

Press release – October 14th, 2020

The Political and humanitarian crisis in Cameroon: update

A peaceful demonstration of support to the Cameroonian people took place on September 19, 2020, in Bern and some other European and North American capital cities as a prelude to the peaceful rallies that took place in Cameroon on September 22, 2020.

These peaceful demonstrations of September 22, 2020, in Cameroon were repressed in violence, with the following facts (non-exhaustive):

- The arrest, brutalization and detention of hundreds of protesters and journalists covering the event;
- The arrest and detention of Mr **Olivier Bibou Nissack**, Special Advisor and spokesperson of Maurice Kamto, President of the Cameroon Renaissance Movement (CRM), the main opposition party, arrested at his residence, the day before, therefore on the sidelines of demonstrations;
- The deployment of a large security force in front of **Maurice Kamto's** home in Yaoundé, who has been under house arrest with his family since the night of September 21, 2020.
- The arrest and detention of Mr **Alain Fogué**, National Treasurer of the CRM at Mr Kamto's Residence where he had come to witness his house arrest.

On October 2nd, 2020, the Geneva Grand Conseil debated the petition requesting for President Paul Biya to be declared persona non grata in Geneva. The petition was dismissed by the Geneva parliament and several of deputies who were members of the petitions committee declared the incompetence of the Geneva parliament for such petition which they said fell within the purview of the federal authorities.

On October 13, 2020, the Jesuit priest Ludovic Lado, having started a pilgrimage the day before between Douala and Yaoundé to pray for the return of peace in the two anglophone regions where several thousand people have been killed since conflicts began in 2016, was arrested on the way and transported to Yaoundé.

Given these serious human rights violations, it would be desirable for the Swiss federal authorities (federal parliament and FDFA) to look into the case of Cameroon and apply all their diplomatic weight to the Cameroonian authorities for the release of all people discriminatorily detained for having exercised their fundamental freedom. These people at risk of being accused of terrorism and endangering national security and tried by a military court, as highlighted in the press release by United Nations human rights experts from October 12, 2020.

We thank you for your interest in this message and looking forward to positive feedback.

For any additional information related to the situation in Cameroon, kindly get in touch with R. Hervais Kamdem (076 337 37 17), referent member of ALRDH on this subject.

Copies to :

- Swiss media
- Federal Parliament