



CAMEROONS SYSTEM OF ABITRARY ARREST, DETENTION AND TORTURE IN SECRET CHAMBERS

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Article 3 of the 1949 Geneva Convention clearly prohibits at any time and in any place whatsoever “violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds” and “the carrying out of executions without previous judgment pronounced by a regularly constituted court, affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples” with respect to “persons taking no active in hostilities, including members of armed forces who have laid down their arms and those placed *hors de combat* by sickness, wounds, detention, or any other cause”

This article is indeed of utmost importance in international law governing the conduct of conflicts. Without conventions like this it will be practically impossible to identify and qualify crimes committed by brutal and dictatorial regimes like the Paul Biya regime in Cameroon. This regime has for the last 3 years flagrantly violated Article 3 of the 1949 Geneva Convention with impunity. Using the barbarity of its elite forces like the Rapid Intervention Battalion (BIR) and Equipes Speciales d’Intervention Rapide (ESIR) or Special Rapid Intervention Squads, as well as torture chambers like the Defense State Secretariat and the General Directorate of External Research (Direction Generale de la Recherche Exterieur (DGRE)), the government of

Cameroon government has unleashed horrific violence on its people, executed countless unarmed civilians on the streets, farms, schools etc. even persons already in detention especially in torture chamber like SED and the DGRE are often executed after undergoing the most brutal treatment imaginable without any previous judgment pronounced by a recognized judge.



The Africa Science Diplomacy and Policy Network has conducted sufficient investigations to substantiate our reports. These include eye witness accounts, victims, and members of the Cameroon military. Victims of torture in Cameroon's secret torture camps, have painted seriously

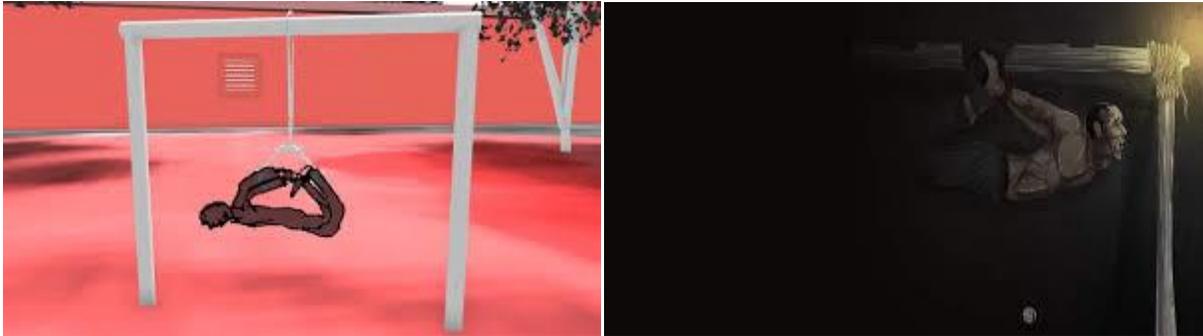
disturbing pictures of their experience. This includes drowning, choking, insertion of metal objects into delicate parts of the human body like the Anus, ears, mouth and nose, use of toxic liquids, use of fire to burn hair on the body, tying and suspension on stretch positions.

State forces have been involved in executing unarmed civilians on the street especially in the Northern Regions of the country where the government is at war with the Boko Haram terrorist group. This is also the case in the Anglophone regions of the country where is an active civil war. In 2018 a video went viral showing two women, a child and a baby being shot to dead by members of Cameroons military sent shock waves around the world. This is however not an isolated incident. ASDPN has documented numerous incidents where the Cameroon military have killed mentally unstable civilians, pregnant mothers, grandmothers and grandfathers, handicap persons, and baby's unintentionally left behind by their mothers in a desperate attempt to escape military raids. In the North West Region and South West Regions of Cameroon, government troops during surprise raids have repeatedly sprayed bullets on the civilian population as they flee in to surrounding forests. We have footage of civilians shot through their backs as they were fleeing.



The Cameroon military have not spared even the sick in their excesses. On February 17th the Cameroon military invaded the Shisong Cardiac Center at St Elizabeth Catholic General Hospital, the only facility where heart deceases are treated in all of the Central African Sub-Region. Their intension being to kill suspected Ambazonian fighter whom they believed were undergoing treatment in the hospital. This brutal invasion happened in total disregard of the fact that these supposed Ambazonian fighters were undergoing medical care or that other patients with delicate heart conditions were undergoing treatment. Bishop George Nkuo speaking after the incident said “The army can come in to the hospital where there are cardiac patients and move around in search of whomever. It is not done; but that was done. And they shoot around even with people who are cardiac patients. That is the most irresponsible act to do. Most unprofessional I would say at the least”. This is by no means an isolated incident. Across the

troubled Anglophone regions of the country, doctors and other medical staff are fleeing from hospitals. In August 2018 the Cameroon military invaded a hospital and killed Nancy Azah and her husband Njong Padisco who are both nurses. Several doctors and nurses have been killed at point blank range while others have suffered grave injuries in the hands of the Cameroon military. The military alleges that the health workers are treating injured Ambazonian fighters. The Ambazonian fighters on their part are accusing hospital staffs of betraying them by exposing them to the military to be killed so the medical staff is under tension from both sides.



Images from Amnesty International

The Ambazonian fighters are responsible for targeting school children. The leaders of Ambazonian struggle for self determination have adopted a policy which calls for the closure of all schools whether public or private. They have banned the selling of any school related material in the restive regions, just to make sure no child goes to school. This is a war strategy. Children, parents, teachers and school proprietors who have defaulted these orders have been shot and killed by the Ambazonians, some have had their fingers chopped off or entire arm chopped off. Children are being kidnapped by the Ambazonian fighter and held for ransom for simply making attempts to go to school.

Human rights is indeed fundamental to the development of any society. No society can ever attain full development potential where such rights are flagrantly disrespected by people who are supposed to defend and uphold it. It is also true that over the past several years the Universal Declaration on Human Rights have had a revolutionary impact. It has influenced many national and international policies and legal frameworks, it has served as a compass in a world all the time guiding humanity towards good conduct. However looking at the human rights situation in Cameroon, it becomes clearer that we still have a long way to go before the respect for human rights becomes universal.