

# CONFERENCE WORKING GROUPS

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# AND PANELS



**Coalition**  
for Dialogue and Negotiations

## 5.1 Working Group Organization and Expectations

The Conference Working Groups (WGs) were managed by a sitting committee of five persons, consisting of two co-chairs, two vice co-chairs and a rapporteur. Appointment to the committee was by expertise but gender and differing ideological viewpoints were integrated in establishing the leadership of Working Groups. Committee members were expected to be driven by passion, the spirit of collaboration, collegiality, selflessness, and mutual respect.

**Goal:** Each WG received detailed terms of reference with the goal to provide evidence-based and pragmatic policy advice to help resolve the conflict and rebuild a robust and sustainable post-conflict Southern Cameroons economy.

**Responsibilities:** Prior to the conference, committee members identified and recruited Southern Cameroonian experts whom they deemed able to substantially contribute to deliberations. The Conference Organizing Committee reached out to all Southern Cameroonian political and frontline organizations for their representation and participation in each of the Working Groups.

The primary responsibility of the committee was to identify the major clusters or thematic areas under the Working Group and assign recognized experts to each cluster. Southern Cameroonians with demonstrated interest in a particular WG were invited to join their preferred WG and directly participate in deliberations.

From the establishment of the Working Groups in February 2020 and during the conference, clusters or thematic groups had the responsibility of identifying:

- Suitable strategic short, medium- and long-term objectives for the thematic area
- Critical issues impacting the attainment of identified objectives
- A set of strategic initiatives to enable attainment of the said strategic objectives

**Deliverables/Outcome:** At the end of deliberations, each Working Group presented a summary of their identified strategic objectives, critical issues, and strategic initiatives, all calibrated within the short-term, medium term and long-term frameworks. This is part of the Strategy Report from each WG. The rapporteur of the Working Group presented the summary at the plenary session which were debated, with resolutions and guiding principles adopted.

A summary of the Seven (7) Working Group deliberations and conclusions are described in the following seven sections.

## 5.2 Mediation and Negotiations Working Group

### 5.2.1 Background

The current armed conflict has its roots in the union between the former British and French United Nations (UN) Trust territories which became West Cameroon (The Southern Cameroons) and East Cameroon (La République du Cameroun), respectively.

Southern Cameroons was administered by the United Kingdom (Great Britain); League of Nations Mandate (1919 to 1946), and the United Nations (UN) Trusteeship (1946 to 1961) and was part of a loose union with Nigeria.

The French speaking East Cameroon was administered by France in the same period under the League of Nations and the United Nations (UN). East Cameroon Independence was gained on January 1, 1960 as The Republic of Cameroon (La République Du Cameroun [LRC]).

The Southern Cameroons (SC) became a self-governing territory from 1954 to 1961. This was a vibrant multi-party system that saw the first peaceful transfer of power in post-colonial Africa from Prime Minister Dr. Emmanuel M. Lifaka Endeley to John Ngu Foncha through democratic universal suffrage. The people of the Southern Cameroons voted in an UN-sponsored plebiscite on February 11, 1961 to gain Independence by joining La République du Cameroun (LRC). This union became effective on October 1, 1961 and the beginning of the Federal Republic of Cameroon with two equal states (the federated state of West Cameroon and the federated state of East Cameroon).

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Cameroon emphasized a union of Equal Status between the two Peoples. However, no union treaty is on file at the UN, and the Federal constitution was not ratified by the Southern Cameroons parliament.

**Note to Conference Participants:** The statements therein are based on deliberations of working group members from October 30-November 1, 2020. A detailed process and framework for international mediation and negotiations developed by the working group from March to October 2020 will be shared with the Southern Cameroons leadership team and the Steering Committee of the Coalition to inform a credible international mediation and negotiation process.

Subsequent key unconstitutional changes include:

- A 1966 ban on multi-party democracy in the Southern Cameroons.
- A 1972 illegal and unconstitutional referendum abrogating the federation.
- A 1984 Presidential decree by Paul Biya changing the country from the “United Republic of Cameroon” back to the Republic of Cameroon (pre-1961 La République du Cameroun)

**Note to Conference Participants:**

### **5.2.2 Pros and Cons of an Independent Southern Cameroons.**

**PRO:** Southern Cameroonians have the experience to run their own affairs without any fear of domination from Francophones.

- Single legal and educational system eliminates confusion; well-trained human capital, and endowed natural resources will ensure job creation, rapid economic growth, and development.

**CON:** - Major investments are required to rebuild institutions and for state building in general.

- Complex negotiations are required to split current debt obligations and disentangle from shared resources, such as electric grid and petroleum.

### **5.2.3 Pros and Cons of a Two-state Federation as outlined in the 1961 Federal Constitution.**

**PRO:** - Easy to transition to; familial, and investment relationships, benefit of being part of a larger country.

- The two-state federation would emphasize English common law and Anglo-Saxon education system in the Southern Cameroons (Quasi-confederacy).

**CON:** - Risk of continued domination from La République du Cameroun; issues of distrust continue. The Republic of France does not allow Cameroon to change its currency and stop using the Franc CFA. This makes a Federation highly impossible.

**Note:** Only two attendees/panelists out of 50+ indicated interest in “Federation” as a possible final outcome during the deliberations in the Mediation and Negotiation working group sessions.

**Note:** None of the attendees/panelists showed any interest in discussing “Special Status” in a “Unitary State” during the deliberations in the Mediation and Negotiation working group sessions.

### **5.2.4 Mediation and Negotiation Working Group Conclusions**

The Mediation and Negotiation working group, bearing in mind the fact that Southern Cameroonians are a People with a right to Self Determination as well as Self Defense, strongly recommend that as part of any agreement to end the armed conflict, the following actions occur:

1. An international peacekeeping force be sent to the Southern Cameroons to enforce the peace agreement due to the lack of trust between the warring parties.
2. A transitional period of limited self-rule to be offered to the People of the Southern Cameroons followed by a chance to vote on the above two options in a United Nations sponsored and supervised referendum.

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## 5.3 Judiciary and Constitutional Affairs Working Group

### 5.3.1 Introduction

The Union of French speaking La Republique du Cameroun and Self-Governing Territory of British Southern Cameroons in 1961 was an unprecedented event in contemporary African politics. In the 1960s, a time when African states were clamoring for independence as separate entities, these two African territories, colonized by two opposing European cultures, bucked the trend by uniting to form one State.

At independence, The Federal Republic of Cameroon was to be constructed on the foundation of the colonial state. Under the Federal Constitution, the Federated States were to maintain their pre-independence governance and legal systems, thus making the new state not only a bicultural state but also a bi-jural state.

Small wonder that the Federal Constitution of 1961 that created the Federal Republic of Cameroon stated in its Article 47 that, “any proposal for the revision of the present constitution which impairs the unity and integrity of the Federation shall be inadmissible.”

However, events that followed registered a blatant disrespect of the constitution as its provisions were flaunted with impunity and reckless abandon. To a large extent the Federated States of East Cameroon continued to apply civil law as obtained in France, while common law as obtained in Britain was applied albeit in a limited extent in the state of West Cameroon until 1972.

In 1972, Ahmadou Ahidjo, through a gagged and dubious referendum abolished the federal structure in flagrant abuse of Article 47 of the Federal Constitution. He decreed a United Republic, and in 1984 his successor President Paul Biya completed the project of annexation and assimilation by a decree that changed the name of the country from United Republic of Cameroon to Republic of Cameroon. Most have interpreted the change to the pre-union name of French Cameroon, as the formal declaration of the colonization of the Southern Cameroons by La Republic of Cameroon. Ahidjo’s 1972 Constitution left the two legal systems in operation intact.

Having illegally terminated the union and centralized political power, French Cameroon intensified its assimilationist policies by deliberately and systematically phasing out of the legal and judicial system of former West Cameroon. The appointment of French speaking magistrates and judges with no mastery of either the common law or English to preside in anglophone common law courts was troubling.

On May 9, 2015, an inaugural All Anglophone Common Law Lawyers Conference that was held in Bamenda, noted with dissatisfaction the administration of justice and the rule of law in Cameroon, especially as they pertain to the Anglophone minority. This eventually led to peaceful protests by common law lawyers in 2016. The Government’s violent crackdown of the Lawyers’ and Teachers’ protests opened the latest chapter in the Southern Cameroonian conflict.

### 5.3.2 *The Constitution*

Prior to the contested union with French Cameroon, the Southern Cameroons was self-governing, with all her governing organs and institutions duly outlined in the Southern Cameroons (Constitution) Order in Council 1960.

In terms of a constitution, a transitional constitutional framework is required. The constitution should provide for a joint interim administration led by the citizens of the Southern Cameroons; however, a combined team involving the UN/AU could be an option to be explored. For purposes of good faith and confidence building, the belligerent parties and any third-party mediators or negotiators should first and foremost, agree to reset the Southern Cameroons to her default position immediately prior to the contested union of October 1st, 1961. This will have the positive effect of undoing in one swoop the perceived ills of the union, build trust and confidence in the negotiation or mediation process, and above all, level the ground upon which each side can firmly make their proposals with regard to the future of the territory.

Besides leveling the playing field and building essential confidence, it is our opinion that, reverting to the default position before 1961, will be healthy for the post war transitional environment as the system will be flexible enough to host and sustain transitional governing structures, institutions and models that will greatly meet the needs of the post conflict society.

Should the Southern Cameroons attain statehood, a new constitution should be drafted by a duly constituted constitutional commission or a constituent assembly. The constitution should follow these guidelines to ensure durability, flexibility, and inclusiveness.

#### 5.3.2.1 *Durability and Accessibility*

To ensure the new constitution is durable we recommend the following guidelines:

**Keep it concise and simple:** Use simple language that the average citizen will understand. It is the people's constitution and should be understandable and accessible to the average person. Do not use dense legal language that alienates the people from their constitution. Durable constitutions result from open and participatory processes. It should also take account of social and cultural norms of the country.

**Broad participation:** Research has shown that constitutions that are developed with wide participation of the people are more durable than those written only by elites or experts. Wide participation takes more time but leads to wider acceptance and longevity of the constitution. South Africa's process took two years and was very consultative. As a result, their constitution gained wide acceptance.

**Who drafts the constitution:** A good constitution should be drafted either by a constitutional commission or a constituent assembly. The drafting body should take extensive input from the public before and during the drafting period. Again, the more open the process the better. Ensure that members of the constituent assembly or constitutional commission are

not allowed to hold public office for at least 10 years, to avoid conflict of interest.

**Who ratifies the draft constitution:** The draft constitution should be ratified either by an elected parliament or directly by the people in a referendum (preferred).

**Principles of the Constitution:** We recommend these broad principles are retrofitted in the new constitution or changes to the Southern Cameroons (Constitution) order in council:

The constitution shall guarantee and protect fundamental rights which shall include, inter alia, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, freedom of information, right to privacy, due process, criminal procedural rights, equal protection, and voting rights.

The Constitution shall prohibit all forms of discrimination including gender, orientation, or tribal affiliation. Amendments to the constitution shall be done through a national referendum, after each state legislature has approved the amendment by the specially defined majority. The amendment must be approved by the majority in each state.

### **5.3.2.2 Articles of the Constitution**

**PREAMBLE OF THE CONSTITUTION:** Will define and state the aspirations of the people of the Southern Cameroons, or whatever name they shall aspire to (e.g. Ambazonia).

The Supremacy of the Constitution as the law of the Land shall be defined.

Articles of the Constitution creating and defining the Legislative, Executive, and Judiciary Powers.

The Constitution shall:

- Create Customary Courts modeled after our traditional values, customs, and indigenous rights to their ancestral land.
- Define what form of government Southern Cameroonians aspire to have.
- Define what form of legal system they should aspire to.
- Define citizenship, its acquisition, revocation, or termination.
- Each Article should define a separate category by itself.

Each Article shall be followed by a Section of the Constitution.

Each Section shall be followed by defining Clauses. For example: Article I shall state who wields Legislative Authority; Section I shall explain the composition of that body; Clause 1 shall define the modalities of accession to power and terms of their office. There will be a Section II, Clause II, as needed:

- The power to declare war and raise an army.
- The power to mint money.

- The power of Taxation.
- Environmental Law, land ownership, and property rights shall be defined by the constitution.
- The power to Ratify Conventions and Treaties with foreign nations.

Constitutional institutions for the promotion, protection of democratic and governance system (like “Chapter 9” institutions in South Africa e.g. Human Rights commission and Regulators.)

### **5.3.3 Judicial System**

Faced with these inconsistencies and conflicts because of the historical, legal, and cultural differences between the two Cameroons, it is hard to propose any possible solutions that will restore peace and harmony without addressing the root causes of the present conflict through a negotiated settlement.

It is therefore recommended that, in the event of any such negotiated settlement, Southern Cameroonians should envision a judicial and legal system that will be completely independent of the influence of politics and the economy.

The judiciary shall uphold the rule of law and shall itself be accountable to the people through their elected representatives in parliament. The judicial and legal systems should be designed to reflect the unique socio-economic and cultural realities within the Southern Cameroons. The system shall therefore be greatly informed by the best practices in indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms and structures, which are basically restorative, and person centered in nature, rather than retributive and rule centered. The proposed model shall have the unique advantage in that it shall have a bottom-up approach to justice; whereby, the local communities shall have effective control of their own judicial processes and outcomes and shall be accountable for outcomes with minimal governmental bureaucratic control.

### **5.3.4 Conclusion**

From the analysis above, it is clear that despite having no legal or historical claim over the territory of the Southern Cameroons, La République du Cameroon has deliberately and manipulatively used legal and constitutional mechanisms to continuously oppress and marginalize the people of the Southern Cameroons with the intention of completely assimilating them, and consequently phasing out their unique identity.

These attempts have not worked, and with evidence of what is happening now, it is clear that it will never work. It is therefore urgent that the government of La République du Cameroun meet Southern Cameroonians on the negotiation table where the root causes of the present conflict will be addressed to the ultimate satisfaction of the Southern Cameroons.

### **5.3.5 Bibliography**

1. Federal Republic of Cameroon. Federal Constitution of Cameroon, Article 46. Federal Republic of Cameroon, 1961.
2. United Republic of Cameroon. Constitution of June 2, 1972, Article 38. United Republic of Cameroon, 1972.
3. Meisburger, Timothy M. "Best Practices in Constitutional Reform." Best Practices in Constitutional Reform, The Asia Foundation, 2014, <https://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/BestPracticesinConstitutionalReformMeisburger.pdf>. Accessed 4 11 2014.

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## 5.4 Governance Working Group

### 5.4.1 Objectives of the Governance Working Group

To provide evidence-based and pragmatic advice that contributes to effective governance frameworks and the proper management of public resources in a post-conflict Southern Cameroons.

### 5.4.2 Framework and Focus Areas

- Thematic area 1: Assessment of the Governance frameworks pre 1961, 1961 to 1972, 1972-1984 and 1984 to present.
- Thematic area 2: Comparative analysis of governance framework in similar situations and lessons learned.
- Thematic area 3: Current governance challenges and durable peace in the Southern Cameroons
- Thematic area 4: Post-Negotiations governance framework

#### 5.4.2.1 Thematic Area 1: Assessment

Important historical dates are: 1954, 1961, 1972, and 1982.

The root cause of the conflict is a failed decolonization process, and subsequent assimilation and marginalization amongst others. The aftermath of that has brought forth other governance challenges, which include:

- Poor governance and Accountability
- A weak Governance Philosophy
- No separation of powers between the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches
- Absence of genuine participatory governance
- A weak transitioning system of governance
- “Strongmanism” as a governance philosophy
- Tribalism and nepotism
- Absence of ownership of national institutions
- Localized democracy against a cut and paste system of democracy – e.g. House of Chiefs.
- An absence of a defined statehood and citizenship concept

#### 5.4.2.2 Thematic area 2: Comparative Analysis

The following table shows a comparative analysis of three African nations.

### **Comparative Analysis**

The following table shows a comparative analysis of three African nations.

<b>South Sudan</b>	<b>Somaliland</b>	<b>Cameroon</b>
Favorable international community	Stability	Presence of state
Presence of State	Security	Presence of natural resources
Presence of Strategic natural resources	Democracy	Gross Human rights abuses Absence of security
Instability, Absence of Security	Absence of negotiating state	Absence of stability
Lack of democracy	Absence of natural resources	Absence of democracy

#### **5.4.2.3 Thematic area 3: Current Governance Framework**

The special status currently offered by the government of the Republic of Cameroon (French Cameroon) will not address the root cause of the on-going armed conflict. The Governance working group believes the root cause of the armed conflict can only be addressed through a credible international Mediation and Negotiation process.

#### **5.4.2.4 Thematic area 4: Post-Negotiation Governance Framework**

##### **5.4.2.4.1 Post Negotiation**

This period is critical and any interim or permanent governance system for the Southern Cameroons should come with a government with devolution of powers, a parliamentary system with elected officials at all levels – governors, senators, and other administrators. A government with an independent judiciary and legislature would use the following principles:

- Good governance principle should be the primary philosophy
- An executive council accountable to federal structures
- Have a non-political chamber with different bodies including the civil society, and trade unions.
- A contextualized and localized form of democracy that suits the needs of the people.

#### **5.4.2.4.2 Post Negotiation without Immediate Independence**

In the event a negotiation yields a transitional government, the Governance Working Group envisaged a federated structure with a two states dual federation system that lists the competencies of the state and those of the central/federal government.

The post negotiation transitional government will prepare the people of the Southern Cameroons for the eventual referendum to vote on the choice of the form of state they want.

#### **5.4.2.4.3 Referendum**

A referendum is a legal process, and when derived from a peace agreement, must be binding to the parties through legal acts. The Governance Working Group believes issues of eligibility, establishment of a United Nations supervised independent Referendum Commission and composition, funding, referendum questions, access for Southern Cameroonian IDPs, refugees and diaspora community must be defined during the negotiations process.

The Governance Working Group's inelastic position on eligibility, subject to negotiations, is that a Southern Cameroonian is anyone born of a Southern Cameroonian parent whose ancestry can be traced to a community in the former United Nations Trust Territory of British Southern Cameroons, before February 11, 1961.

#### **5.4.2.4.4 Post Referendum**

The benchmarking analysis of the nature of the social contract that will define the state, representation, accounting mechanisms, election system designs, and parameters of governance are essential in determining a sustainable governance system that considers the peculiarities of the Southern Cameroons.

The Governance Working Group recommends that core values be instituted in whichever governance system Southern Cameroonians elect to administer. These core values include:

- Our Unique Identities based on a redefinition of the State and the citizen (citing the case of Rwanda).
- A devolution of powers.
- A parliamentary system of government with all elected officials.
- A non-political chamber that ensures laws and bills passed are for the good of the people.
- The enshrinement of our unique cultural values.

#### **5.4.2.5 General Position Statement**

1. There shall be a complete separation of powers between the executive, legislature, and judiciary, with specific checks and balances to ensure accountability, responsiveness, inclusiveness, and transparency.

2. Government should be structured at the federal, state, and local government levels and elected by Southern Cameroonians.
3. The institutions, status, and role of traditional authorities, according to indigenous law, shall be recognized and protected in the Constitution. Indigenous law shall be recognized and applied by the courts, subject to the fundamental rights contained in the Constitution and to legislation dealing specifically therewith.
4. There shall be a construction of a unique Southern Cameroons identity based on a redefinition of citizenship aligned to our cultural heritage and as a people under international law.

#### **5.4.2.6 Final Recommendations**

1. There is an urgent need for dialogue and negotiation as well as an urgent need for a mediated and supervised ceasefire to pave a way forward for mediated negotiations.
2. There must be dialogue and negotiation to discuss the root cause and related causes for justice and durable peace to return.
3. The dialogue and negotiation must be inclusive of all representative stakeholders
4. The people of the Southern Cameroons have a right to self-determination under international law and must be able to exert this right.
5. The People of the Southern Cameroons should be able to determine the form of state that they want.
6. The People of the Southern Cameroons should be able to determine the type of governance system they want.

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## 5.5 Economic Reconstruction Working Group

### 5.5.1 Background and Context: The Economy of the Southern Cameroons

The working group identified the following focus areas:

- Thematic Focal Area 1: Economic Philosophy and Pillars of a Long-term National Development Plan.
- Thematic Focal Area 2: Post-Conflict Considerations for organizing local Economic Development (LED).
- Thematic Focal Area 3: Post-Conflict Monetary and Fiscal considerations.
- Thematic Focal Area 4: Options for financing Post Conflict Economic Reconstruction and Development.
- Status Report on the Economy of the Southern Cameroons (Economic Organization, Potential and Business Environment)

The economic status has taken the following areas into consideration:

- The Economic Potential of the Southern Cameroons.
- Resources Ownership and Potential.
- Southern Cameroons within the Economy of the Cameroons.
- Identifying economic actors and stakeholders (chamber of commerce, business councils, farmers unions etc.).

### 5.5.2 Thematic Focus 1: Economic Philosophy

The following are the aspects of the Economic Philosophy:

- Economic system will be highly correlated with choice of political system.
- Responsibility of central government in formulating long term national development plan.
- Responsibility of the central government in providing backbone infrastructure and services to allow for economic development.
- Awareness of ‘natural resource curse’ thus reducing reliance on extractives.
- Create sovereign wealth fund to manage revenue from nonrenewable natural resources (for investment and posterity).

#### 5.5.2.1 Pillars of a Long-term National Development Plan

- Modelling the Southern Cameroon Economy after economic success stories/best practices.
- Emphasizing central role of education in economic development.

- Providing a template for industrial policy and industrialization.
- Providing a template for trade policy and export promotion.
- Providing a template for import substitution (local production).
- Promoting economic freedom and removing barriers to economic activities.
- Developing the agricultural sector and expanding its potential.
- Developing the manufacturing sector and expanding its potential.
- Developing the Services industry (Health, tourism, financial sector, Information Technology (IT) structure
- Providing a template for Infrastructure development.
- Providing a template for a sub-regional development hub. (e.g., Hong Kong Model).

### ***5.5.3 Thematic Focal Area 2: Post-Conflict Considerations for Organizing Local Economic Development (LED).***

- Local government is responsible for both the medium and the short-term economic development planning.
- There is a need to determine the model of Local Economic Development and how to organize and sustain productive capacity of Local Economy.
- There is a need to provide a template for the local economy (Agriculture and food processing, Real Estate).
- Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises development.
- Economic development Plans.
- Cooperatives and financing for local development.

### ***5.5.4 Thematic Focus 3: Monetary and Banking Systems: Post Conflict Scenarios and Considerations***

- An independent Central Bank is fundamental for a robust monetary policy.
- The need for a Southern Cameroons sovereign currency to fully control monetary policy.
- Ensuring that banking systems are consistent with global standards.
- Using cooperatives and microfinance institutions as potential building blocks for the banking sector.
- Providing mechanisms for boosting the Credit and Financing system.

### **5.5.5 Thematic Focus 4: Financing the Economic Reconstruction & Development: Post Conflict Considerations.**

Financing reconstruction will be a significant aspect of negotiations addressing the following issues:

- Who pays for war damage?
- Who gets foreign reserves and national debt responsibility?
- Need to use reconstruction financing to build national infrastructure backbone to meet long-term development objectives.
- Need for national investment fund to coordinate financing and management of large-scale infrastructure projects
- Role of diaspora with FDI
- Major Sources of Financing for development and Reconstruction:
  - Development Finance Institutions (DFIs), WB, IMF, AfDB, KFW, EIB, GIZ, etc.).
  - Bilateral Development Partners - ‘Marshall Plan’ and Bilateral Investors (USA, UK, China, EU (FR, GMY), S. Africa).
  - National resources.
  - Private Sector (domestic and Foreign Multinational Corporations and FDI).
  - Diaspora remittances.
- What about the current ‘war time’ Economy? Economically conscious actions during wartime greatly improve odds of achieving goals. Post war reconstruction is heavily dependent on wartime economic destruction.
- Coordinate CSO/NGO activities to alleviate wartime economic hardship.
- Emphasize capacity building and empowerment of refugees especially skills necessary in the post-war economy.
- Develop short-term actions that can be implemented currently to help achieve long-term, post-war economic goals.

### **5.5.6 Conclusions and Implications for Dialogue towards Negotiated Settlement - Key Messages**

There is a clear need to migrate away from dependence on primary industries and extractives.

Development partners and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) are key sources of financing for reconstruction. The role of diaspora in driving FDI is an important element.

Options of Domestic Resources Mobilization (Diaspora remittance, owning Natural Resources, and Private Sector), are key considerations for a Negotiated Settlement.

Money and Banking Systems considerations in post-conflict scenarios are quite complex (CFA Zone issues, New Currency, banking system setup, International payment system connection).

National Development planning (national and local economy setup) is imperative for a post conflict reconstruction context.

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## 5.6 Health and Humanitarian Relief Working Group

Livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets, and activities that are required for making a living. Household assets and capabilities represent the basic components of individual livelihood which include food, water, shelter, clothing, healthcare, and education. The Health and Humanitarian Relief Working Group focused on assessing the governance framework for the equitable delivery of health services and how best to organize to better address the growing humanitarian catastrophe facing Southern Cameroonians. The following is a summary of deliberations with a full report forthcoming.

The systems framework utilized included the following key components:

- Governance
- Administration
- Workforce
- Facility/Infrastructure
- Resources/Finances
- Information Technology
- Management

The various levels of healthcare assessed include primary, secondary, and tertiary care.

In considering the key strategies and approach, the Working Group agreed on the following:

- Healthcare implementation should be at the local level.
- Healthcare policy shall be designed nationally.
- Healthcare should be free at the point of delivery.
- Each citizen shall have basic health insurance coverage.
- Human rights of all shall be respected.
- Unique identification system shall be established.

### **Immediate/Short Term Humanitarian Assessment**

- Panelists assessed the pressing humanitarian crisis that has ravaged the Southern Cameroons population.
- Topics of conversations themed around: Refugees, Prisoners, IDPs, Disabled, Wounded Fighters/civilians, Physically/psychologically traumatized and the needs of children

### **Resolutions**

- An urgent call for an “End to the War”.
- Promote the urgent need for dialogue and negotiations.
- Coordinate sourcing of finances to address the humanitarian catastrophe.

- Encourage collaborative and centralized CSO and NGO management at Refugee Camps and the Southern Cameroons to avoid duplication of resources, minimize waste and optimize effectiveness.
- Important to empower and build capacity so as to get out of dependency.
- Set up community first aid centers for refugees and displaced persons.
- Assess COVID 19 Response and management within the vulnerable population.

### **5.6.1 Immediate/Short Term Humanitarian Resolutions**

An extensive fundraising strategy is necessary to fund the humanitarian and social needs of Southern Cameroonians. The following bullet points list the priority requirements:

- Humanitarian and Social needs of Southern Cameroonians include educational support, vocational support centers, empowerment centers and community first aid centers.
- Setup and fund food banks, basic home goods centers and shelters in various cities with large vulnerable populations. These centers will serve refugees in Nigeria and Ghana, including special populations of the disabled, elderly, children, pregnant and lactating mothers, wounded citizens, IDPs in the bushes, urban centers and in Yaoundé, Douala, Bafoussam, and other environments.
- Nutritional, health, and empowerment support for those incarcerated in various prisons.
- Conduct a census of:
  - Refugees in UN Camps
  - Out of Camps in Nigeria
  - Refugees in Ghana
  - IDPs in Douala, Yaoundé and other urban areas
  - Those incarcerated across all prison systems in Cameroon
- Mobilize resources to attend to the urgent needs of the people, such as food, water, shelter, and sanitation.
- Address COVID-19 protocols (such as: masks, gloves, and sanitizer).
- Assist non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) in setting up long-term accountable structures.
- Depoliticize the humanitarian assistance provided to the suffering people.
- Ensure that non-registered refugees in Nigeria are registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

### **5.6.2 Mid / Long-Term Humanitarian Resolutions**

There is a need for coordinated civil societies to function as a framework for transitional implementation in the absence of a functioning, effective administration. Resolving the conflict soon will open the door for implementations of mid-to-long term humanitarian projects in the Southern Cameroons.

The mid-to-long term efforts required are:

- Local control and implementation of healthcare policy.
- Free healthcare at the point of service for some emergency and basic services and an insurance policy that allows for health insurance to all.
- Promote affordable healthcare, expand safe, high quality healthcare options, encourage innovation and positive competition.
- Strengthen and expand the health care workforce to meet their diverse needs.
- Identify and provide accreditation of the health care and human services workforce.
- Set up policy and federal institutions to provide quality control.
- Establish centers of excellence.
- Census of all present facilities and their capabilities.
- Establish research and development centers.

### **5.6.3 Midterm and Long Term Health and Social Welfare Expectations and Resolutions**

- Establish mental, Family (paternal and maternal), behavior, psychosocial therapy, Infectious rehabilitation centers, radiology services, pathology, and other specialty services to the goal of making sure every citizen has access to quality and low-cost health care.
- Set up health advisory boards, licensing boards for medical practitioners and medical unions for patient advocacy, and then monitor medical malpractice.
- Extensively train medical personnel to render quality health care services.
- Set up children hospitals and child resource centers like Child Protection Services.
- Setup community health resource centers with local community workers with the communities.
- Carry out extensive community health-prevention education, awareness, and outreach.
- Setup systems to uniquely identify patients for the hospital systems.
- Set up an electronic health records system for effective coordination of patient care.
- Setup food assistance programs based on eligibility and vulnerability.

### ***5.6.7 Long-Term Health and Social Welfare Expectations and Resolutions***

- Setup Housing Assistance programs based on Eligibility and Vulnerability.
- Establish State and Federal Professional Health Training Institutes and Specialty Universities.

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## 5.7 Peace and Security Working Group

The Peace and Security Working group and this summary is a result of knowledge-based brainstorming sessions from diverse individuals each with their own specializations and expertise but maintaining a high level of professionalism, neutrality, inclusivity, and independence of thought.

### Summary

The Peace and Security working group proposes a way forward using a framework for an immediate ceasefire, credible and experienced mediators, willing facilitators, respected guarantors, and preparation for potential negotiations by all parties.

In arriving at this position, the following items were analyzed:

- Historical causation factors.
- The current state of the war and its impact.
- Armed Groups vs state actors or criminal groups.
- Past history and current behavior of all actors.
- The behavior of regional and international partners or community.
- Unique experiences of other countries with similar history.
- Preconditions – disorganization of Ambazonia groups and leadership – on the ground (Ground zero) /Diaspora
- Unity of purpose and goal

### 5.7.1 Introduction

The CDN recognizes the need to place full responsibility for lasting peace and security in the hands of Southern Cameroonians who have the greatest stake in the ongoing conflict in former British Southern Cameroons. During this conference on ending the armed conflict in Southern Cameroon, the Peace and Security Working Group was given the mandate to brainstorm and provide strategies and recommendations that can lead to peace building and security as a preferred alternative to continuous fighting. The peace and security framework proposal is flexible, diverse, and comprehensive with a four-tier timeline (immediate, short-term, medium, and long-term). This framework takes into consideration some of the different stakeholder positions and is designed to achieve peace and security as an end point. Sustainable peace and security require sustainable investments in peace building initiatives.

#### 5.7.1.1 Primary Argument for Peace and Security

The four years of ongoing conflict in the Southern Cameroons has not only destabilized peace and security in the region, increased the impact on human lives in terms of actual deaths, incarceration, economic and environmental destruction, human suffering in health and psychological aspects, the spread of diseases, and displacement of people among others, but it has also been devastating.

This conflict has led to severe humanitarian crises and persistent human rights abuses. More

than 3000 people have been killed, about 900,000 internally displaced persons, more than 60,000 refugees in Nigeria, and more than 400 villages burnt down.

Children have not been able to go to school, and some who have attempted to go to school have been shot and killed while in school. Most horrifically, children have been recruited into armed groups. Women and children are some of the most affected in and outside the battlefield. Kidnaping and ransom taking is rampant, as well as illegal imprisonment of citizens.

Peace cannot be achieved when fighting still occurs, and these atrocities are on the rise. The situation is still ongoing with escalations in the number of deaths and damages. Working towards sustainable peace and security is therefore an urgent task that should be carried out by all those involved in this conflict.

The following state measures have not stopped the conflict: The Bilingualism and Multiculturalism Commission; The Grand National Dialogue, and the announcement of a Special Status.

#### **5.7.1.2 Stakeholder Identification**

**Internal:** The People of the Southern Cameroons; The People of La Republique du Cameroon; The government of La Republique du Cameroun and its agencies; The Ambazonia Restoration Forces on ground zero (All ideological components); The Ambazonia frontline leaders in Cameroon and the Diaspora; The Federalist (all ideological components), De-Centralization/ Special Status, Civil Society Organizations.

**External:** The Southern Cameroons Diaspora community, La Republique du Cameroun Diaspora Community, regional states like Nigeria; Support countries with a stake in Cameroon – France , United Kingdom , United States, Germany, Canada, China , Russia , Serbia , Israel, Switzerland, Ghana – ECCAS, AU , UN, Commonwealth – the Francophonie, AFDB, IMF , World Bank, and so forth.

#### **5.7.1.3 Strategic Communication and Advocacy**

What are the interests of various stakeholders and how to engage their interests, strategically?

- For Southern Cameroonians: Human and personal security – Prosperity
- For the Cameroon government: Economy, stability, image
- For Neighboring States: Risks of contagion and prevention of spillover ideology
- For other Countries: Political and economic interests
- For international organizations: Humanitarian dimension, human rights dimension, and financial risk.

### **5.7.2 Strategies for Ceasefire Agreement**

All sides should consider a temporary ceasefire; however, trust-building measures are required by all armed stakeholders.

For example, and in practical terms:

- The government of Cameroon could consider withdrawing its forces.
- Ambazonia armed groups could agree to suspend operations in the Southern Cameroons. A consensus by all Ambazonia armed groups might be necessary to avoid spoiler factions and criminal elements usurping the real Ambazonia groups.
- Agreeing to respect a ceasefire is the first real step towards any genuine pre-talks.
- Another advantage is that ceasefires allow for unhindered humanitarian access into ungovernable and ungoverned spaces for the sole purpose of reaching out to the most vulnerable and the assessment of the real impact of the conflict.
- There must be a consideration for the creation of buffer zones where territorial control is highly contested by warring factions or parties to the conflict. The maintenance of buffer zones requires good faith or a trusted third-party monitoring team with sufficient buy-in from and influence on all parties involved.
- Pressure from the people of Cameroon, the UN, AU, Commonwealth, Francophonie, France, USA, UK, Germany, Switzerland, Israel, China, Chad, Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa; etc. has the potential to influence the Government of Cameroon and key Ambazonia armed groups and their representatives to accept a temporary ceasefire agreement.

A key disadvantage of a temporary ceasefire is that it provides a window of opportunity for either party to re-strategize, rearm, recruit, and return to the battlefield. A unilateral ceasefire can be declared by either party, but they are mostly unsustainable and likely to be considered as battlefield weakness.

It should be noted that ceasefires are only guaranteed as long as all parties respect them. They cannot be imposed. The working group proposes a temporary ceasefire guaranteed by a combination of internal and external stakeholders with sanctions attached to any breach by either party. This could take the shape of a United Nations political mission with a humanitarian mandate to monitor the ceasefire process as agreed.

#### **5.7.2.1 Full Amnesty as a Trigger for Trust and Peace building**

An effective step towards dialogue and negotiations as a peace-building indicator should start by the Government of Cameroon granting general amnesty to all prisoners, including activists at home and in the diaspora. The group noted that amnesty and prisoner release is an inevitable step towards peace building.

**Mediation:** Identifying and opening doors for credible and experienced mediators that have the buy-in from all parties is a crucial first step towards a peace process. There can be more than one mediator selected to engage in the process of negotiation especially in cases where compromise is possible from past experiences. With facilitation from the CDN, soliciting for

the involvement of the Church, Germany, Canada, USA, Norway, United Kingdom, Scotland, Rwanda, and Gambia as potential mediators will be a game changer.

**Negotiation:** Any successful negotiation process should be inclusive, identified and be represented by experienced Negotiators from all or a majority of the key stakeholders in the conflict. Negotiators selected by all relevant strands; Independence, Federalism, Special Status etc., should be included in a pre-planned intra-negotiation framework.

### **5.7.2.2 A Requirement for Guarantors**

Guarantors will secure prior commitment of Good Faith and Enforcement Guarantees from all parties. Because of the changing behavior of all parties to this conflict, a good guarantor will reassure all parties that any agreement concluded at peace talks will be honored and implemented.

Obtaining enforcement guarantees after agreements are signed is very crucial. The United States, UK, China, Germany, Canada, Norway, UN, the Vatican, AU, ECOWAS and ECCAS have the influence to provide these guarantees.

### **5.7.2.3 Facilitators**

The Coalition for Dialogue and Negotiation has the capacity and cultural intelligence to facilitate a negotiated settlement platform drawing from its own human resource experience in the conflict in partnership with other viable international organizations like the United States Institute of Peace, or any other organization of repute with similar extensive experience in peace negotiations and peace facilitation in a wide range of conflicts in different parts of the world.

The Peace and Security working group recognizes that a sister working group will dive deep into this process.

Considering assessments as previously described, it is highly likely that the only credible way forward for both conflicting parties is through a third-party mediated and negotiated process that satisfactorily addresses the root cause(s).

## **5.7.3 Key Considerations**

### **5.7.3.1 Immediate and Short-Term**

There must be a sanctioned and enforceable conditional ceasefire with complete withdrawal of troops and fighters. A sponsor for a peace process could be:

- A United Nations Political mission with a mandate for humanitarian intervention and monitoring of a ceasefire agreement, protection of people and provision of essential relief materials.

- Quick access and protection for NGOs, INGOs, and civil society to begin to provide urgent remedies and in preparations towards accommodating IDPs, refugee returnees, and so forth.
- Unconditional release of prisoners.

#### **5.7.3.2 Medium-Term**

- Third-party sponsored dialogue, mediation, and negotiations are necessary. The location and the mediators and negotiators must be agreed upon.
- All parties to select and present a team of negotiators to represent them.

#### **5.7.3.3 Long-Term**

- Depending on the outcome, efforts to create truth and reconciliation avenues, post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation as well as reintegration.
- Peacebuilding must be initiated.
- Depending on the outcome of a negotiated settlement, a revised framework will determine the shape and form of a human security strategy.

#### **5.7.3.4 Finding a Face-Saving Strategy**

Despite that, the war is overdue for settlement, it does not necessarily mean that both sides will, at the first beckon, willingly drop their weapons and go in for peace talks. This is a war in which both sides are fully determined to obtain battlefield victory.

- The Government sticks to its “one and indivisible” clarion call.
- Ambazonia groups stick to their “Independence or resistance forever” battlefield pledge.

For these factions to pull back or give up these strongly worded pledges and settle for something less than total victory, there needs to be consideration for some face-saving by all parties, a determination that requires the decision of the stakeholders themselves.

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## 5.8 Education and Vocational Training Working Group

In October 2016 schools were closed as a result of a general strike with legitimate concerns that needed to be addressed to ensure the right to quality education in the Southern Cameroons. Unfortunately, measures undertaken by the Government of Cameroon rather worsened the situation and has led to many arbitrary arrests and false imprisonment, indiscriminate killings, loss of homes and livelihood. With the armed conflict that has now lasted over four (4) years, more than four hundred villages have been burned down by the Cameroon military, leaving thousands of families without shelter. Most of these are either internally or externally displaced persons living either in the forests, or as refugees across the borders in Nigeria, Ghana, or other African countries. This situation whereby over 900,000 pupils and children in the Southern Cameroons have been deprived of their right to education for four years now requires the undivided attention of all Global citizens.

### 5.8.1 Historical Background

The historical development of the education system in the Cameroons is defined by its complicated two states history in the pre- and post-independent periods. Pre-independence, both Cameroons inherited two distinct educational systems and traditions from the colonial era:

- French-oriented educational system within the Republic of Cameroun as a French mandated territory.
- Anglo-Saxon-oriented educational system within the pre-independent Southern Cameroons as a British mandated territory. (Tosam, 1988; Tchombe, 2006)

Post-independence, there has been a deliberate attempt driven by the central government (Yaoundé) to “harmonize” the curriculum and policies and transform the English-system into a Francophone system.

The outcome has been a plethora of inconsistencies thus far that has led to the current socio-political, economic, and cultural conflict.

### 5.8.2 An Assessment of the Situation: Root Cause

#### 5.8.2.1 International Statue

The level of priority afforded to the education system is assessed by looking at the volume of central government spending as a percentage of the Gross Domestic Products (GDP).

In 2018-2019, the country spent 3.13% of its Gross Domestic Products (GDP) on Education (OECD 2019; UNESCO 2018), while in international and comparative terms, the top six countries in 2018, spent as follows:

- Belize with 7.6%.
- Sierra Leone with 7.0%.
- Lesotho 7.0%.
- Costa Rica 7.0 %.
- Bhutan 7.0 %.
- Timor-Leste 6.8%.

When compared to La Republique du Cameroun (with only 3.1% of GDP spent on education) the difference is clear. This might be seen as reasonable when also compared with other lower middle-income countries; however, it is worth highlighting two fundamental problems:

- Firstly, this was, and is still not demonstrably the choice of Southern Cameroonians to prioritize expenditure on education at that percentage point.
- Secondly, the actual figures spent is not based on an economically justified GDP of the Southern Cameroons as an entity (which is made up of about 8 million people and contributes up to approximately 45% of the country's GDP).

#### **5.8.2.2 Harmonization of the Two Distinctive Sub-systems**

Harmonization became the major term adopted by the central government to fulfil the demands of reunification of the inherited colonial educational systems getting into the union. The specific purpose being the establishment of a synchronized system as a strategy for strengthening the capacity of education institutions to meet many emergent needs (Ndille, 2019, p. 15). The assumption that underlies harmonization is that the contents taught in the two subsystems are universal. The different educational traditions reflect; however, different value systems and perspectives on educational development (Tosam, 1988), and hence, the failure of this attempt.

#### **5.8.2.3 Bilingualism as a Structure and its Value**

Bilingualism was crafted as the modus-operandi of the educational system on the basis of the colonial hangovers regarding English for Southern Cameroons and French for French Cameroon. This led to the bilingual school experiment; however, it is more apparent than real considering that even in administration, all circulars and decisions are made mainly in French. The English Language is *completely non-existent in official circles*, and there seem to be neither an educational nor a social value to bilingualism for Southern Cameroonians.

#### **5.8.2.4 Governance structures, human resource development and deployment**

Controlled centrally by the government, the governance structure of education in Cameroon is steeped in a confused setting. Four differing ministries from the basic, secondary, tertiary, and vocational education control the educational system and each ministry acts as a panoply of force and prestige with coordination completely sacrificed. Each has a delegation in each region and division and structural funding is assured in state public schools and negated in

non-governmental religious public education or low fee institutions (Scheunpflug, 2014, p. 2), the hub of Anglo-Saxon education. For example, the recruitment of teachers is characterized by favoritism and nepotism, mainly through political interference with preference given to French speaking candidates.

### **5.8.2.5 Systematic Disadvantage of Southern Cameroonians**

The central government appoints teachers and boards of schools as deemed necessary and in view of its strategy to harmonize both systems. With 80 % of the population being French speaking, teachers, for example, have been sent to teach Anglo-Saxon based students in French or broken English, deliberately allowing students to gain nothing from the experience.

### **5.8.3 Preliminary Recommendations**

Looking critically at this very complex problem plaguing the education of the Southern Cameroonians children, the conclusion is that the security of the Southern Cameroonian pupil is a priority.

The Education Working Group has therefore focused on immediate or short-term measure recommendations as well as long-term solutions.

#### **5.8.3.1 Immediate Measures:**

**Secured Study Environment:** Southern Cameroonian children should be granted access to all existing educational institutions in total security with a safe, free and study environment void of harassment, victimization and corruption (e.g., sex or money for grades.)

**Education for Life:** Displaced kids and refugees should be provided with technological support, vocational training, finance, and volunteer assistance to catch up on the missing years.

**Emergency Action:** To avoid duplicating efforts in view of the urgency, we suggest identifying existing educational initiatives, creating support systems that are geared towards promoting education within Southern Cameroonians such as providing children with cell, smart phones, tablets and solar panels and creating Apps that can be used to download the content offline.

**Home Schooling:** Parents should be encouraged to assist their children with their studies at home. Be it in the forest or in refugees or IDPs camps, parents should get involved in their Children's education. Learning does not have to take place only in classrooms.

**Community involvement and volunteering:** Teachers as well as other community members that are capable of assisting could offer free services to children who need assistance either because their parents are illiterates or they have no parents, since many children now are orphans.

**Mental Health Intervention:** We recommend that psychiatric or psychosocial evaluation be

carried out to ensure the good mental health condition of our children by expert volunteers. Educational facilities should also cater for special needs, so this group is not left out.

**Consensus Principles from our Working Group:** The Education Working Group resolved to create a network to liaise with all educational stakeholders in the Southern Cameroons (ground-zero) especially the youths (students) and trade union leaders to engage in hands-on project initiatives to keep forging on with the education of the children.

### **5.8.3.2 Short and Long Term**

Because there is little appetite for the harmonization of the education systems; we therefore revert to English as the sole language of instruction in the Southern Cameroons and French in French Cameroun with immediate effect.

The Southern Cameroons education system should be governed by Southern Cameroonians mainly through decentralized local structures, with a common universal framework agreed with the governmental structure.

Higher education in the Southern Cameroons, including teacher education should include high standards in ethics and operate with maximum autonomy to permit research informed curricular, integrity and capacity building.

The educational system of the Southern Cameroons needs rebranding and re-invention with an educational system that is relevant, industry driven, entrepreneurial, solution focused, ethical, inclusive, and standardized to meet global dynamics. This requires a robust framework and state of the arts teacher training, retention, and empowerment process.

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## 5.9 Special Panel Sessions

Three of these panel sessions were intended to bring together international practitioners with specific expertise on the subject matters to assess, explore, and obtain consensus on salient issues for participants to be informed on pathways and commitment towards achieving justice and peace for the people of the Southern Cameroons. Another two brought together leaders of the Southern Cameroons struggle and opinion leaders of all three shades of opinion to examine, arrive at a consensus path, and to address the root cause(s).

### 5.9.1 Panel Session with Leading Political Stakeholders

At a special panel bringing together proponents of three of the four leading shades of political opinion in the Southern Cameroons (federalists, confederationists, independentists), the following outcomes emerged:

#### 5.9.1.1 Understanding the Root Cause of the Conflict

The panel of Southern Cameroonian political stakeholders were in consensus that the root cause of the present conflict goes back to 1961: The decolonization of the State of the Southern Cameroons and the foundational principles were flawed in that there existed a legacy of bad governance and unwelcomed dictatorship. This overall flaw in the union, along with significant cultural differences between the two states (French-speaking and English-speaking population) entering into the 1961 union further compounded the lack of clarity in the foundation of the union.

#### 5.9.1.2 Finding Consensus to a Sustainable Resolution

The panel worked toward a consensus on which process would most likely bring lasting peace and prosperity to the peoples of Southern Cameroons.

A consensus was agreed on that a sustainable solution to the present conflict must include a third-party mediated dialogue without preconditions and by addressing the root cause(s) of the conflict.

There was consensus that a credible way of finding the majority view of Southern Cameroonians on their most preferred system of governance would be best addressed by holding a UN sponsored and supervised referendum on the question.

#### 5.9.1.3 Driving Consensus toward a Resolution for all Southern Cameroonians

An overwhelming majority of Southern Cameroonians want the immediate release of all Southern Cameroonian prisoners of war in the jails across the Republic of Cameroon, even if on certain conditions, and also the need for amnesty for restorationist fighters.

The panel agreed that an immediate ceasefire was needed for a society of justice, rule of law, freedom of speech, accountability, and self-governance.

#### **5.9.1.4 Consensus on Collaboration to drive Negotiations**

The leaders in attendance from the Ambazonia Governing Council (AGovC), the Interim Government of the Southern Cameroons/Ambazonia (IG-Care), the British Southern Cameroons Resistant Force (BSCRF) and the Southern Cameroons Civil Society Consortium committed to attending a leadership forum to explore proactive pathways to collaboration.

There was an acknowledgment of the necessity for adequate access for aid workers and humanitarian assistance and the need for collective outreach to educate Southern Cameroonians about the protection of international human rights.

The leaders also expressed their commitment and preparedness to an internationally mediated and negotiated settlement to the armed conflict, provided this process is credible, mandated by the United Nations, and endowed with guarantees for an effective implementation of a peace agreement.

#### **5.9.2 Panel Sessions of International Experts**

Three international expert panels were held:

- Assessing Armed Conflicts for Self-Determination: Key Considerations in the armed conflict in the Southern Cameroons.
- Mediation and Negotiations in Armed Conflicts: Normative Perspective and Best Practices
- The Role of INGOs in Armed Conflicts in Africa: Perspective on Human Rights and Humanitarian Response.

The following consensus were reached in all three sessions:

##### **5.9.2.1 Driving to a Possible Escalation of Hostilities**

Panelists assessed the conflict dynamics and the trend since 2017 and came to a consensus, informed by current trends and dynamics, of a possible escalation of hostilities. Panelists agreed local remedies have been exhausted with little or no path to achieving lasting peace or addressing the root cause of the armed conflict. The panel concluded an international mediated and negotiated settlement between the Yaoundé regime and the people of the Southern Cameroons is critical to end hostilities.

##### **5.9.2.2 Consensus on a Credible Mediation and Negotiations Process**

Members of the panel, informed by comparative processes and standard practice, agreed the international community must play the vital role of mediating an end to the armed conflict.

There was a consensus on the role of the United Nations and its organs especially the Security Council as well as the United States of America in facilitating mediation including a proactive role of Africa's statesmen and women.

There was consensus that any credible mediator must undertake a detailed assessment of the armed conflict and understand the major stakeholders to inform the process while maintaining universal standards and practice. Panelists agreed to having no preconditions for negotiations as vital for an honest path to a successful negotiations process and agreed a multilateral approach as the best guarantee of a credible peace agreement.

### **5.9.2.3 Consensus on the Protection of International Human Rights and Need for Access to Humanitarian Aid and workers.**

The panelists assessed the trend of international rights violations and the limited access of aid to the affected populations and agreed there was an urgent need for warring parties to abide by international laws that protect civilian populations during periods of war. Panelists also agreed the humanitarian disaster in the Southern Cameroons is the single most under-reported and under-funded globally.

There was a consensus for the donor community to do more to fund and alleviate the humanitarian disaster, to care for the over 60,000 refugees and more than 900,000 civilians displaced. Panelists also reached a consensus that an independent international investigation of the rights violations was necessary to examine the nature of atrocities committed and to identify the perpetrators.

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**“Virtually every Anglo-Saxon qualification is inferior to French ones, and so Anglo-Saxon standards are supposed to be inferior to French ones. This gives an idea the frustrations which English speaking citizens face virtually at all levels in the university, in the public service and in state corporations with regard to their progress.”**

*Solomon Tandeng Muna,  
4th Prime Minister of the Southern Cameroons  
(appointed by Ahmadou Ahidjo)*

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