAF2,800,000,000<sup>265</sup>.

**775-** A third-party donor financing agreement between the Professional Association of Credit Institutions of Cameroon and UNDP was signed on 31 July 2023. Through this agreement, the association pledged the sum of CFAF250,000,000<sup>266</sup> to UNDP in support of the economic recovery of the North West and South West Regions. The funding will be used to reconstruct and equip the Government Primary School Ngarbuh and the Cameroon Development Corporation Hospital in Mbonge.

<sup>262</sup> Decree No. 2023/330 of 04 August 2023 to ratify the Loan Agreement for an amount of Euros 32.250,000, or approximately CFAF 21.115 billion, concluded on 10 May 2023 between the Republic of Cameroon and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), for the implementation of the Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction and Development of the North-West and South-West Regions

<sup>263</sup> About 32,236,641.22 Euros.

<sup>264</sup> About 1,984,732.82 Euros.

<sup>265</sup> About 4,274,809.16 Euros.

<sup>266</sup> About 381,679.39 Euros.

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**776-** In addition, 700 farmers and fishers received start-up kits, and 5 micro-finance-type community funds were given technical support to relaunch their activities. Besides, the Bamenda Women's Multipurpose Centre was equipped, while 1,200 birth certificates were issued in the South West Region.

## **2) Special Reconstruction and Development Programme for the Far North Region**

**777-** On 20 November 2023, the Programme received the financial contribution of CFAF140,000,000,000<sup>267</sup> from the World Bank through the signing of an agreement with MINEPAT for the financing of the Connectivity Improvement and Inclusion Project along the Mora- Dabanga-Kousseri stretch.

**778** Projects were also contracted for the construction and equipment of 5 primary schools and 5 health centres; the rehabilitation and equipment of the Swiss Hospital of Mada and the construction of a drinking water supply point at the university of Maroua, Sekande campus.

## **§4: Continued Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration of Ex-combatants and Ex-associates**

**779-** The National Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Committee (NCDDR) continued the process of reintegration of ex-combatants.

**680-** As at 31 December 2023, the numbers in the various regional information centres for ex-combatants were as follows:

**Table 1: Number of reformed persons in the information centres as at 31 December 2023**

Information Centre	Men	Women	Children	Total
Buea (South West)	461	23	60	440
Bamenda (North West)	291	89	15	499
Mora (Far North)	726	785	1,341	2,852
Total	1,478	897	1,416	3,791

**Source:** NCDDR

<sup>267</sup> About 213,740,458.02 Euros.

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**781-** The constant presidential call for peace was accepted by many fighters. There were 3,226 ex-combatants in DDR centres in 2022 as compared to 3,791 in 2023.

**782-** In addition, the NCDDR continued its reintegration activities by the empowerment of ex-combatants through different training opportunities for small trades: agriculture, livestock, masonry, electricity, sewing, etc.

**783-** The Bamenda DDR centre received all ex-combatants from the provisional site since 14 July 2023. Construction of the Buea DDR Centre was completed and equipment underway. With regard to the Maroua DDR, work was estimated at 80% complete.

## §5: Consolidation of National Integration

**784-** The National Commission on Bilingualism and Multiculturalism promotes awareness against hate speech and violent extremism by organising meetings and poster campaigns. In this regard, it signed on 1 June 2023 in Yaounde, a memorandum of understanding with 14 CSOs to combat this scourge. In the same vein, in the last quarter of the year, it visited diplomatic posts in Abuja, Berlin, Brussels, London, Paris, Pretoria and Washington, DC.

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**785-** On the whole, the obligation to ensure a secure environment for all was the core concern of the State through capacity development of DSF staff. Emphasis was also laid on combating cross-border crime, terrorism and consolidating social cohesion. However, circulation of firearms and their possession by non-State entities remains a major concern.

# CHAPTER 2

## PROMOTION OF GOOD GOVERNANCE AND COMBATING CORRUPTION



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**786-** Overall, improving the quality of governance in the management of public affairs and resources remained a priority for the State of Cameroon. Special attention was given to combating corruption and misappropriation of public property.

## SECTION 1: MEASURES TO ENHANCE GOVERNANCE

**787-** Measures taken included public-private sector dialogue, investment incentives and application of the principle of transparency.

### §1: Public - Private Sector Dialogue

**788-** Public authorities, at central and local levels, held discussions on various matters with several employers' organisations including *Groupeement Inter-Patronal du Cameroun* (GICAM). These discussions<sup>268</sup> focused on deduction of visa fees from contracts of foreign workers, taxation, companies' access to electrical energy, credit facilities from the State to companies or private investment in agriculture and livestock.

**789-** On 14 December 2023, the constitutive general assembly of a new employers' organisation called "Union of Cameroonian Enterprises" (GECAM) held in Douala. The organisation is born from a merger between 2 employers' organisations which are the GICAM and "Enterprises of Cameroon" (ECAM). GECAM which has become the most representative employers' organisation is expected to influence public - private sector dialogue.

### §2: Investment Incentives

**790-** In addition to tax and customs incentives, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education – (MINJEC) and the Investment Promotion Agency (IPA) carried out some actions to encourage investment.

### A: Common Tax and Customs Incentives for Investment

**791-** The Finance law of the 2023 financial year made provision for tax and customs measures to attract investment<sup>269</sup> focusing mainly on support to local production, facilitating access to land in order to promote imple-

<sup>268</sup> <https://www.legicam.cm/index.php/p/actualites>.

<sup>269</sup> <https://www.minpmeesa.cm/site/inhoud/uploads/2023/07/Bulletin-dinformations-du-04-mai-2023-version-depp.pdf>.

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mentation of second-generation agriculture as well as tax exemption and taxes for enterprises operating in the agro-industrial and wood sectors. In order to promote transformation of raw material, this law provides for a range of measures including a 30% reduction in the tax base for excise duties proportional to the value of the good for drinks produced using local raw material.

**792-** To strengthen the mechanism for promoting the agriculture, livestock and fishery sectors, in addition to specific incentives, the said law provides various general incentives by way of tax exemptions such as registration fees on transfer of agricultural land and loan agreements. To limit the importation of products that can be produced locally, this law increases excise duty on some imported goods such as beer made from malt, grape wine, fermented drinks and other mixtures of fermented or non-fermented drinks, excluding only ethyl alcohol for medical use.

## B: Incentives by MINJEC

**793-** In addition to counselling youths notably through the multipurpose youth empowerment centres (CMPJ), MINJEC provided support to 75 youths in difficulty to establish micro income-generating activities. Moreover, MINJEC developed and equipped 187 economic clusters and 168 pioneer second generation villages, funded 10 youth projects, trained and supported 12 youths within the framework of the Youth Socio-economic Integration Project through the creation of micro enterprises for the production of sports equipment as well as trained and supported 71 youth in junior enterprises within the CMPJ.

**794-** MINJEC also settled 100 youths in Yaounde and Douala under the "Digital Youth Service Center (DYSC)" project, funded 233 projects of former street children and 78 projects developed by youths from disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration centres as well as 28 co-enterprise projects between youths in the diaspora and their counterparts in the country under the "Diaspora and Local Youth Joint-venture" initiative. These 28 projects were funded to the tune of CFAF 418,000,000<sup>270</sup>. Through the Support programme to rural and urban youth, MINJEC organised 2 entrepreneurial and technical capacity building sessions for 505 youths and 5 awareness-raising sessions for young people in the diaspora in Europe

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<sup>270</sup>About 638,167.94 Euros.

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on Government projects and programmes implemented on their behalf (1 200 youths of the diaspora were impacted). As part of the “Youth Connekt Cameroon” initiative, 113 youth-led enterprises were created and 610,000 youths were connected to diverse opportunities.

## **C: Incentives adopted by the Investment Promotion Agency**

**795-** Out of the 20 agreements targeted in 2023, the Investment Promotion Agency (IPA) signed 38 agreements with investors of Cameroonian, Chinese, Lebanese, Sudanese, Indian and Belgian nationalities in several fields of activity and for 23,409 projected jobs. These fields include: hotel business, agrifood, manufacturing industry, tourism and leisure, construction material and poultry farming.

**796-** From 2014 to 31 December 2023, the IPA signed 348 agreements, generating 14,354 jobs out of 42,697 projected and CFAF 1764,800,000,000<sup>271</sup> out of CFAF 2,856,500,000,000<sup>272</sup> expected in investment.

## **D: Measures taken by the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Promotion Agency**

**797-** Regarding support to obtain approval for the private investment incentive scheme, 5 authorisation agreements were signed and 4 files were pending at the Ministry of Finance. Moreover, 13 lists of equipment and material to be imported by approved SMEs were co-signed by the Director General of Agency for the Promotion of Small and Medium –sized Enterprises (APME) and the Director General of Customs.

## **§4: the Principle of Transparency**

**798-** The principle of transparency was applied, especially in the extractive industries and public contracts sectors.

## **A: Transparency in the Extractive Industry**

**799-** The new mining code, which is the subject of Law No. 2023/14 of 19 December 2023 contains some innovations, Thus, Sections 107 to 111 of Chapter 6 on governance and transparency in the mining sector requires

<sup>271</sup> About 2,694,351, 145.04 Euros.

<sup>272</sup> About 4,361,068,702.29 Euros.

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holders of mining titles, among other things, to comply on the one hand with the principles of transparency by declaring all payments and on the other hand with international commitments made by the State of Cameroon, particularly those relating to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and the Kimberley Process.

**800-** In addition, the Code, toughens sanctions, strengthens the involvement of the State, allowing it to act through a mandated public body, lays down new categories (strategic mineral substances, collectors of precious and semi-precious mineral substances, mining waste titles, domestic quarries, etc.), enshrines a right of pre-emption for the State in relation to the sale of shares in mining companies, etc.

**801-** Furthermore, from 17 to 19 April 2023, a mission from the International Secretariat of the EITI visited Cameroon to support the country in the pre-validation of its compliance with the EITI. This involved ensuring transparency and accountability requirements in the management of extractive industries (oil, gas, mining sectors, etc.). On 10 August 2023, the *Training Workshop for Extractive Companies Out of the Reconciliation Scope for the Disclosure of Beneficial Owners* was held in Yaounde. During this workshop, participants were trained on the declaration of beneficial ownership.

**802-** On 15 September 2023 in Yaounde, the 16<sup>th</sup> EITI Report (for the year 2021)<sup>273</sup> was presented to the public. It revealed that revenues from extractive industries were on the rise. Indeed, extractive industries produced about CFAF 776,090,000,000<sup>274</sup> and the share reserved for the State amounted to CFAF 589,350,000,000<sup>275</sup> compared to CFAF 535,180,000,000<sup>276</sup> in 2020. The oil sector remained the largest contributor, followed by the mining and quarrying sectors. With regard to the economy, extractive industries contributed 3.93% of the gross domestic product (GDP), 16.34% of budgetary resources and 31.15% of exports compared to 2.2% of the GDP, 16.61% of budgetary resources and 23.59% of exports in 2020.

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<sup>273</sup> <https://eiticameroon.org/post/3997>.

<sup>274</sup> About 1,184,870,229 Euros.

<sup>275</sup> About 899,770,992.37 Euros.

<sup>276</sup> About 817,068,702.29 Euros.

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**803-** Moreover, as part of its mandate to levy the combined flat-rate mining tax and the export duty on gold on behalf of the State from operators engaged in semi-mechanisation, the National Mining Corporation collected 529,702.26 grams of gold from 16 July 2021 (date of the start of its activities) to 31 December 2023 compared to about 777,000 grams collected previously over a period of nearly 10 years.

## **B: Transparency in the Management of Public Contracts**

**804-** Through the E-Procurement project, Ministry of Public Contracts (MIN-MAP) continued the operationalisation of the Cameroon Online E-Procurement System (COLEPS) platform by supporting project owners and delegated project owners with the online programming of 8,696 contracts. A total of 80 project owners and delegated project owners (compared to 65 in 2022) were supported, including ministries, public institutions, projects and programmes and RLAs. This allowed for the publication of 322 calls for tender and the related tender files and the award of 162 contracts exclusively electronically, compared to 132 calls for tender and 111 contracts awarded in 2022. In addition, 141 stakeholders were trained on the use of COLEPS.

**805-** As provided for by Section 53 (1) of the Public Contracts Code, MIN-MAP launched 10 calls for applications for the categorisation of enterprises and firms in the following fields: roads, buildings and collective equipment, electrical energy, hydraulics and telecommunications. Out of a total of 225 categorisation requests submitted by 130 companies, 212 were granted.

**806-** Moreover, in September 2023, MINMAP updated the inventory of contracts programmed for the 2023 financial year, that is 8,696 contracts for a cumulative amount of CFAF 1,625,000,000,000<sup>277</sup>.

## **SECTION 2: COMBATING CORRUPTION AND MISAPPROPRIATION OF PUBLIC PROPERTY**

**807-** The normative framework for combating corruption and misappropriation of public property was strengthened. Preventive and repressive measures were put in place and initiatives relating to prevention, repression, cooperation, control, assistance, counselling and investigation were taken. The main stakeholders involved were the National Anti-Corruption

<sup>277</sup> About 2,480, 916,030.53 Euros.

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Commission (NACC), the Supreme State Audit (CONSUPE), the National Agency for Financial Investigation (ANIF), the MINMAP and courts including the Audit Bench of the Supreme Court and the Special Criminal Court (SCC).

## §1: Strengthening the Normative Framework

**808-** On 27 September 2023, the Prime Minister signed Decree No. 2023/06801/CAB/PM to lay down the modalities for implementing Section L8 *quinquies* of the general tax code relating to transparency of beneficial ownership. This Section, as written in the Finance law for 2023, prescribes, under pain of fine, the identification of beneficial owners, in particular by legal persons, the keeping of an updated register to this effect, the declaration to the taxation administration of the information relating to beneficial owners and the provision by beneficial owners of all the information necessary for their identification...

## §2: Preventive Measures

**809-** These include in-service training, awareness-raising, information and communication.

### A: In-service Training

**810- CONSUPE** organized 7 workshops for its personnel on: the Finance Law and the Circular on the instructions relating to the implementation of the finance laws, the monitoring and control of the execution of the budget of the State and other Public Entities; the new legal framework for public contracts in Cameroon; the INTOSAI<sup>278</sup> framework of professional declarations (8-12 July 2023, 35 participants); the drafting of the rapporteur's report before the Budgetary and Financial Disciplinary Council (BFDC) and the statement of defence before the administrative courts (21-24 May 2023, 35 participants); the performance audit applied in the mining sector; the job process, ethics and deontology within CONSUPE; and the implementation of precautionary measures during audits (16-18 October 2023, 35 participants).

**811-** CONSUPE also organised training for other stakeholders including authorising officers, credit managers and internal auditors. Thus, regarding the Cameroon Cotton Development Company (SODECOTON),

<sup>278</sup> International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions.

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317 staff were trained, during 6 series of workshops in Garoua, Maroua and Touboro, on the notions of irregularities, mismanagement, responsibilities and prejudice in the management of a public company, as well as 30 internal auditors of the audit and internal control division on the detection of fraud (13-16 November 2023 in Garoua). In addition, 100 administrators, directors and heads of departments of the Douala Port Authority (PAD) received participated in 3 training workshops on the concepts of irregularities, mismanagement, responsibilities and prejudice in the management of a public company. From 18 to 22 December 2024, a training workshop on methodology and techniques of verification was held in Yaounde for 28 inspectors from different ministries.

**812-** To implement the Technical Assistance Protocol by CONSUPE to SODECOTON's internal audit service, internal audit guidelines were finalised, a procedure manual was adopted, the mapping of its organisational risks was updated and the verification tools were approved.

**813-** As far as ANIF is concerned, the following training sessions were carried out for its personnel: the contribution of the ISO 37001 Standard to combating corruption and improving governance (2 analysts, from 2 to 6 October 2023 in Ebolowa); investigation on crypto currencies (12 analysts, from 27 February to 1 March 2023 in Yaounde); money laundering from foreign trade (1 analyst, 10 to 14 July 2023 in Yaounde); the fight against money laundering and terrorism financing (2 analysts, 31 July to 4 August 2023 in Yaoundé).

**814- NACC** staff participated in 4 capacity building sessions on the modalities of the preparation, execution and monitoring of the public investment budget (Mbankomo, 4 to 5 April 2023, 15 executives), coaching on professional relations (Douala, 14 and 15 April 2023, 2 executive assistants) and in-depth investigations into the confiscation of stolen assets (online, 22 May to 2 June 2023, 2 executives).

**815-** In addition, NACC organized 11 trainings for public institutions on the following themes: Rapid Results Initiatives (Douala, 22 and 25 March 2023, 24 senior staff from the Douala City Council, members of the Local Anti-Corruption Committee-LACC); Integrity and Anti-Corruption Technique- (Yaounde, 13 April 2023, 20 members of the LACC and staff of MINEDUB Inspectorate General); *Do not touch what does not belong to you* (Lolodorf, 17 June 2023, 1,000 pastors' wives); Corruption and

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related offences, the role of communication in the fight against corruption and the development of personal and collective integrity in a company (Ngaoundere, 11 to 13 July 2023, 150 chairpersons of LACCs); Anti-Corruption Techniques (Yaounde, 5 and 6 November 2023, 30 members of the LACC and heads of central services and regional offices); Promotion of integrity within the University of Buea (Buea, 21 November 2023, 70 university officials); AC Techniques (Yaounde, 14 and 15 November 2023, 22 LACC members and executives from the National Port Authority NPA) ; Mismanagement, methodology for collecting information and preparing the annual Anti-Corruption report and integrity of a team (Ebolowa, 7 to 9 December 2023, 150 Chairpersons of LACCs); AC Techniques (Yaounde, 13 and 14 December 2023, 8 members of the MINMAP LACC)

## B: Awareness-raising, Information and Communication

**816-** During the 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the Government Action Show (SAGO) organised from 22 to 29 July 2023 in Yaounde, **CONSUPE** raised public awareness on the need to participate in the protection of public property through reporting acts affecting public property and, on the need to make good use of public property.

**817-** In addition, **NACC** raised awareness on corruption through campaigns, dedicated days, anti-corruption clinics<sup>279</sup>, sports, economic, cultural and other activities. Thus, the “Corruption-free 2023 Senatorial elections” campaign, held from 27 February to 5 March 2023 in all regions except the NorthWest due to security constraints, targeted stakeholders of the electoral process.

**818-** During the commemoration of the 2023 Commonwealth Day, NACC hosted a stand in Yaounde to mobilize the population to fight against corruption. Regarding anti-corruption clinics, one held from 17 to 21 April 2023 in Bafoussam where 78 denunciations was investigated and 11 people were caught red-handed in act of corruption and brought before courts. The other clinic held from 2 to 6 October 2023 in Bertoua where 54 complaints were registered and 4 people were brought before courts. From 1 to 12 November 2023 in Douala, NACC took part in the “2023 International Business and Trade Fair”, during which it distributed 6,000 copies

<sup>279</sup> This is a technique of temporary and partial relocation of NACC services to a specific locality, other than its official headquarters, in order to better address denunciation of acts and practices of corruption identified among the populations of the said locality.

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of the NACC Newsletter, 5,000 Flyers on the use of the phone as a weapon to denounce corruption, 5,000 stickers on how to expose corrupt practices, 2,000 leaflets on the risks incurred by companies in terms of corruption and 40 copies of the 2022 Anti-Corruption Report.

**819-** CONAC sensitised 10,000 people through flyers distributed to athletes and spectators during the 23<sup>rd</sup> edition of the University Games from 29 April to 6 May 2023 in Ngaoundere.

**820-** During the 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the Finals of the National School Games Federation (FENASCO) B, from 9 to 16 June 2023 in Douala, NACC distributed 2,000 leaflets on the promotion of integrity, 2,000 flyers on the complaint procedure 1,000 stickers bearing its toll-free number (1517) as well as copies of the 72<sup>nd</sup> and 73<sup>rd</sup> editions of CONAC Newsletter to athletes, technical coaches, officials and the public. As concerns FENASCO A Games, from 29 July to 5 August 2023 in Garoua and Gaschiga, NACC distributed 200 NACC bags, 200 polo shirts, nearly 4,000 leaflets on the promotion of integrity, 4,000 flyers bearing NACC contact details, 1,200 copies of the NACC Newsletter as well as numerous stickers bearing its toll-free number.

**821-** In addition, NACC produced and broadcasted, in English and in French, 22 editions of the programmes of *Espace CONAC Magazine Radio* on themes related to corruption and uncivil behaviour<sup>280</sup>. Furthermore, 9 editions of *Espace CONAC Magazine Télévision* were produced and broadcasted on national television on several topics<sup>281</sup>. Similarly, 8 editions of *Espace CONAC Alerte Télévision* were produced and broadcast

<sup>280</sup> Sensitising the youth on integrity, 2023 senatorial elections without corruption, working visit of the Cameroonian Parliamentary Network to NACC in the fight against Corruption, corruption in public contracts, Bafoussam anti-corruption clinic, NACC at the Ngaoundere University Games, the deployment of integrity clubs at the University Games, FENASCO B 2023, NACC raises awareness, local radios and the fight against corruption, African Anti-Corruption Day in Ngaoundere, FENASCO A 2023, NACC at the frontline, corruption-free 2023 back to school, phase 2 corruption-free 2023 back to school: repression, Bertoua anti-corruption clinic, corruption at the Mandjou toll gate, 2022 Anti-Corruption Report, forum for information and exchanges on combating corruption at the National Assembly, NACC advocates for the adoption of an anti-corruption law, advocacy for an anti-corruption law, NACC on the frontline, strengthening the anti-corruption system: what to do, and commemoration of the 2023 International Anti-Corruption Day at Ebolowa.

<sup>281</sup> Corruption and uncivil behaviour, NACC spurs Kribi through the integrity quiz, NACC Anti-corruption Clinic in Bafoussam, NACC at the Ngaoundere University Games, celebration of the 7th edition of the African Anti-Corruption Day, NACC raises awareness in local languages on community radio stations, NACC for a corruption-free back to school, and combating corruption: the magic of NACC anti-corruption clinics.

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on CRTV notably on money laundering<sup>282</sup>. Regarding *Espace CONAC Alerte Radio*, 4 editions were produced and broadcasted on the CRTV national station on various themes such as joint action and accessory to misappropriation of public property, money laundering, corruption and terrorism financing. Moreover, the CONAC Newsletter was produced monthly, in 5,000 copies, totalling 12 editions.

**822-** From 1 July 2023, NACC began broadcasting anti-corruption messages in local languages via community radio stations across the 10 regions. The official launch of this new communication approach in the fight against corruption and the promotion of integrity took place on 29 and 30 June 2023, concomitantly in the East and West Regions.

## §2: Control, Assistance Counselling and Investigation Initiatives

**823-** These initiatives were led by ANIF, NACC, CONSUPE, the Audit Bench of the Supreme Court and MINMAP.

### A: ANIF Actions

**824-** ANIF received 930 reports on suspicious activity (as against 785 in 2020, 771 in 2021 and 869 in 2022) from credit institutions, other enterprises and related professions. Overall, 504 files were forwarded, including 140 to judicial authorities (compared to 98 in 2020, 373 in 2021 and 103 in 2022), 154 to investigation authorities (Police and Gendarmerie) (compared to 140 in 2022), 191 to other public administrations compared to 148 in 2022. Based on files forwarded by ANIF, the Directorate General of Taxation (DGT) recovered the sum of CFAF 70,000,000<sup>283</sup>.

### B: NACC Actions

**825-** NACC received reports in the following ways: toll-free number 1517 (2,566 cases, 1,245 of which related to corruption); *WhatsApp* number -656 26 26 82 (2,260 written reports, 161 of which related to corruption and similar offences, and 535 calls, 31 of which were forwarded to the hotlines of the administrations concerned); *e-mail* address: info@conac.cm (770, 277 of which related to corruption and 123 e-mails from CONAC's

<sup>282</sup> Joint action of misappropriation of public property, accessory of misappropriation of public property, corruption and terrorism financing, tax fraud, false declaration, bribes, failure to declare conflict of interest.

<sup>283</sup> About 106,870.23 Euros.

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international partners); and administrative letters (3,273, 1,248 of which were not related to corruption).

**826-** To follow up on the reports, NACC on the one hand initiated 35 actions through rapid intervention (AIR) and after investigations, 23 reports were founded, for which the persons concerned were either placed at the disposal of the judicial police or were subject to administrative sanctions. On the other hand, at the end of its field visits, NACC finalised 16 investigations which resulted in reports validated by its coordination committee. These reports were accompanied by recommendations to the relevant authorities.

**827-** Following these actions, NACC also initiated 13 judicial proceedings relating to active corruption, misappropriation of public property and usurpation of qualification which resulted in 7 judgments including 4 for which the accused persons were convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for corruption. In the other 3 cases, the defendants were found not guilty.

## C: CONSUPE Actions

**828-** CONSUPE conducted 22 control and verification missions within public administrations, public corporations, mixed corporations, public establishments, specific organizations and RLAs. About 15 cross-checking missions were undertaken. In addition, 9 audit mission reports were forwarded to the Presidency of the Republic. Moreover, 28 activity reports of internal audit bodies of public administrations and establishments were examined.

**829-** Some 472 reports were registered (compared to 462 in 2022) and processed by relevant operational units. The reports concerned acts committed in public administration, public corporations, public establishments, private legal persons operating in the public contracts sector and RLAs. Finally, CONSUPE conducted 5 data collection missions relating to enforcement of sanctions passed by the BFDC against dishonest managers. At the end of their deliberations, it was found that recovery of misappropriated fund stood at CFAF 758,630,205<sup>284</sup> out of CFAF 1 14,000,939, 627<sup>285</sup> (that is a recovery rate of 0.66%).

## D: Activities of the Audit Bench of the Supreme Court

<sup>284</sup> About 1,158,214.05 Euros.

<sup>285</sup> About 174,047,236.07 Euros.

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**830-** The activities concerned controls, audit and certifications of public accounts.

## 1) Controls

**831-** The table below indicates the controls carried out.

**Table 1: Controls carried out in 2023**

	Division in charge of controlling and ruling on accounts produced by State accountants	Division in charge of controlling and ruling on accounts produced by accountants of public establishments of the State	Division in charge of controlling and ruling on accounts produced by accountants of regional and local authorities	Division in charge of controlling and ruling on accounts produced by public and semi-public enterprises=
Investigation reports	35	178	397	0
Reports on scrutiny of management	0	1	2	7
Judgments	35	139	57	/

**Source:** Audit Bench of the Supreme Court

## 2) Audit and Certification of Public Accounts

**832-** During the 2021 financial year, the Audit Bench certified data from 27 forms of revenue declaration of the extractive sector of the Directorate General of Taxation (DGI), 10 from the Directorate General of Customs and 1 from the Directorate General of Treasury, financial and monetary cooperation. Also at the request of financial partners, the Audit Bench carried out 15 accounting and financial audit missions for projects or programmes<sup>286</sup>.

<sup>286</sup> Value chain development project for livestock and fishing, 2022 financial year; Value chain development programme for agriculture, 2022 financial year; Transport Sector Support Programme (phase 2), rehabilitation of the Yaounde - Bafoussam - Babadjou Road, 2022 financial year; Transport Sector Support Programme (phase 1), development of the Batchenga-Ntui-Yoko-Lena Road, 2020, 2021 and 2022 Financial years; feasibility studies for extension of the Cameroon Chad Railway line, 2022 financial year; securing the electricity metering services in Cameroon, 2021 Financial year; Addendum: Study of the Project to Support Entrepreneurship and Skills Development for Competitiveness and Job Creation in the Construction Sectors, 2022 financial year; Project to develop the Ketta-Djoum road and facilitate transport on the Yaounde-Brazzaville corridor, phase 2, 2022 financial year; Integrated Development and Climate Change Adaptation Programme in the Niger Basin, 2022 Financial year; Bamenda-Manfe-Ekok-Enugu (Cameroon)-Enugu (Nigeria) Transport Facilitation Road Project, 2022 Financial year; Studies of a Programme of 350 simplified drinking water supply

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These missions were completed with 26 reports on financial statements and internal control.

**833-** Regarding assistance to Parliament, the Audit Bench certified the general account of the State for the 2022 financial year with reservation and 12 observations and noted the lack of significant progress and shortcomings already mentioned from previous evaluations. Having received the 2022 Settlement Bill, the Audit Bench formulated 29 observations on the form and the merits.

## E: MINMAP Actions

**834-** In addition to controls carried out by central commissions in charge of market control, control of contract award took place with 2 missions deployed to 537 project owners and delegated project owners from public administrations and public enterprises compared to 474 in 2022. By reviewing the procedures carried out by project owners and delegated project owners, including public tender boards assigned with them, these missions made it possible to rectify procedures deemed not compliant and to make various recommendations<sup>287</sup>. Particularly with regard to the evaluation of the practical execution of public contracts, activities of general control of contracts awarded in 2023 and specific control of major infrastructure projects were recorded.

**835-** With regard to general control especially control of documents, which represents 55% of these control activities, MINMAP central brigades processed 526 final statements for infrastructure contracts and final invoices for other services for a total amount of CFAF 68,787,170,029<sup>288</sup>. As for field control, MINMAP services conducted nearly 300 field monitoring missions, both routine and unannounced. This field missions led to the control of 1,305 contracts worth CFAF 1,349,988,850,835<sup>289</sup> that is 629 infrastructure contracts and 676 contracts relating to supplies and services.

networks in rural areas, 2022 financial year; Transport Sector Support Programme (Phase 3): Construction of the Ring Road, Phase 1, 2022 Financial Year; Project to strengthen and extend the electricity transmission and distribution networks, 2022 Financial year; Lom Pangar Hydroelectric Development Project.

<sup>287</sup> Project maturation and programming them systematically before launch, complying with contract award plans, publishing tender notices in the Public contracts Journal, complying with regulatory contract award deadlines.

<sup>288</sup> About 105,018,580.20 Euros.

<sup>289</sup> About 2,061,051,680.66 Euros.

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**836-** Controls were carried out on documents and on the field for the following major infrastructure projects: phase 2 of the rehabilitation of the East entry into the city of Douala, 2 phase of the construction of the building of technical services of the Douala City Council; construction of the Douala 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary city at Bonapriso; construction of sections of the Douala-Bonepoupa and Bonepoupa-Yabassi roads; construction of the Limbe Regional Hospital high-standard ward ; construction of the Limbe market (New-town), and construction of the Limbe city council hall.

**837-** These controls revealed progress in terms of effectiveness and improvement in the quality of work or services in the field, reduction of amendments with financial impact, and fictitious contracts and payment for such brought under control.

**838-** For the 2023 financial year, 50 companies were excluded from public contracts due to various reasons related to fraud, corruption and bad practices, 2 project owners as well as several chairpersons and members of tender boards and bid evaluation sub-committee were excluded. To encourage reporting of misconduct, MINMAP has maintained its toll-free numbers: 288 20 06 06, 673 20 57 25 and 699 37 07 48.

**839-** Finally, for proper observance of the exemptions granted for exceptional procedures, the public contracts regulatory authority maintained the threshold for exceptional mutual agreement procedures at 8.9%, below the maximum threshold of 10% set by international standards

## §4: Cooperation and Collaboration Initiatives

**840-** CONSUPE took part in deliberations of the Commission for Compensation of victims of Illegal Detention, Audit Committees set up by the Head of Government and investigation committees on technical matters in the Prime Minister's Office. CONSUPE also took part in the Regional Institutional Strengthening Committee in Kinshasa (13-14 December 2023) and the INTOSAI Steering Committee in Vienna (20-21 November 2023).

**841-** NACC participated in the following meetings and workshops on combating corruption and cross-border crime: the Specialised Meeting on economic and financial crime in Central Africa (by video conference, organised from 17 to 18 January 2023 by INTERPOL's Regional Bureau for Cen-

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tral Africa), the Continental Workshop on the Formation of the African Anti-Corruption Research Network in Arusha (organised from 9 to 11 May 2023 by the African Union Advisory Board Against Corruption) and the 1<sup>st</sup> session of the Pan-African Counter-Corruption Assembly in Stellenbosch (organised from 2 to 3 November 2023 by the African Regional Centre of Excellence in Integrity). NACC interacted at the national level with various institutions<sup>290</sup> in Yaounde.

## §5: Repressive Initiatives

**842-** These included administrative and judicial sanctions.

### A: Administrative Sanctions

**843-** Within 31 sessions held including 9 special pre-deliberation sessions, BFDC examined 164 files. In all, 8 managers were brought before this body, that is 7 relating to the Education II project and 1 relating to files for the residual asset management file by the C.A. firm At the end of these sessions, BFDC delivered 28 decisions of which 4 acquittals and 23 decisions imposing different penalties for prejudice amounting to CFAF 13,695,124,723<sup>291</sup> as balance due and CFAF 23,100,000<sup>292</sup> as special fine. BFDC Permanent Secretariat received 3 disciplinary files, including one from the Presidency of the Republic relating to the control and verification mission of the Integrated Support Programme for stakeholders of the informal sector and 2 from MINDDEVEL concerning the audit missions of certain councils. Defenders of the interests of the State produced 6 replies to actions brought before administrative court for the annulment of decisions pronounced by the BFDC.

<sup>290</sup> Working session between NACC President and the Director General of SIC, on strengthening Anti-Corruption (AC) at SIC, on 30 January 2023; Installation of members of the MINEDUB LACC on 13 April 2023; Participation of NACC at the 4th Round Table of the Forum on Democracy under the theme: Inclusiveness as the driver of Democratic Governance, on 2 August 2023, organised by UNCHRD-CA; Working session with Electricity Sector Regulatory Agency (ARSEL) executives on the implementation of a RRI on the theme "Allocation, Management and Monitoring of Administrative Purchase Orders", on 9 November 2023; Working session on the fight against illicit financial flows with CONSUPE executives, on 18 November 2023; consultation with UCAC, on 29 November 2023, on the implementation of Certification in the fight against fraud and corruption in organisations in Central Africa; Review with MINEPAT on 12 December 2023, of the implementation of the NDS30 in the "Governance and Sovereignty" sector; Launch of the public contracts award conferences for the 2024 Financial year with MINMAP on 19 December 2023.

<sup>291</sup> About 20,908,587.36 Euros.

<sup>292</sup> About 35,267.18 Euros.

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## B: Prosecution

**844-** In addition to 5 cases relating to mismanagement that were under investigation by the Audit Bench of the Supreme Court, the SCC and other courts heard cases related to corruption and misappropriation of public property.

### 1) Prosecution before the Special Criminal Court

**845-** Cases at the level of preliminary inquiry at the SCC are presented below:

**Table 2: Cases at the level of preliminary inquiry since 2019**

No. Year	Number of cases at the level of preliminary inquiry	Number of cases heard	Number of persons brought before the SCC	Number of accused who benefited from no-case rulings
2019	54	27	104	7
2020	34	18	90	6
2021	49	30	60	10
2022	43	16	46	10
2023	47	17	25	13

**Source:** SCC

**846-** The table below presents cases at trial level before the SCC.

**Table 3: Trial Proceedings since 2019**

Number Year	Number of cases enlisted	Number of judgments rendered	Number of convictions	Number of discharges and acquittals	Number of discontinued proceedings
2019	66	19	48	18	6
2020	65	20	43	64	19
2021	73	31	37	16	4
2022	68	27	34	12	1
2023	62	34	45	15	1

**Source:** SCC

**847-** For illustrative purposes, by judgment No. 19/CRIM/TCS in the Case *The People v H.W. And I.A.*, the SCC, acquitted **I.A.**, accused of accessory to misappropriation of public property for want of evidence, and found H.W guilty of misappropriation of public property amounting to CFAF 120,136,000<sup>293</sup> and sentenced them to 20 years imprisonment.

<sup>293</sup> About 183,413.74 Euros.

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**848-** In total, the sum of CFAF 207,699,377<sup>294</sup> was recovered as against CFAF 1,265,329,640<sup>295</sup> in 2022 and CFAF 1,743,288,327<sup>296</sup> in 2021.

## 2) Prosecution before other Courts

**849-** Other courts (CFI, HC, Courts of Appeal and Supreme Court) heard cases relating to corruption (Table 4) and misappropriation of public property (Table 5).

**Table 4: Judgments delivered in matters of Corruption**

No. Year	Number of investigations opened	Number of files at the level of preliminary inquiry	Number of judgments rendered	Number of convictions	Number of discharges and acquittals
2019	20	2	14	08	1
2020	73	6	69	38	20
2021	45	3	44	10	2
2022	17	2	29	17	0
2023	20	4	15	6	1

**Source:** MINJUSTICE

**Table 5: Judgments in Matters of Misappropriation of Public Property**

No. Year	Number of investigations opened	Number of files at the level of preliminary inquiry	Number of judgments rendered	Number of convictions	Number of discharges and acquittals
2019	135	130	94	52	24
2020	148	141	169	57	17
2021	185	171	140	86	2
2022	122	122	83	38	20
2023	138	145	136	60	49

**Source:** MINJUSTICE

<sup>294</sup> About 317,098.29 Euros.

<sup>295</sup> About 1,931,800.98 Euros.

<sup>296</sup> About 2,661,508.90 Euros.

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**850-** The adoption of a new Mining Code, the establishment of a new employers' organisation, investment incentives as well as awareness-raising, investigations, controls, audits and repression were, among other measures, the pillars to improve the quality of governance and combat corruption and misappropriation of public property. In spite of these successes, there were challenges including poor recovery of fines for the State.

# CHAPTER 3

## DETENTION CONDITIONS



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**851-** Improvement of detention conditions was a concern for which Government continued to provide multifaceted responses, taking into account the number of detainees. Measures were taken on the development of prison resources, enhancement of the treatment of prisoners, their environment and preparation for social reintegration, as well as controls and visits to prisons by several stakeholders.

## SECTION 1: OVERVIEW OF THE PRISON POPULATION

**852-** In 2023, the prison population was assessed through the overall situation and the specific situation of some prisoners.

### §1: Global View of the Prison Population

**853-** The number of prisoners increased from 32,998 in 2022 to 35,438 in 2023, an increase of 2,440. The capacity of the 76 functional prisons stood at 20,955 beds compared to 19,070 in 2022. With the rise in the number of prisoners, the average occupancy rate of prisons remained a concern, though it dropped slightly from 173% in 2022 to 169.114% in 2023. The proportion of prisoners with a bed also dropped from 15.27% in 2022 to 14.37% in 2023.

**854-** The North West Region remained the Region with the lowest occupancy rate, with 701 prisoners for a capacity of 2,000 beds (35.05%).

**855-** Prisons had different occupancy rates: with capacities of 500, 400 and 250 beds, the fYoko, Tchollire II and Mora main prisons had 182, 79 and 240 prisoners respectively, or occupancy rates of 36.4%, 19.75% and 96%. Meanwhile, with a capacity of 500 beds, the Garoua Central Prison had 1,691 prisoners or an occupancy rate of 338.2%.

**856-** The number of detainees awaiting trial increased from 19,054 in 2022 to 20,410 in 2023, while the number convicts increased from 13,944 in 2022 to 15,028 in 2023, an increase of 1,356 and 1,084 respectively. The following table provides statistical data on detainees by Region:

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**Table 1: Statistics of detainees awaiting trial by Region as at 31 December 2023**

REGION	DETAINEES-AWAITING TRIAL								TOTAL
	MEN		WOMEN		MINORS				
					BOYS		GIRLS		
	N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F	
Adamawa	826	51	21	0	46	2	1	0	947
Centre	4,897	55	297	1	279	5	5	0	5,539
East	1,125	121	52	2	80	12	1	0	1,393
Far North	1,433	245	64	4	71	6	0	0	1,823
Littoral	4,062	62	127	6	102	12	2	0	4,373
North	1,310	141	15	6	34	3	2	0	1,511
North West	638	7	29	0	27	0	0	0	701
West	1,678	3	52	0	94	0	3	0	1,830
South	701	14	22	1	35	0	2	0	775
South West	1,314	96	55	1	33	2	6	1	1,508
Overall Total	17,984	795	734	21	801	42	22	1	20,400

**Source:** MINJUSTICE/DAPEN

**N:** Nationals

**F:** Foreigners

**857-** The highest numbers of convicts were in the Centre and Littoral Regions, with 3,600 and 2,696 respectively, while the lowest numbers were in the North West (435) and South (636) Regions. It should be noted that the number of convicts in the South West Region increased from 935 in 2022 to 1,159 in 2023. Some prisons had more convicts than suspects: Garoua Central Prison (744 convicts and 562 suspects) and Abong-Mbang Main Prison (260 convicts and 189 suspects) Some prisons housed only for convicts, such as the Sa'a (126) and Yoko (182) Main Prisons, the Doukoula (48), Makary (62) and Doume (78) Secondary Prisons.

**858-** The overall situation of convicts is shown in the table below:

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**Table 2: Statistics of Convicts by Region as at 31 December 2023**

REGION	CONVICTS								TOTAL
	MEN		WOMEN		MINORS				
					BOYS		GIRLS		
N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F		
Adamawa	905	87	14	0	22	0	1	0	1,029
Centre	3,424	21	94	4	56	0	1	0	3,600
East	1082	96	28	4	10	2	0	0	1,222
Far North	1,382	85	22	1	23	4	0	0	1,517
Littoral	2,578	38	68	0	11	0	1	0	2,696
North	1,176	121	20	0	10	0	0	0	1,327
North West	417	2	12	0	4	0	0	0	435
West	1,346	1	28	0	31	0	1	0	1,407
South	604	11	10	0	10	1	0	0	636
South West	1,076	45	23	1	14	0	0	0	1,159
Overall Total	13,990	507	319	10	191	7	4	0	15,028

**Source:** MINJUSTICE/DAPEN

## §2: Overview of Specific Groups of Prisoners

**859-** Women, minors and foreigners were the main specific groups of the prison population.

### A: Female Detainees

**860-** The number of women increased from 935 in 2022 to 1,083 in 2023, that is, 3.05% of the prison population compared to 2.83% in 2022.

**861-** There were 755 female suspects and 329 female convicts. The Far North, Centre and Littoral Regions had the highest number (91; 396; and 201 respectively), while the lowest proportion was in the South (33) and Adamawa (34) Regions.

**862-** The following table provides information on women in custody:

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**Table 3: Statistics of Women in Prison Custody as at 31 December 2023**

REGION	FEMALE DETAINEES		FEMALE convicts		TOTAL
	N	F	N	F	
Adamawa	21	0	14	0	35
Centre	297	1	94	4	396
East	52	2	28	4	86
Far North	64	4	22	1	91
Littoral	127	6	68	0	201
North	15	6	20	0	41
North West	29	0	12	0	41
West	52	0	28	0	80
South	22	1	10	0	33
South West	55	1	23	1	80
Overall Total	734	21	319	10	1,084

**Source:** MINJUSTICE/DAPEN

**863-** Of the 1,083 women in prison, 24 were accompanied by their children and 14 were pregnant. This was challenging, given the specific needs (food, health and clothing) of the women concerned and their children.

## **B: Juvenile Detainees**

**864-** Analysis of the table below shows that the number of minors increased from 982 in 2022 to 1,068 in 2023. Out of the 1,068 minors, 202 were convicts, representing 18.92% while 866 were awaiting trial, representing 81.08%. The Centre (346), West (129), Littoral (128), East (105) and Far North Regions (104) had the highest number of minors, respectively representing 32.39%, 12.07%, 11.98%, 9.83% and 9.73%, while the North West Region had the lowest number (31), representing 2.90%. Some prisons did not have separate wards for minors<sup>297</sup>, while others did not have any minors<sup>298</sup>.

**865-** The table below contains.

<sup>297</sup> This was the case of the Sa'a, Kousseri, Makary, Guider, Yabassi, Bazou, Nanga-Eboko, Meiganga, Tibati, Yokadouma and Batouri Main and Secondary Prisons, etc.

<sup>298</sup> These included the Douala Ngoma Central Prison, the Tchollire, Nkambe, Yoko, Mbengwi, Wum, Kumbo and the Secondary Prison of Ngambe Main Prisons.

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**Table 4: Statistics on Minors in Prison Custody as at 31 December 2023**

REGION	DETAINEES AWAITING TRIAL				DETAINEES CONVICTED				TOTAL
	BOYS		GIRLS		BOYS		GIRLS		
	N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F	
Adamawa	46	2	1	0	22	0	1	0	72
Centre	279	5	5	0	56	0	1	0	346
East	80	12	1	0	10	2	0	0	105
Far North	71	6	0	0	23	4	0	0	104
Littoral	102	12	2	0	11	0	1	0	128
North	34	3	2	0	10	0	0	0	49
North West	27	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	31
West	94	0	3	0	31	0	1	0	129
South	35	0	2	0	10	1	0	0	48
South West	33	2	6	1	14	0	0	0	56
	801	42	22	1	191	7	4	0	1,068

**Source:** MINJUSTICE/DAPEN

## C: Foreign Detainees

**866-** As at 31 December 2023, there were 1,383 foreign detainees compared to 1,432 in 2022, of which 859 were awaiting trial and 524 convicted. There were 50 minors and 31 women. The Far North, East and North Regions had the highest number of foreign detainees: 100, 102 and 131 respectively.

**867-** There were 93 refugee detainees, all from the Central African Republic<sup>299</sup>.

## SECTION 2: DEVELOPING THE RESOURCES OF THE PENITENTIARY ADMINISTRATION

**868-** The budget allocation for The Penitentiary Administration increased from CFAF 22,372,037,000<sup>300</sup> in 2022 to CFAF 22,894,127,000<sup>301</sup> in 2023, representing an increase of CFAF522,090,000<sup>302</sup>. In addition to

<sup>299</sup> The Ebolowa and Ngaoundere Central Prisons respectively had 1 and 8 refugees, while the Doume, Betare Oya and Moloundou Secondary Prisons had 9, 9 and 4 respectively and the Batouri, Meiganga, Abong-Mbang, Yokadouma and Tchollire-1 Main Prisons respectively had 63, 28, 2, 9 and 17 refugee prisoners.

<sup>300</sup> About 34,155,781.68 Euros.

<sup>301</sup> About 34,952,865.65 Euros.

<sup>302</sup> About 797,083.97 Euros.

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the levers activated by Government for the development of material and infrastructural resources, the technical skills of the Penitentiary staff were consolidated although the staff strength was slightly reduced.

## §1: Slight Reduction in Staff Strength and Development of Technical Skills

**869-** Despite the slight decrease in the number of penitentiary staff, their capacities were developed as well as ethical standards.

### A: Slight Decrease in Penitentiary Staff Strength

**870-** There were 4,234 employees in 2023 compared to 4,335 in 2022, representing a decrease of 101. The following table shows a 1:9 ratio of staff/prisoners. The ratio included all penitentiary staff including staff assigned purely administrative tasks.

**871-** The table below shows the numerical strength of penitentiary staff:

**Table 5: Numerical Strength of Penitentiary Administration Staff as at 31 December 2023**

Grades	Staff		Total	Retired staff	
	M	W		M	W
AGPs	24	6	30	2	1
APPs	33	7	40	1	0
AP	102	31	133	7	2
AP stg	4	2	6		
Super IPs	9	2	11	10	0
IPPs	150	46	196	4	4
IP	98	23	121	0	0
IP stg	2	0	2		
GCPs	102	29	131	4	4
GCMs	681	291	972	3	0
GCP	153	45	198		
GCP stg	285	69	354	0	0
GPP	908	232	1 140	0	0
GMP	594	274	868	0	0
GP	28	14	42	0	0
Civils	19	0	19	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 192</b>	<b>1071</b>	<b>4 263</b>	<b>42</b>	
<b>Effectif total:</b>			<b>4 263</b>		

**Source :** MINJUSTICE

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## Key

AGPs (Administrator General Of Prisons), APPs (Senior Administrator of Prisons), Aps (Administrator of Prisons), APs stg (Trainee Administrator of Prisons), SIPs (Senior Superintendent of Prisons), IPPs (Principal Superintendent of Prisons), IPs (Superintendent of Prisons), IPs stg (Trainee Superintendent of Prisons), GCPPs (Senior Chief Warder of Prisons), GCMPs (Major Chief Warder of Prisons), GCPs (Chief Warder of Prisons), GCPs stg (Trainee Chief Warder of Prisons), GPPs (Senior Prisons Warder), GMPs (Major Prisons Warder), GPs (Prisons Warder).

**872-** In 2023, some 42 persons went on retirement.

## **B: Capacity Development of Penitentiary Administration Staff**

**873-** In addition to the 79 prison penitentiary staff who who received in-service training at the National School of Penitentiary Administration, 5 others were trained on the protection of child victims and witnesses. From 2 to 3 August 2023 during a workshop in Yaounde. 4 were trained on the protection of children in the Cameroonian criminal justice system, during a workshop organised in Bafoussam from 24 to 25 August 2023 by MINJUSTICE and 50 attended workshops on Human Rights and HIV and Tuberculosis, organised by GIZ with the technical support of MINJUSTICE, between September and October 2023.

## **C: Continued Penitentiary Staff Ethics**

**874-** During the Annual Meeting of Heads of Court of Appeal and Regional Delegates of Penitentiary Administration organised from 25 to 26 September 2023 by MINJUSTICE, the escort of detainees was discussed. During the occasion, participants focused on compliance with the ethical rules related to such escort.

**875-** Inspectorate General of Penitentiary Administration (IGAPEN) statistics show that 20 complaints were referred to the disciplinary bodies resulting in 822 observation letters and 113 queries addressed to penitentiary staff.

## **§2: Consolidation of Material and Infrastructural Resources**

**876-** Rolling stock and equipment were acquired for prisons and construction works on some prisons were completed or yet to be completed and other prisons were rehabilitated.

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## A: Allocation of Rolling Stock and Equipment to Some Prisons

**877-** Prisons were allocated equipment and rolling stock. In this connection, the Central Prison of Douala-Ngoma was provided with equipment and rolling stock (ambulance), while the Main Prisons of Tchollire I and Nanga-Eboko were provided with office furniture, and a grain mill. The Main Prison of Nanga Eboko acquired a kitchen and computer hardware. The Main Prison of Tchollire I received equipment for the sickbay, and a generator, while the Main Prison of Yaounde acquired rolling stock, and 1,502 uniforms and 1,502 pairs of Rangers shoes were distributed to penitentiary staff<sup>303</sup>.

## B: Construction Works

**878-** The following construction works were completed or were in progress: the different tracks and networks and the fence of the Douala-Ngoma Central Prison, a watchtower at the Monatele Main Prison, 2 watchtowers at the Bafoussam Central Prison, a borehole at the Bertoua Central Prison, a sickbay at the Kousseri and Ambam Main Prisons.

**879-** Through special funding of CFAF701,484,550<sup>304</sup> granted by the Presidency of the Republic, the following construction works were carried out: a single-storey building at the Douala Central Prison; a collapsed fence of the Yaounde Main Prison and an extension of the Poli Main Prison.

## C: Rehabilitation of Prisons

**880-** Rehabilitated works at prisons include the kitchen and the roof of the adjoining building of the Bafoussam Central Prison, the store of the Tchollire I Main Prison, the roof of the women's section of the Main Prison of Monatele, septic tanks and some works at the Sangmelima Main Prison and a borehole at the Nanga-Eboko Main Prison. Rehabilitation works were also carried out at the Bertoua Central Prison, the Meiganga and Kaele Main Prisons, and some sections of the Yaounde Main Prison.

<sup>303</sup> Culled from the statement of the Minister of State, Minister of Justice, Keeper of the Seals before the Finance Committee of the National Assembly in the 2024 financial year.

<sup>304</sup> About 1,070,968.78 Euros.

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## SECTION 3: IMPROVEMENT THE CARE OF PRISONERS AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT

**881-** In addition to the slight increase in the budget allocated to the treatment of prisoners, measures were taken to prepare them for social reintegration and to ensure hygiene, sanitation, water and electricity supply in prisons.

### §1: Food and Health Care of Detainees

**882-** Detainees were provided food and Healthcare

#### A: Food Supply to Detainees

**883-** The budget allocation for food supply to prisoners increased from CFAF5,015,000,000<sup>305</sup> in 2022 to CFAF5,415,000,000<sup>306</sup> in 2023. This slight increase was however diluted by the increase in the prison population. The daily ration per inmate decreased from CFAF431<sup>307</sup> in 2022 to CFAF412<sup>308</sup> FCFA in 2023. The frequency of food supply was 1 meal per day. Only patients and minors were entitled to 2 or 3 meals per day. The meals comprised mostly rice and groundnut soup, beans, wheat and corn fufu.

#### B: Health Care for Prisoners

**884-** The health coverage of prisoners was examined from a global perspective and on specific aspects.

#### 1) Global Health Coverage of Prisoners

**885-** The budget allocation for health increased slightly from CFAF1,050,000,000<sup>309</sup> in 2022 to CFAF1,150,000,000<sup>310</sup> in 2023. The annual cost of medical care per prisoner dropped slightly from CFAF33,335<sup>311</sup> in 2022 to CFAF31,943<sup>312</sup> FCFA.

<sup>305</sup> About 7,656,488.55 Euros

<sup>306</sup> About 8,267,175.57 Euros.

<sup>307</sup> About 0.66 Euros.

<sup>308</sup> About 0.63 Euros.

<sup>309</sup> About 1,603,053.44 Euros.

<sup>310</sup> About 1,755,725.19 Euros.

<sup>311</sup> About 50.89 Euros.

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## 2) Special Health Coverage of Prisoners

**886-** The State continued to manage communicable and non-communicable diseases. Most prisons had a sickbay, a chemist, a laboratory and at least one doctor.

**887-** There were 250 health staff in 2023 compared to 239 in 2022. There were some 23 doctors, 63 nurses, 128 nurse aids and 36 medical-health technicians (laboratory technicians). The ratios were one doctor per 2,400 prisoners, one nurse per 864 prisoners, and one nurse aid per 432 prisoners.

**888-** HIV-AIDS, Tuberculosis, Covid-19 and Cholera were among the communicable diseases. Regarding HIV-AIDS, out of 26,336 prisoners screened, 968 were HIV positive and started receiving treatment, representing a prevalence rate of 3.68% against 3.13% in 2022.

**889-** Out of 8,029 suspected cases, 608 prisoners were diagnosed with Tuberculosis (a prevalence rate of 7.57% compared to 15.43% in 2022) and started receiving treatment.

**890-** The number of prisoners suffering from cholera was higher in the Central Prisons of Yaounde and Douala. Out of 359 prisoners suspected of cholera, 355 were confirmed and started receiving treatment. With regard to covid-19, out of 5,648 prisoners screened, 187 tested positive, representing a prevalence rate of 0.28%. They started receiving treatment immediately.

**891-** The most common non-communicable diseases included malaria, drug addiction and mental illness. Some 652 prisoners were treated of malaria. There were 179 cases of mental illness and addiction, 98 old and 81 new cases, including 6 women.

**892-** Among the other common infections, there were respiratory diseases (15,552 cases, with a rate of 28.12%) and scabies (9,891 cases, representing a rate of 17.88%). The less common infections included high blood pressure and diabetes with rates of 1.67% and 0.49%, respectively.

**893-** Out of the 3,432 prisoners who received outpatient care, 701 were hospitalised in 2023 compared to 497 in 2022.

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<sup>312</sup> About 48.77 Euros.

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**894-** In 2023, there were 363 deaths in prisons, mostly related to diseases such as: HIV, Tuberculosis, Malaria and Cholera.

## **§2: Hygiene, Sanitation, Electricity and Water Supply Measures**

**895-** In addition to supply in running water, borehole water and electricity or generators, some prisons had fitted toilettes, sewage disposal systems and sometimes waste water treatment systems. These systems were consolidated. In this regard, a borehole was built in the Bertoua Central Prison and the Nanga-Eboko Main Prison. The Douala-Ngoma Central Prison was equipped with cubitainer.

## **§3: Preparing for the Social Reintegration of Prisoners**

**896-** As part of such preparation, emphasis was laid on schooling and training.

### **A: Schooling of Juvenile Prisoners**

**897-** In spite of the absence of a formal schooling system in prisons, provision was made for the education of minors under the supervision of Penitentiary Administration staff or other prisoners. With regard to results, out of 1,459 children in school, 2 passed the *Baccalauréat*, same as in 2022, and 3 passed the *Probatoire* compared to 2 in 2022, and 9 passed the *BEPC* compared to 5 in 2022, and 30 passed the *CEP* compared to 26 in 2022; meanwhile 2 passed the *GCE Ordinary Level*, and 3 the *First School Leaving Certificate (FLSC)* as against 9 in 2022.

### **B: Training of Prisoners**

**898-** In all, 111 prisoners received vocational training in handicraft, weaving, jewellery, masonry, sewing, leather goods, carpentry, pastry and computer science. Training certificates were awarded by the Maroua Women's Empowerment and Family Centre to 101 prisoners (compared with 110 in 2022). At the Central Prison of Maroua, 77 prisoners including 47 women and 30 men and minors received intensive training on clothing industry, aesthetics, handmade liquid soap, leather goods, pastry and milk curd or yoghurt processing. Besides, 23 of the prisoners, including 16 men and 7 women, received training in the manufacture of Yoruba hats.

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**899-** With regard to production activities, the Buea Upper Farms Secondary Prison had an agro-industrial complex used to grow 11 hectares of maize (5,874 kg produced), 7 hectares of red beans (3,625 kg produced), 3 hectares of green beans (2,500 kg produced), 100 avocado and 200 banana trees were planted. There were 3,500 chickens and 13 pigs growing. Also, as part of the MDRI/HIPC project, Government provided the Mora Main Prison with 13 small ruminants.

**900-** In addition, the Meiganga Main Prison had an estimated corn field area of 1 ha for an annual production of 21 bags of 100kg, soybean on an area of 1/4 ha, for a production of 3 bags of 100 kg, beans on an area of 1/4 ha with a production of 1/2 bag, vegetable farming on an area of 1/8 ha for a production of 13 baskets of tomatoes, 3 cartons of vegetables and 2 cartons of green condiments.

## SECTION 4: PRISON INSPECTIONS AND VISITS

**901-** Checks and visits were carried out in prisons.

### §1: Prison Inspections

**902-** IGAPEN conducted on-site inspections of the Mbalmayo (3 October 2023), Ngoumou (4 October 2023), Monatele (5 October 2023), Sa'a (5 October 2023), Mfou (11 October 2023), Yaounde (13 October 2023) Main Prisons and the Yaounde Central Prison (17 October 2023).

**903-** The inspections made it possible to better observe some dysfunctions in detention conditions. Recommendations were made including the construction of new prisons in particular in Yaounde, Mbalmayo, Monatele and Mfou.

**904-** In addition, some 111 inspections were carried out by judicial authorities in prisons in Cameroon.

### §2: Visits to Prisons

**905-** Visits to prisons were carried out by the Department of Human Rights and International Cooperation (DDHCI) of MINJUSTICE, Cameroon Human Rights Commission (CHC) and by Civil Society Organisations (CSO).

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## A: Visits by the DDHCI

**906-** From 19 February to 30 April 2024, delegations of the DDHCI, in the drawing up of the Report of the Ministry of Justice on Human Rights in Cameroon in 2023, conducted visits to 9 central prisons as well as several main and secondary prisons. Irregularities observed during the visits led to corrective measures.

**907-** Besides, some best practices were observed in some prisons. An illustrative case is the Monatele Main Prison where the number of convicted persons was far above the number of detainees awaiting trial, mainly due to excellent collaboration between the Bench, the Legal Department and the Prison. Since the women's section was not adapted to their needs, they were moved to another part of the prison with more space and facilities. In addition, under the impetus of the prison, some prisoners living with a disability were examined at the hospital and issued medical certificates for the purpose of establishing disability cards.

## B: Visits of the Cameroon Human Rights Commission (CHC)

**908-** In 2023, the Cameroon Human Rights Commission conducted 614 visits to places of detention. The CHRC visited 59 prisons in the Adamawa Region, 55 in the Centre Region, 106 in the Far North Region, 3 in the East Region, 54 in the Littoral Region, 85 in the North Region, 162 in the North West Region, 28 in the West Region, 9 in the South Region and 45 in the South West Region.

## C: Visits by Civil Society Organisations (CSO)

**909-** Some prisons in Cameroon were visited by CSOs. Support provided to the prisons included mostly food, medicines and essential kits. An illustrative case is that of the Bertoua Central Prison, which received about 30 visits from CSOs including those of the *Association des Amis Solidaires pour la Prévention des Infractions et de la Récidive Carcérale* (ASPIRCA). All the minors were enrolled in the prison school for all levels thanks to the multifaceted support initiated by the association.

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**910-** As challenges persisted with regard to detention conditions, judicial authorities made enhancement of the said conditions a priority. Thus, penitentiary resources were increased to better take into account food and health coverage among other things.

# CHAPTER 4

## PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF SOCIALLY VULNERABLE PERSONS



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**911-** In 2023, by strengthening the legal and institutional frameworks and adopting certain measures, the Government consolidated its policy of promoting the social inclusion of socially vulnerable persons, in particular children, persons with disabilities, older persons and indigenous peoples, to enable them to continue to enjoy their civil, political, socio-economic and cultural rights.

## SECTION 1: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

**912-** The legal framework relating to the promotion and protection of children's rights was strengthened and measures to ensure civil and political rights were taken. Measures were also taken to combat violence and curbing the phenomenon of street children.

### §1: Legal Framework on Child Protection

**913-** In order to protect children in the cyberspace, Law No.2023/9 of 25 July 2023 to institute the Charter on Child online Protection in Cameroon was enacted. The said Law defines the role of public authorities and the private sector and responsibilities of cyberspace actors. The Law also specifies, the general and specific obligations of internet service providers. Administrative sanctions, criminal procedure and penalties are provided by this Law.

**914-** Equally, Plan International-Cameroon on 9 August 2023, signed an Agreement with Cameroon through MINREX. The said Agreement<sup>313</sup> provides a framework for Plan International-Cameroon to continue carrying out its actions on the promotion and protection of the rights of children especially the girl child regarding their access to education, health and their empowerment.

### §2: Civil Rights

**915-** Measures were taken aimed at improving the civil rights of children related to access to citizenship, participation in matters concerning them and guaranteeing alternative care.

<sup>313</sup> The initial agreement was signed on 6 September 1996 and has been revised twice (October 2012 and October 2017).

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## A: Right to Citizenship

**916-** A total number of 1,569,660<sup>314</sup> (about: 30.4%) children were registered in Government Primary schools without birth certificates for the 2022/2023 academic year, with the East Region having the highest percentage (52.6%) followed by the North, 46.7%, Adamawa, 42.9% and Far North, 41.7%.

**917-** Government had to step in to ensure that children have birth certificates. Thus, MINPROFF on 15 June 2023 made available the sum of CFAF 267 000 000<sup>315</sup> for the issuance of declaratory judgments to enable the establishment of birth certificates to 26,691 children in 21 councils in 7 regions<sup>316</sup>.

**918-** In addition, on 17 February 2023, in Tokombere, Mayo Sava Division in the Far North Region, 415 birth certificates were distributed to pupils of examination classes in 19 primary schools, under the auspices of the Tokombere community to enable them sit for the CEP examination.

**919-** Besides, the National Civil Status Registration Office (BUNEC) built the capacity of 300 nurses from State-certified nursing schools on the new harmonised birth declaration forms. It also involved Traditional and Religious Leaders in awareness-raising actions with a view to better mobilizing the public for birth registration.

**920-** The courts delivered declaratory judgments to enable the establishment of birth certificates to children.

## B: Ensuring the Right to Participate

**921-** The 24<sup>th</sup> Session of the Children's Parliament was organised, under the theme *"Digital literacy: an essential tool for information and the fight against violence and sexual abuse of children online"*. The Junior Parliamentarians gathered in a plenary Session on 26 June 2023 at the National Assembly, raise awareness on challenges faced by children that they rep-

<sup>314</sup> MINEDUB : School census data analysis report 2022/2023, pages :50 -51.

<sup>315</sup> About 407,633.59 Euros.

<sup>316</sup> Centre: Nitoukou, Mengueme, Ayos, Ngoumou, Akono, Bot Makak, Esse and Ebebda ; Littoral: Bare; East: Messamena, Mboma and Ngoyla; North: Figuil; Adamaoua: Mbe, Mayo Baleo; Far North: Datcheka with about 40,000 children without birthcertificates; and South: Ambam, Kribi II, Bipindi Ebolowa II and Biwong Bulu.

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resent, notably: violence, exploitation and sexual abuse of children online and offline, barbaric practices affecting children, cyberbullying, juvenile delinquency, cybercrime, the non-registration of births at the civil status registry, hate speech online and child labour.

**922-** At the end of the Session, the Junior Parliamentarians made some recommendations amongst which : psychosocial support and reintegration of victims of violence and online sexual abuse, the systematic and compulsory registration of every child at birth, raising awareness on the 2 hotlines of ANTIC, (8202 and 8206), for reporting all sorts of abuse on the Internet and strengthening the strategy for raising awareness among children /youth on safe and responsible use of social media.

## **C: Alternative Care: Adoption and Guardianship**

**923-** Courts granted applications for adoption taking into consideration the best interest of the child. The Court of First Instance Tibati in judgment No.277/TPD/TIB of 19 October 2023 in granting an application for adoption, took into consideration the best interest of the child.

**924-** Statistics from the courts indicated that 449 adoption applications were granted to Cameroonians and 61 to foreigners while some 1,551 decisions for legal guardianships were also granted to nationals and 3 to foreigners. Courts also took decisions in favour of some 7 Wards of the Nation.

## **§3: Combating Violence against Children**

**925-** Children were exploited including for economic reasons. According to MINAS statistics, as at 30 June 2023, 296 cases were registered in the East and Centre Regions among whom 76 children living with disabilities. Government continued to take measures to prevent and respond to violence against children, strengthen the capacity of juvenile justice stakeholders and fight against the phenomenon of street children.

## **A: Measures to prevent Violence**

**926-** In order to curb violence in the school milieu especially gender based violence, the Minister of Secondary Education and the Minister of Basic Education respectively issued Circular letters No.13/23/C/MINESEC/SG/DPPC/DAJ/DOVAS of 10 November 2023 and No. 12/B<sup>1</sup>/M64/C-L/MINEDUB/CAB of 27 November 2023 (See para 926).

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**927-** In addition SONAMINE organised the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of “zero enfant dans la Mine” (zero child in the mines) from 25 to 28 September 2023 reaching out to 5 localities and 32 public and private nursery, primary and secondary schools in the East Region (Batouri, Bétaré-Oya, Ngoura-Colomine, Ketté and Garoua-Boulai).

**928-** The results of the action of SONAMINES which started in 2021 are visible with an increase over the years in the number of children in school thereby reducing the rate of school dropouts.

**929-** However, in order to sustain the activity over a long period and find solutions to certain issues raised , notably poverty and unemployment, which favour child labour in the mines, SONAMINES intended to implement new measures as part of its plan of action, on aspects relating to parental employment and improvement of school infrastructure.

## **B: Prosecution of cases involving Child Victims**

**930-** Perpetrators of crimes (murder, kidnapping, trafficking in and smuggling of persons, and indecency on child under 16, grievous harm or unintentional killing.) in which minors were victims were prosecuted. Trends from the courts indicated that about 1,173 minors (897 girls and 276 boys) were victims of the above-mentioned crimes.

**931-** By way of example, as regards indecency to child under 16, the Adamawa Court of Appeal in *Arret n°31/CRIM* of 26 July 2023 between The People Vs B.A upheld the decision of the Lower Court sentencing the accused to 15 years imprisonment for raping a minor under 16 and CFA 50,000 <sup>317</sup>as fine.

**932-** Concerning kidnapping and trafficking in and smuggling of persons, the High Court of Faro and Deo in the Adamawa Region, in suit No.09/CRIM between The People Vs Y. A of 11 May 2023, the accused was standing trial for attempted kidnapping and trafficking of 5 minors between the ages of 13 and 17 years respectively. The accused had without the consent of the parents of the minors taken them to the Galim-Tignere motor park where he was arrested trying to take the minors to Bafia. The accused had promised to pay the children a monthly salary of CFAF

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<sup>317</sup> About 76.34 Euros.

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150,000<sup>318</sup> to work in a cocoa plantation. The court sentenced the accused to 12 months imprisonment for attempted kidnapping and acquitted him on the charge of trafficking in and smuggling of persons.

**933-** In another kidnapping case (The People Vs A. T, in *Arret n° 15/CRIM* of 12 April 2023), with demand for ransom as condition for the release of a 10 year old child, the Adamawa Court of Appeal upheld the decision of the Lower Court sentencing the accused to 10 years imprisonment.

## C: Capacity Development for Juvenile Justice Stakeholders

**934-** The Ministry of Justice organised a series of capacity development workshops for Magistrates, Lawyers, Court Registrars, Police and Gendarme Officers, Penitentiary Staff and Social Workers on different themes such as the protection of child victim and witnesses, children in conflict or contact with the law during crisis period and protection of children in the criminal justice system of Cameroon. These Workshops were organised in Yaounde on 5 and 6 July 2023; Bafoussam on 24 and 25 August 2023 and Buea from 30 August to 1 September 2023. A total of 104 stakeholders were trained during these workshops.

## D: Curbing the Phenomenon of Street Children

**935-** As at the second quarter of 2023, social welfare Centres and social welfare services ( under MINAS registered 557 street children over the National Territory with 273 from the East Region and 124 with disabilities.

**936-** Besides, Government through MINAS and MINJEC with the financial support of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) presented to the Public the Project for the Reinsertion and Socio-economic Inclusion of Street Children in Cameroon in Douala on 27 April 2023. The strategy for the Project comprises setting up an inclusive operational framework to combat the phenomenon of street children, data collection, support socioeconomic initiative for street children, training girls/young women with disabilities and support them with equipment for income generating activities among others.

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<sup>318</sup> About 229 Euros.

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## SECTION 2: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

**937-** As in previous years, Government continued to ensure the protection and promotion of the rights of persons living with disabilities in diverse fields such as strengthening the legal, strategic and institutional framework, continuation of inclusive education and capacity development of relevant stakeholders.

### §1: Strengthening the Legal Strategic and Institutional Framework

**938-** On 28 September 2023, Cameroon deposited its instrument of ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as well as the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa.

**939-** MINAS on 27 November 2023 presented to the public a Working Guide titled "the National Strategy Document on Community-Based Rehabilitation for Inclusive Development in Cameroon 2024-2029", in prelude to the celebration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3 December 2023. The said Document enables the harmonisation on a national scale, the response of actors to diverse needs of persons living with disabilities in terms of health, education, means of subsistence or even empowerment according to a coherent framework.

**940-** On 8 June 2023, MINAS and Platform Inclusive Society for Persons with Disabilities (The Platform) signed an Agreement for Collaboration, within the framework of the Project of the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD). The said Agreement, guarantees the participation of persons with disabilities and their organisations in the drafting and implementation of Government policy on social protection.

**941-** On 8 August 2023, MINAS equally signed a Partnership Agreement with "Effective Basic Service", a civil society organisation, which undertook to support Government in all its actions in favour of vulnerable groups including persons living with disabilities.

**942-** Concerning infrastructure, construction work on the Maroua Rehabilitation Centre for persons with disabilities as at 31 December 2023 was completed and equipped. Built on a surface area of 26 hectares, the Centre comprised a hospital ward, and an administrative block among others.

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## §2: Inclusive Education

**943-** MINAS carried out consultations with MINEDUB and MINESEC, as well as technical and financial partners<sup>319</sup> in order to improve the education of children with disabilities in schools. In this connection, the 2023 edition of the campaign to raise awareness of families and communities at large on inclusive education was carried out under the theme “from policy to practice: inclusive education for children with disabilities in Cameroun”.

**944-** The number of pupils with disabilities who sat for “*Certificate d’Etudes Primaires*” rose from 667 in the 2021/2022 academic year to 952 ( 475 girls and 477 boys) in the 2022/2023 academic year. As regards specifically visual impaired students, 79 sat in for the *Brevet d’Etude du Premier Cycle*, 67 wrote the *Probatoire* and 46 the *Baccalaureat* in 2023. There was also an increase in the number of students from 180 in 2020 to 245 in 2023 in the Special Inclusive School at the Cardinal Paul Emile LEGER Centre for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities, Yaounde.

**945-** Furthermore, the 2023 Ordinary Session of the National Committee for the Rehabilitation and Socioeconomic Reintegration of Persons with Disabilities (CONRHA) took place on 13 and 14 September 2023 in Yaounde under the theme “inclusive education in Cameroon: issues, challenges and prospects in the context of promoting an inclusive society”. The Session was held to examine how the 70 pilot inclusive schools in the country operate and examine challenges faced and to identify the bottlenecks that continue to hamper the implementation of inclusive education at a strategic level in the country.

**946-** At the end of the Session, it was resolved among others to continue documenting consideration of disability approach by including related actions within the framework of mid-term expenditure and vulgarise national and international legal instruments relating to Human Rights in general and the rights of disability children in particular with the national community and disability parents. To MINEDUB, it was resolved that it should continue with the process of transforming public nursery and primary schools into inclusive schools and strengthen the capacities of those responsible and teachers of the said schools.

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<sup>319</sup> CBCHS and SightSavers Cameroon.

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**947-** In addition, Government and SightSavers Cameroon on 21 March 2023 launched an inclusive education programme called “A Better World” which will ensure that persons living with disabilities are included in all spheres of life. The Said Programme to be implemented for 5 years in 8 regions<sup>320</sup> with the involvement of local actors, covers inclusive education, citizenship and political participation. The Programme will provide sustainable inclusive education of good quality for children with disabilities and local actors will work towards ensuring that persons living with disabilities take part in the political life of the Nation.

## **§3: Capacity Development on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities**

**948-** The UN Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa (UNCHRD-CA) organised a series of workshops relating to persons with disabilities. One was organised in partnership with Platform Inclusive Society for Persons with Disabilities on 10 and 11 May 2023 in Yaounde, for leaders of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The aim was to strengthen the capacity of persons with disabilities, OPDs and representatives of Public Administrations on the content of the CRPD and to intensify the implementation of the CRPD in the field.

**949-** Also, from 20 to 21 July 2023 in Yaounde, another workshop was organised in collaboration with MINJUSTICE for Magistrates, Lawyers and Judicial Police Officers from the 10 regions of the country on the UNCRPD. The training focused among others on the approach to disability based on Human Rights, International Human Rights Law, and access to justice for persons with disabilities: obstacles and solutions. Besides, a Training Guide on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Cameroon for Legal Professionals was validated in a workshop on 29 May 2023 in Yaounde still under the auspices of UNCHRD-CA.

## **SECTION 3: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS**

**950-** Cameroon ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa<sup>321</sup>. Furthermore,

<sup>320</sup> (Adamawa, Centre, East, Far North, North, Littoral, South and West).

<sup>321</sup> Decree No. 2021/752 of 28 December 2021.

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participation in inclusive development and socio-economic retraining of older persons and promoting healthy and active ageing as well as social inclusion of older person was ensured.

**951-** Concerning the participation in inclusive development and socio-economic retraining of older persons, in 2023, the Plan for the implementation of the National Policy Document for the Protection and Promotion of Older persons in Cameroon identified 8 actions and 31 activities amounting to CFA 1, 417 000,000<sup>322</sup>.

**952-** The implementation of the said Document enabled MINAS to carry out some activities. Thus, older persons were supported in setting up umbrella associations or voluntary networks to fight ageism, enabled them to access loans, income-generating activities, and markets. A total of CFA 588,000,000<sup>323</sup> for 6 actions and 21 activities on basic social services needed by older persons.

**953-** Furthermore, Government adapted health systems to the needs of older persons like the creation and multiplication of specific Blocks for the care of seniors and training of specialists in Faculties of Medicine and *higher institutions* specializing in the subject.

**954-** Cameroon also presented an advocacy document in New York during the 13<sup>th</sup> Session of UN Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG)<sup>324</sup> on ageing held from 4 to 6 April 2023. Issues discussed included the identification of gaps in the protection of the Human Rights of older persons and how best to address them.

**955-** In addition, during the celebration of the International Day of Older Persons on 2 October 2023, Government and partners offered free medical consultations to older persons and training on the fabrication of soap among others.

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<sup>322</sup> About 2,163,358.78 Euros.

<sup>323</sup> About 817,709.92 Euros.

<sup>324</sup> OEWG's aim is to discuss concrete ways to strengthen the protection of the Human Rights of older persons.

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## SECTION 4: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

**956-** In addition to capacity building, access to citizenship, education, land and economic empowerment were ensured.

### §1: Access to Citizenship

**957-** Government embarked on the establishment and distribution of birth certificates and National Identity Cards to indigenous children and their parents. This was the case with the establishment and distribution of birth certificates to vulnerable children of parents of the Mbororos by Plan International Cameroon in the Far North Region. Also, United Councils and Cities of Cameroon supported the establishment of birth certificates and National Identity Cards to 20 Bakas in the Messok Locality in the East Region by the *Association centre d'Education au Bien-être des Peuples Vulnérables* (ACEBPV) while the *organisation pour le development des Mbororo* did same by establishing 60 birth certificates and the NGO FAIRMED established 34 birth certificates and declared 40 births in the Abong-Mbang, Atok and Mindourou Councils.

**958-** In addition, 200 birth certificates were established by the NGO, Local Fusion Nature while the campaign for the education of indigenous forest peoples enabled about 90 indigenous children to have birth certificates. Equally, *Forum des Femmes Autochtones du Cameroun* (FFAC) declared 25 births of indigenous children in Kribi and 20 in Lolodorf. Also, some 102 births of Mbororo children were registered in the Douala II Subdivision by Mbororo Community Development Organisation (SURAMAMA) and 500 National Identity Cards were established to indigenous peoples of Mbororo origin in the Adamawa Region.

### §2: Socio-economic Rights of Indigenous Peoples

**959-** Government took measures to ensure access to education and school safety, economic empowerment by Indigenous People.

#### A: Access to Education and school safety

**960-** Government, financial and technical partners carried out some actions. The NGO FAIRMED sponsored 57 Baka children in secondary school and 344 in Primary school while *Forum des Femmes Autochtones du Camer-*

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oun (FFAC) raised the awareness of 50 girls on the importance of education. Also, ACEBPV offered didactics school materials to 40 young Baka girls in the localities of Adjela, Pohempoum and Mintoum (East Region) and to 38 Baka primary school girls in the Lomie Subdivision. Besides, the Government settled down 3,397 Primary school Teachers at their workstations.

**961-** As regards activities relating to safe schools, *Plan International Cameroon* carried out activities relating to the Safe Schools Declaration which includes training and awareness workshops which took place in Ebolowa from 27 to 29 February 2023 and in Douala from 17 to 19 August 2023. Also, 14 secondary schools brigades were set up to ensure a safe and protective environment. Some 90 students and 36 teachers from these schools were trained on school safety.

## B: Economic Empowerment

**962-** Income-generating activities for vulnerable indigenous people was supported through the strengthening of agricultural and artisanal techniques by *Réseau des populations autochtones et locales pour la gestion des écosystèmes forestiers d'Afrique Centrale (REPALEAC)* (The Network of Indigenous and Local Communities for the Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa) in order to increase their yield. REPALEAC raised the awareness of Baka women of Missoume on group sales rather than individual sales to enable them have a better bargain for their products.

## §3: Capacity Development

**963-**The indigenous people of Mbororo origin living in the North West Region were drilled by Mbororo Cultural and Development Association (MBOSCUDA) during a series of meetings from 29 November 2023 to 6 December 2023 on peace processes, in preparation for inter-community dialogue between indigenous Mbororo communities and the Grassfield crop farming communities. These meetings served the purpose of information and sensitization, which was necessary to enroll and prepare the two conflicting communities for dialogue. Also, the communities were supported by MBOSCUDA to choose their representatives and identify issues they thought should be addressed during the inter-community dialogue. A total of 491 participants took part in these Meetings<sup>325</sup>.

<sup>325</sup> (269 Mbororo grazers and 222 non-Mbororo crop farmers).

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**964-** MBOSCUDA also organised training sessions from 14 to 17 November 2023 for 30 Peace Actors (Mbororo grazers and 18 non-Mbororo crop farmers). Key training themes included conflict analysis, early warning, dialogue and mediation facilitation, and non-violent conflict management.

## **§4: Access to Land and Participation in forest conservation**

**965-** REPALÉAC continued to implement its 5 year (2022 -2027) programme titled "Programme for the Strengthening, Protection and Securing of the Forest Tenure Rights of Indigenous and Local Communities in Central Africa"<sup>326</sup>. The objectives were to develop a political and social environment that guarantees (1) secure land tenure and forest tenure rights and (2) economic autonomy for Indigenous and Local Communities (IPLCs) while preserving their authenticity and the natural resources of the Congo Basin.

**966-** Beside, on 19 September 2023, in Bertoua, East Region, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)<sup>327</sup> between the Ministry of forestry and Wildlife and the indigenous Association, Sanguia Baka Bumma'a Kpodé (ASBABUK) was revised, related to access of the Baka community to the national parks of Lobeke, Nki, Boumba Bek as well as the Ngoyla Reserve newly included in the MOU.

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**967-** Despite, the challenging economic environment, Government continued to promote and protect socially vulnerable people's rights in 2023. The legal framework for the protection of children was improved through the enactment of the Charter on Child online Protection in Cameroon, while Circular letters from MINEDUB and MINESEC to fight gender-based violence in the school milieu was also a great leap forward. Furthermore, the legal framework for the protection of persons with disabilities and older persons was strengthened through the ratification of international treaties, while, inclusive education continued.

**968-** However, challenges persisted especially as concerns the non-registration of births.

<sup>326</sup> The programme is implemented in Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon and Rwanda.

<sup>327</sup> The first Memorandum of Understanding was signed in 2019 on the same subject.

## CHAPTER

# 5

## PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN



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**969-** In 2023, the State continued to promote and protect the rights of women as characterised by their consideration in the management of public affairs, the promotion and protection of their rights within the family, promotion of their economic rights, their involvement in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and the response to increased violence against women and the girl child.

## SECTION 1: GENDER CONSIDERATION IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

**970-** Gender-sensitive budgeting (GSB) and the inclusion of women in the electoral process continued.

### §1: Gender-sensitive Budgeting

**971-** In the Circular of 30 August 2023 on the preparation of the State budget for the 2024 financial year, the President of the Republic prescribed “gender promotion, the integration of the gender-sensitive budgeting approach” as “a priority in all areas of national development”. In this connection, special emphasis was and will henceforth be laid on gender-sensitive aspects in the preparation, execution and monitoring of the State budget.

**972-** In the same vein, heads of the pilot administrations<sup>328</sup> continued to receive support from MINFI, MINEPAT and MINPROFF, with the aim of translating gender sensitivity into their budget programmes. That is why 3 technical workshops on GSB were organised.

**973-** Deliberations of the 1<sup>st</sup> workshop, held from 19 to 20 September 2023 in Mbankomo, enabled participants to consolidate the process of identifying and quantifying gender-sensitive activities. The 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop that held from 20 to 21 September 2023 still in Mbankomo for Focal Points, which focused on gender mainstreaming in the budget preparation process enabled them to acquire knowledge on supporting the gender marker setting in the digital application for a more efficient information system and the implementation of the tools prescribed by the 2022 circular of the Minister of Finance on GSB; advisory support for the establishment of harmonised terms of reference for the conduct of gender sector analyses; the production of data for the preparation of the gender-sensitive budget document; and

<sup>328</sup> They include MINFI, MINEPAT, MINADER, MINDEVEL, MINEDUB, MINESEC, MINSANTE, MINPROFF and MINAS.

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to prepare and supervise the performance and budgeting conferences with regard particularly to GSB aspects. The 3<sup>rd</sup> workshop that held from 6 to 8 December 2023 in Kribi aimed at drilling officials of Ministries on GSB.

## §2: Inclusion of women in the electoral process

**974-** Following the renewal of members of the Senate, 26 women were elected and 7 appointed by the President of the Republic, making a total of 33 women out of 100 Senators in 2023 as against 26 in 2018.

**975-** At the end of the annual registration on the electoral lists, out of the 7,361,875 registered voters, 3,429,025 were women representing 46.58%.

## SECTION 2: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN THE FAMILY

**976-** Such promotion and protection comprised consideration of land rights of women, protection of their rights in marriage, and in the event of the termination of the marriage.

### §1: Consideration of Land Rights of Women

**977-** So many women acquired land as shown in the table below:

**Table 1: Statistics on issuance of land titles in 2023**

	Men	Women	Communities	Total
Direct registration	3,453	1,143	1,295	5,891
Subdivisions	4,241	1,961	1,396	7,598
Transformation into land title	252	8	32	292
Total transfer	106	40	317	463
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,052</b>	<b>3,152</b>	<b>3,040</b>	<b>14,244</b>

**Source:** MINDCAF

**978-** In land matters, a large number of judgments were entered for women such as Judgment No. 27/FD/23 of 2 March 2023 by the Administrative Court Douala before which the matter was brought by the rightful claimants of **N.M.** represented by Barrister **P.K.G.** The Court cancelled a land title improperly drawn up in the name of **N.S.**

**979-** Similarly, by Judgment No. 23/CIV/TGI/2023 of 17 May 2023, the HC of Haut-Nkam ordered the exit from joint possession of Ms. **N.D.C.** from an immovable property, thereby granting her request according to

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which she argued that the other co-owners, all men, had repeatedly attempted to transfer the property without her consent.

## §2: Protection of the Rights of Women in Marriage

**980-** Protection of the rights of women in marriage included efforts to encourage common-law couples to marry. Such efforts resulted in the collective celebration of 1,233 marriages. As an illustration, there was a collective celebration of marriages for some 50 couples organised by the Dschang Council on 7 March 2023 as a prelude to celebrations to mark the International Women's Day. Besides, 24 prenatal, matrimonial and family education sessions were organised by MINPROFF, during which 1,467 persons were counselled.

## §3: Protection of the Rights of Women in the event of Termination of Marriage

**981-** Women were protected in the event of divorce proceedings and widows were protected.

### A: Judicial Protection of Women in the Event of Divorce

**982-** As part of such protection and by way of illustration, by Judgment No. 622/TPD of 21 November 2023, the CFI of Mbouda dissolved the marriage between **W. and W.** holding the husband solely responsible for the breakdown of the marriage as he had repudiated his wife. The court ordered him to pay the sum of CFAF5,000,000<sup>329</sup> to his wife as damages.

**983-** By Judgment No. 1/CIV/TGI/NDE of 23/01/2023, the HC of Nde dissolved the marriage between **N.R.** and **N.R.** to the exclusive fault of the husband **N. R.** and consequently ordered him to pay the sum of CFAF100,000 as alimony for the two children of the marriage and CFAF1,500,000<sup>330</sup> to the wife as compensation for the damages suffered. Besides, custody of their children was granted to their mother.

**984-** Furthermore, by Judgment No. 2/CIV/TGI/K of 25 September 2023, the HC of Kadey Division dissolved by divorce the marriage between **D.M.**

<sup>329</sup> About 7,633,59 Euros.

<sup>330</sup> About 290,08 Euros.

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and **D.M.** to holding the husband solely responsible for the breakdown of the marriage for he had breached the duty of trust. The court ordered him to pay the sum of CFAF30,000,000<sup>331</sup> to his ex-wife.

## B: Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Widows

**985-** During celebrations to mark the International Widows Day celebrated on 23 June each year, a ceremony to raise the awareness of widows on their rights was organised by MINPROFF in partnership with the Yaounde III Council. At the occasion, the *“Practical Guide on Legal Assistance to Widows”*, translated into several languages including Pidgin, Ewondo, Fulfulde and Ghomala, was disseminated. Besides, some 1,000 widows in distress from the 7 Subdivisions of Mfoundi Division received a support pack<sup>332</sup> of food and soap offered by MINPROFF, as well as psychosocial support specifically for victims of violence.

**986-** In addition, judgments to guarantee widows their inheritance rights were delivered. In this regard, by Judgment No. 194/TPD/2023 of 5 July 2023, the CFI of Foubot granted the widow **P.S.** her right of legal usufruct on all the estate.

**987-** By Judgment No. 253/TPD of 6 September 2023, the Customary Court of Tignere also designated the widow **A.D.R** not only as administrator of the estate of her late husband, but also as guardian of the children and usufructuary with the benefit of a quarter of the property of the said estate.

**988-** Similarly, by Judgment No. 1851/DL/2023 of 9 October 2023, the CFI of Douala-Ndokoti designated a widow **C.K.M.** as administrator of the estate of her late husband, and granted her the right of usufruct on the property of the said estate.

## SECTION 3: MEASURES ON THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

**989-** Measures on the economic empowerment of women included promotion of the rights of women indigital technology , their inclusion in entrepreneurial development and agro-industrial projects.

<sup>331</sup> About 45,801.53 Euros.

<sup>332</sup> The pack comprised rice, soap, basins, sachet tomato, onions and cooking oil.

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## §1: Promotion of the Rights of Women in Digital Technology

**990-** The Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation (CTO) in collaboration with the Government of Cameroon, organised the International Women's Digital Forum also known as "*Cameroon Digital Week*" from 16 to 20 October 2023 in Yaounde, under the theme "*Toward a digital future*". The forum brought together women leaders of the public and private sectors working in the digital field in institutions such as (Cameroon Telecommunications (CAMTEL), the Telecommunications Regulatory Agency (ART), *Orange Cameroon*, *MTN Cameroon*) and civil society organisations defending women's economic rights, such as the Association of *Bayam-Sellam Women of Cameroon* and the *Diaspora (ASBY)*, as well as the Ministry of Justice, who had the opportunity to make presentations mainly on the realities that hinder the access of women to the digital world in Cameroon. They advocated the enhancement of the conditions of access to digital technology for women in Africa and particularly in Cameroon. One of the recommendations was that the State of Cameroon should take urgent measures to guarantee the effective and immediate right to the digital inclusion of rural women and other socially vulnerable persons, taking into account their standard of living.

**991-** Furthermore, the first session of the Cameroon Artificial Intelligence Week held from 19 to 22 December 2023 in Yaounde, in a hybrid formula (face-to-face and online) under the theme: "*Cameroon in the age of artificial intelligence*". The session enabled young women to acquire knowledge on the stakes, challenges and opportunities of artificial intelligence in Africa.

## §2: Inclusion of Women in Entrepreneurial Development

**992-** On 18 July 2023, the Minister of Economy, Planning and Regional Development signed 3 funding agreements with the Head of the Delegation of the European Union in Cameroon, worth CFAF40,000,000, 000<sup>333</sup> to combat food insecurity, develop the territory with the construction of some infrastructure, and support the resilience of women in the North West, South West, West and Littoral Regions, by promoting empowerment in the form of income-generating activities and access to vocational training.

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<sup>333</sup> About 61,068,702.29 Euros.

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**993-** Women entrepreneurs from the 11 countries of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) met in Douala from 3 to 7 October 2023 as part of the very first Women Entrepreneurship Fair in Central Africa (SAIEF). The subregional event organised by the ECCAS Higher Business Council (ECCAS HBC), in partnership with the Ladies Business Forum Association held under the theme: *African women entrepreneurs and the challenges of industrialisation in the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) and the post-Covid economic crisis*. The forum enabled hundreds of women entrepreneurs to market and sell their products through the sales exhibition. It was also a platform for meetings and discussions between women entrepreneurs to increase the visibility of their companies internationally.

**994-** Besides, MINPMEESA with the support of the *African Women Entrepreneurship Programme (AWEP)*, developed the capacities of 350 women on the reforms and strides that positively impact women entrepreneurship. The capacity development session held on 23 March 2023 in Yaounde.

**995-** Moreover, some 100 women entrepreneurs were trained on 31 May 2023 in Yaounde, as part of the implementation of the import-substitution policy, to align national products with international standards.

**996-** In addition, as part of the implementation of the *She Trade Outlook Cameroon* project throughout 2023 in Ayos, Foubot, Mbalmayo and Belabo, 650 women were granted technical support for cassava processing to increase their production capacity and access to the continental market with value-added products such as *gari* and other by-products.

**997-** Furthermore, during activities to celebrate the 61<sup>st</sup> African Women's Day under the theme: *"The role of women in peacebuilding for the functioning of the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA)"*, MINPROFF, in collaboration with its technical and financial partners, organised at the esplanade of the Yaounde II Town Hall, a ceremony during which an appeal for the economic empowerment of rural women was made to the competent authorities.

## SECTION 4: RESPONDING TO THE RISE OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

**998-** According to statistics released by MINPROFF, Cameroon experienced more than 66 cases of femicides in 2023. The State undertook to

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step up its efforts to eradicate the scourge by taking more action to prevent GBV, punish perpetrators and care survivors.

## §1: Preventing Gender Based Violence

**999-** At the close of the Third Ordinary Session of the 2023 Legislative Year, the President of the Senate, in reference to Gender Based Violence (GBV), called on public authorities to *step up awareness-raising and education campaigns, including repressive measures, to stem these scourges that constitute unacceptable violation of the rights and dignity of women and vulnerable persons.*

**1000-** Furthermore, when questioned before the National Assembly during the November 2023 budget session, on actions to be taken against the resurgence of feminicides, the Minister of Women's Empowerment and the Family pledged to take strong measures.

**1001-** During the 17<sup>th</sup> edition of the *16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence* under the theme: *"Invest to Prevent Violence Against Women Girls"*, MINPROFF and its partners organised several activities to mobilise State stakeholders, the private sector, CSOs, technical and financial partners and the public to support the strategies undertaken by Government. The activities included the launch of the said campaign at the national level on 27 November 2023 in Yaounde with nearly 700 participants (Administrations, Public and semi-public entities, the UN System, CSOs, Women's associations); launch at the regional level that mobilised some 5,000 people; the organisation of 15 roundtable discussions and conferences under several themes<sup>334</sup> and the organisation of more than 200 educational talks that raised awareness on the prevention of GBV, their causes and consequences, the importance of civil status, the development of positive masculinity, early marriage and early pregnancy, the role of parents, etc.

<sup>334</sup> In the Littoral Region, for example, the round table held on 29 November 2023 focused on the theme: *"Capacity development of different stakeholders (CSOs, IDPs, Refugees and others) on the Mechanisms for the Management of Violence against Women (VFF) and on the Promotion of Positive Masculinity to reduce Violence against Women and Girls in the Littoral Region"*, and brought together 75 people including (51 women and 24 men); in the Adamawa Region, a conference held on the theme of the Campaign, bringing together 250 students, 140 girls and 110 boys; in the North Region, a conference was organised in the University of Garoua on 29 November 2023 under the theme: *General aspects on GBV: Causes and Consequences; How to Manage a GBV Case*. It brought together 49 men and 59 women.

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**1002-** In addition, some 30 training sessions were organised for about 1,500 women in soap, pastry, decoration, ginger syrup, dyeing, slippers making, etc. Besides, the screening of films such as *"For better, not for worse"* raised awareness of the people on the consequences of violence against women and the girl child. Radio programmes in both official and local languages were broadcasted to more than 20,000 people and focused on the impact of family and school violence.

**1003-** During the same campaign, the Working Group on Gender and Public Policies in Cameroon (GTOG) in partnership with MINPROFF organised a silent White March against femicide, where awareness-raising messages such as *Protecting women is protecting the nation*, stop femicide, *"Let's break the silence"*, *"Stop killing women and girls"* were displayed.

**1004-** The Cameroon Young Jurist Legal Resource Centre, organised 2 workshops to combat GBV on 31 March in Buea and 27 April 2023 in Yaounde. The workshops brought together 113 participants, among whom Judicial and Legal Officers, Judicial Police Officers, Social Workers and Medical Practitioners. They were drilled on the need to adopt a gender approach in the discharge of professional duties in order to enable persons affected by the conflict, and displaced persons to get access to justice and health care including reproductive healthcare.

**1005-** Moreover, during celebrations to mark the World Human Rights Day on 10 December, students from the Faculty of Law and Political Science of the Catholic University of Central Africa (UCAC) organised a conference on 8 December 2023 under the theme: *"Dignity, equality and justice for all in Central Africa"*. On the occasion, more than 1,000 students were sensitised on the protection of the rights of women in Cameroon.

**1006-** As part of implementation of the project to reduce sexual and gender-based violence in secondary schools in Maroua III Subdivision through training and the establishment of procedures, legal instruments on GBV and care for survivors, a formal launch of the LEAD project supported by the "Regional Fund for Democracy and Human Rights in Maroua" held on 19 January 2023 with 62 participants.

**1007-** Furthermore, the following 2 circulars were signed in the same connection: Circular No. 13/23/C/MINESEC/SG/DPPC/DAJ/DOVAS of 10 November 2023 to step up the fight against gender-based violence

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in schools and Circular No. 12/B/1464/L-C/MINEDUB/CAB of 27 November 2023 to protect girls from gender-based violence in schools. (see §287).

**1008-** Besides, a free concert against GBV was organised on 25 November 2023 by Team Europe in collaboration with United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) at the Multi-Purpose Sports Complex in Yaounde. On this occasion, the public was exhorted not to remain silent but rather report acts of violence to competent authorities.

## §2: Judicial Repression of GBV

**1009-** Legal responses were provided to cases of GBV and femicide<sup>335</sup>. Thus, in the case of **Diane Yangwo**, a teacher at Bilingual High School Ndogpassi, Douala, who died on 17 November 2023, following assault by her husband **B. E.**, the latter was arrested on 20 November 2023 arrested and remanded in custody. The matter was pending.

**1010-** With regard to the case of Ms. **Magne Hélène**, aged 89, whose corpse was found on 12 April 2023 in Bandjoun, the suspect **T. C.**, with whom she was living, was arrested, charged and remanded in custody. Preliminary inquiry was ongoing.

**1011-** Concerning the case of **Victorine Manga** whose corpse was found on 1 May 2023 in the Minkan quarter in Yaounde, a suspect, **Y.E.G.**, her partner, was arrested. The matter was pending.

**1012-** Moreover, for offences of slight harm and conditional threats committed against his ex-companion, despite the withdrawal of the complaint by the latter, the Legal Department continued prosecution that led to the conviction and sentence of **K.R.** to 12 months imprisonment and fine of CFAF50,000<sup>336</sup> according to Judgment No. 170/COR of 8 May 2023 by the CFI of Foubot.

<sup>335</sup> The following matters were pending before the courts:

- the case of **Vanessa Youbi** killed with her 4 children in Nanga Eboko; the suspect who was allegedly her companion was arrested and he reportedly committed suicide while in custody;
- the case of **Mentchum Wambo**, a physics teacher at Lycée Bilingue Mokolo in the Far North Region, who was slaughtered by her husband, **H. J.** 12 April 2023 who was alleged to have committed suicide subsequently; investigations were ongoing;
- the case of **Suzanne Zamboue**, whose corpse was discovered on 6 September 2023 at her home in Yaounde, Suspects including her son were arrested and preliminary inquiry was opened.

<sup>336</sup> About 77.34 Euros.

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**1013-**By Judgment No. HCF/CRIM/JGT/119/2023, the HC of Fako convicted and sentenced **M.O.R.** to 10 years imprisonment for public indecency, rape and conditional threats against **M.N.O.**, a 14-year-old.

## §3: Management of victims

**1014-** Some 2,000 women, young girls and new mothers from Goulfey, Kousseri, Guéré, Maga, Vélé and Yagoua received dignity kits, menstrual hygiene kits and baby boxes, distributed in Yagoua by ALVF Office of the Far North Region as part of implementation of the *Emergency project for the provision of integrated sexual and reproductive health services and prevention and control of GBV for inhabitants affected by flooding*.

**1015-** By consolidating the protection of women and girls affected by the crisis in the North West and South West Regions, and with funding from the Government of Japan, the State and its partner UN Women provided psychosocial support, including counselling, material support, guidance and monitoring of GBV cases to 1,651 internally displaced women and women from host communities in the safe areas created for activities of the project in Babadjou Dschang, Loum, Njombe-Penja, Bafia and Ombessa. Specifically, there were 150 beneficiaries in Babadjou, 171 in Dschang, 356 in Bafia, 176 in Ombessa, 467 in Loum and Njombe Penja among whom victims of rape, denial of resources, early and forced marriage, sexual and physical assault. Some of the GBV survivors received dignity kits<sup>337</sup> while others with very young babies received mama kits<sup>338</sup>.

**1016-** Still as part of the same project, 300 internally displaced women and women from host communities received vocational training and start-up kits to carry out economic activities in accordance with their business plans.

**1017-** Some 160 women and girls (8 persons living with disabilities and 3 members of the Mbororo indigenous group) in Babadjou, Dschang, Bafia and Ombessa, internally displaced persons and host communities received a capacity development session on disaster risk reduction, self-protection, psychological and physical first aid, and women's leadership.

<sup>337</sup> Comprising sanitary pads, cotton underwear, powder detergent, a bucket, a loincloth, a towel, a toothbrush, toothpaste, bathing soap, and laundry soap.

<sup>338</sup> Comprising baby clothes, a basin, a baby towel, comb and Vaseline pack.

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**1018-** Besides, a joint UN Women – UNFPA training on the management of GBV cases in January 2023 enabled 96 Government and civil society stakeholders in the Far North, North, North West and South West Regions to increase their skills in the management of GBV cases in compliance with international standards.

## SECTION 5: WOMEN IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACE-BUILDING

**1019-** Under the chair of the Prime Minister, Head of Government, Cameroon hosted the International Conference on *“Islam, empowerment of women and youth, and peacebuilding”* from 13 to 14 July 2023 in Yaounde. During the occasion, more than 1,500 people from the 10 regions of the country and from 19 other countries discussed the role and responsibility of religious and traditional leaders in promoting the rights of women and youths. At the end of the deliberations, it was decided that a regional network of doctors of Muslim law (Oulemas) and African dignitaries for peace, women’s empowerment, support to family planning and the education of girls be established.

**1020-** Furthermore, an important delegation of women leaders from Cameroon attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the African Women’s Forum for Peace and Development held in Bangui from 28 to 29 September 2023 with the aim of consolidating the role of women in peacebuilding and development.

**1021-** On 6 April 2023, MINPROFF, MINJEC, the NDDRC, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and UN Women undertook to collaborate, during the signing of a memorandum of understanding to implement the project entitled: *“Women for Peace: stepping up the participation of women’s organisations in the implementation and coordination of DDR processes in Cameroon, on the basis of the National DDR Strategy 2021-2025”*. The project, based in the Far North Region, aims to support the action of the NCDDR through a network of women’s associations and organisations by developing their capacities in the field of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR), providing technical and financial resources to the associations for the implementation of activities that contribute to the DDR process for youths and women, and by facilitating regular coordination of the network with the NCDDR and the DDR coordination structures, financed to the tune of USD 2,000,000<sup>339</sup> by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund.

<sup>339</sup> About 1, 244,51200 FCFA or 1896040.12Euros.

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**1022-** On 26 July 2023, the NCDDR signed a partnership agreement with the UN Women's Project to implement a project involving women at the community level by training them for discussions on peacebuilding, and the integration of the rights of women into the disarmament process.

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**1023-** Notwithstanding the increase in GBV cases observed throughout 2023, the State and her partners mobilised to step up promotion and protection of the rights of women in Cameroon. The GSB process continued and extended to several other public administrations and institutions. Actions on the economic empowerment of women through their inclusion in the digital world, prevention and response to the GBV phenomenon and the role of women in peacebuilding were effective. However, the inclusion of women in the management of public affairs remained a major concern.

## CHAPTER

# 6

## PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF FORCIBLY DISPLACED PERSONS



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**1024-** In 2023, Cameroon continued to receive a substantial number of individuals seeking refuge. Moreover, the country faced a plethora of crises and natural disasters, which led to massive population displacement. Despite resource scarcity, the Government, with the assistance of its partners, maintained its commitment to preserve the rights of refugees and asylum seekers, as well as that of internally displaced persons.

## SECTION 1: TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE RIGHTS OF REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

**1025-** Initiatives undertaken focused on the reception and settlement of refugees and asylum seekers, protection, as well as access to health and nutrition, education, and income-generating activities.

### §1: Reception and Settlement of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

**1026-** Shelter was provided to refugees and asylum seekers, the number of which increased.

#### A: Statistics on Refugees and Asylum Seekers

**1027-** Cameroon hosted a total of 477,975 refugees, compared to 473,887 in 2022, that is, an increase of 4,088 individuals<sup>340</sup>. Among them, there were 354,139 Central Africans, compared to 346,689 in 2022; 120,839 Nigerians, compared to 124,651 in 2022 and 2,997 individuals from other nationalities<sup>341</sup>, compared to 2,547 in 2022. Women accounted for 53% of this population, while men constituted 47%.

**1028-** In 2023, the number of asylum seekers increased from 9,265 in 2022 to 10,310.

#### B: Settlement of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

**1029-** Arrangements were made for individuals admitted and registered in Cameroon to be sheltered. In 2023, some of them (147,274) were settled in developed sites, while others (341,011) lived in communities in the Far North, North, Adamawa, East, Centre and Littoral Regions

<sup>340</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

<sup>341</sup> Several nationalities are represented, including Chad (3,788 individuals), Niger (2,467), Democratic Republic of the Congo (658), Rwanda (420), Mali (398), Guinea (259), Sudan (192), Côte d'Ivoire (64), etc.

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## 1) Central African Refugees

**1030-** A total of 260,260 Central African refugees resided in communities in the East Region (88,062 in the Lomand Djerem Division, 56,356 in the Kadey Division, 5,598 in the Boumba and Ngoko Division, and 15 in the Upper-Nyong Division), the North Region (50,291 in the Mayo-Rey Division) and the Adamawa Region (54,027 in Mbere Division, 4,440 in Vina Division, and 1,471 in Djerem Division). Additionally 70,287 of them settled in the 7 sites developed in the East Region, namely Gado Badzere (23,544), Lolo (11,359), Borgop (10,517), Mbile (11,170), Ngam (6,148), Timangolo (6,222), and Ngarisingo (1,327). Furthermore, 23,592 Central African refugees were registered in urban areas, with 9,629 in the Littoral Region and 13,963 in the Centre Region.

## 2) Nigerian Refugees

**1031-** A total of 76,987 Nigerian refugees resided in the Minawao site located in the Far North Region. Those living in host communities in villages within the same region were 42,248, including 8 in Diamare Division, 26,782 in Logone and Chari Division, 8,488 in Mayo-Sava Division, 4,519 in Mayo-Tsanaga Division, and 2,451 in Benoue. In urban areas, there were 618 refugees registered in the Ndian Division (South West Region), 942 in Mayo-Banyo Division (Adamawa Region), 19 in Wouri (Littoral Region), and 25 in Mfoundi (Centre Region), making a total of 1,604 Nigerian refugees in urban areas.

## 3) Refugees of other Nationalities and Asylum Seekers

**1032-** Refugees from other countries, as well as asylum seekers, were registered in urban areas. Concerning these refugees, 713 resided in Douala (Littoral Region), 157 in Langui (North Region) and 2,127 in Yaounde (Centre Region). As concerns asylum seekers, 4,434 were settled in the city of Douala and 5,876 in Yaounde.

## §2: Protection of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

**1033-** Efforts to protect the rights of refugees involved awareness-raising, access to documentation and refugee registration, agreements and other initiatives, improving living conditions, and pursuing long-lasting solutions.

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## A: Awareness-Raising

**1034-** Awareness-raising activities targeting refugees were multi-pronged. In collaboration with UNHCR and Plan Cameroon, the Government organised an awareness-raising campaign for refugees from 15 to 29 March 2023, in each of the 7 municipalities of Yaounde. The purpose was to equip refugees with knowledge about the legal framework protecting them, their rights and responsibilities, procedures related to their status, and the opportunities available to them in Cameroon. This activity which was facilitated by representatives of public administrations<sup>342</sup> and UNHCR, was conducted for the target population grouped into refugee committees<sup>343</sup>, which are active in the 12 municipalities of Yaounde and Douala. The ultimate goal was to enhance their organisation and improve the support provided by the authorities.

**1035-** Furthermore, with the support of development partners, awareness was raised among refugees as part of the fight against GBV. For instance, in February 2023, the awareness of 6,388 refugees residing in the Mayo-Sava, Mayo-Tsanaga, and Logone-et-Chari Divisions was raised on the prevention of child abuse, exploitation and sexual abuse, early marriage, and violence. In these localities and during the same period, 17,057 individuals, including 7,982 women and 3,350 girls, were sensitised on the consequences of GBV, prevention of abuse and sexual harassment, women's empowerment as well as sexual and reproductive health.

**1036-** During the celebration of World Refugee Day on 20 June 2023, the International Organisation for Migration took advantage of the exhibition fair organised at the Yaounde City Hall to inform refugees about programmes and projects in Cameroon which are beneficial to them, including the programme for assistance and resettlement in other host countries.

<sup>342</sup> They included the General Delegation for National Security (DGSN) and the Ministries in charge of Foreign Affairs, Women's Empowerment and the Family, Basic Education, Secondary Education, Higher Education, Employment and Vocational Training, Territorial Administration, Defense, Social Affairs, Economy, Planning and Regional Development, State Property, Surveys and Land Tenure and Justice.

<sup>343</sup> These Refugee Committees in the Municipalities of Cameroon (CRCC) were accredited by MINAT on 9 May 2023. They work to promote community support for individuals with specific needs, strengthen solidarity and advocate for the rights and interests of refugees in all circumstances in Cameroon.

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## B: Access to Documentation and Refugee Census

**1037-** To facilitate the mobility, identification, and socio-economic integration of refugees, the General Delegation for National Security officially distributed 4,308 biometric cards<sup>344</sup> to refugees residing in the East and Littoral Regions.

**1038-** On 10 March 2023, the Central Bureau of the Census and Population Studies and UNHCR signed a memorandum of understanding to include data on refugees, stateless persons, and internally displaced persons into the 4<sup>th</sup> population and housing census. This initiative aimed at improving their identification and socio-economic integration.

**1039-** With the assistance of Plan International Cameroon, 175 birth certificates were issued in the Mayo-Tsanaga Division in the Far North Region for refugees born on the Cameroonian territory, including 88 boys and 87 girls.

## C: Agreements and other Initiatives beneficial to Refugees

**1040-** Cameroon actively participated in the second Global Refugee Forum, which was held from 13 to 15 December 2023, in Geneva, Switzerland. During this Forum, the Cameroonian Government made specific pledges to enhance the management of both refugees and host populations. These commitments primarily focused on areas such as protection, socio-economic inclusion, education, healthcare, and environmental considerations (See §29).

**1041-** On 13 September 2023, the CHRC and the UNHCR signed a Memorandum of Understanding, the purpose of which was to enhance advocacy for the ratification of the Convention on Statelessness, to domesticate the Kampala Convention, monitor Cameroon's commitments made during the initial Global Refugee Forum<sup>345</sup> and the High-Level Segment on Statelessness<sup>346</sup>, ensure the protection of rights and the effective implementation of protective measures and provide legal support to internally displaced persons and stateless persons.

<sup>344</sup> This initiative which was financed by the World Bank to the tune of CFAF 800,000,000 (About 1,221,374.05 Euros) began in June 2022 with the production and distribution of over 5,000 biometric refugee cards to Central African refugees in Gado Badzere and Mandjou.

<sup>345</sup> Held from 16 to 18 December 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland.

<sup>346</sup> Held on 7 October 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland.

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**1042-** Furthermore, as part of efforts to implement recommendations of the *Yaounde Declaration* of 27 April 2022, which aimed at addressing forced displacement resulting from the Central African crisis<sup>347</sup>, 2 multi-stakeholder workshops for the development of the National Action Plan for the implementation of these recommendations were organised in collaboration with UNHCR from 17 to 18 October 2023 in Mbankomo and on 22 November 2023 in Yaounde. From 30 to 31 October 2023 in Bangui, along with other signatory States of the Declaration, Cameroon participated in the regional ministerial meeting officially launching the Support Platform for Solutions to forced displacement linked to the Central African crisis. It validated the governance structure of the said Platform.

## D: Improving the Living Conditions of Refugees

**1043-** In order to monitor the quality and operation of drinking water systems remotely and in real time, using graphic quality data, a pilot project was set up in the Gado Badzere refugee site in Garoua Boulai in the East Region and in the Minawao site in the Far North Region. In addition, with the support of UNHCR, 14 autonomous solar power plants were installed to supply power to water pumping and distribution systems<sup>348</sup>.

**1044-** The refugees at the Minawao site contributed<sup>349</sup> to reforestation and the reduction of desertification. In June 2023, a total of 463,761 seedlings were planted in Minawao and the surrounding areas. Similarly, in the 7 refugee sites<sup>350</sup> in the East Region, 90 solar lamps were installed, and a joint assessment by UNHCR, partners, and refugees was initiated to identify suitable locations for solar lamp installation and ensure refugees' safety, against sexual violence among other things.

## E: Voluntary Repatriation and Resettlement of Refugees

**1045-** During the reference year, a total of 2,396 refugees, including 1,319 Nigerians, 997 Central Africans and 80 urban refugees of various

<sup>347</sup> This Declaration is the result of the inter-ministerial meeting which brought together 7 countries bordering the Central African Republic in Yaounde.

<sup>348</sup> In Gado (2) and Mbile (1), as well as in the Far North Region, notably in the Minawao site (7), in Firkiliwa (1) and Almagoche (1) in Logone Birni, in Lyamagra, in Fotokol (1), in Blangafe and in Blangoua (1).

<sup>349</sup> The Bogo IDPs also contributed, with nearly 2,000 seedlings planted on the site.

<sup>350</sup> The sites in question are Borgop, Gado Badzere, Lolo, Mbile, Ngarisingo, Ngam and Timangolo.

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nationalities were repatriated<sup>351</sup> to their respective countries. Regarding the option of resettlement, Cameroon submitted 1,016 individual refugee resettlement requests<sup>352</sup> to various countries. As a result of these requests, 878 refugees were resettled in the following countries: France (364), United States (274), Canada (215), Australia (22), and Finland (3) in November 2023.

## §3: Health and Nutrition of Refugees

**1046-** Initiatives were undertaken to preserve the right to health and facilitate access to food for refugees.

### A: Refugees' Right to Health

**1047-** A total of 166,148 consultations were recorded, including 113,405 Nigerian refugees, 47,983 Central African refugees from the sites in the East Region, and 4,760 urban refugees, resulting in a service utilization rate of 0.49 (on a scale of 1-4). The predominant health conditions were respiratory infections (38%) and malaria (24%).

**1048-** The improvement in measles vaccination coverage for children in 2023 (98.4%), compared to 2022 (97.4%), helped prevent measles outbreaks in refugee sites. The Minawao site benefited from a cholera vaccination campaign, achieving 100% vaccination coverage for newly arrived refugees.

**1049-** Regarding reproductive health, HIV, and STI prevention, a total of 16,227 prenatal consultations were conducted and 4,166 deliveries were recorded, including 1,836 Nigerian refugees and 2,330 Central African refugees. The rate of deliveries assisted by qualified personnel was 96.3%, compared to 95.71% in 2022. In total, 10,809 individuals were tested for HIV, with 47 testing positive and receiving antiretroviral (ARV) treatment. A total of 47,091 refugees were enrolled in universal health coverage, granting them free access to malaria, HIV and tuberculosis treatment.

<sup>351</sup> These individuals received assistance from the Government in the form of food items and basic necessities as a preliminary measure prior to being taken care of by the authorities of their respective countries.

<sup>352</sup> 75% of these requests were related to girls and women living in risky environments or survivors of violence in villages located in the Adamawa, East and Far North Regions.

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**1050-** Regarding chronic malnutrition, one out of every 2 refugee children experienced stunted growth, which had an impact on their psychomotor and cognitive development. At the Minawao site, there were 783 new cases of severe acute malnutrition, compared to 1,015 cases in 2022.

## B: Access to Food

**1051-** In the East Region, a total of 930 households, consisting of 70% refugees and 30% host population, organised into 40 cooperatives received various forms of assistance<sup>353</sup>. These households engaged in agricultural and livestock activities on 450 hectares of land. They produced 231 tons of maize on 95 hectares, 1,352 tons of cassava on 169 hectares, 78 tons of beans on 26 hectares, 12 tons of peanuts on 3 hectares, 8 tons of taro on 2 hectares and vegetables on 9 hectares. Regarding livestock and fish farming, these cooperatives acquired, inter alia, 763 chickens, 91 goats, 1,200 carps, and 5,000 fingerlings. Approximately 60% of the total production was used for household consumption, while the remaining 40% was sold in local markets. These households improved the quality and quantity of their food intake through increased production and received seeds for the 2024 season.

**1052-** In the agropastoral and fisheries sectors, 968 individuals in the Far North Region received assistance. As a result, 700<sup>354</sup> farmers, including 490 refugees and 210 host community members, received fertilizers and agricultural tools, had access to 350 hectares of agricultural land, and received training from MINADER. Additionally, 50 refugee women each received vegetable seeds to improve family nutrition, especially for children. In the livestock sector, 200 breeders, including 140 refugees and 60 host community members<sup>355</sup> received veterinary products. Furthermore, 18 fish farmers, including 16 refugees and 2 host community members, received 3,000 fingerlings and fish feed.

## §4: Refugee Education

**1053-** During the 2022/2023 school year, the demand for education spanned various levels of schooling, including preschool, primary, secondary, and tertiary.

<sup>353</sup> This includes financial aid (cash-based interventions), technical support from agricultural experts, training in entrepreneurship, financial education, etc.

<sup>354</sup> In Mayo-Tsanaga (370), Mayo-Sava (50), Logone et Chari (130) and Garoua (150).

<sup>355</sup> i.e 100 individuals in Mayo-Tsanaga, 60 in Logone et Chari and 40 in Mayo-Sava.

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## A: Preschool Education Demand

**1054-** A total of 5,425 refugee children were registered, including 2,796 girls and 2,629 boys. Among these pupils, 1,394 (740 girls/654 boys) were enrolled in public schools, 1,199 (632 girls/567 boys) in private schools, and 2,832 (1,424 girls/1,408 boys) in community schools. The region with the highest number of enrolments was the East Region with 2,145 children, while the South Region had the lowest number with 23 children.

## B: Primary Education Demand

**1055-** In the 2022/2023 school year, a total of 76,514 refugee children (34,432 girls/42,082 boys)<sup>356</sup> were registered, with 82% of them in Priority Education Zones (ZEP) and 55% were boys. There were 67,759 pupils in public schools (30,172 girls/37,587 boys), 8,212 in private schools (4,007 girls/4,205 boys), and 543 pupils in community or parent-led schools (253 girls/290 boys). The East Region recorded the highest number of pupils, that is 30,686 (17,491 girls/13,195 boys), while the West Region had the lowest number, that is 1,038 pupils (505 girls/533 boys).

**1056-** In functional literacy centres, a total of 424 learners (259 women/165 men) were registered, with 16 (13 women/3 men) in the public sector, 177 (115 women/62 men) in the private sector and 233 (131 women/102 men) in community centres.

**1057-** Regarding non-formal literacy and basic education centres, 520 refugees were registered, including 298 females and 222 males. The East Region recorded the highest enrolment with 343 learners (194 women/149 men), giving a rate of 66%.

**1058-** Concerning participation in official exams, 1,923 refugees (1,180 boys and 743 girls) registered to take the CEP (Certificat d'Etudes Primaires), while 1,529 refugees (826 boys and 703 girls) registered for the FSLC (First School Leaving Certificate).

**1059-** Following these exams, 627 refugees passed the CEP, resulting in a pass rate of 32% and 1,279 refugees passed the FSLC, achieving a pass rate of 83%.

<sup>356</sup> The East (40.1%), Far North (17.4%) and Adamawa (15.6%) Regions collectively account for two-thirds of the refugees identified in the primary cycle.

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## C: Secondary School Attendance

**1060-** A total of 4,257 refugee students enrolled in secondary schools, with 855 in urban areas, 2,349 in the East Region, and 1,053 in the Minawao site. The East Region don't have urban area?

## D: Tertiary Level Education

**1061-** In total, 132 young refugees, including 37 girls and 95 boys, benefited from the DAFI<sup>357</sup> scholarship programme. Furthermore, as part of Complementary Education Pathways, 7 refugee students, 3 women and 4 men, were admitted to universities in France to pursue their Master's studies.

## §5: Refugee Access to Empowerment

**1062-** To improve the living standards of Central African refugees residing in the East Region part of the country, the Government, in collaboration with the German Technical Cooperation (GIZ), officially presented on 20 June 2023, the *Support Project for Host Communities and Refugees in the East Region and Voluntary Return Assistance for Communities of the Central African Republic (ProCAR)*<sup>358</sup>. The first phase of ProCAR, which extends until 2026, aims to increase income, strengthen cooperatives and promote social cohesion, among other objectives.

**1063-** In June 2023, the Government and humanitarian partners launched the three-year<sup>359</sup> (2023-2026) cross-border program to promote sustainable solutions to displacement situations in Cameroon and the Central African Republic.

**1064-** In September 2023, 19 Central African refugee women out of 52 learners in Meiganga and Garoua-Boulai were trained as part of the Wom-

<sup>357</sup> This is an acronym referring to the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative, a university scholarship programme for students and one of the key pillars of the strategy to achieve a 15% enrolment rate of young refugees in higher education by 2030.

<sup>358</sup> This project covers the municipalities in the Kadey and Boumba-and-Ngoko Divisions.

<sup>359</sup> This programme, run by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) - Action Against Hunger (ACF) - CARE - and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), extends to border area in the East and Adamawa Regions (Garoua-Boulai, Ouli, Kété, Batouri, Kentzou, Ndélé, Bétaré-Oya, Meiganga, Djohong, and Ngaoui). The objectives of this programme are to provide sustainable and diversified solutions to refugees/returnees and host communities in reception and return areas, including addressing their basic needs and contributing to strengthening the economic empowerment of displaced populations in the face of shocks and climate change.

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en's Empowerment for Resilient Economies and Sustainable Livelihoods for Refugees and Host Communities living in the East and Adamawa Regions project initiated by the International Labour Organisation for the period between 2021 and 2024<sup>360</sup>. Similarly, Cami Toyota trained 18 refugees in automotive mechanics with the aim of making them self-reliant and contributing to economic development.

**1065-** Moreover, the digital platform called "Opportunities for Refugees"<sup>361</sup> was launched by UNHCR and Plan International Cameroon, under the aegis of the Minister of Employment and Vocational Training, to facilitate refugees' access to employment opportunities.

## SECTION 2: MANAGEMENT OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

**1066-** These numerous vulnerable population, which are, continued to receive various forms of support, which had an impact on their education.

### §1: Statistics on Internally Displaced Persons

**1067-** On 30 November 2023, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) was estimated at 1,075,252. Among them, 453,661 were located in the Far North Region, 5,301 in the Adamawa Region, 63,809 in the Centre Region, 79,954 in the Littoral Region, 114,111 in the West Region, 188,954 in the North West Region, and 169,462 in the South West Region. Children accounted for 52% of this population. Some 658,548 people returned to their usual places of residence after a return to normalcy. They included 198,940 in the Far North Region, 233,451 in the North West Region and 226,157 in the South West Region.

### §2: Continuation of Government Assistance to IDPs

**1068-** Despite the expiration of the Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Plan in December 2022<sup>362</sup> and the limited financial resources available, the Government continued to provide diverse forms of support to IDPs. This assistance included food supplies, basic necessities, bedding materials and

<sup>360</sup> This project is funded by the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

<sup>361</sup> It is available at the address <https://opportunitiesforrefugees.org/>.

<sup>362</sup> The plan implemented to address the assistance needs of IDPs and host populations covered the period from July 2018 to December 2019 and was extended till December 2022.

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resettlement sites, benefiting both victims of crises and natural disasters such as landslides and mudslides in Buea in March 2023 and Limbe in July 2023, as well as the landslide that occurred in Mbankolo, Yaounde, in October 2023.

**1069-** Furthermore, with the support of Plan International Cameroon, 82 birth certificates were issued, particularly for 38 internally displaced children in the Mayo-Tsanaga and Logone-et-Chari Divisions in the Far North Region. The remaining birth certificates were intended for host communities in these divisions.

## §3: Implementation of IDPs' Right to Education

**1070-** The social instability prevailing in the crisis-affected regions did not prevent children from enjoying their right to education. Thus, at the preschool level, 14,936 pupils were registered, including 4,153 pupils (2,065 girls/2,088 boys) in public schools, 10,325 pupils (5,227 girls/5,098 boys) in the private sector and 458 pupils (234 girls/224 boys) in community schools. At the primary level, 165,892 pupils (79,313 girls/86,579 boys) were enrolled, including 123,188 (58,268 girls/64,920 boys) in public schools, 40,827 pupils (20,140 girls/20,687 boys) in private schools, and 1,877 pupils (905 girls/972 boys) in community schools.

**1071-** In literacy and non-formal basic education centres, there were 1,745 learners, including 913 women and 832 men and in the functional literacy centres, there were a total of 905 learners, with 396 in public centres (211 women/185 men), 315 in the private sector (166 women/149 men) and 194 at the community level (107 women/87 men). Compare with names in the chapter on the right to education

**1072-** Regarding official examinations, the number of registered pupils for the CEP was 1,688, including 1,070 boys and 618 girls, and for the FSLC, the number was 10,031 pupils, with 4,762 girls and 5,269 boys. The success rates recorded in these different examinations were 70% for the CEP with 1,192 successful pupils and 95% for the FSLC with 9,965 successful pupils.

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**1073-** Despite the increase in the number of refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons on the one hand, and the limited financial resource on the other hand, Cameroon remained a host country and continued to take action, with the support of partners, to provide better protection for these vulnerable individuals.

**1074-** Nevertheless, in order to maximize the effectiveness of these efforts, additional initiatives could be considered, such as increasing financial resources to support the education sector and producing more refugee identification cards.

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## CONCLUSION OF PART THREE

**1075-** In a nutshell, some of the actions undertaken to reinstate peace included fighting against the proliferation of arms, collaborating with neighbouring countries to strengthen cross border security, prosecuting perpetrators of violence, building capacities of defence and security forces or signing funding agreements for the reconstruction of crisis regions.

**1076-** The will to improve governance and combat corruption was demonstrated through awareness-raising, control, repression and adoption of a new mining Code. Similarly, the slight increase in the budget allocated to prisons facilitated detainee's access to health care, food as well as enabled an improved living environment and preparation for social reintegration. The increase also enabled an improvement in material and infrastructural resources. Major events relating to the protection of the rights of socially vulnerable persons included the signing of some cooperation agreements, strengthening the legal framework by depositing instruments of ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the adoption of the Charter for Child Online Protection in Cameroon.

**1077-** Moreover, initiatives to promote women's right continued with emphasis on increasing women's inclusion in the digital world and protecting women's in the family and the society. Also, multifaceted actions continued to be undertaken concerning internally displaced persons and refugees whose numbers continue to increase every year.

**1078-** However, some weaknesses were observed notably regarding the difficulty for the State to recover funds from pecuniary sanctions, the persisting crises in some regions and insufficient financial resources.

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# GENERAL CONCLUSION



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**1079-** At the end of this Report, it emerges that measures taken towards the promotion and protection of Human Rights helped to highlight progress made and identify challenges encountered.

**1080-** Overall, in terms of progress, the State of Cameroon sought and obtained funding for its major road development, agricultural, railway, energy, and hydraulic projects, increased the number of civil servants and strengthened their technical capacities as well as those of other key stakeholders. In addition to raising awareness and taking remedial administrative and judicial measures following Human Rights violations, the legislative, strategic and institutional frameworks were consolidated in several areas.

**1081-** Thus, laws relating to higher education policy, child online protection, mining, special status of research personnel and the treasury's preferential-rights were adopted amongst others. To ensure coherence of actions, strategic tools in the health, food, environmental, digital and other sectors were validated or launched. Institutions were created such as the Peacekeeping Operations Training School, the national committee on access as well as fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from the utilisation of genetic resources, the coordination committee on national policies against money laundering, terrorism financing and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and regional coordination committees for sector interventions for the prevention and fight against trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling.

**1082-** Under international cooperation, the State of Cameroon reiterated its attachment to Human Rights by taking up commitments following the 4<sup>th</sup> Cycle of the Universal Periodic Review, the Global Refugee Forum and activities marking the celebration of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

**1083-** As concerns civil and political rights in particular, in addition to improving transport infrastructure (such as tarring over 2,400 km of road) to guarantee safety, visa exemption for Russian, Irish and British holders of diplomatic or service passports as well as easing modalities for obtaining visas, even online, contributed to guarantee freedom of movement. The justice sector received new impetus with the amendment of the Rules and Regulations governing Bailiffs, appointment of Assessors in matters of juvenile delinquency and admission of new Clerks.

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**1084-** Increase in institutional support to the media and acceleration of digital transformation were some of the spinoffs of the guarantee of freedom of expression and communication.

**1085-** Participation in the management of public affairs was consolidated through the election of 70 Senators and the appointment of 30 others by the Head of State, update of electoral registers which resulted in 7,361,875 registered voters in total, continuous update of the State Payroll with the registration of 279,736 employees of the public service on the application CARTO, increase in resources allocated for decentralisation illustrated by the Common Decentralisation Fund, devolution of powers in the areas of health and secondary education.

**1086-** As concerns economic, social and cultural rights, readjustments made towards the organisation and functioning of teacher training colleges, measures taken to fight against GBV in schools, and strengthening education (expanding the school map, recruiting teachers, and reducing the period of their absorption to 90 days as well as developing school infrastructure) reinforcing the educational sector which recorded encouraging results and increase in demand. Extension of health care offered was particularly visible through the launch of Phase I of the Universal Health Coverage and introduction of the anti-malaria vaccine, of which 331,000 doses were received. Furthermore, conservation of biodiversity and the fight against climate change including different forms of pollution were the pillars of environmental protection.

**1087-** Regarding the right to an adequate standard of living, the import-substitution process was consolidated, with a large budget allocated for this purpose together with tax and customs measures which favoured local production on the one hand and development of factors of vegetable production, forestry and fishery, in terms of research, financial, technical or material capacity which had a positive impact on production on the other hand. To guarantee qualitative, quantitative and regular access to water and electricity, production, storage, transport and distribution infrastructure were reinforced notably through digging of boreholes, water conveyance systems and water supply points, construction of photovoltaic solar stations for electricity transmission and continuous development of Lom Pangar, Nachtigal, Mekin and Memve'ele hydroelectric dams.

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**1088-** The project to construct social housing continued to be executed and the development and securing of lands as well as the issuance of land titles, over 10,000 in total. The major event under culture and leisure was the registration of the *Nguon* by UNESCO on its Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Concerning labour and social security, the salaries of employees of the public service together with the minimum wage were increased, more jobs were created (as seen from the creation of 1,260 SMEs) and digitalisation of NSIF services continued.

**1089-** As concerns cross-cutting issues, the fight against the proliferation of arms continued, as well as initiatives towards restoring peace. For example, provision of health care services to 3,791 ex-fighters in NDDRC Centres. Regarding good governance and combating corruption, a new employers' organisation (Union of Cameroonian Enterprises) was born to influence public-private dialogue and consolidation of integrity in the management of public affairs and resources continued, with emphasis being laid on public contracts, extractive industries, movement of private or public funds and the activity of authorising officers and public accountants. In line with improving detention conditions, the budget allocated for Penitentiary Administration was increased, construction and rehabilitation works took place in prisons, 1,647 detainees underwent professional trainings, administrative or judicial controls were carried out. Visits were also carried out by the CHRC and the DDHCI of the Ministry of Justice.

**1090-** As regards vulnerable persons (children, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples), measures were taken to ensure their protection against all forms of abuse and guarantee for them access to civil status documentation, particularly the birth certificate. Gender issues remained a main focus of public policies, gender-sensitive budgeting followed its course. There are 33 female Senators and actions were undertaken towards women empowerment such as support to entrepreneurship. Furthermore, refugees and internally displaced persons received basic social services and assistance to obtain access to documentation, particularly the biometric refugee card and the birth certificate.

**1091-** Regarding challenges, insufficient financial resources relatively reduced the ability for the State to take action while peace was often disturbed in some localities due to terrorist attacks by *Boko Haram* and armed groups. Similarly, physical integrity came under serious challenges evidenced

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by road accidents, fire outbreaks, natural disasters, collapse of buildings, inter community disputes and upsurge in GBV.

**1092-** Furthermore, the quality of life was affected by irregular supply of water and electricity, increase in fuel prices, challenges with waste removal, proliferation of cybercrime as seen from 31 ,463 complaints registered by ANTIC and the poor quality of mobile telephone services which led to a wave of indignation. Moreover, hate speech, incidents involving municipal police, leadership battles within some political parties and traditional chiefdoms constitute some of the threats to social cohesion.

**1093-** In view of continuously improving Human Rights in Cameroon, the following avenues are worth exploring: continuous research, diversification and mobilisation of financial resources for major projects; major enhancement of integrity and transparency in the management of public affairs and resources, particularly as concerns public contracts, extractive industries and the use of public property; strengthening normative, administrative and judicial response to hate speech, GBV, cybercrime, terrorist acts and intercommunity violence.

**1094-** Other possible solutions could include: strengthening production, transmission and supply of water and electricity; improving the quality of mobile telephone services, better management of the municipal police and waste removal; accelerating devolution of powers to RLAs; intensifying civil protection measures, particularly in risk zones and during construction works; continuously improving health care and education services; intensifying dialogue between the public and private sectors and dialogue between stakeholders of the electoral system.

# APPENDIX



# MINJUSTICE

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The following institutions contributed in preparing this Report: the UNHCR, the Supreme Court, Courts of Appeal and Lower Courts, Ministries, independent administrative services, public and semi-public establishments, and civil society organizations:

## Ministries / Administrative Structures

- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER);
- Ministry of Arts and Culture (MINAC);
- Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB);
- Ministry of Communication (MINCOM);
- Ministry of Defence (MINDEF);
- Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development (MINEPAT);
- Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training (MINEFOP);
- Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED);
- Ministry of External Relations (MINREX);
- Ministry of Finance (MINFI);
- Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF);
- Ministry of Higher Education (MINESUP);
- Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MINHDU);
- Ministry of Justice (MINJUSTICE);
- Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MINTSS);
- Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries (MINEPIA);
- Ministry of Mines, Industry and Technological Development (MINMIDT);
- Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (MINPOSTEL);
- Ministry of Public Contracts (MINMAP);
- Ministry of Public Health (MINSANTE);
- Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform (MINFOPRA);
- Ministry of Secondary Education (MINESEC);
- Ministry of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, Social Economy and Handicrafts (MINPMEESA);
- Ministry of Social Affairs (MINAS);
- Ministry of Sports and Physical Education
- Ministry of State Property, Survey and Land Tenure (MINCAF);
- Ministry of Territorial Administration (MINAT)
- Ministry of Tourism and Leisure (MINTOUL);
- Ministry of Trade (MINCOMMERCE);
- Ministry of Water Resources and Energy (MINEE);

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- Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family (MINPROFF);
- Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education (MINJEC);
- Supreme State Audit (CONSUPE);
- Ministry of Public Works (MINTP);
- Ministry of Transport (MINT);
- Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation (MINRESI);
- Ministry of Decentralization and Local Development (MINDDEVEL);
- General Delegation for National Security (DGSN);
- General Delegation for External Research (DGRE);
- Secretariat of State In Charge of the National Gendarmerie (SED);

### **Courts**

- Supreme Court;
- Special Criminal Court
- The 10 Courts of Appeal;
- Administrative Courts.

### **Independent Administrative Institutions and Public and Semi Public Establishments**

- National Agency Financial Investigation (ANIF);
- Standards and Quality Agency (ANOR);
- National Agency for Information and Communication Technologies (ANTIC)
- Investment Promotion Agency (IPA);
- Cameroon Water Utilities (CAMWATER);
- National AIDS Control Committee (CNLS);
- National Social Insurance Fund (NSIF);
- National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC);
- Cameroon Human Rights Commission (CHRC);
- National Communication Council (NCC);
- Elections Cameroon (ELECAM);
- National Fund for Youth Integration (FONIJ);
- Urban and Rural Land Development Authority (MAETUR);
- Consumer Product Supply Regulatory Authority (MIRAP);
- National Community-Driven Development Programme (PNDP);
- Institute of Agricultural Research for Development (IRAD);
- National Civil Status Registration Office (BUNEC);
- National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism (NCPBM);

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- National Disarmament, Demobilization and Rehabilitation Committee (NDDRC);
- Cameroon Housing Corporation (SIC);
- Cameroon Housing Loan Fund (CFC);

## **International Organizations and Civil Society**

- International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA)
- United Nations High Commissioner for - Refugees (UNHCR Cameroon);
- Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association (MBOSCU-DA);
- Young Men's Christian Association.
- United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women);

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