

8 April 2018

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW OF CAMEROON

## 1. Arms controls

Over the past decades Cameroon has witnessed a significant proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons largely triggered by cross-border conflicts and organised crime. The human rights and gendered impacts of arms proliferation are well documented and multifaceted; arms proliferation exacerbates power differences and facilitates acts of violence, including those rooted in gender discrimination. Law No 2016/015, which regulates arms and ammunition, does not take into account a gender perspective, as opposed to the Arms Trade Treaty to which Cameroon is a signatory.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, despite Cameroon being a party to the Kinshasa Convention<sup>2</sup> and passing Law No 2016/015, which both provide for the creation of a national commission on small arms and light weapons, little progress has been made in this regard.

### Recommendations:

- By 2019, ratify and implement, with a gender perspective, the Arms Trade Treaty, the Action Programme of the United Nations on Light and Small Arms and the Central African Convention for the Control of Light and Small Arms;
- Adopt implementing decrees of law No 2016/015 of 14th December 2016 on the general rules governing arms and ammunition in Cameroon by December 2018;
- Establish with no delay the National Commission on Light and Small Arms with the allocation of adequate human and financial resources.

## 2. Gender-based Violence

Women survivors of sexual or domestic violence do not enjoy adequate support from public services. No specific law on the prevention and fight against violence towards women has been adopted. The absence of criminalization of domestic violence and marital rape remain major gaps. In addition the Civil Code, which contains discriminatory provisions against women still has not been reformed.

### Recommendations:

- By 2020, adopt and implement a specific law to prevent and fight against all forms of violence against women, including marital rape, followed by education and awareness raising programs to the attention of the public about domestic violence;
- By 2020, reinforce and ensure the organisation of 100 training sessions of the judiciary and of court officers at all levels, regarding the support to, and the rights of victims of gender-based violence;
- Extend the creation of call centres and of free phone help lines for victims of gender-based violence all over the national territory;
- By the end of 2018, finalise, as a priority, the ongoing revision of the civil code and the drafting of a code of the person and the family with a view to bringing its legislation in conformity with the CEDAW and of ensuring that all discriminatory provisions are repealed.

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<sup>1</sup> Law No 2016/015 of 14th December 2016 on the general rules governing arms and ammunition: <http://www.assnat.cm/index.php/fr/les-lois/73-loi-n-2016-015-du-14-dec-2016>  
(available in French only)

<sup>2</sup> The Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and all Parts and Components that can be used for their Manufacture, Repair and Assembly (Kinshasa Convention)

### **3. Political and Socio-Economic Participation of Women**

Women's representation in politics in Cameroon is very low, with as of 2017, 6% in the Government, 21% at the Senate and 8% in Municipal Councils. High inequalities also persist between the salaries of men and women. Women continue to work mainly in subsistence agriculture and in informal sectors.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Take appropriate measures, including special temporary measures, to ensure women's equal representation in the private sector and in political and public life at the national, regional and local levels including, in Government in decision-making positions, in Parliament, in the judiciary and in the civil service;
- Implement gender-sensitive budgeting in all areas with the aim of realising Sustainable Development Goal 5.

### **4. Participation of Women in Conflict Prevention and Resolution**

Although being disproportionately affected by conflict-related physical and sexual violence, including through the abduction of women and girls by Boko Haram, women are deprived from having a role in conflict-management, and are excluded from conflict resolution mechanisms.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Implement the National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 by December 2018, with the allocation of adequate human and financial resources and the establishment of an effective monitoring mechanism;<sup>3</sup>
- Ensure the effective participation of women in the prevention of conflict, in peace efforts and post-conflict reconstruction, including involving them in decision making positions in accordance with resolution 1325 and connected resolutions, 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013) and 2122 (2013);
- Put in place a peace education programme to build sustainable peace;
- By 2020, train at least 500 women, including traditional, civil society and political leaders from all regions of Cameroon, on conflict mediation techniques;
- Adopt prevention measures to the recruitment of young girls as human bombs by Boko Haram, including through measures to fight against the radicalisation of youths.

### **5. Birth Registration**

The lack of access of birth certificates for children remains a key issue in Cameroon and hampers the exercise of other rights, such as the right to health, education and nationality.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Increase the financial, technical and human resources of the national civil status office in order to increase its accessibility throughout the national territory and accelerate its activities to reduce, the percentage of the population without birth certificates;
- Adopt and implement a simplified procedure to obtain substitute birth certificates and expand mobile court hearings throughout the national territory;
- Ensure the effective implementation of art. 31 of law No 2011/011 requiring heads of hospitals or doctors to declare births, in order to reduce corruption in the process of delivery or establishment of birth certificates.

### **6. Protection of Persons in Humanitarian Situations**

The humanitarian needs of displaced persons in Cameroon remain cause for concern, in particular the shrinking space to welcome refugees and the returns of Nigerian asylum seekers.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Increase resources made available for refugees, internally displaced persons and populations in conflict zones;
- Reinforce the protection of refugee and internally displaced women and girls, taking into consideration their specific needs and also ensuring they have equitable access to shelter and services.

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<sup>3</sup> Since the submission of WILPF Cameroon's alternative report on 5 October 2017, the government of Cameroon has published on 16 November 2017 its National Action Plan for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. More information available at : <https://wilpf.org/cameroon-has-its-national-action-plans-on-women-peace-and-security/>